



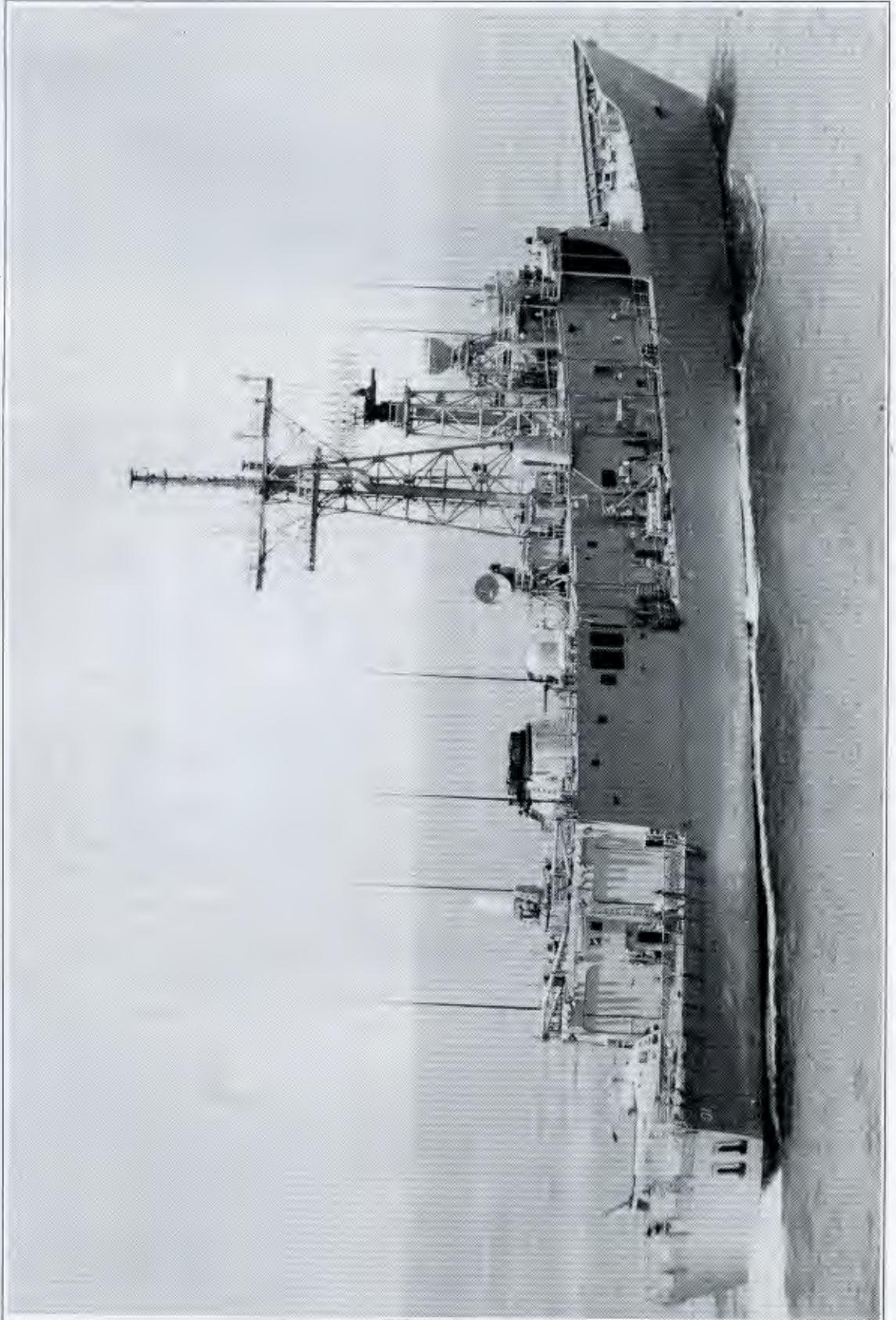
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Slipstream

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CAPTAIN GEOFFREY R COLE, AM, RAN

Geoff Cole was born in Adelaide, South Australia on 23 May 1945. He was educated in Warwick, Queensland.

He entered the RAN College in 1961 graduating in 1964.

As a Midshipman he served in HMAS VENDETTA, HMAS SYDNEY and HMAS ANZAC before promotion to Acting Sub-lieutenant in September 1965. He studied at the Royal Naval College, Dartmouth UK in 1965-66 and then completed Sub-lieutenant courses in Portsmouth before returning to Australia in February 1967. He undertook the Basic Supply Course in 1967 and then joined the Fleet Staff. He was serving in the Flagship HMAS MELBOURNE at the time of the collision with USS FRANK E. EVANS in June 1969.

He served in the destroyer HMAS BRISBANE as Deputy Supply Officer from 1970 to 1972, including service with the US 7th Fleet during the Vietnam War before being posted as the Supply Officer of HMAS PARRAMATTA. He was subsequently posted as an instructor at the Supply School thence to HMAS TORRENS as Supply Officer.

From 1976 to early 1980 he served on exchange with the US Navy at the Ships Parts Control Centre, Mechanicsburg, PA. He was promoted to Commander in 1980 and served as Secretary to the Naval Support Commander until 1982 when he was posted as Supply Officer of the NAS NOWRA. He studied at the Joint Services Staff College in 1985. He was employed in Navy Office in Supply Policy and Supply Support areas and was promoted Captain in 1987. Captain Cole was Chief Staff Officer (Support) and Fleet Supply Officer in Maritime Headquarters from July 1989 to December 1990.

Captain Cole took command of the RAN's Technical Training establishment, HMAS NIRIMBA, in December 1990 and remained there until the cessation of apprentice training in December of 1993. He then took up his posting as Superintendent Ship Logistics Office within Naval Support Command, where he remained until December 1996. He is posted as Commanding Officer HMAS ALBATROSS from 20 January, 1997.

Captain Cole was appointed a Member of the Military Division of the Order of Australia (AM) in the Australia Day Honours List 1995, in recognition of his service especially as Commanding Officer HMAS NIRIMBA.

Captain Cole is married to Lynette and they moved to Nowra in February 1997.

He is a dedicated downhill skier, plays golf less frequently than he would wish and jogs regularly to keep fit for his other sporting activities. He amuses himself by sketching and listening to a broad range of music.



**COMMANDING OFFICER HS 816 SQUADRON—
CMDR M.P. (Paul) FOLKES RAN**

Commander Folkes was born, raised and educated in the northern suburbs of Sydney and joined the Royal Australian Navy in 1975 as specialist aircrew. He underwent Observer training on No 4 RAN Observer Course, at RAAF East Sale, where he was awarded the prizes for Dux of Course, Best Practical Observer and Highest Academics. After undertaking operational flying training on Seaking helicopters, a number of flying postings with HS 817 Squadron followed, including deployments in the carrier, HMAS MELBOURNE, and as a Seaking simulator instructor.

In 1981, then Lieutenant Folkes, undertook watchkeeping training in the first two of the RAN's *Perry Class* FFGs, HMA Ships ADELAIDE and CANNBERRA, based in Longbeach, California, and gained his bridge watchkeeping certificate on CANNBERRA's delivery voyage to Australia. Following short postings to HC 723 Squadron flying Wessex helicopters in support of the army, and as Flight Commander of HMAS STALWART, Lieutenant Folkes trained as a Helicopter Warfare Instructor (HWI) in the United Kingdom. He subsequently undertook a two year exchange with the Royal Navy where he served as the HWI of 814 Naval Air Squadron, flying Seaking Mk 5 helicopters based at RN Air Station CULDROSE, in Cornwall, but primarily embarked in the carriers HM Ships ILLUSTRIOUS and INVINCIBLE.

Following return to Australia and promotion, Lieutenant Commander Folkes served as the helicopter tactical development officer at the RAN Tactical School and subsequently formed the RAN Tactical Development Cell at the RAN Surface Warfare School. Lieutenant Commander Folkes returned to the aviation arena with a posting as the Air Operations Officer of the Naval Air Station, Nowra, and finally returned to flying when he joined the Seahawk Introduction and Transition Unit in 1989, as Senior Observer, to transition the S-70B-2 Seahawk helicopter into operational service. This process was unexpectedly accelerated when, following the invasion of Kuwait by Iraq in 1990, as Flight Commander, he embarked a Flight in the FFG HMAS DARWIN with only four days notice in support of UN sanctions against Iraq and subsequently undertook the first operational deployment of the Seahawk.

After a period as Executive Officer of the shore establishment HMAS CAIRNS, promotion in 1993 saw Commander Folkes assume the position of Fleet Aviation Officer, in Maritime Headquarters, as the Maritime Commander's senior aviation adviser. Subsequently, Commander Folkes again returned to flying the Seahawk, when he was posted in command of HS 816 Squadron, based at NAS Nowra, in December 1996.

Commander Folkes is married to Fae, with two sons, and lives in the village of Callala Bay, on the shores of the beautiful Jervis Bay, where he indulges his keen interest in vintage motorbikes.

A WORD FROM THE PRESIDENT



Members may be interested to know more about the issues which the team at our National Headquarters are endeavouring to sort out.

Firstly I should report progress on the two priority tasks assigned to the National Executive by the November Federal Council meeting at Tweed Heads, namely:

- resolution of the Association's constitution, and
- placing Slipstream on a sound footing.

The draft Constitution has been examined by the Divisions and comments are back at the HQ for action. I am sure we will be able to reconcile most of the issues raised and establish a sound, effective document which will meet our needs. For my part I am looking for something simple and unambiguous.

Slipstream is our means of communication and I think we should acknowledge firstly the very good work done by those who have produced it to date. I am sure each of us has enjoyed the contents each issue.

We have a new Editor in Bob Perkins and one can only be impressed by his keenness and his work on this issue. There are two matters in particular which we have addressed:

- the content of Slipstream, and
- its future viability.

We think that each issue of Slipstream should contain standard core sections, which are fairly obviously:

- current issues in the Association (contributed by the National Executive)
- State Division contributions
- open forum (comment on any relevant matter by members)
- events of interest in the FAA today (from current air squadrons, ships flight)
- Museum news
- FAA History segment ("I was there when . . .")

At the end of the day the quality and readability of Slipstream will be brought about largely by members contributions so we are hopeful that you will share with your ex FAA colleagues some of your thoughts or experiences.

As you may know, the Museum publishes a paper called 'Fly Navy'. This is aimed at those who have financially contributed to the Museum's establishment and its purpose is to keep them updated on Museum developments and developments in naval aviation generally. You can see that its contents are very relevant to Slipstream too.

We are discussing the possibility of merging Fly Navy with Slipstream and our intention is to seek the concurrence of the Museum's Board of Directors to this idea. We will propose that the character of Slipstream be fully retained. In this way we hope that the future of Slipstream will be better secured financially and its production more easily managed.

You may recall that there was general agreement to establish the Association's National Headquarters in Nowra but as yet there is no facility for a National HQ. Should funding become available a purpose built suite will be part of the Museum's administrative centre but this is a mere possibility. In the interim we are planning on resurrecting the old chapel as a small office complex, to be located in the Museum grounds.

There has been considerable discussion on how best to deal with the current stock of FAAA clothing and ties. There has not been any form of easy access to it by members. The Executive proposes that the Museum markets this stock on an equally shared profit basis through its shop facility. This will simplify access and hopefully will move the stock. FAAA ties will be sold only to members.

Recently I received a letter from the Chairman of the Museum Foundation in which he sought Association assistance in fund raising to meet the deficit in Museum operating costs. The Museum is running at a loss in spite of many cost saving initiatives and help is needed for it to survive. I think its continued existence would be seen as very important by all our members because of our former very close association with most of the relics displayed in it and I am sure we all want our unique history to be on display. The Executive believes that fund raising projects might be best left to the Divisions, and we hope your Division will give it some serious thought. Museum support is an important Association objective.

Finally a word on the 50th Anniversary Reunion planned for October-November 1998. We will shortly be sending out brochures and invitations to register. This reunion will eclipse all former occasions and you cannot miss it. Please make plans to come to Nowra and join with your old colleagues to remember the best times of your life. Tell others about it. More in the next (mid year) issue of Slipstream.

I hope you enjoy this edition of Slipstream and on your behalf, I congratulate Bob Perkins for a great first effort.

Very best wishes,

Neil Ralph, President

NATIONAL SECRETARY'S REPORT

It has been a fairly hectic period since the FLY NAVY-SLIPSTREAM Christmas newsletter went out to members, and others, from our National Membership (Past and Present) Data Base.

With the cooperation of (nearly) all Division Secretaries, to the time of writing, I am confident that we will get it right this time. If you are financial for 1997 and do not receive your April 1997 edition of Slipstream you can blame either me, or Australia Post.

The Interim National Executive has met twice since the 1996 Federal Council meeting and our discussions have covered a considerable number of items and range of Association business. The matters of most importance to the Association, and to you the membership, have been communicated to your Division Committee via the minutes of those meetings.

Certain specific matters have been addressed by way of correspondence from either National President Neil Ralph or myself. Those of you who attend Division meetings will have been made aware of recent events, others will have learnt through the medium of their Divisional newsletter. A summary of the more important policy issues appears elsewhere in this newsletter (see A Word from the National President).

Members are reminded that Association items such as monogrammed shirts, sloppy joes and pullovers are retailed through the Australian Naval Aviation Museum (ANAM) gift shop. Contact the ANAM for a complete catalogue/pricelist.

The only items the National Executive now handle are Association ties \$18.00 (for Members only), name badges at \$6.50 if you collect from me (or \$7.50 if you want me to wrap, pack and post), and probably in the future blazer pocket badges. For the latter you will have to contact your Division Secretary. Since taking up the position of Interim National Secretary I have been pleasantly surprised at the amount of helpful information passed on to organisations such as ours from the Department of Veterans Affairs.

This makes me appreciate the value of the Welfare Officer's Reports which have appeared in this journal over the years.

We are deeply indebted to Ivan "Chips" Gray for his dedication

in disseminating such information to members via his column. Unfortunately "Chips" has indicated he is experiencing increasing difficulty continuing in the role of Welfare Officer and reporter. We are actively seeking a replacement so that "Chips" can devote more time to family and other interests.

The opening paragraph of the Welfare Officer's Report on page four of the July 1996 issue of "Slipstream", particularly the bit in brackets, ("...Those not considered to be Veterans"), caused me to seek out the definition of "Veteran".

The Veterans' Entitlement Act, section 5c(1) defines an Australian Veteran as a person who, because of section 7, is taken to have rendered eligible war service .

Section 7 states that a person who has served during World War II or who has rendered operational service outside Australia during a period or hostilities in which the person was so allotted for duty as a Member of the Defence Force of Australia, shall be taken to have rendered eligible War Service.

The period of hostilities for service in Warlike operations in:

1. The Korean conflict is from 27 June 1950 to and including 19 April 1956.
2. Parts of Malaya is from 28 May 1963 to and including 19 April 1967.
3. Sabah, Sarawak and Brunei from 8 December 1962 to and including 30 September 1967 and
4. Coastal waters within 80.5 kms of the Malayan Coast from 17 August 1964 to and including 30 September 1967.
5. The Vietnam conflict is from 31 July 1962 to and including 11 January 1973.

But what about honourable overseas "Active Service" during the Malayan Emergency from 1 July 1955 to 31 July 1960 I hear you ask? Well, that's another story and veteran campaigners like our own Barry Roberts and Bob Gibbs are giving that saga their undivided attention. We will keep you informed.

Jim Lee.

EDITORIAL

I am pleased to report that this, my first edition of Slipstream as Editor, has been well supported by the membership. It is clear to me from the reports I have been receiving that members place considerable importance on the magazine as a means of keeping in contact with old friends and shipmates. If the magazine then, is to continue being useful as a means of communication between members, and if the high standards set by my predecessor, John Arnold, are to be maintained it is important you continue to send in your contributions. Letters, articles, extracts, photographs, jokes, ditties and the like. Every little bit helps.

Dinsley Cooper (South Australia) tells me there are a number of members in his Division who he never sees but who look forward to the arrival of Slipstream. Also John Arnold tells the story about receiving a call from a West Australian member who rang to ask when the next edition of Slipstream was due as he wanted to be at the mail box before his wife, otherwise he had to wait his turn to read it.

My wife is always interested to read Slipstream and still maintains an interest in things Naval. Our wives played an important part in the Naval careers of many of us and their stories too are interesting and worth recording. Marg Marquis' tales of her arrival in Australia as a young bride straight from Scotland, is a classic, and even more colourful and humorous when related in her broad and pithy accent. So, ladies, let's hear from you as well.

Much has been written and spoken about events of the recent past. There is nothing I want to add except to draw your attention to the article "Reunions" later in this magazine.

Several members have spoken to me about resurrecting the annual anniversary dinner. Expressions of interest in its revival would be helpful.

It is time to put this magazine to bed (do they really say that?). Look forward to hearing from you.

Bob Perkins.

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FLEET AIR ARM HISTORY— 'THE BOOK'

WE NEED YOUR HELP!

Time is rapidly running out for YOUR input to the HISTORY OF THE FAA.

Submissions do not have to be in book form, short articles and anecdotes are most welcome. The author needs to know about your day to day tasks in whatever branch or position you held. If you have supporting photographs—all the better.

If your literary endeavours do not appear in print this time around, they could possibly be used at a later date in other books under consideration.

Whatever the outcome—your efforts will be kept on file at the ANAM archives for posterity.

The FAA HISTORY is a jig-saw that desperately needs as many pieces as possible to complete the picture.

YOUR piece is required NOW!

John Arnold—Book Committee member.

REUNIONS

Eric Manuel recently sent me a copy of the Benbow Air Apprentices Association newsletter (of which he is a member). It includes an item about reunions extracted from a book "Victorious - The World Over" by Ray Barker which vividly describes, in my view at least, the essence of why we hold and attend reunions. It goes as follows:

"Seeing these men, together again after so many years, is to witness the manifestation of the profound comradeship which bound them during the war. The unashamed joy of now old men, the buzz of animation, the relief to find 'old so and so' ostensibly unchanged, still sparkling with earthy wit and cynicism, or happily grumbling unrelentingly as of old. These men have lived another complete life since 1945. Some have prospered, others have not, they have grown up children, grand and great-grandchildren, some are widowers, others infirm. There have been prominent businessmen, also the failures. There are the practical, the artistic, the creative and misnamed 'ordinary men'. None of these men is ordinary. When they are together there is a brio, a zest for life in their behaviour; even those by nature reserved, shed their defensive demeanour when confronted by a recognised ship-mate and old friend. There exists in these meetings the warmth of flames fanned from embers by the sheer force of joyous reunion. They can be found organising mini-reunions to savour again, quickly, the precious nostalgia of unforgettable days".



Marj. Marquis and Jill Davies, F.A.A.A. Reunion 1996

Ex-Naval Mens Association— Social Weekend

A social weekend in Nowra is planned for the weekend commencing Saturday 19th July, 1997. Details are as follows:

Sat. 19th July:

Inspection and lunch at the Australian Naval Aviation Museum.

Dinner at Club 83 Shoalhaven Ex-Servicemen's Club.

Sun. 20th July:

Barbecue Lunch HMAS ALBATROSS Senior Sailors Mess commencing at 1100 hours. \$7.00 a head.

Enquiries:

Bill Kerr, Tel: (044) 21 0530. All welcome (including members of F.A.A.A.)

The venue was Garden Island, Sydney in wartime. Three of the four destroyers in the flotilla had already left their berths and were standing off impatiently awaiting the fourth to cast off and join them, but her green crew seemed to be making a hopeless mess of it.

Captain 'D' signalled a demanding "How long will you be leaving harbour?"

Quick as a flash came the insubordinate and understandably frustrated reply.

"Three hundred and sixty-two feet, same as alongside!"



NEWS FROM THE DIVISIONS

Tasmania

As winter is now over, the Editors comments (July Issue) have really shaken us out of hibernation, and with the ink thawed out here's a signal to bring the "North Island" up to date.

Anzac Day we marched at Ulverstone, with a good roll up of members. The RSL catered for the lunch and a great day was had by all.

For the benefit of other branches, we meet at three-monthly intervals at a different location. Over the last few years we have met at Exeter, Launceston, Oatlands, Orford, Ulverstone, Somerset, Ravenswood and for the last meeting, at Elizabeth Town Hotel. We were superbly catered for by 'mine hosts' Grant and Cathy Lee. Two log fires warmed the area and both the food and camaraderie were great.

Elizabeth Town is on the Bass Highway about 55 km from Launceston, 45km from Devonport and 90km from Cradle Mountain. The snow-capped peaks of the Western Tiers are visible from the this area, hence the wood fires at the pub.

Our long standing President and hard-working Barry Simpson has stood down after five years in the job. Barry has been President since this Branch's inauguration in August 1991. Thanks to his dedication we now have a great organisation which runs very smoothly. Barry continues in the frontline as Secretary. Sadly we are losing our previous Secretary Peter Barnes and his good wife Millie who was our Treasurer. Family commitments are taking them to Melbourne (Victorian Division, grab them for your outfit as our loss could be your gain). Peter and Millie thanks for your great work for the Tasmanian Division; it has been great having you as shipmates and we hope all goes well in the future.

The newly elected officers are:

President:	Roger Itchin
Vice-President:	Les Kube
Treasurer:	John Nobes
Secretary:	Barry Simpson

The following members attended the AGM held 1 September 1996:

A.C.T.

The ACT Division held its Annual General Meeting on 18 February 1997. The newly elected Executive consists of:

President:	Mike Astbury
Vice President:	Brian Treloar
Secretary:	Peter Schilling
Treasurer:	Tim O'Halloran

The Committee members nominated and elected were Richard Scott, Phil Landon, Peter McNay and Vince Daly.

The Division would like to express its gratitude to Geoff Ledger for his three years at the helm. Geoff did an excellent job and the members appreciated having a serving officer as President. We wish him well in his new posting as Deputy Commandant at the Australian Defence Force Academy.

We would like to welcome Bill Barlow as our newest member. Membership now stands at 89 (82 full members and 7 associates).

The first meeting of the new committee will take place on 12 March 1997. The dates of our social functions will be advised in the next edition of Slipstream for any interstate members who may be visiting Canberra. *Peter Schilling, Secretary, (062) 91 4681*

SLIPSTREAM - APRIL, 1997

Barry & Roma Simpson, Henry ('Matt', 'Jake') Jacobs, Alan & Bev Andrews, Geoff & Chris. Larcombe, Peter & Millie Barnes, John & Miriam Nobes, Bob & Bev Jones, Les & Fiona Kube, Ken & Rayleen Allen, Gus & Joan Tuck and Bill Lowe. Apologies were received from a few absent members.

A small contingent will be attending the Gold Coast Reunion later this year. Others are planning for the big "five 0" at Nowra in 1998.

We welcome aboard three new members: "Tas" Browning, Alan Leslie and Max Ackerly.

Our next meeting will be at Ravenswood Fifty & Over Club. Details to each member later. This will be close to Christmas (Hell another year gone), probably early December.

Jake got the job of scribe again, sorry I missed the July edition. Kept saying to myself "Must write to Slipstream, must write to Slipstream", next thing I know my copy is in the mail box. Actually I'm surprised it even got here, the Tassie winter this year has been the wettest for nearly 40 years. Even the seagulls are flying I.F.R. Alan Andrews gave me a photocopy of the story of the two 805 Squadron Furies shooting down the runaway Auster off Sydney in 1955. You may want to print it in Slipstream, pass it on for the F.A.A history or whatever. It may be of interest to some of the younger generation of F.A.A. members. I was on 724 Squadron when it all took place. Beating the R.A.A.F. to the job certainly created a feeling of pride among the men of the F.A.A.

Rummaging through my old sea bag (yes I still have it) I found an early issue of Slipstream. Issue No:2, May 1957, price sixpence. Sir Victor Smith, then Captain, on the front cover. Unfortunately the inside page (1) is missing. You can have it for your archives. Reading through the pages about ALBATROSS people and activities of 40 years ago certainly jolts the memories.

Geoff Larcombe helped in writing this report. Geoff was an armourer who went to live in Brisbane after paying off. Now, 43 years later, he has returned to Tassie. Good to have him back! Better get this finished and posted or I'll miss this next issue (made the one after. Ed.).

'Jake' (Jacobs)

Secretary: Barry Simpson (036) 425 5580

South Australia

"Once more onto the beach, dear friends" as Shakespeare was once reported as saying. He should have had our weather, as we break records on the current heat-wave as the mercury steadies on 40 degrees. Anyone with a grain of sense would join Shakespeare on the beach.

This being the very first 'SLIPSTREAM' for the new year, I will take this opportunity on behalf of this Division, to wish all of you the very best throughout 1997.

For this Division, 1996 didn't do a real lot to cement that special bond that we all have strived toward. I'm talking about the Federal Conference held at Tweed Heads on the 8th November. Without any doubt, the SA delegates were treated shamefully and with a collective hostility from most of the Executive, delegates and their cohorts standing at the back of the hall. Our delegates witnessed a mass resignation of the former National Executive and the election of an interim Council headed up by Neil Ralph. Mary Rayner and John Saywell, the two delegates mentioned, will have more to say on what transpired at that meeting in the very near future. Enough to say that we all go on and not look back. Leg's get this Association on the move

New South Wales

I have the pleasure of reporting the activities of the NSW Division for the year ending March 1997.

The Management Committee met regularly on the 3rd Monday of each month and all meetings were very well attended. On a number of occasions the Committee was able to welcome visitors who came to see what was going on.

The past year will not be recorded as one of our better years in the Association, what with the National Executive submitting their resignations at the Tweed Heads conference and also the resignation of the Slipstream Editor. Fortunately, State Delegates were able to appoint a new National Executive with four very competent members who were prepared to act in a caretaker roll for the remainder of the term ending November 1998. On behalf of the NSW Division, I thank each of them for having accepted their appointments under very difficult circumstances and I'm quite sure our Division will get behind them with support.

The sudden departure of our Slipstream Editor was most unfortunate, the importance of this journal to the membership, to my mind, is paramount. The new National Executive has been able to find and appoint a new Editor. Bob Perkins is well known to many I'm sure and his contact details are listed in the last copy of Slipstream/Fly Navy, sent out just before Xmas. It is hoped that all members will remember to pass on any material they think might be of interest for the Editor to include in the journal. Producing Slipstream is a very demanding exercise and a lot of help is required.

I believe all correspondence tabled at our meetings was satisfactorily dealt with.

Family Air Days throughout the year continued to prove popular, our share of profits from the sale of food has been most welcome and I thank those dedicated members and friends who work so hard all day for our benefit. The money we get from these Air Days has enabled us (in the past), amongst other things, to subsidise increased running costs.

Operating costs in all areas have jumped and the Management Committee has had to address this problem. Following the Tweed Heads conference, the situation was that each Division was responsible to National for \$5 per head capitation fee annually and \$3 Slipstream levy per copy so with four copies of the journal per year, our \$15 annual fee was well and truly used up. At our January meeting the committee, after much deliberation, reluctantly agreed

The SA Division has just had their AGM and typically, there were no surprises in the election of officers to the State executive. Another sweltering summer evening kept the members at home with the exception of a few dedicated fools who were duly elected unopposed to those vacated positions. Mary Rayner has retained the Presidents job, Roger Harrison is Vice President (on \$56,000 a year I believe), Dinsley Cooper has kept the Secretaries position along with Social Secretary, John Saywell has insisted on keeping his grip on the Treasurers job as he is still experiencing problems with his electronic transfer of funds to the Banke de Brazil. Roger Harrison has won the local 'Fly Navy' editors position and automatically the SLIPSTREAM correspondence as you are witnessing at present. Committee members are Des Reardon, Richard Widger and Ian Laidler who was elected in absence and therefore has no recourse to withdraw. With a new National Executive at the helm, this year should be a busy one for us all. But not that busy where we can't have a day or evening out together such as a tour of the Adelaide Oval complex, Anzac Day March followed by lunch at the popular Adelaide Hotel, a tour of the Adelaide International Airport and a bus tour down south to visit the wineries and sights. This has been planned out by your/our

that annual dues would have to be increased. As a result, as from January 1st, 1998, dues will be \$20.00 per member per year. The joining fee for new members will remain at \$15.00 so that first year contributions from applicants for membership will be \$35.00.

The writing of the 'History of the RAN Fleet Air Arm' by author Bob Nicholls is progressing to schedule. The ANAM History Committee still wants input from serving and ex-serving members, the author can get facts and figures from official archives and those sorts of things are part of the history, but the book has to have personal input, experiences and recollections of members and their families. The author was not in the FAA so that style of information has to come from us. Please do what you can to make this a good record of life in the FAA. Anything you write which you consider might be of interest for inclusion can be sent or given to the Museum Curator, or contact the author direct. His Phone/Fax is (02) 9810 7417.

Our annual July Yulefest Dinner at the Bomaderry Bowling Club was well attended and I think a good time was had by all.

Our NSW Division membership to the end of this year stands at 463. During the year we had the pleasure of welcoming 48 new members and while this is a pretty healthy number, there are still plenty who have not joined so keep eyes and ears open. We have plenty of membership forms in stock.

I express my sincere thanks to the Management Committee for their support not only to me, but to the NSW Division. Many hours were spent attending meetings and our Secretary and Treasurer occupied a lot of their home time carrying out their respective offices. To our committee-men not seeking re-election, your involvement in running our affairs has been greatly appreciated and because two of you have accepted positions on the National Executive something has to go, and I know you are only a phone call away when your advice is needed.

Thank you also to the President and Management of the Bomaderry RSL for having allowed us the use of their facilities to hold our meetings and to the Board of Directors of the ANAM, the Museum Director and his Staff for their support during the year.

In closing members, thank you for having allowed me the opportunity of being President for the past term and I wish the incoming Management Team success for the coming year.

*Yours aye. Max Altham, 16th March 1997.
Secretary: Mike Heneghan (044) 41 2901*

Social Secretary who will require you to return those responses located on the back page of last months Fly Navy. Dinsley Cooper is in the process of gathering prizes for another major raffle to be held later this year. I've heard something about a flight in an old Tiger Moth as being a special prize to be won by someone with nerves of steel and a well tried parachute. More on these items as they unfold.

I will leave this report to SLIPSTREAM somewhat shorter than usual, just have to do a little more thought gathering toward the FAAA's direction at present. I look forward to receiving reports and clippings sent to me direct and these will be included in the March edition of our Fly Navy newsletter.

Once again I stress that the SA Division not be vilified for all this major reconstruction in our National Executive. Believe it or not, we wish to see the Association getting bigger and better and will move heaven and earth to ensure that it does.

*Roger Harrison—Hon. Whipping Boy
Secretary: Dinsley Cooper (088) 344 8812*



NEWS FROM THE DIVISIONS *(cont'd)*

Queensland

We were delighted to have the Deputy CNS Rear Admiral Chris Barry and his charming wife, Maxine, attending. I'm sure they enjoyed the event as we did - apart from a small stuff-up in names in the Christmas Slipstream - gave us all a laugh (Sorry Ed.). Those of us who played golf and bowls enjoyed the day. I got lucky and won a couple of balls. Jenny Doyle won a parcel of them as well. The March was fun. Toz and I were laughing and commenting on the pace set by the Cadet's Band and almost missed the 'eyes right' at the Saluting Base. Toz managed to give the order in the nick of time. 'Chuck' Churcher said that John McAllister was there - I didn't see him and am sorry to have missed him if that was the case. It was great to have the Historic Flight up as well. The Tracker taxying in folding the wings was good to see. The Airport security were a bit tense initially, but gradually relaxed, thanks to Max Altham & Co. The thought of a number of us wandering around and with bottles of champers, glasses etc. was a bit rough on them!

Commander Malcolm Wright, CO of HS 816 Squadron did a marvellous job of getting the aircraft overhead during the march. Mobile phones come into their own! There was some doubt as to the programme of events outlined for the Caloundra City - Freedom of the City Ceremony - for 816 Sqn, but a bit of persuasion and Esprit-de-corps during the weekend fixed that.

We were all sad to see the National Executive Committee resign and we congratulate all of them for the hard work and dedication given to strengthen the Association. Our congratulations to the newly elected Committee, headed up by Neil Ralph. We assure them of our full support and co-operation. We were delighted to present both Bob Bryce and D'arcy Doyle with plaques expressing our appreciation for (a) Bob's excellent effort and (b) D'arcy's generosity in donating the Artists Proof of 'HMS Endeavour'. A girl from Strathpine won the proof - I know I'd love to have had it hanging in my lounge room. Against that temptation, it was stored in the ANZ Bank Vault, next to my office. The Manager and Loans Manager forced me to let them win at golf before they'd release it to me!

We all thoroughly enjoyed the Reunion and I'm sure everyone else did. The Twin Towns management reckoned that we set a record for the bar in the Anzac Room on the Thursday - booking in day. We're all looking forward to the '98 Reunion.

We had a very successful and enjoyable weekend at Caloundra on the 6th, 7th and 8th December. One Sea Hawk came up to the aerodrome and about 50 816 Squadron personnel arrived, with Cdr. Malcolm Wright and Lt. Cdr. Adrian Lister. We think we must be related, though I reckon he has a few more drinks than I do! On the Friday night, we had a Cocktail Party at the Power Boat Club. About 170 or so there - a good evening. Federal MP, Peter Slipper attended and gave a good speech to welcome the Squadron.

It was my 60th birthday and I was presented with and had to put on a 'Biggles' cap and goggles and Mick Blair found a copy of the book 'Biggles Does It Again'. Somehow, I don't think I'll wear it next time I fly the Tiger! We had a fun evening.

On Saturday morning, we had the Naval Reserve Band, Naval Cadets, the Squadron, our gang and Naval Association members in the main street of Caloundra and the Freedom of the City ceremony was very impressive, followed by a march and being challenged by the Senior Police Inspector. The Ceremony dates back to the 12th/13th century from Londonium. We then marched to the Council Building where refreshments were laid on - coffee,

tea, sandwiches, cakes, etc. It was pretty hot and threatening to rain and quite a few of our people headed off to the RSL for a jar or 2. Shortly after, a trolley was wheeled up in the gardens, loaded with tubs of ice and beer etc. on the house, which was highly appreciated by all. Someone suggested a phone call to the RSL but that fell on sonic deafness ears! Both the RSL and Power Boat Club had good attendances that day and night. On Sunday, the Sea Hawk was 'open for inspection' and the Qld. Air Museum had a sausage sizzle running and a reasonable crowd came along. The Council Publicity section could have performed a bit better. Later, the races were on at Corbould Park with HS816 Sqn. as guests for lunch and Race 5 was to be the HS816 Sqn. Handicap. However, just before Race 4 a tremendous storm hit - everyone got wet - the wind and heavy rain (horizontal) went thru 360° very quickly and got all, including the bookies. The track became water logged, so all further races had to be scrubbed, which gave everyone the opportunity of using the bar facilities and improving public relations. I believe the guys were treated with great hospitality and plenty of parties were on the go! We all enjoyed the weekend and look forward to further events in the future.

Recently, our Treasurer, Ian Henderson, celebrated his 60. Mick Blair and I got together and I got a temperature gauge from Nev Hall (aviation instruments) at Redcliffe Aerodrome. Nev jammed the needle on max. temp. The glass was cracked so Nev put a sticker on with a picture of a hammer and the words 'gentle tapping is permitted'. Mick got a toy plastic boat and put on Navy Transfers and Rego. 02B60 plus an admirals cap. All of this relates to Ian selling his bay cruiser a while back when, on the 1st demo. run, in 35 kts, heavy seas, the engine overheated and a rescue by Water Police was effected.

After the engine was fixed, on the 2nd demo. run, the temperature went off the clock again. Eventually, after much ado, muttering, etc. Ian found the gauge was U/S. The good ending was that the buyer did buy and sailed merrily off in the distance. At Ian's party, we told the story and presented him with the bits and pieces. Good fun.

Sadly, Shorty Nielsen, our Treasurer, who was at the party, suffered a stroke and has spent sometime in Greenslopes Hospital. He lost his speech - can say 'yes', 'no' and 'that's right' and temporarily the use of his right arm. However, that seems to be coming right. Whilst in hospital, he had a minor op. on his waterworks - rough times. He's home now and having speech therapy 3 days a week. We all hope he recovers and can come to our AGM at the Gold Coast on 16th March. Both he and Shirley appreciated the visitors to see him. Also Flossie Nugent was in Greenslopes having various tests - went home and is back in again now for more tests. We hope she'll be OK. George Sawyer was in for a quadruple bypass - Mick called to see him and we hope he has a full and quick recovery. Ron Baxter is also in hospital now with a lung infection. Get well quick, Ron.

We're holding our AGM at the Currumbin RSL on Sunday March 16, from 10-12 noon and then we'll carry on with a BBQ for the afternoon, which should be well attended and enjoyable as usual. We're looking for a new Secretary, to give Shorty a break and will advise all State Secretaries after the AGM. Mick and Ian are doing the job for the moment. We haven't arranged much for this year so far, apart from our normal Anzac Day March in Brisbane. We will do something in the 2nd half of the year. We reckon that with the Reunion, 816Sqn do and the big fella in '98 we'd better go a bit easy. Our membership is steadily increasing which is pleasing to

see. We've had to introduce a \$5 levy to assist in financing Slipstream production and the response has been/is terrific. Thanks, guys.

The Art Union produced about \$1,600 for Slipstream, which is less than we'd hoped for, but certainly appreciated and we're grateful for everyone supporting the venture - which reminds me to remove same from my insurance policy. Who am I writing this story to?? (just joking)

Attached are some Anecdotal quickies from 'Anon' who requested that I include in this epistle.

Editor, if you can't fit them in with this, can you include elsewhere in Slipstream.

Well, I'm off to see 'Phantom of the Opera' and a free overnight in the Mercure Hotel in Brisbane - Marian's birthday - so have to put the glad rags on (and in this heat!) Wonderful.

Best regards to all

Barry Lister, President.

Secretary: Ian Henderson (073) 90 8199

Victoria

Best wishes to all, wherever you may be and a special thank you to Bob Perkins for volunteering to become Editor of Slipstream, not a very envious position, so good luck Bob, I am sure you will receive 100% co-operation from all.

The Victorian Division held its Annual General Meeting on the 8th February 1997, on a very hot and sunny day, none the less, we had forty six members in attendance, including two Queensland Division members, namely Lois and Ron Forbes, who were of course ex Melbournites down for some good weather!

The duly elected Committee for 1997 are as follows:

President: Les Jordan
Vice President: Ralph Mayer
Secretary: Ron Christie
Treasurer: John Ikin

Committeemen: John Champion, Alan Clark, Frank Crowe, Jim Kalmund, Bill Martin.

Social Co-Ordinator: Val Christie.

We are all confident for a successful and happy year ahead.

The AGM was convened at the Melbourne Naval Centre, which is located at the premises of the English speaking Union, at 146 Toorak Road (West) South Yarra. It is a lovely old mansion, complete with all the necessaries, cosy lounge, ballroom, bar and excellent covered and mobile bar-b-qs in the large garden area outside, a very good venue to conduct our meetings and social activities.

Whilst on the subject of meetings, all the Victorian Division meetings are open for all members, starting at 1200. On completion of meeting a general get together is the order of the day.

With the exception of the AGM, annual FAA Memorial Service at HMAS Cerberus and Christmas breakup, all other events are BYO food.

The following are the dates of meetings for 1997:

4th May - 6th July - 5th October

and combined meeting/Xmas breakup 7th December

so mark these dates on your calendar now as we would like to see more of you at these functions.

It was pleasing to see Anne Taylor at the AGM after such a long period, on the road to recovery, after such a long illness.

Another member in attendance at the AGM, a blast from the past, of one of the original old and bold Sea Fury Pilot's Noel Knapstein.

It was great to see Noel after so many years, also in attendance was Geoff Strickland, who just happened to be Noel's Pilots Mate!

For those of you who may not know, I think the date was the 25th October 1951, the then S/Lt N.W. Knapstein whose aircraft was hit by flak and was forced to crash land his Sea Fury on the south bank of the Han River, Korea. If my memory serves me correctly, Noel was picked up safe and sound by a sea boat from HMS Amethyst.

Don't leave it so long between visits next time Noel!

On completion of the meeting everyone was treated to an excellent Bar-B-Q lunch, thank you to the Ladies who prepared the victuals on the day, very much appreciated by all, once again, "Thank You".

ANZAC DAY - this is the next major event on the calendar.

Firstly the march - this year the Navy is back to its place of honour, leading the parade, which is scheduled to move off at 0850, it is suggested the FAA contingent muster no later than 0830 at the south east corner of Flinders and Swanston Streets, same mustering point as last year.

The after march Reunion will be convened at the Melbourne Naval Centre (146 Toorak Road (West) South Yarra) once again a Spit Roast lunch will be arranged, same caterer as previous years, so we know it will be good.

IMPORTANT, if you require lunch at the reunion, it will cost \$10.00 per person, BOOKINGS ARE ESSENTIAL, and must be booked and paid for by the 10th April 1997, all cheques made payable to FAAA of A (Vic) and forwarded to the Social Co-Ordinator, 15 Bianca Court, Rowville, Vic.3178. So please remember, No Booking No Lunch!

This year we will be sharing the facility with the following Associations: Submarine, HMAS Bataan, Warramunga, Shropshire, Australia, Canberra. A large marquee will be erected in the garden area courtesy Melbourne Naval Centre in case of inclement weather or overflow from main ballroom area. In case you may be thinking why must bookings be made so early, we are operating on a directive from the Melbourne Naval Centre as they wish to hire more appropriate tables and chairs for the occasion adding to our comfort, so please abide by this request, thank you.

I recently received in the mail an interesting magazine named Classic Wings Downunder, a New Zealand publication, appearing on the back page is a section titled Classic Market Place, in this section there is an advert which reads as follows:

"Warbird Projects: If anyone is looking for Spitfire, Kittyhawk or (wait for it) Sea Fury projects we can assist in the location of same with the view to bringing them into our region.

Can also secure an airworthy SEA FURY.

Serious enquiries only please.

Call Graham, NZ (03) 578 9609, Fax NZ (03) 577 6451."

So in closing, on behalf of the Victorian Division, may I wish good health and good fortune to all members and better late than never, many thanks to the Queensland Division for Reunion 96, "Well Done".

Till we meet again,

Ron Christie, Hon. Secretary, (039) 764 5542

CRASH ON DECK!

Your erstwhile editor remembers this very well. The year is 1960 and my first sea-going posting. R.P. Bolton and yours truly were the firesuitmen on watch that day - our first responsibility the rescue of aircrew in the event of a crash on deck and here was the real thing!

With the thought of the aircraft catching fire uppermost in our minds a certain unmentionable orifice began twitching as we dashed to the crash scene. We arrived to discover that the two rear seat aircrew had already escaped (probably to the Wardroom and a few stiff scotches to settle the nerves and celebrate having survived another carrier landing). The pilot was not so lucky, he remained trapped in his cockpit unable to escape because the aircraft as it skidded up the flight deck on its side had picked up an arrestor wire which had wrapped itself around the fuselage and over the pilots cockpit canopy preventing the canopy from being opened (the extended wire can be seen in the photograph). One speculates how easily this crash, in which no one was hurt, might easily have turned into tragedy but for the fortunate circumstance of the aircraft becoming tangled in the arrestor wire. *(photo courtesy Richard Holmes)*



IN DEFENCE OF THE REALM

As many know John Fry has had another stroke resulting in loss of vision. This happened in early June last year. John relates to me a story when 'ALBATROSS' had to defend itself against the 'enemy' (I think the might of the Army Reserve).

On a calm moonless night John was sent to reconnoitre a certain part of the camp (I think Nowra Hill). Cattle were quietly chewing their cud, unperturbed by these odd creatures dodging about the paddock. In the darkness a cow could easily seem like several of the enemy crouching, John did stealthily creep up on such a creature, and soon realised his mistake. Later he was alerted by the sound of someone dodging about in the darkness so John crept over to a shed which had a post and rail fence around it placed his lighted torch on the post and slunk off into the shadow of the shed to wait in ambush. He watched as the 'enemy' crept up on 'him' and was about to claim John's life when John quietly tapped him on the shoulder and said "You're dead mate". It was probably fortunate that the enemy was young and healthy as he told John in no uncertain (colourful!) terms that he'd had the fright of his life.



*Pat Perkins, Jill Davies, Norma Lee, Connie Connellan.
Distaff Representatives—F.A.A.A. Reunion 1996*

WHOOPS !



The very raw and unsophisticated country recruit was attending his first party in the big smoke, on his very first shore leave. He'd been putting in a lot of work on an attractive young woman but to no avail. Trying to let him down gently, she told him "Look, you're a lovely chap, but I'm just not interested!" Unaccustomed to such a polite knockback, he ventured a naive, "Why? Have you already got a bloke?"

"No," she said bluntly, "I haven't got a bloke! Look, if you must know, I'm a lesbian!"

"What's a lesbian?" he innocently enquired.

Boldly, she explained, "Look, do you see that gorgeous looking blonde girl over there? Well, I'd really love to get into her pants, and that's what makes me a lesbian!"

"Ah, right!" the bushie exclaimed with a sudden flash of insight, "Well, in that case, I s'pose I must be a lesbian too!"

Name Game:

Q: Who was the W.O.
Armourer that set fire to
his bunk on the
Melbourne?
Sorry about that Billy.

THE SOPWITH PUP

During the course of the Capital Campaign to raise funds for the construction of the Naval Aviation Museum, the author read of a project completed by the Toronto Science Centre, Canada, where a Sopwith Pup had been constructed for display.

The Pup had been flown by a number of Australians serving in the Royal Naval Air Service during WW 1, and the type had also carried out flying off trials from light cruisers (using a 15 foot platform for the take-off run). It was also the first aircraft to land on a ship underway.

As the museum has no aircraft dating from that early period of naval aviation, it seemed that if a set of plans could be first be obtained it would be possible to construct a replica for the Naval Aviation Museum. When asked, the Toronto Science Centre willingly sent out copies of the plans, and an approach to British Aerospace also resulted in a booklet of plans being provided.

There the matter rested until the museum hangar was completed and after calling for volunteers, via a short paragraph in "Slipstream" a small group held a first meeting in October 1994 to examine the plans and apportion work for construction. As work progressed the size of the group increased by the inclusion of further (recruited?) volunteers.

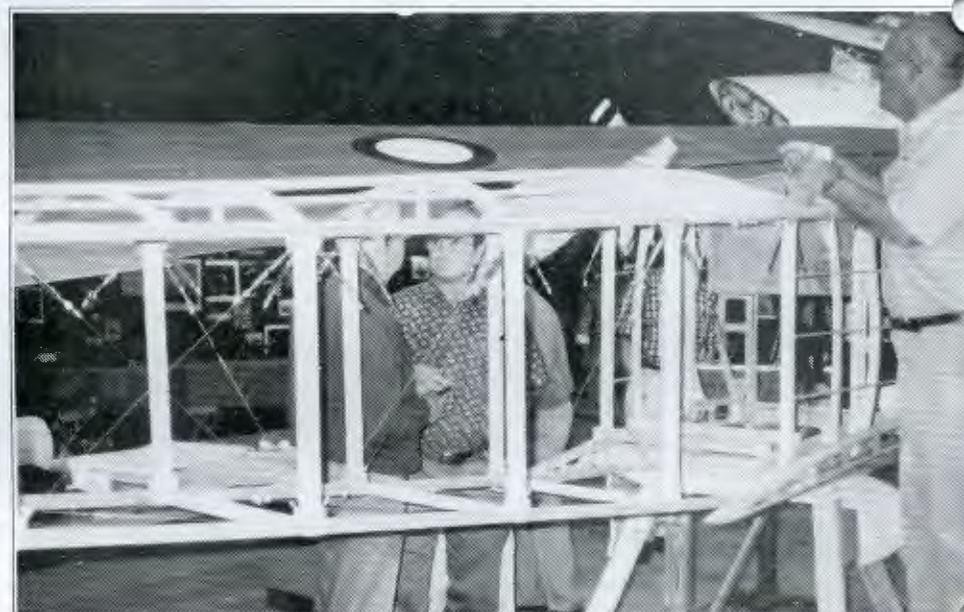
The construction is following the 1916 plans as closely as possible so that visitors can see how aircraft were built 80 years ago. In addition costs are being kept to a minimum and therefore it was not necessary to use the specified timber (mainly spruce) and certainly it will not be a flying replica. It is doubtful whether an aircraft built to the accepted standard of those days would receive a certificate to fly. Anyway, none of the construction team wanted their completed work reduced to a heap of sticks and wire - leaving aside the strong likelihood of litigation by the intrepid pilot who would no doubt seek damages for personal injury, claiming negligence on the part of the constructors. "It just came apart in me 'ands" - notwithstanding that the glues being used today are far superior than the rendered down horses hooves used in 1916.

When completed the aircraft will be suspended from the roof of the hangar, hopefully near where the public can see it from the function centre, see one side as it appeared in flight and the other side will be without much of its fabric so that the internal skeleton, wire bracing and so on is visible.

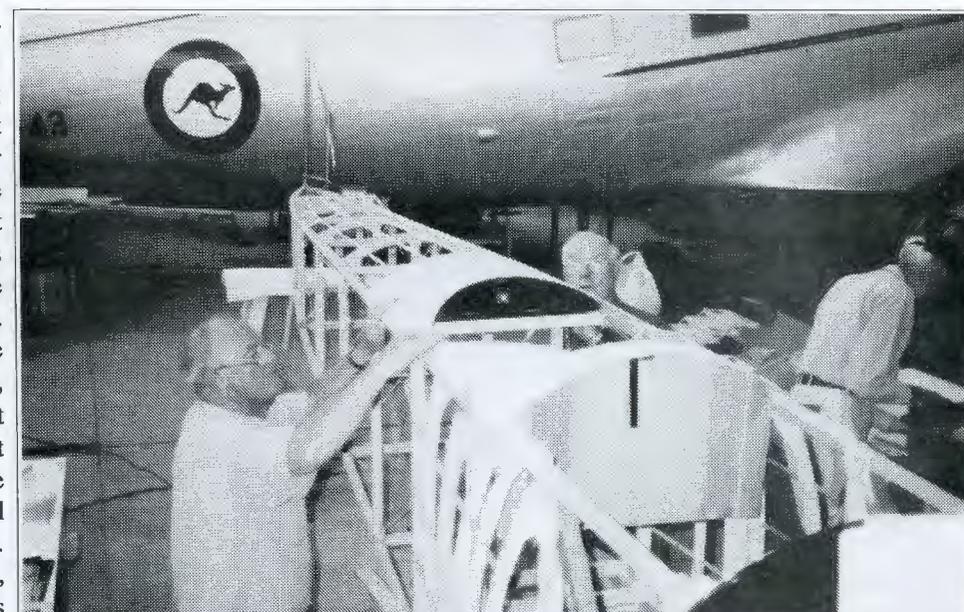
By the time readers receive this edition, the tail plane should be fitted, and work is progressing in various home workshops



Fitting streamline formers to upper fuselage



Fuselage and conference group



Fitting cockpit cowling

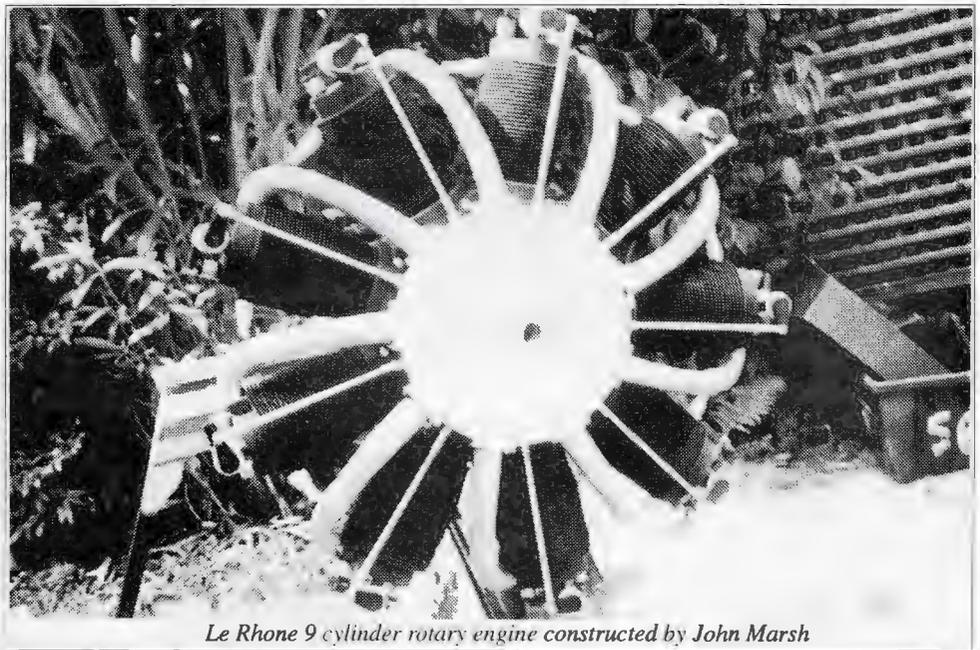
producing wing ribs for the mainplanes. The engine cowling has been formed, and the centre section is well advanced. A replica engine has been completed. About \$ 1400 has been outlaid in purchasing special material such as plywood, glue screws, bracing wire, and turnbuckles - the latter being stainless steel and by far the most expensive items. There are about 86 turnbuckles in the fuselage bracing.

Much of the metal work has been done by material donated by Mascot Steel and includes the pressing and forming of the undercarriage legs. Relec Pty Ltd donated all of the timber for the fuselage vertical and cross struts. Items which have to be bought in such as wheels are second hand, as are the tyres.

The question may be asked "When will it be finished?" The constructors do not have firm timetable, but it will be finished - if they all live long enough! Maybe the end of 1997 might see completion. The fuselage in the Museum represents 8 days assembly, but a closer look will clearly show that there is a lot of work in the production of the various parts.

The constructors are all directors and sweepers) of the Sopwith Aviation Company (NSW) - an organisation which is not listed on the stock exchange, and is neither incorporated or conducting business under a trade name. The directors are:

- George Beasley - Ex FM and Hawker de Havilland
- Terry Croft - Hawker de Havilland
- John Goble - Ex FAA
- Ken Greenaway Ex FAA
- Charles Grose - Ex FAA and Hawker de Havilland
- Bob Ladd - Ex Hawker de Havilland
- John Marsh - Hawker de Havilland
- George Parker - Ex FAA
- Bob Studdert - Ex Hawker de Havilland
- Bill van Gennip - Ex RAN "Chippie"

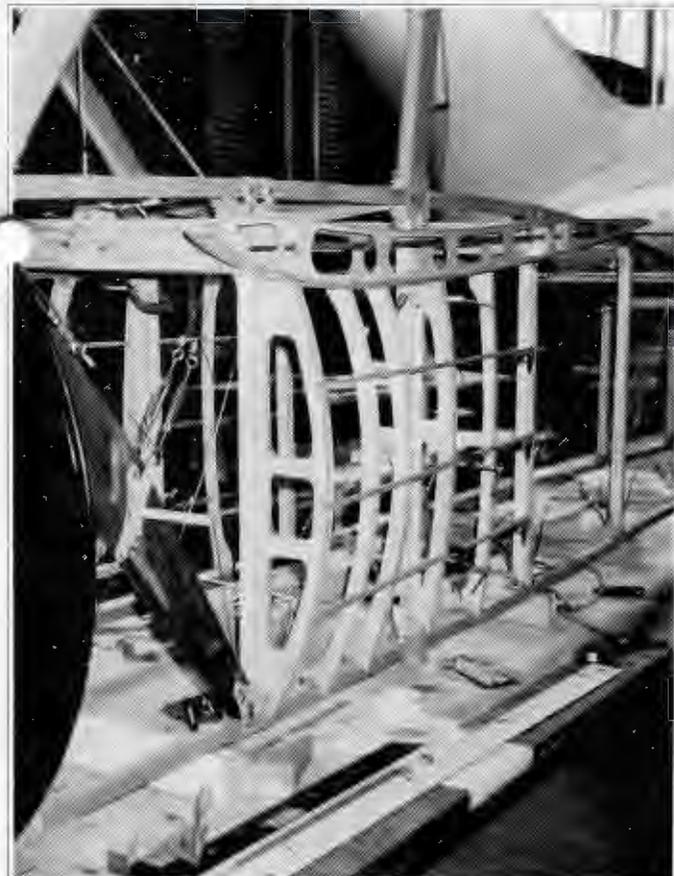


Le Rhone 9 cylinder rotary engine constructed by John Marsh

Because Charles Grose is always much more neatly dressed than the rest of the team -when assembly work is being done, the directors have appointed him publicity manager to greet members of the public who want to know what on earth the old grey headed gents are doing.



Barry Lister wearing his 'Biggles' outfit—presented to him on the occasion of his 60th birthday. HS 816 Squadron cocktail party, Caloundra, Qld.



Upside down on table jig showing starboard side formers and undercarriage legs

TO THE EDITOR



Dear Ed,

I am enclosing a cutting from one of our local free newspapers. I am sure it will bring back a few memories to those 'oldies' who were on the SYDNEY at that time. You may be able to use it in your Easter issue. Maybe the Museum could salvage the remains and find themselves an engine or perhaps a camshaft or two? Why are the Historical Flight sending the engine to the U.S.A? It beats me!

Eric Manuel

The following article is a reprint from the Bundaberg Guardian **Firefly ditched after take off from carrier**

Dogged determination has uncovered the mystery of the Fairey Firefly plane wreck which has been lying anonymously on the ocean floor off Burnett Heads for nearly 45 years.

A Bundaberg Volunteer Marine Rescue member has spent hours sifting through records and years of historical newspapers for clues.

But it was an article in the Australian Aviation magazine which yielded the vital clue - an actual eyewitness to the ditching in June, 1952.

It all happened when H.M.A.S. SYDNEY was stationed off Bundaberg at the this time.

A retired Royal Australian Navy Commodore Norman Lee explained that the Firefly was piloted by a British Sub-lieutenant Alan Hayward.

During a take-off from the ship's runway, the Firefly drifted off course and its right wing struck a mobile crane, slewing it sideways.

The pilot quickly lost control and was lucky to survive the plane's ditching in the sea nearby.

"Hayward managed to get clear of the aircraft, and having inflated his Mae West (vest), floated majestically down the port-side of the ship giving a royal wave as he went," wrote Commodore Lee.

"Hayward recovered none the worse for wear and went on to fly with the squadron until he returned to the U.K. in 1954."

In more than 38 metres of water, the wreck has remained undisturbed except by marine life, until July this year when a trawler's net became snagged on what was thought to be rocky outcrop.

To the surprise of divers called in by Marine Rescue, the snag turned out to be a Fairey Firefly which no one, not even Navy records, were aware of.

The records have since been located and updated and the items recovered from the plane are on display at the Bundaberg RSL.

The diving was carried out by experienced local divers, Julian Negri, Ian Arnott and Colin Forge.

Dear Ed,

My good friend of five and a half decades, Andrew Robertson, (1939 entry, RANC, Flinders, with me) showed me page 14 of the July issue of 'Slipstream' last Sunday as we quaffed a pre-lunch beer. It certainly stirred the digestive juices as well as the remaining brain cells. Can I add to Ian Ferguson's most interesting recollections? I was the pilot in Firefly 227 which Danny Buchanan chose as his touchdown spot.

The photographs show, correctly, that the horizon that day was



Recruit Class No.1 - August 1954

*Back row: Nev. Edgar; Sid Norris; Don Hanson; Bob Witt; Ian Henderson; J. Walsh; Noel Ford; Alec Stevens; John Cheal.
Front row: Harry Jenkins; S. Skuse; Les McCulloch; LCDR Brash; PO Merv Manuel; Mick Tattersal; A. Gordon; A. Jenkins.*

Photo courtesy Ian Henderson

misty - something unhelpful in getting the aircraft in the right 'attitude' for a deck landing. They also indicate that there was little wind so that relative landing speeds were high. But they don't show that (the aftermath of previous wind patterns) there was a big swell, which meant that the deck was moving up and down a lot. That was why Danny Buchanan bounced and came over the barrier.

I didn't hear Frank McCaffrey's shout in the cockpit of 227 of course but I did see the utter astonishment and apprehension in the eyes of the marshaller in front of me as he looked aft. He sprinted for the ship's side; I put my head between my knees and wrapped my arms over my neck and waited (it seemed a long time) for the end of the world. When the banging and walloping stopped and I looked around Danny was right up near the bows without, as I recall, wings or undercarriage, pointing neatly back down the deck, right side up. He climbed out of his aircraft unharmed.

On his way there he hit three more aircraft. So in one landing he wrote off five new aircraft. It must be a world record! Memory says that not long afterwards near Plymouth Danny landed on very smoothly - but about two feet below the round-down, leaving his undercarriage in the sea. For all these spectacular accomplishments he was almost immediately promoted to LTCDR.

By the way, my observer was CPO Jones. Very sensibly he very soon decided to quit flying. It was a miracle he wasn't killed. Danny's wing must have parted his hair.

My log book doesn't even mention that anything unusual happened!

*Sincerely,
John Gunn*

Dear Ed,

I recently learned from his wife Audrey of the passing of ex AA1 Ron (Winnie) Churchill at Bath, Somerset. He served for two years in the RAN on loan from the RN during 1950 to 52 on the 21st and Sydney CAG's.

During the Korean campaign he was well known on 805/808 Sqdn for his ability to repair the Sea Furies frequently damaged by Chinese ground fire, usually working willing and uncomplaining through the night and sometimes longer to have them ready for action over Korea next day. One of the many contributors to Sydneys record at that time of 89 sorties during one day of operations.

We first met as Naval Air Apprentices in February 1940 and became 'Halton Brats' (a name given to those fortunate enough to receive their training at No 1 Technical Training School RAF Halton). The next time I saw Winnie he was rebuilding a Tiger Moth at RNAS Trincomalee, Ceylon for the Captain of Theseus. Later we were to become shipmates beginning with the formation of the 21st CAG at RNAS St Merryn on ANZAC day 1950 followed by service aboard Sydney and Albatross.

After keeping in touch over the years we had our last reunion at RAF Halton in 1990 to celebrate the 50th anniversary of joining the FAA as 15 year olds. His ashes lie in Fareham Holy Trinity Church within easy marching distance of the main gate at the now closed HMS Daedalus, Lee-on-Solent where all RN FAA ratings joined, then at times waited in the pool for draft chits, and finally the discharge to civvy street.

Our deepest sympathy to wife Audrey, daughter and son Theresa and Robert.

Goodbye old mate, you leave happy memories.

Tom Allwood

Dear Ed,

Many thanks for returning my picture and for publishing my letter and article.

Having been editor for several publications, I am well aware of the pain and trauma in your job, particularly as you are doing it on a voluntary basis. Accordingly I hope you will take my small complaints in the manner they are intended.

Firstly, somehow or other Noel Knapstein's name managed to appear in the magazine with only one 'p'. I've checked my copy and it is correctly spelt. I guess we all know how cross we feel if people can't get our name right!

Secondly, the punch line was completely spoilt in my article by the word 'range' being left out of the last sentence. You always go on a range with some form of call sign, the point I was making it should be a 'range call sign'. Again it is correct in my copy.

You're doing a great job with the magazine and from comments I hear, everyone is finding it very readable and stirring the memory banks.

Norman Lee

THE 'OLD EDITOR' THANKS YOU FOR YOUR KIND REMARKS AND THE 'NEW EDITOR' IS KEEN TO ACHIEVE THE SAME HIGH STANDARD.

Dear Ed,

About a couple of years ago someone raised a query about Mosquitos being delivered to Australia in the escort carrier STRIKER.

For anyone still interested, there is a book "A Most Secret Squadron" 618 squadron by Des Curtis. It is all about using Barnes Wallis bouncing bombs, a smaller edition, to be used against ships. Chapter 8 gives details of part of the trials that were conducted in Australia.

The publisher is Skilton Books, Winbourne, Dorset, U.K., BH21 1HJ. Cost fifteen pounds 99p plus postage.

Basil Nash

Dear Ed.,

Those Were the Days.

Recently in the papers was the story of a Qantas Jumbo which was buzzed by F18s over Japan. I don't know what constitutes a collision today - 5 miles?

The above story and seeing the Constellation at Nowra earlier this year (a wonderful job by De la Hunty and his mates) reminded me of flying in South Wales in 1946/7.

We were flying with 790 Squadron at Dale in Pembrokeshire and working with Kete and HMS BOXER. We were on a direct line between London and Shannon and the Connies used to potter over about 10,000 feet. Not only did we beat them up quite frequently but, occasionally, we used to formate on them.

All of a sudden there would be a Mosquito tucked in tight each side. The passengers thought it hilarious. The drivers were not so amused and used to shake their fists and wave us away. I think the aircrew must have been ex-service people because no one was ever reported. Our aircraft had identification letters two feet high on the sides and "Royal Navy" on the tail, so everyone knew where we came from.

I salute the gentlemen from the airlines.

Basil Nash

TO THE EDITOR ^(cont'd)



Dear Ed,

When reading Clem Conlan's reminiscences ('Slipstream' July 1996) of his days as a maintainer at RAAF Point Cook in the early 1950s his final paragraph concerning an incident of a trainee pilot buzzing a farmer and hitting the only tree in the paddock had a familiar ring.

This accident was included in the RAAF Flying Safety magazine 'Spotlight' earlier this year. Have enclosed a copy of the article for which you have RAAF approval to reproduce. The accident occurred on 22 May 1952 and involved a solo student in a Wirraway. As the photograph indicates, Clem was right about the tree being the only one standing in a large open area. I hope this fills in the details he was asking about.

On the subject of another incident, the October 1995 'Slipstream' had a photograph of a Sea Fury landing on HMAS Sydney with one mainwheel departing the aircraft. The incident took place in the Hervey Bay area in 1949/50 and has similarities to another incident many years later.

I was the Assistant Flight Deck Officer on HMAS Melbourne in 1979. We were conducting flying operations in the Hervey Bay area at

about 0800 one morning with Skyhawks in the pattern. An A-4 piloted by LEUT Barry Evans lost the starboard mainwheel during a touch and go landing. The wheel continued up the flight deck passing between the FDO (LCDR Rod Coles) and the Fly 1 director. Barry was able to get the aircraft airborne again safely. FLYCO decided that the best option was to attempt gear retraction and if successful launch the tanker aircraft to refuel the damaged Skyhawk for a diversion ashore. This was accomplished and Barry smoothly landed the aircraft on its drop tanks at RAAF Amberley. Such was the sturdiness of the A-4 that it was flown out to Nowra the following day! Had the gear not retracted we had planned to take the aircraft into the barricade.

Barry was returned to the ship by Seaking and with the Wardroom bar open that night a couple of the HS-8 17 aircrew (Tony Haigh and one or two others) with guitar accompaniment performed a song they had written which told the whole story. It was to the tune of the Kenny Rogers song 'You Picked a Fine Time to Leave Me Lucille' but with the re worded chorus 'You Picked a Fine Time to Leave Me Loose Wheel! We had an ABC television crew on board at the time filming the TV series 'Patrol Boat' and they were incredulous at the events. They none the less got a great insight into the professionalism and Camaraderie of the Fleet Air Arm.

Regards, Owen Nicholls (LCDR RANR)

Daydreaming? • Overloaded? • Reckless?

At 1012 hrs on 22 May 1952, a trainee pilot set course from Point Cook in a Wirraway to carry out a solo low-level navigation exercise along the route Point Cook - Scott's Creek - Lismore - Point Cook. At approximately 1130 hrs the aircraft was observed by a civilian in the Rokewood area to come into view from the west, flying at a height of about 40ft AGL. The aircraft made a turn to the right, followed by another turn to the left, straightened up and thereupon collided with the only tree within several hundred metres and situated on gently rising ground. The aircraft then rolled to the right through approximately 110° before striking the ground and crashing some distance further on. The pilot was killed instantly.

Earlier, a mass briefing to students, conducted by the Flight Commander, emphasised the following:

- a minimum height above all obstacles of 200ft;
- a warning to avoid populated areas, dwellings, livestock, etc; and
- reiteration of a local flying order requiring pupils carrying out low flying to climb to 500ft prior to making flight log entries, changing fuel tanks, carrying out cockpit checks, etc.

The pilot was engaged in an authorised low-level navigation exercise. He had apparently concluded the



Note the sole obstacle, the tree, hit by the Wirraway on 22 May 1952. Note also the section of the tree neatly carved out following impact with the aircraft's left wing.

first two legs of the exercise uneventfully and, according to his flying log (portion of which was found in a legible state in the wreckage), he had departed Lismore for Point Cook at 1119hrs. Twelve aircraft were despatched from Point Cook around the same route at five-minute intervals during the morning. An average groundspeed of 140kts was achieved by the three aircraft which traversed the Lismore - Point Cook leg nearest to the time at which the accident Wirraway crashed. Assuming this groundspeed, the accident pilot must have arrived at the position on the track at which it crashed at 1129hrs, had the pilot flown directly along the briefed route.

There was one eyewitness to the accident, a man riding on horseback through the paddock in which the aircraft crashed at about 1130hrs. He described the aircraft as appearing at a height

of approximately 40ft above the terrain to the west and flying in an easterly direction. The aircraft weaved slightly to the right and then to the left. The wings were then levelled and almost immediately the aircraft flew into the tree (see photograph), before striking the ground. The witness stated that there was no apparent change in the aircraft's height prior to it striking the tree. There was no suggestion of a 'beat-up' and engine noise sounded normal.

The tree was 22ft high and the aircraft struck it 4ft from the top.

The evidence of the eyewitness was borne out to a degree by the circumstantial evidence of the pilot's flying log. If the time at which the aircraft departed Lismore was accurately logged, no time

existed for anything but a direct flight to the scene of the accident. From this, and the eyewitness's evidence, it was assumed that the pilot was not diverting in any serious way from the briefed task of flying from Lismore to Point Cook. It was clear, however, that he was doing so a considerably below his briefed minimum height.

It is probable that the pilot's first reaction to the collision (and resultant yaw to port) was to pull the control column hard back and apply right rudder, which resulted in a flick roll to the right. After initial contact with the ground, the

aircraft apparently cartwheeled before disintegrating. Had the pilot not reacted so violently, it's possible that the outcome might not have been fatal; indications were that the collision with the tree did not damage the aircraft extensively.

On the face of it, it was difficult to understand why the pilot did not observe the tree, in view of his 'weave' prior to striking it. However, a number of possibilities existed:

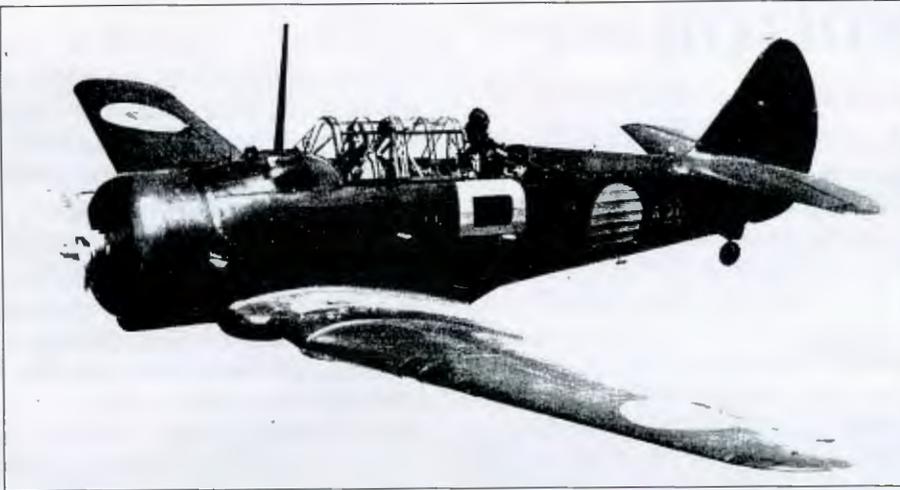
- the 'weave' may have been insufficient for the tree to have come into the pilot's vision;
- the apparent 'weave' may merely have been due to inadvertent movement of the control column while the pilot was engaged in some check or adjustment in the cockpit (in which case, of course, he should have been at 500ft);

- he may have been looking for a particular navigation pinpoint. In this case his attention could have been to the right and a nearby road (with the tree on his left); and/or
- he may have intended to impress the witness with his ability to 'lift' his left wing over the tree.

It seems unlikely that the pilot was looking at the witness at the time with a view to 'beating him up', as the tree would surely have been in his view had he been doing so.

The pilot was relatively inexperienced in low-level flying. He had carried out only 2.7hrs dual and 0.7hrs solo of such flying in Wirraways and, earlier in his flying training, two periods of dual low flying training in Tiger Moths.

On the balance of probability, the pilot was looking out of the



right side of the cockpit, and probably at the road, when the left wing struck the tree. Nevertheless, the root cause of the accident was a disobedience of orders in that he was maintaining a mean height of approximately 30ft (in lieu of 200ft) above the general terrain in the vicinity of the scene of the accident, thus permitting his aircraft to collide with the only obstruction on an area

of slightly rising ground.

Low hours pilots need to realise that this type of accident rarely happens to experienced pilots. When a low-flying accident, due to a disobedience of orders and/or overconfidence, occurs, the pilot involved is invariably under training or has recently graduated.

Remember, low aerobatics and unduly low flying are strictly non-habit forming. To form habits, you must stay alive!

Dear Ed,

Enclosed are a few photos taken by our 'Official Photographer' Ken Spragg on Anzac Day 1996.

We all first met at Yeovil (HMS HERON), U.K. in 1948, after transferring from Engineer Department, General Service. Our first Anzac Day parade was organised by 'Righteous Roy' Torrens (who else). Having received permission from the C.O. we mustered at THE FLAG on the parade ground and recited 'The Ode' remembering all those no longer with us who had helped make it possible to be there that day. THE FLAG our rallying point then and THANK GOD STILL IN 1996.

Eric 'Scrubby' Bush, an ex-Chief Handler (also ex-General Service) and I meet occasionally at Combined Services Club and also at the Kirribilli R.S.L. to assist with 'Corvette' mailing. 'Scrubby' will be O.K. after some work on his eyes next week. Ken Spragg is recovering from an operation on his crook knee. Hopes to throw away his walking stick soon and then head North to warmer weather. Alan Zammit still battling on 'R.R' and Maxie are O.K.

Best wishes to our 'old' shipmates at Nowra. Keep up the good work with Slipstream.
Leo Taff Evans



ANZAC DAY SYDNEY 1996

'Digger' Schmidt, 'Maxie' Gant, The Great Kenneth Spragg, 'Taff' Evans, 'Tug' Wilson and 'Righteous Roy' Torrens.

Their first Anzac Day together was at Yeovil, H.M.S. HERON, U.K., in 1948.

Mr Carr wants a new national anthem for Australia. Mr Mark Weeks of Potts Point disagrees with Mr Carr. He believes that the tune is alright but the lyrics need updating. What do you think?

*"Australians all, we've lost our voice, For we are old and tired;
We've ceased our toil and sold our soil; Our credit has expired.
We can't afford to pay our board, And so we say this prayer
On bended knees, will someone please
Advance Australia's fare."*

TAKEN FROM LETTERS TO THE EDITOR OF WEEKEND AUSTRALIAN DATED 24-25TH AUGUST 1996

TO THE EDITOR (cont'd)



Dear Ed,

My daughter Marilynne and her Canadian born husband left Canberra to spend Christmas day and the January holidays with his folk in both U.S. and Canada spending sometime in Nova Scotia. By arrangement they visited the Canadian Naval Aviation and R.C.A.F. Museum at Shearwater not far from Yarmouth N.S. where the Canadians have proudly restored Fairey Swordfish HS 469 to its flying condition. They brought back for us Fairey Swordfish/Shearwater Museum T shirts photographs and other items which included a reasonably sized booklet called 'No. 1 Naval Air Gunners School' (someone forgot Telegraphist) that was based at Yarmouth N.S. not far away from Shearwater. Besides lots of photographs the story of the school is told and a little section, here summarised, goes . . . "amongst the prangs and bangs we had during the life of the school, says the writer, one incident I remember well. We didn't have sufficient Stringbags at the school, so the RCAF provided a number of Ansons for air radio and telegraphy exercises; on one occasion an Anson with trainees aboard forced landed, wheels down on Lockeport Beach some miles from the base at Yarmouth. The radio got help in the form of the stations rescue plane, a Walrus which finished alongside on beach and took on all the gear, the Anson's pilot, and with its own crew of two chuffed off back to Yarmouth leaving behind two trainees to find their own way home via the local bus service (which was almost non existent in this remote area). The writer goes on to say that he remembers one of the trainees . . . it was Malcom Clarke who later became Commodore RAN!"

I've known Nobby for some time now, but that was a new story for me. *My regards, Bill West*

Dear Ed,

Having received a July copy (of Slipstream) from our great old man of the sea Jack Kitney (I joined with him some decades ago). Age! A mere bagatelle.

A couple of things contained therein deserve mention. The photo of the 1992 'Checkmates' reminds me of a disturbed lunchtime, feed and nap. I was sitting in my vehicle, a Morris Oxford, owned by my employer, British Petroleum, at Cremorne Point. There was a commotion above me - Venoms making efforts to prove that the British made a reasonably aerobatic aircraft. Unfortunately not all good horses win races, due to bad jockeys. Similarly aircraft are controlled by humans but at this time said humans made a mistake. The aircraft that lost its' empanage made a beeline for the water and I uttered three words "You poor bastard". It was a relief to see the canopy fly and the Martin Baker seat do its work efficiently. He was a very lucky pilot was Lt. Riley, he was so low! If he was as unhappy as a couple of others I know of, he didn't sit down for a while - a fifth of a second is not much time to pad your backside.

The other mention is on page 24. The 'Sons of Heaven' are not on Manus but in Singapore unloading . . . 9's gear. I guess we shouldn't complain but put it down to 'Poetic Licence'.

Eric Manuel

P.S. The secretary of the Isis (Childers) RSL Club and Sub-Branch is an ex-Handler, John Woods. When I asked his branch in the Navy his reply was "I doubt if you've heard of it, it was not well known!" I say no more but wait for the missiles.

Eric Manuel

STEADY THERE ERIC - YOUR ERSTWHILE EDITOR WAS A HANDLER!

SLIPSTREAM - APRIL, 1997

Dear Ed,

At the 1996 National Reunion, you may recall R/Adm. Chris Barrie in his address telling us that the young men and women in today's Navy and today's Fleet Air Arm "are every bit as good and every bit as professional as we ever were. They don't go to sea in big air groups in a big carrier anymore, they go to sea in small tightly knit teams aboard frigates, but their tasks are every bit as demanding and hazardous as ever. They are a great bunch of kids!" as near as I can recall his words.

Along with those other members of the Queensland Div., who were privileged to host the 50 or so HS 816 people at the Freedom of the City of Caloundra celebrations on the weekend of 6th, 7th and 8th December, I can only echo Chris Barrie's words. If HS 816 is any criterion by which to judge today's FAA, their presentation is immaculate, their keenness and dedication first class and I gather from talking to them that they still have to scrounge and cannibalise at times to keep aircraft in the air. The political purse strings don't always cope with the demands for fuel and parts, so some things haven't changed. As regards the professionalism of today's Navy, I think HMAS Adelaide's recent recall of crew from annual leave and her very creditable performance in the Southern Ocean with only two-thirds of her normal compliment, answers that quite adequately.

All of which brings me to the point of this letter: previous editions of Slipstream have quite rightly expressed concern that unless more serving members can be persuaded to join our Association, it will wither on the vine and die with the last of our numbers from the old fixed-wing days. Given that the FAA has now only a quarter or so of the personnel which it had in it's hey day, this seems not only highly possible, but highly probable **unless we do much more to encourage their participation.** Their professional attitude is positive enough, "Oh, but we DO have an aircraft carrier, in fact we have nine of them with more on the way!" Yet at Caloundra I got the general impression that most were genuinely and pleasantly surprised at the warmth of the welcome accorded them by the Queensland Division. I am fully aware that it is very easy to sit up here and to pontificate at a distance of 700 miles, and probably I will be stirring up a hornet's nest, but I do feel that for the long term future of the Association, these issues must be addressed. In particular, I was quite surprised at the negativity expressed by some serving personnel towards the Museum, which exclusively seems to be perceived as the show-case of the Association. Bearing in mind the small size of the current FAA, even a few people detailed for ANAM sentry duties can be a drain on the weekend duty rosters if they feel they are "being taken for granted." Other comments heard were "It's just a money-making concern," "All take and no give," and the private opinion of one young officer that "Quite frankly, there are times when we just wish it would pack up and go away."

I was quite shocked to perceive at best the lack of identification with and at worst alienation from the old fixed-wing days. Yet as I earlier alluded to, the genuine rapport of acceptance at Caloundra indicates that times may have changed, fixed wing replaced by rotary, but we're still the same breed deep down, so **let's reach out, go the extra mile and encourage these young people to feel a part of our great fraternity.** When we were young, we'd have got pretty sick of old codgers who thought aviation's pinnacle was an SE5.

Regards, Arthur Rowe

Dear Ed,

DARCY W. DOYLE

One of the best known members and greatest supporter of the Queensland division of the Fleet Air Arm Association of Australia is local artist, Darcy DOYLE. Darcy joined the RAN as a Naval Airman, from his home-town of Ipswich in August 1951, leaving behind an incomplete apprenticeship as a painter-signwriter. Seeing that advancement in the Air Branch was slow he applied for, and was granted, a trade test for a ship's painter which he successfully completed and was promoted to Leading Painter. During his 6½ years in the RAN he served at the RAN Air Station, HMAS ALBATROSS at NOWRA, and on board HMAS AUSTRALIA and HMAS SYDNEY. He was a prominent sportsman and represented the Navy playing Rugby Union, and was a star player with BOMADERRY in the strong Group Seven Rugby League competition.

On completion of his Navy time he settled in SYDNEY where he was employed painting murals in the foyers of many of the prominent RSL and Rugby League Clubs. Due to the Clubs' operating hours he would normally work throughout the night from approximately midnight until opening time the next morning at about 9a.m. or 10a.m.

In 1965 he met and married his wife Jenny who has proved a real pillar of strength throughout their marriage and they are the proud parents of two lovely daughters in their early twenties, Samantha and Alexandra.

They decided to move north to the Gold Coast in 1971, living for two years at CURRUMBIN, before moving to their current home on a few acres at MUDGEERABA in a lovely country setting where the family share their love of animals with a couple of horses roaming the back acreage and a couple of fluffy dogs greet visitors at the front porch. Also, the couple have raced horses with considerable success; ROMAN ARTIST, COUNT HENRI and BEAU ZAM returning handsome dividends during their careers.

Just three kilometres down the road from their home, Darcy's good friend, 'Wallaby' Bob McMaster's famous Wallaby Hotel stands with its DARCY DOYLE Bar and his famous painting of Sir Donald BRADMAN adorning the wall.

Just on four years ago Darcy was stricken with cancer and he was unable to continue with his career; the cancer spread to several parts of his body and after two years he was given only three weeks to live. However, his medical practitioner discovered an American remedy with a 95% rejection rate and only 5% success, and as a last resort it was decided to give the treatment a try and, which miraculously so far, has kept the dreaded cancer in check, and allowed him to resume his career.

His present project is working for the National Australian Football League in painting the twelve legends of Australian Rules viz: Dick REYNOLDS, Ted WHITTEN, Jack DYER, Ron BARRASSI, John COLEMAN, 'Polly' FARMER, Bob SKILTON, Hadyn BUNTON, Bob PRATT, John NICHOLLS, Leigh MATTHEWS and 'Up There' CAZALY.

A hard working self-taught artist, depicting his love of family and friends as well as embodying early Australiana in most of his works, Darcy has risen from a humble ship's painter to be the most admired and biggest selling artist in Australia today.

Reg Gilbert

Another incident following a function at the S/S Mess at HMAS CRESWELL:

Come on T.... we'll drive you home, leave your car here.

After several explanatives he leapt into his car and left, enroute to Nowra he ran off the road and ended up in a swamp. The nice local Constabulary came to his rescue and put him on the 'BAG'.

More explanatives as he blew into the 'bag'. He began to wonder why the blokes in Blue were splitting their sides with laughter.

How embarrassing to be told he was blowing into a Brown Paper Bag.

Another character of the Handlers World was driving home from Creswell and as he got to the outskirts of Nowra a loud banging noise came from under the bonnet.

He got the car home OK by turning the Radio up so that he couldn't hear the noise.

Lifting the bonnet at home he discovered the fan belt had shredded itself and beat the engine bay almost to death.

Another incident at NAS NOWRA

A Thornicroft Fire vehicle on its side at the Powerhouse corner. The driver somewhat in a bit of a panic (naturally) was heard to tell the sightseers to @#\$\$ off and not to make it look so obvious.



*Mystery Photograph
The Lady? The Place? The Occasion?*

Guido Zuccoli

7.10.1940 - 6.3.1997

Guido was born in Morbegno, Italy and grew up amongst the mountains of the Valtellina with his father, mother, older sister and younger brother.

After graduating as a Civil Engineer, it was in 1961 that Guido came to Australia and took on a job as foreman for Transfield in Cairns. He met his future wife Lynette at Chinchilla on the Darling Downs, and they were married in 1965. Their daughter Annamaria was born in 1970.

After several years, Guido and three other partners formed Steelcon Constructions Pty Ltd in Mount Isa, and in 1967 Guido and Lynette moved to Darwin where the company started work in the Outback of the Northern Territory.

In 1969, due to the vast area of the Outback, he decided to get his pilot's licence. It was from here that his love of flying developed, and he decided to learn aerobatics. As with everything in his life, he excelled at this too; being a member of the Australian Aerobatic Team at the World Championships in 1976, 1978 and 1982.

The first aircraft he purchased was a Chipmunk, which was destroyed in Cyclone Tracy. In the early 1980's Guido purchased three ex-Iraqi Air Force Hawker Sea Fury aircraft for refurbishment by Nobby Bartsch at Aerotec Pty Ltd in Darwin. He kept the first one, registered VH-HFG (Hawker Fury Guido), which was always to remain his favourite aircraft.

The purchase of the Sea Furies began the collection of historical and unique planes that were to eventually become an absorbing passion.

In 1987 Guido competed at the Reno Air Races in Nevada, USA in his FIAT G-59B, 'Ciao Bella' (Hello Beautiful), which at that time was the only airworthy example of its type.

By 1994 Guido had retired from Civil Engineering to devote more time to refurbishing aircraft and flying the airshows circuit. He has attended airshows all over Australia with his famous collection including the Sea Fury, FIAT G-59B, CAC Boomerang and North American T-28 Trojan. His skill, generosity and modesty have become the stuff of legends.

With the introduction of 'Skyrace' pylon air racing at Valleyfield, near Launceston, Tasmania, Guido competed successfully in both the Sea Fury and the Trojan. In February 1997 he set a new short course record with the Sea Fury.

Guido's last major appearance was at the Australian International Airshows Down Under at Avalon in 1997, where he enthralled tens of thousands of spectators with the distinctive smoke trails from the wing-tips of his aerobatic Sea Fury.

He was tragically killed as the result of an aircraft accident at Tindal Air Force Base, Northern Territory on the 6th of March, 1997. Guido's legacy to the Royal Australian Navy Historical Flight was his constant support and generous donations to assist in the restoration of the RAN's Hawker Sea Fury VW-623.

His many attendances in Nowra at Navy Air Shows and Naval Aviation Museum Air Days gave him great pleasure; a satisfaction derived from displaying his former Royal Navy Sea Fury at its spiritual home in Australia.

Guido harboured immense pride at being so readily welcomed into the Navy fraternity.

Sir, the honour was ours.



Guido Zuccoli overflies the Australian Naval Aviation Museum in his favourite aircraft, the Hawker 'Sea Fury'

HISTORICAL FLIGHT REPORT TO THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING FLEET AIR ARM ASSOCIATION - NSW DIVISION 16 March 1997

Aircraft and personnel of the Historical Flight have appeared at numerous small and large air shows throughout 1996 and early this year; including the RAAF 75th Anniversary at Amberley and Richmond, the FAA Association Reunion on the Gold Coast, the Tasmanian Air Races in Launceston and at the Australian International Airshows Down Under at Avalon in February.

Participation in the Naval Aviation Museum's Family Air Days has always been an important commitment for the Historical Flight and 1996 was no exception.

On the 7th March the Tracker was flown to Griffith in south western NSW to take part in that town's celebration to mark the 30th Anniversary of the erection of a former RAN Fairey 'Firefly' atop a 25 foot high pole as a 'Memorial to Airmen'. The Tracker crew were among the guests of honour at a Civic Reception hosted by the Lord Mayor.

There are currently three operational aircraft which are active in airshow attendances for the Flight. The C-47 Dakota had a full repaint last year at RAAF Richmond and will shortly have the starboard engine removed for overhaul of the engine frame and mounts. Two spare Dakota engines were delivered in December to Superior Air Services, Moorabbin for survey and quote on a total rebuild.

Meanwhile both the Tracker and Dakota have had a major avionics upgrade with new VHF radios and GPS satellite navigation systems installed.

The Iroquois helicopter has had good serviceability throughout the year, appearing at many local and interstate events, often in conjunction with the Army's Red Berets parachute display team.

The Restoration Teams are making good steady progress with the Sea Fury, Firefly and the Scout helicopter. The Scout's main rotor blades were subject to X-ray examination by the RAAF and all but one of the blades were cleared as airworthy. Westland Helicopters, UK are supplying replacement blade damper units, but at market prices.

The team responsible for the Sea Fury restoration were very saddened to learn of the death of Mr Guido Zuccoli recently. (An Obituary appears elsewhere in this issue.) Guido had been very generous in many practical ways;

donating, among other things, the services of his company to rebuild the core of the Fury's Centaurus engine and the huge five-bladed Rotol propeller. There are still several years of work left in this project and it is very important to the history of Australia, the Navy and the Fleet Air Arm. The Firefly's Griffon engine has been removed and placed in a shipping stand for transportation to the USA where it will undergo a total rebuild, giving it a new life of up to 1000 flying hours. The writer of this article, as Firefly Maintenance Manager, has stated that the aircraft must be ready for the FAA Jubilee in 1998, OR ELSE !

The future of the Sea Venom project is uncertain at the moment, for the want of interested people to relight the fire of enthusiasm. At present, it sits untouched in the corner of the hangar, waiting.

Sometime during April it will be necessary to move out of the Flight's current base in D Hangar and condense all or most of our assets into E Hangar, which up until now we have shared with the Air Training Department.

In a convoluted sequence of events, this requirement has come about due to increased helicopter maintenance activity by the Navy's on-base contractor; and the timing of the shift and the amount of space available hinges on the relocation of the demountable hangar in the Museum environs. Both the Museum and the Historical Flight will welcome volunteers to assist with the movements.

The Historical Flight expects to be heavily committed in 1998 with the Fleet Air Arm's 50th Anniversary celebrations, and the possibility exists that the Flight, at that time, will have five aircraft on-line: Tracker, Dakota, Iroquois, Scout and Firefly.

Just recently enquiries have been initiated with various owners and agencies with a view to repatriating a number of former RAN aircraft from the USA and elsewhere, to join in the celebrations of our Jubilee. This exciting possibility is in the very early stages of negotiation at the time of going to press, and will require lots of planning, diplomacy and arm-bending.

Those of you who want to share my vision of multiple Sea Furies, Fireflies and Trackers roaring down Runway 21 at 'Albatross' on Sunday 1st November 1998, please step forward.

Terry Hetherington
RAN Historical Flight Maintenance Coordinator
FAA Association Liaison Officer

Dear Ed,

I have just received my copy of Slipstream and knowing that you are requesting articles and information of interest about former aircraft I have enclosed a copy of an article I thought you might be interested to include in the next edition of Slipstream.

Ted Evans (former R.N. F.A.A. AMAI.)

WARBIRD SALVAGE by David King

Fleet Air Arm aircraft, which have lain on the sea-bed off Queensland's Sunshine Coast since 1946, soon could be on display and some could even be flying again.

A salvage consortium has begun raising some of the hundreds of aircraft dumped in the sea by the Royal Navy after World War Two.

They include Voight Sikorsky Corsair and Grumman Hellcat fighters. Avenger and Fairey Barracuda torpedo bombers.

Resting on the sea-bed between 240 and 270 metres, they are said to be in surprisingly good condition, with many still bearing their original paint and markings.

The salvage consortium has formed a new company—International Warbird Salvage (IWS)—to raise the aircraft in what could be one of the biggest salvage operations yet seen in Australia.

Between 300 and 400 aircraft were believed to have been taken from Archerfield and dumped in the depths off the Sunshine Coast after World War Two.

IWS Director, Ian McLean, said it had since been revealed there were even more aircraft in the area than originally believed.

Using remote operated vehicles, the initial salvage operation will concentrate on raising five aircraft for restoration and display.

Among them will be a Supermarine Seafire, a naval version of the Spitfire.

The consortium began working on the project in 1990, when it salvaged its first Corsair.

It has since salvaged three others and has perfected a chemical treatment and preservation process which combats the effects of salt water on aircraft bodies.

Mr McLean said this made it possible that some aircraft could be returned to flying condition.

Over the past 18 years the consortium has salvaged aircraft and military equipment from all over South-East Asia and the Pacific.

IWS would like to hear from anyone involved in dumping the Fleet Air Arm aircraft off the Sunshine Coast and from engineers and others with experience in working on older aircraft.

IWS can be contacted at
PO Box 2023,
Noosa Heads, Qld.4567

Reprint of Nowra News article undated

HELPED WITH RESCUE

Lieutenant Commander Arthur Heather (left) and Lieutenant Commander Jeff Konemann both participated in the rescue of round-the-world yachtsmen Thierry Dubois and Tony Bullimore.

LCDR Heather is presently the Flight Commander of the Seahawk on board HMAS Adelaide. He is responsible for the aircraft's deployment missions and manages the flight crew.

During the Southern Ocean mission, which has become one of the most talked about events in Australia in recent weeks, he directed

the flight to the rescue site and winched Mr Dubois to safety, for transferral to HMAS Adelaide.

LCDR Konemann was despatched from 816 Squadron for the mission as the relieving co-pilot on the Seahawk, which experienced quite a battering above wild seas at the rescue site.

Both officers have families in Nowra and were home on leave when the call came through for urgent deployment.





C.O. No.2 Squadron RNZAF Squadron Leader Ozzie Osbourne and A4 Skyhawk at Nowra recently

Australian and New Zealand Defence Ministers recently signed an agreement providing support flying by the Royal New Zealand Air Force for the Australian Defence Force for a further five years.

This means a continuation of the RNZAF presence at Naval Air Station Nowra, near the RAN's east coast exercise area.

The five year renewal in the Enhanced Nowra Agreement is a continuation of the agreement providing for support flying for the ADF by the RNZAF which was signed in Canberra in July 1990.

The 53 person RNZAF detachment at Nowra will provide 1070 flying hours per annum of flying support for the RAN on the east and west coasts of Australia.

The detachment will train up to six RNZAF pilots per year and the Australian Government will provide opportunities to the New Zealand squadron to train with other elements of the ADF when it is cost neutral to Australia to do so.

The Nominal Roll of Vietnam Veterans

The Department of Veterans' Affairs is seeking errors or omissions from the first printing of The Nominal Roll of Vietnam Veterans so that they can be corrected in the forthcoming new edition. The book version of the Nominal Roll has sold out and will be reprinted in mid 1997. The Department is particularly keen to hear from individuals whose name have been omitted and from unit historians who have been working on their units nominal roll.

Any amendments received prior to 15 April will be included in the reprint. The Nominal Roll contained the names of 49,036 men and 484 women who served for at least one day in Vietnam between 23 May 1962 and 1 July 1973. In the book, the names are arranged in alphabetical order within each service i.e. Army, Navy, Air Force and Civilian. The following information was provided for each name - service number, surname, up to two initials and a code for the units in which the veteran served.

Corrections and omissions should be sent to the appropriate service office which will verify the information.

Their addresses include:

Royal Australian Navy Sailors Records
Russell D-2-24
Department of Defence
Canberra ACT 2600

A Last Farewell

'Slipstream' regrets having to advise the passing of the following shipmates:

Lyle Francis 'Pop' Stark	17th October, 1996
John Tapping	
Des Gleeson	
Dudley Stonehouse	August, 1996
Ray Meredith	August 1996
Wally Nugent	24 December, 1995
Bill Walker	
John Isherwood	1996
John Slade	18 April, 1995

'Pop' Stark's ashes were scattered in Jervis Bay from a work boat out of HMAS CRESWELL. Two brothers and two cousins attended the ceremony. Coffee was served in the Wardroom afterwards.

A memorial service for the late John Tapping was held in the HMAS ALBATROSS Fleet Air Arm chapel on the 18th January last.

Once again at NOWRA

The space between the guardhouse and the garage was definitely a 'No Parking' zone as this was where the Fire trucks exited during emergencies. On this particular day it was knock off time and with only one A/C still up the fire vehicles were placed in their normal overnight stowage areas. A CPO (I believe) parked his VW in that area to return keys. Boy was he upset to find a fire truck sitting on the front of it when he returned because as Murphy's Law would predict the A/C declared an emergency.

WELFARE OFFICERS REPORT

A welfare report from Ivan 'Chips' Gray JP (NSW Division) appears below. I believe the points made in the report are just as relevant to those presently serving as they are to we 'old and bold'. I also believe the report highlights the importance of belonging to organisations such as ours (or the Regular Defence Forces Welfare Association, Naval Mens Association etc.) In unity there is strength and the greater possibility of our concerns being heard and action taken to resolve them. It was well-known British General and former Governor-General of Australia Sir William Slim who in his autobiography said, now that he had retired, it was his intention to take up the causes of service personnel in the belief that we must help ourselves because governments certainly would not!

Following many letters of concern in the wake of the Blackhawk disaster pointing out to both the Minister for Defence Industry, Science and Personnel, the Hon Bronwyn Bishop MHR and the Minister for Veteran's Affairs, the Hon. Bruce Scott MHR the inadequacies of the Military Compensation Scheme it was announced, in the latter part of 1996 that a review of the Military Compensation Scheme would be conducted. Terms of reference were released and submissions invited from most service organisations. No doubt the wide TV and press coverage played no small part in nudging the government into action.

In the November 1996 issue of 'Camaraderie' the Regular Defence Forces Welfare Association had this to say about the MCS: "One of the major problems has recently highlighted by the case of one of the surviving victims of the 12 June Blackhawk who is now a paraplegic. His maximum lump sum compensation would be \$152,000, if approved, compared to much higher amounts awarded by civilian courts for comparable injuries."

Also in a later UPDATE newsletter "At the time of preparing this update our submission is being finalised. We are in touch with other interested organisations and there seems to be some common concerns regarding the existing complex scheme. There is also concern that the review is being conducted by those responsible for managing the existing compensation scheme. We can only hope that those conducting the review are amenable to change because change—drastic change—is needed to overcome the anomalies in the present MCS.

The working group conducting the review is to report by 1st March 1997. The outcome of the review will have far reaching implications for members of the ADF.

On the 28th November 1996 the Australian Veterans and Defence Services Council issued the following comments:

"This Council, representative of its 36 ex-service member associations, numbers among those associations many that are directly involved in the welfare of serving and recently served men and women of the Australian Defence Force.

"The Council has been from the inception of the Military Compensation (and Rehabilitation) Scheme (MCRS) very concerned about details of the scheme and remains concerned. The Blackhawk disaster has underlined the reasons for that concern.

1. It is a basic view of AVADC that the MCRS is unsatisfactory as a whole for Defence personnel and that all Australian Defence personnel (including Reservists and Cadets) should be appropriately covered by the Veterans Entitlement Act, irrespective of period or place of service and that the entitlement should be back-dated to the inception of the MCRS this would obviate discrimination between Australian servicemen and women.

2. If, as would consequently be the case, administration of their entitlements were in the hands of the very experienced Department of Veterans' Affairs, the existing bureaucratic duplication in some

cases between two Commonwealth departments would be prevented with substantial financial savings to the Commonwealth Treasury.

3. It is recognised that DVA provision for rehabilitation (both physical and occupational) will have to be reviewed. Comments in ensuing paragraphs are related to the paragraphs in the Terms of Reference for the Examination.

4. Para 3. Marked differentiation between major injuries (causing para or quadriplegia) and lesser disabilities should not occur. Payment of lump sums without continuing support of adequate amount and kind throughout life is opposed strongly. Severely injured or inexperienced servicemen may not be able to manage or retain lump sums. Where periodic payments of compensation are made they should not cease at age 65 or 60. Widows should not be financially abandoned.

5. It is felt that lump sums being paid under existing (not DVA) schemes inadequate in amount. When paid they should not be settled rare special cases) prior to discharge from service.

6. The Defence Department and Services should welcome the cost saving arising in terms of time and staff for training and deployment in the Defence Forces and the transfer of compensation and rehabilitation concerns to Veterans' Affairs. The professional purpose of DVA is the provision of benefits to disabled and injured ex-servicemen and women.

7. It should be noted that the DFRDB Scheme is irrelevant to this examination.

8. Para 6. Matters referred to in this paragraph of the Terms of Reference have been largely covered in the above. Some points must be reiterated. MCRS should terminate and all service and ex service personnel should be covered by the Veterans' Entitlements Act (suitably amended). The VEA should cover Reservists and Cadets. There should not be different categories. Burden of proof (or disproof) should rest with the Commonwealth. Standard of Proof should be beneficial. The 'Reasonable Hypothesis' of the Veterans' Entitlement Act is favoured.

9. Should policy outcomes result in a continued MCRS - separate from the Veterans' Entitlements Act - both should be administered by the Department of Veterans' Affairs.

10. Paras 8—10. While welcoming the Examination and accepting its Terms of Reference, the Council the absence of ex service representation on the Working Group or Steering Committee. We ask that the draft Report of the Working Group be discussed with the nominated ex service Associations before being 'set in concrete'.

11. AVADSC recognises that comments made above should be capable of detailed support and will be happy to discuss these matters with the Working Group and the Steering Committee as necessary. Several member Associations of AVADSC will be making direct comment on these matters to the Examination, as is their right, but we feel the presentation of varied perspectives must be helpful and will be constructive.

12. AVADSC is pleased to meet and co-operate with the members of the Examination. Various member Associations, mentioning the Regular Defence Forces Welfare Association specifically, will be making submissions which will be of great value to the Examination."

Lets all hope that we end up with a positive result with just benefits for victims of service caused conditions, irrespective of whether during 'war service', 'operational service', 'peace keeping', 'defence service', etc etc. Lets at least have something understandable.

*Ivan G (Chips) GRAY JP,
Welfare Officer NSW Division, (044) 416006.*

PROSTATE HEALTH—A MEN'S HEALTH ISSUE FOR MANY!!

You may be surprised to learn that at least 50% of Australian men are at risk of developing prostate disorders. Such figures can be alarming if taken out of context, as can other pieces of information which circulate on the subject of prostate disease. This however underlines the importance of men seeking comprehensive and reliable information to ensure they understand the risks of the disease and also the way in which it can be managed and treated.

Despite the common nature of urinary disorders in the male population, many men are poorly informed about what are often common problems in middle aged and elderly men and what creates prostate disease. Information is the key to building confidence and encouraging men to investigate any problem. This in turn, reduces the stress and concern that comes with "not knowing".

While a large number of men are still reluctant to discuss their health care this is thankfully changing. As men become more interested in their health and better informed, they will develop the confidence and the capacity to better understand and manage any problems that occur. More information helps men and their families to make informed decisions. Ignoring the early symptoms of any disease reduces the chances of an uneventful recovery and may prolong treatment.

In Australia, the incidence of prostate cancer more than doubled between 1991 and 1995 and more than 4,000 of the 10,000 prostatectomy operations in Australia last year were performed on veterans. The highest numbers of prostatectomies occurred in the 65 to 74 year old age group, and many of these men are veterans.

The Minister for Veterans' Affairs, Bruce Scott, launched a book titled "You and your Prostate: An Overview" at the Repatriation Hospital Daw Park, Adelaide, on 26 November.

"I am sure that the book will assist in helping men to be more confident and open when talking about their concerns in relation to prostate illness, treatment and management with their health care team members, and, in particular, their doctors," Mr Scott said.

The book provides an overview of the anatomy of male reproductive organs, discusses urinary and prostatic symptoms, details investigations for prostate disease, the treatment and

management of non-cancerous enlargement of the prostate gland and cancer of the prostate gland, written in easy to understand language

It concludes with an important section on education and support services.

If you are a veteran or a spouse, family member or non-professional carer of a member of the veteran community, the book is available to you free of charge.

Write to the Department of Veterans' Affairs in your capital city, and include your name and address details. Please mark the envelope Attention: Prostate Book.

Health providers and other interested individuals can purchase the book at \$5.00 per copy. Order forms are available from the Department.

Editors Note:

Pre-T.U.R. (Trans Urethral Resection) prostate symptoms can be very trying. Rushing to the toilet during the movie interval and hoping to have the business completed before the second feature commences. Never a good nights rest owing to the bladder alarm clock going off at frequent intervals, and the longest, most uncomfortable aircraft flight of my life. At Cooma airport to catch a flight to Melbourne one wintry morning I treated myself to several cups of coffee while waiting for my aircraft to arrive. It was only when the aircraft was airborne that I realised my error - I had had too many cups of coffee and the aircraft had no toilet facilities The need was so great I thought I might disgrace myself and do what I had not done since I was a baby. I thought about using the water bottle (which I carry on my cross-country skiing trips) but was too embarrassed because of the presence of several women in the intimate cabin of that rather small commuter aeroplane. The walk along the concourse at Tullarmarine seemed endless and the agony exquisite as one tried to move quickly without adding to the agony.

I can assure, you dear reader I wasted no time in seeking out my doctor and having treatment. The operation was a complete success and I would recommend the treatment to anybody in a similar position.



March—National Reunion, 1996. Flag bearers: Brian Sargeson, Mick Blair, Theo Bush-Jones and Ian Henderson

From BOB GIBBS

Hi Barry,

As you are aware, RAN service in Malaya from 1955 to 1960 is the only honourable overseas 'active service' by Australians to be excluded by an Australian Government from eligibility for repatriation benefits available to all other Australian veterans. The only people who can remove that exclusion from the Veterans' Entitlements Act are the Federal politicians who put it there in the first place.

Accordingly we are trying to arrange for the *petitions to be sent to both houses of parliament. Petitions to the House of Representatives are read out each Monday while the House is sitting. The Senate is different, petitions being read out on the morning of each sitting day. To get the maximum benefit, the ideal will be to have the petitions arrive regularly so that they are read out often enough and eventually the politicians will hopefully do something about the problem. That means we are looking at continuing to submit petitions until the exclusion is removed, which could take some time.

Both the House of Representatives and Senate are expected to resume sitting on 4 February 1997. It would be nice to start their year with something which all parties have managed to ignore for 40 years.

Your help is requested to have these petitions signed and submitted to both your local member of Federal Parliament and as

Those who have been seeking long overdue recognition of RAN service during the Malayan Emergency are aware of the inordinate number of excuses which have been used over the years to deny that service.

On 21 August last RADM Forrest and senior Personnel officers met with ex-navy representatives at Russell Offices. The Admiral said Navy fully supported our efforts for recognition and equity with the land forces in Malaya.

You are aware that broadly speaking there are two areas where recognition has been refused; firstly by the exclusion of RAN eligibility for service afloat off Malaya between 1955 and 1960 in Veterans' Entitlements legislation, imposed by the Menzies government while the RAN was serving in Malaya in late 1956; and then by the persistent refusal by Navy Office to acknowledge RAN eligibility for the Naval General Service Medal (NGSM) 'Malaya'.

Sadly, but not irreversibly, the Chief of Naval Staff has just come up with two new excuses. It could be fairer to say that his advisers have come up with the excuses but CNS has given his approval by putting his signature to them, four months after Navy Office said it was supporting our efforts for equity and a fair go.

Looking first at the exclusion from eligibility for repatriation benefits. We find the longest standing excuse for the exclusion was that HMA ships had never been 'allotted' for operational service. That excuse persisted until we recovered the Department of the Navy letter to Treasury of 11 November 1955 from the Australian Archives. That letter said, as most are by now aware:

"the date on which RAN ships were allotted for duty as the RAN component of the Strategic Reserve was 1st July 1955.

There are other supporting documents including a minute from the Minister for the Navy dated 4 August 1955, which referred to the RAN being allotted.

Since the evidence was given to Navy Office in late 1995 (and never acknowledged) the excuse seems to have sunk without trace and we are now being told the RAN was not on 'active service'. Before looking at that furphy, some will have been told they were not 'allotted for operational service in accordance with the Special Overseas Service Act' and of course they were not. Although the excuse sounds good, that Act was introduced two years after the Malayan Emergency ended.

One myth claims the exclusion was a 'Cabinet decision'. That is not correct. Cabinet decisions are numbered and retained. A search

many of your State Senators as possible.

Because I am looking after the initial cost of distribution, I trust you will be willing and able to copy as many petitions as you can find signatories for and arrange for a mate or two, perhaps an RSL Sub-Branch, to assist with the project. The greater the response from the public, the more quickly the politicians will be encouraged to remove the exclusion.

Although there is no sign of either the Minister for Defence Industry, Science and Personnel or the Minister for Veterans' Affairs removing the exclusion yet, they could give some ground in the future. If, for example, Disability Pensions are provided without Service Pensions we will still have to fight on until we have equity with Army and Air Force service in Malaya which qualified for all benefits after 24 hours ashore.

There is provision for five signatories on each petition and we can only have signatures on the page containing the petition. Five to a page is enough and they must all be original signatures, not photocopies, nor can anything be stuck on or parts of the petition erased or ruled out.

The reference to ex-members of the South Vietnamese Armed Forces receiving Australian Service Pensions denied to Australians should not be misconstrued. Eligibility for Australian pensions for nationals of five other countries involved in the Vietnam conflict was introduced AFTER the RAN exclusion and has nothing to do with racism but everything to do with equity and a fair go.

* NB: YOUR DIVISION SECRETARY HAS *With best wishes, Bob*
COPIES OF PETITIONS FOR BOTH HOUSES.

of Australian Archives Cabinet decisions has not found anything excluding the RAN. Neither has the Department of Defence been able to identify any such decision.

Let us look at the excuse being used by Navy Office that the RAN was not on 'active service'. There were and still are, four criteria for such service, briefly:

persons subject to military law attached to or forming part of a force engaged in operations against an enemy, or in military ops in a country or place wholly or partly occupied by an enemy, or in military occupation of a foreign country or service during a period or in an area proclaimed by the Governor-General to be active service.

In 1955 these criteria for 'active service' were to be found in Section 4 of the Defence Act 1903. They can also be found on page 163 of the CIDA Report and I have been advised that they are the only criteria used by the Department of Defence. "You little beaut" I hear you say, the RAN was the first element on the Australian Order of Battle, it was attached to and formed part of a force engaged in operations against an enemy, in a country partly occupied by an enemy and rendered service during a period and in an area proclaimed by the G-G to be active service.

We retrieved the *Commonwealth Gazettes* in which the Governor-General, 'acting with the advice of the Executive Council' proclaimed Malaya and the waters 10 n.m. seaward from the coast to be 'active service' from the middle of 1952 and the proclamation which removed the 'active service' status for the same area w.e.f. December 1960.

They were sent to Navy Office. CNS now says he has legal advice that the proclamation by the G-G, acting with the advice of the Executive Council, in the *Commonwealth Gazette* which declared Malaya and the waters 10 n.m. from the coast to be 'active service' did not apply to the RAN because only the Army was subject to 'military law'. How the RAAF qualified if only the Army was given active service by that opinion was not stated.

Not being a lawyer I read at Section 5 of the Defence Act, 'Application of Act'.

"This Act shall apply, subject to the provisions of the Naval Defence Act 1910-1949 and the Air Force Act 1923-1950 to, and in relation to, all the Naval, Military and Air Forces of the Commonwealth and to all members thereof whether appointed or enlisted or deemed to be enlisted under this Act or under any other

Act and whether serving in or beyond the territorial limits of Australia."

From what we are hearing from Navy Office, I would not be surprised if that does not mean what it says either.

How the Navy ever got on active service if the G-G as Commander-in-Chief of the naval forces, along with the Executive Council, did not send it because its members were not subject to 'military law', is a mystery. All available definitions of 'military' law include the army and defence forces.

The next declaration of active service in the *Gazettes* was for Borneo in 1964, the same terminology, including 'subject to military law' was used. As you know, the RAN was on active service for the Borneo and Malay Peninsula campaigns. The legal advisor to CNS apparently finds no problem between the Navy being on active service in Korea, not on active service in Malaya and then being on active service again in Borneo, when all three campaigns are referred to in the *Gazettes* by almost identical terminology and format.

No doubt Navy Office staff are fully aware that when the *Gazette* proclamations for Korea and Malaya were made, on the same day in 1952, *Warramunga* and *Bataan* were operational in Korean waters.

No doubt Navy Office staff also know that during 1951, in the lead up to the *Gazette* proclamation, the Malayan Emergency took the lives of some 4,269 people in some 6,082 'incidents'. They may or may not know, or care, that at the time of the *Gazette* declaration for the Malayan 'active service' area the deaths and 'incidents' in Malaya were similar to the previous year.

Those involved in the RAN bombardments of Malaya might think that if they were not on active service when they were trying to kill people while bombarding a foreign country they would be war criminals or pirates. Navy Office has decided that you may have been on active service at the time of bombardment but you were not when the guns stopped firing. Which means an infantryman is only on active service whilst shooting at an enemy but not when he stops shooting or is being shot at. Similarly, the RAAF would only be on active service when an aircraft was attacking an opponent or target but not at other times.

Vice Admiral Sir Richard Peek has pointed out to Navy Office the nonsense of such a statement. He calls it 'a disgrace'.

For operations in Malaya, a Navy Office document of 1962 shows the conditions of issue for the Returned from Active Service Badge as:

that a member of the RAN must have been on permanent assignment to a unit participating in the anti-bandit operations in Malaya and served within the limits, or the waters immediately adjacent thereto, or in the air over, the Federation of Malaya or the Colony of Singapore for any period from 19th June, 1950 to 31st July, 1960.

Does that make you eligible for the Returned from Active Service Badge? Apparently not, Captain Mead, Director General Personal Services and Conditions - Navy has written to me and said:

"Further to the information provided to you by the Chief of Naval Staff in his letter of 17 December 1996 it is advised that as no case exists for the award of the NGSM (Malaya) to Royal Australian Navy FESR personnel, no entitlement exists for the award of the Returned from Active Service Badge".

Which of course brings us to the campaign medal. No doubt many readers have seen the often repeated statement made by Navy Office that a decision on the NGSM would be widely publicised when received from Britain.

Navy Office has thrice gone to the Ministry of Defence (UK). The first response dated 25 October 1994 from the office of the Second Sea Lord and signed by Commander J.A. Hobbs MBE RN said, in part:

"Should any veterans wish to pursue a claim for the NGS (1915) with clasp 'MALAYA' they should forward details of their ships' employment together with a statement that it operated for 28 days

in Malayan waters."

While that response does not clearly say to whom the claim should be made, it is, quite clearly, approval to issue the campaign medal, subject to verification.

Despite the Navy Office statements that the decision would be widely publicised, that was not done. Instead Captain Foot, DGPS-C-N, in a minute of 10 November 1994, quoting the MoD response, said, in parts:

Reference A indicates that the British Authorities are no closer to resolving the issue than ever before. Unfortunately, as this is a British award we are bound therefore by any decision they make.

It would appear that there are now only two options open to us. One would be to provide the British Authorities with copies of all Reports of Proceedings (ROP's) and ship's Logs of the ships involved during the prescribed period for examination. The other would be for the RAN to carry out the examination and forward any relevant data which would support a claim for the award to the UK for decision.

His minute made no reference to "Should any veteran wish to pursue a claim etc."

Rear Admiral Oxenbould then wrote, on 2 December 1994, asking for the Naval Historical Section to examine the ROP's and Logs for evidence of qualifying service.

On 27 February 1995 Rear Admiral Campbell responded, saying, in parts:

2. Reports of Proceedings and log books for the relevant vessels have been examined at the Australian War Memorial and the Office of Australian Archives in Sydney. The period covered was May 1955 to July 1960 inclusive, thereby commencing with the initial RAN deployment to the Strategic Reserve to the cessation date for this award.

3. The research concluded that RAN vessels may (repeat 'may') have provided qualifying service on the following occasions:

a. HMA Ships ANZAC and TOBRUK carried out a bombardment of suspected Communist Terrorist positions on 29 Sep 56.

b. HMA Ships QUEENBOROUGH and QUICKMATCH carried out a bombardment of suspected Communist Terrorist positions on 22 Jan 57.

c. HMAS QUIBERON conducted a search from Johore Shoal Buoy to Lima Island on 12 Jan 59. The reason for the search is unknown.

d. HMAS WARRAMUNGA conducted a patrol off Pulo Padang on 4 Mar 58.

4. Neither the ROP's nor the logs specifically recorded any occasions upon which RAN ships were ordered or directed to conduct patrols off the Malayan coast or conduct operations against bandits. RAN ships deployed to the Strategic Reserve were employed for much of the period conducting exercises with the Far East Fleet and on goodwill port visits.

Rear Admiral Campbell had no way of knowing that ship's logs are only held at the Australian Archives in Sydney and their holdings are only up to the end of 1957 (in the case of Quickmatch, only until December 1956) and they don't know where subsequent logs are.

Thirteen ships were deployed on 35 occasions over the five year period. When you go through the logs you find complete logs in the Archives for 11 deployments, partial logs for 3 deployments and no logs for 21 deployments. It is only possible to look at logs for 14 of the 35 deployments. When that fact was raised at Navy Office on 21 August last, the reply was Navy Office had only claimed to have looked at the 'available' logs. The correspondence makes no reference to 'available'. Neither Logs written in present tense, or ROPs in past tense, show orders or intentions.

The 27 February 1995 minute made no reference to Anzac's bombardment of 26 July 1957 or Tobruk's on 26 August 1957, both of which are easily found in the Archives records.

Pulo Padang lies a few miles off Sumatra, in Indonesian waters. The relevance is not clear.

A more detailed assessment of the above alleged 'comprehensive examination' of logs and ROPs was sent to Navy Office last September. No acknowledgement or response has been received. The assessment said, in part:

4. IT IS VERY DIFFICULT TO ACCEPT THAT NAVY OFFICE CARRIED OUT RESEARCH WHICH SOUGHT THE FACTS, instead a charade appears to have taken place.

On 8 March 1995, K.R. Freemantle, writing for the Director of Naval Personal Services, wrote to Commander M Robbins RN at MoD. At para 7, we find:

Another suggestion from ex RAN members is that the RAN draft an instrument of issue, issue the medals and simply advise MOD(UK) of what has occurred. As this is a British award with conditions governing the award approved by the Government of the day, approval or otherwise to do this must come from MOD(UK).

On 27 April 1995, Commander Robbins, in part, replied:

My only suggestion, much in the same vein as that mentioned in your Paragraph 7, is that if the RAN is prepared to verify the claims of the Australian units involved against the criteria in the AFO, it should go ahead and issue the medals.

That approval to issue was not widely publicised as Navy Office had repeatedly said it would be.

On 31 May 1995, Captain Foot, DGPSC-N wrote to DGSP, making no reference to the approval to issue but saying in part:

4. A response has been received from the UK, Reference B (the Robbins letter), which indicates that the RN believe that none of the RAN vessels met the stringent criteria for the award as laid down in AFO 612/58, AFO2466/60, Reference H. This fact is also substantiated at paragraphs 4 and 5 of Reference D.

As you probably know, the Association made a submission to the Interdepartmental Committee on Honours and Awards. Admiral Peek and Commodore Clarke attended the meeting at which the submission was considered on 9 May last. Very soon afterwards Navy Office wrote to MoD for the third time. Although the correspondence has not been seen it seems the question was whether the RN issued the medal to its ships during the period in which the RAN was involved.

CNS has now said, in part:

The First Sea Lord further advises that records held by the RN Medal Office indicate that no RN ships entered the qualifying area for a sufficient length of time to qualify for the NGSM (Malaya) between June 1955 and June 1960. It may, therefore, not be unreasonable to conclude that the Commander-in-Chief Far East Station did not advise the RAN of the qualification of individual ships because none ever met the criteria.

In light of the above, I have concluded that RAN members have not suffered any inequity or anomaly in comparison with their RN counterparts. On that basis, no case exists for the award of the award (sic) of the NGSM (Malaya) to any of the RAN FESR personnel.

As far as I know, no submission has ever been made to Navy Office that we wanted our service compared with RN service. Even so, it is incomprehensible to think no ships of the Strategic Reserve fleet entered the zone between 1955-60 long enough to aggregate 28 days qualifying service. Once again there has been no 'wide publicity' given to the decision to deny recognition by using another excuse.

Previously we were told our service had to comply with the Conditions of Award in the relevant AFO's, especially the conditions to be at sea, off the Malayan coast, in support of operations against bandits etc. Now CNS appears to have over-ridden those conditions.

I applied for the NGSM and RAS Badge partly on the basis that Telegraphists (S) on RAN ships were intercepting CT communications and that our Tel (S) had spent more than 28 days so engaged which meant we, like the RAAF signals intelligence operators on Labuan Island, whom CIDA found were 'in direct support of the Malayan Emergency' and 'in direct support of operations', were meeting the Conditions of Award in the AFOs.

Navy Office has responded that no case exists.

At this point it is worth noting that Mr C.W. Bradshaw, Head of NPP(Acs) I MoD wrote to Alex Schultz, one of our members, on 1 October 1996. In parts, he said:

There is, regrettably, no record of any RAN ship completing 28 days 'operational' service in the area of Malaya . . .

Having said all of this, if any veteran does have evidence that his service would qualify him for the award, as laid down by the Honours and Awards Committee, he should, in the first instance submit an application to the RAN.

It is also worth noting that the Public Records Office, Kew, Surrey, England says in explaining what it holds, that it holds all Admiralty documents which are considered worthy of permanent preservation and then makes the incredible statement:

only about 5% of records are kept.

In light of the above statement by CNS, it may, therefore, not be unreasonable to conclude, on the basis that Navy Office has ignored almost everything sent to it on the subject, that

a. Navy Office is not interested in the facts of the matter, preferring the myths;

b. Although RADM Forrest said Navy was going to help us get equity with Australian land forces, others are not; and

c. Navy Office has had, and clearly still has, a policy of not issuing the NGSM 'Malaya' under any circumstances.

I do not consider the battle for recognition by campaign medal and RAS Badge to be over and I will welcome your support to justice and equity for the RAN.

The 'Malaya' section of the Roll of Honour at the Australian War Memorial will not be complete until RAN casualties take their rightful place thereon. AWM management is aware of the omission. However, they maintain that only veterans who were on 'active service' can appear on the Roll and Navy Office is still advising the AWM that the RAN was not on active service during the Malayan Emergency.

When the maritime 'operational area' around Malaya was removed in August 1957 in an attempt to deny eligibility for RAN service, there was still a 3 n.m. territorial area.

Since February last I have been seeking advice from DVA whether that meant RAN ships were still in the 'Malaya' operational area. So far there has not been one word of acknowledgement or reply. Two complaints have been sent to the Minister for Veterans Affairs asking for a reply. No acknowledgement or reply has, as yet, been received.

A petition, from individuals and not this Association, has been prepared for both houses of parliament. It seeks the removal of the exclusion of RAN seagoing service in Malaya from the Veterans Entitlements Act 1986. You can help by obtaining a copy, reproducing it, collecting signatures and making sure your local federal member of parliament and state senators submit it to both houses. It could take a long while for the petition to bear fruit, which means you have to be prepared to keep getting signatures and keep at your federal politicians. If you want a copy of both petitions send a stamped, self addressed, business sized envelope to me at 3 Berwick St., LILYDALE VIC.3140. In the past a couple of our members have sent me unstamped self addressed envelopes, one used an envelope from a government department where he works. This time only Plan 'A' will apply.

A whisper has it that some form of recognition MIGHT be under consideration but it will not be FULL recognition. If that happens it will be necessary to fight on, so the need to keep fighting will continue as long as the injustice remains.

Recently in the press there has been some justifiable criticism of retired senior officers for not fighting for recognition of service by their men. In closing I ask you to give credit where it is due and recognise the indefatigable contribution still being made by Admirals Peek, Hudson and Griffiths, Nobby Clarke, Curley Fahey and others and thank them for their commitment and contributions.

Bob Gibbs

THE AUSTRALIAN NAVAL AVIATION MUSEUM

I thought it might be of interest to our readers to provide some background to the development of the Museum where we are today and its common bond with the FAA Association of Australia.

Background

HMAS ALBATROSS located in Nowra, New South Wales commissioned as an Australian Naval Air Station on the 30th August 1948 to support the carriers HMA Ships SYDNEY, VENGEANCE and MELBOURNE. After the Korean War, the RAN commenced its first re-equipment programme, selling off the obsolete aircraft on the open market. Some of the aircraft however remained at ALBATROSS as 'gate guards' and trainers. Others remained because there were no buyers. Successive Base Commanders stowed these machines away in far corners of the airfield creating a variety of aircraft 'grave yards.'

Early Development

That was until the early 1970's when the then Base Commander, Commodore Andrew Robertson decided to gather all the old aircraft and surviving items of memorabilia into one of the old World War 2 hangars and set about the formation of the first, albeit rudimentary, Australian Naval Aviation Museum. Known then as the Fleet Air Arm Museum the exhibit was a culmination of years of voluntary efforts. Housed in and around a surplus aircraft hangar at the RAN Air Station, the museum was opened in 1974 by Admiral Sir Victor Smith, the then Chairman of Chiefs of Staff Committee and recognised as the 'father' of the Fleet Air Arm. Although the collection had been previously stored on Base, this was the first time it was open to the public.

The Heritage Trust

On 10th August 1982, Commodore 'Toz' Dadswell, the then Commanding Officer of HMAS ALBATROSS established the Heritage Trust of the Royal Australian Navy Fleet Air Arm. The Trust's activities were based upon the Charter of the Fleet Air Arm. This Charter was an agreement by serving officers, appointed by their position, to further the aim of preserving the history of the Fleet Air Arm.

Formation of the Trust was the first step in providing the already established Fleet Air Arm Museum with a formal basis to plan and conduct its future operations. Previously, the museum was not provided with this form of leadership and guidance, relying heavily on the enthusiasm of voluntary staff and the continuing endorsement of Base Commanding Officers.

Located on Commonwealth land at the North Eastern boundary of HMAS ALBATROSS on a concrete area known as the 'Dummy Deck', the museum until quite recently, comprised of five fibro, wood and galvanised iron buildings. The 'Dummy Deck' had been used to train sailors of the Aircraft Handler Branch in the art of moving aircraft in very confined spaces, ie, the deck of an aircraft carrier. Whilst most of the memorabilia was housed inside these buildings, the aircraft were parked in the open, exposed to the elements and were rapidly deteriorating. The Heritage Trust, recognising the importance of preserving and displaying this significant representation of Australia's naval aviation history, agreed to progress the development of new facilities.

Establishment of the Australian Naval Aviation Museum Foundation

A number of decisions were made in an effort to progress the establishment of a first class museum. Specifically, these were;

- Change the name to the Australian Naval Aviation Museum;
- Incorporate the Heritage Trust as a Company Limited by Guarantee, called 'The Australian Naval Aviation Museum Foundation', and

- Commence raising funds (known as the Capital Campaign) from the corporate sector, Government and private sources, to finance the development of new museum facilities.

In its decision to change the name of the museum from its previous title of The Fleet Air Arm Museum to The Australian Naval Aviation Museum, the Heritage Trust considered a number of factors. The term 'Fleet Air Arm' is normally applied to the body of aviation specialists who served the nation and the RAN since 1948. Australia's naval aviation precedes that time involving Australians who served with the Royal Navy's Fleet Air Arm prior to and during both World Wars as well as Air Force personnel who served on Australian ships prior to 1948. The Trust therefore considered that a more meaningful title for the museum would be one that encompassed the total history and which more aptly linked with the theme of the Heritage Trust Charter, ie 'the preservation and display of Australian Naval Aviation'. This theme and title were transferred with the process of incorporation in order to retain the Museum's true identity in the tradition established by the original charter.

A National campaign Committee to raise the necessary development funds formed in Sydney in September 1988 under the Chairmanship of Rear Admiral Andrew Robertson who retired from the RAN some years previously. The Committee continued through the very difficult recessionary years of the early 1990's to raise \$6 million by 1993. This gigantic effort enabled successful development of the first three stages of the construction plan and the establishment of a viable business to operate the Museum. Fundraising continues unabated to this day in an effort to complete the \$10 million facility.

Objectives of the Museum Foundation

On 6th June 1990, the Australian Naval Aviation Museum was incorporated as a public company, limited by guarantee with the following objectives:

- To take the funds and other assets and liabilities of the 'Heritage Trust' the object of which has been to ensure that as the years pass the story of the development of Australian Naval Aviation is faithfully recorded, preserved and presented with energy, thoroughness and dedication for the benefit of Australia and the Royal Australian Navy.
- To ensure that the story of Aviation in the Royal Australian Navy is recorded by various media and that it will continue to be so recorded.
- To ensure that the history of Aviation in the Royal Australian Navy of yesterday and today which is essentially the story of the deeds and sacrifices of the many men and women who have served their sovereign and their country, in peace and in war, is preserved for the benefit of the people of Australia.
- To ensure that the Naval Aviation Museum at the Royal Australian Navy Air Station, Nowra, New South Wales (the Museum) is preserved, maintained and expanded in furtherance of the objects of this Company.
- To ensure the Museum will always contain and serve as a memorial to those who have lost their lives in the service of Naval Aviation in peace and war.
- To ensure that all of the aircraft, equipment and paraphernalia presently in the Museum is at all times fully maintained and properly presented to the public and that as and when the opportunity arises the Company will acquire by purchase, gift or otherwise or accept on loan all further aircraft, equipment and paraphernalia which the Company considers appropriate and will restore, preserve and present or display in the Museum such further items thereof as the

Company might consider appropriate in furtherance of the objects of the Company.

- To assume and maintain executive control of the Museum and to take all steps necessary as desirable from time to time for the efficient administration, management, maintenance and expansion of the Museum and all of the exhibits therein.
- To ensure that the Museum shall be accessible and open to the public, with or without a charge for admission, at all times and from time to time as might be decided by the Company.

1997

The Museum has now developed to a stage where it is recognised as the foremost tourist attraction on the South Coast of New South Wales, working hard to generate the necessary capital to meet the ongoing objectives of the Company.

The ability to progress and maintain the displays and historical collection would not be possible without the dedicated and enthusiastic support of our cadre of volunteers and sponsors. Due to their efforts and that of the very small Museum staff, the facility boasts a first class and vibrant 120 seat Function Centre, a souvenir shop and the finest collection of restored naval aircraft in Australia.

The Museum Society of Donors and Supporters is currently 1000 strong and continues to be dedicated to our nations naval aviation heritage. Various levels of acclamation are awarded depending on the level of sponsorship and names are recorded on our Honour Boards displayed prominently throughout the Museum. Many benefits are also available to members. The Museum is a Registered Charity and all donations are tax deductible.

Current Activities

The Museum has been developed as a family tourist attraction and our Family Air Days are testimony to popular public acceptance of this theme. We have expanded our activities to include a variety of safe, supervised childrens entertainment enabling adults to enjoy the flying displays and our heritage collection. The latest edition to our collection is the old APEX childrens train that commenced life at HMAS ALBATROSS many years ago. Developing the family theme with suitable discounts has boosted much needed entry revenue.

Our Family Air Day programme for the remainder of 1997 is Sundays, 4 May, 24 August and 23 November.

Stage 4 Development

Mr Ray Williams of HIH Winterthur Insurance has pledged \$1 million over 5 years for the Theatre project and having already received \$400,000 we are on target to commission the building at our 50th Anniversary. The Sydney based Capital Campaign Committee is leading the push to ensure that we obtain the \$1.7 million needed in cash and kind to complete the project without debt. Plans are on public display in the Museum.

Aircraft Acquisition

Aircraft currently and actively being sought by Museum staff include an ex RAN Macchi, a Sea Fury, ex RAN Avenger (currently in the RNZAF Wigram Museum), an F14 Tomcat, 2 ex Korean Kiowas (ex US Army) and a Huey Cobra (for interest).

History of Australian Naval Aviation

Pre orders have now reached 300 books. We need to pre-sell at least 1000 to ensure financial viability. Please fill in the form if you are interested in obtaining your signed copy. The book will be launched at our 1998 Reunion but pre-orders can be collected or sent out in early November that year.

Progress to date has been satisfactory with the main history in rough, first draft form. Windy Geale has been extremely busy adding his expert touch to prompt the author along.

We need more sailor input. Please do not be shy, give us your stories—funny or sad! Send to: The Secretary, History Project, PO Box A15, Naval PO, Nowra, NSW 2540.

50th Anniversary Committee

The Museum is actively involved in the organisation and development of the 50th Anniversary Reunion programme to be held at Nowra 28 October—3 November 1998 as follows:

1998 FAA Reunion—Programme

Wednesday 28th October

1000 Registrations open at Museum

Thursday 29 October

1200 Registrations continue

PM Divisions NAS

1830 Combined Cocktail Party—Museum
Beat Retreat

Friday 30 October

0800 Registrations—Museum

1000 FAA AGM—Base Theatre

Air Day rehearsal all day

1100 Base Tours

Museum Tours

1230 BBQ Lunch

1400 Review

1500 Launch History Book by VIP

PM Dolphin Watch/Kangaroo Valley Tours

Mini Reunions

1900 50th Anniversary Ball 'A' Hangar

Saturday 31 October

1100 Freedom of Entry Parade with RAN

Historic Flight Flyover

Private Aircraft 'Fly-in'

Spring Festival

Dolphin Watch/Kangaroo Valley Tours

Race Day—Nowra Racecourse

1900 BBQ Museum

Sunday 1 November

0830 Ecumenical Service

Memorial Dedication—Museum

1030 HMAS ALBATROSS Air Day

Monday 2 November

Bowls and Golf Day

Local and Sydney Tours—

if sufficient interest.

PROGRAMME SUBJECT TO CHANGE.

*Mike Lehan, FAA Committee Secretary
Amended 17 December, 1996.*

Requests to register intention to participate are being developed with provisional costing for the programme. Accommodation will be very scarce as we have promoted our Golden Jubilee across the globe. No cabins will be available on board HMAS ALBATROSS as they have all been allocated to visiting Airgroups participating in the International Air Days. Good advice is to book your mates spare room now or take an early decision on a hotel room or caravan.

Displays

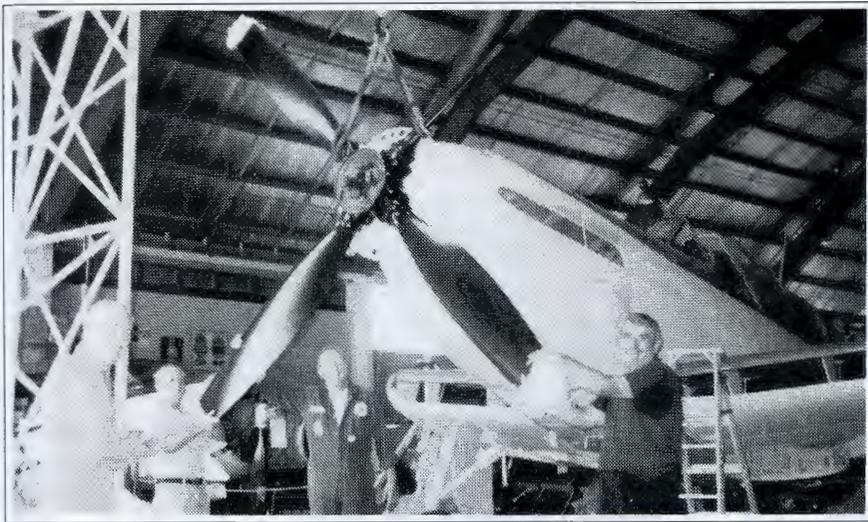
We are embarking on two major displays:

- Korean War—50th Anniversary (2002)
- Women in the RAN

If you have any input—memorabilia, photographs or stories, would you please contact me on (044) 21 7463, (044) 21 1999 (fax), Email (to be advised).

Keep in touch, please come and see us.

Mike Lehan, Museum Director



'Fixing the Firefly Prop'
Peter Penny, Frank McPherson,
Don Parkinson and Bob Pearson

Potential Fighter Pilot



The Museum Flyer

New Hangar for the Museum



HMAS MELBOURNE ASSOCIATION

I know that many members of the Fleet Air Arm Association are also members of the HMAS MELBOURNE Association and will have received a copy of their latest newsletter. For those of you who do not belong I have noted a number of items which I thought might be of interest. Included is a copy of a report of the 1996 Arabian Gulf deployment of the HMAS MELBOURNE (FFG 05).

A request for information comes from a Mr John Godl who is doing research for a British writer Peter Underwood into houses and buildings in Australia with a reputation for being haunted to be used in his next book 'Australia, the Haunted Continent'. Apparently they had heard numerous stories regarding MELBOURNE's ghosts but are unable to find any documented stories and are looking for help. Personally I have no knowledge of any such stories. If you out there in 'Slipstream' land have a ghost tale to tell, let's hear about it.

HMAS MELBOURNE GALLERY—NAVAL HISTORICAL COLLECTION

The long awaited HMAS MELBOURNE Gallery at the Naval Historical Collection, Spectacle Island is completed and Curator, LCDR Graham Thurstans has suggested that 23rd March, 1997 might be a good day for the grand opening. Association members are invited to celebrate that opening. Pick up will be from Drummoyne Sailing Club carpark at 1000—BYO food and drink as nothing is available on the island. Barbeque and picnic facilities are available.

HMAS MELBOURNE FFG 05—ARABIAN GULF DEPLOYMENT 1996

HMAS MELBOURNE, after three months of intensive preparations, departed Sydney on 10 April 1996 and headed for the Arabian Gulf on the RAN's eighth Operation Damask deployment. The ship conducted a brief visit to Darwin and, while the ship's company was unable to join in the annual march in Sydney, ANZAC day was commemorated at anchor near the island of Phuket, Thailand. The ship then sailed for a five day visit to the city of Goa (Mormugao) on the western coast of India. On departure from Goa MELBOURNE conducted a passage exercise with the Indian naval frigate INS SUVARNA which included shiphandling, air defence, underway replenishment and helicopter operations. This was the first co-operative exercise of its type between the two navies for about ten years and was very successful indeed.

MELBOURNE entered the Gulf area of operations (AO) and conducted her first transit of the Strait of Hormuz on 8 May 96. After operational briefings with staff of the Commander, Fifth Fleet United States Navy (USN) in Bahrain, the ship commenced Maritime Interception Force (MIF) operations in close co-operation with USN and Royal Navy (RN) units tasked with enforcement of UN sanctions against Iraq.

MIF operations required all shipping entering and leaving Iraq to be located, identified and queried over VHF radio in relation to their cargo and destination. To locate contacts, MELBOURNE employed surveillance resources such as shipborne radars, infra red cameras and electronic support measures equipment as well as conducting aircraft operations using the embarked AS350-BA (Squirrel) and S70B-2 (Seahawk) helicopters. A diving detachment onboard led the boarding teams which were inserted by helicopter or boat to verify vessel information. If a vessel was found to be violating UN sanctions, it was diverted for further investigation by authorities of one of the Gulf Co-operation Council (GCC) states.

Close co-operation with foreign navies was vital to successful operations in the Gulf. These skills were honed in multinational exercises such a Gulfex 33 in May which was conducted with three

Royal Navy units (the rugby ashore was another winner for MELBOURNE as well!). MELBOURNE also operated with the Nimitz class aircraft carrier USS CARL VINSON in the Central Arabian Gulf early in July, assuming the plane guard safety station close astern of the carrier for 24hrs. MELBOURNE maintained this station while CARL VINSON launched and recovered many of her fighter and surveillance aircraft throughout the day and night.

The operational environment in the Gulf is a challenging one with elevated air temperatures exceeding 45 degrees Celsius daily and high levels of humidity. This made work on the upper decks for long periods very difficult and required personnel to maintain high levels of water intake. The ship's equipment worked well considering the heat and haze present.

Amongst highlights of the deployment were the VIP visits by the Chairman of The Joint Chiefs of Staff, United States, General John M. Shalikashvili and the Maritime Commander Australia (MCAUST). RADM C.J. Oxenbould AO RAN. In their addresses, both stressed the importance of the Australian contribution to the MIF and thanked MELBOURNE's crew for their efforts.

WHEN RADM Oxenbould joined the ship in Dubai and sailed with MELBOURNE to observe MIF ops first hand. He used the visit as an opportunity to present Australian Service Medal ribbons to members of the ship's company and to speak informally with many of them on issues currently affecting their service. MCAUST then disembarked to Bahrain for briefings with Commander Fifth Fleet. VADM T.W. Fargo USN, before returning to Australia. The ship also visited Kuwait which was a significant indication of Australia's commitment to that country. While there, MELBOURNE hosted a ship visit by the Orphans of the Martyrs. These children had all lost their parents who were killed during the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait in August 1990.

For many of the crew, this deployment was their first visit to the Middle East. The states of Bahrain, Saudi Arabia and Oman, as well as Abu Dhabi and Dubai in the United Arab Emirates were also visited. The visits provided the opportunity to conduct official calls and to hold a reception, sporting events and the opportunity for everyone to experience a little of the GCC countries' offerings for themselves.

MELBOURNE departed the Arabian Gulf on 9 Aug 96 and left the AO on 15 Aug 96. The long journey to Sydney via Mauritius and Fremantle has completed on Monday 16 September.

By any measure the deployment was a great success both operationally and personally for the ship's company. MELBOURNE made a significant contribution to the enforcement of United Nations resolutions on Iraq while giving members of the ship's company an opportunity to test themselves and their equipment in an operational environment—but as with any deployment, it was great to arrive home.

Early 1960's—HMAS MELBOURNE

Q. Whats Splice the Mainbrace mean?

A. It's a big piece of rope stowed in the bilges which is hauled on to the Flight Deck and everyone sits around it and splices a piece of rope into it.

Comment: I can't do that as I have a broken arm.
By guess who?

Same character was the only person to put his name on the Tiger hunt list.

REUNION 1996



*l to r: Col Price,
Ray 'Diamond Jim' Davies,
Ian Stilton*

*Queensland Division President Barry
Lister pictured with a Historical Flight
contingent—National Reunion 1996*



REUNION 1996

*Les Jordan, Ron Christie, Val Christie,
Clem Conlon, Betty Conlon, John Ikin,
???. F.A.A. Reunion 1996*



*Trevor ('Snow') Tite, Ruth Mateer and
Alan ('Weed') Smith. HS 816 Squadron
cocktail party, Caloundra, Qld.*

*'Fine' group of Handlers. National
Reunion bar-b-cue*



REUNION 1996



Gunnery Officer's worst nightmare!



Vale

Frederick Charles Atkinson July 23, 1940—March 28, 1997

Fred Atkinson, originally from Beaudesert in Queensland, joined the Royal Australian Navy in 1957.

He served in H.M.A.S. ANZAC and commissioned H.M.A.S. YARRA before transferring to the Fleet Air Arm as an Aircrewman in 1963.

Fred served in both fixed wing and rotary wing squadrons including 725, 817, 724 (Gannets), 816, 723, 851 and 816 (Tracker) Squadrons. Other postings included two years exchange duty with the Royal Navy where he trained in Sea King helicopters and also assisted in the formation of RAN Helo Flight U.K. at R.N.A.S. CULDROSE—formed to train RAN Aircrew on the (then) new Sea King helicopters. Fred was also part of the Acceptance Team for the Sea King Rear Seat Simulator. Fred, a Warrant Officer Aircrewman, left the RAN in November 1982.

Fred is survived by wife Pearl, daughter Debbie and son Darren.

A service for Fred was held in the Fleet Air Arm Chapel, H.M.A.S. ALBATROSS on Friday, 5th April 1997.



*Bob Bryce with Plaque
presented by Queensland Division
for outstanding organisation of the
1996 National Reunion.*