

The Quarterly Journal of the
FLEET AIR ARM ASSOCIATION of AUSTRALIA Inc

VOLUME 4 NUMBER 3 JULY 1993



SLIPSTREAM



PUBLISHED BY - FLEET AIR ARM ASSOCIATION of AUSTRALIA (NSW) Incorporated

EDITOR - PO BOX 662, NOWRA, NSW, 2541 - AUSTRALIA

REGISTERED BY AUSTRALIA POST PUBLICATION No.NAS2604



FOREWORD

by Vice Admiral I.D.G. MacDougall AC RAN

Chief of Naval Staff

I am delighted to have been invited to write the Foreword to this edition of *Slipstream*. I well remember the day that Admiral Sir Victor Smith commenced publishing the first *Slipstream* as I was serving at HMAS ALBATROSS at the time. To see it revived so many years later is indeed testament to Admiral Smith's foresight and the *esprit de corps* of the Fleet Air Arm and its members, both past and present.

Readers will be pleased to know that I recently had the pleasure of hosting an 80th birthday luncheon for Sir Victor and Lady Smith in Canberra. The Fleet Air Arm conducted a flypast in honour of Sir Victor, and the Navy's chefs produced a magnificent birthday cake. The charm and grace of Sir Victor and Lady Smith will long remain in the memories of those who attended this wonderful day.

Speaking to Sir Victor made me realise that, despite the loss of MELBOURNE and the fixed wing element of the Fleet Air Arm, the essential spirit of those in the Fleet Air Arm remains unchanged. Highly professional yet relaxed in their attitude to life, noted for their daring and courage, the personnel of our Air Arm remain respected throughout the world. Their achievements in the Gulf War and involvement in the RAN's frequent deployments throughout the region are testimony to that. We can be justly proud of the Navy's Fleet Air Arm.

I am also proud of the work done by the Fleet Air Arm Association of Australia to promote Navy and preserve our naval aviation heritage. Thus, it gives me much pleasure to announce to the members of the Fleet Air Arm Association of Australia, that I have just approved your request to incorporate the Australian White Ensign into the new official flag of the FAAA of Australia.

Finally, I would like to thank the members of the FAAA of Australia for the support that you have given to the Navy over the years - you are an important part of the navy family. I wish the Association every success in the future and look forward to receiving my next edition of *Slipstream*.

EDITORIAL

This edition of *Slipstream* is brought to you by the generosity of Rockwell Systems Australia, to whom the Association offers their most sincere thanks.

There is no news from Albatross in this issue, but I have been assured that nothing of interest has occurred of late.

Despite this fact, the new Inter-denominational Chapel is almost completed - and - the Shoalhaven City Council recently gave a Civic Reception to recognise local Naval personnel from HS 817 Squadron who were deployed to Somalia and participated in Operation Restore Hope. *Ed.*

All *Slipstream* correspondence to: PO Box 662, NOWRA NSW 2541 - or Tel. (044) 232014 - Fax (044) 232412

NATIONAL SECRETARY'S REPORT

This report is coming to you from Harrisburg, Pennsylvania, and yours truly is still suffering from the effects of Jet-lag.

The National numbering system has not yet been finalised because I am still awaiting confirmation of member's addresses and financial status from the Divisions. Initially a list was forwarded to each division showing each member's address, the division was asked to confirm the details, amend as required and indicate the financial status. To those who have provided the information, thank you. To those who haven't, get the lead out fellas!

Should the financial status appearing on your *Slipstream* address label be incorrect, please advise your Division Secretary.

Please bear in mind that the next meeting of the Federal Council is being held in Melbourne from 29 October to 2 November this year. If any member has any item for the agenda, they should pass them to their Division Secretary.

The Queensland Division is going from strength to strength, it is personally pleasing to see some of the names that are appearing on their

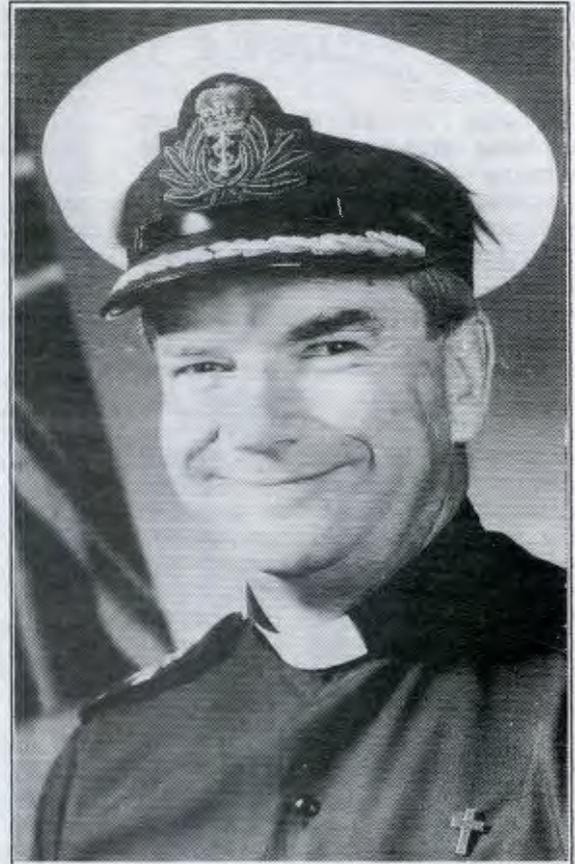
Principal Chaplain Dempsey to retire

One of the foundation members of the NSW Division of the FAA Association, Principal Chaplain Ian Dempsey, will retire on 13 September after 21 years Naval service. The last thirty months as Navy's Director General Chaplaincy at Navy Office, Canberra.

Born in Adelaide, Monsignor Dempsey's postings have included, *Nirimba, Cerberus, Melbourne, Leeuwin, Albatross*, Naval Support Command, Maritime Command, and Navy Office.

He was made an Officer of the Order of Australia (AO) in the Military Division in June, 1992.

On leaving the Navy, he will travel to the USA to carry out further studies at the University of St. Louis. When these are completed, he is expected to return to his home diocese of Adelaide.



Principal Chaplain Dempsey (Photo RAN)

membership list.

My wife and I departed Sydney for Osaka on 8 June, for a stay of two days, they were spent exploring the city which is most impressive. A cruise on the Tosobori and Dojima rivers provided an excellent way of seeing the beautiful gardens and parks. A very expensive place, if you consider that the exchange rate is 70 Yen to the dollar, and that a single cup of tea or coffee costs 450 Yen, beer is about the same price.

Departed Osaka for New York on 10 June. The 'Big Apple' was an interesting experience to say the least, with a three hour cruise around the Island being the highlight. The *USS Intrepid* is alongside in the Hudson River as an Air and Space Museum - hope to have a look on the way home.

By far the most impressive part of the journey to date, was the Amtrak train journey from Penn Station to Harrisburg. After the confines of

aircraft seating, the three foot of leg-room was great.

The country between Philadelphia and Harrisburg is beautiful at the moment, particularly in the Amish country around Lancaster.

Whilst in the USA, we will be looking at the historic parts of Virginia before travelling to Michigan to spend some time with old friends. We will then be visiting one of our new members who lives in Farmington Hills on the outskirts of Detroit.

* Ian Ferguson - National Secretary

**And as the sun slowly sinks in the West, we say farewell to our National Secretary..... Ed.

** All rights reserved. Reproduction in part or whole is forbidden without the express permission of the editor in writing.

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

The life and tribulations of Sea Venom WZ937

by Tony Penno

On the 20th of May 1990, a meeting was held on the old dummy deck site where it was decided that two teams of volunteers would be formed to start work on restoration of the old aircraft.

One team, led by Don Parkinson, decided to start work on the Gannet, the other team, led by Tony Penno, were to commence the restoration of Sea Venom WZ937.

WZ937 had been sitting on the old dummy deck, as far as we can determine, for about five years. In the early part of that period the aircraft was regularly ground run, but as the years passed, the aircraft became an eyesore. The cockpit canopy, covered only with a small piece of canvas, failed to keep the rain out of the cockpit. The neoprene covering over the radome was peeling off as was most of the fabric covering the fuselage. Its dilapidated appearance belying the fact that it had once been brand spanking new.....

On the 8th March 1956, WZ937 was loaded on board *HMAS Melbourne* at Lee-on-Solent for the delivery trip to Australia. According to available records, little flying of this aircraft was done on the journey to Australia.

On the 20th August 1956, the aircraft was nearly lost off the catapult when the left wing dropped dramatically due to a hydraulic problem with the aileron system. The aircraft was recovered at *HMAS Albatross* where it was put into quarantine awaiting inspection by a team from De Havillands.

The 27th of August 1956 saw the aircraft once again cleared for flight, shore based only, with nothing unusual having been found. Four days later the aircraft was cleared for carrier operations and on the 7th of September embarked with 808 Squadron with the side number 211.

Once again in the lime light, WZ937 was grounded whilst on board *Melbourne* on the 13th March 1957, having developed cracks around the catapult hook. The aircraft was ferried by barge and low loader to *HMAS Albatross*, along with similarly grounded aircraft. On 3rd of April 1957, WZ937 was the first of the grounded aircraft to once again take to the skies. Six days

later whilst taking off from *Albatross*, the canopy separated and the take off was aborted. As can be seen by these incidences, the aircraft had its fair share of problems.

WZ937 accumulated 1179 hours 30 minutes flight time and was paid off on 4th of September 1963.

This particular aircraft served on 808 Sqdn, 724 Sqdn, 805 Sqdn and was then used for instructional purposes.

During the week of May 20th 1990, Wings, Cmdr Chris George, had the aircraft moved from the dummy deck to 'E' hangar and five days later, restoration work began in earnest.

Over the next few months the aircraft was partially stripped of fittings and the clean-up job was in full swing with the removal of all fuselage fabric and what was left of the neoprene on the radome. The ejection seats were removed and completely renovated, all the water that was on the cockpit floor was painstakingly dried out and the sanding back of the paint surfaces well under way.

In September and October 1990 the hydraulic system was checked through and found to be in fairly good shape with the aircraft accepting full hydraulic pressure

with most systems working normally. With the advent of the hydraulics coming to life it was decided to try ground electrical power, this also worked with no smoke issuing from black boxes.

In early November 1990, we made the decision to try and start the aircraft sometime in early 1991, consequently the search began for starter cartridges and bursting discs. One hundred and thirty eight cartridges were found in the bomb dump, all well out of date. These were sent to Sydney for test and unfortunately found to be too unstable for use. Other means of starting would have to be found.

Later that same month, a fully detailed inspection of the engine was commenced and a large crack was found in the lower section of the diffuser casing. Fortunately, in February '91, thanks to the efforts of George Beasley and the Apprentice Training School of Hawker De Havilland, Bankstown, we had been given another engine.

The fun started again, changing engines and preparing the systems, once again.

On the 14th of September 1991, the aircraft was rolled out, ready for the first start attempt. A GTC85 (Gas Turbine Compressor) was to be the first item on the starting agenda. This proved unsuccessful. Too much volume, not enough pressure. A couple of weeks later 28 volts was pushed through the starboard generator, getting engine speed up to 700RPM, not enough.

Thanks to Air Watch Services in New Zealand, who kindly sent us



WZ 937 - Restored and awaiting handover to the Naval Aviation Museum
(Photograph courtesy Tony Penno)

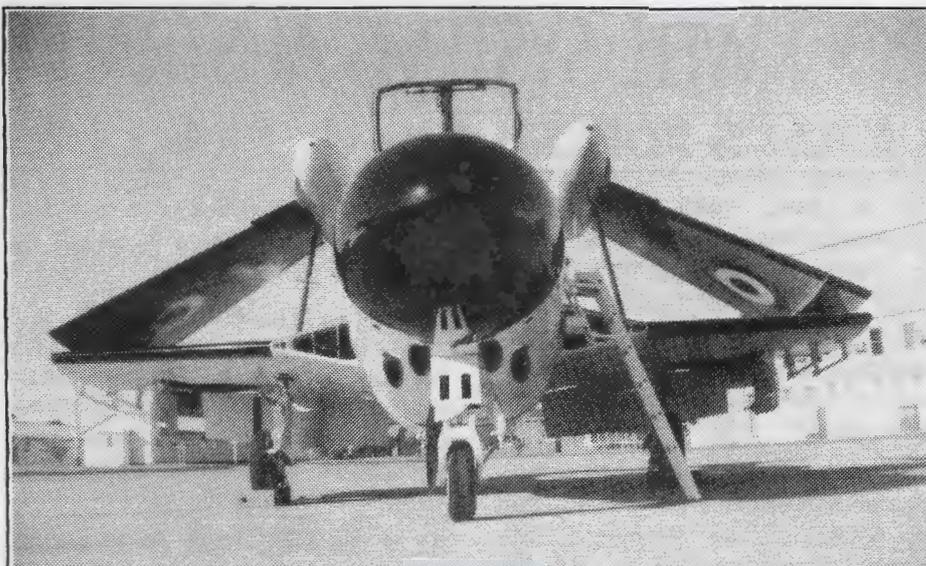
photo's and a video on 'how to do it', an air start was effected on the 26th of April 1992, and the engine was run for eighteen minutes.

Other work on the aircraft was progressing and after spraying the booms with undercoat, it was decided that to achieve the finish we required, all the surfaces would have to be stripped right back.

During October and November much overtime was put into getting the aircraft ready for the November air day, the fuselage was fibre glassed (thanks to Advanced Composites) and all the small dents and scratches were filled with body filler and sanded back. The radar scanner was hand painted with loving care and the radome was sprayed a brilliant gloss black. After having organised the spray bay ready to accept the aircraft a final inspection of all surfaces was carried out by the spray painters. They said that the aircraft could be painted, but, if we really wanted a first class high gloss finish there were still a few things that could be done. We decided not to spray.

The aircraft was towed up to the Museum complex for display on the November air day and was to be returned to the hangar the next day. Unfortunately it rained very heavily for the next few days and the aircraft stayed where it was. Over the next week or so, we re-sited it to a more favourable position in the Museum complex and all subsequent work has been carried out there. The interest it has generated in the viewing public has been very rewarding for the crew, and we spend quite a lot of time talking and explaining what's going on to the visitors.

All depressions in the fuselage were filled with body filler, two coats of



WZ 937 looking as pretty as a picture. The only thing missing being a good layer of soft soap and a couple pounds of cannon shell residue around the gun ports. (Photograph courtesy Tony Penno)

spray putty were applied to the complete area and sanded back to a very smooth finish. Three coats of 3D primer were then applied and once again sanded back to give an extremely smooth surface ready for the undercoat.

On the 2nd of April 1993, the aircraft was finally moved into the spray booth, and painting preparations were commenced. By working into the early hours, the aircraft was completely undercoated and the first top-coat applied.

Next day, the second colour top coat was applied. On the third day all masking was removed and the aircraft was then towed back to the Museum where all markings were painstakingly applied by the hand of Chris Brown.

Over the past thirty six months approximately three thousand man hours have gone into making this

aeroplane look like brand new and if I were to thank every body who was involved, it would take another page.

Those that I will thank are, the crew who have applied themselves so diligently to the project, Hawker De Havilland, George Beasley, Advanced Composites, The Rod Shop, Shoalhaven Frames and Trusses, Cookes Tyre Service, the Safety Equipment section and workshops of *HMAS Albatross*, and last but by no means least, Commodore Rob Partington for his help and backing when things got a bit tough.

The aircraft was handed back to the Museum on Saturday 29th of May almost exactly 3 years from the commencement of the restoration project. Now the fun starts all over again - on WZ895.

*TP 1993 ©

What happened to the badge off the 'Vengeance'?

The writer was a member of the Ordnance section left behind to clean up the Vengeance prior to handing the ship back to the RN.

On the last night on board, several things occurred which people may be still wondering about.

Late that night, some members of HQ Section 'O' branch, with some help from the 'A/E' group, decided that the ship's badge on the flight deck should be taken back to the Nowra RSL Club.

Armed with a GS screwdriver and a hacksaw, the badge was

successfully removed and conveyed to the airman's mess. This group then decided to remove the badge from the quarterdeck.

However, this badge proved to be more secure than the previous one, and, as the officers were partying only a few feet away and we didn't want to get sprung, we gave the idea away.

On the way back to the mess, we piped "Members of the lower deck are invited to attend a party at the wardroom." I never did find out if anyone took up the offer!

The flight deck badge was wrapped

in a blanket and strapped to one of my suitcases. We left Plymouth in the early hours with no checks and had no trouble getting it on board *HMAS Melbourne*.

I am not too sure where the badge was hidden for most of the time, but most likely in the bomb room. I know that just prior to arriving in Sydney it was hidden in the fo'c'sle heads. That was the last I saw of it.

So, who found it? Where is it?

It has to be in Australia, so how about it appearing at the Naval Aviation Museum at Nowra.

* Roger 'Ratsack' 46783

ROCKWELL SYSTEMS AUSTRALIA

RAN S-70B SeaHawk Helicopter

On 1 July, 1985, the Royal Australian Navy (RAN) awarded a contract to Sikorsky to procure eight S-70B-2 helicopters, along with one software support facility, one mission support facility and four shipborne data terminals.

An option for eight more helicopters was exercised on 2 May, 1986, and an additional two shipboard data terminals were ordered to meet the Australian-built frigate requirements. Project cost was established at A\$662M (April, 1989).

The S-70B-2 helicopter has been procured to operate from the RAN's FFG Class frigates. Its primary roles are antisubmarine warfare and antisurface and surveillance targeting. Secondary roles include sea air rescue, utility lift, ferry and troop transport.

Collins Avionics and Communications Division (CACD) of Rockwell International is Sikorsky's major subcontractor for the helicopter's unique and state-of-the-art tactical data system (RAN/RAWS - Role Adaptable Weapon System).

Rockwell Systems Australia's (RSA) involvement through CACD stems back to the early phases of the program when RSA's Melbourne-based manufacturing and engineering facility provided four systems engineers to work on the requirement definition phase, systems integration and test phases of the RAN/RAWS. This involvement covered all aspects of the avionics suite, weapons system and included definition of the fault management system (display generator Operational Flight Programs). RSA provided field service support personnel to Navy at NAS Nowra in the area of communications and avionics. Additionally, RSA also manufactured, assembled and tested the TACAN and Identification Friend or Foe equipment currently

on board the S-70B-2.

The original schedule provided for delivery of the first S-70B-2 helicopter by January, 1988 and subsequent acceptance into Navy service following a transition period in January, 1990. Due to some delays, aircraft one was not accepted in service until September, 1989.

As of late May, 1993, all 16 aircraft have been accepted into service by the Navy as have the Computer Sciences of Australia (CSA)-developed shipborne data terminals, Software Upkeep Facility (SUF), and Mission Support Facility (MSF). Both SUF and MSF combine to form the aircraft weapon system support centre, which itself forms part of the air warfare systems centre, later to be joined by the S-70B-2 mission simulator.

Conditional acceptance of the aircraft was based on there being two software upgrades referred to as Block 1 and Block 2 upgrades. The first of the Block upgrades was completed in two stages, whilst the second is now fully tested and ready for release to the fleet. A final upgrade to provide complete mission support facility functionality is under development by CACD and CSA. The overall effect on the functionality of the weapon platform of the upgrade program has been minimal. Recent success during a number of deployments in the Middle East tends to confirm this.

The S-70B-2 is an extremely potent, intelligent and advanced weapon sensor platform and represents significant advantages over previously operated RAN helicopters. It provides the frigate Commander with real enhancements to his antisubmarine warfare and antisurface surveillance and targeting capabilities.

The S-70B-2 collects, analyses and transmits resolved data to a mother-ship for input to the Naval Combat

Data System carried on-board the RAN frigates. All activities can occur at ranges of up to 100 nautical miles from the helicopter's own ship.

The "heart" of this formidable system is the Rockwell, Collins Avionics and Communications Divisions RAN/RAWS (Role Adaptable Weapons System) Technical Data System (TDS).

The system is designed primarily around a dual redundant MIL-STD-1553B Data Bus and is controlled by dual Display Generator Units (DGUs - Mission Central Processors). Each unit is capable of providing system control in the event one should fail. The Tactical Data System can be subdivided into a Display Management System (DMS) and the Collins Cockpit Management System CMS-80 family derivatives.

The Display Management System is the "brain" of the aircraft data system, receiving, directing and orchestrating tactical/operational data over the 1553 Bus for the multiplicity of onboard sensors. Manual input from the crew may be accepted via one of three multifunctional key sets fitted to the helicopter.

It is the intelligent, raw processing capability of the Display Management System, along with the power of each weapons system sensor, that ensures autonomous operation of the S-70B-2 to be able to detect, track and neutralise an enemy submarine without the requirement of mother-ship reliance for weapon-firing solutions.

The Cockpit Management System manages all radio communications equipment, including the secure voice and tactical data link. It also provides for the control of the non-1553 Bus compatible communications equipment, such as the direction finder, TACAN and the IFF. Additional to these Rockwell Collins products, the RAN has invested in the latest Rockwell Global Positioning System (GPS) - satellite navigation receiver equipment. Current redesign and integration changes are underway, and this will further enhance the

ability of the platform to meet operational scenarios. For example, five channel GPS receivers are being installed for flight tests at the Naval Air Station Nowra.

Additional mission sensors and processors integrated by the TDS on the platform include ASQ 504 on-board integrated magnetic anomaly detector system; UYS 503 sonobuoy processor system (which includes a purpose built BARRA side processor), dual ARR 84 sonobuoy receivers, ARN 146 position indicator; and the Thorn-EMI Electronics Super Search 360 degree radar with automatic tracking. The helicopters are fitted with dual eight-inch CRT displays, three multifunction key sets, and dual Horizontal Situation Video Displays.

The beauty of a weapons system

like this is that its ease of update enables the operators and support crews relatively trouble-free system updates and aircraft weapons system configuration changes.

As Navy moves closer towards 2000, additions of Forward Looking Infrared (FLIR), Electronic Support Measures and Dipping Sonar, will only enhance the remarkable tactical data system.

Rockwell International's Collins Avionics and Communications Division (CACD), in partnership with Rockwell Systems Australia (RSA) Pty. Ltd., is committed to continued support of the RAN and the Australian Department of Defence in addressing the RAN/RAWS enhancements.

RSA is a leading electronics systems engineering design and manufacturing company employing

approximately 400 people in its Sydney and Melbourne facilities. The company heads a 28-member international team building the advanced combat system and the communication system for the Royal Australian Navy's new Collins-class submarines. RSA also leads a multinational team that is upgrading the avionics for the Royal Australian Air Force's F-111C aircraft which, when completed, will extend the mission life of the aircraft by twenty years.

Rockwell Systems Australia is a wholly owned subsidiary of the US-based Rockwell International Corporation, a multi-industry company applying advanced technology to a wide range of products in its electronics, aerospace, automotive, industrial automation and graphics businesses.



S-70B-2 SEAHAWK HELICOPTER

LENGTH OVERALL: 21.2 metres
(with rotors turning)

HEIGHT: 5.2 metres

TURNING RADIUS: 13.2 metres

MACHINERY: Two T700-GE-401 front
drive turboshaft engines

SPEED: 135 knots (250km/h)

RANGE: 600 nautical miles (1110 km)

SERVICE CEILING: 3810 metres

FLEET AIR ARM PERSONALITY

George Raymond Blondel was born in Portsmouth, England, on 29 June, 1922.

From the age of eleven years he was educated at the Royal Navy School for Sailors' sons, a rigorous establishment by any standard, located at Holbrook in Suffolk.

When he was discharged from the school in November 1937, after four years, his report stated that his knowledge of seamanship was good; his sporting ability was average; and his contribution to the band as a horn player was very good indeed. The Superintendent of the school described George as a nice quiet boy who had never been in any sort of trouble.

So, at the age of fifteen, he followed his father's footsteps into the Royal Navy, joining *HMS St Vincent*.



As was the custom of the day, he was Boy 2nd Class. And so it happened that each boy was called upon to do a stint in the galley to help prepare scran. On one occasion his job was to make the custard. After mixing the ingredients he asked the Chief where he would put it. Abruptly he was told to put it on the range. Because at that time he was learning to become a gunner, the only range that George knew about was on the top deck of a ship, so up he went to deposit it. At the appointed time the Chief asked, "Where's the custard, Blondel?" "On the range, Chief,"

was his crisp answer. "Well bring it here boy." When he brought it down, what was left was full of seagull droppings. After being kicked around the ship, one Boy 2/C's rear end was rather sore.

This early ignorance was a far cry from the deep and wide-ranging knowledge of the Warrant Officer AVN who retired from the RAN thirty-seven years later at *HMAS Albatross*, Nowra, New South Wales.

By 1939 the world was at war. George had already served for short periods in *HM Ships St Vincent, Drake, Dromeda, Royal Oak, Hermes* and *Valiant*. He was a good achiever right from the start, and whilst in his first ship he was awarded the Class Prize in Gunnery and Disciplinary Training.

He was made Ordinary Seaman in June 1940, with the comment - 'A very good boy. Works hard and has intelligence. Always smart and clean. Should do well in the service'. Seven months later, he was promoted to Able Seaman.

George was to serve in *HM Ships Drake, Port Quebec* and *Glennearn*, in many theatres of conflict. While still serving in *HMS Valiant*, just prior to his twentieth birthday, his Divisional Officer saw his potential as a leader when he wrote - 'A superior Able Seaman in every way, who would make an excellent Leading Seaman: but I cannot get him to put in his name to pass, he considers he is too young and inexperienced.'

However, his humility was not able to escape the wishes of his superiors for too long. A little over a year later, in July, 1943, he was made an Acting Leading Seaman. Another year elapsed before he was made up to Leading Seaman. Again his Divisional Officer (*HMS Quebec*) paid him a great compliment - 'Has passed for Leading Seaman on board. A man of excellent character with good power of command.'

It was not surprising that within twelve months Leading Seaman Blondel was given the rank of Acting Petty Officer while serving in *HMS Glennearn*, a task that won him the reports - 'An excellent Acting Petty Officer. Shows great interest and inspires his men to follow him in his good work...tackles the unusual job calmly and intelligently. He sets a good example by appearing cheerful at all times....A Petty Officer of outstanding ability. A very

good seaman....A good example to junior ratings....is very retiring in nature....he is above average as an instructor.' His promotion to Petty Officer came in October 1947.

It was during 1947 and '48 that Petty Officer Blondel attended *RNSAH Gosport* to do his courses in Aircraft Handling, Fire Fighting and Runway Control. In July, 1948, he was awarded the rating AH1 after gaining superior marks in all sections in both AH2 and AH1.

From the conclusion of his Aircraft Handling Course until the end of 1949, George remained at the School of Aircraft Handlers (*HMS Siskin*). He was considered a quiet and efficient, above average instructor.

It was while he was serving in *HMS Sanderling* in 1950 that he was encouraged to attempt promotion to Branch Rank, such was his standing with his superior officers. However this matter had to wait as another opportunity came his way.

During 1950 he began a two year loan engagement with the Royal Australian Navy and served in *HMAS Sydney* (21st Carrier Air Group), and served for 177 days in the Korean War. George soon earned himself a fine reputation with the Australian command.

He renewed the loan engagement in April 1952, agreeing to serve with the RAN until December, 1953. However, he decided that Australia should be his new home before the end of this period. Thus, Petty Officer (AH1) George Blondel severed his links with the Royal Navy on 30 August, 1953. The next day he was a member of the Royal Australian Navy.

From the time of his loan postings to the RAN until he retired from the Navy in April, 1974, George's service time was divided between the aircraft carriers *Sydney* and *Melbourne*, and *RANAS Nowra*.

George was promoted to Chief Petty Officer in April, 1954, the delay occasioned by his loss of seniority when he transferred from the RN to the RAN. His reports continued to reflect his efficiency, knowledge, reliability, instructing ability, and his keen interest in the future of the air arm of the RAN.

It came as no surprise to anyone that in December 1967, he was awarded the British Empire Medal for outstanding devotion to duty, professional competence, loyalty to the service, and exceptional qualities of leadership as Captain of the Flight Deck, *HMAS Melbourne*.

This award accompanied his

Returned from Active Service Medal, the 1939/45 Star, the Pacific Star, the Long Service and Good Conduct Medal with Clasp, the Africa Star, the United Nations Service Medal, the Atlantic Star and Clasp, and the British Korea Medal.

He wasn't one to talk much about his past war experiences, but he loved to tell the story about when his ship was sunk in African waters. Whilst awaiting another ship, he was given an eight hour shift as sentry to monitor the operation of the boom net set up to keep out submarines and frogmen at the entrance to the harbour. With food and a rifle, he was deposited on a buoy bobbing up and down adjacent to the net. It was a duty he was never to forget.

Shortly after the war, on a trip to Australia, George met and fell in love with Zoe Dawes of Kiama. After an extended correspondence around the globe, they were married in England in 1948.

In his years of retirement, he quietly and courageously struggled with a serious heart condition which finally claimed his life on 28 July, 1987.

Over a long service life which was punctuated by the life-confusing

hardships of war and by the long periods away from his wife and two boys, he did remarkably well to serve two countries, and almost always with a smile on his face and laughter in his heart.

He was pleased to become an Australian Citizen in October 1975. As well as helping his adopted Australian mates celebrate Anzac Day, without fail he would celebrate the 6th of June, the anniversary of the evacuation of Dunkirk, which he called his Anzac Day.

At the time of his death, Cdre Paul Berger, Commanding Officer of *HMAS Albatross* paid him this final compliment - 'As *Melbourne's* Captain of the Flight Deck, George Blondel was magnificent. He was so very competent. He had the presence of mind and the personality to do this task. Young airmen quickly grew in confidence while George was in control. While WO Blondel performed many



significant tasks for both the RN and RAN, being Captain of the Flight Deck of *HMAS Melbourne* was the pinnacle of his service career.'

**Eulogy by the Rev. Graham Adsett.*

*** In memory of George Blondel, the Shoalhaven Contact Group of the, Regular Defence Force Welfare Association hold an annual 'George Blondel Yule Fest'. Ed.*



A group photograph of Aircraft Handlers taken at the Senior Sailor's Reunion, HMAS Albatross, in 1986.

(Photograph kindly loaned by Alex Stevens)



CONTACT COLUMN

To National Secretary

Dear Ian,

I had my 80th birthday on 9th May and received good wishes from many members of the FAA Association, including cards from the New South Wales, Victorian and Tasmanian Divisions. It was extremely kind of them.

As I don't have the addresses of all concerned, I would be grateful if, say, next time you are sending a memo to the divisions you mention how very much I appreciated people remembering my birthday, and that I send them all good wishes.

Yours sincerely,
Victor Smith

Dear Sir,

New Zealanders in FAA 1938 - 1945

I recently came across a copy of your excellent publication, *Slipstream*. As I am in the process of gathering anecdotal and photographic evidence/material for a small publication on the experiences of New Zealanders in the Fleet Air Arm 1939 - 1945, I thought that you may be able to help me.

It is material of the 'Spin us a dit' variety that I am collecting. Do you have any stories in your past issues of *Slipstream* that may cover experiences of 'Kiwis'?

Could you put me in touch with any prolific yarn spinners who could provide me with funny, serious, sad or bad anecdotes?

My initial interest in this area stems from the fact that my father, H.A. 'Dusty' Rhodes, is one of your members from New Zealand. He was a member of 1136 Corsair Squadron on *HMS Victorious*.

Yours in anticipation,
Chris Rhodes

* If you can be of assistance to Chris, please contact him direct at - 23 Finlayson Street, Malvern, Vic. 3144. Ed.

To National Secretary

Dear Ian,

I would be obliged if you could assist me in my search for cloth badges that are needed to complete my collection of badges from my RAN postings.

I would be willing to pay for these plus postage, so if it could be arranged to publish the list in *Slipstream*, I would be very grateful. They are:

* 723 and 816 Squadrons, *HMA Ships Leeuwin, Harman and Melville*.

I don't expect that they be in 'mint' condition, but hopefully they would be at least recognisable.

I have one 817 Squadron badge which I am willing to swap.

Members who may be able to help could write to me: C/-Pamacorp, 302-308 Russell Street, Melbourne Vic 3000, or phone me on (03) 639 2555 or (03) 663 7155.

Many thanks.

Yours sincerely,

Kevin (Slug) Whitting - Ex-CPOAVN

Dear Ed,

In reply to B.J. 'Beauchamp' Butler, Victoria Division, April issue of *Slipstream*.

I enclose a photograph of my rego plate FAA 057.



I have had this 'personalised' number plate since August 1989. (The last three digits of my Official Number R64057)

I was also on 816 'A' Flight - Gannets, in April 1967.

Bill 'Mac' Magrath - Ex-armourer

From the Telegraphist Air Gunners Association UK.

Dear John,

Many thanks for your note and the copy of the Australian Fleet Air Arm magazine *Slipstream* which I think is a great magazine.

It was especially pleasant to see one of my own stories published other than in the TAGS journal (*Palembang story last edition. Ed.*) and it makes one realise that us ex-Fleet Air Arm guys really are world wide.

I would like to publish from time to time, articles from *Slipstream*, which I feel may be of interest to our readers, I hope this is OK. Naturally, if you wish to publish anything from TAGS, you are more than welcome.

A large number of our members served with the British Pacific Fleet and have revisited Australia since, so your magazine will be of great interest. I myself visited my ex-pilot, Alan Ryman, in Brisbane, also one

of our 820 Squadron TAGS, Fred Brunton, in Sydney during 1991.

Best wishes from the TAGS to all FAA chaps in Australia.

Kind regards,

Roy Gibbs (Editor TAGS)

Through this column, several old friends from 'service days' caught up with each other, they arranged a get-together in Sydney for Anzac Day. This letter is a follow-up. Ed.

Dear John,

Where does time go? It seems just like yesterday, we were talking about a get together on Anzac Day.

We had a great three days starting on Saturday the 24th. I met 'Digger' and Doug at Central Bus Terminal, after they settled into their hotel (Westend, 412 Pitt Street), we had a few beers and lunch.

'Righteous' Roy and Max arrived at Mascot Airport together and the bus dropped them off at the same hotel as the others.

I left them at about 5:30pm, thinking of the big day to come, had an early night, also a leave pass for Anzac Day.

On Anzac Day we all mustered at the *HMAS Sydney* banner, completed 'the march', then Alan Zammit produced his camera (photo enclosed) with two more ex-general service members joining the crew, namely Eric 'Scrubby' Bush and Reg Holton, both ex-CPO Handlers. We let Alan Zammit be in the photo, after all, he does run the camera! He also gave us the prints - enough for everyone.

The reunion luncheon was at the Leagues Club, a very good venue as quite a few other associations met there. A walk around the various floors, finds many old shipmates with the usual 'remember this and remember that?'

Reg Holton and Alan Zammit had other arrangements later that day so we bid them farewell and then 'sailed' down Pitt Street to HQ at the Westend, now known as 'their' hotel.

Once again I left early? Only to return at 9:00am Monday, just to make sure they all caught the right transport home.

We all had such a great time, we have decided to do it again next year, only this time the stay will be longer. Also hope to make it to Nowra later this year!!

Since last writing I have had a birthday and received a very nice card from 'Righteous' Roy with a

poem called 'The Gift of Friendship' by Helen Steiner Rice (enclosed). I would like to think that this says it all regarding the friends we made whilst in the Royal Australian Navy.

Kind regards,
Leo 'Taff' Evans

*Friendship is a priceless gift
That cannot be bought or sold
But its value is far greater
Than a mountain made of gold
For gold is cold and lifeless
It can neither see nor hear
And in the time of trouble
It is powerless to cheer
It has no heart to listen
No heart to understand
It cannot bring you comfort
Or reach out a helping hand
So if you ask God for a gift
Be thankful if he sends
Not diamonds pearls or riches
But the love of real true friends.*



The crew of HMAS Incorrigeble meet up again. Hyde Park - Sydney 1993
Back: 'Righteous' Roy Torrens - Leo 'Taff' Evans - Max Gant - Eric 'Scrubby' Bush and Reg Holton Front: Alan Zammit - E.H. 'Digger' Schmidt and Doug Eastgate.

The following letter is from one of our members, Daniel Mark Bowden MID, ex-CPO TAG. The wartime exploit that resulted in his MID, is captured for posterity on canvas at the Naval Aviation Museum, Nowra

Dear John,

I recently returned from the annual Anzac Service in Honolulu. A report was sent to you previously describing this service and the area at the Memorial Cemetery which is contained in an extinct volcano.

Each year is similar in format but always impressive, and I feel that my contribution in representing my four associations is a reciprocal appreciation of all the planning by the Australian Consulate General Staff, and in particular the honour accorded our special day in having the great support of American Marines; really a splendid tribute, possibly the best Anzac Day spectacle held overseas.

The American Marines always parade their own Colours and Guard, provide the Fleet Marine Band, orderlies to each wreath layer, 21 Gun Saluting Battery and orderlies for ancillary duties etc..

Generally, Anzac Colours and Guards are co-opted from Anzac ships if they are training in the area - Rimpac exercises.

If three guards, Australian, New

Zealand, American, are available, all are paraded with respective colours on ten foot wide landings of the approximately seventy foot wide steps that cascade in flights of ten from the top to the lower patio court in front of the Memorial. Audience seating is arranged in front of the 'Memorial Stone to the Missing' where the wreaths are laid. So you can imagine, the presentation is very impressive.

This year Anzac forces were not available so American Marines, I think for the 5th time to my personal viewing since 1978, carried out all ceremonial including the parade of Anzac Colours, which were accorded position of honour, in addition to the parade of their own colours.

This year we had five patriates direct from Australia, Mr and Mrs Ted Borstel (he laid a wreath for Terrigal Wamberal RSL), Mr and Mrs Ted Reynolds, who organised their holiday especially to attend the service, and myself, we laid three wreaths. Coincidentally, our five patriates were all from the Central Coast of NSW, the blokes all ex-RAN.

A total of thirty-three wreaths were ceremonially laid, each respective wreath orderly saluted while the wreath layer saluted or bowed a short obeisance.

After the service we were conveyed

to a reception jointly held by the resident Australian Consul General and New Zealand Consul General, both GG's had also jointly conducted the service in cooperation with an American Naval Chaplain; the NZ CG attends each year especially for the service.

After the NNMR (Nip, Natter, Mingle, Reception), we proceeded to the Rose and Crown, a pseudo English type pub in Waikiki where, after each Anzac Service, the Anzac ex-patriates gather to renew friendships and enjoy a quiet Suds Opera.

Since arriving home I've been turning in circles, had a good dose of 'flu, I think a double whammy, an excuse to spend a couple of days in bed, and with the Doc's antibiotics have altered my circles and steadied on course to catch up with the mail.

I am negotiating with RSL Travel to hopefully join a private tour that will meet up in France with the Old Veterans and War Widows official tour (similar arrangements as for the 75th Gallipoli Tour, but very much smaller group) being sent by our government to the 75th Anniversary Battle of Bullecourt etc. in WW1 Western Front France.

If this tour eventuates, I anticipate doing the add on tour 'Grand tour of France' another fifteen days and then back home broke to start

saving for something ? will dream up later while my health holds good, I'm now 83 years young and still cheeky.

I have been fortunate, being on the 75th Anniversary Gallipoli Tour and laid wreath at Lone Pine for the 'Tingira Old Boys and Submariners Association'. On the 6th Australian Div. 50th Anniversary return to Greece and Crete, laid wreath Souda Bay Cemetery for the Federal Naval Association. On the 9th Australian Div. 50th Anniversary to El Alamein, laid wreath at Tobruk for the Federal Naval Association, extended to add on tours and thoroughly enjoyed all. Keeping fingers crossed for the next tour.

With Best Wishes, sincerely, *Dan*

I once asked Dan why he travelled around so much. He replied; "Because there aren't any pockets in a shroud." Good Luck, Dan. Ed.

The writer of the following, Colin Davies, is a member of the Fleet Air Arm Museum (UK) Society of Friends.

Colin, an ex-Air Mech/E, spent two years in Australia on temporary transfer to the RAN (o/n A 15847). He kindly consented to write down some of his recollections of his time here, mainly at RANAS Nowra.

We left Devonport in September 1948 on board HMAS Kanimbila.

Instead of working ship, as everyone else had been detailed for, three of us were detailed off for a special job - the ship's laundry! The only thing 'special', being that we were turned out an hour earlier in the morning because the washing machine used soap flakes - these not being available, we had to make them using a knife and a box of Pusser's hard soap bars.

The laundry work wasn't too hard at first, until we got to Genoa where we picked up several hundred Displaced Persons en route to Australia.

Despite several requests to keep the laundry separate, whites from coloureds, it was to no avail, so the AB in charge of the laundry finally gave in and said: "Sod 'em, all in at once!"

When the DP's finally disembarked in Australia, Joseph's coat of many colours had nothing on some of the creations the DP's were wearing.

At last to Australia. Two weeks at HMAS Cerberus, a few days at HMAS Penguin, before we went to Nowra.

Several weeks of work at a variety of jobs followed in workshops and

hangars. Finally, six of us were sent off to RAAF Clarendon, between Windsor and Richmond, to retrieve Vultee Vengeance fuselages for fire fighting training.

Whilst there, as well as the excitement of dodging the rather wild dogs the RAAF used as guard dogs, and the aircraft half collapsing as they were being dismantled, or dropping out of the slings as they were being carried, I had my first taste of Australian hospitality.

My 21st birthday occurred while I was at Clarendon and I was asked by an RAAF man to accompany him to Richmond, where I discovered that the five eldest daughters, June, Marcia, Norma, Gloria and Gwen of the Lenbeith family, had organised a birthday party for me. It was complete with a large cake and a large key signed by everybody at the party.

The remains of the cake were parcelled up and sent to my mother in UK, she and June corresponded for several years. It was a surprise that was very much appreciated.

After Clarendon it was back to Nowra and more mundane matters and several weeks as a spare hand, sweep that, pick that up. It seems that whilst at Clarendon, everybody had managed to fit themselves into the jobs they wanted.

Then it was the Transport Yard - find the ERA in charge and see what he's got for you. It turned out that he'd got a wire brush, lots of steel wool, and several aircraft refuellers. Get inside and clean off all the rust ready for painting.

The painting was something to think about with all the Health and Safety Acts that are in force now. The authorities would have been horrified, not ordinary paint, but quick drying petrol resistant paint, no proper ventilation, no safety man, just somebody who now and again would bang on the side of the tank and shout: "Tea up!"

Still, it did lead to a crash driving course - 'crash' being the operative word.

As it was pointed out to Mr Daniels, the Transport Officer, as I had done all the work getting them ready, it would only be fair if I had a go at driving them.

Mr Daniels, a Commissioned Engineer, was the only officer I really came into contact with and he had a lot to put up with, considering the crowd he'd been lumbered with.

At the start it was Stokers who were the drivers, somebody said it was because they were mechanically

minded. Then it was decided that Air Arm people were probably alright for airfield vehicles, and any other vehicles involved with aircraft. Eventually a big proportion of drivers were Air Arm. Air Mech/E Bill Doyle, Air Fitter/E Sam Shave, aircraft transport and crane drivers. Air Mech/E Ted Scott, eventually the Officer's Bus driver, Air Mech/E Paddy George, another refueller driver, just to name a few.

I suppose we made Mr Daniels' life a bit of a misery at times. He had a liking for riding a large Harley Davidson motor bike, which at times he looked as if he was going to drop when he came to a stop. There was invariably someone to offer to help if needed, or there would be someone near his office practising his Australian - "My cobber's sheila has gone crook on me, Blue", in as English an accent as possible.

It was with Ted Scott, that he and I, having heard how quick it was possible to hitch-hike to Melbourne, decided to have a go and came across further examples of Australian hospitality. A bus from Nowra to Moss Vale, and then late in the evening a lift to Goulburn.

For some reason - it took FOUR days to get through Goulburn! It might have had something to do with the Australian Army camp there, who seemed to think that 'drink like a fish' was what the Navy could do - anyway - we couldn't go until we'd attended their dance on the Saturday.

At midnight we decided that regardless of the time, we would have to leave, otherwise we would never get to Melbourne.

A lift all through the night with somebody who spent all the night describing the country side we were travelling through.

He left us in Gundagai early Sunday morning, wondering what to do next, a knocking on a cafe window was the proprietor, offering us breakfast and a chance to have a wash and a shave. The uniforms fascinated him and his family.

I don't recall how we got to the statue of the 'Dog on the Tucker Box', but it was from here that we were picked up by a young fellow with a semi-trailer loaded with cement, a one man one woman firm, he did all the driving and his mother did all the office work. He went out of his way to make the rest of the trip to Melbourne as interesting as he could. By the time he'd finished there wasn't much we didn't know about Ned Kelly and where he'd operated.

I wonder if anybody remembers the little entertainment that was put on at the cinema at dinner hour - you could hear the low murmurs from the back of the cinema, in perfect time - "Whereas it has been represented to me by Commander Rodney Rhoades DSC, Royal Australian Navy...."

I also wonder if anyone will recall the feeling of excitement when it was disclosed that a new crane was on its way, this was to replace the outmoded Coles 5 Ton cranes, which had to have platforms welded on the front to carry several concrete blocks to cope with the Sea Furies and Fireflies - and the sense of anti-climax when, instead of one of the big American Browning cranes, two men, a driver and an operator, that we'd seen the Marines driving back in UK - what should appear but a large Caterpillar tractor with a twenty foot tow bar to two enormous wheels and then an equally long jib.

As someone unkindly said; "Instead of waiting for the tractor to slowly clank its way to the crash, it would be much quicker to crash into the crane!"

When I left Australia at the end of my two year stay, it was with a great deal of appreciation for all the hospitality that had been shown by all the Australians I had met.

* Colin Davies

THE LAST KAMIKAZE

The date was 15 August, 1945.

I was a bridge signalman on *HMS Indefatigable* and we were steaming some 100 miles off the Japanese coast.

All morning rumours had been circulating of a Japanese surrender. At about 1000 the signal was received confirming the rumours, the war was to end at 1100. At this time the signal was hoisted - "Cease Hostilities Against Japan".

Within five minutes *Indefatigable's* flight deck was alive with about 500 men dancing, singing, shaking hands and hugging each other with sheer delight. As I looked over the deck I also saw three or four crying with emotion and another six or seven on their knees giving thanks that at last it was all over. Now we could all go home to the loved ones waiting for us.

At about 1110, *Indefatigable's* radar detected a bogey - an unidentified

aircraft - a flight of US Navy Corsairs was directed to investigate.

The intruder was positively identified as Japanese and the Corsairs were instructed to intercept and destroy the Jap.

The victory celebrations on *Indefatigable's* flight deck were dramatically cut short when the ship's 'X' turret and the Oerlikons and Pom Poms on the Port side opened fire on the now diving Japanese plane.

A wall of steel was being sent up and as we watched we saw three Corsairs in hot pursuit.

After firing another couple of rounds, 'X' turret and the AA guns were ordered to stop firing for fear of hitting the US planes.

These planes were led by Lieutenant Marshall Lloyd (as we later found out) displaying a heroism that took our breath away. They showed a complete disregard for their own safety as they charged into the hail of AA fire being thrown up by our guns.

As we watched we could see their cannon shells hitting the Japanese aircraft. Suddenly the Jap released a bomb which hit the water about 60 yards on our Port quarter, doing no damage apart from throwing some water over our stern.

Whether it was the effect of releasing the bomb, or whether the Japanese pilot was dead or severely wounded, will never be known, but the plane changed course. It then seemed to head towards *HMNZS Gambia* which was on our Starboard quarter, he hit the water about 50 yards off *Gambia's* Port side and disintegrated; some of the pieces actually fell on *Gambia's* deck where they were quickly snapped up as souvenirs.

My most vivid memory of the action was the incredible courage displayed by Marshall Lloyd and his fellow pilots. I believe they belonged to the US Navy's "Bombing Fighting Squadron Six".

A signal was sent from *Indefatigable* to *USS Hancock*, quote: "At 1122 yesterday a Judy (*Yokosuka Naval Dive Bomber.Ed.*) diving on me was splashed by three of your Corsairs.



The last kamikaze photographed from *Indefatigable*

Please thank the pilots for their timely assistance and tell them we greatly admired the neat and skilful manner in which they splashed it." Unquote.

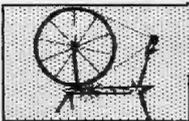
Unfortunately, Lieutenant Marshall Lloyd passed on to a higher command last November, but as *Indefatigable's* contingent passed the Cenotaph in Sydney during this years Anzac Day March, we remembered Marshall Lloyd and his fellow pilots.

We will never forget them.

* Ted Tisdale - Ex-Signalman *HMS Indefatigable*



'Cease Hostilities Against Japan'
HMS Indefatigable



SPIN US A BIT

WHAT'S IN A NAME?

Jervis Bay, 1988.

It was one of those Indian Summer days that occasionally sneak into the latter part of Autumn. The sun had lost most of its bite, and the slight on-shore breeze was just cool enough to warrant the wearing of a light pullover.

The bush, the grass and the gardens at the Naval College, were showing the signs that they would welcome the short holiday that the winter ahead promised.

My wife and I drive down to the Bay occasionally and enjoy the walk along the breakwater. This is a form of pilgrimage because we met, did our courting, wedded and lived there in the early fifties.

In those days, it was like a normal village, the only Naval presence being the Marine Section for the Sea Air rescue launches, the wharf and the slip-way.

It's much different nowadays, and although many of the original buildings are still in existence, the charm has gone. The relaxed atmosphere no longer exists, probably lost under the gallons and gallons of white plastic paint, used to regiment the place.

As we strolled along the breakwater, we came towards a parked car. It was an early model Holden and very well cared for. The passenger front door was open and an elderly lady was sitting in the seat, she was enjoying the sunshine whilst keeping out of the breeze.

As we neared the car we noticed that she was busy knitting baby clothes. If there is one area of commonality that females have, it is babies and what they wear.

In no time at all, my wife and the lady were engaged in social discourse and I might have been non-existent. My wife's new-found friend, suggested that I might like to have a chat with her husband who was further down the breakwater. I took the hint and headed off in the direction indicated.

He was sitting on one of those large granite blocks that make up the breakwater, arms braced behind him in a semi-reclining position. With his head tilted back, the breeze ruffled his full white beard and his sparse hair. He must have been in his seventies but looked tremendously fit. He had 'Mariner'

written all over him.

I introduced myself.

"My name's Johnnie Walker," he said. "Red Label," he added with a grin, pointing to his wind-burned face.

He had a soft West Country accent, as the Brits call it. I found it very pleasant to listen to as he explained his reasons for being down at the college.

One of his grandsons was a midshipman at the college, and, well, he just wanted to see first hand how he was doing. This particular grandson was the first to break with a family tradition that had gone on for many years.

Johnnie explained in his own inimitable fashion. "All the family has sailed under the 'Red Duster', this one's the first to sign up with the 'Grey Funnel Line'."

We spoke for some time about the Navy, and compared Naval and Merchant Marine 'slanguage'.

Our discussion eventually led us to people's nicknames. All the usual and obvious names were discussed. 'Spider' Webb, 'Dusty' Miller and 'Dusty' Rhodes, 'Davy' Jones, 'Pincher' Martin and 'Splinter' Wood. How some of the more elaborate nicknames originated was anyone's guess.

"I knew a wharfie down Melbourne once," said Johnnie. "They called him 'The Judge' 'cos he was always sitting on a case, but I think the most deserving one I knew of, was 'Eloquent' Clarke."

"You mean 'Nobby' Clarke, don't you?" I said.

"No," said Johnnie. "I mean 'Eloquent' Clarke, stripe me pink, I thought everybody had heard of him. Never mind, you would have been right at one time. They used to call him 'Nobby' at first, until they got to know him better.

"He joined the Merchant Navy to get away from some girl's irate father. Before he signed on, he'd worked on one of those market stalls in London's Petticoat Lane.

"Talk! Crikey he could talk. The girl's father must have been his only failure, unless he'd been deaf that is, because 'Eloquent' could talk himself out of anything under the sun."

Johnnie moved his position slightly on the rock.

"Bloody bum's going numb," he complained, giving the affected area

a good rub.

"What was I talking about? Don't tell me, I can remember. 'Eloquent' Clarke.

"I first met him when I was in this French port, not too long after the war. The place was still recovering from the occupation and the bombing it had received. There weren't too many places for sailors on shore to kick their heels up.

"We were having a yarn to this 'frog', who could speak a bit of our lingo, he said he'd take us to this special bar he knew about. We piled into his old Citroen and he headed for the hills.

"The car eventually stopped outside an old winery. The 'frog' explained that the owners were rebuilding, and renting the cellars out as a bar and night club provided the necessary finance.

"We went through these big oak doors and down a flight of stone steps, worn smooth and concave by the feet of generations of winemakers. Loud music and large volumes of cigarette smoke greeted us as we descended.

"The main part of the cellar was circular in shape with a high domed ceiling. This area provided space for chairs, tables and a dance floor. Radiating from this central area, like spokes from a hub, were six or seven deep recesses. They were the areas used for wine racks in the pre-war days.

"Two of these recesses were used as bars with counters across the front of them. Another one provided a stage area, currently occupied by a group of musicians.

"The remainder of the recesses had large red velvet drapes partially drawn across them. Behind each curtain was a large brass double bed, a washstand and a clothes rack. From time to time the bar girls would disappear behind these curtains, always with one of the patrons in tow.

"After a drink or two, and intrigued by the traffic flow to and from these screened areas, my reverie was interrupted by a mate of mine giving me a nudge. He pointed to a couple heading for one of the curtains. A girl was leading 'Eloquent' Clarke into the 'love-nest'.

"We were all yacking amongst ourselves about how he would talk this girl into parting with her favours for free, when.....the musicians started to miss their beat. This was followed by a general hush from the crowd.

"As the music faded away, it was

replaced by a rhythmic, squeaking, grating noise. We stood up to get a better view of what was happening.

"What a shock! 'Eloquent', on the bed with the girl, and both completely naked, had appeared through the red velvet curtains. Every sexual thrust he made, propelled the bed on its ancient castors further and further to the centre of the dance floor. After one final effort, the bed came to a juddering stop.

"The energy source used to provide the propulsion for this unit, was totally unaware of what had occurred. In fact neither of the participants knew that anything was amiss until the applause became deafening.

"For almost a minute, 'Eloquent' appeared thunder struck.

"The people who knew him had one common thought uppermost in their minds. How the hell would he talk himself out of THIS one?

"Well, I took my hat off to him. He jumped off the bed, still in the raw, with one hand over his 'wedding tackle' and the other on the bed post, he made a deep bow to the assembled crowd.

"The noise stopped immediately, 'Eloquent' cleared his throat. 'Ladies and gentlemen,' he said. 'With the aid of my charming partner, I will now proceed to 'root' this bed back where it came from.'.....

"It's time we were heading back to the car," said Johnnie. "It's starting to get a bit cool."

As we strolled back to the ladies, Johnnie continued. "The trouble with nicknames is that the bloody things have a tendency to stick. I haven't got much time for them myself."

When we reached the car, Mrs. Walker was checking the time on her wristwatch.

"Come on, Bill," she said to her husband. "We're going to be late."

"Bill?...Bill? I thought you said your name was Johnnie?" I said to my companion.

His wife answered for him, "No, love, that's just his nickname."

*Peregrine © 1991

THE HANGOVER FAIRY

by Jason Stevens

HER LOOKS ARE WORSE FOR WEAR I FEAR

SHE REEKS OF OLD RED WINE AND BEER

CIGGIE BURNS IN TATTERED TULLE
MASCARA SMEARS AND LIPS THAT DROOL

THE STENCH OF SMOKE IN FRAZZLED HAIR

AND BROWN STAINS ON HER UNDERWEAR

RECOIL IN HORROR FROM THIS VISION
THE HANGOVER FAIRY HAS ARISEN

SHE'S HIDING THERE BEHIND THE BAR
SHE KNOWS EXACTLY WHO YOU ARE
AND WELL AWARE YOU'VE HAD TEN GINS

A DAIQUIRI AND A SHOT OF PIMMS
SHE VIEWS AS BLATANT PROVOCATION
YOUR NIGHT OF BOOZE INDUCED ELATION

SHE WAITS FOR YOU TO HIT THE SACK
THEN MAKES A SAVAGE QUICK ATTACK
SHE GIVES HER MAGIC WAND A FLICK
AND PLACES IN YOUR NECK A CRICK
CARRIED IN HER CLAWED OLD HAND
A BAG OF BUDGIE CRAP AND SAND

WITH THIS YOUR TONGUE AND TEETH
SHE'LL COAT

THEN POUR WARM DRIPPING DOWN
YOUR THROAT

WITH DAMAGE DONE TO GUTS AND PALATE

SHE GRABS HER MAGIC BASHING Mallet

SHE RAISES HIGH THIS VILE DEVICE
AND SLAMS IT DOWN - NOT ONCE - BUT TWICE

IT NEVER LEAVES A SINGLE MARK
(JUST LIKE A QUEENSLAND NARK)

SHE SCREAMS: "THAT NINETEENTH BEER YOU'LL RUE!"

AS SHE STICKS YOUR EYELIDS SHUT
WITH GLUE

THE FOREHEAD COPS ANOTHER BLOW
THEN FAIRY TURNS - PREPARED TO GO

WHEN MORNING COMES YOU KNOW
THE PAIN

OF MURUROA IN YOUR BRAIN

BEROCCA FIZZ LIKE SONIC BOOM

COCKROACH STAMPS AROUND THE ROOM

YOUR BLADDERS FULL YOUR SINUS
ACHES

IT'S HIDEOUS - BUT THEM'S THE BREAKS
AND FUNNY THOUGH - DESPITE THE PAIN

YOU KNOW YOU'LL DO IT ALL AGAIN.

HELLO! HELLO! Oh HELL!

The New South Wales Police News tells about an English Police Inspector who was worried about a report submitted to him by one of his constables.

He thought that one line read: "The defendant put his hand down the witness's trousers and fondled his bollocks." So the inspector substituted 'testicles' and later told the constable that you couldn't say 'bollocks' in a court file.

"That wasn't bollocks," replied the constable. "I wrote buttocks but I mustn't have crossed the tees."

PUSHING YOUR LUCK

During World War Two, the Royal Navy took over Roedean, the exclusive private girl's school, and used it as an extension of the Torpedo School, HMS Vernon.

It's not known where the girls and mistresses went to, but the bells rang continuously the first night the sailors took over the dormitories. Apparently each room had a bell push and a sign reading - RING BELL FOR MISTRESS.

* With thanks to Starshell.

DIVINE INTERVENTION

When the OOD made middle watch rounds, he found a watchkeeper asleep at his post. He duly trooped him.

At the captain's table the man denied the charge, saying that he had been praying.

The Chaplain, called as a witness, testified that the man had been taking religious instruction.

Asked for his comment on this defence, the OOD conceded it was very likely true as, when he shook the man, he had gasped; "Jesus Christ! What's going on?"

* With thanks to Starshell

GRAFFITI

Written on the pub wall:

'My mother made me a homosexual!

And written below this in a different handwriting appeared:

'If I buy some wool will she make me one?'

It sure was a wow of a get-together!

This was the headline that accompanied the following article, written by Wally Crouch, in the Sydney Sunday Telegraph on 7 June 1953.

All the South Coast is talking about it - the big 'frollic' last Wednesday night.

It was the Coronation Ball held at HMAS Albatross, the naval air station near Nowra.

And what a ball - an exuberant, carefree affair which easily shamed the efforts of many slick city organisers.

As one greying but twinkle-eyed dairy farmer put it:

"The mightiest social 'ding' we've had in the butter-belt for fifty years."

Some say 1000 attended, some estimate 1500, while others claim 2000 crowded the dance floor.

But everyone - ticket collectors included - were having too good a time to make a complete tally.

The Nowra ball, despite its size, typified hundreds of Coronation festivities that blazed like beacons throughout Australia's rural districts this week.

It was a blending of near and far, of young and old, of serviceman and civilian to honour the Queen's crowning.

The nations man-of-the-land had no Buckingham Palace before which to cheer, no harbour foreshore from which to gaze at dazzling fireworks.

So he hitched up the pony-rig, marshalled his family, and rode into town to let off his Coronation emotions in a spot of self-organised celebrating.

Folks came by foot, sulky, horseback and car to the Albatross Ball.

There were gum-chewing teenagers, grizzled oldsters, fresh young milkmaids and town socialites.

They flocked from as far afield as Wollongong, Mittagong, Jervis Bay, Milton, Ulladulla, Moss Vale and Canberra.

For them, the Navy turned on its traditional hospitality - full blast!

The ball was held in a hangar 250 feet long and 100 feet wide. Ratings had cleared it of Sea Fury fighters

and Firefly bombers last weekend.

Carpenters laid down a large wooden dance floor in the staggering time of two days.

The hangar became a near miracle of improvisation.

It was festooned with every flag available on the station, including distress and Yellow Jack signals.

Landing strip and aircraft navigation lights winked their colours from the rafters.

From the roof hung a magnificent six-foot replica of St. Edward's Crown with dazzling coloured lights representing the Crown's gems.

At least twenty 15 foot-high fir trees bordered the hangar.

Scattered among the tables were large charcoal burners which softened the winter night's nip.

Guest of Honour was tall, bespectacled Rear Admiral H.A. Showers, Chief of the Navy's Eastern Area, and his wife.

Seven nervous, dewy-eyed debutantes stepped from a big canopy-draped box to be presented to Mrs. Showers.

Jim Gussey's ABC Dance Band played formal waltzes and boogie-woogie. Vocalists Jack Carpenter and Olive Lester warbled pop tunes.

Bearded English fliers and exuberant ratings jostled cow-cookies and tuxedo jacketed young men.

Navy style oaths and pleas of; "I say old man, do step off my wife's bally skirt", mingled with slow drawled Aussie accents.

Five ratings had to dissuade a man from stepping from the debutantes' box - minus his pants.

Others pirated Officer's wives and whisky bottles with gay abandon.

The wife of one Officer Pilot said; "Give me those ratings to dance with any day. Our husbands seem to have too many worries to relax properly."

Admission was a guinea for officers and civilians, fifteen shillings for ratings.

Beer was served from huge barrels - into large mugs only.

There was food, stacks of it. Wholesome home cooked rissoles,

pigs' trotters, hamburger steaks and frankfurts.

But a notice said; "Bring your own glasses and water."

As the night progressed, farmer and navy-man became more pally.

A Sub-Lieutenant said; "It's great to see them getting together. Our relationships with the civilians have been getting a bit sticky lately. It's because a few of the boys have been getting shickered and noisy in Nowra. Now's the ideal time to unstick things."

A navy wife remarked: "Everybody who's anybody along the Coast is here tonight. Come to think of it, there's a few nobodies too."

A young lieutenant flier lamented that there were no paper caps or masks. So he adorned his shoulders with his wife's fur cape.

An English officer jumped excitedly when he heard the result of an art union draw. First prize was a new car, second prize a refrigerator.

Amid the confusion a sweet young thing drifted to his table and smiled; "I do hope you'll drive me home."

The officer bellowed with laughter and said; "Silly chicken, it'd be a bit cold for you, I won second prize."

Nowra's White Ensign Club organised the ball.

Club President Alan Morrison, a Nowra tailor, said; "Proceeds from the ball will help build a club for ratings in Nowra. At present they haven't even got a public convenience there. We need fifty thousand pounds for the club, we've already got eight thousand. We bought the old hospital in town and hope to have one floor ready by Christmas.

"Ratings will be able to get cheap meals there. Later we'll add sleeping accommodation.

"Sydney's Lord Mayor is also running a branch of the appeal."

By midnight officers' lavishly gowned wives Nowra farmhands were jitterbugging with each other.

When the ball ended at 3 am, there hadn't been one brawl nor one argument. But there were lots of new found friends.

It was noted that the Sick Bay at HMAS Albatross opened earlier than usual on Thursday morning.**

WANTED

Articles, anecdotes, photographs, for future editions of Slipstream.

Deadline for next edition 17SEP93

AIRCRAFT RESTORATION REPORTS

SEA VENOM WZ-895

Very little airframe work has been carried out since last November due to the need to complete WZ937.

Jules and Gus have been steady at it over that period getting the cockpit stripped of all electrical and radio equipment, wiring and junction boxes so that we can get in to inspect the internal bulkheads and sides of the cockpit before starting the labourious job of putting it all back together again.

The crew are looking forward to getting back to this aircraft, simply to do some mechanical work instead of rubbing back paint all the time.

Our first priority is to sort out all the components, get them clearly labeled and get them positioned into racks and then get it all on computer so that when we are looking for something, hopefully, it will be easy to find. Our other main priority is to get the tool control board set up appropriately.

We are looking at the possibility of moving the aircraft up to the Museum hangar where we will have the full facilities of a good workshop. This is only in the very early planning stages at the moment as there are a lot of factors to be taken into consideration.

More next issue.

**Tony Penno- Project Manager.*

FIREFLY WJ-109 (207)

Restoration of this aircraft is well underway with Terry Hetherington, and the occasional helper, putting in many hours of arduous work.

So far, the fuselage has been disassembled from the Firewall forward, and from the Rear Wedge Bulkhead aft. RAAF facilities are being utilised to provide the following assistance.

The elevators, tail plane, tail fin, side panels, fairings and engine cowlings, with the hardware removed, have been sent away for paint stripping, repair and repainting in undercoat.

The rudder has also been forwarded for stripping, undercoating and re-

bagging to airworthiness standard.

The Rear Wedge assembly, with hardware and accessories removed has been forwarded for stripping, crack detection and undercoating.

These items are expected to be returned by the RAAF in early August.

**Keith Boundy - Maint. Coordinator*

FIREFLY WD-826 (245)

The past few months have brought a small amount of good fortune to the Firefly Restoration Team.

Bob Johnson, Deputy Director for Restoration of Pima Air and Space Museum of Tucson, Arizona, visited the Museum in May. Whilst here, he very kindly offered to take our two unserviceable cams, and a set of rocker arms, back to the USA with him and find a suitable repair facility on our behalf. This offer was graciously accepted.

Last month, a colleague from Classic Aviation was in the USA and tracked down a source of 'new' Griffon 74 spares - possibly including a quantity of camshafts.

A letter has been sent to the owner of this treasure trove and we are eagerly awaiting his reply.

Hopefully we can obtain the spares we require and progress towards our goal of getting 245 airborne.

**Keith Boundy - Maint. Coordinator*

SEA FURY VW-623

The Sea Fury restoration team are progressing at a good rate, having almost completed the paint stripping of the Centre Fuselage section.

Bead-blasting of the Centre Wing section is continuing with good results.

The undercarriage components have been stripped and are ready for crack-testing, repainting and assembly.

**Keith Boundy (for Oscar Harper-Team Manager)*

The Museum work-load since the last edition has precluded work on other restoration projects. More volunteers are still needed.

WELFARE OFFICER'S REPORT

In the January issue of *Slipstream*, the Welfare report dealt with the procedure to be followed for those wishing to have their 'exposure to asbestos', during service or employment by the Department of Defence, investigated.

I have recently been advised by the NSW Occupational Health and Safety Officer, that the correct procedure is not always being observed in that they are receiving completed questionnaires from people they have not issued the forms to. This, for some reason, upsets the records, therefore it is requested that photocopy questionnaires are not to be used and the correct procedure observed, ie:

1. Obtain a questionnaire from the OH&S Officer in your State.
2. Obtain a copy of your Service Record and attach. Medical Records are not needed, but if held they may also be attached.
3. Return questionnaire and attachments to Defence OH&S Officer who will contact you in due course.

For the full list of OH&S Officers in each State or Territory, refer to the January 1993 issue of *Slipstream* or direct your enquiry to Defence Centre or Defence Regional Office (Commonwealth Government section of the telephone directory - NOT Department of Veteran Affairs.)

February 10, marked the twenty-ninth anniversary of the *HMAS Voyager* tragedy. We lost 82 of our comrades. The 232 survivors, many plucked from the sea by present day members of the FAA Association, still live with the nightmares of that night.

The new Attorney General, Mr Lavarch, recently announced that the Commonwealth would accept liability for 19 and would negotiate with a further 56 who started legal actions as far back as 1986. It should be remembered that legal proceedings only started after many other avenues had been exhausted.

It is hoped that all outstanding and just claims, will now be settled without further delay. The Regular Defence Force Welfare Association has consistently put a position that all regular service people should be covered by a single scheme during

their service, whether it be in training, peace keeping or war. This cover should be under a Veteran's Entitlement Act. Unfortunately, Governments have a habit of not heeding sound advice, and we will shortly see the introduction of the Military Compensation Bill.

If this Bill is passed, which is almost certain, it will remove the entitlement that veterans, who were serving on a three year engagement as at December 1972 - or completed three years service after that date, currently enjoy under the Veteran's Entitlement Act. If you have a condition that is due to or aggravated by service during this period, get your claim in as soon as possible. Disability benefits from Veteran Affairs are not taxable, but compensation is.

On the local RDFWA Contact Group scene, Neil Gage has been very successful in establishing the 'John Gardiner Appeal'. Young John was born with a debilitating condition which required financial and community support. Thanks to Neil's efforts, and his band of volunteers, the community responded and the situation is now much better for this young RAN family.

*I G (Chips) Gray - Welfare Officer
NSW Division

NEWS FROM THE DIVISIONS

NEW SOUTH WALES

Since *Slipstream* went national, I'm sure that all readers will agree that the contents and layout of the journal has become very professional and is continuing to get even better.

Much of the content, and the final presentation, is due entirely to the dedication and particular skills of our hard working Honorary Editor. He continuously solicits articles and information, he feeds it all into his computer until it goes into overload, then sorts it out and extracts a myriad of layouts until the right one emerges.

He is not greatly helped by any division, particularly NSW, with these onerous tasks, he should not have to continually plead for information. Submissions should be coming into the editor in a steady stream; there are plenty of stories out there. Jot yours down and send it in.

Don't wait until the last minute before publication is due. Material received on, and in many instances after the deadline, results in the editor burning the midnight oil and to suffer much heartburn.

A reminder to members; our contract with Australian Post is that *Slipstream* be published the first week in the months of July, October, January and April. Plus a Special Edition in August which deals specifically with the history, life and times of RANAS Nowra.

The absolute deadline for submissions for publication are to reach the editor not later than a full two weeks before the beginning of the month in which publication of *Slipstream* occurs.

Since going national, disturbing numbers of our journal are being returned non-deliverable by AustPost.

If you change your mailing address inform your Division Secretary immediately, he/she will then inform the National Secretary, this will ensure amendment of the mailing list.

It seems fairly certain that Capitation Fees will have to rise next year, in part to cover the increasing costs of production and delivery of *Slipstream*. The NSW Division Committee foresaw this eventuality when we raised Annual Subscriptions to \$15:00 from 1 January this year. Members may rest assured that we see no legitimate reason to consider raising Joining Fees or Annual Subscriptions in the foreseeable future.

Apropos the April report, our division continues to grow in member numbers, if not in members attendance at the regular open forum meetings. We have accepted twenty-seven new members in the past six months.

Our next open forum meetings will be held in the Boardroom of the Bomaderry RSL Club at 1930 on Tuesdays 17 August and 19 October. We would appreciate the pleasure of the company of, and the benefit of the ideas of more Nowra resident members on these occasions.

We still haven't attracted a Social Secretary to the ranks of Committee.

Are there any volunteers from the local members? The social programme is pretty much set for the rest of the year, so it's a matter of someone taking charge of the few functions still to come. Check

your divisional pocket calendars for dates.

It was not practical to arrange a surprise visit to our Patron on the occasion of his 80th birthday. Sir Victor's health precluded that, but the Historic Flight put on a small fly-past in his honour.

The visit to the Powerhouse Museum on Sunday 16 May, was hosted by Ian Debenham, the Museum's Curator of Transport. An amazing array of exhibits are on display and the members from Nowra and Sydney who attended, were unanimous in their praise of the high standards set by the Powerhouse.

Visitors to the Naval Aviation Museum at Nowra will also witness the same quality of display as it was Ian and other members of the Powerhouse staff who planned and installed the Navy exhibits.

The next scheduled function is the FAA 45th Anniversary Dinner, Smorgasbord which we will host in the White Ensign Club Function Centre at the museum. Planning is well advanced thanks to the efforts of Museum Director Gmdr Mike Lehan, and his small but dedicated staff.

Tickets at \$20:00 each are available from your nearest Committeeman (see April *Slipstream*), or write to the Secretary, Terry Hetherington. Seating is strictly limited in numbers and the cut-off date is **DEFINITELY** Friday 20 August.

The proposed coach tour to Melbourne for the Federal Council Meeting and Cup, has been cancelled due to lack of response by local resident members. Ross Stuart has had to release the option on the 50 reserved Cup tickets he had for us.

The last museum family fly-in day in June, was an outstanding success. Mike Lehan attended our June Committee Meeting and gave us an extensive briefing on future plans for the museum complex. On behalf of the Board of Directors, and his own staff, he expressed sincere thanks to all FAAA members who assisted on the day and contributed to the successful outcome.

The next fly-in day will be even bigger and better. Mike intends to extend the theme from 'Warbirds' to include other items of interest.

On Sunday 1 August, the theme will be Sports and Classic Cars. Fifty car clubs from all over the State have been invited to take part in a combined display of cars and aeroplanes within the museum.

A cavalcade of cars will take place at lunchtime with the parade driving along the road in front of the museum and down the taxi-way. This will be a day not to be missed by those who appreciate the 'show and shine' aspect of motoring, and the thrill of vintage aircraft.

The assistance of local members is requested on this day to help with the food outlets and the other activities we normally undertake.

Early the following morning, Monday 2 August, we'll again need the help of local members. All aircraft and other exhibits in the museum hangar will have to be moved inboard to allow contractors to begin work on erecting the hangar walls.

Shortly after that, our assistance may be required to help demolish and remove those old storage buildings on the museum site. At the present, they house invaluable spare parts and equipment for the historic aircraft. They also prevent the commencement of planned beautification works and interfere with the view of patrons during flying and other activities.

The Director says, "They have to go - SOON!" Before he does drop the hammer on them, Les Matterson and Peter Penny are desperate for assistance to catalogue the remaining contents of the buildings and remove same to a safe stowage. If you can spare just a few hours, ring Les on 217945.

Our NSW members from the deep North are reminded that the newly formed Queensland Division is off and running with a solid membership base. At present there are about thirty NSW members resident in Queensland and if you want to take the option of transferring to the Queensland Division, please contact the Secretary.

Incidentally, a reminder that the Department of Defence Asbestos Surveillance Programme is underway. I've just completed my medical. Have you had your free check-up yet? If not, read the Welfare Officer's article in this edition of *Slipstream*.

* Jim Lee - NSW President

QUEENSLAND

I am pleased to report that our inaugural Anzac Day March in Brisbane was a brilliant success with 51 marching led by Col Wheatley. I carried the Ensign, Mick Blair the Australian Flag, Bob Davis and Alan Smith the

big banner.

The crowd gave us great support, and I'd have to say that every one of us was proud to be there representing the Fleet Air Arm.

Our banner, beautifully painted by D'arcy Doyle, was a bit wide, and Bob and Al did a great job hanging on to it. We will be designing a suitable frame to show it off properly next time.

We adjourned to *HMAS Moreton* and all had an enjoyable afternoon. Our thanks to Cdr Derek Caton, for his hospitality and for the loan of the flags.

Since the Anzac March, our membership has increased to seventy, thanks to the rev from Channel 2.

We have been looking into a few more activities for the rest of the year. These include a dinner at Moreton, a BBQ at Mooloolaba - Sunshine Coast, on 10 October, and a Queensland Reunion at Bundaberg, tentatively on the weekend of 5,6,7th of March, 1994. Detailed information will be included in newsletters as we proceed, so, make a BIG note of that one in your diaries. Interstate visitors are very welcome at any of these functions.

In May, we visited Bob and Colleen Conellan at their home at Gin Gin - lovely scenery and great company. Harry and Fay Harkness joined us there for dinner, it was a very nice evening.

Bob is currently undergoing treatment at Greenslopes Repatriation Hospital in Brisbane for cancer in the hip. Beat it, Bob! Their address is 33 Morris Terrace, Gin Gin, 4671 - (071) 572141 - if anyone would like to make contact.

We visited the Harkness' home next morning, they live near Mount Perry. Fay is a brilliant potter, while Harry has been the driving force in the construction of a very successful Cross Country trail-bike course (pedal power), which attracts national attention for the competitions there. I know that Harry will be of great assistance in getting the Bundaberg Reunion set up. They can be contacted at 'Wolca' Pottery, Mt. Perry.

Kev Raddatz, up at Mirriwinni has, amongst other things, a gemstone mine. He has very kindly sent a parcel of gemstones to Mick Blair for us to raffle, or whatever. They really are beauties. Thanks Kev.

Dick Alchin, from Caloundra, let me know that he had arranged a wreath on behalf of the Association, and that it had been laid on the

Sunshine Coast on Anzac Day.

Dick has been very involved with the Naval Association up here for many years, he led the Naval Reserve and Sea Cadets in Caloundra and recently retired as Lieutenant Commander - great stuff, Dick.

Lee Harris, from Moolooloba (he marched at Nowra in '92 and at our Anzac Day March in his wheel chair), has been of great assistance in getting a polo shirt organised - white with navy blue collar and navy blue band on the sleeve hems. The pocket is white and has the FAA logo with Queensland Division underneath it, all in gold. Order forms are being arranged for the division newsletter, or contact Lee on (074) 444027 - cost \$20:00 plus \$2:00 postage. Thanks Lee, for your help and drive.

Johnny Richards and I nearly finished Lee and ourselves off at *Moreton* on Anzac Day. Lee was leaving, so we offered to get him and his wheelchair down three flights of stairs. We got to the top of the first flight and couldn't hold him! JR went down backwards, Lee spilled out of the wheelchair and landed on top of him, and I hurtled down and landed on top of the lot. We escaped with a few bruises. A few drinks soon made us all fairly flexible. It would have made a good segment for the Funniest Home Video Show.

Lee told me later, that before his swimming pool was fenced, he reversed his ride-on mower on the slope beside the pool, missed the brake and he and the mower had a swim. I knew there was a good reason for fencing pools.

Des 'Ned' Kelly has just had an operation for bowel cancer - they reckoned they wouldn't let him march with us, more to the point, join us for a drink afterwards. He's recovering well and is at Lot 6 Hauton Park, Morayfield, 4506.

Ken 'Snow' Nichols is also having a tough time with the Big 'C', he can be contacted at 23 Boongaree Avenue, Caboolture, 4510. Ken taught me some of my basic engineering at *Nirimba*, about 100 years ago.

Frank 'Jock' Collins and Margaret, have just moved to Buderim from Airlie Beach. He had an operation to by-pass an aneurism recently, and developed continuous hiccups afterward. His neighbours in the ward enjoyed his company immensely (as you might imagine), and many and varied cures were suggested - to no avail (some were

a bit drastic).

He was discharged, still hiccuping as they shoved him out of the hospital (the nursing staff waving and saying; "Come back and see us, Jock - in about ten years time").

Finally he went back to the doctor who said he'd have to go back into hospital again. Well - that did it! The hiccups shot through like the proverbial Bondi tram and were last seen outpacing a mob of emus west of Wilcannial

The dinner at *HMAS Moreton* is arranged for Saturday night, 21 August, Buffet/Smorgasbord meal, bar open. Cost will be \$16:00 per person, buy your own drinks, come and enjoy a good night. Bookings to Ian Henderson, PO Box 113, Cleveland, 4163.

Noel Fisher is arranging a bus from Beenleigh for the BBQ on October 10, contact Mick Blair (07) 2641207 for details.

I wrote to Sir Victor Smith to let him know how we were progressing and had a nice letter back with his best wishes for the Division.

You know, we should all (Australia wide) talk to our local MPs and Naval Units about forming a Veterans Reserve. What are your thoughts on that?

That's about it for now. Best wishes to all members, here and overseas.

* *Barry Lister - President*

SOUTH AUSTRALIA

Winter has tightened her grip on all of us here in South Australia as is evidenced in absenteeism at our regular monthly meetings. So to all those with coughs and colds and other sore things - in this State and others - a big cheer-up from us all.

I have the sad duty to report the death of our dear and respected member, Tony Haynes. As mentioned in our last correspondence, Tony has been fighting for his life over the past few weeks, but on 2 May he gave up.

Several members attended the crowded service for Tony and when we all sang the Naval Hymn, you could have heard a pin drop afterwards - very moving.

Our collective thoughts go out to Helen, David and Alison. Tony was 58 years old.

Anzac Day was well attended by more than forty members, including Darky Howlett who used his electric tricycle to set the pace. The day

was delightful, clear sky, 22 degrees C, good crowds, good friends. I won't mention at this point the clatter and glare of some members with their new medals on show. The Ian Laidlers and Darryl Greers will know who I mean.

The Naval Dinner Dance was a success even with members' numbers down compared to last year. The beef and pork on a spit is difficult to beat and this was combined with hot potatoes and salads, followed by dessert and coffee. Must not forget we started off with home-made soups.

Many thanks to Dinsley Cooper who organised most of it as well as look after Junice, who was fresh home from the hospital.

The band made the evening jump and I must admit, it was one of the best nights out for some time. Well done to all those helpers in the galley and at the tables.

Our next big social will be the Scottish Night on 11 September, so be warned and get your ticket early as the seating will be restricted to sixty.

The remainder of the hall will have lovely Leonie Garret doing a dance routine with swords etc. plus we will butcher the haggis on a table in the same area - lovely!

In closing I will take this opportunity to wish all those members in all States and Territories - good health and long life.

Where would this Fleet Air Arm Association be without those dedicated behind the scenes few.

* *Roger Harrison*

Australian Capital Territory

This Division was deeply saddened by the untimely and tragic death of Cmdr Errol Kavanagh in Mid March.

The spontaneous turn up of so many of his former colleagues and friends at his funeral exemplified the respect and friendship he enjoyed in this Division and throughout the Fleet Air Arm. This division was very glad that *SLIPSTREAM* was able to include a resume of his career in the April edition.

Once again, the Fleet Air Arm Association was well represented at this years Anzac Day March in Canberra. Some 30 odd stalwarts turned out and marched behind our banner, duly lead by our President, Col Bushe-Jones. However, one

reflects that this is less than half of our membership and probably less than 10 per cent of all in the Canberra region who would be eligible to join us. We were very pleased that a few of our currently serving members joined us for the occasion, but it would be wonderful if all past and present members of the Fleet Air Arm could join us on this occasion.

Following the March, some 45 turned up at the Barbecue and Get-together at *HMAS Harman* Function Centre, where we were catered for in fine style by Chief Cook Colenso and his staff. All who attended had a very enjoyable afternoon. We were extremely pleased to have Carol Kavanagh and her daughter Justin join us. Carol expressed the wish to become an Associate Member of the Association and continue Errol's interest in our work.

At a recent meeting, it was decided by the committee that there should be three main functions each year. These would be

a. Anzac Day

b. An out of town barbecue in mid-September - currently programmed for 5 or 12 Sept 93.

c. A Cocktail Party on 19 November 1993.

These programmed events will be in addition to the Annual General Meeting which will normally be held on the last Wednesday in February each year. In future, this will probably be arranged at the Manuka Services Club with refreshments available at the conclusion of the meeting. Regular monthly meetings will not be held and the Committee will meet every two months approximately.

Anyone wishing to attend any of the committee meetings will be very welcome and they are requested to contact the Secretary for details of dates and the venue.

* *Brian Treloar - Hon. Secretary*

WESTERN AUSTRALIA

Hi Shipmates! I will try again. With only a few lines to go, the lights went out. So guess what? No power and I lost the lot on the computer.

There's one thing about pens, pencils and typewriters, they don't need electricity. What an enlightened time we all live in.

Having received a phone call from 'Juke' Matterson that the magazine will go to print in four days time, I

have to get this to Nowra. With the wonders of modern computer science and a lot of help from 'Casino' Ron (he has the Fax), if the power stays on this should make *Slipstream*.

Once again Anzac Day was a great success with many people coming out of the woodwork to attend the parade. It was great to see John Green and George Smith as we don't see much of them these days.

Hilton Devereux, Ron and myself attended the Dawn Service in Kings Park, a great crowd was in attendance, from young couples with children of all ages to aged veterans of both World Wars. It was a most moving service with the sun coming up over the distant hills.

As it was too far to return home for breakfast, Ron and I decided to eat at the Casino, but as the gaming part was closed, breakfast was all we had.

After the march, it was over to the South Perth Hall for the combined Navy get-together. The Birdies came under a lot of pressure from the 'other types' as we once again took out most of the prizes of chooks and plonk - as is our right! A great day was had by all and it was a good roll-up of the boys.

We had a pleasant surprise, in that Sonny Sundstrom was visiting from Victoria and managed to get down for the morning. I called Lou Burns and he came over, so a lot of memories were dragged up. I hadn't seen Sonny for about thirty-seven years so there was some catching up to do. Sonny was also able to get in touch with Bob Pesca and Keith Murdoch during his visit.

Attention Victoria Division - Sonny is not a member, but I gave him all the papers and the name and address of your secretary and hope he makes contact.

Rick Hammond is back on his feet after a stay in hospital having his knee redesigned. He isn't running around, as yet, but is mobile and improving each week.

Our Treasurer, Jim Caldwell, is away on his annual trip to Exmouth for three months. Good one, Jim. Enjoying the sunshine and fishing while we down here are enjoying the winter chills. It must be great to be among the privileged few who get to follow the sun. Ron will be 'carrying the weight' in Jim's absence.

I read in the paper where Jack Suriano is lecturing to those wanting to improve their status in life, not being in that bracket, I didn't attend. Good to see that you are still on the

ball, Jack.

Hilton is another leaving us here in the throes of winter. He's visiting his daughter and grand-daughter in the USA, we wish him and Norma a good holiday. His house is on the market and last week he received an offer for it and was looking to have his goods and chattels put into storage while he was away. I offered to take all the frozen food to my place and store it in the deep freeze. Ron suggested that we could hold a barbecue - but the deal fell through, it looks as though we will have to get our own supplies - it was a nice try.

Lou Burns is about to build his new home. We were going to do the work but Barbara decided that it would be better if we left it to the builder - I've got that niggling feeling that she doesn't trust us. I don't know why, the shed is still standing and we weren't planning to set fire to the joint - we don't understand her objections.

At this point in time, it looks as if only Ron and I will be attending the conference in Melbourne. Hilton won't have any time owing and Geoff Vickridge is planning a trip to the UK to visit all the military museums and air displays. We hope that everything goes well, Geoff, and that you bring back plenty of videos that we can watch.

I was able to extract the Annual Subs from those who attended the Anzac Day activities, but there are still those out there with short arms and deep pockets who haven't paid yet. Please search in those little corners and send in your fees.

I am still waiting for that overwhelming response from all those ex-ARMOURERS out there who want to participate in the big reunion in 'Honkers' in 1995. So far, there is a great big blank - get cracking and let me hear from you all.

Well, I am now at the place where I was when the power went off, so you can see I have done well.

I will once again request that if you have anything for *Slipstream*, please give me a ring on 5279186 or drop me a line to- 24 Baltic Mews, Waikiki, WA 6169 - I'll try and get it in the next issue. If you are looking for your old, lost buddies, this is the place to try as it has coverage Australia wide as well as overseas - so use the magazine.

Wishing you and your families the very best of health and hope that the Golden Eagle comes and craps on you all.

* *Theo Bush-Jones - Secretary*

VICTORIA

Another Anzac Day has come and gone, the Division had forty-nine members on parade, and we had the honour of having the National President, Toz Dadswell, co-leading the Division with the Victorian President, Les Jordan. For a change, the weather was perfect.

Another highlight of the day was the unfurling and parading of the new Divisional Banner for the first time. A special thanks goes to Clem Conlan for the excellent job he did in the production of this fine banner.

Our thanks are also extended to our ever reliable band of 'groupies' (Associates), as they popped up at various vantage points along the route to offer their support by cheering the boys on.

The 'after-march reunion' was again held at Topolino's Restaurant in St.Kilda. At this event, Toz Dadswell presented John Ikin with the Diploma of Merit for his efforts in the formulation of the National Constitution.

There were lots of dits being spun (*Did you write them down? Ed.*), remember this, remember that, memory jolts were the order of the day.

All in all a very memorable day.

The Division conducted a Picnic Day during May, out at the De Bortoli Winery, Dixons Creek. Despite the inclement weather we had a reasonable turn-up. A tour of the winery then back to the main building for a wine tasting - by this time we were all becoming experts. We then adjourned to the 50'x50' - window sided hospitality marquee, and put our newly gained knowledge into practice. All had an enjoyable day.

Our next social event, is a luncheon at the Frankston RSL on 4 July. The one to follow, on 12 September, is a 'Pokie Trip' to the Corowa RSL. This will be with Pat and Ron's Tours, Ron being Ron Forbes, one of our members. Let Bryan Roberts know if you wish to attend this one, it should be a good outing.

Arrangements are progressing slowly but surely for the Federal Council Meeting and associated activities. The first scheduled sitting is Saturday 30 October, 1993, at the RAAF Sergeant's Mess located at 6 Dorcas Street, South Melbourne, which is one door west of St.Kilda Road and diagonally opposite the Shrine of Remembrance. Times will be advised at a later date.

The first social event, a three course dinner, will take place on the evening of 30 October at the same venue.

This dinner is open to all FAAA Members, Associates and friends, the cost will be \$20 per person, drinks will be available at Mess prices.

Give this one some serious thought, come along for a good meal and good company, but please, we must know who will be attending so that the catering can be arranged. Send your replies to - Ron Christie, 15 Bianca Court, Rowville, Victoria 3178 - or ring (03) 764 5542 - 'NOW'.

The FAA Memorial Plaque Laying Ceremony will take place at *HMAS Cerberus* on Sunday 31 October. It is scheduled to commence at 1115, the duration of the service approximately thirty minutes, this will be followed by a tour of the Depot then on to Club Cerberus for light refreshments.

Monday 1 November, is set aside for the second sitting of the Meeting, if not required a barbecue will be held instead.

Tuesday 2 November, for those interested in a day at the races, the Melbourne Cup. The division has obtained a limited number of complimentary passes to the races. So, once again, let me know who will be attending, because it will be a case of 'first in - best dressed'.

Well Shipmates, that's about all for now!

* Ron Christie - Hon. Secretary

TASMANIA

No official news from Tasmania this issue.

Barry Simpson, Division President, is either in hospital or has been recently hospitalised.

Member John Cook, lighthouse keeper on Bruny Island, leaves his job shortly. He tells me that he is being replaced with two 'D' cell batteries - the lighthouse is going on automatic operation.

Good Luck to both of them. Ed.

SECRETARIES PLEASE NOTE!

DEADLINE

for next edition

17 SEPTEMBER 1993

Australian Naval Aviation Museum



Since the last issue of *Slipstream* much activity has taken place in the Museum.

The Capital Campaign Fund

The fund-raising teams in Sydney and the local Shoalhaven area have been exceptionally busy raising the necessary funds and in-kind support for the building project to be progressed in a timely fashion.

The first stage of a renewal 'mailing', asking all our current members of the Society for a further donation has been sent out and the response has been overwhelming.

As a consequence of this effort, and other donations, over \$200,000 has been raised for the Capital Fund.

We asked in the last issue for members of the Fleet Air Arm Association to join us as Founding Members of the Society. We are soon to ask the Small Business of the Shoalhaven to support our campaign, to become the largest tourist attraction on the South Coast, on the basis that they in turn will benefit from our success. Additionally, we are conducting a Market Survey and Competition in an effort to expand our Society Membership.

The Building Project - Progress of Stage 3

Tender responses have been received by Public Works

Department from interested companies and negotiations are taking place to ease the quoted contractor's price.

Cladding of the hangar, with a glass front end (South wall), a single large hangar door on the opposite end, six emergency exits and fully enclosed 'long' walls should commence in the first week of August - with luck!

The Board of Directors have made the decision to progress the cladding contracts as soon as possible, despite the anticipated high westerly winds. We will progress what work we can, in order to be prepared for the Summer School holidays, our busiest season.

Aircraft Restoration

Sea Venom - WZ-937

We were honoured and delighted to 'commission' into Museum service the newly restored Sea Venom, together with its purpose-built public viewing stand. The Board of Directors and the Capital Campaign Committee congratulate Tony Penno and his dedicated and enthusiastic team for their extremely valuable contribution to the Museum, the Navy and to Australian Heritage.

The aircraft is now proudly displayed with other restored masterpieces and proves to all our visitors, the dynamic thrust of the

aircraft restoration programme, committed to the main objective of the Foundation, that of Preserving our Naval Aviation Heritage.

Dakota (C47)

Don Parkinson and his team have completed the cabin and cockpit, and the 'cinema' is now operational. They have commenced the lengthy and arduous job of painting the aircraft exterior. When the hangar walls are in place, the aircraft will be pushed back, tail first, in a northern corner. The tail will be raised to the flying position, ready for the 'warry' movies to be shown.

Sea Fury

Oscar and his team have been up to view their future work place, and are starting to move spares up to the Museum. When the hangar walls are in place, his restoration team will take over the other northern corner. Progress on this project is noticeable.

UHIB / WASP

'Johnno' Johnson is progressing well with the tidying up of these aircraft. His wife's baby is due, and by the time this goes to press, he will be a proud father for the first time. After many restless nights, we hope to see him back 'on the job'...

Incidents

You may have heard through the grapevine that we had a fire in the Museum. I had a phone call from the OOD at midnight 16 June, to say that our Portable Building had

burnt down. I was told that the fire was out, power tripped, and that there was no point in coming out in the dark because it was dangerous.

I had a very sleepless night thinking that the Administration PB had burnt down, with all the ramifications associated with such a disaster. You can imagine my relief next morning to find out that it was the caravan (Restorer's office/rest room) that had burnt out.

The fire was so intense that the overhead power cables to the hangar overhead lights and workshop burnt through.

We are counting our blessings - 'He', is obviously a Society Member.

All safety systems worked exceptionally well. Water from the sprinklers flooded the area outside the IMB Display area. First fire then flood.... The matter is still under investigation and therefore cannot be discussed further at this stage.

We are suffering from very high Westerlies at the moment, the hangar display has been rearranged to compete. The Auster still wants to get airborne with every gust over 40 knots and the Dakota doesn't understand that it is grounded - it keeps mounting the chocks.

Family/Fly-in Days

A heart warming 'Thank you' is passed to all FAAA members and friends who helped us on the 6 June Fly-in Day. The event was also a Governors Day to acknowledge our major sponsors, they all echoed our appreciation by stating it was a fantastic day, made most memorable by the evidence of

goodwill and enthusiasm of our volunteer helpers.

Our next event is 'Classic Sunday' to be held on 1 August, followed by the Shoalhaven Spring Festival Sunday 31 October. We are putting an Aircraft Float in the Spring Festival Parade on Saturday 30 August. Why not come and visit with us? If not, then come to our final Sunday Fly-in Day on 5 December. For this event we are still looking for a theme variation...to keep our popular public interested.

Museum Aircraft Stores

De-storing of the old buildings will be undertaken the weekend 10 July. The Canberra Division is sending a team to assist. Any other help will be most appreciated.

Museum Workshop

This is now fully functional. George Parker spent many hours wiring up for light and power - thanks, George. Unfortunately the facility is currently powerless due to the fire.

General

We are manufacturing our own display modules and these are progressing well.

The Gliding Hangar will be dismantled shortly...any quotes?

We have employed a qualified book keeper to keep us on the right track - she is working wonders.

With kind regards and Best Wishes to all the readers.

* Mike Lehan - Director-Australian Naval Aviation Museum

Bits and Pieces!

Firefly WJ-109 (207) at the Australian Naval Aviation Museum, being stripped ready for restoration.
(Photograph courtesy Peregrine Publishing)



Anzac Day March - Brisbane 1993 - Col Wheatley leads the way as the Queensland Division Banner getting its first airing.
(Photograph courtesy Barry Lister)



The Dulwich Hill Salvation Army Band test the acoustics at the Naval Aviation Museum - Nowra. (Photograph courtesy Peregrine Publishing)

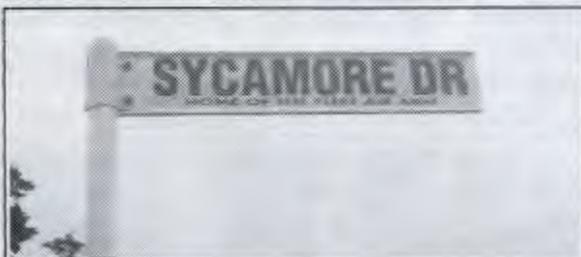


Keith Boundy and Ian Ferguson, offering to give 'Juke' a lift with his wallet. (PP)

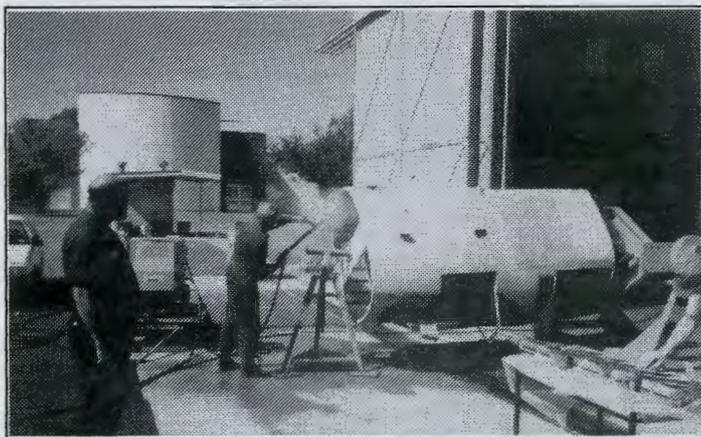


Pictured here in the old section of the Naval Aviation Museum, David and Jacqui Richardson, visitors from the UK. David is a Research Officer at the FAA Museum at Yeovil. (PP)

Karen 'Billy-Backhoe' giving Jim Napier the 'cold shoulder' at the Museum Ball while Derek Whyte puts the silver in his sock. (PP)



One of the new road signs at HMAS Albatross carrying the logo 'HOME OF THE FLEET AIR ARM' (PP)



Ken Lee, a member of the restoration team, steam cleans a fuselage section, carefully 'supervised' by Bill Crowley. (PP)



Aviation artist, David Marshall, with one of his commissions for the Naval Aviation Museum. (PP)