



Slipstream

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Pilotless Auster Terrifies Sydney

By Paul Shiels

On 30 August 1955, a pilotless Auster aircraft flew for nearly three hours over Sydney watched by thousands before two Navy Sea Furies shot it down over the sea.

The aircraft dived, circled and swung on an erratic course over the city from Bankstown aerodrome, south of the city, in a generally north-east direction until it was shot down off Broken Bay, north of the city terrorising citizens below as it passed overhead. Sydney authorities declared the entire city in a state of emergency as the plane swept over crowded suburbs and the main central city area. Police, fire brigades and ambulances were alerted as aviation officials pinpointed the plane's crazy course.

The drama started at 8.56 a.m. at Bankstown aerodrome when private pilot Anthony Thrower, 31, of Sydney, rented the Auster to brush up on his circuits. After only one circuit the engine began to splutter and he landed. He got out and with the



RAN Auster 856

hand brake on, casually swung the aircraft's propeller to restart the engine. To his amazement the engine suddenly revved and the plane started moving slowly forward. The handbrake had somehow released. Gradually the Auster gained speed and eventually took off.

It circled the aerodrome climbing steadily to 10,000 ft and as it headed for the city.

An RAN Auster aircraft was making its way from Nowra to Schofields and the pilot, Commander J. Groves, offered to trail the runaway Auster then heading across town to the Sydney CBD. After watching the straying Auster for some time, the RAN Auster had to break off from the chase as it had been airborne for more than three hours.

In a bold stroke, the authorities called the RAAF who scrambled a Wirraway from Richmond airbase to shoot down the abnormally behaving aircraft.

By now the pilotless Auster had managed to fly across the city to Manly where it turned north towards Palm Beach. Flying into a steady breeze the Auster gained altitude - to around 9,000 ft. Here the air tends to be cold and as the gunner in the rear



Sea Fury on HMAS Sydney

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National President's Update

G'Day Everyone,

I am delighted to report that I was overseas for most of the recent election campaign, and I missed most of the carry-on of that wonderful democratic process. How sad!! Notwithstanding, it appears that the outcome of the election means that Defence will remain a bipartisan matter for the two major parties and not a political 'no man's land' which I believe is in the best interests of Australia's ongoing security. The Ministers and Shadow spokespersons recent announcements would appear to bear this out and so I think that the current trajectory for Defence, Navy, and the FAA in particular, is very much "On on". I hope to get more regular updates from HQFAA so that we can all see the progress being made. More on this later.

The two matters that I mentioned in my last Foreword continue to simmer away. The Productivity Commission's draft report into

compensation and rehabilitation for veterans by the Department of Veterans Affairs (DVA); and the endorsement by the Government of a military covenant for Australia and its Defence Force are matters that I will seek to keep you across as they take shape.

Finally, historians at the Australian War Memorial in Canberra are seeking to increase their knowledge of the efforts of the Fleet Air Arm during the Korean War. I know that some of you have already been contacted by Memorial staff and I thank you for your contributions to date. Can I urge anyone who has material or a willingness to assist to increase the Memorial's knowledge of FAA involvement in this conflict, to let me know through your Division's President please?

Stay safe and look after yourselves.

Mark Campbell

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Sea Fury Pilot Killed In Mid-Air Collision



Sequence of events as LCDR Wild's Sea Fury collides with Tiger Moth 200 feet above ground

Lieutenant-Commander Reginald Albert Wild DFC RAN was killed when his Sea Fury collided with a Tiger Moth flying over Wagga aerodrome on 17 May 1953.

The pilot of the Tiger Moth, Richard John Jackson was a 17 year old RAAF printing apprentice, stationed at RAAF Wagga. The Sea Fury crashed into the undercarriage of the Tiger Moth which disintegrated in mid-air. Its wings were shattered and its fuselage broken into three pieces.

The Tiger Moth hurtled to the ground immediately dropping 200 feet with Jackson still strapped in the rear cockpit. The Sea Fury's propeller had ripped the Tiger Moth's fuselage into small parts, except for the rear cockpit. Jackson climbed from the cockpit and waited for rescuers to arrive. An ambulance took him to Wagga Base Hospital, where he was admitted with a dislocated shoulder and shock.

The Sea Fury crashed two miles away. The dead Navy pilot, LCDR Wild, a veteran of World War II and the Korean war was also Commanding Officer of 850 Squadron. He was leading a formation of Sea Furies from Wagga on a cross-country flight. The Tiger Moth was on a training flight when LCDR Wild's Sea Fury collided with it. He had been a RAAF

pilot during the war and transferred to the Fleet Air Arm on its formation.

LCDR Wild's plane was badly damaged, but he kept it flying in a wide left-hand arc. A witness said LCDR Wild tried to make a forced landing with the aircraft continuing on for two miles, gradually flying lower until it crashed into the tops of trees. Out of control, it dived into a ploughed field, bounced, and was torn apart. The engine was

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LCDR Reginald Wild DFC RAN in the cockpit of a Sea Fury

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Sea FuryMid-Air Collision

Continued from Page 3.

ripped from the fuselage and parts of the plane were strewn about the field. LCDR Wild was dead when rescuers reached the plane.

The owner of the Tiger Moth, Mr. E. Condon, proprietor of the Wagga Flying School, said: "Jackson had just got the green light from the Control Tower and had taken off". Apparently, radios weren't in use at the time for some aircraft.

"I didn't realise what had happened - it was all so quick. I didn't see the collision - just the Tiger



Sea Fury propeller torn from crashed aircraft at Wagga—17 May 1953

Moth dropping out of the sky like a shot bird with its feathers flying." Mr. Condon claimed that the Navy aircraft should not have been so low over the airfield at the time. "My plane had received the green light to take off from the Control Tower and that should have meant that the area was clear." he said.

The Control Tower had cleared the Tiger Moth for take-off as it was unaware that the Sea Furies were returning – as they filed a flight plan to fly direct to Nowra without a request to return and overfly the airfield at low level.

RAAF armed guards were placed around both crashed aircraft. LCDR Wild and other naval pilots had attended the wedding of Guy Beange another Navy pilot and Dr. Helen Flynn at St. Michael's Cathedral Wagga the previous morning. Mr. Condon said that Jackson had been a member of the Wagga Aero Club for six months, had only flown four hours solo and was training for a Private Pilot Licence.

See LCDR Wild's 'Roll of Honour' Page [here](#)

WANTED!

Articles are wanted from members for the magazine on past and present FAA topics. Peter Coulson (Page 28) and Max Speedy (Page 40) have given an insight into the dangers of aircraft-carrier operations landing onboard HMAS *Melbourne* in 'adrenalin pumping' articles.

All members are welcome to contribute. You might have a short story on something you've seen or heard; what it's like flying different types of aircraft; what it's like working on different aircraft; working in the Fire, Salvage, Met, SE, Phot Sections etc; a book you may have read might prompt you to write a book review; a scary moment on flight deck operations etc.? There's so many stories out there! ALL Aviation branches of whatever rank held previously must have some stories hidden away?

One Column (Full Page) 260 words
(allows for heading no photographs)

Two Columns (Full Page) 500 words
(allows for heading and 1 photograph)

Two Pages 1000 words
(allows for heading and photo on page 1; two photos on page 2)

Multiple Pages 500 words a page
(no more than 3000 words)

Photographs of interest would also be appreciated. Send in any format that you feel comfortable with.

Ron Gent, a former RN Aircrew officer did some great cartoons for 'Slipstream' in the 70's. Does anyone have copies of his cartoons or know where I can track them down? Also, I'm told another FAA(?) cartoonist named 'Hughes' did some good work. So, if anybody knows of his cartoons please let me know.

Editor

Taking the F-35B to Sea on the 'Canberra' Class LHDs – Fantasy or Future?



F-35B Launches from HMS Queen Elizabeth. Click [here](#) to watch F-35B Operations in the Royal Navy.

By Steve George

A number of countries in the East and South East Asian region are equipping their navies with aircraft carriers. So far, Australia has decided against trying to put combat aircraft to sea: this article explains why they may have to think again, and how they could meet the emerging threat by putting the F-35B STOVL aircraft on the Canberra class LHDs.

What's Changing?

The oceans around Australia are seeing a significant growth in sea-based combat aircraft. China is building at least two very large aircraft carriers, while in response Japan plans to convert their two large 'Izumo' class warships to take around a dozen F-35B each. Meanwhile, South Korea is investigating using F-35Bs from their smaller 'Dokdo' class warships. Further afield, India's INS 'Vikrant' is nearing sea trials, and is planned to be equipped with Mig-29K aircraft.

In short, we are moving from an era where all maritime air power has been owned by an ally (the US) to one where potential adversaries also possess

this capability. These developments will have repercussions for Australian defence planning.

The Limitations of Land Based Air Power

The 2016 Defence White Paper made it clear that Australia wants to be able to exert military power over a large geographical area, most of which is sea, as well as contributing to coalition operations across an even wider area. It also made an assumption that the RAAF's exercise of air power would rely on Host Nation Support (HNS), which it assumed would always be available. But is this a valid assumption? Put more controversially, can Australia reliably depend solely on land-based air power? And what are the plans for defending RAN ships against the growing maritime air threat?

Land based combat aircraft are certainly capable of carrying out strike missions at extremely long range. But these are subject to the iron laws of distance, time and speed. The further they have to fly, the longer the time spent in transit. Time spent in transit (both ways) is time they can't spend delivering combat effect. Put bluntly, very long-range air operations deliver limited effect for the (immense)

resources expended. The ADF's base for Operation OKRA (Iraq and Syria) was located in the UAE, well over 1000 miles away. Their own figures showed average F/A-18 sortie durations of around 7.6 hours. Nearly all of their flying hours were spent getting there and getting back. Nor could they deliver much weight of bombs. Their own figures show that less than one weapon was dropped per (long) sortie.

Proximity equals capability. Or, closer is better. This is why the US and the French put aircraft carriers in the Eastern Med around 50 to 100 miles off the coast of Syria. It's why the Russians took the risk of basing their strike force on land in Syria. While Russian air strike tactics are not a model that the ADF could (or should) follow, their use of a nearby land base allowed them to deliver very high numbers of sorties and thus devastatingly effective air power. Were the ADF to have a base 50 to 100 miles off the coast, they could have delivered three or four times the weapon effort with the same number of aircraft and the same number of personnel.

So why did the ADF base its aircraft over 1000 miles away from their targets? Because the UAE was the closest country that was politically prepared to offer HNS. It's important to note that this isn't an isolated example.

The 'closer is better' model is even more relevant when looking at fleet air defence, where threats to the fleet may develop quickly and unpredictably. The 2016 White Paper stated that 'The three ... Air Warfare Destroyers ... will provide Australian or coalition maritime task groups with defence against air and missile attack'. Unless the RAN is going to rely solely on the AWDs, their only current option is land based fighter cover from

the RAAF. The UK tried relying on land-based fighters for fleet defence in the 1970s: it was an epic failure.

So, is the F-35B on the RAN LHD an effective and feasible way to address the issues?

Is the F-35B Effective?

The F-35 programme has been executed under an unprecedented level of public visibility. Detailed reports from the US General Accounting Office (GAO) and the DoD's OT&E department have clearly set out the F-35 programme's problems. This has generated a wave of adverse comment that has often obscured the real (and significant) achievements of the programme.

Those of the F-35B STOVL programme are especially significant. A supersonic, stealthy aeroplane weighing more than an F-4 Phantom (and of a similar size), equipped with large internal weapons bays has successfully demonstrated the ability to operate from ships far smaller than conventional aircraft carriers. This is a truly 'disruptive technology' and is providing new options to maritime forces around the world. However, many commentators stress the F-35B's 'deficiencies' against the F-35A land-based variant.

It's absolutely true that the F-35B has a shorter range, less 'g' capability and smaller weapons bays than the F-35A. But these were deliberate trade-offs, made at the outset of the programme, when it was recognised that putting a powered lift system inside the F-35B (to deliver that 'disruptive' capability) would incur a weight and space penalty. But that does not mean that it can't carry out very effective strike missions. The concept of operations for maritime aircraft like the B involves using the ship

to get the aircraft closer to the target – 'proximity equals capability'. The F-35B is also a formidable air to air adversary. Since the 90s, it has become clear that signature reduction, sensors, pilot situational awareness (SA), data-linking and more effective weapons are the key attributes for combat effectiveness. Traditional 'fighter' attributes such as 'g' capability, turn radius and outright speed have become less important. The 'B' has the same sensors and weapons suite as the 'A'. Operational aircrew actually involved with the programme have made it clear that the F-35B is a hugely effective air combat platform.

Simply put, a sea-based F-35B force will create severe headaches



Figure 1 – F-35B and Rotary Wing Aircraft Together on Deck (USS Wasp, Philippine Sea Early 2019) USN Official Photo

for potential adversaries. The US has recognised this, and their new 'Lightning Carrier' concept using their LHDs has already been deployed in the South China Sea.

Putting the F-35B on the LHD

As with the wider F-35 programme, the F-35B STOVL variant's ability to operate from small ships has been the subject of much debate. Unfortunately, much of it has been ill informed. Let's look at some of the common misconceptions.

Number One - The hot jet exhaust melts the flight deck.

The F-35B main jet exhaust does NOT melt steel decks. In the hover, the F-35B takes half the power from the main jet engine and uses it to generate lift fan thrust using cold air. This means that the aft hot jet is running at about half full thrust. It cannot melt steel plate.

However, it can damage deck coatings, and repeated jet blast on one area of deck can cause localised buckling. This happened with Sea Harriers and happens now with AV-8B. It's a normal aspect of operating jet aircraft from ships and has been managed for many years. Improved deck coatings are now being used, having first been tested by the UK against representative F-35 jet blast as far back as 2005. Localised deck distortion can (and has been) addressed by local stiffening of the flight deck support structure. Operating patterns can be adjusted.



Figure 2 – A Mixed Air Group: USS Wasp with 8 F-35B Embarked (Philippine Sea, March 2019) USN Official Photo

Number Two – the force of the jet blast damages the ship and is a hazard to personnel

The jet blast from the F-35 is significant, but as with Sea Harriers, AV-8Bs and any other jet aircraft ever operated from a flight deck, can be managed with basic precautions. Vulnerable deck equipment can be shielded or moved, and approach patterns adjusted. Personnel are trained and trained again on how to avoid jet blast while deck operating patterns are developed and adjusted: these effectively mitigate the hazards. Again, this is 'ops normal' for jet aircraft on small flight decks.

Number Three – The F-35B is Too Big for an LHD

The F-35B was designed to fit on a USN LHD whose deck and elevator sizes and deck head heights drove many key F-35B design decisions. The F-35B's logistics 'tail' was the subject of one

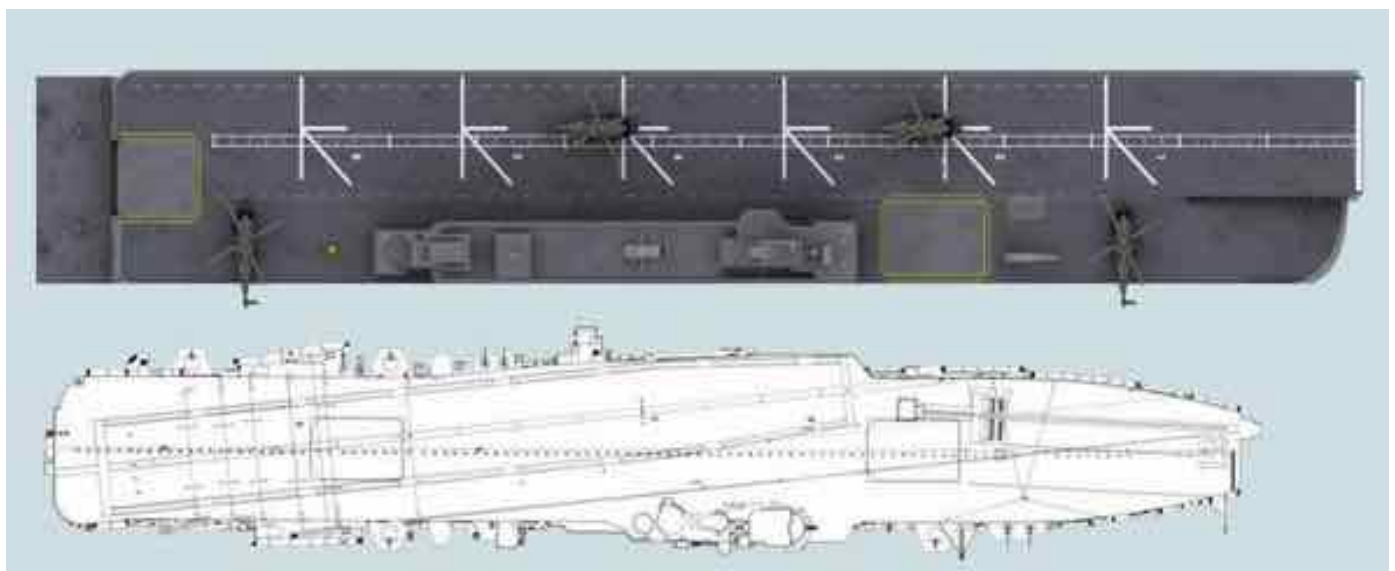


Figure 3: Deck Plans (to Scale) for HMAS Canberra and HMAS Melbourne (ANI, 2016)

of a small set of Key Performance Parameters (KPPs) for the programme and was ruthlessly suppressed throughout development.

While smaller than the USN LHDs, the 'Canberra' class are a modified version of the Spanish 'Juan Carlos I' design which was intended to be able to operate F-35B aircraft. F-35B data drove the design of the flight deck, elevators and hangar decks of these ships. F-35B will fit physically on the RAN LHDs.

Number Four – You Can't Mix F-35Bs and Helicopters on the Same Small Deck

Absolutely wrong. It's been done for years: it's normal for carrier aviation, and it's achieved by careful and professional management of the aircraft around the ship and the deck. It's not easy, and it needs practice, but it's routinely achieved by naval aviators and engineers. (See Figure 1)

Number Five – You Can't Put an Effective F-35B force on an LHD

The RN's Sea Harrier squadrons, and their USMC colleagues on LHDs have repeatedly showed what small but suitably located units can do at sea and from the sea. From the Falklands to Bosnia, from Kuwait to Iraq, the first-generation Harriers showed time and again that ship-based aircraft can generate high attack sortie rates as well as reactive air defence, as required. Six or ten F-35Bs on an LHD would provide a highly capable force by any standards. The USN seems to agree. Moreover, small carrier Air Groups can, and should, be tailored to meet the missions placed upon them. Any F-35B/rotary wing mix would be adjusted as required. There is no 'F-35Bs in, Army helicopters out' rule. (See Figure 2).

Actually, the RAN has put a worthwhile Air Group on a small carrier before. HMAS *Melbourne* managed to embark and operate no less than 27 aircraft from this small deck:

- eight A-4 Skyhawks,
- six S-2 Trackers,
- ten Sea King ASW helicopters and
- three Wessex search-and-rescue aircraft.

It would be natural (and understandable) to assume *Melbourne* had a much larger flight deck than the LHD. A picture comparing them is at Figure 3.

Of course, modifications would be required to the LHDs to support F-35B operations, especially support facilities and weapons magazines. Making space for mission planning equipment to support the F-35B would be a particular challenge, but modifications to ships through their lives is, once again, 'ops normal' for warships. Yes, it would cost money to make these changes. Losing an RAN

LHD to an unopposed air attack by PLAN J-15s would cost more. Much more.

Getting There

Achieving this would also require an Australian 'split buy' of F-35As and F-35Bs. While this would cost more than a straight 'A' buy, there is near total commonality in the avionics suites for the two variants, and this is a major through life cost driver. There are also opportunities for common support and training systems for the two variants, as well as providing routes for ADF co-operation with other F-35B maritime users including the US, UK and now Japan.

It would also need to be noted that F-35Bs would be capable of land-based operations alongside F-35As – this would not be a case of 'robbing Peter to pay Paul'.

Conclusions

Hopefully this article will stimulate more discussion about the F-35B/LHD option for the ADF. Strategically, the case for total reliance on land-based aircraft to deliver air power in Australia's sphere of military interest must be robustly questioned, especially given recent developments in China and Japan. Tactically, operating an RAN fleet without organic air defence in seas where large numbers of maritime strike aircraft are being deployed will become increasingly risky as these new maritime actors develop their skills and capabilities.

Technically, there is no good reason why the LHDs can't accept the F-35B and the aircraft can certainly operate from the ship to very good effect. Moreover, giving the ADF the ability to provide deck space and interoperability with the F-35Bs based on the USN's new 'Lightning Carriers' would be advantageous both militarily and politically.

So, how about giving the F-35B a 'fair go'?

(Steve George is a retired Royal Navy Air Engineer Officer. His 28 years' service in the RN included serving with 820 Squadron (Sea Kings) in 'HMS Invincible' in the Falklands in 1982 and with 801 Squadron (Sea Harriers) in 'HMS Ark Royal' in 1988. He was the Sea Harrier Engineering Authority, and also served in the British Embassy in Washington DC in the early stages of the JSF (F-35) programme. Leaving the RN as a Commander in 2002, he joined BAE Systems, working at Fort Worth, Texas and Warton UK on F-35B integration with the QE Class carrier.

Steve is a Chartered Engineer and a Fellow of the Royal Aeronautical Society.)

Who Knew of Three HMAS Albatrosses?

At 1200 on Tuesday 19 April 1949 SAR 916 (formerly HMAS *Air Trail*) was re-commissioned HMAS *Albatross* (SAR 916) under the command of Lieutenant M.G.W. Bensoh RN. ROP for April [here](#) for digital versions.

NAS Nowra was also commissioned HMAS *Albatross* at the same time and had been since August 1948. Thus, two commissioned HMAS *Albatrosses* existed together between 1949-65. So, contrary to belief; there had been three HMAS *Albatross*: a Seaplane carrier, a SAR craft and a Naval Air Station!

The *Cerberus* name was also given to a number of subsidiary depots and auxiliary vessels. These units were identified with roman numerals:

HMAS *Cerberus II* was the gun-boat HMAS *Protector*, renamed on 1 April 1921 as *Cerberus II* until reverting to *Protector* in 1924;

HMAS *Cerberus III*, the Naval Reserve Depot at Port Melbourne was commissioned as HMAS *Lonsdale* on 1 August 1940

HMAS *Cerberus IV*, the Naval Reserve Depot at Port Adelaide was commissioned on 13 September 1939. On 1 August 1940 it was renamed HMAS *Torrens* and on 1 March 1965 it changed again to HMAS *Encounter*.

HMAS *Cerberus V*, the Naval Reserve Depot at Fremantle was commissioned HMAS *Leeuwin* on 1 August 1940

HMAS *Cerberus VI* was the Naval Depot in Hobart; later renamed HMAS *Derwent*, then HMAS *Huon*.

HMAS *Cerberus III* had also been used for the tug *Kooronga*; HMAS *Cerberus IV* the tug *TB 10*; and HMAS *Cerberus V* the tug *TB 1536 Dooen*.

History of HMAS Albatross (SAR 916)

HMAS *Albatross* SAR 916 (formerly HMAS *Air Trail*) was one of 21 air/sea rescue vessels originally built in the USA and Canada between 1943 and 1945 and transferred to the RAN under the Lend-Lease Agreement. These vessels were originally designed as anti-submarine craft but their high speed and manoeuvrability made them ideal as

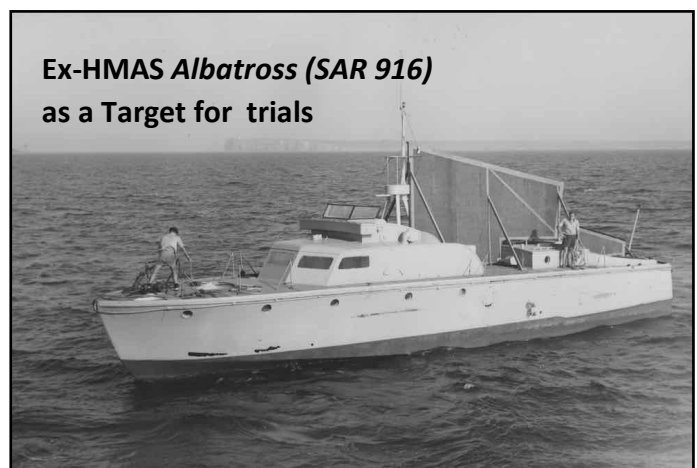


HMAS *Albatross* (SAR 916)
at speed in Jervis Bay

search and rescue vessels. In this role, their hulls were painted black and their upper decks and superstructure painted bright yellow. One vessel, HMAS *Air Sprite*, was built locally in 1960 to an almost identical design.

Originally commissioned HMAS *Air Trail* on 8 February 1945 in Sydney under the command of Sub Lieutenant Victor Maddison, RANR, the vessel was officially listed as a tender to HMAS *Madang*. She returned to Australia and was decommissioned on 2 August 1946. On 19 April 1949 she recommissioned as a search and rescue vessel renamed HMAS *Albatross* (SAR 916) operating primarily between Sydney and Jervis Bay.

She remained listed as a search and rescue vessel until 1965 and was sunk as a target in 1968.



Ex-HMAS *Albatross* (SAR 916)
as a Target for trials

Stories on Page 8 originally published in Naval Officers Club Newsletter No. 115 of 11 December 2018 and republished in 'Slipstream' with permission of writer—Paul Shiels

Pilotless Auster

Continued from Page 1

of the Wirraway was to find out. It was very cold. In fact so cold he was unable to change magazines on his Bren gun after his initial shots failed to stop the Auster.

With the Wirraway retiring from the scene, the RAAF sent two Gloster Meteor jet-fighters from Williamtown to intercept the Auster. The Meteors were flown by Squadron Leader M. Holdsworth and Squadron Leader (later Air Vice Marshall) J.H. Flemming. Very soon the Meteors caught up with the troublesome Auster. However, because the Auster was only doing about 60 knots, the pilots found it difficult to position for a shot. Adding to the frustration, the first Meteor's guns jammed having fired only a few rounds and the second didn't shoot at all. Both diverted to Sydney for fuel.

Meanwhile, at the RAN Air Station at Nowra, two Sea Fury aircraft had returned to base after firing rockets at Beecroft Range. The Sea Furies, from 805 squadron, were piloted by Lieutenants Peter McNay RN (Sea Fury WZ650) and John Bluett RN (Sea Fury VW645). Both of their aircraft were quickly loaded with 20mm ammunition and the pilots were told to fly to Sydney.

Airborne for so long

Flying north the two RAN Sea Furies arrived on the scene shortly after the RAAF Meteors broke-off their engagement. As a precaution, to ensure the Auster was empty, McNay lowered his flaps and undercarriage, slowing his prop-driven Sea Fury - to check the cabin - as a report had been received that a schoolboy might be onboard.

Ensuring it was empty; McNay repositioned his Sea Fury behind the Auster, now flying at about 10,000 ft and some distance out to sea. McNay fired a short burst from his 20mm cannons - hitting the Auster and knocking it out of balance. Bluett, in the other Sea Fury, then fired from a beam-on position, causing the Auster's cockpit to burst into flames. Badly damaged, the Auster nosed-down in a slow spiral. McNay followed with another burst from his cannons, sending the Auster crashing into the sea.

This was handy work on the part of the RAN pilots, not least because the RAN Auster was nearby when the civilian Auster took-off from Bankstown. Pilotless from around 9.00 am the Auster



LEUT John Bluett RN (on left) and LEUT Peter McNay RN (later RAN) discuss the shooting down of the Auster

was airborne for over two and a half hours. When the Sea Furies arrived it was 11.35, by 11.42 the Auster was destroyed - hitting the ocean about five miles off the coast. The remarkable thing is the runaway Auster was airborne for so long and fortunately not involved in a major accident.

Deeply embarrassed, the RAAF later explained that its fighter squadrons at RAAF Williamtown were stood down when the incident happened. Seems like a poor excuse? How come the RAAF could send two Gloster Meteors then?

The RAN Austers were small as fleet-air-arm aircraft go - but big surprises come in small packages. By 1963, the RAN had withdrawn their Austers from service, disposing of them soon after. However, it is understood one of the Austers was rediscovered and is now housed in the Fleet Air Arm Museum, Nowra.

Of interest, Peter McNay later became Recruiting Officer in Adelaide in the mid 1960's and was the last living in member with family at the married quarter in HMAS *Torrens* (later HMAS *Encounter*)

Click [here](#) for those with a digital version to watch TV re-enactment with an interviews with Peter McNay and John Pearce of Radio Station 2GB.

Seaking's Dramatic Manoeuvre to Avoid a Torpedo!!!

By Howard McCallum

There we were — sitting in the hover at 40ft., dipping sonar in the water, outside the edge of the safety trace, waiting for the missile launch. The target was tracked on sonar and its position was being sent back to the DDG, HMAS *Brisbane*, by the Sea King's EXDAK data link. This was done by the Aircrewman sonar operator (LSA Guy Flower) placing the sonar cursor on the target position and using a foot-switch to 'cut' the position to the ship.

The missile was an IKARA — a remotely controlled, small, rocket-powered aircraft that carried a Mk 44 or Mk 46 torpedo (no warhead in this case), same as carried by our Anti-Submarine Warfare (ASW) aircraft. Fired from the warship, it would level off at about 1,100 ft and fly to the target (max. range 10 nautical miles) where it would release the torpedo.

Position of Helicopter

It took some time for the ship to get all its systems working in order to proceed with the firing (it was a test firing, not war-time!). The ship's fire-control radar would locate the helicopter's position and plot that with respect to the data-linked target position. The position of the helicopter would be checked to be outside the safety trace (1,000 yards either side of the firing bearing to the target then fanned out at 30 degrees either side to 10,000 yards), confirmed by the Observer (LCDR 'Spike' Campey) on the helicopter's radar. When the launch was ordered, the IKARA controller, once all the system lights were 'green' would activate the launch by pushing two buttons on his control panel simultaneously.



RAN Sea King Engaged in Dipping Sonar Operations

The booster stage would launch the rocket then the second stage motor would take it to the target area, with mid-course guidance by radio command link from the ship's Ikara console.

It was the 24th of August 1983, and conditions were near perfect: low sea-state, a gentle swell, the wind just right to give us full view of the ship, launch and cruise all the way to the target position, with a few small cumulus clouds at just the right height to obscure the missile from time to time as it flew on its way to the stationary acoustic target.

This was my first IKARA firing and I, on the controls in the left-hand seat and excited to be involved in a rare evolution, watched in fascination as the missile blasted away from *Brisbane* in a cloud of smoke, climbed to cruise height, levelled off and ‘skitched’ through the clouds on its way to the target.

This was awesome — the business end of ASW!

All of a sudden, the missile changed course: it turned right and headed straight in our direction. As the other pilot, the aircraft captain (LEUT Claude Alviani), and I watched it fly towards us, I had no idea of the danger we were in.

“Where’s the torpedo?” yelled the captain.

“What?” I replied.

“IT DROPS A F***ING TORPEDO! WHERE’S THE F***ING TORPEDO?” he said with a degree of urgency uncommon in the cockpit.

We had lost sight of the missile as it neared on top our position, so the captain grabbed the controls and took us sideways to the right at a great rate of knots, the RADALT height-hold doing a marvellous job of keeping us at 40 ft. We may just have exceeded the Sea King’s sideways flight limits on this occasion.

Speared into Water

I looked to the left and saw the sonar dome bouncing horizontally over the sea’s surface. That can’t be good for the sonar, I thought to myself.

Then I looked out the front and saw the torpedo spear into the water right in front of us. I transmitted: “Splash point two five yards my twelve o’clock. I say again – *two five yards!*”

Brisbane replied, rather calmly I thought: “Roger”.

How blasé can they get?

But the fun wasn’t over: as the torpedo was released, the air vehicle broke up automatically, as it was designed to do, tail section first, then after torpedo release, the rest, so it didn’t career off into the distance to cause more damage and mayhem. That meant that bits and pieces of airframe, engine, and various hardware items came speeding or floating down from above – not what you want when you are sitting in a rotary-wing aircraft underneath it all.

We never found out what caused the mid-flight course alteration. Was it operator error, electronic

malfunction, or what? Ikara was notorious for malfunctions, so it’s unlikely a real cause could ever be determined.

In the end, no damage was suffered, except for the poor sonar dome and stretched cable... and some soiled flying suits.

My log-book entry for that event, written in red in the Duty column is:

KAMIKAZE IKARA.

ATC Recordings Heard in Nowra Tower

A Tracker with a QFI (the Late Trevor Peck) was taking off on RWY 26 when he called ‘Practice’ (to inform the Controller it was a practice engine failure). The aircraft began to ‘sink’ towards the ground at the upwind end of the RWY. A Macchi with (the Late Ralph McMillian) lined-up on RWY 26 was heard to remark over the radio “if that’s a practice then I’d hate to see a real one”!

Constant transmit seemed to be a problem with some aircraft. On one occasion a Wessex (the Late Des Rogers and another unnamed pilot) were sitting on the threshold of RWY 21 waiting to do circuits. Suddenly, they went on to constant transmit (where the microphone button is ‘stuck’ and everyone on that frequency can hear what the pilots are talking about). Des and his off-sider were in the process of abusing ATC for everything they could think of for holding them up. The conversation then turned to the amount of mushrooms there were between RWY 21 and No.4 Taxiway. They promised to keep it ‘secret’ between themselves and would ask ATC permission to go out there on completion of the flying training.

After 10 mins or so they realised they were on constant transmit and were embarrassed by the whole situation. On completing their sortie they returned to dispersal to discover numerous aircrew had rung ATC for permission and were out picking mushrooms between RWY 21 and No.4 Taxiway. It’s amazing what you hear on constant transmit!



Letters to the Editor



Life in the Fleet Air Arm at the beginning

Dear Ron (previous Editor),

I have enjoyed the Slipstream publication over many years. The nostalgia element deepens with time. There are not too many of my contemporaries left. I have attached a very recent photo of myself (below) about to play bowls at the Yungaburra Club in FNQ.

To be in harmony with SA Whipping Boy's comments (his sense of humour has much nuance attached) of Queensland's slow speech syndrome. I confess that I am a SA member even though for



many years I have lived in Queensland. Maybe it is because the records have me a native of SA. Joined the FAA at HMAS *Torrens* in September 1948, one month after the commissioning of the FAA.

Anyhow I am still alive and kicking and a threat to all who dare to challenge me on the green. I would like to send a cheerio to George Self who from time to time gets a mention. We were in the same mess in 1950 onboard '*Sydney*'. It was a miscellaneous mess consisting of Armorers, Safety Equip, Phot, Met and me. George was the only shipmate one could go ashore with and come back onboard sober. My PO was Henry Hall who can be described as a naval icon. He recently died well into his nineties. He and Admiral VAT Smith the FAA father had a nexus. Nobby was a boy seaman when they were shipmates and VAT was a Midshipman. When one received promotion so did the other. Nobby did not quite catch to VAT but, did retire as a LCDR with many honours. Those carefree times were eventually terminated

when I decided to go into aircrew. I often wonder 'why' about that crossroad, however the FAA trained me to maintain an aviation career in the civil arena. Thank you RAN.

Barry (Dooley) Lord

Lashing Aircraft in Heavy Seas

Dear Ron,

I remember the Melbourne en route from Perth to Sydney in 1961 crossing the Great Australian Bight and in very heavy seas with the odd wave over the flight deck. We went from 8 lashings per aircraft to 16 lashings with Gannets on deck.

One Gannet broke her lashings and ended up in Gun Sponson where it was secured. After that they went to 32 lashings I think?

Cheers,
Brian Dutch

Newsworthy 'Slipstream' in March 2019 Issue

Hi Ron,

Thanks for another excellent edition of 'Slipstream' for March 2019.

Good to see round-up of news and matters relating to today's FAA especially items such as the Schiebel Camcopter S-100 unmanned aerial system, the fundraising by 725 Squadron on page 21 and other stories on pages 22 and 23, not forgetting the Presidents Report on page 2.

The many items of interest from the past provided great reading too. Of special interest was the photo on page 9 of Fairey Gannet XG796 with the request for further information. Details are available on the FAAAA website under the Heritage Series which features plenty of information about the RAN Gannets including the complete story about the demise of this aircraft.

The link below opens to pages covering details of XG796.

<https://www.faaaa.asn.au/gannet-xg796/>

Keep up the good work.

Cheers
Kim Dunstan

Witness to Gannet XG 796 Mishap!

Hi Ron,

I was Seaman Midshipman in HMAS *Melbourne* in 1966 and I think this looks like Alby Fyfe's Gannet in which he thought he had missed the wires and hit full throttle in an overshoot until the arrestor wire ran out and he fell to earth hanging over the ships side.

All got out with the pilot and observer jumping into the water once a light was available to show a safe gap between the props; the crewman clambered up the tail and into a sponson.

The Gannet became fouled in trying to winch it on-board. It was at night and we were on our way back to Sydney. The Captain didn't want to enter Sydney Harbour with the spoils hanging down the ships side and so axes were used to cut the Gannet free.

Best regards,
Mike Perrott

(Actually Mike it's very well documented that they tried to recover the aircraft by attaching a crane to its hard lifting point, aft of the centre cockpit. Because the load was being taken some 90 degrees off the designed lifting plane, however, the hard point failed and the aircraft fell into the sea. The explanation on p29 is correctEd)

Mystery Gannet Photograph

Hi Ron,

I thought I should tell you what I believe the photo of the Gannet in this months Slipstream is from. I was serving in HMAS *Melbourne* in 1961 and this looks like the Gannet that crashed over the side of the flight deck, forward of the island, after landing safely and was taxiing to it's parking position in fly one. At that time there was a gun sponson forward of the island and it appeared someone had spilt brake fluid or oil on the deck. So when the aircraft turned outboard and then attempted to turn up to fly one position its left wheel skidded in the spilt fluid and the plane continued in the direction it was going over the side. It was like a bomb had gone off and I was told I was lucky to be alive, as shrapnel from the propellers and the other metals flew over the flight deck. It was a part of 816 Sqn and a day I will never forget.

Mike Stubbington
President FAA Association
South Australian Division

(Unfortunately Mike the correct answer is XG796 that caught No.6 wire before going over the side. The accident occurred on the night of 24 February 1966.....Full Story Page 28....Ed)

The Editor Slipstream,

In a recent edition you show a Sea Fury pinned on a gun sponson on the port side of HMAS *Sydney* in 1951. Readers may be interested in some aspects of this event.

The new destroyer, HMAS *Anzac*, just back from the Korean War was the follow-up destroyer for HMAS *Sydney* working-up off Jervis Bay before heading for Korea. Initially, fine weather resulted in an accident free day, but then the weather changed dramatically

We in *Anzac*, like the *Sydney*, had a stressful if not painful few days. There were 10 major crashes on the deck and over the side. On one occasion, with the boat's crew ready to be dropped, we steamed slowly through the wreckage and oil slick. There were no signs of the poor pilot and after a few minutes the Captain ordered a message be sent by light to *Sydney* expressing our regrets. I was on the bridge as the signalman began flashing. He heard a shout and, on looking down there was the pilot almost alongside, waving, as we all looked out to the other side at the slick! My memory tells me it was Lieutenant Peter Goldrick – of much fame later when badly wounded by shrapnel over North Korea he skilfully flew his damaged aircraft back and landed safely onboard HMAS *Sydney*.

This bad period was brought to an end when the Sea Fury featured in your magazine probably hit the side of the barrier and went over the ship's side onto a bofor gun on a gun sponson. The gun barrel went through the wing, pinning the aircraft to the ship's side, like a moth. The pilot (can't remember his name) adrenalin steaming, shot up the wing onto the flight deck like a rat up a drain pipe!

An ordnance artificer had been working on the gun but somehow was unharmed having crouched beside the gun cradle. The flight deck crew stood scratching their heads for the 'Jumbo' crane couldn't lift the Sea Fury, and the aircraft could not be pushed overboard. Sydney ceased flying and returned to Jervis Bay where the artificers got to work, cutting the wing and lifting the aircraft on to the flight deck. In those days spares of every type including wings, engines etc were carried on board. Engineers worked all night and successfully restored the aircraft to it's flying condition the next day. I do hope this may be of some interest to the members.

With best wishes

Andrew Robertson
Rear Admiral DSC, RAN (Rtd)

(Andrew was the Gunnery Officer in HMAS Sydney for her second deployment to Korea and Coronation/Fleet Review Cruise 1953 and her last seagoing Captain 1973.)

Oh, What a Day—An Ejection and Ditching!



Lieutenant Commander Kevin Finan's USN spectacular ejection from Skyhawk 888 following an arrestor wire failure

Right, Canopy is released in the Ejection sequence as seen from behind



Below, LCDR Kevin Finan USN is seen ejecting from Skyhawk 888



The 23 May 1979 turned out to be a very bad day for HMAS Melbourne. That morning, a Skyhawk was lost overboard when an arrestor wire parted following a normal landing and arrest. The pilot, Lieutenant Commander Kevin Finan USN ejected from the aircraft and was quickly recovered by the search and rescue aircraft.

The day only got worse, however, as, while discussions were being conducted on board regarding the rescheduling of the exercise program and an investigation into the crash and the arrestor system, a Sea King helicopter ditched into the sea, striking the ship's side and turning upside down. The forward part of the aircraft quickly submerged leaving only the tail wheel and a small section of the aft fuselage visible on the surface. Of the four person crew, the observer and aircrewman were able to evacuate the aircraft quickly through the port cabin window and were rescued by the ship's Gemini dinghy.

The pilots, however, experienced difficulties in evacuating the cockpit. They eventually escaped through the starboard side cockpit window and were rescued by another Sea King. All four crew members suffered only minor injuries, however, anxious minutes passed as the two pilots were attempting to free themselves from the cockpit and grave fears were held for their safety.

Subsequent investigation found that a fracture in the tail rotor drive system led to a complete failure



**Shark 01 on its descent following mechanical failure
(Note: the tail rotor, guard rail and how close to ditching!)**

of the tail rotor and the consequent loss of directional control. All flying operations were cancelled until investigations into the two accidents could be completed.

Extract from Navy Website [here](#)



Gannet Side No. 304 of 816 SQN on catapult off NSW coast about to head to NAS Nowra (HMAS Albatross) on completion of the 1958 deployment. The "Hawaiian Influence" on the side of the aircraft was courtesy of electrical tape. The aircraft was maintained by LAM(A) Tassie Douglas and LAM(E) Denny Lynch. (photograph supplied by Bob Douglas and taken on 22 July 1958. Bob can still fondly recall those 'Grass Skirts' as I am sure others on that deployment can!)

Flying The Tiger Moth



Basil Nash
and the Tiger Moth

By Basil Nash

The De Havilland Tiger Moth was an incredible aeroplane. Introduced in 1932, there were about 28000 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 Havilland 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 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 aerobat 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, Fireflys 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)



SA Division Report April-June 2019



SA Division Marching down King William Street, Adelaide on ANZAC Day 2019

Firstly, on behalf of the SA Division, I extend to you all a hearty and healthy Winter.

I Some of us do not enjoy the ravages of winter whereas I do. The early morning chill, the icy breeze blowing up your kilt, the effort of dodging those of you who are showing signs of a heavy cold, yep! all great fun to be enjoyed without grumbling.

The last three months have been quiet as we slide towards Easter and all that road traffic that appears to be the Easter trend as most of the family groups head off to parts unknown to enjoy close proximity living.

Office bearers were all elected without arm twisting or heavily veiled threats. We look forward to a quiet but busy year. The General Meeting followed, and John Siebert suggested that in view of our January Picnic in the Park meetings being cancelled due to weather extremes, then he and Anna would open their home for the Meeting. Very thoughtful John and Anna.

ANZAC Day formal Parade in Adelaide 25th

April 2019 went off as expected although numbers down on last year for what-ever the reason.

Completely ignoring the RSL notification of Meeting Up Locations as printed, the Division formed up on North Terrace close to where we were allocated our place. Most of us found each other using the CDF we were issued with in the Navy and formed up in four rows of six as requested by the over efficient ex-army marshal. Joining us from Nowra that morning was Don Parkinson looking splendid in medals and sun smart hat as the weather was a delightful 24 degrees, blue skies.

The Parade was led by a uniformed CPO Ian Lockwood (Locko) with Fred Driver on FAAA flag duty and Ian Laidler with the whipping boy on Banner. All looked very smart.

President Mike Stubbington would normally lead off, but he wisely chose to sit this one out, which was just as well as he collapsed on King William Road and got carted away for observation at the local hospital. I spoke to him later that day and he was shaken but not stirred. I believe he should stick

to attending our ANZAC lunches and forget walking.

Both Don and I attended the Dawn Service at Morphett Vale which was very well attended in the cool but clear early morning air. I didn't catch up with Don due to the crowds, so we caught up at the March.

Member Henry Young laid an early morning wreath at the Cenotaph on North Terrace on behalf of the Fleet Air Arm Association. Considering that this old darling is mid 90's, shows determination and grit well above his pay grade.

Navy Mate

Typically, the RSL floundered on after March activities for the Torrens Parade Ground because they were not going to put on beer and food tents as per usual. Luckily the State Government came to the rescue and we could all get cheap booze and food.

ANZAC Day lunch held at our regular Windsor Hotel and a good number showed up for the lunch and chatter. Bob Scobie recited The Man from Snowy River for the lunch group and apart from stumbling on the last verse, did an excellent job of it. (14 Verses from memory). Remember those days when we could remember our own phone number?

Have contacted my Navy mate, Ian Hughes (NSW) possibly due to Adrian Whiteman (QLD) contacting him to contact me (SA) regarding his chopper drawing in the last Slipstream magazine. Ian and I go back some time and his ability to draw a quick cartoon has led me to ask him for a few of his Navy related gems from our earlier days together. I hope he hasn't forgotten. With his permission, they could be included in future Slipstream print-outs.

Speaking of Slipstream. I take this opportunity to welcome the new Slipstream Editor, who clearly has a high pain threshold, South Australian Member Paul Shiels.

Paul has taken over from our long-suffering Ron Batchelor (NSW) who for years, gave us a quality Slipstream magazine to enjoy over all others. Ron will be missed, and I hope that his extra free time can be used successfully on things that he wants to do.

Paul will bring to Slipstream a new direction and format which he is suitably qualified to do. I guess

he will place an introduction inside the next Slipstream magazine, so I will leave it to him.

If there is one thing I can't stand, it's people interfering with my life. Something I can stand even less is people interfering with my life from thousands of miles away. For example, I am writing this at home on my lap-top with the desk-top word engine constantly attempting to correct my grammar. Essentially there's a spotty youth somewhere in the Microsoft empire whose pedantry and smugness in digital form sets him up as a God, only rather less creative. He will try to correct my spelling in words only a Queenslander or red neck American would recognise. As I am unable to cancel his unwanted assistance, I feel a certain power of control to ignore his red underlined corrections and can only hope that he senses my displeasure. With his last gasp, he tells me I have used 981 words. How anal.

*Roger Harrison, Honorary Whipping Boy.
South Australian Division*

SA AGM Decides On Office Bearers

The March AGM went well as AGMs go with those interested in defining our yearly progress, turning up to vote in the new or not so new, committee for 2019/2020.

Returning Officer: Mrs Dee (Don't mess with me) Laidler.

President: Michael Stubbington (Stubbo).

Vice President: Roger Harrison (Whipping Boy).

Secretary: Mrs Jan Akeroyd.

Treasurer: Gordon Gray.

SA Delegate Federal Council Meeting: John Siebert.

Committee Members. Vic Byas, Ian Laidler, Junice Cooper, Ian McBeath.

Auditor. Michael Cain.

VIC Division Report April-June 2019

GREETINGS TO ALL MEMBERS FROM THE VICTORIA DIVISION

No doubt like all Divisions the recent ANZAC Day was the highlight of the last quarter. The weather was perfect and although our numbers were down slightly an enjoyable day was had by those who attended the march and reunion.

We were delighted to welcome the Senior Naval Officer, East Sale LCDR Mark O'Donnell and his partner who joined us for the march and reunion.

It was a great pleasure to present George Self with a Certificate of Appreciation. Over many years George has ensured that we have a photographic record of all our meetings and functions. He has recently had a significant birthday and we wish him many congratulations.

A special word of thanks to Norm Pickering who donated a beautiful model Gannet for our raffle. Appropriately this was won by John Champion who along with other old pilots Jim Davidson and John Nestor had a great time reliving stories of the Sea Fury, Firefly Gannet era.

I am currently just starting to arrange our Memorial Service to be held on Sunday 25th August at 1030 in St Marks Chapel HMAS Cerberus. Along

with ANZAC Day this is our major event of the year and we are looking for a good turnout. Any interstate members who happen to be in our part of the world at this time are welcome to join us.

If I may be allowed to be self indulgent for a moment, I was a proud grandfather this month as one of my granddaughters joined the Na-

vy. I am looking forward to her joining us at the memorial service.

Lastly a word of thank to Ron Batchelor for all his efforts in editing Slipstream. A job well done Ron and enjoy the well deserved rest.

On the same note a warm welcome to our new editor Paul Shiels. Good luck Paul and we will try to make your job as easy as possible.

Yours Aye

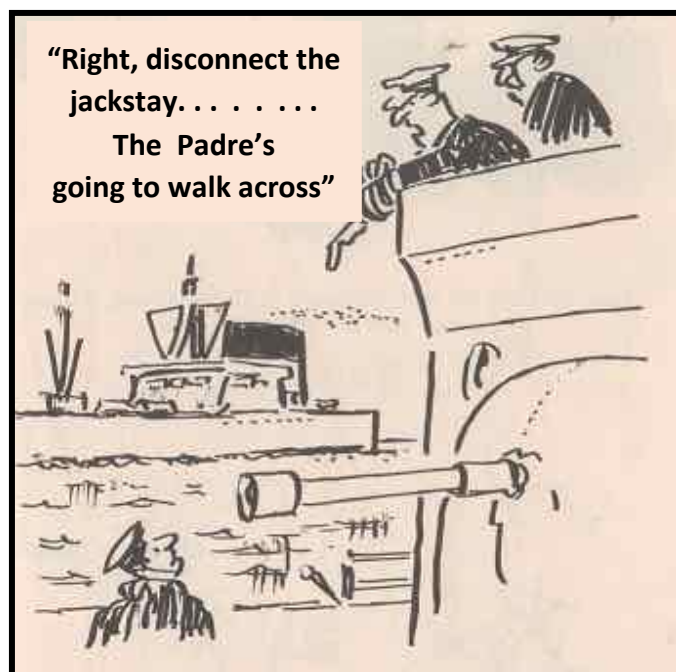
Mal Smith.



**Three Fixed Wing Pilots from the 1950's
John Champion, John Nestor and Jim Davidson**



**Chris Fealy
Victorian President**



Vic Division Anzac Day 2019



*Above, Fleet Air Arm Association of Australia
(Vic Division) at the Anzac Day march 2019*

*On the right, Mal Smith and John Nestor
drawing the raffle at the Reunion*



*Above, George Self being presented with
'A Certificate of Appreciation'
by Mal Smith and Chris Fealy*



*Above, Aircrew at the Reunion
From left, Scott Myers,
John Champion,
John Nestor, Jim Davidson and
Rob Gagnon*



*On the left, a group of the
Victorian Division after
the Anzac Day march 2019*

WA Anzac Day 2019



**Banner Bearers (left) Don Lorimer
(right) Owen Gardiner
Front—Jim Bush (VP), Avelon Browning (Tas) &
John Stewart (Qld)**



Sonsee Family Veterans Bill, Gavin & Raelene



**CDRE Brett Dowsing, former Naval Attaché South
Korea with former Army Sgt Alan Long
(Korean War Veteran)**



**Albatross Legendary Footballers 1960's era
Skinhead (RU & RL) with Paddy Stewart (AFL)**



**Former RAN Chef Adam Fletcher with grand-
father Tassie Browning then Paul Hodgkinson,
Jim Bush & Mike Keogh**

WA holds AGM

The WA Division held its Annual General Meeting on Sunday 14th April and the following Office Bearers for 2019 were elected:

President- John Gregory Kelson

Senior Vice President- Jim Bush

Junior Vice President - Owen Gardiner

Secretary - Keith Taylor

Treasurer - Mike Keogh

Committee - John Selsmark; Bill Atthowe;
Ross Sarti

Scribe - Sharron Spargo

Historical Officer - John Brown.



More Pics From the West

*R21 Boys of 69 with the Late
CMDR Geoff Vickridge just before he died.
Charles Lammers, Bob Mummery, Skinhead
and Paul Hodgkinson*



*Theo Bush-Jones awarded Plaque of
Appreciation by Republic of South Korea*



*Anzac Day flag bearer Jake Horsting, grandson
of "Kipper" Britten. Pictured with (from his right)
fiancée Amy, Grandmother Kathy
and mother Rhonda.*

*Right, Farewell to the
Late Robert Leslie Burns*





June Edition of 'Slipstream' - New On-Line Version

The June Edition of 'Slipstream' is trialling a 'new' format on-line that fits into the way many newspapers, magazines, and ex-service organisations are heading, if not already there.

The link to June's Slipstream magazine would have already been provided in the email to you. This issue is published for all members electronically for this issue only.

Those members who normally receive Slipstream by Hard Copy can expect one in the post in the next week or so - but you may care to check out the on-line version which offers a completely new interface, more colour pages and the ability to click on embedded links to get more information. If, after trying this, you'd prefer to change from hardcopy to the on-line version, all you have to do is email the database manager Paul Norris [here](#) and notify your State Treasurer. Subs may change for 'online' the following year. You'll be saving your Division some money and will also get your Slipstream a bit earlier.

If you want to remain on the hard copy mailing list you need to do nothing. However, the 'links' will not be available in the hard copy form of 'Slipstream'. This new on-line presentation can

be saved as a bookmark but not downloaded from the 'Slipstream' website. However, you can download as a pdf file from the FAAAA website.

In the June Issue for example: Click on the link 'here' on Page 9 at the last paragraph of the *Pilotless Auster* story and you will open a video that reconstructs the whole story with interviews by Peter McNay and others.

Similarly, on Page 8 in the first story, first paragraph after April click on 'here' and you will read the actual Report of Proceedings for the commissioning of HMAS *Albatross* (SAR 916).

When 'Slipstream' opens on-line it defaults to a small screen. Its best read in 'Full Screen' by clicking on the enlargement in the bottom right corner of the Window.

When the arrow turns to a hand, click on the 'link' to open. Sometimes it might not initially convert to the hand, so click on the arrow when located over the link and after clicking it will change to a hand and open.

If 'pop-up' ads appear, DON'T OPEN click the 'x' outside the box to delete. Your feedback on this method would be appreciated.

Editor — slipstream_faanaa@outlook.com

To Save: Bookmark Page. In this case -

https://issuu.com/pashiels15/docs/slipstream_june_2019

Downloads are not permitted with Basic Version.

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Slipstream
Volume 30 No 2 June 2019

Pilotless Auster Terrifies Sydney

By Paul Norris

On 26 August 1952, a pilotless Auster aircraft flew for nearly three hours over Sydney, watched by thousands before the Navy Sea Fury shot it down over the sea.

The aircraft dived, circled and swung on its erratic course over the city from Gullhurst Aerodrome, south of the city, to a generally north-east direction until it was shot down off Broken Bay, north of the city, scattering citizens' panic as it passed overhead. Sydney authorities declared the entire city in a state of emergency, as the plane swept over crowded suburbs and the main central city area. Police, fire brigades and ambulances were alerted as aviation officials pinpointed the plane's exact course.

The drama started at 5.00 a.m. at Mascot Aerodrome when ground crew Anthony Thornton, 21, of 20th Squadron, started the Auster to break up on its course. After only two minutes the engine began to sputter and he landed. He got out and with the

RAN Auster 800

hand held on, casually, during the aircraft's preparation to start the engine. The two witnesses did engine suddenly revved and the plane started moving slowly forward. The handbrake had somehow released. Gradually the Auster gained speed and eventually took off.

It circled the aerodrome clockwise steadily to 10,000 ft and so it headed for the city.

As RAN Auster aircraft was making its way from Mascot to Gullhurst and the pilot, Commander J. J. Jones, offered to call the Navy's Auster then heading across river to the Sydney CBD. After tracking the striking Auster for sometime, the RAN Auster had to break off from the chase as it had been airborne for more than three hours.

In a bold stroke, the authorities called the RAN Auster to land. The Auster then followed orders to land over the Auster landing aerodrome. By then the pilotless Auster has managed to fly across the city to Gullhurst where it landed some distance from the sea. Flying into a steady breeze, the Auster gained altitude - to around 2,000 ft. Here the air began to calm and at the point in the rear

Sea Fury - Wings Folded

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Web: www.slipstream.org.au
Email: slipstream_faanaa@outlook.com

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A Naval ATC at Adelaide Airport

By Paul Shiels

Walking through a busy Adelaide Airport terminal that Monday morning to a new posting on the Military Air Traffic Control Sector seemed surreal. Out of ATC for four years to complete a Full Bridge Watchkeeping Certificate and a Staff appointment, it now felt strange to be thrust in again to the 'deep end' of the specialisation. It was 1982!

Prior to this, a period of refresher training in ATC theory at RAAF East Sale (four weeks) and the Civil ATC School, Melbourne (eight weeks) for further theory and simulator sessions on the RAAF AACC Course took place.

It all started with call from the Fleet Air Arm 'Poster—the late Wally Gascoigne'. "How do you feel about going back to NAS Nowra as SATCO? First of all we intend loaning you to the RAAF for 12 months – three months of courses then to RAAF Edinburgh for a couple of weeks followed by time on the Military Sector at Adelaide for the remainder of the loan to bring you up to speed", he said. I replied: "It sounds fine to me, Wal."

Edinburgh Control Zone

After arrival at the Military Sector another three weeks was spent being 'checked' to get an 'Approach Rating' (Licence) for the airspace we were controlling. It was then that unsupervised work started, four months into the 12 month posting. Only two military controllers worked on the sector at the time, myself, a Navy LCDR and a RAAF FltLt. Our responsibility covered all RAAF Edinburgh Restricted Areas (for Flying Training) and Edinburgh Control Zone other than the 5NM and 2000ft that Edinburgh Tower controlled.

So, primarily we were 'Edinburgh Approach', but for some unknown reason the callsign of the sector was 'Adelaide Control' along with the other civil sectors. It actually annoyed us and felt misleading because it had a 'civil' connotation and we were military and particularly associated to RAAF Edinburgh! With our station seated next to 'Adelaide Approach' and 'Adelaide Clearance Delivery' a good rapport developed. A professional attitude resulted where both civil and military respected each other to the extent where we would make use of each other's airspace to facilitate and expedite air traffic.

It was not uncommon for RAAF Orions and ARDU aircraft (F-111, Mirage, Macchi) to use a 'block' of civil controlled airspace and for civil traffic to transit military airspace to save time and fuel for operators, instead of navigating around the said airspace. The advantage to the military meant use of Adelaide Airport for Instrument Approach training for Orions (ILS/VOR). It also meant F-111 and Mirage aircraft could operate closer to Edinburgh when the military airspace was used for civil operations, instead of proceeding to a Restricted Area south of Kangaroo Island, saving transit fuel and time.

Realistically it was common sense. The best and most economical use of the airspace, no matter who used

it. Unfortunately, with a change of controllers and therefore personalities, matters went back to what had formally been agreed upon.

From time to time one of us would be sent to operate Woomera Tower and Approach for ARDU trials. So it was that Woomera operated one frequency for Tower and Approach simultaneously. ARDU showed their appreciation by flying us up to Woomera on a Monday and back on a Friday in a Macchi aircraft. Normally our attachments were two or three weeks.

Back at Adelaide on the Sector, there were some quiet periods and some of those were entertaining, such as one time calling up HMAS *Hobart* requesting they 'squawk' a Heavy Jet Transponder Code on its way down Gulf St. Vincent. Those onboard, no doubt would have wondered why and been surprised to know that it was a Naval Air Traffic Controller on the Adelaide ATC frequency! It was all in jest, so the civil controllers could inform overflying aircraft to 'look out' the window and below to their right/left they would see the destroyer HMAS *Hobart* on passage to Sydney.

To top it off, the RAAF thought it best not to pay travelling allowance from RAAF Edinburgh (our official location) to Adelaide Airport daily, declaring instead that they'd provide a car. So, the two of us happily accepted. But, what the RAAF didn't realise was we both lived within few kilometres of Adelaide Airport, so the only use for the car was to and from work; the occasional visit to RAAF Edinburgh; and going to the RAAF Officer's Mess in North Adelaide. To boot, they changed it over for fuel and service every Wednesday evening when ARDU were night flying!

Mateship

The friendship that was experienced between military and civil, many of whom were ex-military themselves, was outstanding. So much so, that when a Service event was held we'd just release the airspace to the 'civvies' and they'd work it on our behalf. However, they'd pester us about wearing uniform saying it was not necessary since no other military were around.

Nevertheless, 'Out of the Blue' we had visits from NOC SA and a visiting Admiral; and on another occasion the Air Commodore (OC RAAF Edinburgh) with an Air Marshall (Chief of Air Staff). The ATC centre was located in those days in easy reach for arriving/departing passengers. So, it may have only been once or twice in a year but we'd have been in strife if we were in 'civvies' on those occasions!!

The RAN ATC specialisation ceased nearly two decades ago when taken over by RAAF 453 Sqn Nowra Flight (ATC) and Defence Contractors (ex-military/civil ATCs). However, this did not stop the exodus of military ATCs to civil and overseas agencies, even with the temptation of retention bonuses and enhanced promotion prospects in the RAAF. Most RAN ATCs ended up in the RAAF, Civil ATC, Defence ATC Contractors or with Overseas ATC agencies (e.g. New Zealand). Only a few remained in the Navy in non-ATC jobs.

No SOP's as Gannet Pilot (Albie) Fyfe Arrests No. 6 Wire in Flight – Ends up Over the Side

By Peter K Coulson

Bravo Zulu, Paul, on taking on the editor of Slipstream! The photo on page 9 of the March 2019 Slipstream was taken on 24 February 1966; we had launched from Melbourne in XG796 side number 858 for a sortie that was to conclude with 'Albie' Fyfe's (Albert John Fyfe) night deck landing qualification.

The weather was closing in and after a few touch and goes Albie was given down hook for his first night arrest. As we crossed the round down Albie thought the ship was turning and initiated a last minute wave off. This was in the era of no Landing Signals Officers! However, as we rotated XG796 engaged number 6 wire, with the result that the aircraft went over the port side of the flight deck. The aircraft came to a precarious stop suspended by a combination of the hook, arrestor wire and the aircraft being partially embedded in a sponson below the flight deck.



XG796 hanging over side of HMAS Melbourne with a strop attached to ship's crane. Unfortunately, this failed and aircraft fell into sea.



One of the few available photographs of XG796, side no. 858 before she was lost on 24 February 1966.

We communicated briefly with the ship and between ourselves before I asked 'Albie' to turn off the electrical system, as I was soaked in fuel from the main fuel tank. A decision was made to abandon the aircraft before any attempt would be made to recover the aircraft. The rear aircrewman, Tom Lindsay, was recovered back on to the flight deck with the aid of a length of line. 'Albie' and I were in a slightly more difficult situation, as we were inaccessible from the flight deck. We were also hanging in our harnesses and did not wish to upset the delicate balance of the aircraft by jettisoning our canopies. By carefully easing out the safety harness straps I was eventually able to gain a foothold and release my safety and parachute straps. I was then able to force my canopy open until it locked in the open position. This allowed me to ease myself out of the cockpit and to perch on the edge while 'Albie' did the same some six feet below.

An attempt was made to reach us using the flight deck crane but this was not possible and we



'Albie' and I picked up by boat.
(Image Peter Coulson, via Phil Thompson)

elected to jump into the water. Fortunately, the double [aircraft] propellers had stopped in a perfect cross giving a relatively clear arc to jump through. To avoid hitting each other, 'Albie' jumped first and when he was clear I followed. We then swam to the sea boat which was waiting clear of the aircraft, and we were recovered on board and taken to the sick bay and kept there overnight for observation and many beers.

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

'Albie' and I finally completed his night



Albie (right) and I, a year later – the bag on the wing is my "Observer holdall" which I had managed to toss up on to the flight deck and I still have

qualification in April of that year and [we] continued to fly together regularly until the end of the Gannet era. In fact we led the last flight of four Gannets at the Air Day on 8 October 1967.

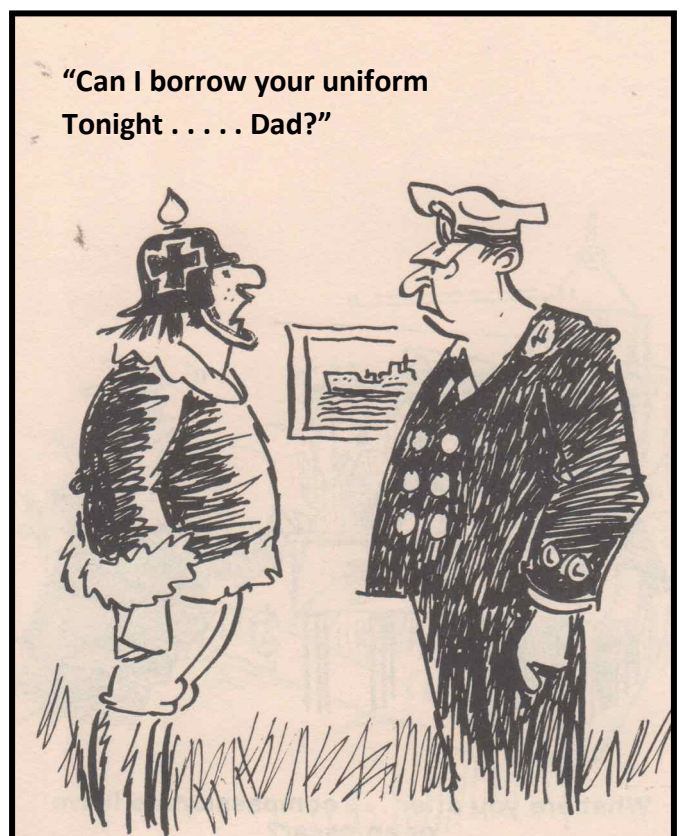
I had another four postings to 816 culminating in an all to short period as CO. Over those years, I think I sat through the initial night quals of about another dozen pilots and while some were also memorable there was never another XG796.

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

Photos and article by Peter Coulson courtesy of the following FAAAA link:

<https://www.faaaa.asn.au/gannet-xg796/>

(Peter seems to recall when discussing this story with me, Mike Tower transmitting '858 where are you' and he likes to think his calm response was 'hanging over the side'Ed)





Wall of Service Plaque (Information & Application)

Serving and ex-serving members of the RAN Fleet Air Arm (FAA) and other ex-serving personnel attached to FAA units now have the opportunity to have a bronze plaque denoting their service mounted on a wall just outside the Fleet Air Arm Museum at HMAS Albatross.

The plaques are simple - cast in bronze and denoting the member's name (with decorations and awards), rank/rate, official number, date of entry/date of discharge, and with a logo (modified) of the Fleet Air Arm Association with the acronym 'RAN' replacing the word 'Association'. They are half brick in size and are permanently affixed to a commemorative brick wall.

The plaques indicate Service to the FAA. They are not memorials and you do not have to be deceased to have one.

The layout of the plaque is locked in, there are no 'nick-names' and the listed name is as was on the records of the RAN. All plaques are similar and no alterations to the format will be accepted. This is to ensure that everyone stays "equal" and the Wall stays in state that is in keeping with the service we all were part of.

Groups of old classmates, relations or just good friends can be placed side-by-side as long as the plaques are ordered at the same time.

A plaque could be a very good present for someone 'who has everything' or 'is hard to buy for' and would certainly be a nostalgic surprise. If you have any ex-service (FAA) friends who have not heard of the scheme, please mention it to them.

To keep the costs and paperwork to a minimum plaques are ordered from the foundry in lots greater than 12, so there will almost certain-

ly be a delay between the actual order and its production. Notification of the actual affixing is by Slipstream, the FAAAA magazine.

Eligibility

The following eligibility criteria apply. (If in doubt, please check with the FAAAA Secretary):

- Must have been or is a current member of the FAA, or been attached to a unit of it – for example, Stores, Victualling, Cooks, Writers, Stewards and conforming RAAF/ARA personnel who were posted (drafted) to the Air Branch or to a Squadron.
- CBGLO is also a qualifying posting, but a posting to AJASS is not as they were not actual squadron personnel.
- RN members who served with the RAN on loan are also eligible as long as they were actually posted or attached to an FAA unit.
- Allied Forces personnel on Exchange Posting to an RAN FAA unit also qualify.
- Duration of service is not a factor.
- Postings to Ships' Companies, even if air capable, are not sufficient. It must be to an FAA unit.
- You do not need to be a member of the Fleet Air Arm Association of Australia, but a discount applies if you are.

Policy

- Applications for a plaque must be made by the person whose name will appear on the plaque, unless they are deceased.
- If the member is deceased an application may be made by a third party but only with the specific approval of the Next of Kin.
- The Wall does not differentiate by rank and the plaques are mounted on a 'first in, first



up' basis. An Admiral can therefore be alongside a Naval Airman (or Seaman in today's language).

Approval Process

Final approval for inclusion on the Wall of Service is granted by the executive committee of the NSW Branch of the FAAAA. The committee may request additional or more precise information to assist in their determination. If your application is rejected you will receive a full refund of your application fee. You may also appeal the decision by writing to the National Executive Council, PO Box 7115, Naval Post Office, NOWRA 2540.

Notification

Once your plaque is affixed to the Wall of Service, notification is normally conducted via the next issue of Slipstream magazine, which is available to paid-up members of the Fleet Air Arm Association of Australia. If you prefer you can ask for an email notification by clicking in the 'email' box towards the end of the application form.

Cost and Payment

The cost of each plaque is **\$190.00** for FAAAA members, which includes fitting to the wall. If you are not a member of the FAAAA the cost is **\$240.00** but this will also include a 12 month membership to the NSW Division of the Association.

Payment is required at the time of application. This can be by one of the following methods:

A cheque made out to "The Fleet Air Arm Association of Australia" and sent to:

The Administrator, Wall of Service
PO Box 7115
Naval Post Office NOWRA 2540
OR

Electronic Funds Transfer to:

Greater Bank

Account Name: FAAAA

BSB: 637 000

Account: 7168 19 388

Reference: Your surname plus "WoS" – for example "SmithWoS"

Application Form Next Page

Ex Meteorological Branch Reunion



This reunion is to be held in Nowra, N S W, over the weekend of 21st to 23rd February 2020 with the venue being the Shoalhaven ex Servicemens Sports Club on Greenwell Point Road.

There will be a Meet and Greet on the Friday at the Sports Club and a tour of the Fleet Air Arm Museum on the Saturday where they will display equipment from the old Met Office. The main event will be dinner on the Saturday night at the Sports Club.

All ex Meteorological Branch and current serving members, including partners, are invited to be a part of this event and renew friendships old and new.

For further information please contact Ron Vanderplas at thevandernomads@hotmail.com or via the Facebook page RAN Meteorological Observers.

PLAQUE APPLICATION FORM FOR FLEET AIR ARM WALL OF SERVICE

PLEASE PRINT DETAILS CLEARLY – ERRORS CANNOT BE CORRECTED AFTER THE ORDER IS SUBMITTED

Are you the person whose name will appear on the Plaque? Yes / No (Circle one)
(If **NO**, a letter from the Next Of Kin must be attached giving approval)

Details for Plaque/Eligibility Check:

First Names

Surname

Official Number

Highest Achieved Rank/Rate

Period of Service From To

Qualifying FAA Service

Your Contact & Payment Details:

Address

.....

Email:

I have attached a cheque **or** EFT Payment Ref is:

Certification:

I certify that the above details are correct.

Signed

Name

Date

Please notify me by email: ☐

Please include a photo: ☐

Send form and payment to:
The WoS Administrator, PO Box 7115
Naval Post Office NOWRA 2540

Navy Surveys the Sub-Antarctic Sea Floor

The Laser Airborne Depth Sounder (LADS) Flight is currently deployed to Invercargill in New Zealand to undertake survey operations over Macquarie Island, a 34km long World Heritage listed island that lies approximately halfway between Australia and Antarctica.

Macquarie Island is part of Tasmania and hosts an Australian Antarctic Division research station.

The aim of the survey is to improve knowledge of potential dangers to ships visiting the island, with a focus on the area surrounding the station itself.

The LADS aircraft is a modified Dash 8-200 fitted with a laser system to measure the sea floor depths in coastal waters.

The Royal Australian Navy's LADS capability is unique amongst bathymetric LiDAR as the Dash 8 gives the extended range required to reach remote locations such as Macquarie Island. At a distance of 650nm to the SSW of Invercargill, this extended range is a necessity.

Executive Officer, Lieutenant Cheyne Colley, said the improved data will be used to update the



**The Royal Australian Navy Laser Airborne Depth Sounder (LADS)
Flight on the tarmac at Invercargill, New Zealand.**

existing nautical charts used by all vessels navigating in this sensitive area.

"The Royal Australian Navy has responsibility for charting approximately one-eighth of the world's surface, including much of the Southern Ocean," Lieutenant Colley said.

"The charts that are updated from the data captured by LADS will ensure safer navigation and greater environmental protection by reducing the risk of a marine accident."

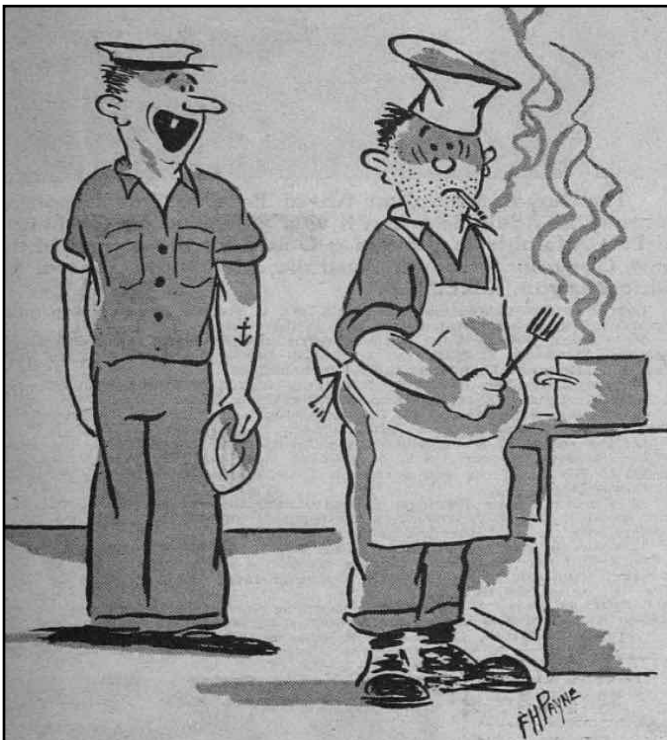
The LADS flight will fly as many as eight sorties from Invercargill, with each sortie lasting up to seven hours. When conducting survey, the aircraft will fly at approximately 600 metres, with the LASER emitting through a special window in the belly of the aircraft.

"The unit is unique to any Navy in the world. The technology was developed in Australia and uses a scanning laser which is mounted in the aircraft to collect hydrographic survey data and depth information," Lieutenant Colley said.

"The survey system employed by the LADS Flight is particularly suited to coastal and dangerous reef areas where it would be less safe for our survey ships to operate.

"With the airborne system, we can bring safety and efficiency to large and complex areas of the ocean. Where LADS is suitable, we are able to cover vast areas with excellent economy of effort in relation to surface-based survey vessels," Lieutenant Colley said.

The LADS Flight is based in Cairns and can survey more than 40 square kilometres per hour and depth of more than 50 metres in good conditions.



***"That meal was delicious;
what went wrong with it?"***

Tasmanian Division Report April-June 2019

Well winter is settling in to Tassie with some great snow falls. Although the first official day of winter was a gloriously warm (17 C) and cloud free day which brought the crowds out for Campbell Town Show (circa 2,000 and yes that classifies as a “crowd” down here!).

However, as I sit here today writing the Tasmanian Division article for Slipstream on the second day of winter, the fog is yet to commence lifting and it is nearly midday. Be no 0940 flight to Sydney tomorrow if this weather pattern continues; but, that is a good thing!

The Tasmanian Division attended ANZAC Day ceremonies at Claremont RSL for 2019 as part of our effort to fly the Flag for the Fleet Air Arm in as many parts of Tasmanian as we can. Several members attended the Dawn Service and also participated in the march.

The Dawn Service was a very blustery affair and just after the laying of wreaths a gust of wind came through blowing one of the wreaths into the Derwent River: yes it was the Navy wreath. You could not script that!

After the march our members and partners were invited to Claremont RSL by their President, Mr



Anzac Day Claremont 2019
L to R: Graham Nicholas, John Schofield,
Dennis Hinds, Rohan Denman

Jason O’Dowd, for lunch and participation in other ANZAC Day activities.

The President, Committee and members of the Claremont RSL made us all very welcome. If you are visiting the Hobart region (Claremont RSL is approximately 20 minutes north of Hobart) please drop in for a refreshment; you will be made most welcome.

The next meeting of the FAAAA (Tasmanian Division) is on Sunday 25 August 2019. This is the Annual General Meeting and will be held in the South Venue. It is yet to be confirmed but, most likely will be at the Claremont RSL because of the hospitality we enjoyed at the ANZAC Day Service. Our aim is to support Service organisations.

We are also hoping to have the Tasmanian DVA representative in attendance to update members on current entitlements and direction of DVA.

Fortunately the health conditions of several Tassie members continue to improve so, hopefully a better attendance for future meetings. As I have said before, if you are down here you are always welcome to join with the (small) Tasmanian contingent.



L-R: Dennis Hinds, Jason O’Dowd,
Graham Nicholas

DVA Overview of Disability Pensions and Allowances

Some members are unaware that they may have a DVA entitlement notwithstanding they don't have operational service. Persons who served in the ADF from 7 December 1972 to 6 April 1994 for at least a three year qualifying period are eligible unless medically discharged beforehand.

What is disability pension?

Disability pension is paid to compensate veterans for injuries or diseases caused or aggravated by war service or certain defence service rendered on behalf of Australia before 1 July 2004. It is a non-taxable pension.

Who is eligible for disability pension?

You may be eligible for a disability pension if you suffer from an injury or disease that is a result of service rendered:

- in the Australian Defence Force (ADF) during a time of conflict before 1 July 2004;
- in the Australian Merchant Navy during World War 2;
- as a United Nations Peacekeeper representing Australia overseas before 1 July 2004;
- in the ADF whilst undertaking service overseas before 1 July 2004 that has been designated as hazardous;
- during the British Nuclear Tests program in Australia at prescribed nuclear test areas or whilst performing certain tasks during prescribed nuclear testing periods in the 1950s and 1960s;
- as one of certain civilians who assisted the ADF in wartime before 1 July 2004; or
- in the ADF (after completion of 3 years qualifying period, unless medically discharged) from 7 December 1972 to 6 April 1994.

You may also be entitled to a disability pension if you served with a Commonwealth or allied country and you lived in Australia before you enlisted.

*Note: - If you enlisted in the ADF before 22 May 1986 you can also claim for injuries or diseases resulting from service after 6 April 1994 up to 30 June 2004.

How much is the disability pension?

The amount of disability pension paid depends on the level of incapacity you suffer as a result of your war-caused or defence-caused injuries and diseases. Generally, the more incapacitated you are, the higher the amount of pension you will receive. There are four 'categories' of disability pension payable:

- General Rate, payable in multiples of 10% up to 100%;
- Extreme Disablement Adjustment (for over 65 years of age only);
- Intermediate Rate; and
- Special Rate.

Generally, the disability pension will become payable from three months before the date a claim is received by DVA. This means that once your claim for a disability pension is granted, the pension will commence from the next pension pay day along with an arrears payment for the pension that was payable for up to three months prior to your claim being received.

For information on the current rates of disability pension payable, refer to [DVA Factsheet DP43](#).

How do I claim disability pension?

You need to lodge [DVA Form D2582](#). DVA Forms are available from your nearest DVA office or the DVA website at www.dva.gov.au/dvaforms. For further information about how to lodge a claim and how claims are decided, please refer to [DVA Factsheet DP18](#).

What is a disability pension allowance?

A disability pension allowance may be paid to pensioners to provide financial assistance, compensation or reward for valour.

Applications can be made under the VEA in respect of the following allowances:

- attendant allowance;
- clothing allowance;
- decoration allowance;
- loss of earnings allowance;
- recreation transport allowance;
- vehicle assistance scheme.

National Secretary's Report June 2019

Hello to all members,

Cripes six months of another year have gone by already time seems to fly by as we get older.

Things have been fairly quiet over the past three months since the last edition of our magazine.

ANZAC Day has been and gone and was as usual well supported, the Greenwell Point Dawn service grows bigger every year and as one old member (Cluey Wise) said the hill gets steeper and steeper.

As you have probably seen by our Web based newsletter "Flyby" we have a new editor for our quarterly magazine "Slipstream" namely Paul Shiels a member of the South Australian Division. By all reports Paul has been involved in the newspaper game over a number of years and we wish him well in his new role. Also I would like to thank Ron Batchelor for his tireless efforts as editor over the past few years may be he will give me a little peace now that he has time on his hands.

"Well Done Ron"

It is also worth noting that the Long standing President of the New South Wales Division Greg Wise retired at their recent AGM. Greg was replaced by Phil Carey and we wish him well in the position of President. Greg has done a tremendous job over the past decade presiding over at least 3 or 4 Reunions, the Wall of Service and he was instrumental in establishing the Wall of Honour. These are only a few of his achievements for the Association.

"Well Done Cluey"

Note: Maybe we will get more fishing in.

At the risk of repeating myself here is a reminder to all Secretaries and indeed all members that 2019 is an election year for our association and positions

on the National executive are open for nominations for all positions. Please note that nominations must be in accordance with Rule 14 of the FAAAA Constitution.

Here at Headquarters we have had a very dry Summer and Autumn so some rain would be most welcome but then the bloody grass needs cutting again before I can get back onto the river so best wishes to all and I leave you with the following.

"Those who get too big for their pants will be totally exposed in the end."

All the best to all of you

Dick 'Pincher' Martin



"No, I'm sorry, my mum would go mad if I married a matelot"

Death Notice

Marion Day (48682150) has notified the Fleet Air Arm Association of the death of Bruce Francis Williams on the 6th April 2019. He served at HMAS Albatross between 1955 - 1961.

From the Editor's Desk



Let me introduce myself to those who don't know me. My name is Paul Shiels and my association with the Fleet Air Arm was as a specialist Air Traffic Controller.

I joined the RANR in 1965. The year after, I was called up for National Service and had the choice of completing five years efficient RANR service or two years in the Army full-time.

In 1967 on completion of my apprenticeship as a newspaper compositor, I elected to enter the RAN fulltime. A year was spent as a Seaman Officer before then choosing to directly undertake the six month Air Traffic Control Course at 'C' Flight, Central Flying School, RAAF East Sale. This was followed by six months practical training back at NAS Nowra. Subsequent to this training, I completed the Ground Controlled Approach (GCA) Course, again, at CFS RAAF East Sale.

My ATC career involved several ATC postings to NAS Nowra; to RAAF Williamtown (2 years exchange); CAG HQ HMAS *Melbourne*; RAAF Edinburgh; Military Sector Adelaide Airport and Woomera (1 year Loan). In 1982, I completed eight weeks advanced ATC training (RAAF AACC Course) at the Civil ATC School, Henty House, Melbourne. I had other postings to sea as a Seaman Officer, RAN Staff College, XO HMAS *Encounter* and Staff appointments. I completed over 20 years RAN service in October 1988.

So, how did I end up taking on this task as Editor? My training as a newspaper compositor qualified me in 'layout and design' in the print industry. I became involved in Corporate PR (post Navy) and ended up Editing a couple of Association magazines. Prior to retirement due to illness, the Corporate organisation had me complete an eight week full-time Commercial Desk Top Publishing Course specifically related to producing magazines.

So when Ron needed to have a break, I stepped up. His help and advice in taking on this role has been very much appreciated as have the suggestions of Webmaster, Marcus Peake.

But, I must emphasise that this job can only work if I can get your assistance and help with articles for publishing. General feedback from members is a way to keep me on my toes and ensure the magazine continues to be successful.

Fred goes for a job with CASA

CASA man:- Thank you for coming to the interview Fred, now I've just got a few questions I'd like to ask you. Have you ever been in any of the armed forces?

Fred:- Yes, I was in the RAN Fleet Air Arm.

CASA man:- Oh good, you see we like ex-military types in CASA. Now did you ever see any action whilst in the RAN?

Fred:- Oh yes, I was a helicopter gunship pilot in Vietnam.

CASA man:- Oh very good, you see we like chaps that know how to handle themselves when the pressures on. Now Fred, were you wounded at all?

Fred:- Oh yes, I was wounded!

CASA man:- OK Fred, well I can tell you now that you sound just the chap for a job with the CASA, let me tell you more about it. You start at 9:45 then work through until 10:30 when you get a half an hour tea break. You then work quite a long stint from 11:00 through until 12:30 when we stop for a 2 hour lunch break in our excellent subsidised restaurant. We restart at 14:30 and work until 15:00 when we have another well earned half an hour tea break. We then press on from 15:30 until 16:00 during which we clear our desks ready for work the next day. And finally, on Fridays we only work a half day, and all go home at 12:30.

Now Fred do you think you could fit in with a tough and demanding schedule like this?

Fred:- Oh yes, I'm sure I could fit in.

CASA man:- OK then Fred we'll see you at 9:45 next Monday.

(Fred gets up and begins to leave the room whence the interviewer notices that Fred seems to be a fully able person (i.e. no war wounds).

CASA man:- Excuse me Fred but you did say that you had been wounded but it seems to me that you're actually very able bodied. Could I inquire as to the nature of your wound?

Fred:- Well it's a bit embarrassing really. You see I was running in on a strafing run when some bugger on the ground got lucky with a rifle and shot my balls off!

CASA man:- OK then Fred, in that case you can start work at 10:30.

Fred:- Oh no, I don't want any special treatment because I've been injured.

CASA man:- Oh no Fred, I'm afraid that you don't understand. All we do in CASA between 9:45 and 10:30 is stand around and scratch our balls.

A Friendship Developed in the Heat of War

'Get the Bloody Job Done'



Vietnam Veteran Paul Kornoely (left) of Lewiston USA

By Joel Mills of the Lewiston Tribune

23 March 2019 and Updated 24 March, 2019

After involved process, Lewiston Vietnam War veteran Paul Kornoely is to be honoured posthumously by the Australian Military. A chance meeting aboard a Lake Tahoe cruise boat last year will bring a posthumous decoration to a Lewiston Vietnam War veteran.

David Benge of Newcastle, Australia, was at the scenic lake for the annual gathering of the Vietnam Helicopter Crew Members Association when fellow member Jerry Kriegel sat next to him during the cruise. When Benge found out that Kriegel lives in Lewiston, it unleashed a flood of memories about a long-deceased but much admired Lewiston resident who served by Benge's side during the war.

"Paul came in April or May of 1970," Benge said of Paul Kornoely, who died at the age of 33 on Christmas Eve, 1982, in a Snake River boating accident. "It was like a breath of fresh air."

Kornoely arrived in Dong Tam near the Mekong Delta as a helicopter maintenance man with the

U.S. Army's 135th Assault Helicopter Company, which worked tightly with Benge's helicopter group from the Royal Australian Navy. Together, they formed the Experimental Military Unit, or EMU.

At the time, the unit was the only completely integrated multinational helicopter company fighting in Vietnam, according to the company's 1970 yearbook. The EMU's motto was "Get the Bloody Job Done," and Benge said Kornoely excelled at just that. "He could do anything, and we didn't even have to ask him," said Benge, a search-and-rescue diver who ran the unit's helicopter maintenance. "I could leave him with a pile of work and when I got back it would be done. He was an all-around terrific bloke."

Benge finished his tour in Vietnam in October of 1970, and Kornoely faded from his memory. But years later, a perusal of pictures from his days in the Southeast Asian jungles reminded Benge of his able friend. The problem was, he'd completely forgotten the name of Kornoely's little western hometown. "It took me forever to remember where the hell he came from," Benge said.

Benge is a history buff, however, and Lewiston popped back into his head while he was reading up on Lewis and Clark and the Corps of Discovery. The hunt to find Kornoely was on, but Benge eventually found out it was too late. His old friend was dead. Vietnam Veteran Paul Kornoely of Lewiston USA came back into his life, however, on that fortuitous day on a Lake Tahoe paddle-wheeler. Benge asked Kriegel to find Kornfeld's grave so he could have some flowers placed, and Kriegel happily complied.

Benge even wanted to pay for the bouquet, and Kriegel tried to decline. "Darn Dave, he went ahead and sent me \$50," Kriegel, 72, said with a laugh. The flowers were a nice gesture, but Benge decided to take his respect for Kornoely to a different level. Members of the EMU had recently been awarded Australia's Unit Citation for Gallantry, the highest military honour that can be given to an entire unit. The award included all U.S. Army personnel who served in the 135th.

Kornfeld's next of kin

But the Australian military requires official discharge papers to prove that a service member was part of the unit. And those are only available to immediate relatives of deceased veterans, leaving Benge at a loss. He enlisted his new friend from Lewiston to find Kornoely's next of kin.

"Jerry turned out to be my best mate on this particular project," Benge said of Kriegel, a member of the 173rd Assault Helicopter Company. "Jerry changed my opinion of humanity."

But with the passage of so many years since Kornfeld's death, Kriegel came up empty. So they decided to ask the Lewiston Tribune for help finding a member of Kornfeld's family willing to request Kornfeld's discharge papers. The newspaper was able to track down Kornfeld's widow, Rhonda Rose, who still lives in Lewiston. Rose remarried after Kornfeld's death. The military no longer considers her his next of kin.

But Rose knew how to contact Kornfeld's son from an earlier marriage, and reached out to him for help. Jeremy Kornoely was 5 when his father died, so the request took him by surprise. But he was more than willing to help. "It's impressive to me that somebody still has that kind of admiration for my father," said Jeremy Kornoely, a 43-year-old medical lab scientist at a Boise hospital. "So it's really, really neat. I don't know how else to explain it, but I'm excited for it." Jeremy Kornoely promptly requested his father's service records from the National Archives, but also learned the process could take up to 90 days. That meant the records might not arrive in time for an April 25



David Benge of Newcastle NSW

ceremony to commemorate Anzac Day — the equivalent of Memorial Day in Australia and New Zealand — at Fort Rucker in Alabama.

Other members of the 135th will gather to receive the Unit Citation for Gallantry at the ceremony. Jeremy Kornoely, Benge and Kriegel were keeping their fingers crossed that Paul Kornoely could be among those honoured. But Jeremy Kornoely was in for another pleasant surprise. Archives officials emailed him the required records in a matter of days, not months, and he forwarded them to Benge in Australia. Benge quickly passed them along to the proper authorities in the Royal Australian Navy.

Benge said he was notified Friday of one discrepancy on Kornfeld's discharge papers that may delay the award: the lack of the dates he served in-country with the EMUs and the 135th Assault Helicopter Company. "But the fact is we know Paul was with the 135th AHC," Benge said in an email Friday. "I'm hoping that this is good enough for the approval. Apparently there are a few (applications) with the same missing details. Apart from that, it's all go."

Whenever the award comes, Jeremy Kornoely said he will place it at his father's marker at Lewis-Clark Memorial Gardens in the Lewiston Orchards. "I think of my father all the time," he said. "But it's neat to know that people out there still think of him. I don't know many people who knew my dad very well and knowing him in that kind of situation is a whole other ballgame. It's neat to hear, and definitely brings back the memories I do have."

(Reproduced with permission of Joel Mills of the Lewiston Tribune)

"Camaraderie—Vietnam Remembered by (the Late) Clive Mayo" RANHFV Helicopter Pilot. Click [here](#) to view.

My Near Accident and Other Stories of Sea Venom Operations



Barrie Daly (Pilot) and I (Observer) on short final to the deck about to experience the 'near' accident

By Max Speedy

I started out to tell a short story about a touch and go exercise with my Sea Venom pilot, Barrie Daly, but it has become something longer in the telling. There are lots more of these stories but I'm not the one qualified to tell them. Hopefully though, it may prompt some others to write about what were then, cutting edge individual skills and some bravery in an aircraft that was marginal for the task and having limited back-up during the tense days of the "Cold War" that might have gone hot without notice.

The Royal Navy had Buccaneers, Scimitars and Sea Vixens; the USN had Corsairs, Phantoms, Sky Warriors and Intruders; the RAF had Lightnings, Victors, Valiants and Vulcans; the RAAF had Sabres then Mirages: all in large measure to capture the Russian Bear, the Tupolev TU-95. The RAN had the Sea Venom, definitely not super-sonic nor adequately equipped for the chase – but it was the best we had at the time I'm talking about.

Dave (Foxy) Cronin and I had been selected from 817SQN anti-submarine Wessex to do a Sea Venom night fighter conversion course. For me it was a difficult business of using the air radar to intercept another aircraft at any and all approach an-

gles to get my pilot into a shooting position 150 yards (in those days) astern and slightly below so that he could see the glow of its jet pipe. It was also possible for the pilot to do the last part blind as he had an arrangement that, once I'd locked on to the target, could transfer my radar picture to his gunsight. We did this at night, in all conditions with the target aircraft able to evade with navigation lights out and they did with some vigour.

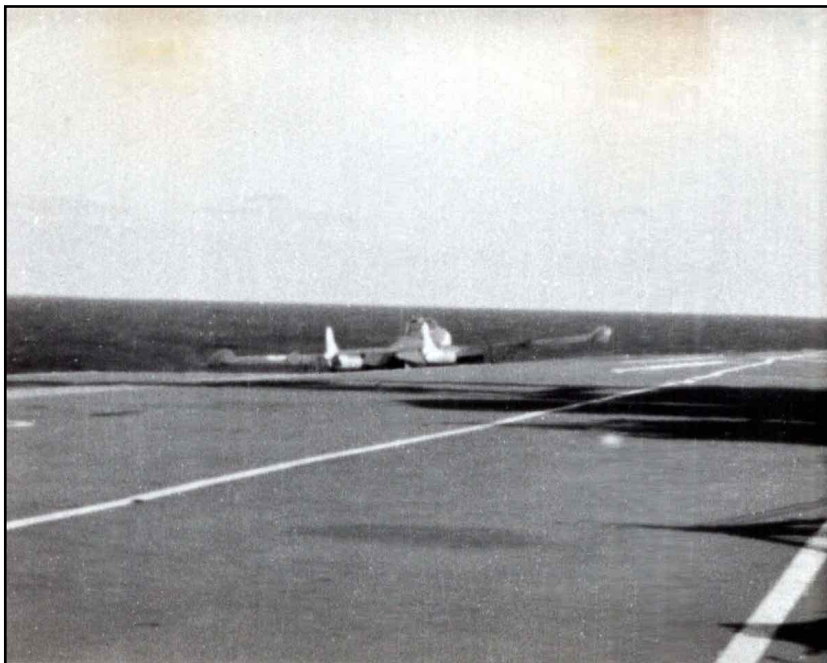
Despite some misgivings both of our instructors and most certainly ourselves, Foxy and I duly passed from the long nose Dakota chasing a Gannett around the sky to the Sea Venoms in 724SQN and flying with lots of very old and bold jet jockeys as our mentors and critics.

Our next indoctrination was to go to the deck to be arrested and catapulted off HMAS *Melbourne*. Our mentors must have been all of possibly 25 – 28 years of age, maybe even very old at 30 while Foxy and I were about 22: they however had "been to the deck" for real, having been arrested and catapulted off HMAS *Melbourne* a number of times. Dave and I had only done the soft stuff as back seat crew in a Wessex. So these people took us to the deck for the first time, then took our pilots who we were to crew up with. I had maybe done half a dozen arrests and cats with the likes of Bob Muffett and others. Bob's claim to fame was he had never missed a wire – i.e. done a bolter!

Eventually Paired Off

With all this experience, we were eventually paired off with our new pilots: Dave with Clive Blennerhassett and myself with Barrie Daly, both newly off pilots' course from the RAAF. There had been another pilot in this mix, ASLT Gerrit Geerlings, who sadly never made it. On a very windy day doing a solo hydraulics-out approach to RW26 in December 1964, he got caught in the notorious downdraft on approach and was killed.

(With the hydraulics switched off, the controls were very heavy to operate and this contributed to his accident. Gerrit wasn't the only one to be



Our Sea Venom floating over the edge of HMAS Melbourne's angle deck

caught in RW26's downdraft, another Venom some years prior (again fatal) and a RAAF Caribou some years later with that aircraft being shoved in many pieces off to the side of the runway as a constant reminder to others. The downdraft problem wasn't fixed until massive earth works in the 1970s filled in the long gully that came to the very edge of the runway).

The story I started to tell began for real on 7 January 1966 as we left Nowra to do touch and goes, and possibly an arrest and cat, time permitting on *Melbourne*. The carrier was some distance off Jervis Bay and the seas not exactly rough but the ship's flight deck was moving around a bit.

Observers Job on Approach

Ideally one came to the deck between 114 – 118Knots. The stall speed with gear down and full flaps was 104 knots. The RPM had to be not lower than around 7500 RPM so that it could spool up quickly in case of a bolter. Idle revs were about 3000. Now the job of the Observer on approach to the deck was to call airspeed and engine RPM while the pilot in a more or less continuous turn from downwind at 400 feet kept his eyes on the ship and the mirror with no landing signals officer from the ship to assist.

In the last stages of this particular approach, maybe 50 yards short of the deck, nicely in the groove at around 115 Knots, we went into the ship's hot and turbulent exhaust funnel wake. In an instant our airspeed fell to 105 knots and we dropped like a brick onto the deck, so hard that we

bounced. I had enough time to realise that if we didn't hit the deck again before we went over the angle and stop the rate of descent, I was going to get out.

It was my job as the Observer to eject the canopy anyway, then my seat could be sprung forward from under the rear canopy rail and both of us could go for our now-armed ejection seat handles, either the blind over the head or the handle on the seat pan.

(The pilot's "bang seat" was the Martin Baker Mk4-0, mine was the Mk 4-1 – both advertised to work from 90kts at zero altitude. So the Observer could get decent view of the radar there was a hood of sorts that concertina'd out some distance from the radar's two screens necessitating a reclined (but definitely not comfortable) seat which

was partly under the rear canopy rail. There was also the radar control box, a thing that came back and sat between the knees so you could fiddle with all its knobs and dials. Going off the catapult, you had to have one hand on the hood and the other on this box of tricks so neither hit you as you went from zero to 120kts in 98 feet. It didn't always work!)

Canopy Release

This has taken infinitely longer to write than the real thing took for Barrie and me. We didn't touch the deck again and floated over the edge of the angle. I saw the ship's anchor go past a little above eye level as the power came on and FLYCO said, "Don't do that again!" I pushed the canopy release handle back into its place and we went home, somewhat chastened and a little the wiser.

As an aside, this is why John Da Costa lived and Ted Kennell did not. In the time it took Ted to operate the canopy release as their Sea Venom went over the deck after the knuckle on an arrestor wire broke, did not leave him enough time to then go for either of the seat ejection handles. Not to say that John wasn't busy anyway; as they went over the side he tried to fly away in a valiant attempt from around 60kts. At the very last moment he operated his seat as the aircraft hit the water. The nose of the aircraft was collapsing in on him as he was going up and out on the ejection seat rails from the aircraft. The top front canopy rail scraped both his legs and broke or strained one of his ankles. Ted

did not have the time to release both the canopy and then operate his seat.

Barrie and I had a few other interesting incidents, none quite as dramatic as John Da Costa's. One was realising much later over a beer or two that instead of pulling out of a dive at night from a normal 1,100 feet after firing our rockets at the splash target, we did so at 100 feet! Another was sitting on the catapult discussing whether we should go or not with engine RPM well below full power but we were sent on our way anyway.

One role of the Venom was that of anti-shipping, armed as we each were with eight un-guided rockets and four cannons. The idea was that at night, four aircraft in tight box formation, fast-ish (300kts) and at low level (less than 100 feet) would be led by another Venom to find the relevant ship. The lead aircraft would fire all of its glow-worm rockets at such a time so that we in our group would have made a hectic climb to 3,000 feet, rolled 90 degrees plus and be in our dive aimed at the now back-illuminated ship (towing a splash target which our flight leader had hopefully identified) and on the leader's say so, we all fired and made a hasty withdrawal.

Air-to-Air Combat Role

With four 30mm cannons under the floor, we had an air to air combat role and there were plenty of sorties where we fired at banners towed by other Venoms. Each round had been marked with a crayon so that hits in the target could be counted later. Though firing at docile targets, there were never many hits ever recorded. We would have been cannon fodder against any Bears.

My role in a day or night catapult launch wasn't much – hang on and pray probably. But it wasn't fun for the pilots. The cat stroke was 98 feet (just under 30 meters) and from nothing to flying speed of 120kts was not gentle – instant 4G and about two to three seconds later, you were airborne.

The interesting part of this was that at night the pilot was more or less blind. Sure there was the usual array of basic instruments – ASI, Turn and Bank, Altimeter and of course the Artificial Horizon (AH) as distinct from an Attitude Indicator (AI) that one has today. There were no radar altimeters nor angle of attack instruments. The latter day AI more or less has no errors. The artificial horizon ran directly off a gyro within the instrument and was good at best to around only say 60 degrees away from straight and level. Being belted off the catapult caused it to top-

ple badly showing a nose up turn of about 10 degrees high and 15 degrees of bank even though you were still hopefully straight and level.

So the solution to this very real problem was this: the Rescue Destroyer which accompanied *Melbourne* as Plane Guard was placed either well astern to pick up crew that may have ditched while landing on, but at night, was placed well ahead and off to Port. In this position, Plane Guard's white stern light was just visible out of the Sea Venom's left hand side tiny direct vision panel. Provided Plane Guard's stern light was kept below you, all was well until you had time to "Gear up, Flaps up, Cage the AH", some anxious moments later.

Off to Pilot's Course

A lot of this had a great deal more to do with Barrie Daly; he was after all my pilot and he hadn't killed me yet but if I was to be killed, then I'd prefer to do it myself. I'd had my hand up to be a pilot for some time and all this made me renew my efforts. So in 1967 off to pilot's course I went. I was Dux at BFTS RAAF Point Cook and Best Pilot at AFTS RAAF Pearce. As the A4 Skyhawk was then the golden prize, I expected to get posted to them. I wasn't and went to helicopters, unimpressed by their lordships' lack of thinking and loudly telling everyone so.

Not long afterwards I went to Vietnam where I really could have been killed any number of times and too many of our people were: but that's another story.

'PIN-WHEELING'

In response to the picture of Trackers 'Pin-wheeling' on HMAS *Melbourne*; it wasn't the first RAN aircraft-carrier to undertake this task.

In 1953 on arrival home from Korea HMAS *Sydney* was confronted with a similar situation in Fremantle. With three Firefly's and three Sea Furies, we not only moved away from the wharf but, we turned the ship so that it sailed straight out of the harbour. In 'that' day, if the 'Finger-Salute' had become the norm, the ship's company would have saluted the Wharfies.

And, how about this – we'd done 'that' before with HMAS *Vengeance* at the time of Queen Elizabeth's visit in 1954!

Dennis F. Charlton
Frankston VIC



CO: Are we safe to proceed to sea?

XO: Certainly, we have six solicitors, three doctors, two dentists, a chaplain and four stockbrokers onboard.

CO: What about someone who can navigate?

XO: Well no but, if we have a collision the doctors can treat the injured; the dentists can fix up damaged teeth; the chaplain can pray for those that didn't make it; and most of all, we'll save most of the crew, win the 'battle' in court and get a good price for the wreck on the commodities market!!!

The Pilot and the Pastor!!

Saint Peter was standing at the Pearly Gates, and a pilot walks up and says "My name is Joe, I'm a pilot, I think you've got a place for me." Saint Peter starts flipping through his book. Flip, flip, flip... "Ah yes Joe, here you are. Take this golden staff, harp, and silk robe, and pass through to the right where you'll meet the choir you've been assigned."

A minute later, another man walks up. "Hello Saint Peter, My name is Bob. I'm a retired pastor. I think you've got a place for me." Saint Peter starts flipping through his book. Flip, flip, flip.... "Ah yes, Bob, here you are. Take this wooden staff, this ukelele, and this cotton robe, and pass through to the right where you'll meet the choir you've been assigned."

Bob says (a little miffed) "Well, alright I guess... but why did that pilot guy get all that fancy stuff?"

Saint Peter says "Well y'see Bob, we work on the cause-and-effect principle here. While you spent years preaching, most of your congregation was asleep. When Joe there was flying, everybody who flew with him was praying."

September Edition

Closing date for all Articles for consideration and Divisional

Reports to be into the

Editor no later than

1 September 2019

A Spotlight Shines on 725 Squadron

Meeting the Press



725 Squadron hosts journalists from a range of Defence and Aviation publications for a behind the scenes look at the range of programs and facilities provided to 725 trainees at HMAS Albatross.

By Dallas McMaugh
Photo by Lee-Anne Cooper

The Fleet Air Arm's 725 Squadron recently welcomed a group of specialist defence and aerospace media for a behind-the-scenes look at Navy's newest and most potent naval combat helicopter, the MH-60R Seahawk 'Romeo'.

Most of the journalists were making their way south to Avalon in Victoria to attend the 2019 Australian International Air Show, making the pit stop at HMAS Albatross along the way.

While the MH-60R was a feature at the Air Show, the visit to 725 Squadron was designed to give the journalists a deeper insight into how aircrew and maintainers are trained to deliver the MH-60R combat capability.

Commanding Officer of 725 Squadron,

Commander Stan Buckham, said it was a privilege to be able to show the journalists what it takes to prepare sailors and officers to do their jobs in the maritime domain.

"Our mission at 725 is to train, develop and mentor the world's best MH-60R aviators and maintainers," Commander Buckham said.

"So, I was proud to be able to introduce the journalists to our state of the art facilities and equipment, but more importantly to the excellent personnel who bring together all of the moving parts and make the system work," he said.

The Royal Australian Navy takes great pride in its standards, instructors, trainees and state of the art training facilities and equipment.

The MH-60R Technical Training System is provided and sustained by a number of agencies, including the Naval Aviation Systems Program Office, the United States Navy and CAE.



The RAN's MH-60R Romeo helicopter conducts functional testing of the newly fitted Airborne Low Frequency Sonar System (ALFS) off the coast of Jacksonville, Florida.

Industry partnerships play a vital role in assisting the Fleet Air Arm in training helicopter personnel to operate and maintain highly specialised, complex helicopters for a range of vital missions, including attack, tactical support, search and rescue, reconnaissance and anti-submarine warfare.

The MH-60R training program uses CAE-built and delivered training which provide simulation and modelling technologies.

"The MH-60R training system is a contemporary example of Defence and Industry collaboration and it would not work any other way," Commander Buckham said.

"I was also particularly keen for these journalists to see how all the stakeholders contributed to the mission outcome of training MH-60R qualified aircrew and maintainers, and how the contemporary use of simulation and devices achieve what was traditionally only trained through live flying."

Deputy Commander Fleet Air Arm, Captain Grant Loughlin, said he also wanted the journalists to take away an understanding of Navy's innovative approach to training personnel within the Fleet Air Arm.

"We were also keen to showcase what naval aviation entailed, its complexity and the high level of training our people get," Captain Loughlin said.

"Finally, we wanted to emphasise the importance of the relationship between Industry and ourselves in both training our personnel and supporting the overall capability," he said.

Journalist Kate Warner of Military Simulation & Training magazine said she was very impressed with everything she saw.

"The 725 Squadron's MH-60R training system is a state-of-the-art, fully integrated and custom-built training facility that reflects the advanced capability of the MH-60R Seahawk helicopter," Ms Warner said.

"The authentically rich and immersive synthetic environment provides aircrew with the opportunity to repeatedly train for a multitude of seen and unforeseen operations while this world-class training facility, a collaboration between defence and industry, enables the 725 Squadron to fully realise the potential of the highly

sophisticated Seahawk by safely pushing it - and its aircrew - to their limit," she said.

The MH-60R is equipped with highly sophisticated combat systems designed to employ Hellfire air-to-surface missiles and the Mark 54 anti-submarine torpedo.

The primary missions of the 'Romeo' helicopter are anti-submarine warfare and anti-surface warfare. Secondary missions include search and rescue, logistics support, personnel transport and medical evacuation.

More information about the MH-60R can be found at: <http://www.navy.gov.au/aircraft/sikorsky-mh-60r-seahawk>.

Landing DC-8 and Departing Cherokee

One day, the pilot of a single-engine Cherokee was told by the tower to hold short of the runway while a DC-8 landed. The DC-8 landed, rolled out, turned around, and taxied back past the Cherokee. Some quick-witted comedian in the DC-8 crew got on the radio and said, "What a cute little plane. Did you make it all by yourself?"

The Cherokee pilot, not about to let the insult go by, came back with... "I made it out of DC-8 parts. Another landing like that and I'll have enough parts for another one."

Wings On My Sleeve

by Captain Eric 'Winkle' Brown

CBE DSC AFC RN

Wings on my Sleeve by the late Captain Eric 'Winkle' Brown CBE, DSC AFC RN is his biography as a Navy Pilot and Test Pilot. Eric Brown flew 487 types of aircraft, more than anyone. He also has the record number of deck landings totalling 2407.

The book describes how he initially learnt to fly with the Royal Auxiliary Air Force at University. Whilst on an exchange in Germany in 1939 he was made aware of the war first-hand when the Gestapo came to arrest him. They released him not knowing he was a pilot in the RAF Reserve.

On return to the UK, the book goes on to explain how he joined the Fleet Air Arm. He describes how his first sea posting was to the first escort carrier 'HMS *Audacity*'. During his service on board *Audacity* he shot down two German aircraft and was subsequently awarded the DSC. Ultimately, this ship was sunk. He was one of the few survivors..

In the meantime, the CO of 'Audacity' had recognised his ability for deck landings and proposed to higher authority that his skills be utilized in this area. Subsequently, Eric Brown was posted to RAE Farnborough for test flying.

It was while here that he not only ended up test flying naval aircraft but, also variety of aircraft types. He quotes one example of turning up to an RAF Airfield to test fly a Lancaster bomber that the RAF had sought assistance on. On arrival at the RAF Airfield, RAF officers were surprised and said that he must have come to the wrong place; until he told them he'd been sent by RAE to test fly their Lancaster.

Towards the end of the war, Eric Brown was appointed CO the 'Enemy Flight' This was to test fly all 'Axis' aircraft. The book describes how he had to rely and trust German pilots and engineers through out his tenure in this posting. He gives the example where he and a German pilot in two separate ME262's were flying the aircraft back to RAE. Not providing the German with charts and instructing him to hang off his wing, they became lost in cloud. 'Winkle' thought "well he's gone" only to get a phone call several hours later from this German 'wing-man' to advise 'Winkle' the airfield where he diverted to.

BOOK REVIEW



Eric Brown test flew 53 German aircraft. That experience rendered him one of the few men to have been qualified to compare both Allied and Axis aeroplanes as they flew during the war.

During this period, he was asked to help interrogate the former Belsen camp commandant and his assistant. Agreeing to do so, he soon interviewed Josef Kramer and Irma Grease, and remarked upon the experience by saying that; "Two more loathsome creatures it is hard to imagine" and further describing the latter as "... the worst human being I have ever met." Kramer and Grease were later tried and hanged for war crimes.

The book concludes with his life in the RN after the war in a variety of postings including Naval Attaché to Germany and helping the German Navy develop the use of Gannets.

A very good and easy read. Recommended to members.

Paul Shiels

Sea Harrier Over the Falklands

By Commander 'Sharkey' Ward
DSC, AFC, RN

Sharkey Ward the author of this book commanded 801 Naval Air Squadron, HMS *Invincible*, during the Falklands War of April to June 1982, and was senior Sea Harrier adviser to the Command on the tactics, direction and progress of the air war.

Nigel David Ward was born in Canada in 1943 and joined the Britannia Royal Naval College Dartmouth, as an Officer Cadet in 1962. After Seaman Officer training in the Bahamas and Hong Kong, he joined RAF Linton-on-Ouse in 1966 for Basic Flying Training. He completed his Fleet Air Arm training on Hunters and Sea Vixens before joining 892 Naval Air Squadron in 1969, where he flew the F-4K Phantom from the deck of HMS *Ark Royal*.

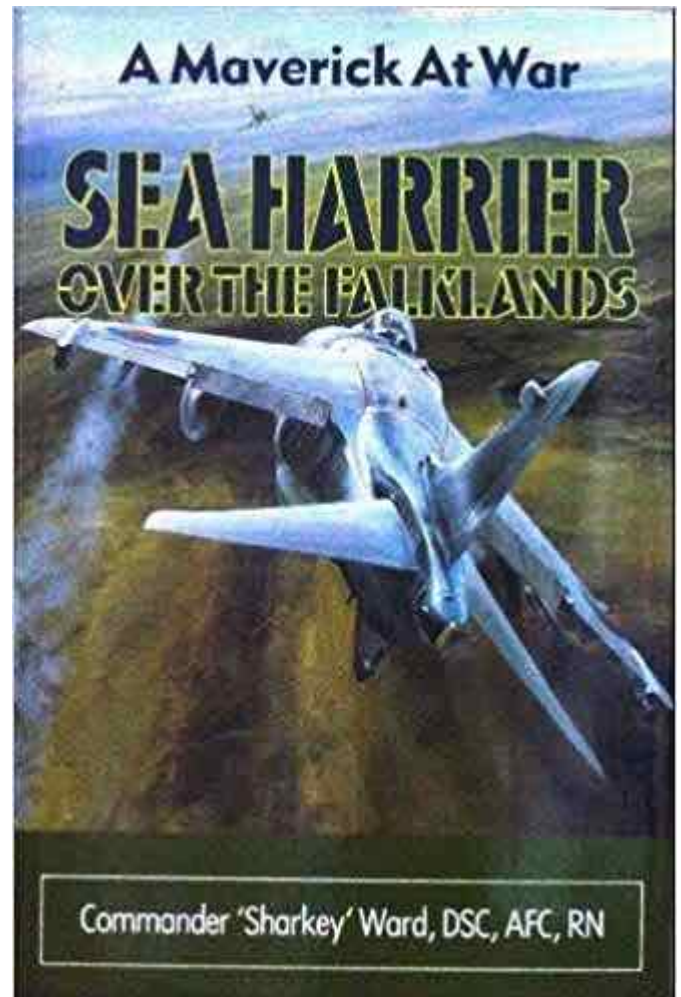
In 1976 he went to the Ministry of Defence as the Sea Harrier Desk Officer responsible for the final development of the aircraft and its introduction into the service. By this time he was known by the nickname 'Sharkey'.

In the Falklands, he flew over sixty war missions, achieved three air-to-air kills, and took part in or witnessed a total of ten kills; he was also the leading night pilot, and was decorated with the Distinguished Service Cross for gallantry.

Those are the bare facts, though they do no sort of justice to this remarkable and outspoken book, nor to its author. For what, after all, could twenty Sea Harriers, operating from a flight-deck bucketing about in the South Atlantic do against more than 200 Argentine military aircraft flown by pilots who, as the raids against British shipping proved, displayed enormous skill and gallantry?

The world knows the answer—now; as it knows the debt owed to the author and his fellow pilots. What is puzzling, therefore, is this book's truthful depiction of the attitudes of some of the senior non-flying naval officers and of the RAF, towards the men (and indeed the machine) that made possible the victory in the Falklands.

BOOK REVIEW



This extraordinary first-hand account charts, in clear and forthright detail, the naval pilots' journey to the South Atlantic, and how they took on and triumphantly conquered the challenges they faced. It is a dramatic story, leavened with brilliant accounts of air-to-air fighting and of life in a squadron at sea and on a war footing.

But it is also a tale of inter-Service rivalry, bureaucratic interference, and the less-than-generous attitudes of a number of senior commanders who should certainly have known better; indeed, some of them might even have lost the campaign through a lack of understanding of air warfare—particularly if all their instructions had been followed to the letter and without question. The author puts the record straight—no one interested in the Falklands, or in aircraft and air combat as a whole, can afford to miss this marvellous book.

SALE



PRICES	SHIRT	\$10	SHIRT (CHILDREN SIZE – large only)	\$5
	CAP	\$5	LANYARD	\$1
	MUG	\$2	ASSOC TIE	\$25
	CARRY BAG	\$1	POSTAGE	\$5

Please contact Denis Mulvihill at djmulvi@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)