



The Quarterly Journal
of the
Fleet Air Arm Association of Australia

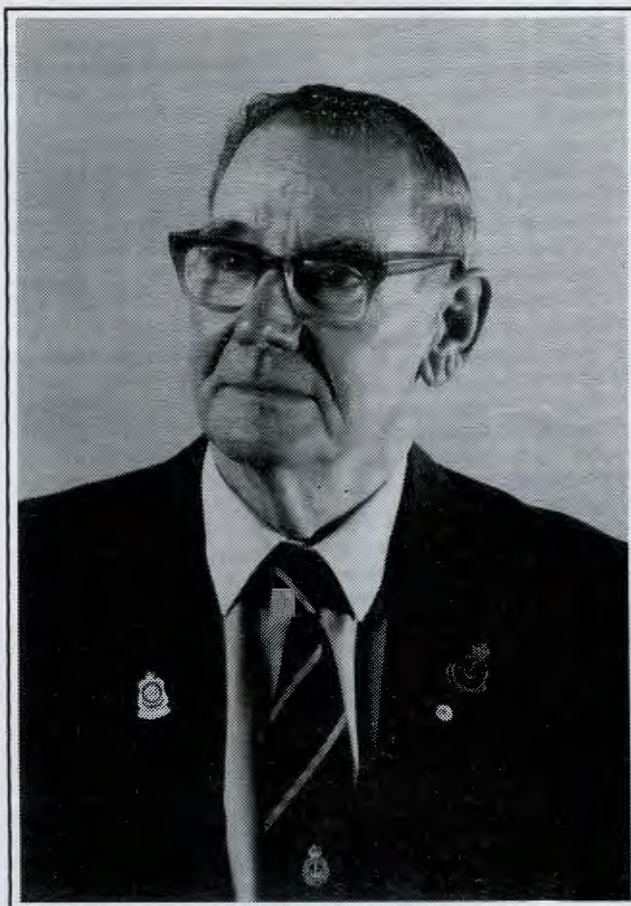
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Slipstream



...up came the Trackers - one, two, three...
Aircraft of 851 Squadron - 'Dawn over Ayers Rock' - 1972



FOREWORD

by **Commodore M. A. McK. (Nobby) Clarke AM RAN (Rtd)**
Federal President of The Naval Association of Australia

I believe that I was invited to write the Foreword for this edition of *Slipstream* wearing my Naval Association hat. As it happens, it coincides with the 50th anniversary of my joining the Fleet Air Arm, so I feel both honoured and pleased to offer a few words to fellow shipmates.

Having spent some time at *Albatross* and in *Sydney*, *Vengeance* and *Melbourne*, I do look forward to receiving my copy of *Slipstream* to keep up with the news of the Fleet Air Arm of today, as well as getting reminders of the past; seeing the names, aircraft numbers, photographs and reading the 'dits' which bring back so many memories.

Many of our shipmates had their first taste of the Fleet Air Arm more than fifty years ago but I think all would agree, and our newly joined shipmates will come to believe, that the recording and preservation of our history is well worth carrying out for the benefit of future generations as well as for our own enjoyment.

There are so many people who deserve the highest praise for the time and effort which they have put in to help preserve our history in so many different ways. The Museum itself is a most vivid example of dedicated effort together with the quite superb effort in rebuilding and preserving the old war birds and equipment, which makes the Nowra Museum Complex the envy of many other aviation museums.

I think I am right in saying that the original *Albatross* Newsletter [*Slipstream* Mk 1] was the forerunner of 'Navy News'. Our current *Slipstream* has become a most professional journal of the Fleet Air Arm Association of Australia so we must continue to give it the maximum support possible.

May I add a final word on the importance of being a member of a major ex-Service association. These organisations have trained counsellors to assist members with various Service related problems, compensation matters etc.

There are many matters of concern affecting serving and retired members which are being pursued by the major ex-Service organisations on behalf of members. There seems to be a steady erosion of conditions of service and retirement benefits. Should you feel that all is not well, then put your case to your association and seek clarification of the matter from your local Member of Parliament.

Best wishes to all in our Naval family. Fly Navy.

EDITORIAL

This edition of *Slipstream*, has been brought to you through the sponsorship of Computer Sciences of Australia Pty. Ltd., to whom the Association offer their sincere thanks.

The National President, 'Toz' Dadswell, has asked me to break the good news that the Association now has its own tie.

Following several requests from members for an identifying piece of neckwear, the retiring President of the now disbanded Fleet Air Arm Officer's Association, offered the copyright of their distinctive tie to the National Association.

This most generous offer was accepted and when stocks are available you will be notified through *Slipstream*.

We are now the third body to hold the copyright.

The blue tie, with its repetitive diagonal FAA logo and kangaroos in gold, was originally designed as an aircrew tie in the early '50s by an Observer named Jarman.

In the late '60s it was taken up as the official tie of the FAA Officer's Association.

Forty years from its inception, it has now become the symbol of the Australian Fleet Air Arm Association.

Wear it with pride!

WHY I WANT TO BE A PILOT

Written by a 5th Grade student of Jefferson School, South Carolina.

When I grow up I want to be a pilot because it's a fun job and easy to do. That's why there are so many pilots flying around these days.

Pilots don't need much school. They just have to learn to read numbers so they can read their instruments. I guess they should be able to read a road map too.

Pilots should be brave so they won't get scared if it's foggy and they can't see, or if a wing or a motor falls off.

Pilots have to have good eyes to see through the clouds, and they can't be afraid of thunder or lightning because they are much closer to them than we are.

The salary pilots make is another thing I like. They make more money than they know what to do with. This is because people think that flying a plane is dangerous, except pilots don't because they know how easy it is.

I hope I don't get air sick because I get car sick and if I get air sick I couldn't be a pilot and then I would have to go to work.

South Carolina Aviation News

NATIONAL PRESIDENT'S REPORT



As we move forward into 1994, this may be an appropriate time to pause and reflect on what the FAAA has achieved during 1993. I am sure that the individual State Divisions have their own lists of achievements, but on the national front there were a number of milestones that merit special attention.

- ♦ The FAAA of Australia now has its own flag complete with the Australian White Ensign in the top left canton.
- ♦ New lapel badges were acquired and have met with the general approval of members.
- ♦ The FAA Memorial Plaque was installed in the memorial Gardens at *HMAS Cerberus*.
- ♦ *Slipstream* continued to flourish and is now much sought after by ex-members of the FAA.
- ♦ Membership continued to grow at a steady pace.
- ♦ Assistance was given to the Naval Aviation Museum in several different ways.
- ♦ Assistance was given to a number of members in relation to Veteran Affairs related problems.

I believe that members can look back at 1993 with a sense of satisfaction. We made steady progress in meeting the aims of the Association, and I thank all those members who gave of their time and effort to make the year the success it was.

We still need to increase our membership. In his article on the Aircraft Handler's branch in the last edition of *Slipstream*, 'Blue' Larter named over 100 'missing' Handlers - and that is just from ONE branch of the FAA. Could I request that each member endeavour to try and recruit one new member in 1994. Two new members would be even better!

The Queensland Division plans to hold a FAA reunion in Bundaberg from 11-13 March 1994. Distance will probably be a problem for many of us southerners and westerners, but knowing the delights of Bundaberg and the enthusiasm of the 'Banana-benders', it will be a great weekend. I look forward to seeing you there.

In closing, I would like to pay tribute to the members of the Executive who work so hard to ensure that the wheels continue to turn and that the 'old-man' is steering the correct heading.

Thank you, fellows - 'Toz' Dadswell



FAA Plaque laying ceremony at HMAS Cerberus
In remembrance of RAN personnel, past and present, who served in the Fleet Air Arm.
See story in National Secretary's Report on page 18. Photo: T. Hetherington

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Computer Sciences of Australia Pty Ltd

The Early Days

During the late 1960's, the AMP recognised the requirement for a strong and innovative Australian company which could meet the emerging needs of the information technology revolution which was taking place.

Computer Sciences of Australia (CSA) was founded in 1970, by the AMP, in partnership with Computer Sciences Corporation (CSC) of the United States of America. CSA has provided a range of services including the AMP's Information Technology operations and the INFONET communications network.

Subsequent distribution of work soon resulted in the formation of two major divisions within the CSA, Systems Engineering Division (SED) and Business Systems Division (BSD).

As well as the main office in Sydney, other offices were opened in Adelaide, Melbourne, Canberra, Perth, Nowra, Newcastle and Auckland.

The Business Systems Division has provided a variety of computing solutions for banking, insurance and government bodies around Australia, and has recently won a major contract to meet the increasing needs of the Western Australian Health Department.

The Systems Engineering Division has been predominantly involved with work for Defence, and has participated in dozens of diverse Defence projects ranging from communications and over the horizon radar to combat to combat system, mission simulators and land based test sites for tactical data systems.

Company ownership was progressively transferred to the AMP over the years, until CSA became wholly owned by the AMP in 1989.

During the eighties there was strong growth, and by mid 1993, CSA had grown to more than 1,000 employees in Australia and New Zealand, with an annual revenue exceeding \$110 million.

Defence Work

One of the first major Defence projects undertaken by CSA was the P-3 CMI at RAAF Edinburgh. This

system provides a combination Compilation, Mission and Integration facility for the ongoing support of P-3 Orion operations.

As a sub-contractor to Hughes, CSA assisted in the development of the RAAF F-18 simulators in use in RAAF Tindal and RAAF Williamtown. Since the delivery of the F-18 simulators, CSA has undertaken major upgrades which have ensured that the simulation is representative of the Australian aircraft.

Currently, the two main offices of CSA in Sydney and Adelaide, are working on major contracts involving the new ANZAC class frigates and the Collins class submarines for the RAN.

The Adelaide staff are working on the ANZAC ship combat system, while the Sydney staff are developing the shore support facilities for both the ANZAC ship and the Collins class submarine.

Nowra Operations

CSA has had Sydney based employees working in the Nowra area since 1987 during the RAN's acquisition of the new S-70B-2 Seahawk helicopters.

As a sub-contractor to the Collins Avionics and Communications Division of Rockwell International, CSA was

responsible for the development of the Aircraft Weapon System Support Centre (AWSSC) at *HMAS Albatross*, the shipboard Data Terminal and Data Link Modem software. The AWSSC provides all of the tools necessary for the ongoing support of the software that forms the Tactical Data System in the Seahawk helicopter.

As a sub-contractor to the Link Corporation of the United States, CSA has developed the Weapon System Trainer element of the S-70B-2 Seahawk Mission System Trainer. This mission simulation system provides realistic training for the crews of the Seahawk, by providing representations of the Pilot, Tacco and Sensor Operators stations, and is complete with visual, aural and motion systems.

This system allows crews to experience a variety of normal and emergency flight conditions and operational exercises at low cost, and with no risk to the crew or aircraft. Complex multi-unit scenarios are also available for crew training.

Early in 1991, a management decision was made to establish a CSA office in Nowra, to provide for the ongoing software support needs of the RAN in the Shoalhaven area.

This local presence ensures that CSA is able to respond quickly to customer requirements, by having a permanent presence of real-time computing skills in the local area, rather than having people commute from the Sydney office.

The Nowra office provides a wide variety of professional skills, and the staff has grown from three to fourteen since its inception. They also have access to a pool of another 1,500 CSA



Aircraft Weapons System Support Centre - HMAS Albatross

personnel around the country which are available to supplement the local staff where specific, highly specialised skills are required or local resources overloaded.

The Nowra Operations Manager is Tony Baker, who retired as a Commander in the RAN to take up his current position with CSA. Tony spent 28 years in the RAN after joining as an Air Radio and Radar Technician. He subsequently undertook additional studies and transferred to aircrew, qualifying as an Engineering Test Pilot at the US Naval Air Test Centre, in Patuxent River, Maryland.

Among the four overseas postings Tony undertook, were three years in the United States working as the Director of the LAMPS Mk III project for the United States Navy, exchange duty with the Royal Navy where he served on 824 Squadron, going to sea on *HMS Ark Royal* and *HMS Hermes*.

Tony was the Director of Aviation Projects - Navy, when he left the RAN, having served as Director of the Air Warfare System Centre and Aviation Projects Deputy Director prior to that.

The Nowra staff of CSA is currently engaged in a major upgrade of the S-70B-2 simulator to bring it from the original 1987 data freeze to the current BL 125 standard.

This upgrade includes a new data link network simulation with a graphical user interface, which will be significantly easier and less time consuming for the instructors to use. It is anticipated that the engines will also be upgraded from the US 401 to the RAN 401C standard when data licences have been approved by the US government.

CSA Nowra is also upgrading the Mission Support Facility so that it will be both portable and able to make full use of the Mission Data Recorder information which is being improved and reformatted by an aircraft update being undertaken in the US. This new system has been designed to enable crews to analyse mission data at the squadron, or on the ship, rather than having to bring tapes back to the Air Warfare System Centre at Nowra for post mission analysis.

The Nowra office is also

developing a Helicopter Data Link Simulation System for Sikorsky Aircraft to be delivered to the Combat Data System Centre in Fyshwick. It will be interfaced with the FFG Combat System, and used to test the data link network functions which are to be incorporated into the ship's computer system by the CDSC staff. The network simulation will be complete with tactical displays and graphical control of the data link functions.

Ongoing support for more routine RAN activities ensures a stable, skilled base of professionals is maintained.

Aviation Museum

The Naval Aviation Museum at Nowra, not only preserves the heritage of Naval Aviation for future generations, but is expected to be the predominant tourist attraction on the South Coast, hence providing support to the local economy. To participate in this project, CSA is building a special display which will be donated to the Museum.

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50th Anniversary

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A lunch to celebrate the Fiftieth Anniversary of the formation of 851 Squadron, was held on 1 October, 1993, at the Fleet Air Arm Museum, RNAS Yeovilton, United Kingdom. The following is a very brief history of the squadron -

851 Squadron formed at Squantum, Boston, USA, on 1st October 1943 with 12 Avenger Torpedo Bombers under Lieutenant Commander Tony Tuke DSC* RN.

After three months intensive training, the aircraft were flown to San Francisco by a Southerly route to avoid the deep winter of the mid-west. The ground crews and equipment went by train from coast to coast celebrating New Year's day in Chicago, and through the deep snows, Salt Lake City and the Rockies.

The Squadron embarked on *HMAS Shah*, Captain John Yendell RN, on the 14th of January 1944, and sailed across the Pacific Ocean via Australia to Cochin in India.

HMS Shah with its escorts, operated throughout the Indian Ocean from its base in Trincomalee in Ceylon, the squadron flying anti-submarine patrols and protecting merchant shipping. In August 1944, LtCdr Tuke attacked a surfaced U-boat and again the next morning. U 198 was finally sunk by *Findhorn* and *Godavari*.

LtCdr Michael Fuller DSC RNVR, took over as Commanding Officer in September 1944. *Shah* had a refit in Durban in March 1945 and then returned to Ceylon to join 21st Aircraft Carrier Group for operations against the Japanese in Burma and Andaman and Nicobar Islands.

On 15th May, LtCdr Fuller found the Japanese cruiser *Haguro* which was attacked north of Sumatra by a strike led by Lt Kenneth Crompton DSC RNVR. The 26th Destroyer Flotilla caught and sank *Haguro* in a classic night action with torpedoes.

The ship and squadron returned together to the United Kingdom in October 1945 when the Squadron was disbanded and *Shah* returned to America. It was later converted to the merchant ship *Salta*.

Post war, the 851 number was allocated to the Royal Australian Navy. The Squadron reformed in 1954 with Fireflies until 1958 and again in 1968 with Trackers, C47s and HS 748s, finally disbanding in 1984.

THE ORIGINAL SQUADRON CREST

Frank Ott, an Observer with the squadron from commissioning until June 1945, said that the crest was drawn by Stan Laurie, the Senior Observer, and the motto, 'Let them hate as long as they fear', by Tony 'Steady' Tuke, the CO. The crest was devised on commissioning in October 1943.



SQUADRON LINE BOOK ENTRY

by S.S.Laurie

*Then their Lordships in Whitehall,
They the Powers that rule our living,
With the wisdom born of Nelson
Made at last a great decision -
'Swordfish now are obsolescent!'*

*'Let us therefore send our Young Men,
They the strongest of our warriors,
Mightiest of our Great Line Shooters,
Send them forth across the ocean
to the land of Koak-a-Kolah!'*

*'They will be a fine example
Teaching from their vast experience
The various ways of Pranging,
All the ancient art of Boobing,
and the art of Fin-Gertrouble!'*

*Thus a band of mighty warriors
formed themselves into a Squadron,
'Eight Five One' they named it
and this book which you are reading
tells you of their trials and wand'rings.*

*From material forwarded by G. Vickridge.



AIR ENGINEERING OFFICERS - HMAS ALBATROSS July 1958

Top Row L-R: S/Lt Lamb - S/Lt Rose - Lt Hutchins - S/Lt Duff - S/Lt Burmeston - S/Lt Jones - S/Lt Wilson - S/Lt Birch
 Centre Row L-R: Lt Coker-Godson - LtCdr Wickett - Cmdr Lovell - LtCdr Kent - Lt Logan - Lt Coward
 Front Row L-R: S/Lt Foale - S/Lt Webster

NIRIMBA '52 to '56 - The 'Nitty Gritty'

by Eric Manuel

Now that *Nirimba* is in its death throes, I feel that something should be written about that seeming void from '52 to '56.

I note that you managed to coerce Colin Davis into penning a few lines on his sojourn in the antipodes, completing time at Nowra.

Bear with me for a few minutes, in which time I will represent a few of those much maligned 'Pommie' instructors at 'Schofields', as we knew it during that period.

As I remember it, we were all volunteers looking for the sunshine and sheilas, about forty-five of us in all.

The trip was, for some, a drudge, for others a break from the 'dragon' at home - she followed in another ship. Booze was freely available and was consumed in copious quantities. Two inseparables drank quadruple gins and rums respectively at lunch time. A glass of water was substituted for the gin one day, it was duly quaffed, straight down, and the recipient was sick. A great time was had by all!

At that time the Aberdeen and

Commonwealth Line was in existence - included on its' books were the three sister ships, *Moretay*, *Largs* and *Jervis Bay*. Having had previous experience on the *Largs Bay*, transit of MONAB 9 from Sydney to Singapore, some of us were forewarned. We are still amazed that only the *Jervis Bay* sank, the remaining two were rust buckets with buccaneers for crew. During the trip we took on migrants from various Mediterranean Ports. Their hygiene left a lot to be desired - to them a passageway was a toilet at night. I could write a book on that trip, but then, I digress.

We eventually arrived in Sydney and were herded into a set of 'cattle trucks' masquerading as carriages, these were drawn by a wood burning steam engine. It was hot and steamy in the train and the windows had to remain closed to stop lumps of cinder and smoke blowing in.

We eventually arrived in Bomaderry and off-loaded into vehicles for the trip to Nowra. Arrival was in the dark, but what was this? Sheets

issued! It was never like this in the RN.

Morning came, awakened by bull frogs, lizards, and that 'little old man' laughing his bloody head off. How was I to know it was a bird? I've always been at a loss as to why 'Sussex by the Sea' was played. Was it the only record available?

Several weeks were spent carrying out various jobs at Nowra, but there seemed to be no rhyme or reason for our presence. I worked for a while on a glider for a WO named Kent. When it was completed he flew it for a while, but on landing, the hangar moved and he had a head-on collision with it. I'm told his shoes didn't fit afterwards.

A request for instructors was posted on a notice board somewhere in *Albatross*, I can't remember where. Having completed an Instructional Technique course and a stint as an instructor at *HMS Gamecock*, Bramcote UK (the WRENS only had HMS on their tally bands), I volunteered. This was my second mortal sin, I had volunteered twice in a year - never done in 'Pussers'.

We were herded once more on to the Sooty's train and were transported to yet another fly-ridden outpost of the Commonwealth [Schofields], or was it Empire? Was it not known as *Albatross 2?*

The RAAF were still in occupation in certain areas, but were only a reserve unit. The main squadron was 22 Squadron City of Sydney (Mustangs) which flew, if ever, on weekends.

The hangars which they used were also used to house two Bristol Sycamore helicopters, they were being modified by civilians prior to the visit of the Queen and Prince Phillip, but if I remember correctly, they never used them. One was flown by an Air Commodore, unfortunately he made contact between the rotor and the hangar wall - and then there was one. He made his way to the crew room and made an entry in the A700, one used quite often, 'Pilot Error'.

As I remember it, the first classes of mechs spent their time erecting partitions for classrooms in the hangars, A's and E's in one and the remainder in the other.

Privacy was never part of instruction in the hangar; a trainee could hear two or three instructors at any one time and learned the whys and wherefores of Centaurus, Firefly Hydraulics and Theory of Flight in one lesson. Aircraft being ground run at the Stop Butts to the rear of the hangar didn't help either. How anyone learned enough to pass exams always amazed me. Maybe they didn't [pass] the instructors fiddled results. After all, they didn't want to prove themselves incompetent!?

.....and the bane of all instructors, the 'Nashos'!

Various trainees were instructed, Air Mechanics, Mechanics, Pilot's Mates, and the bane of all instructors, the 'Nashos'!

These were a group of National Servicemen brought in for - was it nine weeks or nine months? They were mollycoddled and treated with kid gloves. Regulars were screamed at by the Duty Chief at reveille, but the 'nashos' were requested to leave their beds from the doorway! Ludicrous? Of course. Trainees cars were left outside the main gate while the 'nashos' drove into the camp and parked alongside huts and hangars.

One such person was a member of the Amott Biscuit family. The parking of his new Fiat alongside the

instructor's vehicles tended to be incongruous to say the least. I owned a 1936 Ford V8, purchased for about three hundred pounds on time payment - oh to have it now!

The cars driven at that time would have been worth thousands today. Vehicles that come to memory included a 1935 Ford V8 (Truscott), a 1936 Ford 10 (Galliot), a 1925 Morris 25 (Jones) and a 1926 Crossley (?), there were many more including the snob value of a 1948/9 Holden owned by a gentleman named Jones.

.....irreverently known as 'Barney Bear' by the trainees.....

A 1925 Morris Cowley (square radiator), was owned by an equally vintage character irreverently known as 'Barney Bear' by the trainees, due to his gait and bulky form. I personally knew him as 'Herr Funkel Dunkel', mainly due to his attitude towards me. I'm sure that anyone at *Nirimba* will remember the Lt Cdr TTO to whom I refer. His technical ability was second to none, especially in the repair of his shoes. Imagine walking into a workshop after having instructed a class on Workshop Practice, '*never grind soft materials on a grindstone*', to see a TTO grinding the heels of his shoes after repairing them with MASONITE!

The crankshaft broke in the Morris Cowley, it was duly repaired by setting it up in a lathe and pinning and welding it. The mechanic that carried out the work would have had to be a genius! The engine was replaced in the car and I was commissioned to tow start it. The driver of the Cowley, who was so intent on keeping the engine running, failed to stop and consequently jammed the front end under the back of my car. I jumped on the front end of his car and the whole lot fell in a heap! He politely told me that I was a bloody fool and walked off in a rage. His car is probably still there - who knows?

One day the establishment was granted a 'make and mend'. As was always the case, instructors and staff migrated to the Mess to partake of the amber fluid. I had promised to replace wooden running boards on an Austin 8 owned by a Lt. Smith. I was in the process of carrying out this job of love when who should present himself at the workshop door but my favourite 'Herr Funkel Dunkel', (who, incidentally, wrote children's books). He very impolitely asked me what I was doing and I politely told him. He immediately shot through to the Chief

and PO's Mess to find the Chief Instructor, Pat Barry. After telling him of my misdemeanour and directing that I should be charged, he was duly sat on the bar and told to 'Sing, sing, or show your ring', a most humiliating experience for the poor man, but he stridently performed 'Pretty Polly Perkins of Paddington Green'.

I was eventually charged with I know not what, and received a weeks stoppage of leave from a very understanding Commander who had the initials of a well known liquor [VAT]. I have to admit, I noted his inferred advice and after my evening reporting I drove home to my wife and children. The galling thing about the whole episode was that Lt. Smith denied asking me to do the job, it was a 'make and mend' and I had permission from the officers concerned to work in that area - I guess I must have been making more money than you know who.

I've been told that Lt. Smith drowned in the Hawkesbury river whilst water skiing shortly afterwards.

The Chief and PO's Mess was a den of iniquity and a popular watering hole for a variety of people after 6pm, closing time for the local pubs (5 o'clock slush). One group that was in constant attendance was the Blacktown and Parramatta Constabulary. They were not renowned for their sobriety. Whilst Duty Chief one night, I saw police carrying a person to a small car. When I suggested that he shouldn't drive, I was politely told to mind my own business. The Guardroom was told to remove him from his car and place him in the cells. Ten minutes or so later, I was called to the 'phone and a plaintive voice advised that the person in the cells had broken a bed and was breaking out through the wooden walls, 'What will we do?'. What else, but to put him in another cell where he stayed until sober and thence home he went.

The next morning I was called to the Guardroom to meet a Police Sergeant. Instead of planting one on me, he offered me his hand and thanked me. We remained friends 'til my return to the UK. I understand that he has since passed on to that cell block in the sky.

...they even offered him a bit of slap and tickle, at a price!

Sex had to rear its' ugly head at *Nirimba*. All had to know 'Trigger', the friendly female. I had no personal

experience with the lady except when she showered next to me at one time. I'm told that her nickname was acquired because she never went off half-cocked, not being a gunner I don't understand the expression. Her two daughters were also quite friendly with the apprentices.

Night rounds could be enlightening. Passing an open door in which a Mechanician (A/PO) was billeted, Trigger's voice was heard to say, "You're married". "How do you know?" was the response. "Because only married men do that", was the answer. I've often wondered!

Two young girls took up residence in the old Married Quarters on a mattress unwittingly supplied by the Defence Department. During rounds, trainees were found lining up for 16 bob a time. The girls were banished over the back fence and took off to hitch hike to Blacktown. They were picked up by Cdr(S) who was going their way and, yes, they even offered him a bit of slap and tickle, at a price!

..was seen carrying a bath through the back fence, on his pushbike!

The disused Married Quarters were eventually demolished but it was not known if this was done officially, because if some of the older houses in the area were given the order, 'All Married Quarters parts fall out', they would have fallen to pieces.

One PO who will remain anonymous, was seen carrying a bath through the back fence, on his pushbike!

Various pets were held on the camp, one of the most popular being a bitch called 'Minge', an appropriate name if ever there was one. She produced more pups than you could throw sticks at, of all colours, black, white brown, and brindle. A friendly local lady made a present of a British Bulldog as a mascot. He had his own Naval Airman handler and a special enclosure near the main gate. Advice was given that he would be more of a dog after his first service. Poor old Minge was for it again.

There were lesser known pets, one PO was seen in the Mess at lunchtime talking to a frill-necked lizard, tied to a chair leg with a strand of copper wire. When he had a mouthful of beer, his pets open mouth didn't miss out. When passed on the way to the hangar he was asked the whereabouts of his pet. 'Got rid of him, he was a drunken bastard'.

During 1953 a group of trainees sectioned a Rolls Royce Griffon engine and made a really good job of it. It was displayed in the Services tent at the Easter Show in Sydney. I spent the whole period with it and the questions asked were many and varied. 'Is it an Ack Ack gun?' - 'Do you know that the piston stops at the end of its' stroke?'. Anyone with technical questions invariably arrived when I was about to take stand easy.

Night activities were hectic for some, the engine was adorned with various pieces of underclothing, including Army girls' pants on the prop shaft. That engine is, I feel sure, the engine on show at the Museum. It is now painted in garish colours and an insult to its original fitters.

Entertainment was varied, both in the theatre and various Messes with 'Sods Operas' and local concert parties. The Chief and PO's Mess was renowned (parochially) for its motorcycle track around and over the billiard table. One brave sole rode his landlady's auto cycle through the fibro wall separating the table tennis and billiard areas and all thought, with the assistance of XXXX, that it was hilarious.

...her act was to fall over and then attempt to stand up without assistance.

Visiting concert parties had a varied content of participants. One party that comes to mind was well known for its three main characters - a portly and rather raucous middle aged lady, a young woman rather well endowed in the mammary department (she was an actress, her act was to fall over and then attempt to stand up without assistance). The third was a rather limp wristed blonde haired male who insisted on singing 'Row, Row, Row', a song for females, or was it 'Roll, Roll Roll'?

Being duty on the night of a concert, I was the bunny delegated to return the above crew to their various abodes. Two A/PO's, renowned for their sexual prowess, insisted on accompanying us. The young female was first out of the car, duly accompanied by one of the reprobates. The 'boy' was left in the car with the other PO in the back seat whilst I walked the 'lady' to her house. I returned to find the car empty!



1953 - The author and Sgt Barry Gordon RAR, outside *Nirimba* canteen after 'Sods' opera.

The following morning, one PO (a trainee) was displaying his back which was mutilated with scratch marks - 'caused by a CAT which crept into his bed' - he said. The other party didn't return with me and could still be 'Roll, Roll, Rolling' along for all I know.

I could go on and on, but I feel that the defamation laws could rear their ugly head.

We returned to the RN in dribs and drabs, others remained to serve further time with the RAN.

Each individual embarkation and return to the UK was an emotional experience. One that I will always remember, Was that of a well known veteran in the Senior Sailors Mess, Jack Kitney. He was onboard, standing in the crowd of passengers, the ship festooned with streamers and ladies' stockings, when one of our group shouted, 'Sing us a song, Jack!'. His favourite song at the time was, 'Those wedding bells are breaking up that old gang of mine'. It soon developed into an emotional event when the thousands on the wharf started singing. Jack would probably not remember it, and anyone knowing Jack, would know why!

I returned with my family, one more than when we arrived, this time on the *Orcades*. I finished my twelve years with the RN and, after eighteen months of terrible weather, returned to Australia on the *Strathaird* as a 'ten-pound tourist'.

On arrival I applied for a position as an instructor at *Nirimba*, but after meeting with the TTO, I changed my mind and went to work for an Oil Company instead.

I think I'll stay this time.

Cheers, Eric Manuel L/FX 87575

[There was obviously no love lost for Technical Training Officers, Eric also forwarded this definition of a TTO:

'They can tell you the square root of the circumference of a pickle jar to three decimal places - but then can't get the bloody lid off!]

HMAS VOYAGER REUNION

The survivors of *HMAS Voyager* are holding their **30th Anniversary** Reunion at Huskisson RSL Club on 5th and 6th February, 1994.

On Sunday morning, 6th February 1994, there will be a march from the Huskisson Post Office to the Memorial in Voyager Park. This march, lead by a Naval Band, will commence at 0930 and be followed by a service at the Memorial.

Your members are cordially invited to join us for this march, and afterwards adjourn to the RSL Club for a light lunch. Notification, in due course, of the numbers of Association members attending would be appreciated.

John K. Hannay - Reunion Coordinator

PO Box 235

ENFIELD NSW 2136

Tel: (02) 642 2082 - Fax: (02) 746 2068

* Local area FAA Association members wishing to attend, please contact NSW Secretary, Terry Hetherington c/- PO Box 28, Nowra NSW 2541 or Tel: (044) 230056

HMAS Melbourne - USS Frank E. Evans Memorial Service

The Memorial Service marking the **25th Anniversary** of the collision between *HMAS Melbourne* and *USS Frank E. Evans*, will be held in Canberra on 3 June 1994.

A dawn service will be held at the US War Memorial at Russell Offices, followed by breakfast at the Canberra RSL Club. The cost of the breakfast is quoted at \$7 per head.

Other functions are being planned over the weekend 3 - 5 June inclusive.

Anyone interested in attending should contact Ron 'Nullarbor' Baker (ex-CPO RS) on (07) 2813553 (H) or (07) 2803061 (DNATS 8-72-3061) (W) for further information.

Anyone who can billet interstate/overseas visitors during that weekend should also contact Mr. Baker.

Members may be unaware of the existence of a Frank E. Evans Association. For those who wish to make contact, the address is as follows: Frank E. Evans Association, c/- H.G. (Nick) Nichols, PO Box 306, FRANKSTON, TEXAS 75763, USA.

THE MELBOURNE-EVANS COLLISION! One man's observation

In the early hours of the morning of 3 June 1969, 74 United States Navy sailors lost their lives when their ship, the *USS Frank E. Evans* was cut in two by *HMAS Melbourne* in the South China Sea.

Shortly before the collision, the American destroyer was ordered to take up the position of rescue destroyer for the 816 Squadron Tracker - 848 (Crew: Pilot Lt John L. Clarke - Tacco S/Lt Ian Payne - #3 Operator PO Ken Beaton - #4 Operator Lt. Geoff Vickridge) which was scheduled to be launched at 0330.

Whilst changing station, the *Evans* collided with the Australian aircraft carrier.

The following account of the tragedy is taken from a personal letter that the then Lt. Geoff Vickridge, wrote to his wife shortly after the event.

**HMAS Melbourne
At sea
03 June 1969**

Dear....

Where does one begin after such a terrible tragedy? Of course you will

have well and truly heard the news by now and I am glad to hear over Radio Australia that we have been reported as having no casualties - which is perfectly correct.

I am also grateful that you did not send a telegram to the ship as have many of the wives; the 'sparkers' are flat out now sending off all kinds of messages and the personal telegrams must be an additional load that they wish they did not have.

If you were to ask me my reaction now, at 2215 - exactly 19 hours after the collision occurred, I could honestly say I am stunned, as we all are. After *Voyager*, it didn't seem possible that it could happen again. Both the *Frank E. Evans* and *Voyager* were destroyers which the Americans call 'tin cans' - Melbourne has now earned herself the unenviable nickname of *HMAS Can Opener!*

At present we are headed for Singapore for a hull examination and a temporary repair job prior to returning to Sydney; also, an enquiry. My estimate of the earliest we will get home is around 7 July; it is by no means official.

Mail is closing on board at 0400, so I am hoping that this will reach you

as quickly as possible to allay any fears you may have as to our safety.

Needless to say, the exercise has been cancelled; also the remainder of the trip. This was done by Rear Admiral Crabb within an hour of the collision. His first communication outside of the ship was to Chief of Naval Staff (VAT Smith), whom I believe was on an aeroplane within an hour headed for Singapore.

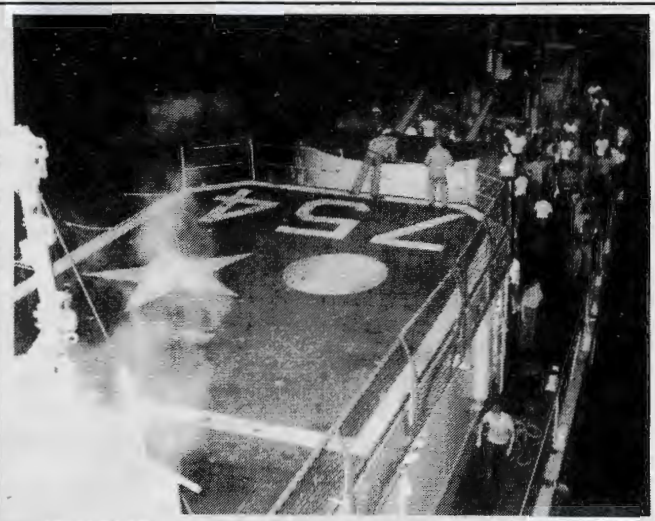
At the last count there was 1 dead and 56 missing and, as we called off the search at 1745 and are proceeding away from the scene of the collision, I would say that this may be the final figure. All the ships in the exercise have been requested to proceed to Singapore with us and from the latest info, they are all complying with the request.

The damage to *Melbourne* is not nearly as severe as it was with *Voyager*, but even so, we have been holed in several places up for'd. I believe that a trim tank was flooded to the extent of 70-80 tons of water taken in, and some of the compartments have been shored up by the Damage Control crew. The bow is a real mess and because of damage to the catapult, 816 and 805 Squadrons will not be flying at all. How it is intended to disembark the Trackers and the Skyhawks, I have no idea.

I was scheduled to brief at 0200 this morning and launch at 1330 (Ken Beaton was with me). We had done our pre-flight and were in the aircraft just prior to starting up when I heard the two blasts on the ship's siren



The extent of the above water damage to *Melbourne's* bows can be clearly seen. The heat generated by the impact welded parts of the destroyer to the carrier. Photos RAN



Dazed and unsure, the survivors cluster on the stern section of *Evans*, whilst N/A R.W Winston, of 816 Squadron. (Right side of uppers), directs them to the rescue ladders.

(emergency turn to port). At the same time I looked through the windscreen and saw a ship very close to our starboard bow. John Clarke yelled out, 'abandon the aircraft'. Apparently, (so I learned later), I had a glass of juice in my hand and passed it to Ken, asking if he would hold it, and then bailed out of the aircraft! Ken poured the juice into his helmet and then bailed out after me, followed by the other two.

Ron McKenzie was due to land on as we had taken off - after the collision, he was diverted to the *Kearsage*, coming over at noon in a boat. John Clarke and Wally Gascoigne have since taken the aircraft to Singapore.

As I exited the aircraft, I looked for'rd and saw the collision which was quickly followed by the for'rd end of the flight deck being covered in steam and smoke as the *Evans'* boilers burst. Fortunately there was no fire at all - a factor which reduced the toll many times.

Just before the impact 'collision stations' had been sounded and everybody was coming on to the flight deck. We had just launched two helicopters and they were recalled to the ship to have winches fitted - a 20 minute job. I wasn't going anywhere near the for'rd end of the flight deck as the grinding and scrunching, with the smoke and the steam, was enough incentive to stay away.

I heard the cry of 'help' from the starboard side and ran over with Ken to see this chap in the water with one of our signal lamps being played on him. He appeared uninjured but was struggling and Ken called out to him to float on his back. I pulled off my Mae West, inflated it and hurled it to him. We both saw him grab it and then we directed him to the rafts, which by this

time had been launched. We then walked over to the other side of the flight deck and saw the bow section rising vertically from the water with many sailors hanging on to guard rails and screaming for help. As it drifted off into the darkness, Ken and I saw it slide under, taking, so we learned later, the majority of those who are missing. All this occurred within five minutes. Of those who are missing, there are three brothers and the son of a CPO who was aboard the *Evans*.

By this time the helos were returning so I cleared the after end of the flight deck of the ships company who were not concerned with the helo recovery.

The stern section of the *Evans* was slowly drifting down our starboard side - we could see the men aboard, but because their decks are so low, we could do nothing to bring them inboard. As it drifted down the side, it tore out a few aeriels and did some slight damage. We could see that it was going to foul on our starboard quarter so I had a scrambling nets brought across and some sailors held on to them. One deck of the destroyer was only 8 feet below the level of the flight deck and we dropped the nets there.

Unbeknown to me, Dennis Rose was on the quarterdeck and had lines passed across to secure *Evans* alongside. Three of our people leapt aboard to coerce the *Evans'* crew onboard *Melbourne*, as they were all clustered down aft and were seemingly loathe to leave the security of their quarterdeck.

Finally, they started coming for'rd and we pulled 80 - 100 onboard. After no more were forthcoming, four of us went on board and started looking below decks to see if there were any

more left. After about a ten-minute search, and not finding anybody, we abandoned the after section and she was cast adrift. There was just no more that could be done.

The next few hours are a bit hazy, as all of us onboard were just wandering around feeling so useless.

The signalman from *Evans* landed on the flight deck, he is in a critical condition and has been flown ashore to Vietnam by a *Kearsage* aircraft after being transferred aboard that ship by one of our helos.

The helos were marvellous - in fact everyone aboard is to be highly praised for the way they swung into action. Jim Firth, from the time of leaping out of his bunk, was in a helo and airborne within twenty minutes - and - the helo had been in the hangar below!

All the ships in the force had come thundering in to the rescue, and by daylight, there were about forty of them around us, all with their boats in the water looking around.

After the stern section was cast adrift, there was nothing further that we could do at all; the sailors onboard really looked after the survivors. Because of the hot weather, many of them had been sleeping in only underpants and thus had no clothing. Our blokes took the shirts off their backs to cover them - in fact, one 816 Squadron sailor gave his entire kit away. Shortly after, the stores side swung into action handing out clean overalls and new sandshoes; also hot coffee, soup etc.

The injured were first attended to of course, and the remainder were housed in the wardroom and quarterdeck. After the initial shock wore off, the bar was opened for the survivors and the band played such

songs as, 'California', 'Deep in the heart of Texas', etc, which cheered everybody immensely. By the time they were taken off by boat to Kearsage, they were well on the way to being merry. For our sailors, there has been a double beer issue tonight.

The Captain, Executive Officer and the Officer of the Watch were all recovered [from the *Evans*], so at least this time the story will be told from both side. From what I have been able to ascertain, it would appear that *Evans* was to fault and our Captain (J.P.Stevenson), did everything possible to avoid the collision.

There was a memorial service on the flight deck this afternoon at 1715, and after the hymn, 'Eternal Father', and 'The Last Post', there were many of our people who were weeping unashamedly, myself included.

Well, there just isn't much more to tell you. At the moment I am so tired, having been awake for twenty-four hours, and with only four hours sleep in the last thirty-six.

Love Geoff

* Our thanks to Mrs Vickridge for allowing Slipstream to use this letter.

Several awards were made in recognition of individual acts of bravery by members of the *Melbourne's* ships company :

- LtCdr R.J.Burns - George Medal
- LtCdr D.N.Rogers - Air Force Cross
- LtCdr C.J.Patterson - MBE
- PO N.H.Heard - BEM
- AB P.J.Richardson - BEM
- NA R.W.Winston - Queens Com'n
- M(E) W.N.Baldwin - Queens Com'n
- Cdr E.V.Stevens - Naval B'd Com'n
- LtCdr D.C.Rose - Naval B'd Com'n
- Lt C.J.Buchanan - Naval B'd Com'n
- Lt G.L.W.Vickridge - Naval B'd Com'n
- Mid. C.J.Cleveland - Naval B'd Com'n
- M(E) K.R.James - Naval B'd Com'n
- AB A.J.Evatt - Naval B'd Com'n
- LS P.J.Varley - Naval B'd Com'n
- OD M.T. Pullinger - Naval B'd Com'n
- OD P.A.Johnson - Naval B'd Com'n
- M(E) R.R.Arnold - Naval B'd Com'n
- PO A.J.Scott - Naval B'd Com'n
- OD C.P.Harris - Naval B'd Com'n
- NA I.S.Hartley - Naval B'd Com'n
- AB L.Farkas - Naval B'd Com'n

One of the proudest possessions of many of *Melbourne's* ships'company at the time, is a message to each and every one of them personally addressed and signed by Captain J.P.Stevenson.

The message was a heartfelt thanks from a man who was held in high esteem by all those who knew him. The message reads as follows:



Dear.....
 This note is to remind you of the outstanding part you played in bringing *Melbourne* from the depths of refit, with new and varied equipment, to a state where, in three short months, she was;

1. Brought to a high pitch of operational efficiency.
2. Steamed 4,500 miles at high speed; and
3. took part in a major international exercise.

During this exercise, submarines never once were able to carry out a successful attack on the ship, and, on the night that the exercise ceased, a complex night flying programme was conducted with:

1. Wessex 31- B helicopters screening against submarines.
2. S2E Trackers locating an 'enemy' surface force then shadowing and homing in a strike, in addition to round-the-clock anti-submarine searches, and
3. A4-G Skyhawks illuminating and striking the 'enemy' surface force.

When the collision of the USS *Frank E. Evans* occurred at 0315 on the 3rd June, the whole of *Melbourne's* crew reacted swiftly, calmly and gallantly to save many lives, care for survivors, and to control and limit damage to *Melbourne*.

This was the epitome of team spirit and efficiency.

Congratulations, thanks, and all good wishes for the future.

Sincerely,
 J.P.Stevenson, Captain
 8th July 1969

~ Vale, USS *Frank E. Evans* ~

Top: Brian Parrotte
 Centre L-R: —?— - Ray Arnol -
 Ron Solomon - 'Slim' Sutherland
 Front L-R: John Wilson - —?—

Photo: Brian Parrotte

The above photograph shows a group of Aircraft Handlers taken at Jervis Bay airfield in 1953.

They spent two years there, clearing the timber around the ridges of the airstrip so that the aircraft could make low level approaches.

* 'The Frenchman'

CONSISTENCY IN AN INCONSISTENT WORLD

The following is a letter from the Duke of Wellington to the 'Army Office' of the day - it would appear that things haven't changed much within the Public Service.

My Lord,

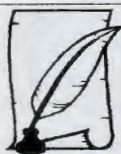
SPAIN 1810

If I did attempt to answer the mass of futile correspondence that surrounds me, I should be debarred from all serious business of campaigning.

I must remind your Lordships for the last time, that so long as I remain an independent position I shall see that no officer under my command is debarred, by attending to the futile drivelling of mere quill driving clerks in your Lordship's office, from attending to his first duty which is, and always has been, to train the private men under his command that they may, without question, beat any force opposed to them in the field.

I am, My Lord,
 Your Obedient Servant,
 Wellington

* With thanks to John Selby



Letters to the Editor



Dear Ed,

It is great to see *Slipstream* grow over the past years and become even more informative about all those issues related to Naval Aviation.

Slipstream is a credit to you and the Association and a tremendous source of information for me.

Please give my best wishes to all those in the Association at Nowra.

Yours aye,
'Spike' Campey

[Good to hear from you, Spike. Your best wishes are now circulated. Ed.]

Dear Ed,

Just a quick note to let you know that Ken [Beaton] and I are back from our sojourn in the UK.

The trip was a major success - Imperial War Museum, HMS Belfast, Cabinet War Rooms, National Maritime Museum, Buckingham Palace etc in London. Then HMS Victory, Mary Rose, HMS Warrior, Royal Marine's Museum, Submarine and Royal Navy Museum, plus a beer with Bill Crozer in Portsmouth, three days at Yeovilton with Dave Richardson, a day at Culdrose (including a two hour low level NAVEX in a 750 Squadron Jetstream), and then two more days at Yeovilton for the FAAA Reunion -GREAT! (Bloody expensive place the UK!)

Joyce Knowlson - HMS Ocean Association and several others wish to be remembered to you and appreciate receiving *Slipstream*.

Must away - by the way, my wife sold our house in my absence. [Probably to pay off your credit cards. Ed.]

Yours aye,
Geoff Vickridge

Dear Ed,

Thank you for the first issue of *Slipstream* received at the time of rejoicing the FAAA on 13 October.

I have found it extremely interesting and didn't realise so many of my old mates were still kicking.

I was particularly interested in the article about old *Nirimba* on pages 11 and 12. I first arrived at *Nirimba* on 14 April 1953, after initial training at *Albatross*. I liked the place so much that I, like a lot of others in training, managed to 'dip' the first NAMO exam and hang on there until early 1954 after taking Western Australian native leave.

As mentioned in the Journal, the 1st of April was the commissioning date, and although not present for that illustrious occasion, I was certainly there for a major part of the transition from the RAAF to the RAN.

Until some other time in the future, all the best,
Jo Jost - WA Division and ex-NAMO.

Dear Ed,

Today I received my October edition of *Slipstream*, congratulations on an excellent magazine. I picked it up and then couldn't put it down until it was completely finished.

The sheep story in 'Spin us a Dit' was a real reminder to me when the same person (it just HAS to be who else could be described as a six-foot banana bender with a head like a beat-up sand shoe) was the bloke in charge of the *Albatross* bomb dump at one time.

I was one of the able seaman armourers in the place, and one particular thing that sticks in my mind, was the way we could get Bob to work for us. He was very proud of his strength and when the time came to heft the 250lb Mk81 bombs around, we'd strain and grunt and make it look like hard work. Bob would take it off us muttering 'weak bastards', while we watched the fun.

I've included another 'Bob Classic' for the pages of 'Spin us a Dit.'

[At this juncture, for legal reasons, I feel that I should stress to the readers that 'Bob' is an entirely fictitious character. Ed.]

The letter continues... Incidentally, my brother, Glen Doré, ex-Handler (Cerberus JR from 1963 or 4), is not often remembered as the first Museum Caretaker from the days when it was in 'D' Hangar, some of his models are still on display in the present museum.

He has an odd hobby now, amongst his model aircraft can be found, and all in working order, a Centurion Tank, a German Half Track (ex Czech), a Bren Gun Carrier, an FV 432 (Pom version of an M113 APC which recently featured in a movie on the Gold Coast), a Saracen Armoured Car (ex-Hong Kong), someone else's Centurion Tank, two ex-Army Land Rovers, sundry other vehicles, a Harley Davidson Soft Tail Classic and seven horses at last count!

Regards,
Peter Doré

Dear Ed,

I have received your very welcome letter, copy of the magazine *Slipstream* and membership application form.

It was interesting to note, that the magazine contained a photograph of Don Chisholm, a long term resident of Newcastle, who I believe is now deceased.

For many years after his discharge from the Fleet Air Arm, he was a taxi-driver in the Newcastle area driving Taxi T2560.

A photo of Clive Smithers and his wife also appeared in the magazine. I met Clive several years after he left the FAA. He was an instructor in the Australian Customs Service at their Sydney Training School in Clarence Street, I believe he has recently retired.

It was also interesting to note that the Association Patron, was my 'skipper' on *HMAS Melbourne* in the year 1958.

If I remember rightly, Ron Robb was a Naval Airman prior to his promotion and subsequent retirement as a Lieutenant Commander.

In August 1992, I underwent a '5' heart by-pass operation and I understand that I am lucky to be here and become a member of the Fleet Air Arm Association. I have been back at work for twelve months now.

Enclosed please find cheque and application form for membership of the Association.

Yours faithfully,
Kevin F. Foot

[Welcome aboard, Kevin. Ed.]

Dear Ed,

'Hope that the Journal continues as it's the only way we can see what has happened to old mates - especially the cream of them all - the Armourers!

Keep it up 'Bucky', there's not many of us 1948-54 mob left.

Best wishes to all the boys.

Allan Johnson

To the Editor,

I suppose you have never heard of me, and are wondering how come I am writing this letter.

I receive each copy of *Slipstream* to read from Ray Davy, and have seen a lot of names of former shipmates, I just thought I would add a few more.

Yours sincerely

W.L. Trevena (Trapper)

* I know you, 'Trapper', and 'Diamond Jim' - here we go....

Eddie 'Doggy' Thompson - Bruce Errey - Bernie Jeffries - Ron Neal - Max Ackerley - 'Paddy' McArdle - Merv Carter - Jack Scanlon - Ray Shanahan - Owen Nadin - 'Sailor' Bill Collins -

Max Kerr - Ray Gunnerson - Maurie Lithgow - Ned Nevin - Mal Presland - Bill Hazel - Bill Cox - John Isherwood - Bill Sincock (now Bill Linden by Deed Poll) - Cameron 'Cammy' Reed - Arthur Sharland - 'Pricky' Reid - Barry Tyrell and last of all, Ray 'Storky' Mailey.

Dear Ed,

The Tasmanian Division is only small, but has a strong attendance. Our members travel from all over the State to attend our meetings which are held in different parts of Tasmania on a rotational basis.

We would like to hear from any interstate visitors over here on holidays. Contact names and telephone numbers are as follows:

North West Tasmania: Barry Simpson (Pres) (004) 244413 - John Nobes (Sec) (004) 352473

North Tasmania: Geoff Singline (003) 392146

South Tasmania: Les Kube (002) 436540

Kind regards,

Geoff Singline - See photo



Rear L-R: 'Chook' Fowler - John Mulhall - Geoff Singline - Fred Olinga - Allan Knudsen - 'Digger' O'Dwyer - Barry Leuders
Front L-R: Harry Philistin - Bob Evans - 'Slim' Harris - 'Tiger' Mason - Barry Plester - Bob Gilmour

Photo RAN



Dear Ed,

The article in the last edition of *Slipstream* entitled 'Muster on the Flight Deck', mentioned riding elephants in Colombo whilst on the way to UK in 1955.

This brought back a few memories from that period and I thought that the enclosed photograph may be of interest to the readers. Sorry, but I can't remember the names of the participants.

Regards, Neil Keedle

ELEPHANT WALK
Kandy - Ceylon
12 July 1955

Dear Ed,

You may recall that I rang you some time ago in regard to the photograph alleged to be that of the last Kamikaze attacking *HMS Indefatigable* after the official cessation of WW II hostilities.

Far be it for me to wish to spoil a good story, but the aircraft depicted is attacking *HMS Victorious* during the Allied attacks on Okinawa somewhat earlier in WW II.

My photograph, which is enclosed, is clearly identical to that published in *Slipstream*. It came into my possession for two reasons, namely:

a) 849 Squadron Observers then serving in *HMS Victorious* all had a

secondary task to perform, mine being the Squadron Photographic Officer.

b) These officers were rostered to carry out Air Officer of the Day duties on the bridge. It was my turn on the day that this particular attack took place. I was therefore an eye to eye witness as well as having access to the photographs taken by the ship's photographic section during this period.

This particular attack developed from the starboard beam and appeared to be heading straight towards the ship's island which also housed the radar equipment.

When 500 to 600 yards away, I deemed it prudent to check what was

developing on our port side, only to find that the attacker was now attempting a right turn from astern of the island and presumably now targeting three Avenger aircraft parked forward port side.

The second photograph [*Unfortunately too dark for reproduction. Ed*] shows the point of impact which wrote off the three Avengers, put a 'kink' in the accelerated take-off system, and the loss of one seaman whose action station was in the fo'c's'le immediately below the point of impact.

The three Avengers were immediately replaced by aircraft from the Fleet Train, but the accelerated take-off system remained inoperative

until at least the end of the Okinawa campaign. During this period *HMS Victorious* was reported in the media to be 95% operational. As the Avenger crews mostly found this method of flying off less appealing than the normal fly-off, they were not particularly upset at the damage.

* *Harold Chandler* - One time Lieut (A) RNVR -ex-849 Sqdn *HMS Victorious* - ACT Division

THE Photograph



Editor's comment: Three or four letters have been received on the subject of the wrong photograph appearing with Ted Tisdale's article, 'The Last Kamikaze'. The correspondence ranged from the informative, as above, to the caustic.

It must be pointed out that the article itself is factual, and had an ultimate aim in giving thanks to, and recording the bravery of Lieutenant Marshall Lloyd and his fellow pilots. Therefore, the LAST word on the subject is given to Mrs Virginia Lloyd, Marshall's widow....

Dear Editor,

It is with deepest appreciation that I write to thank you for your kind note and the Fleet Air Arm Association July '93 Journal with Ted Tisdale's article, 'The Last Kamikaze'.

Each account that I read tells me more about the incident and Marshall's courage. He was no stranger to Anti-Aircraft fire, having been hit by flak on many missions, but it never deterred him from getting the job done!

I will always be grateful that Marshall and I were able to attend the New Zealander's *Gambia* Reunion, and correspond with the Australian and British members of the *Indefatigable* Association before he passed on to a higher command.

Sincerely, *Virginia Lloyd* - Florida USA

Col Price needs YOU! - But certain conditions apply..

Dear Ed,

The Queensland Division of the FAAA recently held a most enjoyable barbecue at Mooloolaba on the Sunshine Coast.

Amongst those attending were three former CAAs, Higgins, Nicholls and Price. They decided that there should be a reunion of the Artificer Conversion Course C4, which was undertaken at *HMS Condor* in 1948.

Would all former participants of that course, please contact Mr.C.Price, 98 Hodgson Street, ROSANNA, Victoria 3084. Telephone (03) 459 7437.

Dear Ed,

The last months seem to have gone pretty quickly. I have enclosed a photo of Geoff Vickridge and Ken Beaton from Perth who were present at Yeovilton when our local FAA Branch made a visit there in September. The gentleman between them is George Chadwick, a member of the Ocean Association and the FAAA of Australia. I thought you might like the photo for your records.

I am pleased to send you a little information about our new carrier *Ocean*, I will let you have further information as I receive it, but I think it will be a little slow in coming. The government is still debating cuts in the Defence programme and I only hope that scrapping the new *Ocean* will not be included in their decisions.

Our membership is pretty stable at the moment, some members are feeling the passage of time and find they are unable to attend the meetings, but we try to keep their interest by post as far as possible.

As regards the FAA local branch, it thrives and I am fortunate enough to be able to join them for both the meetings and the social events. I was so pleased that George Chadwick was able to meet Geoff Vickridge. They have a lot in common because each is interested in 816 Squadron.

We have recently held the Taranto Dinners, an event much looked forward to by the members.

Our kind regards and best wishes for 1994 to you and all members of the FAAA of Australia,

Joyce Knowlson - Secretary HMS Ocean Association

~ Vital Statistics (estimated) of the proposed HMS Ocean ~

Displacement: 20,000 tonnes - **Length:** 203 metres - **Beam:** 33 metres
Draught: 6.5 metres - **Speed:** 28 knots

Armament: Magazine launched Sea Wolf anti-aircraft missiles; three Phalanx / goalkeeper anti-aircraft guns; two 20mm anti-aircraft cannons.

Aircraft: 12 Sea King/Merlin troop carrying helicopters (or 8 helicopters plus 4 Sea Harriers as an option).

Troops: 700 Royal Marine Commandos, plus vehicles and equipment (4 Landing craft carried aboard ship to back up helicopters carrying troops and equipment ashore).

Crew: 600 Royal Navy sailors and 300 plus Fleet Air Arm personnel.



L-R: Geoff Vickridge - George Chadwick - Ken Beaton - John 'Happy' Day
Photo: Joyce Knowlson

Dear Ed,

Thanks for my copy of 'The Journal', but I note that there is a complaint of little input from Aircrew and you request more yarns from your readers. Herewith some reminiscences re- Nowra and Schofields of 50 years ago.

Story #1

On 12 November 1945, the Royal Navy Fleet Air Arm made a 'Balbo' formation run over Sydney to say farewell. The aircraft involved flew in from Nowra and included Fireflies, Corsairs and Avengers from 820 Squadron.

I was flying an Avenger and, as usual, we used a lot of fuel poncing about trying to join up. Whilst about level with Botany Bay my engine failed completely and I immediately dropped out of formation. At the same time I received panic-filled screams from the Observer and TAG - "Are you going to ditch?"

How could I possibly tell them that I had completely forgotten to switch tanks. Talk about a red face!

Story #2

I was switched to 828 Squadron and decided to marry a Sydney girl.

The wedding was set for 30 March 1946, a double wedding, two sisters, the other fellow being a Lt. Asdic Officer.

As was usual in those days there was a beer strike on and the father-in-law was at his wit's end, holding a reception with all these Navy 'bods' and no beer available.

My ship, the *Implacable*, was in dry dock and we had flown off to Schofields. All the squadron was given leave except 'yours truly', who, as the wedding was in the following week, was made duty pilot.

A number of officers wanted to go to Melbourne and Hobart, so I was detailed off for a Navigation Exercise to Hobart.

Can you imagine the incredulous looks from the RAAF personnel at Point Cook when the Avenger rolls up, the wings fold, the Bomb Bay opens and all the luggage falls out, and then seven 'bods' tumble out of the back.

The flight to Hobart was really dicey, a 200' ceiling and hugging the West Coast all the way to Hobart. There was no 100 octane fuel available at Hobart, and had to fly to Western Junction, practically on the smell of a wet rag.

However, all turned out well and I was able to fill the 'kite' with Cascade Beer, much to the relief of father-in-law - so everybody lived happily ever after.

Story #3

The 29th of April, 1946, goes down as the most infamous date in Fleet Air Arm history.

How so?.....Well that was the day when 828 Squadron flew its Avengers from Schofields to *Implacable*, which was located somewhere outside Sydney Heads. Immediately on landing, they were pushed over the bow and into the drink. A demand made under the terms of the American Lend Lease programme.

This made us all weep as we had become very attached to the 'Pregnant Cow', a beautifully behaved aircraft.

When I say 'All' the aircraft were pushed overboard, one was saved by our Commanding Officer, Lt Cdr 'Bobby' Bradshaw, who asked permission of the Captain to boost it off the catapult. This was achieved whilst the aircraft was at full throttle.

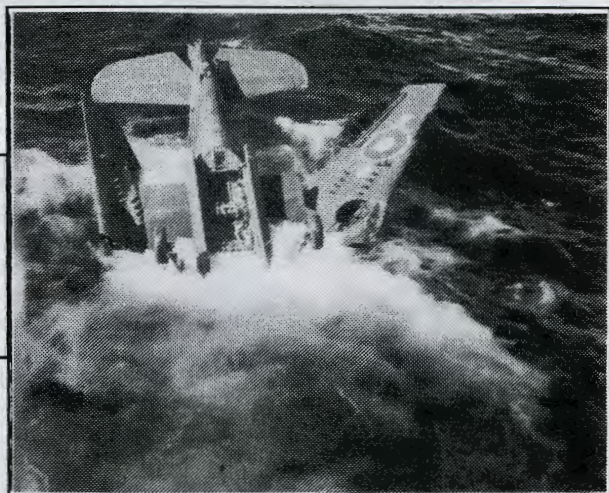
British FAA's Farewell to Sydney

This photograph was taken from a very discoloured newspaper cutting from 1945. It shows the formation run over Sydney referred to in Story #1.



Somewhere off Sydney Heads, 828 Squadron aircraft from *HMS Implacable* were 'deep-sixed' over the sharp end.

Photo: Ron Sunderland



Story #4

I had been detailed off for extra curricular duties as the ships Air/Sea Rescue pilot - flying the 'Walrus'.

After flying out of Schofields and doing 'touch and go' landings in Rose Bay, I left one 'GO' a little too late and looked like collecting the Vaucluse headland, at the last moment I aborted.

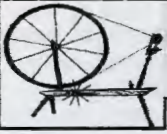
A RAAF launch came steaming out from shore and chased me all over Rose Bay with a loud hailer screaming away. I didn't hang around but took off at a racy 30 knots, fully expecting a 'ROCKET' when I got back to base.

I never did find out what all the fuss was about.

PS: I understand that "Bobby" Bradshaw was killed in a car accident in the UK.

One of Nat Gould's ex-RAAF boys, 'Curly' Bryden, a well known racing driver of the 50s, was also killed in the USA.

Kind regards,
*Ron Sunderland



SPIN US A DIT!

THE STORY OF 'BOB' - THE GREAT WHITE HUNTER

This is the story from Peter Doré, who says that 'Bob' swore that it was true, but then again, so was his sheep story.

Here we go..... Bob had a special fishing hole in a river up in Queensland.

The fish in this particular hole were so wary that they could detect the presence of a human being from some distance away, and as a result, wouldn't be around when the fisherman arrived, no matter how quiet he had been in his approach.

Adjacent to this hole, and close to the centre of the river, was a small island about fifty yards wide. Bob, being smarter than the fish, would moor his little boat on the other side of the island, throw his line across the island and into the fishing hole. This usually resulted in a quick catch, and he would drag the fish back across the island and have it in his bag before the other fish knew what had happened.

One day, Bob got the surprise of his life!

After mooring his boat on the other side of the island, he hurled his baited line across the island in the hope of scoring a feed of fish.

It didn't take long before he got a bite, but what a bite! His catch took off like lightning, taking a hundred yards of line off the reel before he could blink.

Utilising all his skill and not inconsiderable strength, Bob continued to fight this beauty. Time and time again the line raced from the reel, and just as determinedly Bob fought to regain it.

Eventually, Bob tired the monster out, fought it to a standstill and dragged it, albeit with a lot of difficulty, across the island. That was when Bob got the surprise of his life, it wasn't a fish at all, but a BLOODY GREAT FOX!!

Bob reckoned that he must have tossed his line so hard, that it cleared the island and the river, and landed in the paddock where the fox picked up the bait.

Being polite 'Birdies', we didn't yell 'Bull!', besides, Bob was too big. But you can bet your life that we thought it ...and then asked for another dit.

SEX IS HEREDITARY - If your parents never had it, chances are that you won't either!

And then there was 'BOB' - THE TIMBER CUTTER

Trevor Gibbs phoned in from Canberra with the story about when Bob was cutting railway sleepers out in the bush.

Bob felt that with a tally of fourteen hand-cut sleepers a day he was a bit of a record breaker. That was until he spoke to the proprietor of the local hardware store, who told him that if he bought one of the new fangled chain saws he was selling, Bob could at least double his productivity.

Bob bought one!

The next day he headed off for the bush with the chain saw.

Arriving home that night, soaking in sweat, covered in dirt and ABSOLUTELY knackered, Bob pondered over what could have gone wrong. After a solid day of monumental effort with the chainsaw, he had only managed to produce two sleepers.

There must be something wrong with this new device.

Next morning he returned the saw to the store and told the bloke he bought it off how bloody useless the thing was - he was better off using his old handsaw and broad axe.

The store owner said that he thought that there must be something wrong with the saw and invited Bob into the workshop while he checked it out.

After checking the fuel level and priming the carburettor, the man gave the starter cord a good firm pull.

With a cloud of smoke and a roar, the engine burst into life.

'What the bloody hell's that noise?', asked Bob.

THE BOSUN'S MATE ?

from Al Smith

When we arrived at Flinders Naval Depot for basic training in the early '50s, we were just one big group of blokes, some wanting to be Stokers, Seamen, 'Birdies' etc..

To make up class numbers, we had to wait for another intake of recruits to come in. In the interim, we were given jobs around the Depot.

As you all know, when we first joined we didn't know who to salute, call 'Sir' or whatever.

Well, one of our group was given the job of Bosun's Mate and mustered at the gangway for his first trick, the Morning Watch.

At about 0730, the Master at Arms approached him to see if he was doing the job correctly, in the recording of vehicle registration numbers and times as they entered or left the establishment. Satisfied with his inspection, the 'Joss' said, 'The Commodore is due on board for Colours. I want to know immediately when he comes in'.

The Bosun's Mate, not letting on that he was clueless regarding who is who, said, 'Yes. Master at Arms'.

At 0745, the 'Joss', once again asked, 'Has the Commodore come in yet, Bosun's Mate? It is important that I see him'.

The Bosun's Mate replied, 'No Master at Arms'.

'Well I hope he gets here within the next ten minutes', was the rejoinder.

Within minutes, the Commodore, dressed in civvies was driven into the Depot in his staff car, the Bosun's Mate dutifully recorded the registration number and time of entry into the log.

A miffed Commodore said to his driver, 'I wasn't saluted. Drive out again!'

The car turned around and left the Depot, dutifully logged by the Bosun's Mate. Once again the car enters the Depot and once again the registration and time of entry are recorded. A thoroughly 'peed' off Commodore ordered his driver to stop the car and bellowed through the window for the Bosun's Mate to come to him.

When the Bosun's Mate bent down to look in the back of the car, the Commodore said, 'Do you know who I am?'

'I wouldn't have a clue, mate', was the reply.

'I am the Commodore of this establishment!'

The Bosun replied, 'Jeez, you're in the sh.., the Master at Arms has been looking everywhere for you'.

Almost choking, the Commodore said, 'Drive on please, driver'.

LIFE'S LIKE THAT!

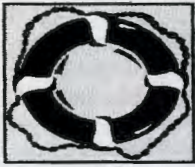
A shipwrecked matelot had been living on a desert island for months.

One day as he strolled along the beach, he noticed a bottle lying half buried in the sand, he dug it out, uncorked it and a genie appeared.

'Name the two things that you most desire', said the genie, 'and they will be granted to you!'

'Bloody beauty', said the matelot. 'I want a carton of the best beer in the world, and, to go with it, the best woman in the world'.

So, the genie waved his arms, there's a great big puff of smoke, a carton of beer...and Mother Teresa.



WELFARE OFFICER'S REPORT

by I.G. (Chips) Gray - Welfare Officer NSW

Two items that have been dealt with previously in the Welfare Officer's Reports, need to be mentioned again.

First, the necessity to take advantage of the free medical check for those who have been exposed to Asbestos. Recently two members of our Association, who currently enjoy good health, decided to have the free medical examination, the results showed that they have the early stages of the condition that may ultimately cause lung cancer.

The detection at this early stage makes monitoring and management of their health more satisfactory than had they not presented for the examination.

To avail yourself of this free check-up, contact the Occupational Health and Safety Officer (OH&S Officer), in your State or Territory and request a questionnaire and instruction sheet. You will find the OH&S Officer listed in the Commonwealth Section of the telephone directory (NOT Veteran Affairs) - a full list of contact numbers also appeared in the January '93 Slipstream.

The second previously mentioned information that many are still not aware of, is in relation to the treatment of cancer by Veteran Affairs.

Any ex-service person, irrespective of their service, will be accepted by the Department of Veteran Affairs under the Special Arrangements Provisions:

TREATMENT of CANCER or PULMONARY TUBERCULOSIS

'Special arrangements exist for the

treatment of Australian Veterans suffering from malignant neoplasia (cancer) and pulmonary tuberculosis.

The Department will provide or accept financial responsibility for the treatment of any malignant condition or TB subject to the receipt of an application from the patient or someone acting on their behalf.'

So, even if you have been rejected for other 'entitlements' applied for such as, Service Pension, Defence Service Housing etc., on this important issue you can gain valuable help. The assistance also extends to Nursing Home care if required.

SENIOR'S HEALTH CARD

From July 1994, many self funded retirees (DFRB/DFRDB etc.), will qualify for the Senior's Health Card, this is not to be confused with the various Senior's Cards issued by the States for concessional rail travel etc., this being a Federal Government recognition that there are many aged in the community who do not get a Social Security or Veteran Affairs Service Pension, but whose income is below the pension cut-off point.

As well as cheaper pharmaceutical prescriptions, card holders will be able to get free hearing aids as pensioners now get with their Pensioner Health Benefits card. It will also give access to the proposed free dental services when it is introduced by the Commonwealth Government. It will not give automatic entitlement to

concessions provided by State and Local Governments, though that could eventuate in time.

Who gets the card? You must be an Australian resident living in Australia and of pension age (60 for women - 65 for men) or meet the age (55 for women - 60 for men) and service conditions for Service Pension.

Your income must be less than the amount at which pension cuts out altogether. From 1 July 1993, that amount is \$722.60 (single), or \$1203.60 (married/combined) per fortnight. These are indexed figures so will go up each few months.

The card will be available and issued in July '94, but it will be necessary for you to obtain a Senior's Health Card Claim Form from Social Security or Veteran Affairs offices - but NOT before May 1994.

When the card is issued it will not give as wide a range of benefits as the Personal Treatment Entitlement card or the Dependant Treatment Entitlement card as are available to ex-service personnel through Veteran Affairs. However, a person who has a Specific Treatment Entitlement card, and is only eligible for treatment for a service related condition, may receive additional benefits through the Senior's Health Card.

I have not yet established the level of Assets that may be held in regard to the issue of the Senior's Health Card. No doubt these will be promulgated or available to you in May next year, but certainly wouldn't be less than that for both the Service and Aged pensions which as from September '93 have been: Single home owner \$220,000 / Single non-home owner \$300,500 / Married home owner \$338,500 (combined) / Married non-home owner \$419,000 (combined).

Farewell, Shipmates



Gordon 'Darkie' Howlett - who passed away on 30 September 1993 after a long illness.

With his flowing beard, Gordon was a well known, much loved character, and one of a remarkable group of volunteers who pioneered the Fleet Air Arm in 1947/48.

In World War II, he served on RAN Boom Ships and later became one of the many original Aircraft Handlers who trained at HMS Siskin in 1948, he continued to serve with distinction in the FAA until 1964.

Deserted by his first wife, he was

left to support five children, this he accomplished with tremendous will, and yet still maintained his duties in the Service without complaint.

One son was killed in an accident in 1972, the same year that Joyce, his second wife, came into his life and became his strength. Participating in all of Gordon's post FAA activities, she is well known by his comrades

He is survived by his mother, his wife, two daughters, two sons and eight grandchildren.

There were many humorous sidelights to Darkie's adventures in the FAA, no doubt his mates will reminisce and burst into friendly laughter over a pot or two.

We all wish Joyce and the family a happy future with fond memories.

On behalf of his mates,
Kevin Ambrose Boulter



**Leslie William Mickan (Chicka)
ex-CPO AH R37482**

At the age of 62, 'Chicka' died peacefully at his home in Byron Bay on 22 August 1993.

Our sincere condolences to his wife Nancy, son Jason and family members.

NATIONAL SECRETARY'S REPORT

The 1993 meeting of the Federal Council of the Association was hosted by the Victorian Division in Melbourne on 30 October.

Unfortunately delegates from the Tasmanian, Queensland and Officer's Division were not able to attend, however, proxies were appointed. The meeting was capably chaired by Les 'Juke' Matterson in the absence of National President, 'Toz' Dadswell.

The major items that affect members was an increase in Annual Capitation from \$3 to \$5, plus a fee of \$8 towards the cost of producing and circulating four copies of Slipstream per annum to each member.

President 'Toz' is continuing to seek sponsorships, while cost saving methods of production and circulation are being studied. In the long term, the setting up of a Trust Fund to ensure the longevity of the Journal is also a possibility.

One other very notable item was the appointment of Monsignor Frank 'Tiger' Lyons as the National Association Chaplain. I think that I observed a glint in 'Tiger's' eyes when Victorian President, Les Jordan, made the announcement at luncheon the following day.

The dedication of the Association flag was carried out at *Cerberus* the following day, prior to the service arranged for the unveiling of the FAA Plaque which is dedicated to those who lost their lives in Fleet Air Arm service. Senior Chaplain Graeme Adsett, Chaplain Eric Burton and our own 'Tiger' Lyons conducted the service, John D. (Twitchy) Goble carried out the unveiling while 'Juke' Matterson placed the floral tribute.

It is obvious that 'Tiger' has maintained his contacts, the weather was magnificent, shades of Reunion'92. The fly-past by the Royal Victorian Aero Club was impressive and very much appreciated.

A big 'thank you' to the Committee of the Victorian Division for a very well organised week-end, and to Secretary, Ron Christie, in particular.

The Association Flag had its first public airing on the 11th of November at the Entombment of the Unknown Soldier in Canberra. The Divisions were represented by Ron Tate and Theo Bushe-Jones from the West, Geoff Litchfield and Len Baggott from Victoria, Col Bushe-Jones and Brian Treloar from the ACT, Jim Lee from NSW, while 'yours truly' represented the National Executive.

The following is a list of new members since the last issue of *Slipstream*:

TASMANIA: Dorothy Pope

WA: Brian 'Jo' Jost and serving member, Phil Smith.

SA: Helen Haynes

NSW: Gordon Crane, Warren Walters, Ron Robb, Edward 'Digger' Schmidt, Bill Julius, Leo 'Bodgie' Viles, Syd Bull, Bill Christopher, Tom Burton and Kevin Foot.

VIC: Noel Knappstein, David Maloy and Associate Judy Young.

QLD: Brian Bosanquet, Les Childs, Stan Hodgkiss and Don 'Danny' Daniels.

I believe that there are another ten members but I do not have their names at the time of writing.

Hoping you all have a Happy and Healthy New Year.

* Ian Ferguson-National Secretary

couple of brollies. After our purchases Ron found another shop that had them for half the price, so we made another purchase, something about saving money. Then we couldn't find the Bus Stop and had to take another taxi out to Rowville.

That night, Ron Christie and his lovely wife invited Ron and I to their home, whilst there we met up with several of the Victorian members and Mary Raynor from South Australia. It was a very pleasant evening and once again I must say 'thank you', to the Christies.

Next morning we made a quick trip to Dandenong, as the sun was shining there was no need for the brollies. After a couple of hours the wind was so cold that we finished up buying a jacket apiece - which we needed like a hole in the head - as jackets were aplenty back at the Motel.

Back at the Motel, the National Council members had arrived, Ian Ferguson, 'Juke' Matterson, 'Pancho' Walter and Commodore John Goble, who was standing in for 'Toz' Dadswell who was away on the high seas somewhere between Europe and Australia. So, it was a few 'tinnies' for those who partake, and coffee for Ron and I, but it was a pleasant session in our room talking about the old times.

Saturday the 29th and into Melbourne for the FAAA Federal Conference held in the RAAF Sergeant's Mess at St.Kilda. I must say that everything went off well, and everyone showed a positive spirit to the advancement of the aims of the Association and its continuing growth.

The fact that we now have our own flag meant that it had to be covered in the Constitution, as there was no reference to a flag when the Constitution was approved, suitable changes had to be made and approved by the Council.

Slipstream was also on the agenda. As the cost of producing the Journal is on the increase, [primarily due to Postal increases. Ed] and sponsors are very few and far between, we will all have to pay to receive our four copies per year. To cover printing and postage costs ONLY, represents an outlay of eight dollars per member per annum - this does not include the additional costs involved with producing the original copy, which are shared between the Editor, NSW Division and National. It has been left to the individual Divisions to decide how this eight dollars per head is to be raised, our Executive have decided that if WA members wish to receive *Slipstream* an additional eight dollars should be sent in along with their Annual Subs.

NEWS FROM THE DIVISIONS

WESTERN AUSTRALIA

Hi Shipmates,

It's that time of the year again and another year closer to the big stand-easy, so let's all live it up while we can and don't count the cost.

Ron Tate and I attended the Federal Conference in Melbourne and, after leaving RAAF Base Pearce on the 26th of October, arrived in Melbourne on the 28th having flown via Adelaide, Richmond and Canberra. The only thing missing was the 'frequent flier' points, but the RAAF

don't participate in this.

A train trip to Dandenong and a taxi trip to the Motel, a quick phone call to Ron Christie to confirm that we had arrived, and pronto, he was there to make sure that all was well.

A visit to Frankston to be met by Dick Prentice outside the ladies' underwear shop in the main drag, then away to find Brian Smith.

After several enquiries we eventually located him, not at his home, not at his Gym, but at the Grand Hotel where he was holding 'Scripture Lessons'. He hasn't changed much, just a bit older like the rest of us. Brian wishes to be remembered to all and sends his best wishes.

Back to Dandenong, and guess what? You're right! Pouring with rain and no jackets as the day was fine and warm when we left. So - had to buy a



....a pleasant session in our room, talking about old times.

L-R: Ian Ferguson - 'Pancho' Walter - Ron Tate - Theo Bushe-Jones - John Goble

Photo: L.Matterson

You must all admit that this is a small sum to pay for the quality of the finished article, it gets better each issue. I must congratulate the Editor on the great job he has done in getting *Slipstream* to the peak it has achieved.

All in all, the Conference went off really well and we were able to complete the business in the afternoon session, all very friendly and no punch-ups.

On the same evening it was back to the Mess for the FAA Dinner arranged by the Victorian Division. This was a very well organised event, the food was excellent and everyone was able to get around and meet old mates.

During the evening, Commodore Goble presented Ron Tate with his Certificate and Badge of Life Membership, and Diplomas of Merit to Mary Raynor of South Australia and Clem Conlan of Victoria. Congratulations to all of you.

Sunday the 30th saw us down at *HMAS Cerberus* for the laying of a plaque to commemorate all those who gave their lives in the service of the Fleet Air Arm. The new flag was also dedicated during the ceremony which was conducted by three Padres. Monsignor 'Tiger' Lyons gave, as usual, an excellent address. With the Navy Band providing the music for the hymns, it was a most pleasurable morning.

Things have really changed at *Cerberus*, you can walk on the lawns and even drive onto the wharf. The old

train has been retained at the Station, the one we all 'went up the line on' those weekends so long ago. Our thanks and congratulations to the Victorian Division for the way the Conference, Dinner and Plaque laying was carried out.

We had lunch at the Junior Sailors Mess and then set off for Nowra with Ian Ferguson who had an empty car and plenty of room. A stopover at Cann River and a nice drive next morning to Vincentia where we shared the hospitality of the Fergusons. Our thanks to Ian and Joan.

A phone call to Don Eldridge, who lives around the corner, and it didn't take long for him to arrive. We had another good session with an old mate. Hope the health improves, Don, and all the best.

Next morning, Ian drove us to *Albatross* where we were delivered to the Senior Sailors Mess and each of us installed in a cabin. Then, down to the Museum, met the gang there and offered our services for the week we were staying. This offer was readily accepted.

Our first job was to remove the small 'lake' that had gathered in the hangar from the overnight rain. The workmen had started to pour the footings for the hangar walls, they objected quite vigorously to the water being swept into their excavations, but all was settled and we continued sweeping. Later on, Ron installed new fluorescent lights in the workshop and wired up the grinder. I was his TA, I

must have done something right, I wasn't sacked!

On the Saturday night we attended the Senior Sailors Annual Reunion at the Mess and met up with many old shipmates, it was a very good night. [They also 'flogged' a few hundred dollars worth of raffle tickets for the National funds. Ed.]

Thanks to 'Tassie' Anning we were able to get a lift to Canberra the next morning. After a pleasant trip across the mountains, my brother Colin picked us up on our arrival and took us home for lunch.

As Colin only had a double spare bed available, and because Ron snores, he had to go and stay at Colin's daughters place where he was made very welcome by Sandra and husband Jim.

We were well wined and dined while in the Capital, with trips to different clubs for dinner at night and much sightseeing.

While at the Mint we saw a notice that said they were stamping out [as in pressing not wiping] the Active Service and Service Medals, we were unable to sight them so you will have to wait for their delivery.

Attended the Entombment of the Unknown Soldier on the 11th of November and we carried the flags of the Naval Association and the FAAA. There were over twenty thousand people present and Anzac Parade was full of banners and flags. We laid a single Poppy on the tomb, and when the ceremony was over the whole area was covered with flowers. It was a great occasion and very moving.

After the activities we had coffee with Brian Treloar (he makes good coffee!) while we watched a video of the parade he had taped from the TV. Thank you, Brian.

Next day we had morning tea with Ian Ferguson and Jim and Norma Lee of the NSW Division, at the home of Sir Victor and Lady Smith. It was a most enjoyable morning and Sir Victor looked a lot better than when we last visited with him a year ago. We all hope that his health stays good.

Checked with RAAF Richmond about return flights to the West, no seats available as they are picking up 32 people in Canberra, so, it's off to Sydney with Jim and Sandra to try and get a flight home. Still no seats available until the next day. Went into Sydney for a feed - thought we were back in Hong Kong, in the area of Pitt and George Streets all signs and language in Chinese. We eventually made it back home next day.

The Annual Dinner was held on 20 November at the Carlton Hotel in East Perth. Fifty-two attended - great show!

'Murlex' Bradley came down from Geraldton - Keith Murdoch turned up, looks good but says that he 'has his days' - Alf Diver was another participant. Our guests were Commodore Rob Partington and Captain Eames from *HMAS Stirling*. Rob spoke to us on the general topics of today's Navy and was well received. Rabbi Coleman once again gave an inspiring talk on today's world. It's always great to hear the Rabbi. Congratulations go to 'Snow' Hall who did a marvellous job in organising everything.

Whilst in Victoria, Dick Prentice authorised Lou Burns to pay the expenses for Ron Tate and myself up to five hundred dollars a day, this was counter-signed by 'Pancho' Walter. I won't print what Lou said, but we didn't get the expenses. Nice try, fellas!

To anyone visiting the West, Lou's place is nearly finished, so take up the offer of accommodation. He's got plenty of room, I'm sure you could get a hundred on each side of the verandahs - and there are four verandahs! [Not likely! I know how he used to give the blokes an early shake as 'kellick' of D8 Mess. Ed.]

REMEMBER - Members of the WA Division, your fees are payable in February, when you make out your cheque please add the extra eight dollars for *Slipstream* and avoid disappointment.

I wish you all Good Health and Prosperity in the New Year.

* *Theo Bushe-Jones*

VICTORIA

On behalf of the Victorian membership, may I express the hope that you all had a Merry Christmas, and wish everyone a Happy New Year.

For those members who could not or did not attend the activities in Melbourne over the Cup weekend, I will endeavour to give a brief report on what transpired, although I'm sure that mention of the same activities will also appear elsewhere in this edition.

Several of our interstate visitors were staying at the Baton Rouge Motel at Rowville, which is in close proximity to my place of abode, an impromptu get-together was organised. I can still see the look of panic on my wife's face when I confronted her at about 1630 and told her that about twenty people would be arriving in three hours time for drinks and nibbles!

No worries - Val handled the situation very well and a good evening was had by all. This event took place on Friday, 29 October '93, a good lead



Federal Council Members - Melbourne 1993

Rear L-R: Brian Treloar - Ron Tate - Theo Bushe-Jones - Mary Raynor - Frank Crowe - Les Jordan - Jim Lee - Terry Hetherington
Front: Gordon Walter - John Ikin - Les Matterson - Ron Christie - Ian Ferguson
Note the new FAA Association flag in background. Photo: T.Hetherington

up to the FAAA Federal Council Meeting scheduled to commence at 0900 the next day at the RAAF Sergeants Mess, Dorcas Street, Melbourne.

I will let the National Secretary supply the details of the Meeting, but I must say that the proceedings went very well.

The next event of the day was the FAA 45th Anniversary - Reunion Dinner, this was also held at the RAAF Sergeants Mess - but - what a transformation had taken place from the time of leaving the Council Meeting to our return for the dinner. The RAAF personnel had done a terrific job with the table arrangements and decor. Most importantly, the dinner to follow was excellent, everyone must have agreed with my thoughts on the matter as I didn't receive one complaint - and that's a big statement!

The evening saw Ron Tate of Western Australia being awarded Life Membership, and Diploma's of Merit presented to Mary Raynor of South Australia and Clem Conlan of Victoria. Once again, congratulations to these very worthy recipients.

Seventy people attended the dinner, including our Guest's of Honour, Commodore John Goble RAN (Rtd), and National Vice President, Les Matterson and his good lady, Florence. Les officiated in the absence of National President, 'Toz' Dadswell, who was overseas at the time.

On Sunday the 31st, the weather was perfect. The days proceedings started with church services being conducted in both chapels at *HMAS Cerberus*, with part of the service being in honour of the Fleet Air Arm.

On completion of the services, all adjourned to the Memorial Garden located between the chapels. A ceremony was then held for the unveiling of an RAN Fleet Air Arm Memorial Plaque, and the dedication and consecration of the FAA Association of Australia National flag.

The unveiling was carried out by Commodore John Goble RAN (Rtd), and the ceremony conducted conjointly by Senior Naval Chaplain Graham Adsett, Naval Chaplain Eric Burton and Monsignor Frank (Tiger) Lyons. We congratulate and thank them for their individual and combined efforts in the planning and execution of this most historic occasion.

Special thanks must go to Ian Brown, Chief Flying Instructor/Chief Pilot of the Royal Victorian Aero Club who, with his associated pilots, provided an excellent display of formation flying during the ceremony in our honour. Well Done! - from all who witnessed the fly-past.

Finally, I would like to express my thanks to Alan (Happy) Clark for his assistance, and to all those who attended, for making the day such a success.

Another event on the 'historic calendar', has been the Entombment of the Unknown Australian Soldier in Canberra. On behalf of the Victorian Division Committee, I would like to thank Geoff Litchfield and Len Baggott for representing our Division at this ceremony.

Congratulations are also extended to Monsignor Frank (Tiger) Lyons, in being appointed Fleet Air Arm Association of Australia Chaplain. [National]

The Annual General Meeting of the Victorian Division, will be convened at 1400 on Saturday, 12 February, 1994, at the RAAF Sergeants Mess, 6 Dorcas Street, Melbourne. (NOTE! at the time of writing this had yet to be confirmed).

A warm welcome is extended to a new member of our Division, Noel Knappstein, ex-Lieutenant 'P'. Welcome aboard, Noel!

* Ron Christie - Hon. Secretary

ps:

Liberty Boat Capers

Christmas at the Melbourne Zoo on 05 December was our day together to celebrate the festive season. With clear skies, plenty of Santas and the permeating aromas, we relaxed on the lawns. A special 'thank-you' to all who came along with their children and grandchildren, your participation helps to keep the Association alive and well.

Special congratulations to the Sec's great niece, Shae Hannaford, who correctly guessed that there was 764 Smarties in the jar.

Another one to circle on the calendar is Sunday, 20 March '94, when a luncheon will be held at the Watsonia RSL commencing at 'High Noon'.

Don't forget the AGM! - we would like to see everyone catching up with old shipmates again.

* Bryan & Jenny Roberts - Social Secs.

SOUTH AUSTRALIA

The SA State Bank is said to be on the way OUT!

The SA Labour Government is definitely OUT!

Even the Grand Prix has 'up bag and hammock' and moved OUT!

It appears that everything in South Australia is getting 'OUT' except news of your Division.

If there's nobody left down there, I'll have Clem Conlan duck over the border and turn the bloody lights out!

Come on, fellas, lend a hand. Ed.

QUEENSLAND

This year sure has flown and has been a milestone year for the Queensland Division.

We had our first meeting in October '92 and to date, our financial membership stands at about 90, and our mailing list in excess of 250. We expect a great increase in financial membership to occur at the March '94



Queensland Division Barbecue at Mooloolaba - 10OCT93

L-R: Mrs.Higgins - 'Taff' Nicholls & family - Col Price - Ron Higgins -

Ken 'Snow' Nicholls

Photo: Barry Lister

reunion in Bundaberg. I take this opportunity to thank everyone involved for their full support, both to the Committee and our functions.

The Federal meeting took place in Melbourne on 30 October, I was unable to attend but Jim Lee from the NSW Division accepted the appointment of proxy for the Queensland Division. Thanks, Jim, your assistance was appreciated.

Our capitation fee for 1994 is now set at \$5 per financial member (it was \$3), and we supported that motion. Our fees remain unchanged at \$15 joining fee and \$15 annual membership fee.

The new lapel badge, smaller than the original one, is now available and supplied automatically to new members. Anyone wishing to update their old model, can place an order with Ian Henderson, PO Box 113, Cleveland, QLD. 4163, at a cost of \$5.

Monsignor Frank 'Tiger' Lyons was appointed as the National Association Chaplain, and is delighted at the appointment.

The funding of *Slipstream* has been a problem for some time now, it was moved and carried 'that the charge to each individual member who wished to receive *Slipstream* be set at \$8 per annum'. The Division will cover this charge for financial members from our funds and with some sponsorship.

Asbestos Exposure - We have been asked to encourage all our members to avail themselves of the free Asbestosis Check - for further details contact the Australian Government Health Services in Brisbane. DO IT NOW! [See Welfare Officer's Report this edition. Ed.]

Alan Smith also advised that CPO (AH) 'Chicka' Mickan had passed

away. Those of us who knew him remember a pretty happy bloke, always good for a bit of fun and a laugh.

Ron Higgins also notified us that Stan Paul, who was one of the original group of twenty that went to the UK to train for the FAA, died on 16 November. We extend our sympathy to both families.

Our barbecue at Mooloolaba in October was a great success with about seventy people attending - beautiful weather - great company. We were pleased to see Col Price firing on all four cylinders, he was a guest of Ron Higgins at Nambour.

Ken 'Snow' Nicholls and his wife 'Taff', came along as well, their new address is 47 Cresthaven Drive, Hillcrest Gardens, Caboolture. Bob Conellan enjoyed himself while Don Daniels kept 'tabs' on him. They had a great week in Caloundra flying the Skyfox and Jabiru. There was a noted slump in the sale of Guinness the following week.

Trevor Bolitho phoned recently, he has moved from Darwin and now lives in Buderim, fairly handy to Jock Collins.

Our Polo shirt is selling well. We'll have some available for sale at the Bundaberg reunion, but, if you want one before then, send \$22 and your size to Ian Henderson (this price includes postage). We do have stock in hand at the moment.

The Federal Council members have suggested a possible National Reunion in Queensland towards the end of October 1995, as a possible lead-up to the 50th Anniversary Reunion in 1998. This suggestion stems from the concern of many members who have commented that the time span between the '92 to the '98 reunion is too great, especially for

those who aren't as young as they used to be. It sounds like a great idea, but a lot will depend on how our reunion in Bundaberg goes.

The dates for the Bundaberg reunion are 11-12 and 13th of March, 1994. We have already received quite a few confirmations of attendance for the dinner on the Saturday night - keep them coming in.

Indications are, that Commodore Geoff Morton may also attend the reunion, hopefully with a couple of aircraft. More on that later.

Whilst Bob Conellan and Don Daniels were having dinner with us, John Crawley phoned me (as a result of reading *Slipstream*). He reckons that he and Ros will come up from Canberra for the reunion. [Send him a Membership Application form. Ed.] It looks as if it's shaping up to be a Gliding Club get-together in Bundaberg.

He did happen to mention that he'd seen Jock Collins' mob of hiccups slowing down to get a quick drink from Lake Burley Griffin in Canberra the other day - they took off at a great rate of knots as a few 'flatulence's' came out of Parliament House and headed towards them. They went South - maybe they'll turn up in Victoria. Incidentally, if you don't understand the word in inverted commas, give me a call and I'll explain.

I'm writing this screed during Xmas party time, my committee will agree that I may not be able to write afterwards. After a recent pre-Xmas do, I chaired our meeting and later on had to phone Mick Blair and Junior Henderson to find out what went on! Shame! Shame! Must be the Naval influence working on me.

With all best wishes to the readers for 1994.

* Barry Lister - President

Barry Lister is the Principal of **Main Street Realty, Caboolture**, and has assisted several of our members in their relocation to Queensland.

He can also provide current investment advice, especially in the Caboolture area, which has one of the biggest growth areas in Australia and provides excellent investment opportunities.

Barry can be contacted at Main Street Realty, 13A King Street, Caboolture QLD 4510 - Phone (074) 954288 or FAX (074) 954560.

Australian Capital Territory

Although this will not reach you before Xmas, we would like to take this opportunity to wish all of our fellow members a very joyous time

during the Festive Season and every good wish for a prosperous and rewarding year in 1994.

Together with representatives from NSW, Victoria, W.A. and the National Executive, we were grateful for the opportunity to join in the ceremony for the Entombment of the Unknown Australian Soldier on November 11th. It was a very moving ceremony with the whole length of Anzac Avenue lined by the banners and representatives of scores of Service and Ex-Service Associations. Our Association banners and flags were paraded proudly with all the others.

Since the last edition, this Division has had two social functions. The first of these was held on 19 September at Harry Adams farm at 'Melrose Valley'. This took the form of a barbeque and some 40 members and wives turned up. Unfortunately, the weather took a turn for the worse during the afternoon which put paid to aspirants for the pitch and putt competition. Nonetheless, all enjoyed themselves and our thanks go to Harry Adams and his wife for looking after us, all so well.

A few of us learnt how to erect an Army tent which should prove useful for similar events in the future. One of the prizes in the raffle was a half hour flight over Canberra by courtesy of Norman Lee, and guess who won that - Nobby Clarke!!

I was honoured to represent the Division at the annual meeting of Federal Council in Melbourne at the end of October. Unfortunately, our President, Col Bushe-Jones was overseas and could not attend. No doubt, the meeting will be reported elsewhere in this edition. All in all, it went very well and many useful matters were discussed and decisions taken.

The commemoration & unveiling of the FAAA plaque between the chapels at *Cerberus* was yet another pleasant and moving ceremony and a great chance to renew some old acquaintances.

Our last function for the year was held on 19 November when some 50 of us gathered at the Canberra



On a recent visit to the USA, ACT member, Mike Astbury (left), took the opportunity to present Joe Gates with his FAAA Jumper and cap. Photo: Mike Astbury

Services Club, Manuka, for our Annual Cocktail party. This was the first time we had used this venue and everything went off splendidly. Our only regret was the fact that our Patron, Admiral Sir Victor Smith and Lady Smith were unable to join us due to illness. We were looking forward to their company but they had to cancel at the last minute.

We received news recently that Brian Farthing and his wife will be returning in the new year after twelve months in Scotland in the Isle of Mull. Brian's wife has been teaching there in the past year. We hope that we will be able to understand them on their return.

Welcome back also to our National President Toz Dadswell and Gwen after a few months in Europe. He was somewhat amazed to see a slight change to our banner since his departure. Maurie Tiffen implores him not to use 'super glue' to stick things on in future.

Just a little reminder to all our members that the Annual General Meeting will be held at the Canberra Services Club, Manuka on Wednesday 16th February 1994 commencing at 1930. This will be a short meeting to elect the incoming committee and will be followed by a social get-together. Please bring your wives and/or friends. We will arrange some small eats and the bar will be open for all to enjoy.

With best wishes for 1994.

*Brian Treloar - Secretary

TASMANIA

Once again we read a truly great edition of *Slipstream*, and it does seem to me that each edition is better than its predecessor, more

and more old friends and shipmates.

The Division is still around and has a get-together each three months or so, the numbers are not overly great but all are there in spirit.

There are a lot of 'Spud Digger' ex-FAA people out there, and we would surely like to hear from them to swell the ranks.

Some of our old cobbers have passed on, God Bless them! None of us are spring chickens any more, but I'm told you are only as old as you feel. As Mo McCackie would say, 'How true, how very true!'

Our President, Barry Simpson at Devonport, is not real good and is under Doctor's orders and all sorts of things. He could well do without the problems after losing his wife, Margaret, this time last year. Keep your head up, old boy, your mates won't forget you.

Going through the October edition in particular, I see old shipmates Rod Coupland, Mick Blair, Ron Baxter, Kevin Raddatz and not to forget old 'Paddy' Williamson. These, along with many others, were serving during my period of service from Oct. 1951 to Oct. 1957 - when the Fleet Air Arm was really roaring!

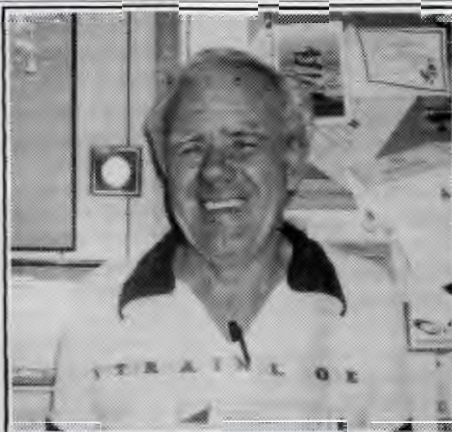
Where are some of the others? 'Rip' Lamont, Brian Thompson, Alan Ripps and Gordon 'Bluey' James from South Australia. The last two were on 724 Sqdn with me, they were riggers on Sea Furys and Gannets while I looked after the engines.

Lou Luther, now gone, Ted Heaven (Line Chief on 724), 'Buzz' Warfield, Arthur Sara (AEO 724) [Arthur deceased, but Mrs. Sara still a staunch member of the Association. Ed.], not to forget the one and only Les 'Zube' Childs from Queensland. I could go on and on.

We must not lose sight of the fact that we are unique in this country. It does seem that we will never be replaced, certainly not to the strength we were in bygone days. Two carriers, two depots, three airfields and a Marine Section at Jervis Bay. Politicians - they say they know. What do we say?

I have not been able to attend any of the reunions at *Albatross*, mainly because of work commitments and finances, but who knows, I may make it one day. I surely haven't forgotten how to find the place! I never failed, even under extreme conditions of weather and sobriety. It's a lonely walk in the early hours.

I have also read with great interest the reports on the restoration of aircraft for the Museum. I must take my hat off to the dedicated people who are performing this task, surely no mean



Tasmanian Division President, Barry Simpson, during a recent visit to the Slipstream Office. Photo: Peregrine Pub'g

feat considering their age and condition. [Don't get excited you restorers, I'm sure he means the aircraft!! Ed.]

I have enclosed a newspaper cutting relating to the Pylon Race being held here shortly, I hope members and friends might be able to see their way clear to have a look.

Incidentally, the mention of the 'airline operated by the CIA' in the cutting, there is a book in circulation called 'The Invisible Airline', when you read it makes you wonder what really goes on and by whom.

That ought to be enough now for this old Birdie, should any one care to contact me after all these years, my address is : 120 Blackwall Road, Blackwall, Tasmania 7275 - Telephone (003) 944398 But remember - I sling my hammock around 2100.

Take care friends,
* Matt. Jacobs (Jake)

'As mentioned previously, 'SkyRace Tasmania' is on from 28 February to 6 March, at Valleyfield. The SkyRace event is based on pylon-racing in the classic North American tradition, including two heats in four categories and two days of finals.

Feature events are expected to see a head-to-head contest between Queensland's Guido Zuccoli and New Zealand's Qwilton Biel in their Sea Furys; and competition between former combat aircraft from a squadron formerly operated by the US CIA, abandoned and then recovered from a Laotian airfield in 1988. A final of 40 entrants is expected.

Valleyfield is located 7km from Epping in the Northern Midlands. In May 1942, the War Cabinet agreed to construct a fully operational airfield as a long range bomber squadron base. The bitumen airstrips, one 1180m, the other 1480m, are now grown over but are still stable enough for landings.'

NEW SOUTH WALES**1993 - The year in review**

The year was a 'steady as she goes' year. Our AGM in March saw a basic recycling/reshuffling of Committee members with three new faces joining at non-executive level.

To my mind, a severe handicap to growth was our inability to appoint a Social Secretary, not even in a non-elected, part time, or even 'specific event' capacity.

A major source of fund rising is an attractive, comprehensive social programme managed by an energetic Social Secretary, with participation of all members possible.

Our trip to the Power House Museum early in the year although poorly attended was very enjoyable, and due to the efforts of the Secretary, Terry Hetherington, a social success. However, due to the poor response from members, when all the bills were paid we were \$100 short which the Division had to meet.

The FAA 45th Anniversary Dinner, again a social success, may yet break even if all costs are eventually recovered.

The Naval Aviation Museum Fly-In Days have been a feature of our social scene throughout the year. Some members assist with displays and exhibits, others cater to the public appetite by operating the Hot-Dog and Roast Beef Sandwich outlets. The majority just keep turning up with family and friends to support these days of wonderful family entertainment. This participation assists in the viability of the Museum and ultimately helps preserve our heritage. After all, that's what it's all about!

I should point out that the interaction between the FAA and the Museum is a two-way street. Director, Mike Lehan, and his staff frequently host no-cost barbecues and luncheons as a way of saying 'thank-you' to the Museum volunteer workers.

Through the Museum's high standing within the community, and their ever increasing circle of contacts, they are sometimes able to arrange subsidised functions for the volunteers. The first, which I thoroughly enjoyed, was a presentation by Mr Colin White, a curator of the Royal Naval Museum, Portsmouth, entitled 'Jolly Jack Tar'. A title that belied the entertainment value. The second was a Dinner Show at the Riverhaven Motel 'Hey Amigo Restaurant', which starred Bunny Gibson and Paul Maybury. Each function as different as chalk and

cheese, but each event outstanding in its own way and exceptional value for money.

So you can see, there is truth in the old adage that 'It pays to belong' - 8,9,10 Museum volunteer support squadron is no exception.

Membership of the Division continues to increase at a steady rate. At the time of writing we have 351 members on the register, unfortunately 15 are still unfinancial for 1993. Because of financial considerations, if those members have not paid their arrears and the 1994 subscription by the time of the AGM, this will be their last *Slipstream* and they will be removed from the register of members.

Six members were removed from the register in 1993 because of long term arrears.

The year ahead

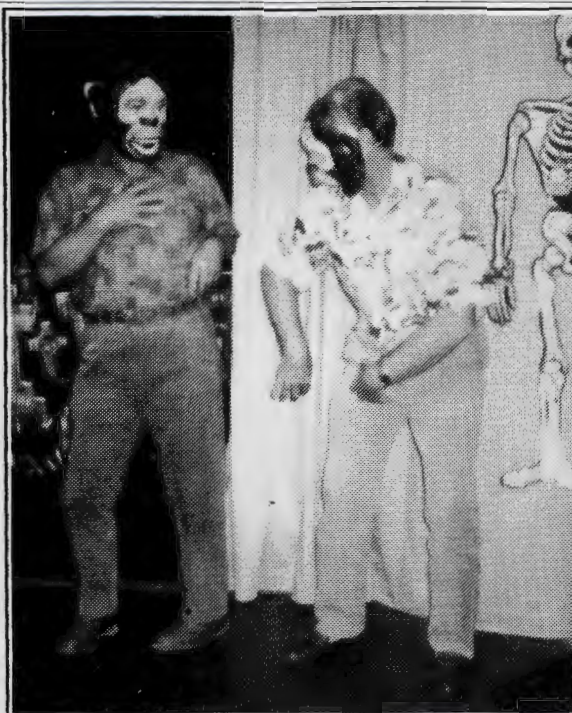
1994 shows signs of being a difficult year in some respects. NSW members will find with this copy of *Slipstream*, a form for the return of Annual Subscriptions. This remains at \$15 despite pressure on the Committee to raise funds to meet on-going commitments.

For example, this edition of *Slipstream* will be the last provided under the terms of our Australia Post Registered Publications 'cheap postage' contract. When the contract is renewed in 1994, we are compelled to change over to the Print Post Service for delivery of periodical publications. This will entail an increase in postal fees. AustPost states that it will be 'a general 30% increase, but substantially cheaper than Standard Rates'. My initial feeling from a cursory look at the Print Post Rates and the National Pre-sort Post Code Plan, the figure is more likely to be 50% for national distribution.

The need for funds to produce and distribute the Journal was addressed at the last Federal Council meeting when all the delegates agreed to the imposition of a \$2 per member per issue levy specifically for four 1994 editions. In round figures this amounts to a \$2,700 up-front liability for the NSW Division.

Times certainly have changed since our first PRO produced a newsletter on his dinky little photocopier, which we then letter dropped around the Nowra area.

Slipstream, as we know it today [not the original], was the brain-child of Tony Penno. It first appeared as the 'Fleet Air Arm Association of Australia NSW Squadron Newsletter' in January 1990. As interest in, and demand for



NSW Members Ray Larder and Derek Whyte, 'monkeying' around at the Museum Volunteers Christmas Party held at the 'Hey Amigo'. Photo:PP

the publication increased, it was obvious that we would have to register it with the PMG and obtain cheaper Postal Rates.

Tony laid the groundwork and the newsletter was granted Category 'A' Registered Publication status. He ensured that we were legally able to adopt the title, 'Slipstream', which appeared in January 1991 as Vol.2 No.1 of the expanding Division Newsletter.

As Tony became more involved with Sea Venom restoration, he eventually passed all responsibility for *Slipstream* to our current editor, whose particular skills, dedication and hard slog have made it what it is today. It is to his credit, that when the National Executive proposed that an existing Division newsletter become the Journal to convey FAAA news and information nationally, the Federal Council chose *Slipstream* to perform that role.

It is not generally known that our editor is very involved with a number of organisations, not least as Executive Officer of the local branch of the Regular Defence Force Welfare Association (RDFWA), the 'volunteer' Public Relations Officer for the FAAA Nationally, and the volunteer 'link-man' between the Naval Aviation Museum Director and the 8.9,10 Squadron volunteer coordinators - the list goes on!

Recently, I appreciated the invitation to attend a meeting of the

Museum Board as an observer. I learnt first hand about some of the many problems faced by the Board, and particularly by the Director and over-stretched staff. Invited to comment prior to the meeting's conclusion, I 'volunteered' the editor's skills and the Division's photocopier to produce some 'special purpose' brochures for the Museum. Talk about flogging a dead horse!

One unfortunate aspect of the above to the NSW Division, is that for the greater good of the Association nationally, we have been without the services of a 'dedicated' PRO for the greater part of the year. The Shoalhaven members miss 'Peregrine's' FAAA column in the local press, but there are just so many hours in the day for one man stretched to the limits to complete priority tasks.

This brings me to the AGM and Election of Committee for 1994-95. Your present Committee accepts that members may be reluctant to nominate for certain positions because of the uncertainty of the requirements for that position. To resolve this problem, we have developed a set of By-Laws to complement the basic guidelines set down in our Constitution. Job Statements for all the Management Committee positions are included in the by-laws. If you are considering nominating for a particular Office and wish to know what tasks and responsibilities are involved, please write to the Secretary and ask him for a copy.

On the same enclosure containing your sub's return form, is a 'Nomination for Committee' form. Remember, ALL positions become vacant at the AGM.

Our Social Programme for 1994 commences with a Family Picnic Race Day on Monday 21 February - the only day available to us. Our venerable Vice President, Bob Cronin, will do his utmost to ensure the success of this first event on the calendar. He would very much like the assistance of prospective 1994 Social Secretary nominees (or anyone else). The experience could prove to be very satisfying.

As mentioned previously, our financial outgoings this year are quite extensive. Apart from the funding required for *Slipstream*, we have to pay

a \$5 capitation to the National Association for every member on the books. This is quite a large sum, and your assistance is requested in ensuring that your sub's are paid BY THE DUE DATE!

In conclusion, on behalf of the Committee, we hope you enjoyed a pleasant Festive Season, and wish you all that you would wish for yourselves for the year ahead. We look forward to the increasing presence of local members at our Open Forum Meetings, your support for our social functions, and your attendance at the AGM - BBQ in particular. [All dates can be found on your NSW Division pocket calendar]

Jim Lee - President

The Naval Aviation Museum



Museum walls under construction - January 1994

It's hard to believe that under this huge complex, there still resides the dummy deck which was cursed by the Handlers, damned by the practising Station Guards and now traversed by 'civvies' who pay for the privilege. Photo: Peregrine Publishing

~ A summary of 1993 and a glimpse into 1994 ~

Introduction

Stage 2 major construction works, which included the Function Centre, Galley, Shop, internal toilets and the IMB Display Hall, was completed on time in November '92, and on budget. The completion of this facility provided the essential elements with which to develop the business aspect of the Museum, 1993 has been dedicated to that objective. 1993 has also been a period of administrative consolidation and much progress has been made in this regard

Business Development

The Function Centre. The Function Centre was opened for normal full time business in January to take advantage of the School Holidays. An earlier experiment of 'contracting out' to a local company did not work. The local ex-WRNS Association took on the task of volunteer caterers and performed an outstanding service to the Museum. The volunteer catering force for the facility expanded rapidly and at one time, there were over forty people on the books.

It was obvious from the onset, that the facility should be limited to Snack Bar operations in the early stages of its development, at least during 1993, and this has been the case with reasonable success.

P and O, who sponsored the Galley with a donation of \$125,000, were advised of our intention and they were

most happy with the arrangement.

The business has developed progressively on a solid basis and should prove to be our major source of revenue in the future. In recognising this factor, a full time qualified Catering Manager was appointed last month to take the Museum to the next step - that of developing the Restaurant and Function Centre as a total package. The demand for functions to be held in the Museum during the lead-up to Christmas was great, but an exhausting period for the staff.

Fly-In / Family Days. These events have been held approximately every two months, and have been so named to ensure that bad publicity is avoided when aircraft participation is reduced. A great deal of organisational effort has been expended on each occasion attempting to get a variety of aircraft involved. The RAAF Museum has been particularly supportive in this regard. However, we will not get the 'Warbirds' to participate until we can sponsor them with fuel, in much the same way as the Air Force support their Museum. It is a reality that aircraft owners are also feeling the pinch financially. Our own Historic Flight continues to be extremely supportive, without them our Sunday programmes would not occur.

Fly-In / Family Days have progressively improved throughout the year as we have gained experience, and the cash intake has gradually increased as a consequence. We have

much to thank our strong band of dedicated volunteers for - this includes our Museum Staff who also work voluntarily on these occasions. We would also be lost without the loyal support of the Nowra Air Division RANR.

The Fleet Air Arm Association have been very strong supporters throughout the year in a wide variety of ways, ranging from cleaning hangar and aircraft prior to an event, operating the Hot Dog stand, serving out the Butt of Beef, helping out in the galley and acting as guides - to name but a few tasks.

The Shop. Shop development has been limited due to the size and capacity of the current facility. With the completion of Stage 3, the shop will move into the foyer with an additional three times the floor area. New shop items are constantly being investigated. St. George, for example, are sponsoring a promotional video for sale (with our own copyright) - which we hope will be the first of many.

Unfortunately, shop volunteers have decreased for a variety of reasons (it is a very demanding environment). Therefore, as we strive to become more professional during our development phase, there will be a need for a qualified shop assistant on staff with a marketing flair. We cannot rely on volunteers alone if we are to carry out the necessary expansion to this cash flow avenue.

Nowra TAFE (Technical and Further Education). We have

developed a partnership with the Nowra TAFE Hospitality Faculty, where they utilise our Function Centre facility to teach Chefs and Stewards. We charge a basic rent for this privilege and we also have the support of the TAFE Staff in support of selected functions that the Museum may wish to host. Food cooked in the galley, in certain circumstances, can be sold through the Snack Bar. This arrangement is in place initially for three years, and is working exceptionally well. The involvement with TAFE is well worth the slight inconvenience to normal trading.

Promotional lunches. We have commenced a series of promotional visits to the Museum by groups associated with the tourist industry. The first, involving Caravan, Hotel / Motel owners and managers in the Illawarra region was great success. Over eighty representatives attended for a presentation, tour and small fork lunch. The next promotion day on the agenda is aimed at Coach Tour operators.

The Museum Display Van. A fantastic PR vehicle, the van was used extensively in the earlier part of the year, and again at the Neptune Festival at Batemans Bay in November. However, it is extremely manpower intensive and badly in need of an update and repairs.

Displays. Much has been accomplished during the year in 'tidying-up' the Museum. Our 'backyard' is looking shipshape as a result, and we no longer resemble an aircraft graveyard.

Working Bees have been busy polishing aircraft at weekends and our local resident team of loyal engineers have continued the essential aircraft restoration programme. The Sea Venom was completed in May and 'formally' commissioned into Museum service. The Dakota was completed in early November. The Dakota will be stowed in the northern corner of the hangar with the tail raised, it will be commissioned as a cabin cinema facility to screen videos.

The Sea Fury and Firefly are progressing slowly. The Sea Fury team will eventually move up to the Museum (hopefully mid-year) when the hangar walls are in place, and to a caged / secure area. We will then have a Sea Fury restoration theme on public display. It is hoped that this aircraft will eventually fly!

The Australian War Memorial collected the two Sea Fury's that were stowed at *HMAS Albatross*. They are

rebuilding one aircraft for their Korean Display and efforts are being made to ensure that the other airframe is eventually returned to our Museum.

The Scout and other Sea Venom restoration is slowly progressing in 'D' Hangar.

Our Tracker has been with the Training Flight for most of the year, getting a face lift and being prepared as the stand-by 'flyer'. Early 1994 will see it on display in the Museum.

Memorabilia Displays. The old museum has been maintained to display a photographic history of Naval Aviation. All other memorabilia has been moved to new display cases in the Function Centre. Most of these displays will be moved into the hangar area when the walls have been erected and, as the restaurant business expands.



DIRECTOR'S DREAMTIME

'..Sixty-four...volunteers, sixty-five... volunteers, sixty-six...volunteers.....'

Photo: Peregrine Publishing

Curator. Our part-time Curator, 'Windy' Geale, continues to give sterling service. He and his band of volunteers have been busy cataloguing our assets, a task that will take volunteers at least five years to complete. The office is inundated with enquiries and requests for information and a system of cash recovery has been introduced to help offset the costs.

Ship's Cutter. Work has commenced on the restoration of the *Melbourne's* Ships Safety Boat by the local branch of the Naval Association.

Ikara and Taurana. An Ikara and Taurana display system have been loaned from The Victoria Museum. (Eventually to be called the National Aviation and Space Museum).

Torpedo. Cradles are currently under construction for 'the torpedo', which will then be relocated in the Museum display hangar.

Administration. A great deal of progress has been made in catching up with the administrative matters which had become outstanding due to the concentration of effort required to complete Stage 2. A major reorganisation of administrative support has also been conducted, mainly due to the transfer of Fund Raising responsibilities to the Museum, and the winding down of the Capital Campaign Fund in Sydney at the end of 1993.

The duties of 'Administrator' have been transferred to a new employee - an Administration Secretary. The previous Administrator, Derek Whyte, has taken on the duties of Manager, looking after the day to day management of the Museum. This has enabled the Director to concentrate on policy, future development, Public Relations (talks and tours), fundraising and any other entrepreneurial activity.

Capital Campaign. The fund raising activities of the National Capital Campaign Committee have continued unabated throughout the year with considerable success.

The committee have now been fundraising for the past six years and are in need of a well earned break. What started as an objective to raise A\$1m over a six month period, has turned into a never ending task which has so far realised cash and in kind support of approximately A\$5m - despite the recession. However, fundraising has recently become more difficult and the Board of Directors decided that the Capital Campaign Committee should be disbanded the end of '93, and all fundraising responsibility transferred to the Museum.

The necessary framework to accept this transfer has been put in place at the Museum with the introduction of the Fundraising Office.

Facilities. Building 32 which was previously used as a store, has now been demolished and the site cleared in preparation for landscaping of the Museum grounds. The building was condemned and unsafe. The stores are now located in Building 30 and inside the hangar.

The Gliding hangar has now been emptied in preparation for dismantling and removal. The timbers will be used in the erection of an 'operational' hangar on the northern Museum boundary, adjacent to the airfield. Removal work will commence early 1994. Once removed the view from the Function Centre will include the operational hard standing of the Air Station and do much to improve our visitor interest.

With the 'commissioning' of the new Fleet Air Arm Chapel on the Base, the old C of E facility was donated to the Museum and is currently being fitted out as a store. This building, situated at the northern end of the hangar, will be required until a new 'purpose designed' store has been built. The 'church' will then be utilised as a crewroom for the aircraft restoration teams.

Major works. The year has been devoted to settling all the accounts for Stage 2 (achieved September '93), ensuring that all defects and warranty work has been attended to and preparing for Part 1 of Stage 3 - cladding the hangar.

Cladding of the hangar. This is seen as a critical step in the development of the Museum business and is due for completion before mid-1994. A small ceremony to mark the

event will be held on the Fly-In / Family Day on 10 July, when the foyer will be officially named 'The Ray Williams Foyer', after our most significant sponsor (C.E.Heath).

Workshop. The MTU Workshop was commissioned in early June '93, after some hard work by a local 'chippy' contractor and our band of volunteers. John Holmes once again came to the rescue by getting Pirelli Cables to supply all our wiring requirements.

Steel shelving was erected in half the workshop as a ready use storage, this is being utilised by our volunteer storemen from the FAA Association.

The workshop is now fully operational and well equipped with mostly donated tools, some of which would be extremely expensive to supply. Our part time 'chippy' was kept busy manufacturing nine additional display cabinets. Aircraft restorers will be pleased to note that this task is almost complete and the workshop used for 'real' work.

Aircraft Stores. Our volunteer stores team, led by Les Matterson, are cataloguing all our aircraft spare parts on computer, and setting up a comprehensive stores accounting system. With millions of spare parts held at the Museum, this task will no doubt take years to accomplish. However, a solid start has been made.

A successful bid was made for Wessex spares from Zetland (DoD) and five truck loads arrived mid November. They are to be used to restore our Wessex helicopters which will be loaned to other Museums as appropriate - in the spirit of the Defence Museum policy.

Staff. The need to operate more independently and the consequent increase in responsibilities (in addition to the transfer of the Capital Campaign and the development of Museum 'business') , has necessitated an increase in staff. Since January '93, staff at the Museum have increased from one full time Administrator, to five full time personnel, namely, Director, Manager, Promotions Manager, Administration Secretary and Caterer). There are also four part-time employees, Curator, Fundraising Secretary, Accountant and Cleaner. As mentioned previously, there will be a requirement to employ a professional Shop Keeper in mid '94 to maximise the shop's cash flow potential.

Summary. 1993 has been a busy year and the Museum business is expanding rapidly. Great emphasis is being placed on the need to be entrepreneurial during our development, and in the shorter term the Museum will be utilised and involved in a wide variety of activities designed to promote ourselves as a major tourist attraction and, to make money.

Cdr Mike Lehan RAN (Rtd) - Director

'Jacks' on the Fax

The following is one of the more unusual printouts to appear on the Museum facsimile machine over the Christmas period. It was addressed to, 'The Birds', (and the 'Boys') from 'The Bard'.

It refers to the bird population in the open hangar of the Museum who, like very wealthy people, make many deposits and no withdrawals.

AN ODE TO THE ANCIENT AVIATOR by The Bard

The Birdies Museum is a sight to be seen, with the ends and the side to the winds open wide, and birds that are feathered bombing 'birds' that are tethered.

But we'll all soon be glad when the openings are clad, and the sweeping and cleaning will bring permanent gleaming.

So pause and rejoice as the builder of choice, brings the effort thus rendered to our vision most splendid....

THEN... the Ancient Aviator can crap on the birds!

God Bless the faithful....

And now a response on behalf of the overwhelmed staff.

WE NEVER 'NEW 'E 'AD IT IN 'IM! by Peregrine

Who could have guessed That from one so ascetic There dwell'd in his breast The words so poetic.

But we're not so dopey It stands out like neon That the author is 'Soapy' - That's as in McKeon.

His pseudonym's a hit And carries lots of clout But - when he signed it He left OLD and A-S-T out!

THE RAM-JET SONG

by JC and BC

To the station down at Nowra
To the place where Venom's dwell
To that dear Espresso Bar we love so well
Sing the Venom crews assembled
With our glasses raised on high
And the magic of our singing casts a spell

Yes, the magic of our singing
And the flying done so well
As old VAT was always saying
'We're the best !'
We will hold the Collins Trophy
While the Fleet Air Arm shall last
Then we'll pass, but not forgotten, with the rest.

We're poor little rams who fly all day
Baa, Baa, Baa.
We're little gold fleeces who are here to stay
Baa, Baa, Baa.
Ground crew off to night flying tea
Wishing us all to eternity
Lord have mercy on such as we
Baa, Baa, Baa.

* With thanks to Roley Waddell-Wood, 'Sheepman from Alcatraz'.

SPOTTED around the traps!



Max Walker - Bert Webster - Max Gant at the Senior Sailor's Reunion.
Photo: Peregrine Publishing



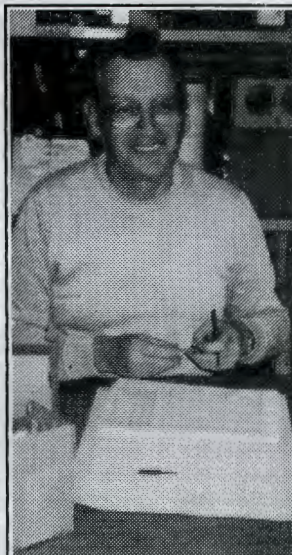
Ian Laidler, of South Australia, catches up with NSW members, Les Matterson and Jim Lee in the Slipstream office.
Photo: Peregrine Publishing



Bill Julius at the Senior Sailor's Reunion at RANAS Nowra. It wasn't just the fact that he was still mobile after 1900 that surprised him, he'd just been bailed up to join the Association.



Briarr Smith chats to Les Matterson at the Plaque Laying Ceremony held at HMAS Cerberus.
Photo: L. Matterson



L: Dave Mowatt, NSW Member, cataloguing stores at the Naval Aviation Museum.



R: From this photograph, it's easy to assume that they will 'flog' anything at the Museum to raise funds.
Photo: Peregrine Publishing



Old friends, John Selby and Greg Kelson, meet up again at the Naval Aviation Museum.
Photo: Peregrine Publishing



John DaCosta removing guano with a grin as he participates in one of the Museum working-bees.
Photo: Peregrine Publishing



Guests at the Victorian Division FAA Dinner included, from L-R: Val Henshaw - Bryan Roberts - Jenny Roberts - Gloria and Dennis Fleming.
Photo: Les Jordan