



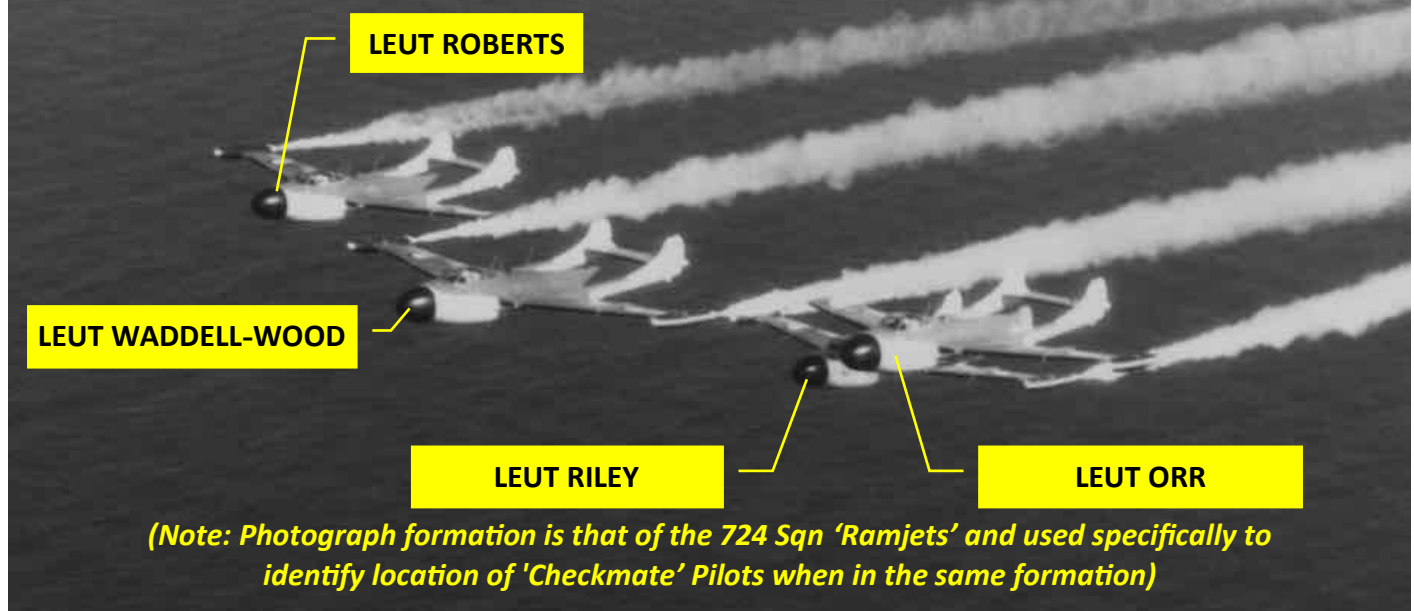
Slipstream

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"A Cool Cat on a Hot Seat—Pilot Ejects!!"

'Checkmates' Collide Over Sydney Harbour in Aerobatics Display



***This Article Appeared in
'Navy News' [here](#) on Friday 5 October 1962
Edited Version and Updated***

Two pilots of the Royal Australian Navy's Fleet Air Arm aerobatic team, the 'Checkmates' escaped death after a collision about 6,000 feet over Sydney shortly after 1300 on Tuesday, 2 October 1962. Lieutenant Albert Riley's, damaged Sea Venom entered Sydney Harbour, near Fort Denison after he ejected and parachuted into the harbour. Within seconds a RAAF search and rescue vessel and small craft of the RAN were racing towards Riley.

Lieutenant Barry Roberts managed to retain sufficient control over his damaged Sea Venom to

be able to return to Nowra where he landed safely, but was forced to use airfield arrester equipment. Lieutenant Riley, was 27 at the time with Lieutenant Roberts then aged 24.

After being rescued from the water Lieutenant Riley was taken to the sickbay on Garden Island, treated and then transferred to the Naval Hospital at Balmoral.

He suffered severe shock and was examined by Surgeon Commander B. Treloar who had flown from Nowra by helicopter.

Both pilots are considered to have experienced remarkable escapes from death. Thousands of people who were watching the display from points around the Harbour witnessed Lieutenant Riley's Sea Venom dive into the water as he hung in his parachute and landed in the sea a few seconds later.

Picked up by the RAAF search and rescue craft Riley appeared unhurt as he was taken to the sick bay at Garden Island.

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As Riley was being examined, Navy divers were on their way to the point where the Sea Venom had disappeared.

An Official Statement was made shortly after the rescue of Riley and news that Roberts had landed safely at NAS Nowra. The statement was issued by Rear Admiral G G O Gatacre CBE, DSO, DSC & Bar RAN; Flag Officer in Charge, East Australia Area to the media at Navy Headquarters Potts Point.

Rear Admiral Gatacre accompanied by the RAN Fleet Aviation Officer, Lieutenant Commander Bowles DSC, said the accident occurred when a group of four Sea Venoms were giving an aerobatic display over Sydney as part of the Waratah Festival and Navy Week.

It appeared that the two aircraft touched while flying in close formation and one plummeted into the harbour after the pilot had taken steps to ensure that the plane would not create a hazard for the public or craft using Sydney Harbour.

"The collision occurred at about 300 knots and accelerating, at about 3000 feet in a vertical dive using about 75% power. I ejected at about 1200 feet indicated, which given the lag in the instruments at that rate of descent was probably actually about 500 feet. I did not expect to survive. My aircraft was rotating rapidly anti-clockwise and not responding to any control movements. Even had I recovered control, I had no hope of recovering from the dive at that height and that speed." Riley said.

When asked by the media, when Riley had decided to eject, he replied rather flippantly, "when I was sure the aircraft was going into the water". Later Riley said: "that comment has been widely misinterpreted; I meant going into the water as distinct from staying in the air. There was never any chance whatever of the aircraft hitting land, with the possible exception of Fort Denison."

He was quickly picked up by a search and rescue vessel of the RAAF. Admiral Gatacre added that the other Sea Venom headed out to sea and the pilot, after communicating with the remaining two aircraft, decided to try and return to Nowra.

It is understood that the port rudder of Roberts' plane was missing and tail cones housing the fighter's pressure instruments were also seriously damaged. After circling over NAS Nowra Lieutenant Roberts made a perfect landing at high speed. and was forced to use the airfield arrester gear.

The other pilots engaged in the display were Lieutenant R.A. Waddell-Wood, then 28, and Lieutenant B. Orr, then 25. The group was known as the "Checkmates" aerobatic team and their numerous displays in Sydney and elsewhere in Australia had evoked the admiration of thousands of spectators.

The spot where the plane crashed into the harbour was quickly pin-pointed and within a few minutes divers of the Royal Australian Navy were



Albert Riley at NAS Nowra after the ejection

in the water seeking the wrecked plane which was estimated to be in about 80 to 100 feet of water.

Many parts of the wreckage were recovered by the divers while other craft picked up smashed pieces of the aircraft. A few hours after the accident it was announced that a Board of Inquiry would be held into the collision. Lieutenant Roberts, who was unaffected by the unfortunate accident, was in position when the "Checkmates" flew to Canberra on Wednesday and again to Sydney on Thursday to give their customary demonstration.

Lieutenant Riley was anxious to return to NAS Nowra to re-join the group and use another aircraft but Naval medical authorities declined to allow him to leave the Balmoral Naval Hospital.

The spirit of Lieutenant Roberts and Lieutenant Riley was admired by the public which also appreciated the courageous and thoughtful way in which the two pilots had reacted after the accident.

Albert Riley participated in the final display that week, and in several subsequent displays with the team.

He had also flown in the same position (with a different team) in the display at Singapore mentioned on the next page.

The media had difficulty comprehending that it was a Navy aircraft and Navy pilot picked up by a RAAF SAR craft with a RAAF crew.

It is believed the 'Checkmates' name continued on in the Skyhawk era until the cessation of fixed wing operations by 805 squadron.

“Checkmates” Draw Wide Applause At Air Show in Far East

Extract from ‘Slipstream’ No.51

January 1962 Price 6d. Edited version

(Full Edition [here](#). Back copies of Slipstream [here](#))

This is not a thesis on the gentlemanly and time-honoured game of chess, it’s to get the story of the Navy’s premier aerobatic team the ‘Checkmates’.

Formation aerobatic teams are nothing new to the RAN. In the early 1950’s several Sea Fury teams set a very high standard for their rivals to achieve, as any number of our greying, heavily brassed and highly honoured visitors can attest.

During the mid-1950’s 805 presented a three-man Sea Fury team which won acclaim in many country displays. Later this became a four man and then in 1956, increased to five. The pilots comprising the teams were consistently changing, so too were the team leaders – but the standard remained consistently high. In 1956, the jets cashed in on the aerobatic publicity and 808 a fielded two and then three-man team. During that year the 808-team won personal praise from the President of the Philippines, President Magsaysay, and at the request of Colonel General Vargas of the Air Force, expressed his admiration in a radio broadcast from Manila.

In the following two years 805 stole the honours again and turned on a number of polished performances. Early in 1960, the 724 Squadron Sea Venom team calling themselves the “Ramjets” was formed. Most of our readers have seen the film production of Movietone ([here](#)) which follows the “Ramjets” through one of their precision routines.

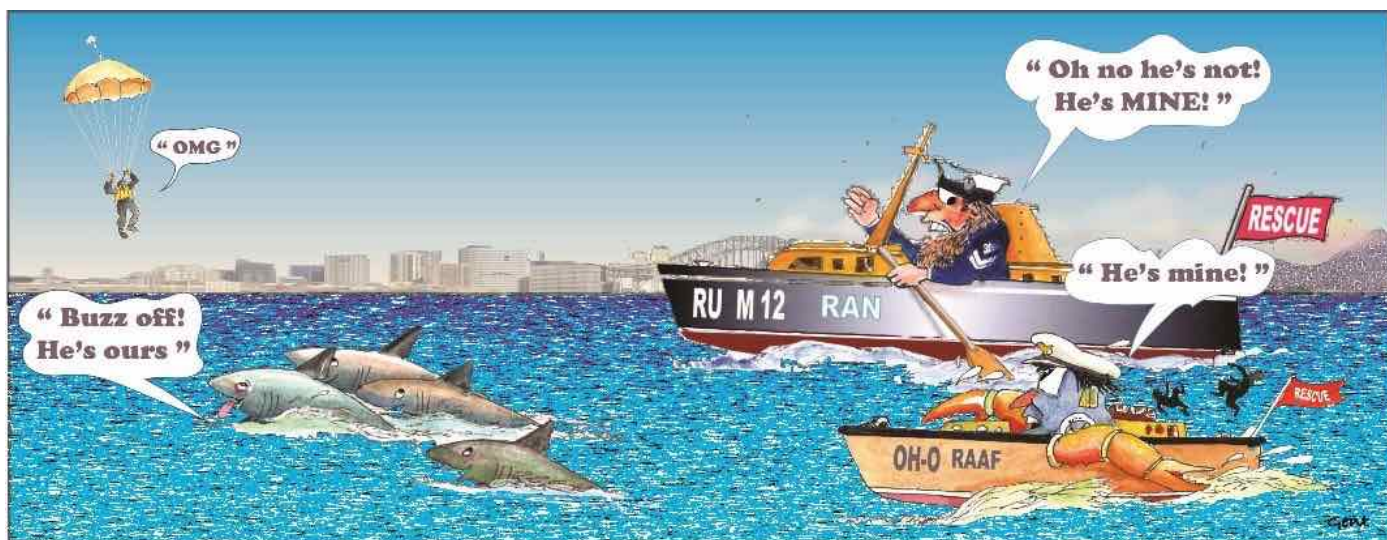
In January 1961, 805 Squadron adopted the present pattern of red and white checks on their tip tanks, and on the 8 March in the Indian Ocean began working up an aerobatic team which later became known as the “Checkmates”.

An invitation was extended to the RAN to take part in an International Air Display at Singapore commencing on Saturday 8 April 1961 and continue for a week. The RAN accepted the invitation and 805 and 816 Squadrons disembarked to Seletar.

On 6 April, a dummy run was held at the International Airport at Paya Lebar, Singapore. The Naval element taking part consisted of Scimitars and Sea Vixens off HMS *Victorious*; Whirlwinds off HMS *Bulwark*; the Sycamores, Sea Venoms and Gannets off HMAS *Melbourne*; and Helicopter Borne Commando Company of No. 43 Royal Marine Commando.

It was very quickly realised that to compete against our much more noisy and impressive brethren we would need more than our three Sea Venoms. On Friday 7 April in a quiet corner of Jahore Baru in Southern Malaya the team (now increased to six) worked out a brand new aerobatic routine.

The Singapore International Air Show was opened at 1600 on Saturday 8 April 1961 by His Excellency, The Yang Di-Pertuan Negara Inche Yusoff Bin, the Navy having been chosen to provide the flying spectacle on the opening day. The standard of flying by both the RN and RAN aircrews was incredibly high and it will suffice to say that in the Sunday papers the “*Melbourne*” aircraft got the lion’s share of the publicity.



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The Editor reserves the right to edit all manuscripts. Reference to commercial products does not imply the Associations endorsement. As a guide, ‘Letters to the Editor’ to be restricted to 250 words. Letters beyond this figure, maybe subject to editing.

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National President's Update

G'Day Everyone,
As the end of another year is rapidly approaching, I thought it appropriate to reflect upon 2019 and wish you all well.

2019 has been a busy year that has seen much change. We have said goodbye to two warhorses of the Fleet Air Arm over the last 12 months. The AS350B Squirrel and S-70B-2 Seahawk both served the FAA, the Navy and Australia extraordinarily well since the mid 1980s in both peace and in war, and importantly in humanitarian disasters around the world. The introduction of the replacement aircraft continues to proceed smoothly. The Romeo Seahawk and the EC135 training aircraft appear to be going from strength to strength. COMFAA changed out in early 2019 with CDRE Dezentje taking over from CDRE Smallhorn. Naval Aviation continues apace.

We have had some great successes over the past 12 months. The Association made an important Submission to the Defence Honours and Awards Appeals Tribunal in support of the case for a unit commendation for RAN Helicopter Flight Vietnam. We were central to advocating for a Unit Citation for Gallantry which the Tribunal eventually recommended to the Minister. The award of the Unit Citation for Gallantry recognises the extraordinary gallantry displayed by the aircrew and maintenance and support personnel of the RANHFV during the Vietnam conflict. There are several other individual awards that we are working on in this area which will hopefully be resolved over the next 12 months.

Our long term Slipstream editor Ron Batchelor stood down over the last twelve months and handed over to new editor Paul Shiels. Ron has done great service for the FAAAA over the years and I appreciate his efforts greatly. Welcome Paul !

Continuing on the theme of lengthy service to the FAAAA, I would like to pay tribute to the outstanding efforts of the National Executive in guiding and directing the Association over the past twelve months. Phil Carey, Pincher Martin, Denis Mulvihill, as well as Webmaster Marcus Peake and Database Manager Paul Norris have done a fantastic job for us all. Thank you chaps for your efforts over the past twelve months and well done this year.

I must also take this opportunity to pay tribute to two stalwarts of the Association. National Secretary Dick 'Pincher' Martin and National Treasurer Denis Mulvihill have both provided the FAAAA with long term, dedicated and unswerving support. Unfortunately, both Dick and Denis decided to stand down this year after lengthy periods in their roles. Thank you both for your dedicated and unstinting hard work over many years.



2019 was also a year for our Federal Council Meeting which is also our AGM. Elections were held for office bearers. The election outcomes were:

National President Mark Campbell

National Secretary Pincher Martin (standing in until replacement identified)

National Treasurer Jock Caldwell

There is a cunning plan to replace Pincher in early 2020. More on this later.

The meeting was addressed by COMFAA, CDRE Don Dezentje, who updated delegates on FAA activities. The meeting considered several reports from Office Bearers and others. Declining membership, remaining a viable organisation and how we can do more to support our membership, particularly in their dealings with the Department of Veterans Affairs were canvassed. The National Executive was tasked with attempting to address these matters as a matter of priority. The remainder of the FCM activity centred on the new National Welfare Officer. I warmly welcome David 'Snappa' McKean to this role. More details on the National Welfare Officer role shortly.

The new National Executive will gather together early in the New Year to set the agenda for the FAAAA moving forward.

Finally, I wish you all a joyous Christmas break. Stay safe, healthy and well

*Mark Campbell
RADM, RAN (Rtd)
National President.
November 2019*

Piloting the Sea Venom

By Norman Lee

This article originally appeared in June 1991 issue of Australian Aviation magazine, and is reprinted here with the publisher's permission.



When it came time for the RAN to replace the Sea Fury, a number of aircraft were considered but the obvious choice, considering the size of HMAS Melbourne was the De Havilland Sea Venom, a two-seater all weather jet fighter.

The aircraft entered service at the same time as the Gannet, a pair forming the second generation of the fixed-wing aircraft in the RAN. The Sea Venom was powered by a De Havilland Ghost centrifugal gas turbine and its twin boom configuration made it obvious that it was developed from the Vampire.

The aircraft were not initially fitted with ejection seats, which made the cockpit a little cramped when they were eventually installed as a mod. The pilot and observer sat side-by-side with the latter staggered slightly aft. The ailerons were hydraulically powered with the stick-to-aileron throw adjustable through a gearing control in the cockpit. This gave a range of half aileron for full stick to full aileron for full stick.

Four 20mm cannon were mounted in the nose and rockets could be carried under the wings. Surprisingly, the aircraft was not capable of carrying bombs.

The view from the cockpit was adequate, but the canopy coaming intruded particularly to starboard. The large flat windscreen was not the best in heavy rain, but there was a removable clear view side panel if things became too fraught. Trim control was in time honoured tradition by trim wheels on a trim box below the pilot's left hand. Cockpit layout was the usual compromise but one soon got used to it, however, care needed to be exercised with the HP cock and speed brake lever if one was flying Vampires concurrently as they were transposed in the two aircraft. Starting was by cartridge and straight forward.

The Sea Venom sat very solidly on the ground and was the least crosswind affected aircraft I have ever flown. Takeoff and climb were straight forward with the aircraft accelerating very rapidly to climb speed.

In my first battle drill climb in the aircraft, I found that none of us could keep up with the squadron CO. He was constantly badgering us to keep up but we found it impossible. The same thing happened on the next occasion and I became suspicious that perhaps we weren't at fault as he was always at pains to fly the same aircraft.

My primary task in the squadron was as the QFI but I also happened to be the Senior Pilot, responsible for the overall squadron programming. I tasked myself for a solo sortie in the suspect aircraft and timed it in the climb, discovering, not to my surprise that its performance far exceeded a standard Venom. Now the method of trimming the Ghost for power was by varying the tailpipe diameter. When the engine came off test it would be noted as requiring

a certain size tail pipe. A quick check of the aircraft log book soon showed that it had been fitted with the wrong size pipe and hence was producing above specification thrust. The Ghost for some reason ran below maximum permissible JPT hence it is understandable that no one queried it before. I snagged the aircraft and we had no more troubles, but I must admit that I wasn't popular in certain quarters.

I then had a break of two years with the RN and on return to command the All-Weather Fighter training squadron was informed that our task for the next three months was to form and work up an aerobatic team for an international convention at Avalon.



Sea Venom catches a wire on HMAS Melbourne

This was at the time of yet another run-down of the FAA and the squadron only had four Venoms on strength. I managed to win a fifth but it is not easy to run a four plane team with only five aircraft.

I had not flown formation aerobatics before, except for the odd play in Fireflies, but three of my pilots had formed part of an earlier team. Under the circumstances, I decided the safest thing for all of us would be if I led the team myself. The RN squadron with which I had been serving had flown a four plane team of Seahawks, so I was familiar with the various routines that had been developed overseas.

I discussed with my team members the speed previously flown in looping and rolling manoeuvres, and then flew a proposed routine solo. It was immediately apparent that they had been flying too fast. Taking up too much airspace. After a few sorties we managed to knock 50 knots off all speeds and it was generally agreed that it was much more comfortable, with less loading in the vertical plane. The final routine evolved consisted of four plane takeoff followed by a double loop, two barrel rolls, a half loop and bomb burst, followed by a thread-the-needle and reform and a four plane formation landing. It was not a long routine, but then we hadn't been allocated very much display time.

Because of the lack of aircraft, it was rare that we managed to practise with all four team members together, which meant that I had to do a lot more flying than the others. This was no problem as I am a self-confessed hour hog and really enjoyed the challenge of working the team up under somewhat trying circumstances.

The Cause was Obvious

The formation takeoff was made in box configuration with a positive lift-off and the boxman calling airborne. We then climbed through a full circle to a height from which we could do a double loop along the full length of the runway. Here we struck an unexpected problem: my loops weren't quite vertical and we were stepping aside several runway widths by the time we had finished the second loop. The cause was obvious, the Sea Venom had the stick cranked to the right so that you could see the instrument panel and I was instinctively pulling it straight back, feeding in a small amount of aileron. The problem was soon sorted out and we managed to do straight loops from thereon in.

The next manoeuvre was a barrel roll off the deck, followed by another returning back across the airfield. It was several years later that the RAAF suffered the loss of a Vampire aerobatic team at East Sale in, I believe, a barrel roll. I always made



Two Sea Venoms on the flight deck of HMAS Melbourne during 'open inspection' of the ship in Japan

certain that I pulled up at least 30 degrees above the horizontal before initiating the roll, and that we were rolling with positive rudder. Aileron alone could leave the wingmen 'hung up' at the top with the roll tending to fade out.

Perfect Crossing

I will be corrected I know, but I believe I can lay claim to introducing the vertically downwards bomb burst to the Australian scene. We would climb to looping height following the second barrel roll and enter a loop along the main axis of the main runway. I would call the burst just before we were pointing straight down. I would continue on straight ahead completing the loop, with the wingmen turning 90 degrees and the boxman 180 degrees and the completing the loop. I would call the second loop and half-roll to initiate the thread-the-needle. This is always a crowd pleaser as it looks dangerous where it is perfectly safe providing you stick to the rules. Our rules were that the leader and boxman returned down the runway keeping to the right and on the deck. The two wingmen kept to the right of the tower and flew at mid tower height. We occasionally achieved the perfect crossing, but there were too many factors involved to guarantee it every time.

Should we be landing on completion of the display, we would form up and do a box landing with the boxman calling cut.

Never having qualified in the all-weather role I thought I had better do so as the CO of the all-weather training squadron. As this entailed mostly night flying, it didn't interfere with the workup of the aerobatics team. It was a fairly condensed course as I was the only pupil and we used a Vampire as the target aircraft to save the Venoms. Having just spent two years in day fighters, I found the change a little difficult to get used to, one had to trust the observer, particularly close in.

Towards the end of our work up, the wingmen

were tending to get a little close to the extent that I could feel aerodynamic interference on my aircraft. The Commander (Air) at the time became concerned at the tightness of the formation and indicated that I should direct them to move out. On that very day, upside down over the married quarters, half way through a barrel roll, I felt an almighty thump through the rudders. My immediate thought was that I snapped a rudder cable. My Observer said a rude word and the formation became a little ragged as we rolled out.

Visiting Parliamentary Committee

A check of all the aircraft could find nothing wrong, but I called it off nevertheless. Back in dispersal it became immediately obvious what had happened from the blue and gold tiptank marking that had been transferred to the bullet fairing around my fin and rudder. My No.3 wingman had got too close and his tiptank had grazed my bullet fairing, sucking my rudder across due to venturi effect. There was absolutely no damage to the bullet fairing and it was only necessary to wipe the paint with thinners to remove all trace of the incident. I then agonised over whether I should inform Commander (Air), finally deciding to do so the following day as we flew down to Avalon together in a Vampire; there was not much he could do at 30,000ft!

Our great day came and with it turbulence and a low cloud base. We flew our number two sequence which deleted looping manoeuvres, but it was a terrible let-down after all our practising.

This was the the early '60s and outside broadcasts on TV had not yet been developed. Film would be rushed to the TV station to be broadcast an hour or so later. As a result, we had time to land at Laverton, our base for the display, and then see ourselves performing on the mess TV.

Shortly after our return to Nowra, we were scheduled to put on a display for a visiting parliamentary committee. Once again, the weather upset our plans to the extent that I could only safely fly the boxman for a few rolling manoeuvres. We finished off with a pairs run close by the tower with everything down. The committee was standing on the tower balcony so in time honoured naval tradition I gave them a salute. That evening in the mess we met the committee and one of their number in conversation admitted that he had watched our performance very keenly because he had not wanted to miss the prang should it occur.

In due course, I left the squadron to do some 'fishheading' (general service sea-time) and the team reformed with a new boxman and one of my old wingmen leading. If you are old enough you may recall a Sea Venom spearing into Sydney Harbour with the pilot ejecting in the nick of time. This

happened when the team was putting on a display over the Harbour and the new boxman clipped one of the wingmen as they split in the bomb burst. The wingman got back to NAS Nowra minus a large section of his tail and that was the end of aerobatics over the city.

In summary, the Sea Venom was a good, solid aircraft with no vices. It was pleasant and easy to fly and had a relatively good safety record. I can only recall being embarrassed once in a Sea Venom and that was on a land-away to Amberley when I forgot to close the jettison valves in the tip tanks and on refuelling the aircraft poured fuel all over the tarmac. I had obviously learnt nothing from my Oxford experience thirteen years previously.

(Norman Lee enlisted in the RAN in May 1948. Following initial naval training in HMAS Cerberus, he commenced pilot training with the RAAF at Point Cook, graduating as a probationary pilot. He saw service in the Korean War aboard HMAS Sydney.

Norman remained in the Navy and rose to the rank of Commodore. During his thirty-three years of service he flew twenty-five different types of military aircraft. He commanded HMAS Queenborough, HMAS Vampire, 724 Squadron, HMAS Kuttabul and HMAS Albatross (Norman retired in 1981).

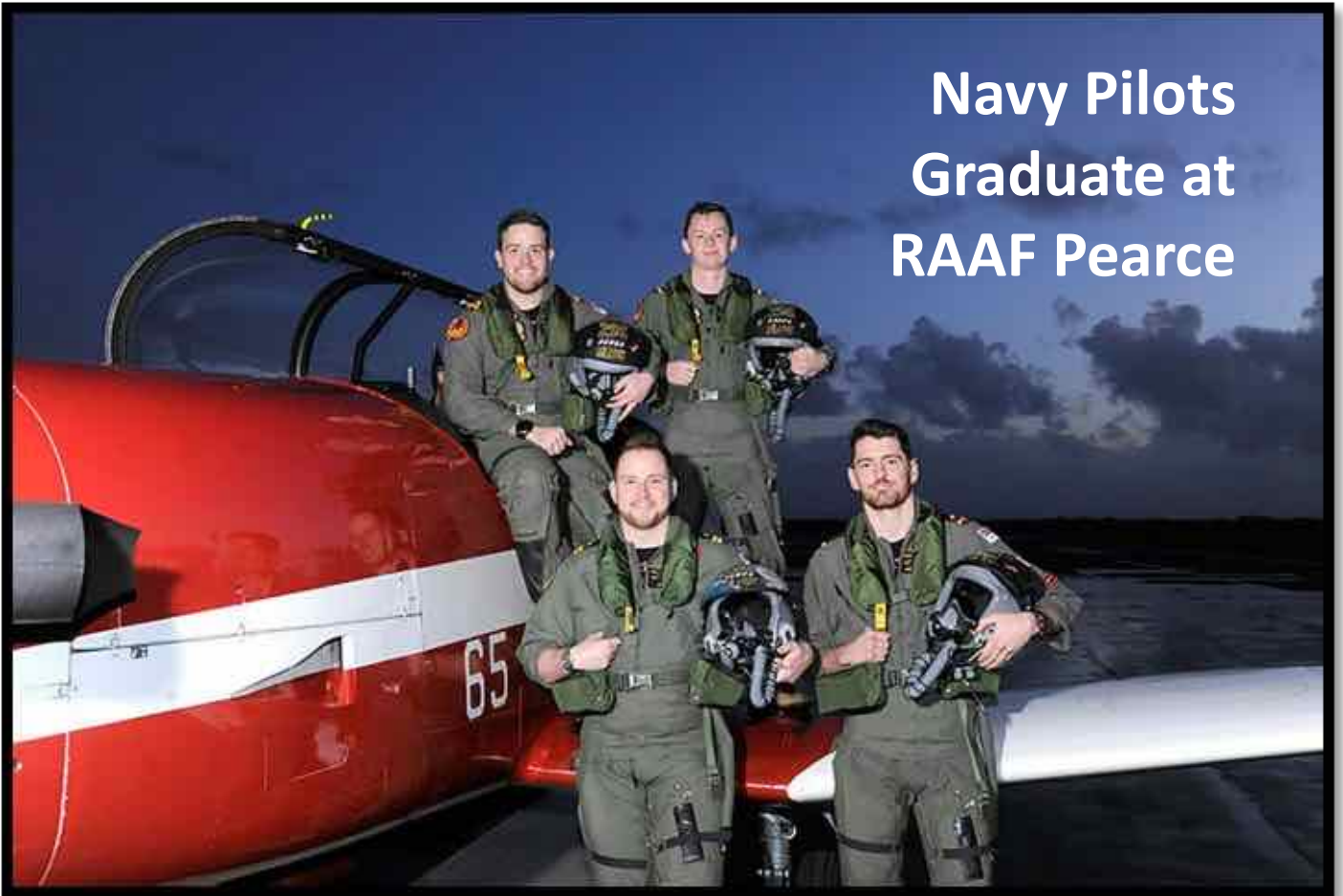
WANTED!

'Slipstream' seeks to attain a reasonable balance covering all aspects of the FAA. Many of the stories are non-aligned to a particular group of members but provide applicable information to the whole membership.

Stories from all branches are always of interest, so 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, or Phot Sections etc; or a book you may have read might prompt you to write a book review etc. ALL Aviation branches of whatever rank held previously must have some stories hidden away? I'm always after stories!

Remember it's up to you to use 'Slipstream' to make others aware of your branch and experience in the FAA. Many may not know? Open debate and comment is welcome through articles and 'Letters to the Editor'.

Navy Pilots Graduate at RAAF Pearce



Friday, 6th September 2019 marked the graduation of No. 256 Advanced Pilots Course from No 2 Flying Training School (2FTS). Navy trainees SBLT Kyle Davies, SBLT Josh Gorrie, SBLT Damon Millichamp and LEUT Riley Tonc were amongst the fourteen Air Force and Navy graduates.

The reviewing officer for the parade was Commander Air Warfare Centre, Air Commodore Phil Gordon. Commander Fleet Air Arm (COMFAA), Commodore Don Dezentje, RAN, was also in attendance to celebrate with the RAN's newest aviators.

Students completed their training on the Pilatus PC-9A. This is the penultimate pilot course on the PC-9A, with initial pilot training scheduled to transition to the new PC-21.

Since graduating, the Navy trainees have been posted to 723 Squadron for initial rotary wing training on the Airbus EC135 (pictured).



Pilotless Auster Shot Down By RAN Sea Furies



Artist impression by Ron Gent of Sea Fury shooting down Auster aircraft off Sydney

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 climbed and manoeuvred on an erratic course over the city from Bankstown aerodrome, 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 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 Auster.

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



RAN Auster 931 airborne in the Nowra area



A Sea Fury shortly after landing on the deck of HMAS Sydney

Auster gained altitude - to around 9,000 ft. Here the air tends to be cold and, as the gunner in the rear 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. *(Note: 1).*

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). After all attempts failed to shoot the Auster down the Meteors left the scene. *(Note: 1).*

Meanwhile, at the RAN Air Station at Nowra, two Sea Fury aircraft, piloted by Lieutenants Peter McNay RN (later RAN) in Sea Fury WZ650 and John Bluett RN in Sea Fury VW645 departed for Sydney.

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 its rate 4 starboard turn. Bluett, in the other Sea Fury, then fired causing the Auster's cockpit to burst into flames. Badly

damaged, the Auster nosed-down in a slow spiral and crashed into the ocean about five miles off the coast. The Auster was airborne for over two and a half hours.

The remarkable thing is the runaway Auster was airborne for so long, and fortunately not involved in a major accident.

(Note 1: I later had it on pretty good authority that the person who manned the Bren gun in the Wirraway forgot to take the breech block with him! Therefore, naturally, the gun couldn't be fired. Also, that the Meteor's guns had not been cleaned preparatory to use, meaning that

the grease used to stop the barrels from rusting, was still present. So much for the excuses put forward by the RAAF!.....Peter McNay)

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.



The pilots of the two Sea Furies, Lieutenants J.R.T. Bluett (left) and P.F. McNay (right)

Gannet - Punches its Weight!

- First Turbo Prop Aircraft in the World according to Pilot of 772*
- 772 (XT752) Only Gannet in the World still Flying



*Paraphrased from the Pilot of
Fairy Gannet 772 'Janet' as shown in the
'KDawz Film' on the adjacent website*

See the Last Flyable Gannet in the World
[here](#) (for online subscribers only)

The Gannet type was produced and entered service in 1953 after the prototype first flew on 19 September 1949. It is the oldest turbo prop* and only Gannet flying in the world today. This Gannet 772 named 'Janet' is a T.5 (dual pilot control version). Only eight were ever built and this was the prototype for its mark number!

The left engine turns the front propeller and the right engine turns the rear propeller. They share the same oil system but, they're totally independent. There's total economy when flying the aircraft.

Because they are turbine and constant speed, the fuel flow can't really be changed, so the aircraft burns around 200 gallons an hour. Can you imagine the fuel when a faucet (e.g. water tap) is turned on, the fuel flowing faster than what's seen on a streaming faucet?

By the time the Gannet is started, taxi-ed and take-off commenced 50 gallons has been expended! An endurance of about three and a half hours can be expected with speeds up to 300 mph. With one engine running speeds of about 170 mph are expected providing an endurance of around 5 hours.

It was a sub hunter for the 'Cold War' effectively searching for Russian submarines which were a threat at the time. At the front of the main 'bomb bay' there were 2 x 1000 lb torpedos; and behind them were what was the first capable nuclear sub hunter 4 x 200 lb nuclear depth charges. For release from the 'bomb bay' were sonar buoys and flare markers dropped to listen for submarines underneath the water. Located on the wings were 16 rockets. If an attack on the sub on the surface of the water was necessary, the rockets

would be used. The weaponry was designed to catch a submarine under water or above.

The Start-up uses the front engine because it has got nitrogen that will 'air start'. An electric start is not available. It's either a cannon shell' that will start it through a turbo starter or nitrogen and that's what's done all the time now. Once the front engine starts and settles down then the second one is started up through the wind of the front engine. The throttles are then open to $\frac{3}{4}$ power and the wind coming off of the front engine (the slipstream) allows the pilot to insert fuel into the engine and start the second one.

The pilot then selects the wings down and straight. Once selected down, the wings will automatically do everything themselves. It pressurizing the fuel in the wing since there's fuel in the mid-section of the wings. When pressurizing the wings, it's also opening up fuel valves to develop a fuel feed from those wings. There are seven fuel tanks in the aeroplane. The straightening of the wings connects all the flaps and ailerons. As it's moving everything is connecting up. It's just amazing!

This Gannet was the last to land in the world on an aircraft carrier. It was selected by the British Admiralty to say farewell to all the Gannets around the world. The aircraft landed on HMS *Ark Royal* in 1978. After that, the aircraft was decommissioned along with *Ark Royal*.

(Note: It is understood that a prototype turbo-prop Meteor was developed in 1945 and the Vickers Viscount entered production in 1948. The Gannet was the first twin engine single axial aircraftEd)*

Gentleman Flyer Survives Crash to Become Test Pilot

*By Terry Hetherington
Secretary, NSW Division*

I read with great interest the very brief and understated letter from David Eagles in the September 2019 issue of Slipstream. David and his wife Ann travelled to Australia in February 2016 and I had the privilege of meeting them on their Sydney stopover during a round-the-world cruise.

David had been on a two-year exchange posting from the Royal Navy between 1956 to 1958 and he served in 851 Squadron flying the Firefly and then 805 Squadron piloting Sea Fury fighters. At the conclusion of a training sortie in the late afternoon of 27 November 1956, three 851 Squadron Firefly aircraft were to rendezvous at 2,000 feet altitude over Huskisson and form-up in a section to return to home base. Tragically during that manoeuvre two of the Fireflies collided almost head-on, and one aircraft, WD887, was totally destroyed in the subsequent nose-dive into the water, taking the lives of Royal Navy pilot Sub-Lieutenant Arthur Arundel and his trainee observer, Queenslander Midshipman Noel Fogarty. Arthur Arundel was two days short of celebrating his 21st birthday, and Noel Fogarty was also just 20 years old.

Arthur's close friend and Royal Navy colleague, Sub-Lieutenant David Eagles was piloting VX381 and his observer was Sydney-born Midshipman Donald Debus. The collision had taken seven feet off VX381's starboard wing, together with the aileron, but through David's skilful airmanship he maintained limited control, having to fly above 150 knots airspeed with the control column hard over against the cockpit sidewall to stay straight and level. Three miles to the north-west, near Callala Bay, VX381 ditched, spun though 180 degrees when it hit the surface of the water, settled in an upright position and sank to the sea bottom at 15 me-



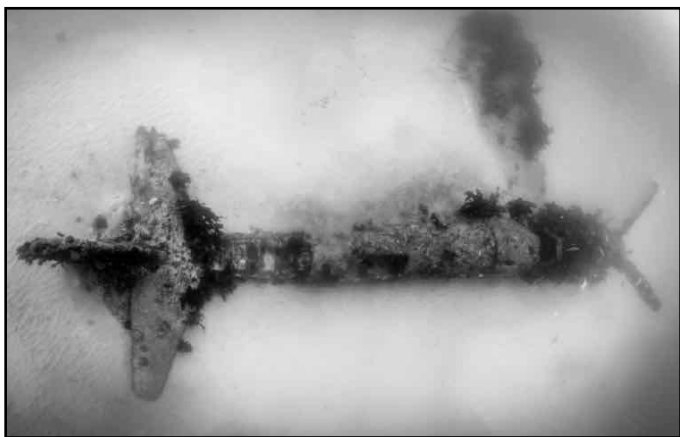
David Eagles sits on the side of a Firefly cockpit

tres depth. Eagles and Debus were in a Navy 'Sycamore' rescue helicopter within half an hour and, still in his dripping wet flight suit, David was soon on the carpet in Commander Air's office at HMAS *Albatross* telling his version of the collision.

Mr Greg Stubbs, a Nowra businessman and highly accomplished scuba diver was familiar with the location and origins of VX381. Greg approached the Fleet Air Arm Museum to help identify the final resting place of Arthur Arundel, Noel Fogarty and their Firefly WD887. Using the 1956 Accident Report narrative, and having met and discussed the incident with David Eagles during his 2016 visit to Sydney, Greg calculated the approximate location for the wreckage of WD887. A determined search led to the discovery of a pilot's seat frame, portion a propeller spinner and a cockpit fuse box cover. Visible part numbers and other markings on these parts were proof-positive of their origin. The location of these discoveries will remain a closely held secret.

In later years David Eagles graduated from the prestigious Empire Test Pilots School and he performed the development flight-testing of the Blackburn 'Buccaneer' with the Royal Navy. David retired from the Royal Navy in 1968 at the rank of Lieutenant Commander and had been awarded the Air Force Cross. He joined British Aerospace and played a major part in the cockpit design and flight-testing of the Panavia 'Tornado' and later flying the first flight in the prototype technology demonstrator for the Eurofighter 'Typhoon'. To cap off a prestigious aviation career David was elected a Fellow of the Society of Experimental Test Pilots, Fellow of the Royal Aeronautical Society, a Liveryman of the Guild of Air Pilots & Air Navigators and was admitted into the Freedom of the City of London.

The casual reader of David's letter in September 2019 Slipstream could have had no appreciation of this modest gentleman's incredible achievements. David and Ann Eagles will be visiting Australia again in February 2020 and I look forward to hosting them to the Shoalhaven district and Jervis Bay.



Firefly VX381 at the bottom of Jervis Bay

THE GENESIS OF THE FLEET AIR ARM

Commonwealth Navy Order 137/1925 which formally established a Fleet Air Arm in the RAN is reprinted below for the interest of members

CNO 137/1925

ESTABLISHMENT OF A FLEET AIR ARM OF THE ROYAL AUSTRALIAN NAVY

The Naval Board have decided to establish a Fleet Air Arm of the Royal Australian Navy, based, as far as practicable, on the scheme adopted in the Royal Navy, as set forth in Admiralty Fleet Order No. 1058 of 1924, and subsequent relative AFOs.

2. Applications have been invited from Officers wishing to undergo the Long Air Course of four years, commencing in January 1925.

3. Officers volunteering for the Fleet Air Arm must be of the rank or relative rank of Sub-Lieutenant or Lieutenant, and must not be above the age of 28 on 1 st January in the year in which they commence the course. Sub-Lieutenants must have obtained their Watchkeeping Certificates. In the main, Officers selected will be of the Executive Branch, but a small number of (E) Officers are also required. Officers before selection will be required to pass a medical examination.

4. Officers who apply are required to volunteer for service in the Fleet Air Arm, involving attachment to the Royal Australian Air Force for certain

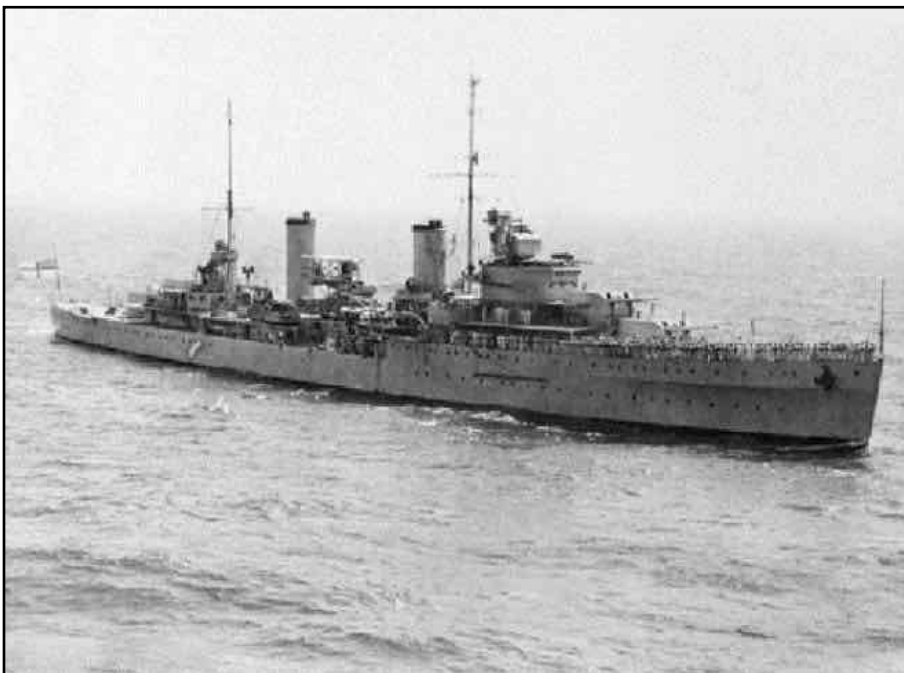
periods, the duration of which will be decided by the Naval Board from time to time. No Officer who volunteers will be required to undertake a second or subsequent period of attachment otherwise than with his own consent. For the present, it is intended that the periods of attachment and General Naval Service shall be approximately as follows:

- A. **First Period** - Air - Four years, which will include a period of training;
- B. **Second Period** - General - Two years Naval Service;
- C. **Third Period** - Air - Two years for 50 per cent of the Officers who have completed A — the rest remain General Service;
- D. **Fourth Period** - Air - Two years for 60 per cent of the Officers who have completed C — the rest remain General Service.;

E. **Fifth Period** - General for remainder, if any, of Service Lieutenant Commander's time, or Air for all Officers, who have completed D.

5. Appointments of attached Officers will be made by the Air Board on the nomination of the Naval Board.

6. Naval Officers attached to the Royal Australian Air Force will be granted Air Force rank during attachment, the initial rank granted being that of Flying Officer, and they will be eligible for advancement in the Royal Australian Air Force, irrespective of their rank in the Royal Australian Navy. They will be given temporary RAAF commissions while attached; such commissions will be given to ensure the status and



**HMAS SYDNEY in 1940 with its Seagull V amphibian aircraft
On the catapult between the funnels**



ADML (then a LCDR) Sir Victor Smith (seated) aboard HMS Tracker as Air Operation Officer in the Battle of the Atlantic ('Vat' Smith became known as the father of the FAA?)
 - see story on Page 30 that may dispute this)

authority of attached Naval Officers under Air Force Law while under training, or at such times during their attachment when they may have to command RAAF personnel not under the Naval Discipline Act, and will not in any way whatever affect their Naval status or authority.

Attached Naval Officers will invariably be addressed by their Naval titles, and if their Naval rank is relatively higher than their Air Force rank, they will take precedence (but not command) among Air Force Officers in accordance with their Naval rank. They will continue to wear the uniform of their Naval rank, but will wear also a distinguishing badge indicating that they are attached to the Royal Australian Air Force for service in the Fleet Air Arm.

7. They will continue during the attachment to draw their full naval pay, and will receive in addition an allowance of 6s per day. This allowance may be drawn in addition to (E) pay, or to Gunnery, Torpedo, or other similar continuous Specialist Allowance. It will be paid during attachment under the general conditions laid for Submarine Allowance. During the periods of Naval General Service, however, when the officers cease to be attached to the Royal Australian Air Force, the allowance for flying duties will not be payable.

8. When attached to RAAF Establishments on shore, they will either be accommodated and rationed, or will be eligible to receive in lieu, in addition to Naval full pay and flying duties allowance, where applicable, lodging and victualling or provision allowance at RAN rates.

9. When embarked during periods of attachment,

their flying duties will be considered as equivalent to specialist duties. They will, therefore, have the rank and status and authority of their Air Force rank when they are engaged in specialist air duties; at other times, when they are engaged in General Naval Duties, they will have their Naval rank, status and authority. They will be available for ship duty in addition to flying duty, and in order to emphasize this, they will, when appointed to a carrier or other of HMA Ships, receive an appointment from the Naval Board as well as an appointment from the Air Board.

10. Attached Officers will, as stated in paragraph 6, be eligible for advancement in the Royal Australian Air Force, under RAAF Regulations, irrespective of rank in the Royal

Australian Navy, and such advancement will be determined by the Air Board, in consultation with the Naval Board.

11. The promotion in the Royal Australian Navy of RAN Officers serving in the Fleet Air Arm will be governed by Naval Regulations, and this service will be considered to be as good as service towards promotion as if they had served in any other specialist branches.

12. Attached Officers, while serving at RAAF Establishments on shore, are to be borne nominally on the books of HMAS *Cerberus*; when serving afloat they will be borne on the books of the ship in which they are serving.

NAVAL AVIATION

'It is impossible to resist an admiral's claim that he must have complete control of, and confidence in, the aircraft of the battle fleet, whether used for reconnaissance, gunfire or air attack on a hostile fleet. The argument that similar conditions obtain in respect of Army cooperation aircraft cannot be countenanced. In one case the aircraft take flight from aerodromes and operate under precisely similar conditions to those of normal independent air force action. Flight from warships and action in connection with naval operations is a totally different matter. One is truly an affair of cooperation only; the other an integral part of modern naval operations.'
 Winston Churchill: Memorandum for Lord Inskip, 1936



No RAN VCs—Why?

All Australians should be concerned that so many RAN personnel have committed exceptional heroic and brave deeds but have never been awarded a VC. Several names for this award were submitted to the Honours and Awards Appeal Tribunal in 2013 and again in 2017 but, had little or no influence.

1. Two Fleet Air Arm personnel come to mind SBLT Andrew Perry and LACM Noel Shipp. SBLT Perry was recommended, presumably by the CO RANHFV for a 'Mention in Dispatches'. The US recognised his bravery with the award of the 'Silver Star' (the highest award by the US to a foreigner). Australia awarded a MID for his exceptional gallantry and flying skills during the 'Battle of Binh Dai'. Surely his bravery warranted more than a MID at the initial recommendation when the US saw fit to award the 'Silver Star'?

Later in the Honours and Awards Tribunal held on 6 March 2017 [here](#) (online subscribers only): Commodore David Farthing RAN (Rtd) and Captain Robert Ray RAN (Rtd) requested that SBLT Perry receive the Distinguished Flying Cross (DFC) and Commander Edward Bell RAN (Rtd) believed that he should receive the Victoria Cross for Australia (VC) for 'his night of outstanding bravery'. Why then did his original nominating officer recommend him for an MID when later senior officers recommended him for a higher award ranging from DFC to VC? Was the original nominating officer wrong in the first instance?

The Tribunal of 6 March 2017 comprising Mr Mark Sullivan, AO (Presiding Member) a Civilian; Brigadier Mark Bornholt, AM (Retd) Army; and Air Vice-Marshal John Quaipe, AM (Retd) RAAF suggested:

"The Minister recommend to the Governor-General that Sub-Lieutenant Andrew Perry be awarded the Medal for Gallantry for acts of gallantry in action in hazardous circumstances as a Flight Leader at Binh Dai, South Vietnam on 18 May 1970".

No Navy representative on the tribunal? 'Says it all' considering we have several Fleet Air Arm Admirals who could have assisted the Tribunal!

2. LACM Noel Shipp's case was also reviewed along with 13 others by the Honours and Awards Tribunal in 2013. I feel submissions by several senior naval officers went against his outstanding bravery as did the quota system. The senior officers at

that time seemed negative towards sailors being decorated. The full Shipp tribunal report can be found [here](#) (online subscribers only) in addition to the quota system.

3. LCDR Robert Rankin (HMAS *Yarra*) did the same as Captain Edward Fegen (HMS *Jervis Bay*) who was awarded the VC for his actions. I feel the tribunal failed to thoroughly address the comparisons of other VC recipients of the award who may have received the medal in similar circumstances. The Tribunal's Report is [here](#) (online subscribers only)

4. ORD SMN Edward Sheean also was reviewed by Honours and Awards Tribunal in 2013. Like many other VC winners, he remained at his post firing his weapon until the HMAS *Armida* sunk. This was similar to LACM Shipp who continued firing until the helicopter crashed. Tribunal Report [here](#) (online subscribers only).

It is also worthwhile noting that, at least until the end of WWII for RAN personnel to receive the award of a VC it had to go through the British Admiralty. The Army and RAAF did not have a similar commitment. It reminds me of the RAN flying the 'British White Ensign' up until the mid-1960's. How naïve we were!!

Roger Harrison

SA Division, Vice President.

Recent Passage of Bill Amendment—Submariners Special Operation

A review of the Veterans' Affairs Legislation Amendment (Partner Service Pension and Other Measures) Act 2019 has been reclassified.. Elements of this legislative amendment to the Veterans' Entitlements Act 1985 (VEA) reclassify Submarine Special Operations (SSO) service between 1 January 1993 and 12 May 1997.

As you are aware, since 2010, SSO which took place between 1 January 1978 and 31 December 1992 have been classified as 'operational' and 'qualifying service' under the VEA. Following a review by the Department of Defence, the Parliament has agreed that service by submariners on certain special operations after 31 December 1992 should be reclassified. The passage of this Act means that service on SSO between 1 January 1993 and 12 May 1997 is now also considered 'operational' and 'qualifying service' under the



VEA. This effectively extends the end date of the previous period of eligibility.

An eligible submariner is a member of the Australian Defence Force (ADF) who:

- served on a submarine special operation; and
- either has, or is eligible for, the Australian Service Medal (ASM) with clasp 'SPECIAL OPS' in respect of SSO service between 1 January 1978 to 12 May 1997.

This reclassification will provide this new cohort of submariners with all the benefits which flow from operational and qualifying service, including eligibility for the Service Pension at age 50 (subject to income and assets tests), the automatic grant of the Gold Card at age 70 and assessment of compensation claims under the more generous reasonable hypothesis standard of proof. They will also be eligible for treatment of any mental health condition, any malignant cancer and pulmonary tuberculosis, regardless of the link to military service under the Department of Veterans' Affairs (DVA) Non-Liability Health Care program.

Due to the highly classified nature of these operations, it can be difficult for a submariner to establish that a medical condition is linked to an incident which occurred on a submarine special operation.

The provision deems a submariner confirmed to have served on SSO to be on operational service for any period they were aboard a submarine during the 1978-1992 period. The provision has now been extended to end on 12 May 1997.

Any further updates affecting the classification of SSO service from 13 May 1997 will be communicated with your organisation.

You may also wish to distribute the updated Factsheet IS55 - Service on certain submarine special operations. 1978 to 1997 to your members.

If you have any further enquiries, these can be directed to Dr Jude van Konkelenberg, A/g Director, Liability & Service Eligibility on (02) 6289 5036 or via email at L.and.SE.Policy@dva.gov.au

Kate Pope PSM

First Assistant Secretary

Veterans' Services Design Division

(Notwithstanding this letter refers to Submariners, in particular, it is hoped that members who have friends from this area of the service will pass on the relevant information.Ed)

Application for National Emergency Medal For Cyclone Tracey

I thought that I should write to advise that I have sent a letter to the Minister for Defence for the award of the National Emergency Medal for those personnel who were involved in the clean-up of Darwin after Cyclone Tracy.

It seems anomalous to me that those personnel who responded to Cyclone Yasi where one person was killed and 10,000 residents were evacuated were awarded the medal but those who responded to Tracy on Christmas day 1974 are not recognised.

There were 65 people killed and 35,000 evacuated during Tracy. The two events : Tracy and Yasi just don't compare.

I have previously written to Honours and Awards but they knocked it back. I have always felt hard done by with respect to Tracy and believe that this should be rectified.

There will be many Fleet Air Arm personnel who were part of the relief effort. I would encourage them all to write to their MP.

Brian Swan

(Brian's Application to the Honours and Awards Board can be seen on page 34 and 'Operation Navy Help' can be seen [here](#) for online users.Ed)

Owen Sub-Machine Gun Never Fired in Anger

The painting on the cover of the September issue showing Observer 1 (CPO) Hancox running with his Owen Sub-Machine gun sent me searching for a posed photo taken of me in Vietnam early 1969. My photo certainly isn't an action shot but one of the blokes wanted me to pose outside of our workshop prior to me going for a day's joy flight with WO Jerry Schuerenberg.

I removed the stock from my Owen to make it easier to store in the aircraft and also in vehicles. The other big difference is that I never fired mine in anger.

John Macartney



Were they the First?

"(12 July 1941. Mine reported off shore near Beachport. This mine was subsequently landed by RMS Party and self-detonated on the beach sometime after landing, causing the death of two members of the RMS. Party — Able Seamen Todd and Danswan. (Note – It is believed that these two ratings are the first men killed on Australian soil as a result of enemy action)".

(Extract from War Diary of HMAS *Torrens* – later HMAS *Encounter*, the Naval Headquarters at Port Adelaide SA-For the quarter ending September 1941)



German Raider *Pinguin* (HK33)

Researched and written by the late Commander R. J. Pennock RAN and updated by Paul Shiels

On 12 July 1941, a mine was found floating in Rivoli Bay near Beachport SA by a local fisherman, Mr M Stehbens. He towed the mine back to Beachport to the foreshore near the foot of the jetty. Local inhabitants, realising the danger, convinced him to tow it to another location about one mile away.



AB W. Danswan RANR

Information on the mine was passed to Naval Headquarters at Port Adelaide (HMAS *Torrens*) and a Rendering Mines Safe (RMS) party arrived on the scene the next day. This consisted of Lieutenant Commander Greening RAN, Able Seamen T.W. Todd RANR from Port Adelaide SA and W.L.

Danswan RANR from Juneec NSW. A demolition charge was attached and connected by half a mile of cable to ensure everyone was a safe distance away sheltered by the sand dune. Having done that electrical wires were run across the railway line to the exploder in the sand hills. All was ready when along came the railwaymen's Section Trike, which cut the wires. New wires were rigged and connected up, the exploder pressed home - and nothing happened. The charge

did not go off as expected.

Having waited the regulation fifteen minutes the three seamen moved across the beach toward the mine and Able Seamen Todd and Danswan were only a few feet away when the unexpected explosion occurred. It is understood that a wave lifted the mine rolling it onto one of its horns and it exploded killing the two sailors. Lieutenant-Commander Greening escaped injury, but the two able-seamen unfortunately died before the ambulance from Millicent arrived, 20 minute after the explosion. **So far**

as is known these were the first casualties caused on Australian soil by Enemy Action.

Many had been killed off-shore by mines but, none were known to have been killed on Australian soil in either World War 1 or World War II. Japan did not enter the war for another five months, and the first raids against Australia were eight months away.

Both men were



AB T. W. Todd RANR



German Mine at Beachport SA, July 1941

acknowledged as war casualties – Killed in Action and their widows immediately granted a War Widows pension by the then Department of Veterans Affairs.

AB Todd is known to be the first South Australian killed on South Australian soil by Enemy Action.

A monument is built at Beachport SA in honour of these two men, but little else is known of them. The historical significance to Australia and South Australia, the latter with respect to AB Todd is significant.

A ship or establishment commissioned in their names to recognize their bravery and significance to the event would be more than fitting.

It was in late 1940 the German Raider *Penguin* (HK33) and auxiliary minelayer *Passat* laid a series of mines in the approaches to Newcastle, Port Stephens, Sydney, Hobart, Port Phillip and Adelaide. In the November they laid a number of Type Yx mines across both entrances to Investigator Strait in South Australia. *Penguin* laid her field at the western end between Cape Catastrophe and West Cape (at the foot of Yorke Peninsula) through which shipping passed to Port Pirie, Whyalla and Port Augusta; and *Passat* her field at the eastern end of the strait, the shipping lane that leads into Port Adelaide from east coast ports. Effectively, these two minefields closed off Spencer and St

Vincent's Gulfs and the access for merchant ships into the main ports of South Australia.

During the night of 7/8 November *Passat* laid her minefield across the ten miles of Backstairs Passage which lies between the eastern end of Kangaroo Island and Cape Jervis on the mainland. To ensure an accurate lay, they used the lighthouses at Cape Willoughby and Cape Jervis both of which were fully operational as accurate navigational aids.

While laying the mines in Backstairs Passage *Passat* had a close encounter with what was described as naval vessel of some kind. An eyewitness in *Passat* described the vessel as manoeuvring with dashing 'destroyer-like' movements. Whilst

the identity remains a mystery, it's more probable than not that it was either HMAS *Warrego* or HMAS *Swan*.

HMAS *Warrego* & HMAS *Swan* (sloops) and a number of naval auxiliary vessels were known to be patrolling in the general area with HMAS *Swan* anchoring later on the night of the 7th November at East-

ern Cove, Kangaroo Island and HMAS *Warrego* at Nepean Bay, both ships within a mile of Backstairs Passage. At 0140 on the 8th November HMAS *Swan* weighed anchor and rendezvoused with HMAS *Warrego* in Backstairs Passage for transit



German Arado Ar 196 aircraft as carried by *Penguin* launches off a Catapult



German Auxiliary Minelayer *Passat* Formerly Norwegian Tanker *Starstad*

to Melbourne. The Report of Proceedings and War Diaries for November 1940 of both ships place them in or near Backstairs Passage on night 7/8 November, the exact date *Passat* commenced mining in the same area.

One of the RAN ships was known to approach *Passat*. The Captain of the German Minelayer, Lieutenant (Kapitänleutnant) Warning using both messages by signal lamp and the use of the ship's siren successfully bluffed his way out of what could have been a very sticky situation and completed laying mines.

It was also on that night that the Australian Prime Minister, Robert Menzies broadcast a warning speech in which he declared that Australian waters could become the scene of hostilities at any time; 'even that very night'.



HMAS Swan at sea post World War II with Midshipman 'Gunroom' at the stern of the ship.

The first casualty at the entrance to Spencers Gulf was the passenger cargo vessel *Herford* on 7 December 1940. The mine blasted a forty-foot hole in the ships hull and she lost all power. The Adelaide based tugs *Wato* and *Woonda* were sent to her aid and found her almost ashore some twenty-four hours later. In poor weather and with the ship drawing over forty feet of water at the bow she was towed stern first into Port Lincoln harbour. Some months later she was successfully towed to Port Adelaide and temporary repairs made so that she could proceed to Sydney.

(Click [here](#) to follow the escapades of the Pinguin from 18:42 minutes and seconds until 29:53 minutes and seconds courtesy of the History Channel—online versions only)



HMAS Warrego coming alongside

Aftermath in South Australia:

The following table is not a complete list of the mines disposed of but gives an indication of the area of the South Australian coastline over which the mines were found in 1941. More were found and dealt with in later years:

Date	Location	Action taken
2 June	at Robe	rendered safe and sent to Flinders Naval Depot
5 June	near Whidbey Isles	sunk by SS <i>KAPARA</i>
7 June	at Wedge Island	destroyed
16 June	at Kingston SE	rendered safe and brought to Adelaide
12 July	at Beachport	self-detonated killing two Naval Ratings
18 July	north of Robe	rendered safe
24 July	near Cape Willoughby	sunk by HMAS <i>Coolabar</i>
26 July	south of Robe	rendered safe
27 July	south of Robe	rendered safe
23 August	Pt MacDonnell	rendered safe
12 September	north of Robe	rendered safe

Overall, near 40 mines were dealt with on the southern and eastern coasts of Australia.

SA Report for period to December 2019

By Roger Harrison

(Whipping Boy)

South Australia Division



December already. Where has this year gone? Christmas is almost on top of us and I am not ready. If I had put my head down and progressed through the naval ranks to reach First Sea Lord, then I would add 2 extra months to the calendar year. On that note, the SA Division extend to all our colleagues in this large brown land, a very “Merry Christmas” and feeling generous, we will chuck in a “Happy New Year.”

While on the Christmas theme, the SA Division has their Christmas end of year lunch at The Windsor Hotel on Sunday 8 December 2019 starting around 1200 mid-day. Some drinks supplied by the Division. All welcome to attend (Stokers stand fast) and you can advise secretary Jan on 0407610894.

Museum Tour

Grim news out of the way first. Member Cameron Reed passed away in Adelaide on the 15 September 2019. Michael Cain and I attended the Service at the Repat Chapel where we met and spoke to the family.

The Commanding Officer Naval Headquarters, Commander Andrew Burnett, has invited the Fleet Air Arm Association to attend the SA Annual commemorative Church Service, Jeffcott Street, on Saturday 16 November 2019. Service followed by a light lunch. The Governor of SA, and family, will also attend.

The Port Adelaide Aviation Museum tour is on at 1100 Sunday, 17 November 2019. A pub meal can be sorted later for those who wish to lunch with the division. I offer my apology here for not attending as it clashes with my fund raising for the Brain Cancer Walk on the same day, although if Loraine and I get away in time, we could meet up. Refer to recent Flash Message (14/10/19)

A Certificate of Service was presented to our over worked secretary Jan Akeroyd at our last meeting by the State President Michael Stubbington. Certificate of Service for the supreme efforts applied in keeping the Division fully informed with what’s happening locally and nationally.

Secretary Jan has organised a gathering of members at her hometown of Kapunda over the 28/29 and 30 April 2020 where she is planning tours and trips for all to enjoy. Kapunda is steeped in history and has a lot to offer visitors. Contact Jan on 0407610894 for your expression of interest. Numbers are needed for this adventure to begin.

John Siebert and I attended the HARS Aviation Museum Tracker aircraft reunion over the 23rd and 24 of October at Albion Park. Organised by one man namely Bruce Saville RAN Rtd who did a magnificent job in planning and organising various members to be involved in displaying not only the serviceable Tracker, but the HARS Museum behind the scenes tour. A “Meet and Greet” was held at the Albion Park RSL on the Wednesday evening followed by an excellent meal served by the Club. Loraine and I dined with Skinhead Kelson and his charming cousin, also Bruce Saville, Leon Brown, George Velaris, Dave Dickfoss with wives/mistresses. On Thursday, 70 plus pilots and ground crews attended to see the Tracker start up, spread wings and taxi for take-off which fortunately was successful all be it, noisy. I had forgotten how much of a clatter and tractor like, these aircraft were. And yes, the Tracker had NAVY painted on the fuselage and it had been over 20 years since anyone had seen this aircraft flying. A delightful lunch was provided by the HARS group of volunteers and it gave the boys a chance to chatter. I lunched with Michael Hough the HARS Navy Heritage Flight Project Leader who gave an excellent welcoming speech to us all. Also chatted to Peter Cannell and Leon Brown over lunch. The museum was opened for us all to wander and ask questions. More of these details will be in the Slipstream edition I believe.

Lack of Rain this Season

John Siebert also attended the Tracker reunion at HARS beforehand and prior to attending the Federal Council meeting as our delegate on Saturday 26 October. More details to follow when John meets for our 20 November meeting at The Windsor. The sunshine throughout NSW was wonderful although I believe Leon Brown (Nowra) was lamenting on the lack of rain this season.

While John and Anna Siebert were travelling through the US recently, he spotted the Firefly aircraft that once adorned a pole at Griffiths NSW. It had been re-furbished and possibly flew at The Oshkosh Air Show. How good is that? See John for more accurate details.

A “Tough” drill Chief Petty Officer ordered his men to hold up their left legs. One recruit sailor mistakenly held up his right leg, thus placing it beside his neighbour’s left leg.

“Alright, alright,” roared the Chief. “who’s the wise guy holding up both legs.”

All for now folks but wishing everyone good health over this silly season and into the new year 2020.

Regards to you all.

Did Pay Day Allotments Contribute to Well Known Clothing Store Closure?

When the RAN stopped the pay day allotment system sailors could no longer allot money to Glendinnings (yes, one could build up a sizable 'bank account' with G's while their ships were away and buy new clothes on return). "The resultant affect on the G's cashflow was a significant factor in the closing of the stores", one former store manager said.

Most members of the RAN past and present will have set foot in a Glendinning store at some stage and most would be aware that the business is no longer operating, but where does the name come from?

Alfred (Fred) Glendinning was born in the Melbourne suburb of East Malvern on 7 February 1918. He was schooled in Melbourne and as a tall athletic sportsman played Aussie Rules for Carlton. His father was a postmaster on the Mornington Peninsula and for a time Fred worked as a postal clerk. But at age 21, and with the excitement of war clouds looming, he enlisted in the RAN on 28 March 1939. His first posting was to HMAS Cerberus as a Probationary Writer.

Unusually, Fred's first sea posting was to the Armed Merchant Cruiser HMS Arawa, then serving on the East Indies Station. Arawa was built as the Australian Government passenger-cargo liner Esperance Bay which together with her sisters was sold in 1936 to British shipping interests. In her he was promoted Leading Writer and when the ship returned to England to take up trooping he was posted ashore for a short period to the London Depot. Next were postings to the 'N' class destroyers HMA Ships Napier and Nepal and the 'Q' class HMAS Quiberon. Fred's career was obviously colourful as in August 1942 he was dis-rated to Writer and lost his Good Conduct Badge but in February 1943 he was back to his rank of Leading Writer. Finally in May 1943 he came ashore to HMAS Rushcutter where he was promoted Petty Officer Writer.

With the end of the war there was still much to be done in bringing the troops back home, transferring occupation forces to Japan and helping with the flood

of refugees who needed to be relocated. The Landing Ship Infantry HMAS Manoora was suited to this work and Fred served in her for nearly two years, until the end of 1947. Next came a succession of postings to various Sydney based shore establishments with promotion to Chief Petty Officer Writer in 1949. The end of permanent naval service came in July 1951 when Fred was discharged ashore to begin another chapter in his long association with the RAN.

Fred was always popular with his messmates and something of a larrikin, with a flair for business. While Manoora operated in the Pacific Islands he brought back bags of cultured pearls which were sold at a large profit, and another of his more memorable

escapades was the acquisition of two discarded, but almost brand new, American Army jeeps. Fred had the foresight to donate one of these to the ship's Commander and then there was no trouble getting them onboard where they were re-painted in pusser's grey with RAN emblazoned on the sides. In Sydney, Fred's jeep was hoisted ashore and he drove it off through the dockyard gates with a friendly wave to the duty Naval Policeman – the jeep needless to say was sold for a handsome profit.

But what was Fred to do in civvy street, not that he was short of ideas, after all he had to look after his week-

end job as a SP bookie. But there had to be other more legitimate opportunities using his navy skills and contacts, then came a flash of brilliance.

At that time sailors had to proceed ashore in uniform but with plenty of money in their pockets they could not wait to change into civvies. But where could they find the type of attire needed to provide a smart appearance. Enter Glendinning and Stacey, Naval Outfitters. Fred may have found inspiration from his sojourn in England, where it was Bernards for sailors and Gieves for officers, a near monopoly as non-government suppliers of naval uniforms. A trip to the former was almost a rite of passage for a tiddly cap, with a slight upward fore and aft sweep.

Fred was always a sharp dresser but knew little of tailoring. However the technical colleges were then offering short courses to ex-servicemen to enter busi-



Glendinning's Advert famously used in Navy News

ness. Not that this sort of craft appealed directly to Fred but he managed to persuade his mate and ex-stoker Ernest (Ernie) Stacey to take a tailoring course, at which he excelled. Fred went to work for Seagraves who were then the main naval outfitters in Sydney. Seagraves was not particularly well run and Fred spied an opportunity for improvements. Fred and Ernie first bought an existing small gentlemen's outfitters in Sydney's up-market Macquarie Place and for a while worked there from an upstairs room, learning the ropes. Not long afterwards they rebadged the business as naval outfitters and opened as Glendinning and Stacey.

It was soon apparent that they were in the wrong part of town and needed to be closer to where customers would pass by – so they moved to new premises at 208 George Street between Wynyard Station and the Quay. Royal Naval House was just down the road and at this stage the whole area with its pubs was a stamping ground for sailors. The nearby Ship Inn became Fred's favourite watering hole. With growing business an agency was established at HMAS Cerberus.

This business proved a great success with sailors readily accepting smart new suits and jumpers. It was not until 1967 with the anti-Vietnam movement that sailors were allowed ashore in civvies. Prior to this many customers would arrive at the shop in uniform and purchase civvies complete for a run ashore, leaving their uniforms to be picked up later.

While Glendinning's provided items of uniform and carried out alterations they did not have the expertise to tailor square rig uniforms, which were contracted out to a wholesale manufacturing tailoring business run by Fred Ambrosoli.

Disguise the Blackened Mess

A new entrant to the market was Red Anchor, first owned by Stan Phillips and later by Kevin James, who opened a naval outfitter's at Macleay Street, Potts Point near HMAS Kuttubul with a branch at Cerberus. This unwanted competition was bought out by Glendinning's in the late 1970s.

One of their customers was the eminent marine artist John Allcot; he was very short of stature and his clothes had to be shortened, otherwise his sleeves became covered in paint. This led to a new awakening and Fred started collecting works of art which were frequently on display in the shop. The wheel of fortune had turned full circle as for a time the ex-captain's secretary could now count a retired four ring captain amongst his staff.

Tired of paying rent, Fred looked around to buy his own premises and with ever an eye for a bargain he acquired an ex-brothel, near Central Station, which had been fire damaged. George King, another ex-matelot mate, had entered the building trade and was called upon for advice; George assured him they could disguise the blackened mess and gaping holes by leaving well alone and covering it all with plasterboard and paint. George also remembers that Fred had acquired at auction a clock from HMAS Sydney, most



The Late CPO WTR Fred Glendinning

likely a wardroom fitting, for which he paid the princely sum of \$5,000. George, who had become a collector of clocks, took a fancy to this and after several years Fred sold it to him at mate's rates, discounted to \$4,900.

The business eventually passed into the hands of Colin Ambrosoli (son of the wholesale tailor) who at age 18 started working for Fred. However it continued on under the singular name of Glendinning's. Fred now concentrated on the life of a gentleman with plentiful time for bowls, golf and fishing. He was happily married to Jean and they had two children. Some time after Jean died Beverley Noble, a delightful young widow, became Fred's partner and although never married, they lived together for 16 years until Fred's death in October 2003 at age 85. Amongst Beverley's mementoes is one of Fred's favourite pictures – a fine early oil painting of HMAS Sydney by John Allcot.

In the late 1980s Dennis Stokes (a Leading Seaman – Underwater Weapons) when still in the navy gained some casual work with Glendinning's and when he left the RAN this became a full-time occupation. With plenty of on-the-job experience and a love for the work, in 1993 Dennis bought the business from Colin Ambrosoli. Passers-by would have seen the famous Glendinning's sign above a shopfront along Cowper Wharf Road at Woolloomooloo just outside the Garden Island Naval Base and there were branches of the business in Cairns, at HMAS Cerberus and in Rockingham, W.A.

Perhaps a fitting tribute to Fred, the character who made the most of opportunities and brought a little sunshine into the lives of those who knew him.



Steve Chaplin suggests some aviation changes for the LHDs

Planning for the Royal Australian Navy's (RAN's) two Canberra class landing helicopter dock (LHD) ships were initially based upon the nation's experiences with the International Peacekeeping Force activities in support of East Timor. The difficulty in sustaining an expeditionary force to one of Australia's nearest neighbours quickly demonstrated the need for an improved amphibious sealift capability above the then existing structure.

In 2007 the Spanish company Navantia was awarded the contract to construct the two LHDs from the keel to the flight deck, with the remainder of the fabrication of the superstructure and fit out performed in Australia by BAE Systems Australia.

Both ships would be home ported and operated from Fleet Base East in Sydney, with the intention for regular operations being conducted out of Townsville, home of the Australian Army's 3rd Brigade. Moreover, this placed the vessels ideally to respond to situations throughout Asia and the Pacific Islands. Planning soon began to implement the 2nd Battalion (3rd Brigade Battalion) to become the Army's specialist amphibious infantry battalion. In more recent times reports have identified the rapid and escalating build-up by the Chinese in and around the Spratly Islands, claiming the South China Sea as their own, a serious concern for our own military strategists.

Rotary wing

A former 'Head Navy Capability' when referring to the ski-jump said: "The bottom line was that the original Spanish design had the ski ramp and it was too expensive to remove and re-design that part of the ship".

The former 'Head Navy Capability' continued: "Also, when the LHD is part of a task group it is generally regarded as a high profile unit. This is because it can have up to a battalion sized unit and its vehicles embarked and it is generally the mission essential unit i.e. if the LHD were lost then there is little point in the task group continuing . . . as the task is usually to deliver the battalion or unit to somewhere where it is needed".

Senior Navy sources also argue that embarking enough STOVL aircraft to be an effective force would have required abandoning the LHDs capability as amphibious warfare vessels.

They further argued that exist-



MRH-90 is designed for the RAN in two airmobile squadrons, one special operations support squadron, and one maritime support helicopter squadron

ing onboard fuel and ordnance storage would not be able to sustain such fixed-wing operations, and structural modifications.

Now with HMA Ships Canberra and Adelaide in full commission as the Fleet's major amphibious units, will ADF planners now re-consider beefing up the LHD's aircraft suite with larger rotary machines to expand the capabilities of the vessels in their various peacetime or wartime operations? Such helicopters would be integrated into the Fleet Air Arm list of equipment and be crewed, controlled and operated solely by RAN personnel.

A purchase of six larger transport helicopters would provide two aircraft per ship, one aircraft in maintenance, and the sixth for crew training and/or in standby for rotation for aircraft going into heavy maintenance. These aircraft would substantially boost the LHD's operational capacities, with their ability to lift and transfer larger and heavy loads (including personnel transfers) in a much shorter time parameter. For the humanitarian aid role, consider how quickly and effectively the much larger helicopters would be able to fly in, underslung freight of diesel generators, fresh water desalination systems, mobile field hospitals and desperately needed supplies. Compare this operation to those undertaken by the smaller MRH-90s equates to 'less trips - more freight' with the larger aircraft winning out on all fronts.

The LSD HMAS Choules has also received certification to operate larger aircraft in cross-deck operations utilising her large flight deck aft which can accommodate two Chinook helicopters (or possibly CH-53K King Stallions). Flight operations are believed to be able to be conducted up to Sea State 5.

With the existing LHD specifications stating that eight helicopters, with 18 helicopters (maximum hangar space), would be carried for the vessels standard deployment/operation has and is yet to be witnessed or demonstrated. A re-evaluation of the MRH-90 numbers would need to be considered.

The selection of the MRH-90 shared between Navy and Army appears to be a comfortable fit for

the LHDs, however in a combat exigency situation when equipment and support stores for landed troops is a priority, an aircraft with a lot more grunt is required to handle the increased demand.

Boeing CH-47 Chinook

Given, that on the several recent deployments in which Army Chinooks have been deployed to the LHD, it was soon proven that the larger aircraft are not only capable of operating from these types of seaborne platforms, but have proven the LHD is an ideal vessel in which to amalgamate these larger type aircraft. The Boeing CH-47 Chinook purportedly is the most reliable heavy lift (24,000lbs) helicopter in the

world. In its current configuration, the CH-47 Chinook is primarily a land-based troop transportation and re-supply platform. There are no marinised versions of this aircraft in the ADF.

As was reported, the earlier Chinook airframes allegedly experienced corrosion



Chinooks are a capable troop transport from LHDs

problems, but this obstacle is believed to have been corrected and strengthened in recent times. It was also said the floors needed upgrading to facilitate quick unload capabilities.

The Chinook has a greater power margin at operating weight and its dual rotor system also negates the need for a tail rotor. Single-rotor helicopters often run into situations at high altitude where tail rotor thrust is not sufficient to hold a high hover. The tandem rotor arrangement ensures a very stable helicopter configuration in an operational situation, though the drawback is less agility to deal with enemy attacks.

Sikorsky CH-53K King Stallion

With a combined 22,500hp surging through its three turbines - roughly 50 percent more power than its predecessor - the helicopter's top speed will near 200 knots. The triple engine King Stallion's main advantage is size, and with its folding tail boom it will fit on amphibious warfare ships for a better performance. Initially, that's why the Sea Stallion existed, and why the smaller Sea Knight was the same tandem configuration as Chinook. If you don't have the space limitation you don't care,



King Stallion has proved its Heavy Lift Capability

you buy the CH-47 Chinook because it can accomplish the missions you need while being extensively supported world-wide.

The CH-53K King Stallion is considered the most modern and advanced heavy-lift helicopter in the world today. The ultimate goal is for the King Stallion to carry an impressive 15 tons of cargo slung externally below the aircraft for over 110 miles. The helicopter will possess a maximum gross take-off weight of 85,000lbs, with its load capacity three tons greater than the Chinook. Its developers refer to it as a 'smart helicopter' due to its automatic flight control system utilised during landings and as well as take offs, and which is highly effective in difficult weather conditions of fog or dust.

High strength composites were used for a large part of the King Stallion airframe construction instead of traditional steel and aluminium.

The CH-53K King Stallion will have a state of the art 'smart' glass cockpit, its engines will have a multi-channel Full Authority Digital Engine Control (FADEC) system, and for the pilots, flight control inputs will be processed through a fully integrated fly-by-wire system. With the King Stallion, "The pilot can talk to the helicopter and plan the mission on a tablet before entering the cockpit". This element improves the safety of passengers by allowing pilots to focus on carrying out their

mission rather than on flying the helicopter.

The earlier model CH-53E Sea Stallion has been very much a 'work in progress' since its first flight, with FLIR turrets, gun mounts, communications systems, self-defence countermeasures and other systems being lashed on over time. The CH-53 King Stallion will have all these capabilities integrated into its original design, along with a trio of 50 calibre machine guns, and its design allows for easy additions of new systems in the future.

However, the King Stallion's major disadvantage is its high cost - almost double that of the

Chinook. The current price tag of each CH-53K King Stallion is US\$87 million, compared to roughly US\$40 million for each Chinook.

Onboard space

The primary reason why the King Stallion is beneficial for shipboard use is that it takes up less space on the deck. For example, the size comparison doesn't show that the difference in undercarriage allows the King Stallion to hang its rear end over the deck. You can't do that with the Chinook. Where space is a concern (like it always is on a ship) then the CH-53 King Stallion wins.

In addition, the aircraft has provided for the King Stallion's disconnect mechanism, which decouples



CH-53 King Stallion with rotors folded on the lift of a US Ship

the drive shaft in the tail and assists in allowing it to fold automatically when the pilot presses a button in the cockpit. By folding its main rotor as well, the CH-53 King stallion is thus fully shipboard compatible, capable of operating on the busy and crowded flight decks of aircraft carriers and amphibious assault ships, and then folding into a compact size to enable storage and maintenance to be performed either on deck or in the limited space of shipboard hangars.

The CH-53 King Stallion airframe is far more adaptable. The only thing you can do with a Chinook is fold the blades. Its size is fixed.

Recent interoperability trials with the USN have also proven the LHDs are very capable of operating with helicopters the size of Sikorsky King Stallions.

Comfortable fit or not

As an example, with the recent volcanic and earthquake activities to the north of Australia in south-east and south-west Asia, the ADF could be called upon to provide assistance for the possible evacuation, medical aid and support for the local communities. This is where these larger helicopters would be a perfect match up with the LHDs.

The ships' specifications identify the flight deck configured for six spots on the port side for medium sized aircraft such as the MRH-90 or Blackhawk, which allows for simultaneous take-off and landing operations. Alternatively, it can support take-off and landing operations of four Chinooks (and possibly CH-53K King Stallions).

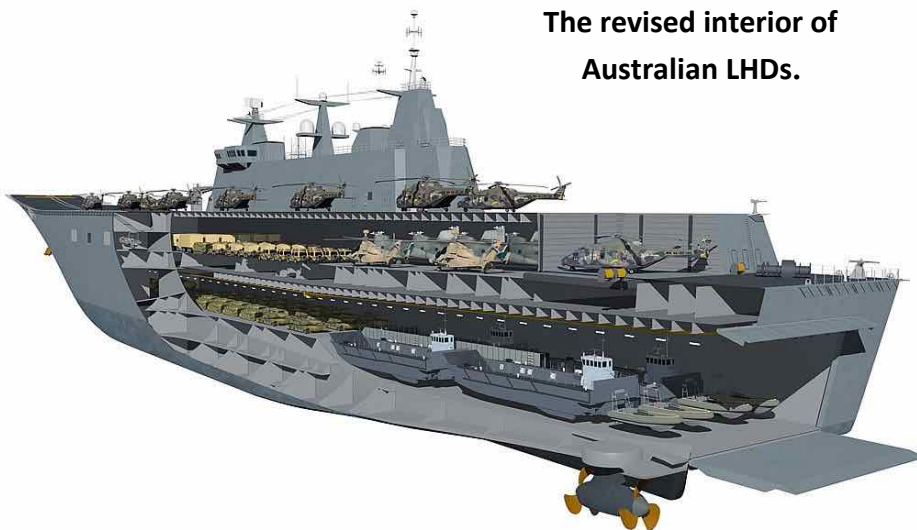
There are two aircraft elevators - one aft of the flight deck and one forward of the island on the starboard side - that can accommodate medium sized helicopters, with the aft elevator able to accommodate the larger helicopter types.

So much more can be achieved with either helicopter embarked as they possess similar operational capabilities. However the King Stallion would be better suited to shipboard strategies given it is already operating in a marinised version.

Hangar storage would also be easier with the CH-53K as it has only the one main rotor compared to the CH-47 with large rotors. The workload/time in folding the rotors and in stowing, this writer would imagine to be a lot more time consuming for the Chinook compared to the King Stallion.

Given the weight variation between the King

The revised interior of Australian LHDs.



Stallion and the Chinook, there could be a concern to calculate whether or not the CH-53K King Stallion could be too heavy to operate from the flight deck. Probable estimates on the heavier aircraft appear to indicate the following weights:

- | | | |
|---|----------------------------|--------------------------|
| • | King Stallion Empty Weight | 33,226lb
(15,071 kg) |
| | Loaded Weight | 74,000 lb
(33,600 kg) |
- | | | |
|---|----------------------|--------------------------|
| • | Chinook Empty Weight | 24,578 lb
(11,148 kg) |
| | Loaded Weight | 33,000lb
(15,000 Kg) |

Specifications correlated to the LHD flight deck allows for both day and night operations and has 4 x spots for larger helicopters (CH -47D Chinook helicopter type), and another Aft spot, heavy reinforced especially for the Bell-Boeing MV -22 Osprey OR the CH-53 Super Stallion. As previously identified, aircraft transport from the hangar to the flight deck is delivered with two elevators, one Aft, cantilevered bay (13.3 x 11.2 meters) and another Forward - Starboard side of the island (17 x 11.2 meters) with a capacity for just over 27 tons. In the Empty Weight arrangement, the CH-53 King Stallion weighs in at a shade over 15 ton – a margin of approximately 12 tons under the 27 ton capacity.

Based on the calculated estimates, it would appear that the CH-53K could safely operate from the flight deck, considering when transferred from flight deck to hangar deck it would not be in a “Loaded Weight” configuration and the reverse would be applicable from hangar deck to flight deck

Conclusion

Short of an initial outlay of millions of dollars for the six heavy lift aircraft, it could be vindicated in Defence (Navy) initially leasing three aircraft (one for each LHD and another as a back-up/training aircraft) for a three-year period and with an option of a two-year extension, for flight and ground crews to be selected and trained in the operations of the new model.

It would be deemed more applicable, in the first instance, to lease three of the older CH-53E Super Stallions as these aircraft already have an operationally proven track record (with most of the bugs ironed out) and are in active service with the USN and would be an ideal introduction platform for the new RAN crews in which to gain experience over the five - year period.

Throughout the proposed RAN lease period with the CH-53E Super Stallion, the CH-53K King Stallion would unquestionably have undertaken additional hundreds of flight hours in testing, training, upgrading and implementing the multitude of snags emanating from this new aircraft before Defence (Navy) decide upon the purchase with the newer aircraft.

Conversely, the decision could be made to retain the CH-53E Super Stallion after the lease period was over.

Surely it is better to spend more now and increase our LHD capability in heavy lift, than try and play catch up at a later date, which usually never works. This will emphatically be a win-win for the RAN and more importantly expand the LHD's operational capabilities.

(Steve Chaplin joined the RAN in 1965 as a Junior Recruit and went on to become a Weapons Mechanic. Served in HMAS Parramatta and participated in the march out Guard in Labuan in 1966 at the cessation of hostilities in Borneo. Commissioned the DDG, HMAS Brisbane and also served in the ship's first deployment to Vietnam. Overseas posting at the RAN's Support Base, HMAS Tarangau providing weapon maintenance and training to the 6 Attack Class Patrol Boats. Completed 20 years Full Time service and paid off as a Chief Petty Officer from his last ship HMAS Tobruk in 1985. In civilian employment, worked in aviation at Senior Management roles (Coastwatch, Customs and Aviation Medical Evacuations (MEDEVAC)).

March Edition

**Closing date for all Articles & Reports
to be into the Editor no later than**

1 March 2019

Australian Veterans Recognition Bill 2019 Notification

I would like to thank you for your ongoing commitment and support to ensuring veterans and their families receive the recognition and respect they deserve for their service and sacrifice to our country.

I am pleased to let you know that the Government's Australian Veterans' Recognition (Putting Veterans and their Families First) Bill 2019 has passed Federal Parliament.

This legislation formally establishes the Australian Defence Veterans' Covenant which includes an oath, lapel pin and Veteran Card which are available for veterans and eligible reservists.

With the passing of this legislation we will now start to send out the lapel pins and oath to those who have already registered via mail in the coming weeks.

The new Veteran Card, which is a redesign of the existing DVA health cards, continues to provide access to treatments and benefits and will soon provide access to thousands of offers from businesses across Australia as a part of a new benefits program.

We are expecting to launch the benefits program very soon and will be sending information packs in the mail to Ex-Service Organisations and RSL Sub-branches which includes promotional material and a set of frequently asked questions to help you support veterans to ensure they get the most out of the program.

For more information about the Covenant, please visit <https://www.dva.gov.au/benefits-and-payments/australian-defence-veterans-covenant>

Applications can be submitted through MyService ([here](#)), contacting DVA by calling DVA on 1800 555 254, or by visiting your local Veterans Access Network office.

Liz Cosson AM CSC

Secretary

Department of Veterans' Affairs

(By Email to Ex-Service Organisations)

Ex-RAN Meteorological Branch Reunion

This reunion is to be held in Nowra NSW, over the weekend of 21 to 23 February 2020 with the venue being the Shoalhaven ex-Servicemen's Sports Club on Greenwell Point Road.

On Friday 21 February at 1700 there will be a Meet and Greet at the Sports Club in the Jack Elliott Room.

A tour of the Fleet Air Arm Museum is being arranged for the Saturday morning, 22 February



where they will display equipment from the old Met Office. It is also hoped to have a tour of the Met Office but this has to be confirmed.

The main event will be dinner at 1700 on the Saturday night in the Stanford Room at the Sports Club, 131 Greenwell Point Road, Worrigee, followed at 2000 by speeches.

For those interested a game of golf is being arranged commencing at 1000 for 9 holes on the Sunday 23 February

All ex-RAN 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 hevandernomads@hotmail.com or via the Facebook page RAN Meteorological .

Victoria Division Report

Best wishes to all members from the Victoria Division.

May you have an enjoyable Festive Season and a safe, happy and prosperous New Year. Our thoughts are with any members who may have suffered in the recent dreadful bush fires.

We have recently held our final meeting for 2019 which was also our Christmas Breakup. Numbers were slightly down on previous years but it was pleasing to see quite a few partners and family members in attendance. This is something we have been encouraging and hopefully this trend will continue. Our venue, the Mission to Seafarers once again made us welcome and my thanks to the staff for their assistance. It was great to catch up with a few old hands. Long time member Dick Prentice who joined the navy in 1948 and hasn't been able to make our meetings recently made a welcome appearance. Another old friend Mary Hobbs who is ninety five made the effort to attend and was warmly welcomed.

Since our last report the Federal Council Meeting has been held at HMAS *Albatross*. No doubt this will be discussed elsewhere but the most important item discussed was our continuing decline in membership. A discussion paper is to be circulated shortly to all divisions with the hope that some answers to arresting the decline can be found.

I have mentioned several times recently that long time member Ron Andrews has been battling health problems but at long last appears to be on the road to recovery.

Our next meeting will be the Annual general Meeting on Sunday 2nd February.

*Yours Aye
Mal Smith*

This year (2019) marks the 100th Anniversary of the London To Darwin Air Race ([check here](#))

... and 50 years ago, 81 aircraft took part in a re-enactment of the race. Among the contenders was an RAN Fleet Air Arm team: Dusty King, Peter Coulson, Peter Plunkett-Cole and Peter McNair.

Peter Coulson has offered to tell the story of this re-enactment for Slipstream. All Peter Coulson's records are at the FAA Museum, so he would appreciate input from the other team members.

So keep your eyes open for the **March 2020 issue.**

Was He the Real Father of the of RAN Fleet Air Arm, First RAN Pilot and only RAN Officer to be Awarded the DFC in WWII?

*First Published by Naval Historical Society of
Australia in September 1993 & updated by NHSA.
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LCDR P. E. Carr DFC RAN

Whilst documentation of our Naval history regarding ships and battles are well covered; these battles could not have been won or lost without the brave officers and men who so gallantly served our nation. LCDR “Pally” Carr, as he was affectionately known, was unique in Naval history as the only serving Naval officer in the RAN to receive the Distinguished Flying Cross in World War II. Air Commodore W.H. Garing, CBE, DFC, DSC (US), RAAF (Ret.), in his Valediction at the funeral of LCDR Carr summed up the man when he described him as “A great and unbelievably courageous Australian”.



***Supermarine Southampton operated by the RAAF from
Point Cook from 1928-1939 which the then
LEUT Carr would have flown***

Born in 1908, LCDR Carr was formally educated in Melbourne and in 1918, attended Geelong Grammar School where he spent four years. In 1922 he was selected as a Cadet to attend the RAN College at Jervis Bay. He excelled as Chief Cadet Captain in 1924 and was King’s Medallist winner as the best all round Cadet. In the same year he won the Governor General’s Cup for the Best Individual All Round Sportsman. He graduated with distinction from the College in 1925.

After graduating, “Pally” was sent to the UK where he spent four years at sea and on various courses, returning to Australia in 1930 as a SBLT.

Volunteers were called for at that time for secondment to the RAAF, training as pilots. “Pally” volunteered, was accepted and spent two years flying seaplanes at Point Cook.

Unfortunately, the Service rules at the time were rather Gilbertian and precluded an RAN pilot from displacing RAAF pilots, who at the time were flying the RAN’s sea-borne aircraft. During this period of secondment to the RAAF, “Pally” wore RAAF uniform by day and Naval mess undress at night, except on ceremonial occasions when he reverted to Naval frock-coat. As a LEUT in the RAN, he was given the honorary rank in the RAAF of Flt. Lt. for which he dressed during the day (*Commonwealth Navy Order 137/1925 which formally established a Fleet Air Arm in the RAN refers to this requirement*).

1932 was an exciting year, as he



***Pilots Course Graduating Class on 2 December 1932
at No.1 Flying Training School RAAF Point Cook***

qualified for his pilot's Brevet wings and in 1933, he flew with Air Commodore W.H. Garing and they remained close friends for life.

The then LEUT Carr was rejected transfer to RAAF while on secondment to the RAAF in 1934 due to several Flight Lieutenants and Flying Officers on Short Service Commissions with Air Force knowledge superior to his. Also, as the number of permanent commissions available were very limited, their claims were stronger, especially as his naval career was still open to him.

"Pally" returned to sea-going service in 1935 as a fully qualified Naval pilot. As he was unable to fly with the RAN, the Naval Board then offered him an Observer's course in the UK, which he accepted, arriving in England in 1936. After qualifying, he spent four years serving in aircraft carriers HMS *Furious*, HMS *Courageous* and HMS *Ark Royal* in European and Mediterranean waters.

In July 1939, "Pally" joined HMAS *Perth*, which sailed from Portsmouth, bound for Australia via New York. *Perth* was to represent Australia at the opening of the World Fair. After leaving New York on the homebound voyage, war became imminent and

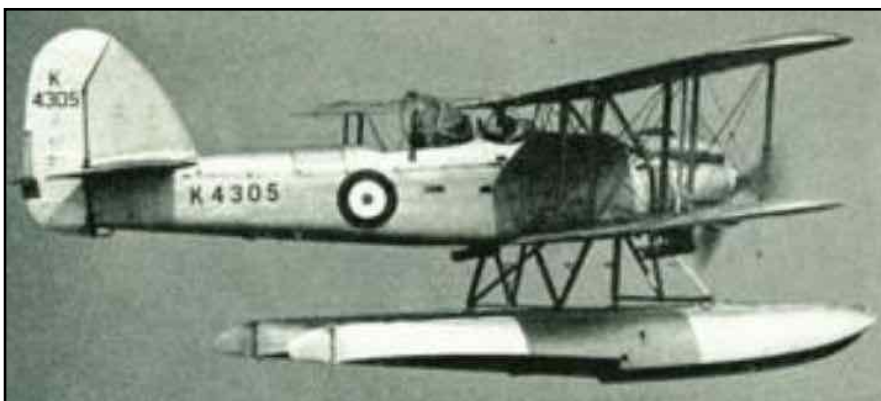


LEUT CARR , on the left, in RAAF uniform with RAAF 'Wings' as an Honorary RAAF FLT LT . He was required under Commonwealth Naval Order 137/1925 to conform to this dress code by day and Naval uniform at night.

ing in the east coast of UK at Royal Naval Air Stations at Arbroath (HMS *Condor*) and Crail (HMS *Jackdaw*), he was appointed to HMS *Hermes*, operating in the Indian Ocean between Mombasa, the Seychelles, Mauritius and Ceylon. "Pally" was re-

called to Australia, leaving HMS *Hermes* in Trincomalee in April 1942. It is interesting to note that the day after his leaving HMS *Hermes* the aircraft-carrier was sunk by aircraft from a Japanese aircraft carrier. On safely arriving in Australia, "Pally" joined HMAS *Australia*, taking part in the Guadalcanal landing and the Battle of Savo Island.

On 16 December 1942, he was posted to HMAS *Magnetic* (shore establishment at Townsville) for duty, once again with the RAAF.



Fairey Seafox flown by LCDR Carr from HMS Orion

He served briefly with No. 100 Torpedo Bomber Squadron based in Milne Bay, TPNG. "Pally" was then posted to RAAF Command at Allied HQ in Brisbane. He initiated, in conjunction with the USN, the highly-secret offensive mine-laying campaign, using night-flying RAAF Catalinas of 11 and 20 Squadrons, working out of Cairns and Darwin. These operations ranged between Indonesia and the South China Seas. Air Commodore Garing stated in later years that he had personal knowledge that the operations were highly successful – at one stage, bottling up a considerable number of enemy warships for a whole fortnight.

'Pally' took off from Darwin 0644/Z on 30 September 1943 in Catalina A24-67 of 20 Sqn. RAAF for torpedo attack in Pamela Harbour, Celebes.

Unfortunately, the Catalina which "Pally" was flying was shot down off Pomala. His mission at this time was testing, under operational conditions, a new American torpedo. The torpedo had a problem in that when its engine was fired, a great flash occurred, lighting up the aircraft, which could be seen for miles. It was because of this problem with the torpedo that "Pally's" Catalina was shot down. Although he was a lone survivor, he did rescue one other member of the Catalina's crew who died within 36 hours of being brought ashore.

Unluckily, he was captured by the Japanese, being left in solitary confinement for six weeks in Su-



Beauforts in formation as flown by 100 Squadron RAAF and by LCDR Carr

rabaya before being flown to Japan. He was then held prisoner of war in the infamous Naval Interrogation Camp at Ofuna, inland from Yokosuku. The torture inflicted on him by the Japanese was of the cruellest kind, but never once did he tell them what work he was in. I quote Air Commodore Garing, when giving "Pally's" valediction, "I doubt if many servicemen could have endured the pain to which this unbelievably brave man was subjected". In this hell hole, "Pally" was to endure eight months of his two years as a prisoner of the Japanese. After Japan was defeated he was repatriated to Australia arriving on 27 September 1945. He took advantage of retirement open to ex-POWs and re-

signed from the RAN in 1948 moving to the retired list. His bravery and devotion to duty was recognised when he was awarded the Distinguished Flying Cross.

He settled with his loving wife, Jean and family at Palm Beach where he ran a boatshed on the Pittwater, later selling the business and taking up the appointment of Information Officer at the Sydney Bureau of Meteorology, where he stayed until retirement in 1971.

Of special note, LCDR Carr was at sea in HMAS *Perth* on her war station off the South American coast on September 3, 1939 and for every one of the six Christmases of WWII, he was on active



Catalinas in formation off northern Australia as flown by 11 and 20 Squadron RAAF and by LCDR Carr

Form 986

ROYAL AIR FORCE.

CERTIFICATE.

This is to certify that **Lieutenant Palgrave Ebdon Carr,**
ROYAL AUSTRALIAN NAVY.

has completed a course of instruction in **Naval Observing**

at **The School of Naval Co-operation, Lee-on-Solent, Hants.**

The duration of the course was from **18th July** to **11th December, 1936.**

He has ~~not passed~~ ^{passed}, obtaining **86.5%** of the total Marks.

Remarks (if any) by Officer Commanding unit at which the course was held:

A keen and conscientious officer who promises to become a thoroughly reliable observer. A good w/t operator.

Signed *[Signature]* **Group Captain,**
Officer Commanding.

Dated **11th December 1936.**

*9812: W1. 4432-741 4-350 8/32 I.S. 113
 *3481 4500/ W1. 4432-741 4-350 8/32 I.S. 113

LEUT Carr's Graduation Certificate as an Observer.
He served in the role of Observer 1937-39.

service – two years at sea in the Atlantic, one in Ceylon, one in New Guinea and two in Japan.

LCDR P. E. Carr DFC, RAN died in August 1990, aged 82. His obituary can be read [here](#) from the Naval Historical Society of Australia website. The data for this history was kindly supplied by Mrs Jean Carr and family.

The National Archives reflect when LCDR Carr was on CinC East Indies HQ Staff, the CinC (VADM G.S. Arbuthnot, DSO) recommended him for accelerated promotion in his Confidential Report in March 1942, based on his personal knowledge of Carr.

The Air Officer Commanding RAAF Command, Allied Air Forces SWPA (Air Vice Marshal W.D. Bostock, CB, DSO, OBE) wrote to CNS, copy to Commander Allied Naval Forces, on 21 May 1943:

"...Attached to the staff of my Headquarters since 28 January 1943... a member of the operational staff with particular reference to torpedo and air mining work. In addition to displaying above average professional knowledge and ability has shown

extraordinary initiative in originating plans and tactics for the employment of aircraft on torpedo and mining duties.

Without his assistance and the example of his personal participation in air operations, I am convinced that the sound basis on which squadrons of RAAF Command are now working would never have been achieved so expeditiously.

I wish to bring to your notice the sterling qualities of this officer and his ability in the performance of his staff duties."

The Officer Commanding (Wing Commander), 11 Squadron (Catalinas), wrote to the Senior Air Staff Officer, HQ North Eastern Area on 24 June 1943:

*"Appreciation of Special Services
Attached duty with 11 and 20 Squadrons during the periods these squadrons have been engaged in mine laying, LCDR Carr planned the operations, briefed the crews and organised the supply of mines. The success of these operations has been largely due to his ready co-operation, enthusiasm and skilful planning.*

Request the squadron's appreciation of his efforts be brought to the attention of the Naval Board."

This begs the question: "Was Lieutenant-Commander Palgrave Ebdon CARR DFC RAN the real Father of the RAN Fleet Air Arm?" CNO 137/1925 established the RAN Fleet Air Arm that year—1925. 'Pally' Parr graduated as a Pilot on 2 December 1932 and as an Observer on 11 December 1936. VAT Smith didn't graduate as an Observer until 1937 according to the official Navy website [here](#). 'Pally' Carr graduated as both a Pilot and Observer prior to VAT Smith.

It is envisaged that 'Pally' is one of a few in either the RN/RAN that has served, firstly as a Pilot, then an Observer returning to flying duties as a Pilot. Most transfer from Observer to Pilot!

Maybe it's time to re-visit the question above to correct history?

Citation for the DFC

Lieutenant-Commander Palgrave Ebdon CARR DFC RAN is awarded the DFC for courage and devotion to duty in flying operations in the Far East theatre of war from April to October 1943. (Supplement to the London Gazette, 29 Jan 1946, Page 720 and Commonwealth of Australia Gazette 7 Feb 1946, Page 297).

2/9a Dorset Street
Epping NSW 2121

22 July 2019

Directorate of Honours and Awards
CP2-1 Department of Defence
PO Box 7952
Canberra ACT 2610

8033622

R42048

19/696729

RECEIVED

25 JUL 2019

Honours & Awards

Dear Sir or Madam,

APPLICATION FOR NATIONAL EMERGENCY MEDAL

Application is hereby made for consideration of the award of the National Emergency medal.

The basis of my application is Cyclone Tracy which occurred in December 1974. Like a great many other naval personnel I was recalled to my ship, HMAS Melbourne, on Christmas Day, worked all through the night, and sailed on Boxing Day for Darwin.

On arrival at Darwin on 31 December 1974 I (together with about 3,000 others,) worked 10 to 12 hour days until HMAS Melbourne sailed on 17 January 1975.

For information I have attached a copy of the Wikipedia page regarding Operation Navy Help Darwin. This page gives a comprehensive view of the entire operation.

Upon reading the National Emergency Medal Regulations 2011 I believe that there is a strong case for the official recognition of this national emergency.

In response to the criteria set out in the regulations I make the following observations:

The name of the nationally-significant emergency was CYCLONE TRACY

The geographic area in Australia where the emergency happened was DARWIN

The day on which the emergency began was 25 DECEMBER 1974

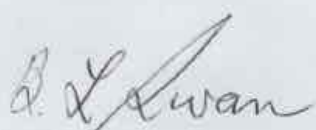
The duration of the emergency was 30 DAYS

The minimum duration and type of service required to qualify for the award of the medal for sustained service : This can best be judged by other similar emergencies (eg. Cyclone Yasi) I would suggest 14 days.

In making this application I am aware of the delay in time for asking for such an award, and I am also aware that a great many others who were an essential part of the operation may also qualify for the award of the medal. However, delays in time are no excuse for not awarding the medal. Indeed awarding the medal would be recognition for the very large task that was undertaken under the most trying circumstances.

Further, the award of the medal in these circumstances would show that the integrity and uniformity of the award process has been maintained.

Yours sincerely



Brian Swan

Captain AM RAN (Rtd)

Snap!! All smiles at the Photographers Reunion



Group: Front L to R. John O'Brien, Trevor Klose, Keith McCarron, Ron Batchelor, Rick Reynolds, Doug Pryke, Bob Maughan, Edward Schulter, George Anderson, John Dawe.

Middle Row L to R. Tony Gay, Eric Pitman, Ron Berkout, John Kwiatkowski, Ray DeRoss, Jock Connolly, Frank Shilton, Mark Lee, Charlie Lammers, Graham Flint, Dennis Milkins, Wayne Bell, Brian Warnest, Paul Kalajich.

Back Row L to R. Cameron Martin, Michael McInnery, Richard Green, Peter Simpson, Scott Connolly, Steve Dent, Ian Storey, Phil Barling, Judy Blackburn, Peter Lewis

Thirty Four (34) past/serving Naval Photographers recently attended a reunion held over the last weekend in October at the beautiful pictures Port Stephens in NSW. With a further 22 partners in attendance the large group toured the region from the Hunter Valley stopping at the magnificent and largest gardens in Australia, wine tasting at Tulloch Winery which has stood for over 100 years, a private tour of Maitland Goal (Did not lose a soul), Lunch at Murrays Brewery, a formal dinner at the Nelson Bay Golf Club, winding up with a Rotarian prepared and catered for BBQ on the final evening.

In attendance was Eddie Schulter who joined the Navy in 1953, Bob Maughan 1955 and Ron Batchelor 1959 with Rick Reynolds also in 1959. Rick a survivor on HMAS *Voyager* the night of February 1964 collision with HMAS *Melbourne*, with George Anderson serving on the *Melbourne*, the same evening. Most travelled from long distances with WA being the largest contributor, followed by SA, TAS, VIC and QLD with NSW making up the numbers.

The branch on record has only numbered 318 in total since its inception in 1948 making for a group

comprising in excess of 10% of the Navies Photographic/Imagery Specialist as they are referred to today a great roll out.

Our Branch was always regarded as a family affair as most sailors and especially their partners never forget each other and in such times as a reunion their bonds continue as if little time has kept them apart.



Photographers all joined in the 60's—Graham Flint, Ray DeRoss, Dennis Milkins and George Anderson

50th Anniversary Reunion of RAAF No. 71 Pilot Course

The Historical Aircraft Restoration Society (HARS) hosted the 50th Anniversary Reunion of members of RAAF No.71 Pilot Course on Friday 18 October and Saturday 19 October 2019 at Shellharbour Airport.

Members of the course attended a number of functions at HARS including a informal gathering including a light meal and drinks among former Australian military aircraft types on Friday evening 18 October 2019, inspection of the HARS Aviation Museum, photographs under a Macchi MB326H jet aircraft, a variety of memorabilia, a remembrance of deceased colleagues and culminating in a Celebratory Dinner on Saturday 19 October 2019.

Graduates from 71 RAAF Pilot Course served in RAAF and RAN Squadrons flying a variety of military aircraft including Boeing 707, BAC 111, F111, Hercules, Caribou, Orion, Mirage, C47/ Douglas DC3, Seaking Mk 50, Wessex 31B and Iroquois helicopters, Grumman Tracker S2E/G, HS748 aircraft and other types in a variety of roles in Australia, overseas and embarked. Some undertook and variety of specialist aviation and military related courses.

71 Pilot's Course was officially convened on 23 October 1968 when 21 Air Force Cadet Aircrew assembled at RAAF Point Cook for General Service Training.

During December 1968 five Royal Australian



Peter Cannell in the cockpit of a Macchi on the second all through Macchi Pilots Course

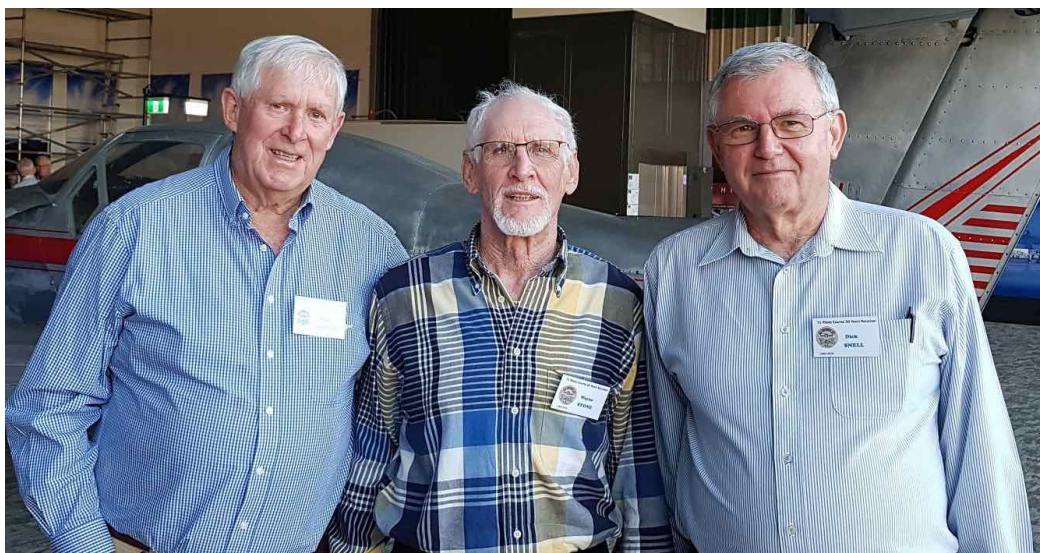
Navy Midshipmen joined 71 Pilot Course at Point Cook having previously committed to RAN Service Training at HMAS *Cerberus*.

In January 1969, ten RAAF Officers comprising eight RAAF Academy graduate Flying Officers, One Navigator and one Air Electronic Officer joined the course at RAAF Pearce WA.

71 Pilot's Course was the second RAAF Pilot Course to undertake All-Through Jet Training. This was dis-continued because initial flight grading of students using the Macchi MB326H was inefficient and expensive and secondly because the training gap between the new Macchi technology and that of some aging aircraft types such as the Canberra Bomber and Sabre was excessive.

Twenty seven (27) of thirty six (36) 71 Course student pilots graduated on the 18 December 1969 with two delayed graduations from an earlier course. The Reviewing Officer of the Graduation Ceremony was Air Marshal Sir Alister Murdoch, KBE, CB Chief of the Air Staff.

All graduates of No.71 RAAF Pilot Course doubtless had the date of the Apollo Moon



From left PJ Cannell, Wayne (Rocky) Stone and Dick Snell at 71 Pilot Course 50th Reunion

Landing on 20 July 1969 etched upon their memories as we watched the Apollo Luna Module in wonder between sorties. At that particular time course tensions were high as the demanding Instrument Flying phase was well underway and “scrub” rides with a Senior Instructor were not uncommon!

On graduation, it was customary for the graduating course to conduct a mass formation flypast of Perth WA. Considerable effort was applied by all Maintenance, Operations, Air Traffic Control and other units in support of No.2 Flight Training School at RAAF Pearce to ensure the success of the 71 Course Mass Formation Flypast. A record number of 36 Macchi MB326H Jets adorned the Perth skies on 12 December 1969. To course members this was an amazing feat. It is not known if this number was surpassed by later courses!

Guests arrived at HARS on Friday 18 October 2019 at 4:30pm and assemble in Hangar 3 which was aptly adorned with an eye-pleasing array of former Australian Defence Force (ADF) aircraft for

the first meeting of the former students in 50 years. Sharing of experiences in a variety of RAAF and RAN Carrier Borne aircraft in various squadrons and theatres of the Australian Defence Force (ADF) over a casual meal with drinks will inevitably occur.

On Saturday 19 October 2019, guests arrived at HARS at 4:00pm after a pleasant and relaxed day at Kiama. Formal activities incorporated a timely inspection of the HARS museum, group pictures under the conveniently placed Macchi MB326H aircraft, a sumptuous Celebratory Dinner in the carefully prepared HARS upstairs inner-sanctum, 71 Course Remembrance of Fallen Colleagues, 71 Course Memorabilia together with fine wine and desert.

All members of RAAF 71 Course wish to thoughtfully acknowledge the efforts of HARS in providing the venue, “know-how” and catering for this important reunion. In particular, the efforts of Ms Sheryl Sherson were highly appreciated.

Defence ‘Sky Watches’ Meet in Canberra

Former Military Air Traffic Controllers met in Canberra over the weekend 8-10 November 2019 for a reunion. There was a great deal of discussion on how the branch had changed over the years. Many spoke of Nowra where ATC was originally run by the RAN, changed to RAAF 458 Sqn (Nowra Flight) and now with Defence Contract ATCs, supervised by 458 Sqn; in another Control Tower adjacent to the civil facilities.

According to a former RAAF ATC, 12 RAN ATCs transferred to the RAAF following the cessation of the RAN providing ATC at Nowra.

A number of functions were held starting off with a ‘Meet and Greet’ at the National Press Club on the Friday night. Around 120 former ATCs and their partners attended, many having not seen each other for nearly 50 years.

Where the branch once had only three Wing Commanders with over 200 ATCs, it now has two one star officers, six Group Captains and nine Wing Commanders. Most former ATCs believed the branch now seemed ‘top heavy’ as many of the bases (Richmond, Nowra, East Sale and Edinburgh) had more Defence ATC Contractors and less uniformed personal.

Next morning, Saturday a large group assembled for a tour of the Australian War Memorial organised by an ATC, now volunteering as a guide to the AWM, former Wing Commander

‘Scran’ Freeman. Around 60 joined this tour which ultimately was split into three groups. The detail for this short tour was excellent and there was no doubt the tour guides had prepared for this event. Realistically, near a week could be set aside to view the whole AWM.

In the evening a dinner was held at the National Press Club where a pleasant evening was had by all. During the dinner, a serving ATC Group Captain gave a presentation on Military ATC today. One area participants found interesting was that ATC had expanded in deployments overseas. Controllers had seen operational service in both Iraq and Afghanistan as well as other countries. In Iraq, Australian ATCs operated Bagdad Tower for all coalition nations.

Following on more conversations were had amongst those that hadn’t caught up the previous evening. Discussions among those attending evolved around the new ATC configuration and overseas deployments.

Later, Sunday morning attendees went to a restaurant alongside Lake Burleigh Griffith for breakfast before then moving on their way to different parts of the country. Only two former RAN ATCs were present at this reunion namely: Paul Shiels and Margaret Maher (the wife of Michael Maher ex-RAN A4 pilot and a retired Air Commodore).

Who's Who At The Tracker Reunion



**Above: Colin Kelson, James Hayes (HARS)
Ednna Mary Homann and Skinhead**



**Squadroneers. Above: John Cowlshaw, Glen Dore, Colin Tietzel, Terry Hetherington, Max Altham, and Skinhead.
Front Ron Puttee.**

Far Right: Peter Dore and niece Jess

Right: Glen Dore's Model Production of the Tracker



**Left: Pamela Saville,
Edna Mary Homann
and Bruce Saville**



**Right: Former RAN
Tracker Pilots Owen
Nicholls (left) and Steve
McMahon who piloted
NHF Tracker 844**





Above: National Executive and State Delegates photographed in attendance at the Federal Council meeting—October 2019.



Left: National President Mark Campbell presents National Secretary Richard Martin with 'Life Membership' award for his work with the Fleet Air Arm Association of Australia.

OH for the old days – Nelson!

Nelson: "Order the signal, Hardy."

Hardy: "Aye, aye sir."

Nelson: "Hold on, this isn't what I dictated to Flags. What's the meaning of this?"

Hardy: "Sorry sir?"

Nelson (reading aloud): "England expects every person to do his or her duty, regardless of race, gender, sexual orientation, religious persuasion or disability. 'What gobble-dygook is this for God's sake?'"

Hardy: "Admiralty policy, I'm afraid, sir. We're an equal opportunities employer now. We had the devil's own job getting 'England' past the censors, lest it be considered racist."

Nelson: "Gadzooks, Hardy. Hand me my pipe and tobacco."

Hardy: "Sorry sir. All naval vessels have now been designated smoke-free working environments."

Nelson: "In that case, break open the rum ration. Let us splice the main brace to steel the men before battle."

Hardy: "The rum ration has been abolished, Admiral. It's part of the Government's policy on binge drinking."

Nelson: "Good heavens, Hardy. I suppose we'd better get on with it, full speed ahead."

Hardy: "I think you'll find that there's a 4 knot speed limit in this stretch of water. It's an environment protection initiative."

Nelson: "Damn it man! We are on the eve of the greatest sea battle in history. We must advance with all dispatch. Report from the crow's nest, please."

Hardy: "That won't be possible, sir."

Nelson: "What?"

Hardy: "Health and Safety have closed the crow's nest, Sir. No harness; and they said that rope ladders don't meet regulations. They won't let anyone up there until proper scaffolding can be erected."

Nelson: "Then get me the ship's carpenter without delay, Hardy."

Hardy: "He's busy knocking up a wheelchair access to the foredeck Admiral."

Nelson: "Wheelchair access? I've never heard anything so absurd."

Hardy: "Anti-discrimination requirements, sir. We have to provide a barrier-free environment for the differently abled....."

Nelson: "Differently abled? I've only one arm and one eye and I refuse even to hear mention of the word. I didn't rise to the rank of Admiral by playing the disability card."

Hardy: "Actually, sir, you did. The Royal Navy is under-represented in the areas of visual impairment and limb deficiency."

Nelson: "Whatever next? Give me full sail. The salt spray beckons."

Hardy: "A couple of problems there too, sir. Health and safety won't let the crew up the rigging without hard hats. And they don't want anyone breathing in too much salt; haven't you seen the adverts?"

Nelson: "I've never heard such infamy. Break out the cannon and tell the men to stand by to engage the enemy."

Hardy: "The men are a bit worried about shooting at anyone, Admiral."

Nelson: "What? This is mutiny!"

Hardy: "It's not that, sir. It's just that they're afraid of being charged with murder if they actually kill anyone. There are a couple of legal-aid lawyers on board, watching everyone like hawks."

Nelson: "Then how are we to sink the Frenchies and the Spanish?"

Hardy: "Actually, sir, we're not."

Nelson: "We're not?"

Hardy: "No, sir. The French and the Spanish are our European partners now. According to the Common Fisheries Policy, we shouldn't even be in this stretch of water. We could get hit with a claim for compensation."

Nelson: "But you must hate a Frenchman as you hate the devil."

Hardy: "I wouldn't let the ship's diversity coordinator hear you saying that sir. You'll be up on disciplinary report."

Nelson: "You must consider every man an enemy who speaks ill of your King."

Hardy: "Not anymore, sir. We must be inclusive in this multicultural age. Now put on your Kevlar vest; it's the rules. It could save your life."

Nelson: "Don't tell me - health and safety again! Whatever happened to rum, sodomy and the lash?"

Hardy: "As I explained, sir, rum is off the menu! And there's a ban on corporal punishment."

Nelson: "What about sodomy?"

Hardy: "I believe that is now legal, sir."

Nelson: "In that case - kiss me, Hardy!"

DVA—Eligibility for Gold Card - All Conditions or TPI

Factsheet [HSV59](#) describes who is eligible for the DVA Health Card - All Conditions or Totally & Permanently Incapacitated (Gold Card) and what circumstances can affect your eligibility under the *Veterans' Entitlements Act 1986* (VEA) and the *Military Rehabilitation and Compensation Act 2004* (MRCA).



Who can obtain a Gold Card?

Australian Veterans

A Gold Card is issued to veterans of the Australian Defence Force (ADF) who:

- are aged 70 years or over, and have qualifying service under section 7A of the VEA. This includes members who have rendered a period of service classified as warlike on or after 1 July 2004, and which is covered under the MRCA for compensation purposes;
- or are ex-prisoners of war;
- or served in Japan between 16 August 1945 and 30 January 1946, or served in Japan as part of the British Commonwealth Occupation Force at any time between 31 January 1946 and 28 April 1952;
- or were participants in the British nuclear test program in Australia (for information on the the specific eligibility criteria, see Fact-sheet DP 83 [here](#).)

Veterans Receiving Disability Pension under the VEA

Veterans who don't fit into the above categories but who receive the disability pension are also eligible to receive the Gold Card, if:

- the rate of their disability pension is 100% of the general rate or higher;
- or the rate of their disability pensions is 50% of the general rate or higher and they also receive any amount of service pension (including partner service pension);
- or their disability pension includes an additional amount under section 27 of the VEA for specific service-related amputations or blindness in one eye; or they were granted the

disability pension for pulmonary tuberculosis before 2 November 1978.

Veterans Receiving an Age or Invalidity Service Pension

Some veterans who receive an age or invalidity service pension are eligible to receive the Gold Card, if they also: satisfy the treatment benefits eligibility income and assets test; or are permanently blind in both eyes; or receive any amount of service pension and have an impairment from one or more service injuries or diseases that constitutes at least 30 impairment points under the MRCA.

Members with Conditions Accepted under MRCA

Former members of the ADF, cadets and reservists who have conditions for which liability has been accepted under the MRCA are eligible for a Gold Card if they:

- have permanent impairment from accepted conditions assessed at or above 60 points; *or*
- have a permanent impairment from accepted conditions assessed at 30 points or above, and the person is receiving any amount of Service Pension; *or*
- meet the criteria for the Special Rate Disability Pension (SRDP) even if they have not chosen that pension.

For more information on the overview of MRCA and MRCA eligibility, refer to Factsheet MRC01 [here](#).

Commonwealth and Allied Veterans

Some veterans of Commonwealth or allied forces with qualifying service are eligible for a Gold Card if they are:

- a veteran who served with a Commonwealth or allied force during World War 2 or in specified operations areas after World War 2 and were domiciled in Australia immediately prior to enlistment in the Commonwealth or allied force; or
- a mariner who served on a Commonwealth or allied ship during World War 2, if they or their dependants were residing in Australia for at least 12 months immediately prior to the commencement of their service on that ship.

***Note:** Eligibility for individuals who served with a Commonwealth or allied force requires that they have been 'domiciled' in Australia immediately prior to enlistment. Until 1 July 2010, individuals who were under 21 years of age were automatically determined to have been domiciled in the same country as their father (or mother, where their father was deceased). On 1 July 2010, this age was lowered to 18, allowing individuals older than this to take their own domicile.

Australian Civilians

A Gold Card is issued to Australian mariners who:

- served in Australia's merchant navy, between 3 September 1939 and 29 October 1945, who are aged 70 years or over, and have qualifying service from that conflict; or
- served in Australia's merchant navy between 3 September 1939 and 29 October 1945 and are ex-prisoners of war.

A Gold Card is issued to Australian civilian British nuclear test participants who: were directly involved in the nuclear tests, including Commonwealth employees and contractors providing services associated with the nuclear tests; or were not directly involved in the nuclear tests but entered a nuclear test area at a relevant time.

Dependants of Veterans

Certain dependants of veterans are also eligible for a Gold Card if they are:

- a war widow or widower in receipt of the war widow's or widower's pension;
- from 1 July 2008 a war widow whose partner was in receipt of Temporary Special Rate and Intermediate Rate Pensions at the time of their death;
- a dependent child of a deceased veteran whose death has been accepted as war-caused, who is under 16 or between the ages of 16 and 25 and undergoing full-time education;

a child of a deceased veteran whose death was not war-caused and who had operational service, if the child is not being cared for by the remaining parent; an invalid son or daughter of a deceased veteran whose death has been accepted as war-caused, who had treatment entitlement before 6 June 1985*;

- a widowed mother or widowed step-mother who was dependent on an unmarried deceased veteran whose death has been accepted as war-caused, who had treatment entitlement before 6 June 1985*; or
- a wholly dependent partner or dependent child of a member who is eligible for compensation for the member's death under the MRCA.

***Note:** No new treatment eligibility grants for categories marked with * have been possible since 18 October 1985.

When a veteran, former member, cadet or reservist passes away, that person's Gold Card is not transferred to the surviving partner or any other dependant. Partners and other dependants who fall into the categories above would receive their own Gold Card if their claim is successful.

Can I lose eligibility for the Gold Card?

It is possible to lose eligibility for the Gold Card if your eligibility depends on anything that may change, such as payments, impairment ratings, age or living arrangements.

If your eligibility for the Gold Card depends on something that cannot change, such as your past service, your widow(er) status, blindness or amputations, then it is not possible to lose eligibility for the Gold Card.

Losing the Gold Card due to a change in financial circumstances

You may lose eligibility for the Gold Card if you were granted the Gold Card because you met any of the below criteria, but your financial circumstances have now changed and you no longer meet the relevant income and assets test:

- you receive the disability pension at a rate of 50% of the general rate or higher and you also received any amount of service pension;
- you have an impairment from one or more service injuries or diseases that constitutes at least 30 impairment points under the MRCA and have received an age or invalidity service pension; or
- you receive an age or invalidity service pension and also satisfied the treatment benefits eligibility income and assets test.

To find out the current treatment benefits income and assets limits, see Factsheet IS15 [here](#).

Losing the Gold Card due to a change in disabilities

You may lose eligibility for the Gold Card due to a change in your disabilities if:

You were granted the Gold Card because you were in receipt of the disability pension at a rate of...	but then a change in your disabilities resulted in your disability pension being reduced to...
50% of the General Rate or higher (including 100% or higher)	below 50% of the General Rate
100% of the General Rate or higher	between 50% and 100% of the General Rate and you are not in receipt of the service pension

Losing the Gold Card when you are a dependant of a deceased veteran

You may lose eligibility for the Gold Card if:

- you were granted it because you are a child of a deceased veteran; and your age, living circumstances, disability or study status changes.
- are a dependant of a deceased veteran and are concerned about your Gold Card eligibility, contact DVA for more information.

What happens if I lose eligibility?

If at any time you lose eligibility for the Gold Card, you will be notified in writing and your Gold Card will be recalled. However, if you lost eligibility for the Gold Card due to a change in your *financial circumstances*, there are some circumstances in which you may be able to temporarily retain your Gold Card.

Period of Grace

Where you have lost your eligibility for the Gold Card because you have ceased to satisfy the treatment benefits eligibility income and assets test, a 'period of grace' of up to 13 weeks may be granted if your income does not exceed the set limits by more than 50%. During the period of grace you are able to retain your Gold Card. However, if, during the 13 weeks, your income:

- reduces below the limits within the 13-week period, your eligibility for Gold Card is re-established; *or*
- rises above the limit by more than 50%, your Gold Card is cancelled immediately.

You are not eligible for the 'period of grace' if:

- you are being paid service pension under the income test, and your assets increase so that you are eligible to be paid under the assets test instead; *or*
- you are being paid service pension under the assets test; and your assets reduce so that you are eligible to be paid under the income test; *or*
- your assets increase.

For more information on the income test refer to Factsheet SIS87 [here](#) and IS88 [here](#).

Bereavement Period

A Gold Card holder's income/assets may increase when their partner dies, and may result in them exceeding the *treatment benefits income and asset limits* or becoming ineligible for the service pension. In this case, the person retains the Gold Card during the 98 days bereavement period. Gold Card eligibility is lost at the end of the bereavement period.

More Information

DVA General Enquiries

Phone: 1800 555 254 *

Email: GeneralEnquiries@dva.gov.au

DVA Website: www.dva.gov.au

Factsheet Website: www.dva.gov.au/factsheets

*Calls from mobile phones and pay phones may incur additional charges.

(Reprint of **Factsheet HSV59** - Eligibility for the DVA Health Card - All Conditions or Totally & Permanently Incapacitated—Gold Card)



Cartoon by Ian Hughes

WA Active in Remembrance Days and Social Events For the Period Ending Dec 2019

By Sharron Spargo

Although the West has experienced some unusual spring heat, thankfully we have escaped the horrendous bushfires that have ravaged South Australia and the Eastern seaboard. Our thoughts and best wishes are with those who have been impacted by these tragedies.

The W.A. division is to lose a long-standing member this year as former pilot and Senior Naval Officer at RAAF Pearce, John May has re-joined the navy and is being posted outside of W.A. Our members wish him all the very best for this new chapter of his life.

The Vietnam Veterans Day, Long Tan Day remembrance services were held in Kings Park on August 18. Former members of the RANHFV and RAAF 9 Squadron were there as were members of the Vietnam Veteran Motorcycle Club, representatives of the South Vietnamese community, ADSOs, Government representatives and distinguished guests. This 53rd anniversary service brought together a diverse cross section of the community not only to remember those lost during the battle of Long Tan, but all the men and women who served in Vietnam.

Remembrance services across W.A were once again well attended on November 11. Services, both small and large, were held across the metropolitan area and throughout the state and saw both the general public and our division members paying their

***Right, WA President, John Gregory Kelson and Ms Syibba Norshah at a Medeka Day Service of Remembrance (Malayan Independence Day) Kings Park, Perth.
(Ms Norshah is wearing the Police Jacket of her Father who was killed during the Malayan Emergency)***

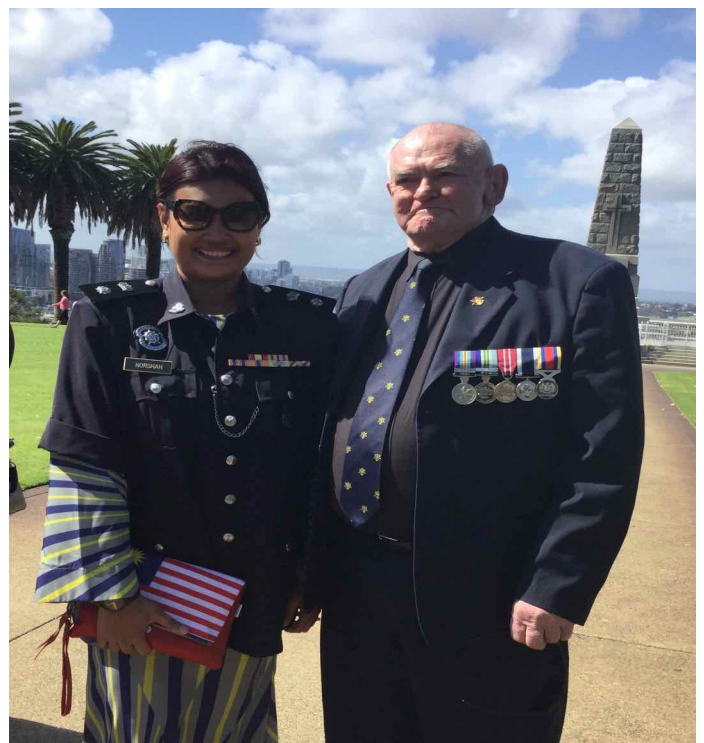


respects. W.A. President Greg Kelson, along with State Secretary Keith Taylor and Doris Taylor also attended the Malaysia Independence Day services at Kings Park on Sunday August 31.

Our October meeting saw a number of apologies, myself included. Luckily, I wasn't laid low, just spending some time with family in Brisbane, which although very dry, was blissfully sunny and humidity free.

Our life member Jo Jost was also an apology as his wife Elva had passed away after a long illness. I think I speak for all of our membership when I recall quite a few wonderful afternoons spent at Jo and Elva's place with the BBQ sizzling and the cold drinks going down a treat. The Jost's had been hosting these events long before I came along but I will always remember how warm and welcoming Elva was, her sense of humour and down to earth attitude. A truly lovely lady, always remembered.

Welfare officer Theo Bushe-Jones has been in need of some welfare himself of late. He arrived home from his latest South East Asian cruise with the remains of a lung infection, dehydration and cellulitis after two falls in his cabin. After being hospitalised on board he spent another night in hos-



pital but is now on the mend, just in time for our Christmas lunch. Rosie O'Grady's is again the venue but this year we will hold our December meeting the week prior which allows for a longer period for our Christmas celebration. Keith will issue invitations to the President of the W.A. Koran Association and the War Widow's Association to be our guests this year.

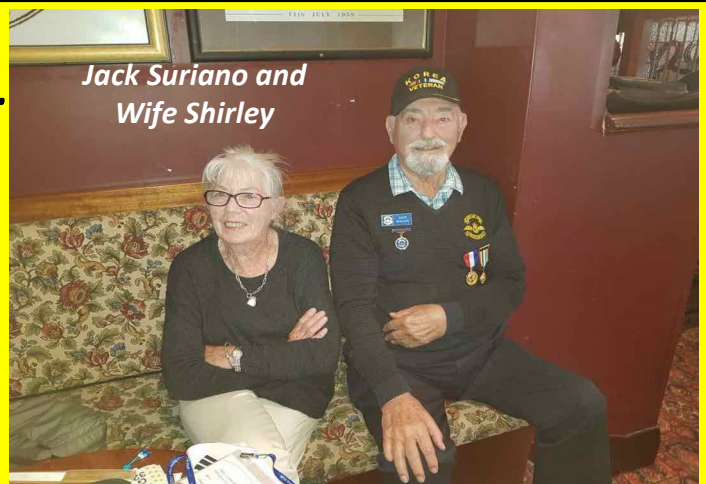
It is hoped that many members and their families who are unable to make the regular meetings will join us for this celebration and we wish all of you a safe and happy Christmas shared with family and friends.

*Until next year,
Sharron.*

WA Report continued. . .

Life Member Travels to Korea For Anzac Day 2019

Jack is a Foundation Member of the Association and Life Member. He was very prominent in development of the "Welcome Sailor" for US Navy personnel in Fremantle. Jack and wife Shirley travelled to Korea for ANZAC Day 2019 as guests of the Korean Government along with Veterans from other countries who were involved in the War. He has CD 's taken in Korea of the Welcomes and Celebration's during the visit. He has copies if anyone wishes one? Jack informed Sha-



***Jack Suriano and
Wife Shirley***

ron that he would be an apology for the General Meeting on 13 October WA thought his apology deserved publication:

"Ahoy ! Keith; I am an apology for this months Meeting. I have my family from Zurich here to celebrate my 90th Birthday; the celebrations include a flight over Perth in a Tiger Moth, great— reliving moments after my first solo 70 years ago— cheers to all

Yours' aye Jack Suriano"



***Front Row - John Stewart- Sec.Qld.Div., Raelene Sonsee daughter-in-law of Bill Sonsee, Roy Coulter
Life members Harry Webster & John Brown
Rear - Barrie Dunbar & Desmond Smith***

The Dawn of Carrier Strike

By David Hobbs

The Dawn of Carrier Strike and the World of Lieutenant W P Lucy DSO RN by David Hobbs. Seaforth Publishing, Barnsley.

On 31 March 1918 the Royal Naval Air Service (RNAS) comprised approximately 55,000 aircrew, maintenance and other support personnel. It pioneered naval aviation through operating aircraft from warships – capital ships, seaplane tenders and the world's first aircraft carriers: HM Ships *Furious* and *Argus*.

All this changed on 1 April when the RNAS and the Royal Flying Corps were absorbed into the RAF. The consequences of this was a throttling of naval aviation in favour of the RAF philosophical panacea of strategic bombing and total oversight of anything that flew.

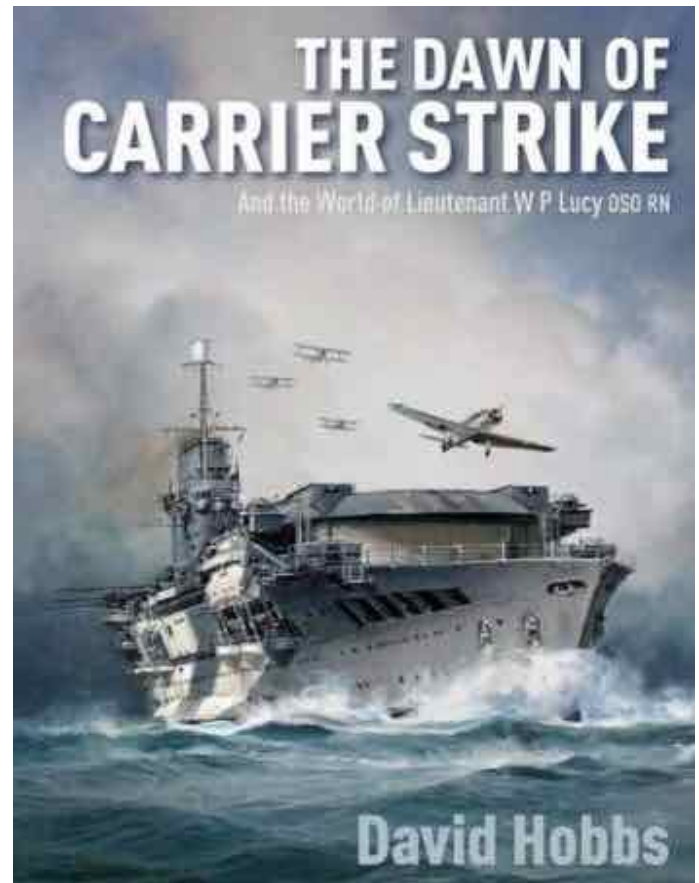
Naval aviation was relegated to fleet reconnaissance and fall-of-shot reporting in future fleet actions. RAF pilots seconded to the Fleet Air Arm (FAA) were generalists, in accordance with Air Ministry policy, as opposed to the RNAS pilots who had been trained for maritime air warfare.

Royal Navy Observers were carried to navigate, communicate and operate weapons; however, most seconded RAF pilots had little interest in naval flying which carried little kudos for promotion. This improved around 1924 when it was decided that 70 percent of FAA pilots would be naval officers, as the RAF decided that naval aircraft were not likely to be used as fighters.

David Hobbs brings us the story from the service career and archives of Lieutenant W P Lucy DSO RN. Hobbs, as a former RN naval aviator and author of suite of books on British naval airpower, examines the FAA interwar debacle from a naval aviator's viewpoint. Throughout the book we are introduced to Lieutenant Lucy through his career as a conventional naval officer and his transition to naval flying and the desperate aerial fights over Norway in April 1940 in which carrier strike was employed for the first time in history. Each mission is described in detail. Lucy was the first naval aviator to sink a warship, the German cruiser *KONIGSBERG*, and became an 'ace' after his fifth aerial victory. Lucy was killed in action before his award of a DSO could be promulgated.

There are many absorbing topics in the book which should satisfy the most demanding of readers seeking to understand the interwar FAA and the bureaucratic dead hand of RAF officialdom. Examples abound: naval pilots of Lieutenant RN rank also held RAF commissions, likely as Flying Officer, one rank lower.

BOOK REVIEW



Admiral Sir Ernle Chatfield became First Sea Lord in 1933 and believed that the RN could not reach its full war fighting potential if the RAF retained control of the FAA. Chatfield's campaign, begun in 1935, to convince the government to return the FAA to naval control, was achieved when Cabinet appointed Sir Thomas Inskip CBE PC KC, the Minister for the Coordination of Defence, to review and report. Inskip's clear and wonderfully argued assessment of the FAA's predicament is a joy to read as Hobbs quotes extensively from the report. Naval aircrew rapidly developed combat tactics to wring the best out of their inadequate aircraft from the earliest encounters over Norway.

The Swordfish's low take-off and landing speeds and its outstanding flying qualities made it an aircrew favourite. The Skua was slow and underpowered yet an efficient dive bomber. Heavily illustrated, largely from the author's own collection, with high quality research from official records, Lucy's personal papers and authoritative secondary sources, this is a splendid book which contrasts the arrogance of blinkered bureaucracy with the highest levels of adaptability, innovation and personal heroism (*Edited Version*).

Tim Coyle

Forgotten Few

by Paul Beaver

In the summer of 1940 Britain's fate rested on the bravery and skill of just under 3,000 aviators. Thanks to Churchill's eloquence, they've gone down in history as the 'Few'.

And while their deeds have been immortalised in print, statues, memorials and on celluloid – celebrating not just RAF fliers, but also foreign volunteers such as Czechs, Poles – the role of a small band of naval aviators who fought in the Battle of Britain is usually written out of post-war accounts, especially in big-screen depictions such as the all star block buster Battle of Britain.

Aviation historian and former Apache pilot Paul Beaver hopes to redress that somewhat and give a voice to the navy men of 1940 in the 80 page paperback 'The Forgotten Few'.

It's a biography of the 57 Fleet Air Arm men (includes the five Petty Officers and three Royal Marines) – subsequently dubbed 'the few of the few' – who either fought with their own service or were seconded to the RAF to meet the desperate need for pilots in our darkness hour and were subsequently awarded the Battle of Britain clasp.

Nearly two dozen naval fliers were temporarily transferred to the air force in the summer of 1940, the remainder defended dockyards with the Fleet Air Arm's own 804 and 808 Naval Air Squadrons.

And while those flying with the air force grappled with the Luftwaffe in Spitfires and Hurricanes, the Fleet Air Arm fighter pilots mostly flew in obsolete Gloster Sea Gladiator biplanes and the cumbersome Fairey Fulmar – though some got their hands on the rugged American-built Grumman Martlets mid-way through the battle.

Four of the 57 became 'aces' (downing at least five enemy aircraft). Londoner Sub-Lieutenant Francis Dawson-Paul led the way with seven and a half 'kills' – in just 25 days: fighters, twin-engined fighters and bombers all fell victim to his Spitfire. He was shot down over the Channel and though rescued by the Germans he died of his wounds aged 24 on 30 July 1940 – not six weeks after becoming a fighter pilot.

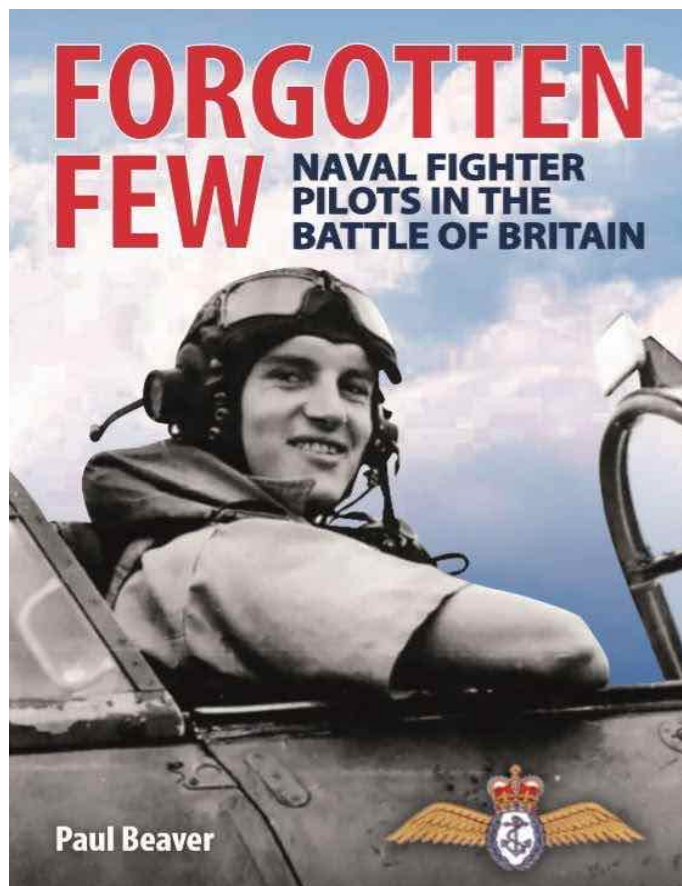
Other flames burned brightly briefly, then were snuffed out.

Fellow Spitfire ace SBLT Arthur Blake was dubbed 'sailor' or 'admiral' by his 19 Squadron comrades. He was 23 when he was shot down over Essex two days before the official end of the battle.

SBLT 'Dickie' Corke flew with the legendary 'tin-legged' Douglas Bader and his 242 Squadron.

Corke was Bader's wingman during the battle, a popular character who remained proud of his naval heritage despite his RAF comrade's constant ribbing and efforts to draw him over to the 'dark side'.

BOOK REVIEW



Bader nominated 'Corkie', as he called him, for the DFC and George VI approved the award...much to the chargin of the Admiralty who demanded their man return the air force decoration in favour of a DSC, He refused.

Dickie Corke was one of three naval fliers in Bader's Squadron and features frequently in the air force officer's biography... but not in the biographical film Reach for the Sky.

After the battle, he returned to his naval roots and became the Fleet Air Arm's fifth highest scoring ace of the war. His luck ran out in April 1944, killed in a flying accident while landing in Ceylon.

In all, seven naval pilots were killed and two wounded between 10 July and 31 October 1940.. the official dates of the battle. Their names – and the 48 other Fleet Air Arm who fought in Britain's skies that fateful summer are listed on the Battle of Britain memorial in London.

The Forgotten Few is produced in conjunction with the charity Navy Wings which fundraises to restore and maintain vintage FAA aircraft. It's available from www.navywingsflightstore.org

The Groove Review
RN Navy News May 2019 Issue [here](#)

Merchandise for Sale



PRICES	SHIRT	\$10
	CAP	\$5
	MUG	\$2
	CARRY BAG	\$1

	SHIRT (CHILDREN SIZE – large only)	\$5
	LANYARD	\$1
	ASSOC TIE	\$25
	POSTAGE	\$5

Please contact Jock Caldwell on flynavy@shoal.net.au with your request, and address details. He will then get back to you with pricing and payment details (payment either via EFT or cheque)