Slipstream

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A German Luftwaffe ME262, one of many Luftwaffe aircraft flown by Eric 'Winkle' Brown (inset) who assessed this aircraft as 125mph faster than any Allied fighter

As most members are aware the late CAPT Eric 'Winkle' Brown CBE, DSC, AFC, RN (21 January 1919 – 21 February 2016) experienced an amazing career cumulating in flying 487 types of aircraft in command (not including variants, e.g. 14 for the Spitfire alone), a feat accomplished by no other known aviator. He also holds the world record for the most launches (2407) and most arrested landings (2271).

'Winkle' achieved several "firsts" in naval aviation, including the first landings on an aircraft carrier of a twin-engine aircraft, an aircraft with a tricycle undercarriage, a jet aircraft, and a rotary-wing aircraft.

He flew almost every category of Royal Navy and Royal Air Force aircraft: glider, fighter, bomber, airliner, amphibian, flying boat and helicopter as well as many United States Navy aircraft whilst serving at the USN Test Center, Patuxent River. During and after World War II, he flew many types of captured German, Italian, and Japanese aircraft, including new jet and rocket aircraft.

Once the war had concluded, 'Winkle' in one of his many TV interviews referred to these captured aircraft as 'museum pieces' only good for evaluating their performance and technology rather than for examining their weaknesses witnessed during combat. The testing of captured German aircraft led 'Winkle' to be a pioneer of jet technology into the post war era.

'Winkles' book 'Wings on My Sleeve' reflects on an important part of his career – the 'Enemy Flight'.

Extract from 'Wings on My Sleeve' and Interviews by Captain E M Brown CBE, DSC, AFC, RN by kind permission of the Winkle Archive. The book is available from Navy Wings (navywings.org.uk) here.

Continued Page 3

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CONTENTS

Towards the end of World War II, the Director of the Royal Aircraft Establishment (RAE) sought out the then LEUT Eric 'Winkle' Brown (then RNVR), who was serving at RAE.

As Brown was fluent in German the initial intention was for him to organise classes in German for selected scientists. This was to prepare them to go to Germany at war's end to evaluate specific German research. There was some urgency to this before the Russians, or they were accidentally destroyed by Allied Forces. Along with these instructions, the Director informed 'Winkle' that he'd most probably go too, so all were then briefed on the establishments and the people to be visited and to be captured.

'Winkle' was then appointed CO of the Enemy Flight at RAE, which included other pilots senior in rank.

Sometime in late April 1945 the first team flew to Germany and landed at Fassberg the nearest airfield to Lundeberg Heath and close to their most important objective Göttingen Aeronautical Research Centre. Not far away was the Belsen Concentration Camp and it was there that 'Winkle' interviewed two War Criminals at the request of the senior British Officer at Belsen, Brigadier Glynn Hughes. These were the camp commandant, Josef Kramer and his female assistant Irma Griese. "Two more loathsome creatures it is hard to imagine, especially the woman who had arrived in Belsen from Auschwitz armed with an already fierce reputation for cruelty." 'Winkle' said.

Eric 'Winkle' Brown in later life standing in front of an Me 163 with a Mig-19 located behind

Arado 234B light twin jet bomber. Often overshadowed by more famous jets in World War II, it caught the Allies by surprise when nine soared through the skies on December 24, 1944 to bomb Liege manufacturing plants in Belgium.

His main objective was to reach Husum airfield where Me163B JG 400s were based. The aircraft were intact and 'Winkles' aim was to fly one under power. For this he would need the help of German pilots and ground crew. He found the pilots reluctant to provide the technical information, whereas the ground crews were more forthcoming. As they were all POWs 'Winkle' decided to split the groups.

As the Allies moved forward, the Germans retreated back toward Scandinavia, taking many of the latest types of aircraft with them; so 'Winkles' immediate priority was to travel to the night-fighter station at Grove in Denmark where a very new jet reconnaissance bomber the Arado 234B was located.

Unbekown to him Grove airfield was still in German hands, so that on landing 'Winkle' was met by a Luftwaffe Major who promptly surrendered the airfield along with 2000 men. However, 'Winkle' had flown far beyond the progress of allied troops. Obviously, ill-equipped for such a situation he did the best he could.

'Winkle', himself takes up the story: "After an uneasy night at Grove, our Army advance forces arrived next morning, so I decid-

ed to return to Schleswig-Holstein, where I had selected Schleswig airfield as my destination since I had a report that some jet aircraft were there. I left my co-pilot with the Avro Anson and to look after the 'boffins' while I appropriated a serviceable German Fw 190 and headed south. Enroute, I flew over Flensburg and noted much activity in the area, so decided to land and report to our Army about the situation at Grove. As I approached Flensburg airfield, I thought my aircraft would be taken for a Luftwaffe pilot surrendering but as I touched down, I attracted some sporadic small arms fire and so opened up at once and took off for Schleswig."

Over the next few days, 'Winkle' saw the Arados, as well as some interesting new types of radar-equipped night-fighters. He quickly arranged to return to collect them later on.

At Schleswig, where the Army was in control, 'Winkle' found some intact Messerschmitt 262 twin-jet fighters, most of which were single-seaters, but there was one two-seat night fighter. With the help of the Luftwaffe POWs who were still moving around the airfield, he decided to have a go at this machine since it was a rarity and too unusual to miss. However, the single-seat fighters were his real targets. In fact, this was his first experience of German jet aircraft. He was immediately struck by the complexity in starting up its axial-flow engines; and by their sensitivity to throttle movement in flight - to move the throttles at all quickly invited a flame-out of the jets.

Focke-Wulf Fw 190 A-3 x 2. Photo taken by Rudolph Hottman 1942

At this stage he had to hurriedly return to Farnborough to carry out the first test to determine the deck-landing potential of the new De Havilland Vampire jet fighter.

Whilst in England, a special assignment was presented in the form of a signal from the Air Attaché in Dublin to say that about two weeks previously a Junkers 88 carrying the latest German radar gear had force-landed in a field north of Dublin. The Irish were prepared to let the British collect the aircraft, provided they arrived in an aircraft carrying civilian markings, and wore civilian clothes.

The crew led by 'Winkle' did not conform and received a somewhat cold reception from the Irish. After interrogating the German crew which is interesting in itself, the RAE crew examined the Junker 88 radar, ran up the engines, and departed. The aircraft headed for Anglesey, and there a flight of Spitfires escorted the Junker 88 to Farnborough.

The immediate months following the German capitulation were a period of frantic activity as captured enemy aircraft were examined and flight tested, and their design engineers and test pilots were interrogated by the Allies. 'Winkle' was heavily involved in all these activities, as he had the added advantage of speaking fluent German.

Returning to Germany was again delayed as there was a requirement to test fly the Sea Hornet and Sea Fury. 'Winkle' did manage to fit trips to Germany around the Navy testing, until RAE approached Navy to ask for support to lighten his workload.

Accordingly he was relieved of his duties in testing the Sea Fury which was handled by another Navy test pilot.

'Winkle' made three flights in the Me 163A under tow to 20,000 ft. His desire to fly it under power

Artist impression of Junker 88s attacking shipping

Four pilots of the Aerodynamics Flight at RAE. From Left to right: Sqn Ldr Tony Martindale, Sqn Ldr Jimmy Nelson, LEUT Eric 'Winkle' Brown RNVR and Sqn Ldr Doug Weightman

became an obsession. However, there had been a number of accidents and the C-in-C Germany had banned all RAF pilots flying the Me163, but, not including RAE accredited pilots. 'Winkle' felt he had a number of factors in his favour. These included that he'd done his training on the Me 163A, interrogated JG400 aircrew and ground crew and had a set of pilot's notes in his possession. Added to this was his fluency in German and an official letter from RAE to all Allied Forces requesting full cooperation in providing access to captured aircraft was an advantage.

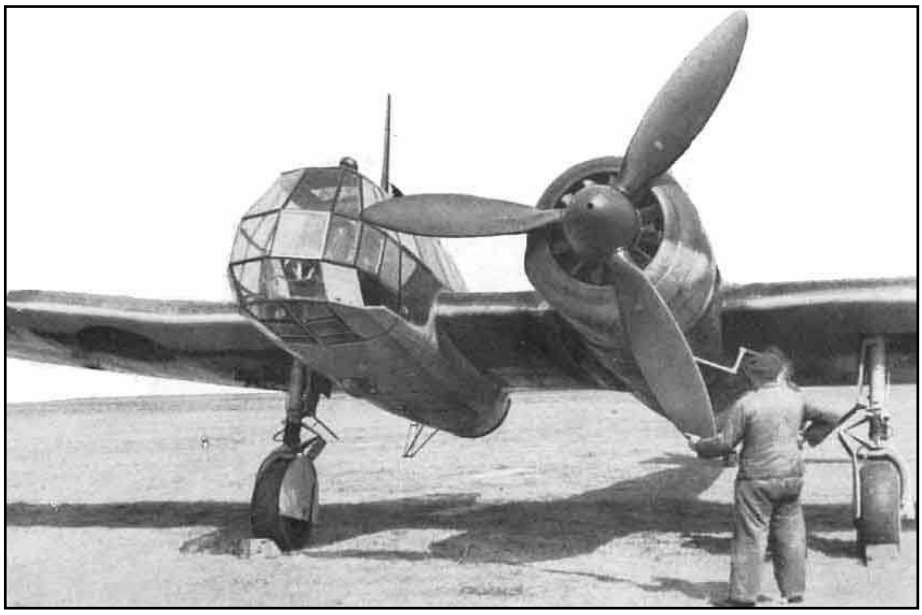
He made the powered flight in the early hours of the morning, lifting off the trolley at 280kph (175 mph) setting the aircraft in a 45 deg climb. 'Winkle' felt he was in charge of a 'runaway train'. The steep angle of climb required the aircraft to be flown on instruments After reaching 32,000 ft in 2 ¾ minutes he levelled off. What surprised him was how quick the aircraft accelerated in a dive with the rocket engine shut down. He had exhausted the rocket fuel so commenced a glide back to Husun, making the final approach reducing the speed to 215kph (135 mph) with flap down for landing.

'Winkle' arranged for a German Siebel 204D (light twin transport) to be his own personal aircraft with the swastika having been removed and replaced with RAF roundels. Whilst the French and Americans were of assistance, he was not sure of the reaction of the Russians. The first occasion he encountered a Russian Commandant at Tarnewitz airfield in East Germany who had flown Hurricanes gifted by Britain during the war. They seemed to get on well conversing in German, though 'Winkle' was not too keen on Russian design philosophy, which was that military aero -engines should not be built for longevity. 'Winkle' accepted the Commandants offer to fly two Russian aircraft the Yak-9 (fighter) and PE-2 (twin tactical bomber).

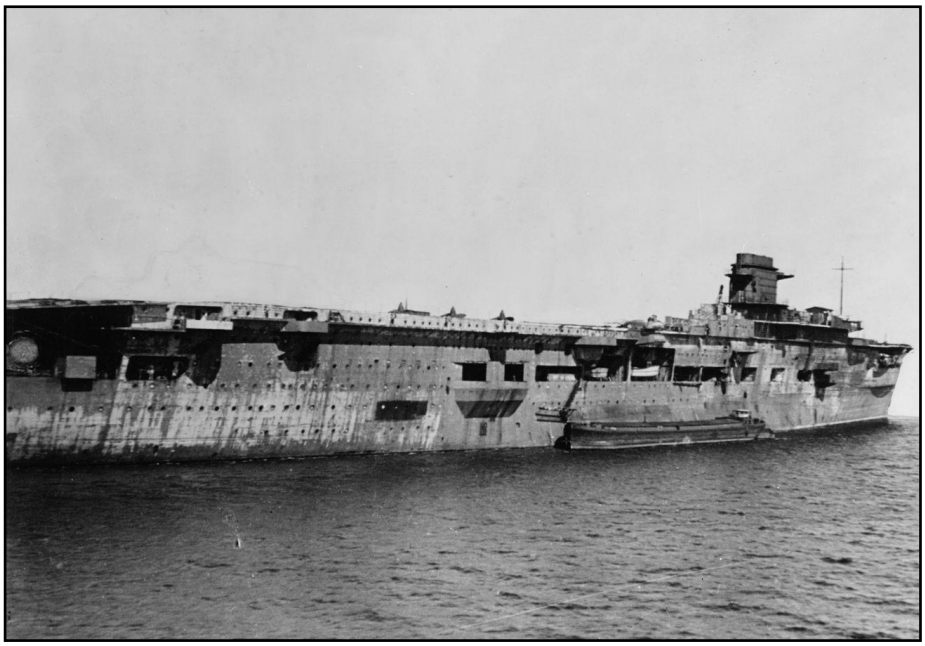
Unfortunately, when the Commandant directed 'Winkle' to another Russian captured airfield near Meissen the hospitality was far less receptive. Eventually, they allowed 'Winkle' to fly a 'clapped out' German Bv141 which was due for destruction. Sometime later, the aforesaid Commandant decided that if 'Winkle' was to fly the Mig-3 and Yak 7 he would have to source two (2) German aircraft in return.

Arriving back at Schleswig airfield, 'Winkle' decided to make this the collection base for the RAE acquired German aircraft. They could be checked out before being sent to RAE Farnborough. At the neighbouring airfield of Leck, 'Winkle' was surprised to find the new fighter wing of Heinkel He162 single jet engine interceptors and 20 miles away in Husun were three (3) squadrons of JG 400's Me 163B rocket fighters.

Whilst visiting the Messerschmitt test airfield at Augsburg 'Winkle' found an Me 109 fitted with an arrestor hook. The aircraft had been specially adapted for deck landing trials on Germany's one and only carrier *Graf Zeppelin*. However, the aircraft was



Unusual design of the Bv 141



Construction of the Graf Zeppelin began in 1936 and was never completed. After the war little was known of it apart from the fact it was in the Russian sector. The Russians sank the ship in March 1946 but decided to refloat it. Enroute to Leningrad it is believed to have struck a mine and sank again. It was discovered by a Polish research vessel in 2006

considered impossible for deck landing because of its poor forward view and weak undercarriage. The *Graf Zeppelin* was never used.

In the meantime, the USAAF had set up their own 'Enemy Flight' with a central base, using German pilots and ground crew as well as US personnel, very similar to the RAE model. Once the US had collected all their targeted aircraft, they'd be ferried to Cherbourg for embarkation to the US. 'Winkle' established a good rapport with the CO of the US contingent where he traded captured aircraft for access to German aviation identities.

This bargaining power got him interrogation rights to Reichmarschal Hermann Goering. 'Winkle' was given one hour with Goering. When asked how he felt about the Battle of Britain, Goering responded that it had been an indecisive draw as he withdrew forces in preparation for Operation Barbarossa, the invasion of the Soviet Union.

More questions were asked but in general 'Winkle' described it as more pilot talking to pilot about differing aspects of the Luftwaffe administration and command. Goering, on the other hand asked 'Winkle' his impression of flying different German aircraft. Initially, Goering, looking pale and withdrawn was seemingly disinterested until he realised he was talking to a pilot solely about aviation.

'Winkles' next endeavour was to track down the German female test pilot Hanna Reitsch and the Horton Brothers who were behind the development of the 'flying wing' (Horton -229).

The RAE's investigations took them to Bavaria on the trail of both parties. Hanna was believed to be in an American hospital in Kitzbuhl. But the RAE team were diverted by a reliable piece of advice that a key member of the Horton brothers was living in a village in a remote part of Bavaria. On reaching the residence, the person answering the door tried to hide his identity until convinced those seeking him out were merely after information and not interested in other matters. The Americans had decided to ship the Horton-229 back to the US via Farnborough to allow the British to examine the aircraft enroute.

Once this was finished the RAE team returned to question Hanna but to their surprise the US had already taken her into custody. Eventually, in early July 1945, 'Winkle' was allowed to interrogate her. Hanna was suspicious at first until 'Winkle' convinced her he only wanted to talk flying primarily because she had flown a wide variety of aircraft, both civil and military. 'Winkle' was also interested in her helicopter experience and flying the Me163, in ad-

Bf 109 Fighter the type 'Winkle' Brown found at the Messerschmitt airfield fitted with an arrestor hook for deck landings

Herman Goering being lead to the War Crimes Trial by a US Military Policeman

dition to flying a 'piloted version' of the V1. Then she opened up and began to talk freely.

In mid-1945 a group of RAE ferry pilots were sent to Schleswig to run a staging base for captured German aircraft previously selected by test pilots from the 'Enemy Flight'. Once a scientist discovered an aircraft of interest, one of the 'Enemy Flight' test pilots would pick it up and bring it back to Schleswig and stage it back to Farnborough. The more familiar types of enemy aircraft would be left to the ferry pilots to bring back. The 'Enemy Flight' test pilots would use the ordinary aircraft as a taxi service to get around Germany in their search for new aircraft.

'Winkle' took a special interest in Himmler's aircraft, the Focke-Wulf Condor, initially because they were similar to those he'd operated against from HMS *Audacity*, but also because they were amazing to fly. Himmler's Condor was fitted out lavishly with a modern kitchen. The surprise was Himmler's unique seat with an armour-plated back and two folding armour protecting plates. At his feet was a jettison - able door controlled by Himmler himself, which would allow him to bail out if necessary.

'Winkle' had to rely on captured German Pilots and Ground Crew to assist the 'Enemy Flight' to complete its tasks. Many aircraft log books had been destroyed necessitating the reliance on German Pilots and Ground Crews.

Two instances that disturbed 'Winkle' were:

1. It was necessary on occasions to use German pilots to fly. They weren't provided with charts and had to fly in close formation with the RAE pilot when ferrying aircraft. On one occasion 'Winkle' was leading a flight of two Me262's to Farnborough when they encounter IMC (inclement weather for non-aircrew, non-ATC and non-MET). They were separated and 'Winkle returned to his base believing that the German had escaped only to receive a phone call the German had landed at another airfield. Once they met up the ferry flight to Farnborough continued.

2. On the other occasion, a German Pilot qualified on the six-engine Bv 222 was asked to demonstrate a take-off from the co-pilot's seat with 'Winkle' in the captain's seat.

As the aircraft increased speed over the water, he noticed the German was making no attempt to lift off but was heading directly for mountainous terrain on shore. He instantly recognised the German was planning a suicide attempt and take to 'Winkle' with him! 'Winkle' then took control and returned the aircraft to its mooring. No doubt this German pilot never assisted RAE again?

In the final analysis the defeat of the Germans in 1945 revealed the extent of their technological advances in aerodynamics, rocketry, engines and weaponry as well as ancillary equipment.

'Winkle' in a presentation to the Royal Aeronautical Society, Yeovilton branch in 2014 said: "Britain in late 1944 got the

Continued Page 26

A four engine Focke-Wulf Condor with RAF roundels, the type of aircraft used by Heinrich Himmler

Refugees Reunite after 40 years following Dramatic Rescue in South China Sea

851 returning aboard about to 'trap' after searching the South China Sea for refugees (RAN Photo)

By Keira Proust and Sarah Moss
of ABC Illawarra here
Posted on ABC website 14 March 2021

A group of Vietnamese refugees and their families have reconnected with a restored aircraft south of Sydney, 40 years after their miraculous rescue from a "floundering" fishing boat that was helping them flee Vietnam's communist regime.

In June 1981, a crew from 816 Sqn were flying an S-2G Tracker 851 from HMAS *Melbourne* when they helped rescue 99 refugees from their broken-down vessel in the South China Sea, 250 nautical miles east of Vietnam.

Before long, HMAS *Melbourne* arrived to rescue the men, women and children from their overloaded boat after four days adrift.

Stephen Nguyen was 20 years old at the time of the rescue and helped organise Saturday's reunion to see the restored Tracker (851) at the Historical Aircraft Restoration Society (HARS) aviation museum in Albion Park.

"We have very mixed feelings," Mr Nguyen said.

"We didn't realise that we would have a chance to see the aircraft again after 40 years."

Of the 99 refugees rescued, more than 70 of them settled in Australia to make new lives for themselves, while others resettled in Canada or the United States.

Now 60, Mr Nguyen lives in Oatley in southern Sydney and spent much of his 40 years running a bakery in the city's south-western suburbs.

He said the reunion was an emotional moment for the 40 attendees.

"It's like being reunited with a friend — an old friend," Mr Nguyen said. "All of us have a feeling of going back to the past, to the time we were in danger and being helped by someone and one of them is the Tracker 851."

Four days at sea

Most of the refugees were sick, weak and dehydrated.

They had run out of food supplies, their water was contaminated and they had spent four days exposed to the elements on the open ocean.

Vince di Pietro was a 21-year-old Wessex helicopter pilot from 817 Sqn on HMAS *Melbourne* during the rescue in 1981.

He still remembers the operation vividly. "I'd never seen anything like it," Vince said. "There were all sorts of people — young and old — hanging over the side of the ship."

Rescue a miraculous coincidence

Carl Robinson from HARS said it was a miracle the rescue occurred. He said: “It was only by chance that the crew on the last Tracker flight of the day noticed the refugees' signal for help”. "They spotted a flare or a fire coming from the horizon," Mr Robinson said. "They flew over and found a floundering boatload of Vietnamese refugees who had been afloat for three days."

In the 40 years since the navy crew saw that flare in a perilous and stormy South China Sea, the aircraft's history had mostly been forgotten.

"Nobody knew the story," Mr Robinson said. "No one had gone looking for [the Tracker] 851 before.”

A 'blessed' life in Australia

Captain Nguyen Van Tam, now nearly 80, was at the helm of the small, struggling vessel in 1981. Among the refugees were his wife and seven children. Captain Tam spoke positively about his life in Australia, and how proud he was of his family's achievements.

"I feel very blessed," he said, speaking through Vietnamese interpreter Kim Robinson. "I arrived in Australia with seven children they have all been successful and contributed to Australia. "Our boat people are very honoured to be here — to live here in Australia."

Captain Tam said he and his family had lived a "very happy, pleasant" life since making Australia their home.

Captain Nguyen Van Tam 40 years later. (ABC Illawarra: Sarah Moss)

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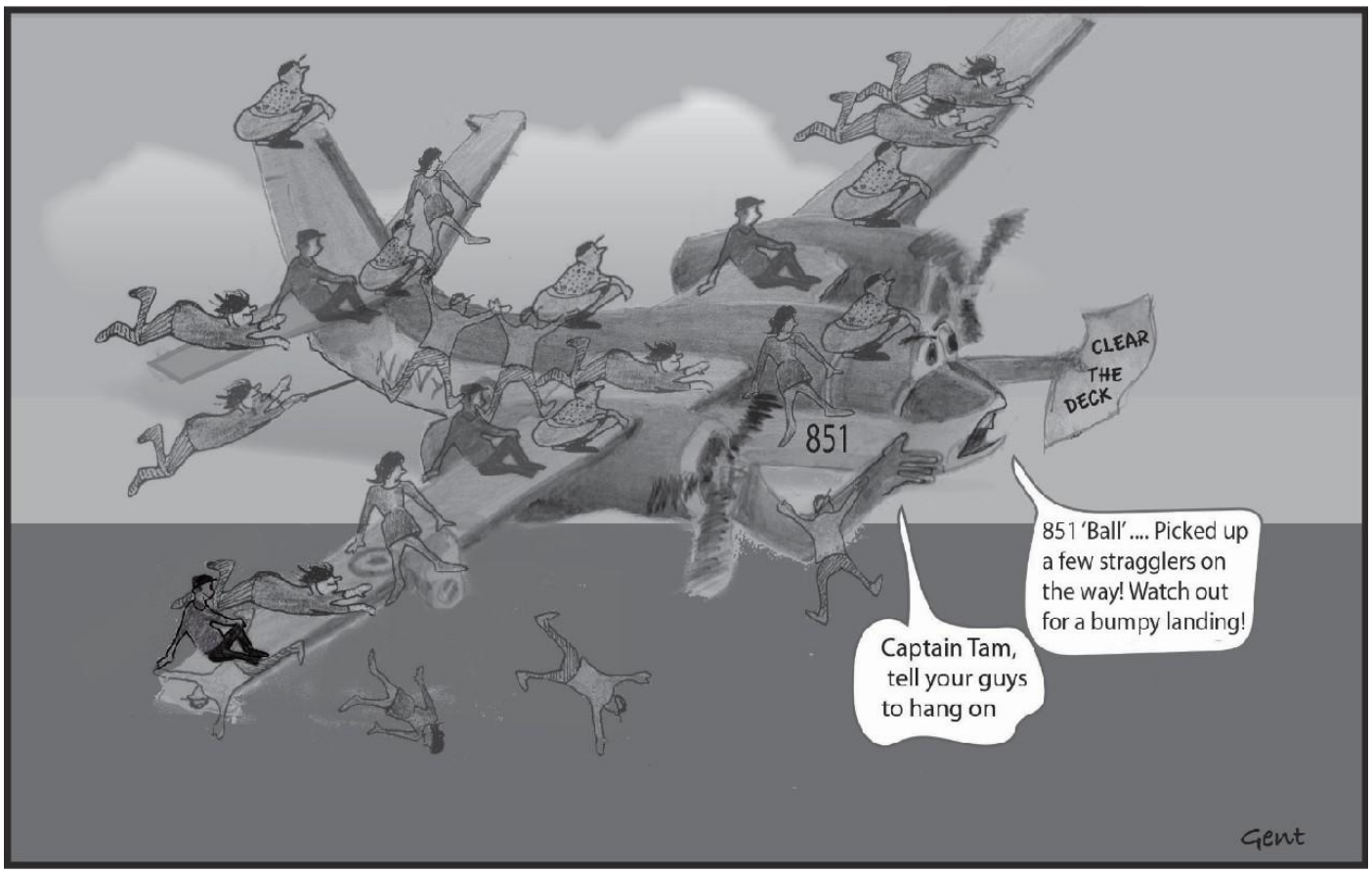


RNAS Bankstown Commissioned as HMS Nabberley on 29 January 1945

Aircraft park looking to the northwest. Serviceable aircraft arranged in neat rows. New arrivals, stripped of engines, wings and tail planes and preserved for shipping, are parked in rows parallel to the road.

The MONAB story continues and is published in Slipstream with the permission of the Editor and Webmaster of the Royal Navy Research Archive, the website which is located here. A direct link from within this site to the MONAB site is here.

Each issue, Slipstream will describe different MONABs located within Australia over several issues with links to relevant parts of the MONAB story. . . . . Ed

Mobile Naval Air Base No. II

Assembly and commissioning in the UK

Personnel and equipment for Mobile Naval Air Base No. II began to assemble during early October 1944 at Royal Naval Air Station Ludham, Norfolk, the headquarters of the Mobile Naval Airfields Organisation (MNAO). The formation of MONAB II was to prove to be exceptionally difficult due to the fact that the duties of this unit were changed from that of a normal type A MONAB to that of a Receipt and Dispatch Unit shortly after formation began. This was a unit for which there was no scheme of complement laid down. The unit was to assemble with the standard MONAB elements, but the Maintenance and repair (Air) element received no Maintenance Servicing or Mobile Maintenance units, instead entirely new, and untested, components were substituted.

The following components were added to cater for all aircraft types in use by the RN in the Pacific theatre:

Aircraft Erection Unit

Aircraft Equipping & Modification Unit

Aircraft Storage Unit

The confusion caused by this role change was to be felt both at the formation station and in the operational area; the drafting office, based at R.N. Barracks, Lee-on-Solent, was not informed of the revised complement in sufficient time so the initial draft arrived at Ludham to find themselves surplus to requirements. A complement of 997 technical

ratings for Maintenance, erecting and Equipping was finally decided upon by the planning staff and a new draft if replacement ratings was raised.

Split formation: A second immediate effect of the role change came with the increased size of the complement; a standard MONAB had an average complement of 550 personnel including officers, so MONAB II was nearly doubled in size. The formation station, Royal Naval Air Station, Ludham, could not accommodate such a large number as MONAB I was also present on the station and MONAB III was due to begin formation shortly. The solution was to accommodate some 600 ratings at HMS *Gosling* (R.N. Air Establishment Risley, over 100 miles away) at Warrington, Lancashire.

Operational Corsairs fitted with centreline drop tanks. These are probably aircraft withdrawn when a squadron had disbanded

This division of the complement made kitting up, checking of lists, and arranging short maintenance courses, and ultimately embarkation, unnecessarily complicated. To further compound an already complicated restructuring of the unit's assembly and formation period it was found that many of the ratings drafted were unfamiliar with the several types of aircraft which it was intended that MONAB II should handle; the formation time table made no allowance for rating familiarisation, unit sailing dates were pre-set so training outside of that set out in the formation programme was sacrificed. In addition to unprepared technical ratings, no adequate writer staff were drafted, ratings received were inexperienced; of three supplied for the workshop element, only one could type with any speed or accuracy.

Despite these problems MONAB II commissioned as an independent command on 18 November 1944, bearing the ship's name HMS *Nabberley* with CMDR E.P.F. Atkinson in command.

Despatch overseas

By late-November the unit was ready for despatch overseas; all of the mobile units planned had been allocated to the support of the new British Pacific Fleet which was to begin operations in the South Western Pacific in early 1945. Australia was to be the rear echelon area for the fleet and a number of the MONABs were to be installed there.

The unit's stores & equipment were transported, overnight, to Gladstone Dock, Liverpool for embarkation on 20 November 1944; this operation was carried out by the unit's own transport. However, the loading, of stores & equipment in the SS *Perthshire*, (LS 1974) did not occur until early De-

RN and RAAF personnel who formed the RNAS Bankstown test flight, Summer 1945. STANDING - From Left: TAG Macintosh, SBLT Michael Price, 3, 4 & 5 Not known, LCDR Roy Dence [CMDR (F)] FLTLT Geoff Schaeffer - (OIC test flight) FLTLT 'Jerry' Myers, FLTLT Ron Rae, FLGOFF Lyie Holtkamp, SBLT Rex Smith, 12 13 & 14 Not Known. KNEELING - From left: FLGOFF Clem Schmitzer - later CMDR RAN, FLTLT Lester Henning, FLTLT 'Glbby' Gibaon, FLGOFF Ken Lockley

Function

Receipt & Despatch Unit.
Communications Squadron (No. 724 squadron)

Aviation support Components

Aircraft Erection Unit
Aircraft Equipping & Modification Unit
Aircraft Storage Unit

Aircraft type supported

Avenger Mk. I & II
Corsair Mk. II & IV
Expeditor II
Firefly I
Hellcat Mk. I & II
Martinet TT. I
Reliant I
Seafire III & L.III
Sea Otter I
Tiger Moth I
Vengeance TT.IV

Commanding Officers

Commander E. P. F. Atkinson 18 Nov 1944 to 31 March 1946

cember, she sailed on 8 December 1944. The personnel of MONAB II did not embark for passage until 22 December in company with elements from MONAB III and other units being shipped to Australia in the Troopship *Athlone Castle*, sailing from Liverpool on 24 December 1944.

An advance party of MONAB II had been despatched to Australia and was in Sydney at the beginning of December. The party arrived at RAAF Bankstown, Sydney, early in the month to set up shop. Unloaded with the advance party were 16 crated aircraft, 8 Corsair IIs & 8 Martinet TT.Is collected from the RN Aircraft Depot at Cochin, South India. These aircraft were to be assembled by the advance party, with RAAF assistance, and were to have been test flown by the time the main party arrived in the New Year. The first aircraft assembled, Corsair II JT537 was test flown on 18 January 1945. In early January two ferry loads of aircraft arrived to begin the build-up of reserve airframes prior to the arrival of the British Pacific Fleet (BPF) in Sydney. These came from the UK and India onboard the escort carriers HMS *Battler* and HMS *Atheling*.

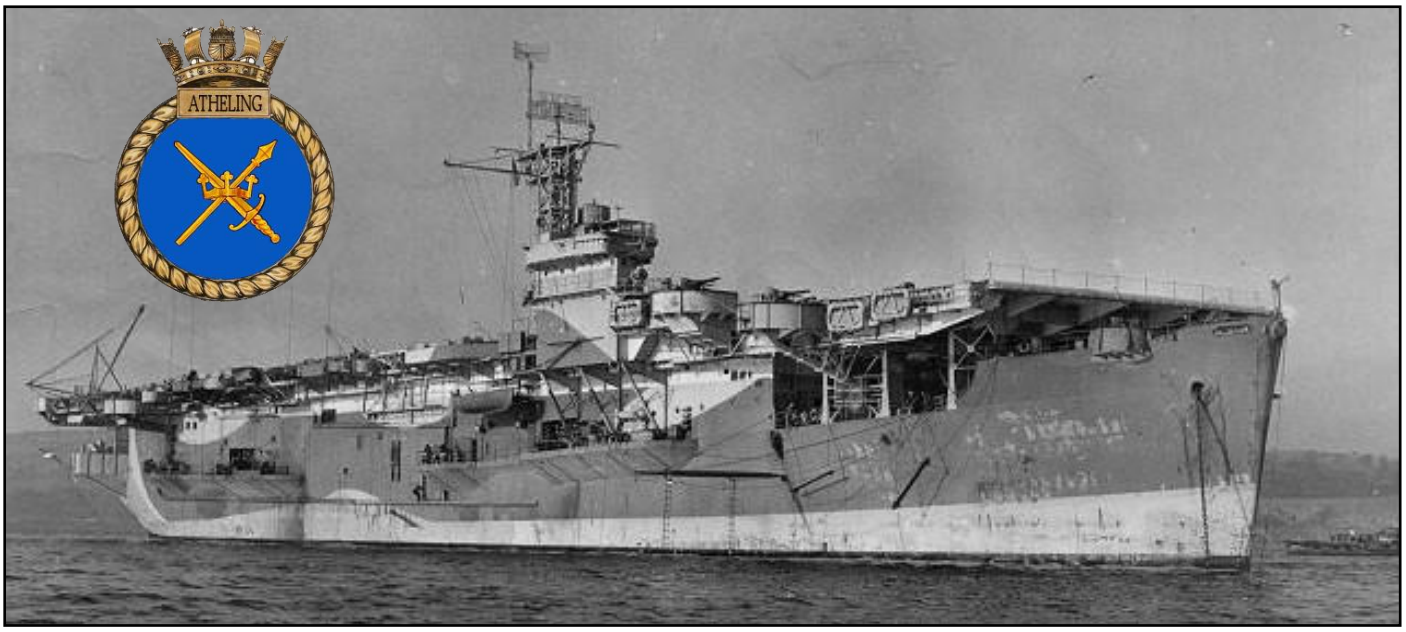
The SS *Perthshire* arrived in Sydney on 24 January 1945 while the *Athlone Castle* arrived the following day; part of the ship's company proceeded directly to RAAF Bankstown, the remainder were temporarily accommodated under canvas at Warwick Farm, HMS *Golden Hind*, while stores and equipment were unloaded and accommodation was sorted out.

Commissioned at RNAS Bankstown, New South Wales

RAAF Bankstown was transferred on loan to the RN on 27 January 1945. MONAB II began transporting stores & equipment to the station on this date. MONAB II commissioned Bankstown, as Royal Naval Air Station Bankstown, HMS *Nabberley* on 29 January 1945. Work began almost immediately, continuing assembling crated aircraft and carrying out pre-issue test flights.

The Receipt of Airframes: One of the most important departments on MONAB II was the Salvage Section. Under the charge of LCDR (A) P. E. Hind RNVR and LEUT (A) G. A. Pursall RNVR, it grew

Aircraft Artificer 4th Class (Electrical) Laurence Russell, part of the unit's electrical section, poses with a Seafire at Bankstown



Escort Carrier HMS Atheling used in her capacity to ferry aircraft to Australia at Anchor

into a team of four Chief Petty Officers, twenty Royal Marine drivers and about thirty naval airmen as mechanics come drivers. Originally tasked with the recovery of crashed aircraft, the occasional crashed aircraft was collected, but they became responsible for the movement of all aircraft and stores by road between the dockside and Bankstown.

Incoming airframes arrived at Pyrmont Dock in Sydney Harbour; this had been designated as a Fleet Air Arm dock and was run by the Australian Port Authorities in conjunction with the Royal Navy. Airframes and aircraft engines arrived by sea via several means; crated airframes and engines were delivered in the holds of transport ships or arrived as deck cargo on RN aircraft carriers. Preserved airframes were delivered by Escort Carriers, and, occasionally Fleet Carriers. Some of the Escort Carriers allocated to the BPF arrived on station with a full load of up to 70 aircraft plus crated engines and stores collected from RN Air Yards in the UK or India. Once off loaded all had to be transported to Bankstown by road convoy.

State law prohibited the towing of these aircraft through the city on their own wheels so special trailers known as 'Spiders' were employed to carry individual airframes in convoys of eight. Aero engines were loaded onto other flatbed trailers for transport. All were difficult loads which had to negotiate Sydney tram cables and tracks, these convoys were assisted by the New South Wales Police as they made their way across the city. When a carrier made a delivery there could be up to 70 airframes to move, this meant working night and day for about three days.

Unknown group, possibly part of the aircraft erection component tasked retrieving and returning airframes to & from the aircraft park

Once the replenishment and ferry carriers of the 'Air train' – the aviation support element of the Fleet Train began operations, Escort Carriers arrived about every ten days from the forward operating base in the Admiralty Islands to off load unserviceable aircraft and embark as many replacements as available for ferrying to the BPF Carriers engaged in operations against the Japanese.

Storage Unit surplus to requirements: By late February it became apparent that unexpected shortfalls in the aircraft production targets meant that the Mobile Storage element was re-

The Governor General of Australia, Prince Henry, Duke of Gloucester inspecting a Hellcat as it was being serviced during his visit to RNAS Bankstown. © IWM (A 29370)

dundant, all available replacement airframes were needed by the 'Air Train' so there were no reserve aircraft to process into storage. The situation was not seen as improving for the foreseeable future so the decision was taken to break up the Mobile Storage unit, sub dividing it to equip four new Maintenance Storage & Reserve units, MSR 3, 4, 7, & 8. Of these, MSR 3 & 4 were already assembling at Bankstown work having begun in early February. MSR 4 was allocated to operate with MONAB IV and an advance party was dispatched to its operational base, on Ponam Island, in the Admiralty Islands, on board the maintenance carrier HMS *Unicorn*; the second echelon of MSR 4 was embarked in HMS *Speaker*, arriving at Ponam Island on 13 March. MSR 3 had a different role to fulfil, it was divided into A & B sub units and embarked in the escort carrier HMS *Striker* and *Unicorn* to support a Forward Aircraft Pool which was initially held onboard these carriers. MSR 7 & 8 were transferred to TAMY I upon its arrival in Brisbane in late March.

The first two replenishment carriers were prepared in early March; *Striker* (Flagship of 30th aircraft carrier squadron) spent the first week of March loading equipment, spares, airframes and passengers. On 4 March she embarked elements of MSR 3 from RNAS Bankstown, to provide additional capabilities and maintain a reserve pool of ready to issue airframes afloat. She sailed with a full ferry load of replacement aircraft, embarking as many as could be supplied from RNAS Bankstown for delivery to the forward base at Manus. After unloading she retained a replenishment load similar to that carried in HMS *Slinger*, but carried no operational squadron. She sailed for Manus on 7 March.

Slinger arrived off Sydney 26 February and flew her squadron, 1845 NAS, ashore to RNAS Schofields. Three (3) unserviceable Corsairs were off loaded once alongside at Pyrmont Dock for repair at Bankstown. She sailed for the forward operating area on 11 March having embarked a replenishment load of 25 airframes from RNAS Bankstown. This load was made up of 10 Corsairs, seven (7) Hellcats, three (3) Seafires, one (1) Avenger and four (4) Fireflies for issue to the fleet during replenishment periods. This load was carried in addition to her squadron which re-embarked once at sea.

Manpower shortages and other difficulties: After only a month of operating it had become apparent that the complement of non-technical ratings borne proved to be totally inadequate to meet demands of station duties. These elements had received no manpower increase in the revised complement. The shortfalls made it impossible to supply

Three members of the MONAB II test flight maintenance crew with Leading Air Fitter (Engines) Bruce Robinson sitting on the Seafire wing

the necessary guards, working parties, galley hands etcetera without drawing on the technical personnel or borrowing ratings, when available, from the RN Barracks, Sydney. Shortages in manpower also applied to Cooks and Stewards; in MONAB II the average number of officers permanently borne was 85, as opposed to 36 for a standard MONAB. The already stretched drafting pool would be further strained after the war in Europe ended. Plans to demobilise those who qualified by either age or length of service were eligible for release beginning on 18 June 1945 and meant that many experienced personnel could be lost and less experienced reliefs would be appointed or drafted to maintain manning level.

An aircraft handling party devisers a newly completed Firefly to the aircraft park, possibly to await it's check test flight.

Being installed at an operational aerodrome none of the mobile Flying Control equipment supplied for MONAB II was used, however HF/DF, YG and JG Beacons and ground W/T installations were installed. MONAB II suffered from a serious shortage of M/T spares, spare parts issued in England were in the majority not required and those needed had to be purchased where possible from local sources.

Streamlined aircraft production: Once sufficient aircraft became available to permit a steady flow through the hangar's attempts were made by the air engineering team to adopt industrial trade methods, namely to break down the jobs into small units so that a team could be trained very quickly to do a small job on each aircraft. This practice paid off, allowing for rapid gains in skill which enabled the process time of an aircraft on the hangar floor to be reduced considerably.

Co-operation between the Air Engineering, Air Gunnery, Air Radio, and Air Electrical Officers had enabled work on an aircraft to be planned as a whole, enabling an aircraft to come out of a crate, enter one hangar and leave that hangar complete in all respects and ready for butt testing, compass swinging and test flight. However, plans to operate this scheme to its full extent were negated by ratings being drafted and by the intermittent arrival of aircraft resulting in varying output figures. The practice of sending secret equipment separate from the aircraft also caused considerable delay in bringing aircraft forward for service.

Over a period of several months aircraft production was refined into a 10-stage procedure:

(*1*) *Aircraft arrives on station.*

(2) To receipt park - loose equipment removed except when aircraft are in sealed crates or Eronell (protective covering which embalmed aircraft for open storage or transport as deck cargo).

(3) Preparation of Servicing and Inspection Forms by the Inspection Section.

(4) Aircraft is allotted to a hangar for production - entry to the hanger was staggered in order to avoid having two aircraft reach the same stage at the same time. A system approach ensured that Gunnery, Radio and Electrical sections worked on each aircraft in turn, and at stages where this work would not interfere with the Airframes and Engine ratings. Available modifications were incorporated during erection or inspection.

(5) Aircraft arrives at the end of hangar line for gun alignment, and final check by inspection team. During this final check an aircraft moves out of the hangar for engine running.

(6) Move to Stop butts for gun firing and harmonisation.

(7) Move to Compass base - if an aircraft carries Radar it goes to Radar Base before the Stop butts, (Avengers were not Butt tested).

(8) Check Test Flight.

(9) To Storage - Category "B".

(10) Transferred to Storage - Category "A" when loose equipment is available and the aircraft has been doped.

The output levels achieved fell well short of the production programme, partly due to a lack of airframes being delivered, and partly by the state in

which crated or preserved airframes arrived on the station. Aircraft were received in varying states of equipment installation, some arriving completely installed, others partially installed and, in many instances, completely void of all equipment, in these cases equipment had been despatched separately and was unlikely to arrive with the airframe.

In the case of aircraft arriving with equipment installed, it was found that in the majority of cases all the equipment was in first class condition, requiring only a minimum of work to complete the testing and final installation of the aircraft. Any aircraft which were only partly installed (and in some cases only partly modified) caused serious delays owing to a lack of spare equipment. Considerable delay was also experienced due to aircraft arriving minus their entire radio equipment.

Test flying: The unit's test flight was responsible for all ground and airborne testing of aircraft on leaving the production hangar. Ground crews conducted engine, electrical, radio and armament checks on aircraft in the storage park prior to the start of the test flight. There were up to 18 aircrew on the strength of the Test Flight, however there were more RAAF pilots than RN, all under the command of FLTLT Geoff Schaeffer RAAF. He in turn reported to CMDR (Flying), LCDR (P) G. R. Dence, RNVR who made the decisions about whether flights could be undertaken or cancelled based on local weather conditions. Flights were conducted every day, and only cancelled when cloud cover was too low. Once airborne every piece of equipment in the aircraft was checked - radio, guns, hydraulics, engine performance, and handling characteristics; depending on the type, an Observer and Air Gunner would be onboard. On completing a successful check test flight an aircraft was returned to the park for category B storage.

Squadron equipment issues: The personnel of 723 Squadron arrived from RNAS Nowra, MONAB I, on 28 February 1945 to commission as a Fleet Requirements Unit and receive their initial equipment issue of 8 Martinet TT.I and 8 Corsair II aircraft (the aircraft assembled by the advance party). The squadron was also temporarily issued with 2 Expediter Mk. I passenger aircraft in order to initiate communications flights in advance of the formation of 724 communications squadron which would begin operation in April. 723 carried out a short workup at RNAS Bankstown during March in preparation for beginning active duties, making regular flights to RNAS Nowra and its satellite at Jervis Bay.

724 Squadron commissioned at Bankstown on 10 April 1945 their initial equipment being two (2) Expediter Is (passed on from 723 Squadron) and 2 Anson Mk.I. 724 operated out of the civil airport at Mascot as the grass surface at Bankstown was unsuitable for the heavy twin engine aircraft. On

Governor General of Australia, Prince Henry, Duke of Gloucester firing the guns of Seafire PR151 on the test butts during his visit to RNAS Bankstown. © IWM (A 29371)

completion of their formation and familiarisation at Bankstown 723 Squadron moved to RNAS Jervis Bay on 1 May to begin operations as a Fleet Requirements Unit.

First aircraft withdrawn from squadron service: On 14 May 1830 & 1833 (Corsair) squadrons disembarked from HMS *Illustrious*. Both squadrons had their Corsair Mk. IIs withdrawn at Bankstown (her other squadron, 854 (Avenger) went to RNAS Nowra where their aircraft were retained). The carrier had been badly damaged by kamikaze planes on 7 April and had returned to Australia after receiving battle repairs in the forward area. 1833's personnel re-embarked in the carrier the same day. 1830 personnel joined them on 24 May when *Illustrious* sailed for passage to the UK.

A royal visit: On 1 June Prince Henry, Duke of Gloucester, the Governor-General of Australia, toured the station. Whilst there he test fired a Browning 50 calibre aircraft machine gun at the test butts. The prince signed the gun's log book 'Henry' [but signed in the wrong place] the log was later raffled and was won by AM(O) 'Jimmy' Dixey.

Victory over Japan and the rundown to closure

On 15 August the Japanese surrendered and VP Day was celebrated at Bankstown. The men of HMS *Nabberley* marched in the victory parade in Sydney,

to mark VP Day on the 17 August.

Work continued through August and September as the emphasis changed from assembling and issuing new aircraft to receiving and preparing surplus airframes for disposal. Aircraft withdrawn from disbanding squadrons at other RN Air Stations in Australia were gradually ferried to Bankstown. This vastly increased the numbers held in the aircraft park while their fate was decided. Some of the first to arrive were the Corsair Mk.IVs of 1834 & 1836 squadrons which began to arrive on the station from 23 August for disposal. They had disembarked from the Fleet Carrier HMS *Victorious* to RNAS Maryborough, MONAB VI where their aircraft had been withdrawn before the aircrew re-joined the ship.

Beechcraft Expediter as used by RN 723 and later 724 Sqns for Communications Flights. 724 later had two Avro Ansons added

By September, when aircraft production had ceased, 2,500 test flights had been made with only four major accidents (one complete loss and three major damages), three other accidents were due to the soft state of the airfield resulting in aircraft nosing up either after landing or whilst taxying.

The Salvage/Movements section were busy at the end of August and early September as they moved large quantities of food, medical and other essential supplies to Pyrmont Dock for loading onto ships preparing to sail for Hong Kong and Singapore to help re-establish the former British Colonies and repatriate POWs recently liberated from Japanese camps. Once this task was completed the section resumed aircraft movement duties, however they were now loading airframes for disposal at sea.

With the war now over the terms of the Lend-Lease agreement between Britain and the US required that remaining equipment should be returned or paid for, equipment that was destroyed however was written off. The Admiralty had been regularly disposing of severely damaged aircraft at sea during Pacific operations, so the mass dumping of surplus airframes would see them 'written off'. Once the carriers had completed their repatriation duties, many were tasked with ferrying deck loads out beyond the Great Barrier Reef and pushing them overboard.

Re-organisation: As part of a review of the naval air support in the Pacific theatre the Admiralty announced in October that four Mobile Units were to be disbanded in early November 1945. These were to be MONAB I, III, IV and VII; MONAB II, V & VI plus TAMY I would continue operations in support of fleet operations and the reception and disposal of aircraft arising from the disbandment of squadrons as the BPF began to reduce its size. As part of this downsizing operation MONAB V was to replace MONAB I at Nowra and MONAB VI would replace MONAB III at Schofields. MONAB VII personnel were to be redistributed to other units, many joining TAMY I.

'A' Flight of 1701 squadron arrived from RNAS Maryborough for a second, short period of detached duties on 15 October, returning to Maryborough on the 21 October.

Air Fitter (Engines) Douglas Hooper (Centre) and two colleagues ashore in Sydney

Paying Off

After months of processing the aircraft from the rapidly shrinking Fleet Air Arm in Australia and the South West Pacific the work of MONAB II was finally completed in March 1946. Her only squadron, 724 Communications squadron was relocated to RNAS Schofields to continue operations. MONAB II and HMS *Nabberley* paid off at Bankstown on 31 March 1946, and the station returned to RAAF control.

Westland Gazelle helicopter entered service with RN 705 Squadron in 1974

RAN/RN Helicopter Instructor Exchange Program 1963 to 1996

Over the course of 33 years, from 1963 until 1996, 22 RAN helicopter instructor pilots served on exchange with Royal Navy's basil: helicopter training squadron, 705 Squadron, at RNAS Culdrose in Cornwall, UK.

By Trevor Rieck

History shows that it took ten years in the development of the RAN's helicopter capability in the early 1950s before it adopted a policy for dedicated helicopter instructors.

The first three (3) helicopters, Bristol Sycamores, arrived in 1953 on HMAS *Vengeance* and with them came three pilots. Two were RAN pilots who were converted to the Sycamore at the Bristol factory; LEUTs Gordon McFee and Neil MacMillan. The third pilot was LEUT Don Farquharson RN who was on loan from the RN for helicopter instructional duties. He was to be the mainstay of helicopter instruction in the RAN for many years.

Good authority has it that no RAN helicopter pilot received any formal helicopter instructional training during that period; that is, there was no formally recognised qualification of QHI. What did happen was that helicopter-converted fixed-wing pilots, who were QFI's, were adapted to the instructional role in the Sycamore.

In the latter part of the 1950s the RAN had the need to expand its helicopter capabilities in two areas; the first was anti-submarine warfare and 27 Wessex 31As were acquired in 1963 from Westlands. Secondly, the ageing Sycamore needed replacing and with the advent of the Vietnam War the need became pressing.

The Bell UH-1 was finally selected and brought into service in 1964 as the advanced helicopter trainer for the RAN. This was not before six Scouts were ordered for the RAN's training role. This order had to be cancelled as experience had shown that Scout flew like a rock and was totally unsuitable as a trainer. However, two had to be accepted as they had been delivered so they flew on survey duties for many years.

In 1960 the RAN decided to formalise the training of helicopter instructors and sent candidates to the RAF Central Flying School (H). Additionally, as instructing experience was needed, an exchange program commenced with experienced RN QHIs being ex-

changed with newly qualified Australian QHIs, who then spent two years on exchange at the basic helicopter training squadron, 705 Squadron.

The first Australian to be trained at CFS(H) was **David Orr** in 1960 and **Seamus (Jim) O'Farrell** closely followed him the same year, both returning to Australia for instructional duties.

In late 1962 the RAN posted **Pat Vickers**, who was a bachelor, for training and exchange duties. Following the 4 months QHI course Pat took up residence in sunny Cornwall (sunny a bit of the time) for two years. **Rowley Waddell-Wood DFC** joined Pat later in 1963 with his wife and 3 children. From 1963 to 1976 there were generally two Australians on the staff of 705 Squadron.

On successful completion of the instructor's course a B2 instructor category was granted. After a probation period in the training squadron, a Bl category was confirmed. After more experience and time on the squadron, an A2 qualification was attained after rigorous ground and flight tests were successfully passed. A few went on to the ultimate Al qualification.

Both Pat and Rowley flew the Whirlwind Mk 10 (turbine) on their instructor course. Rowley was very short on helicopter experience and admits to not having a good time in the turbine Mk 10 but got back into the swing of things in the RN piston engine trainers.

705 Squadron was then flying the Hiller H12E for basic training and the Whirlwind Mk3 and Mk 7 for advanced training. Both had piston engines and manual throttles, which suited the Sycamore pilots. Rowley escaped the frightening habit of the Whirlwind experiencing retreating blade stall and standing on its nose in the oddest flight envelopes and most unexpectedly. He also relates how scary it was to do the altitude familiarisation in the Hiller to 10,000fi if it ever got up there?!

The second pair was **Ed Bell** and **Al Riley**. Both Ed and Al arrived with their families in 1965. Both had been flying Wessex. Ed was 33 and to the surprise of all was appointed senior pilot, the only one in the 33 years of the exchange program. This position was considered a career progression for RNers.

The weather at Culdrose is influenced by the Gulf Stream; it could be eight-eights clear and in 15 minutes it could be thick fog on the deck with 40 knots of breeze. Flying was hectic but enjoyable

The three Pilots of the Bristol Sycamore helicopter after the first delivery of three helicopters to the RAN onboard HMAS Vengeance in the UK. Left to Right: LEUT N.D. MacMillan RAN, LEUT G. McPhee RAN, LEUT D. Farquharson RN and CAPT H. Burrell RAN

and rewarding. Night flying in the summer could not commence until dark at 10pm and would not finish until 2am, but in winter, the first take off would be about 4pm and finished by 8pm and in the bar by 8.30pm.

Al Riley had thought that his instrument flying was good enough, but when he was teaching instrument flying to students in cloud in an unstable aircraft with no rotor speed governors and with instruments only on the student's side, it was decidedly more urgent to be VERY VERY good at instrument flying. Both Ed and Al finished their time in the UK on the RAN Wessex 31B Procurement Project at Westlands.

The third pair, in 1967, was 22 year-old new LEUT **Keith Englesman** and **John Wilkie**. Keith had undertaken his basic helicopter training in UK several years previously with a civilian contractor and was presented his wings at Australia House, London as an 18-year-old Midshipman. Keith therefore "spoke" the same language and fitted in comfortably with his exchange. He began instructing on the same aircraft he trained on back then.

John Wilkie was 21 when he left 817 Squadron and departed Australia with his wife of one day. His course commenced on the Whirlwind Mk l0 but changed to the Sioux Mk2 in mid-December owing to the RAF Whirlwind fleet being grounded ~ one had lost a blade in flight.

Many of the married Australians helped to temporarily increase the population of UK while on exchange; John by 2. Australians were well paid; John being paid more than the CO of 705 Squadron and was able to pay for a flash duty-free car and a block of land in Nowra.

The fourth pair was **Max Speedy DSC** and **Bruce Crawford DSC.** Bruce arrived in 1968 and Max in 1969 and they both came straight from combat in Vietnam. Max relates one day a front socked in the airfield and all flying was cancelled so all took off to the pub for a few beers. However, typical Culdrose weather; it cleared rapidly to bright sunlight. The CO was so upset he was not invited that he ordered them back to fly mutual instruments practice — not a good idea after several hours in the pub. Max was unique in that he jumped from a Bl to an Al instructor while on the Squadron, a no mean feat to say the least. Bruce and his family enjoyed their time in UK travelled and spending time with relatives.

The fifth pair was **John Nicoll** and **Jim Buchanan**. John and Robyn and their baby son arrived first class in a Qantas 707 that had replaced the cruise ships as first class transport for exchange officers. He states that his posting

Hiller H12E used for basic training pre 1974

to 705 was the highlight of his naval career. John and Robyn increased the population by one.

Jim was 38 when he arrived in UK in October 1971 for his instructor course straight from combat in Vietnam. He was sent to Culdrose first to do a conversion on the Whirlwind Mk 9 in order to be familiar with the RAF version, the WW M1410, which was a change in procedure. During his instructor course his DFC was awarded. The first student he sent solo was found in a farmer's field sitting in a pile of metal and perspex as he had forgotten to wind on throttle to recover from an autorotation.

The sixth pair was **Bomber (John) Brown** and **Trevor Rieck**. John had been flying Wessex in 725 Squadron. He had to first go to Culdrose to convert to WW9s to give him familiarisation with the RAF WW10. He commenced learning to fly "proper" at CFS(H) in September 1973. He purchased a fancy BMW as an investment and drove in luxury for his time in the UK.

Trevor arrived in UK at the end of 1974 as a single officer from flying Iroquois. There was no first class travel for single Naval Officers then! The energy crisis had hit the World and the IRA was still bombing London. The RAF had by that time also acquired the Gazelle and paid off the Whirlwind Mk10 so Trevor was on the first instructor course to be conducted on this very manoeuvrable and fun machine to fly.

A 705 Sqn Gazelle, the post 1974 trainer lifts off

Two major events occurred during Bomber and Trevor's tour; the first being that the RN paid off the 25-year-old Whirlwind and Hiller helicopters and introduced the Aerospatiale Gazelle. The second event was the formation of the RN Helicopter Formation Display Team - The Sharks. Both Bomber and Trevor flew in the first display team, which went on to fame on the European airshow circuit for the next 21 years.

The Whirlwind and the Hiller were way past their use-by date. They were a technology nightmare, the Whirlwind started by a shotgun cartridge, mostly by a maintainer with a hammer as the firing pins in the aircraft were so worn. How pleasing it was for Trevor to lead the last three flights of both aircraft to the knacker's yard. Trevor's 705 instructor's time was and remains the most rewarding job he has ever had.

Mick Perrott arrived in 705 in 1975 to become the lonely Australian on the Squadron. The RN and RAN mutually agreed to reduce the two-year exchange to one officer. Mick was one of the fortunate pilots to be to fly in the 1976 Sharks Formation Display team. Mick gained the reputation as the Australian who not only took a fancy duty-free car home with him but also a container of antique furniture.

Jack Kinross got the news of his posting while returning from the UK on HMAS *Melbourne.* He was off-loaded in Singapore, flown home, packed up family and was in UK three weeks later in 1978. By then CFS(H) had moved to RAF Shawbury where it remains today, Jack being the first Aussie to do his instructors course there. He survived a prang from a

The advance trainer pre 1974 —the Whirlwind Mk3 and then Mk 7. A Westland Whirlwind Mk 3 is shown above

wing-over at low level when the Gazelle's fenastron tail rotor stalled which resulted in an uncontrollable yaw. Jack managed the Sharks 1979 team and his commentary of the display got a few laughs from the crowds because of his broad Australian accent.

In late 1979 **Leigh Costain** and family arrived in the UK. He was in the Squadron when Prince Andrew began training. Leigh became good friends of the Prince and his bodyguards. When the Prince found out his bodyguards had been invited to dinner at Leigh's house he "demanded" to be invited as well. "Not until you graduate", Leigh told him, and on graduation he was invited. His car had to be put in Leigh's garage and the door closed during the dinner for security reasons. When they left the UK the Prince invited them to the Palace and then to his favourite restaurant in London. Leigh's words "an exceptional tour and some of the best flying I have ever done".

Vince Di Pietro was a 22 year-old SBLT on the *Melbourne* SAR Flight in 1982 when he was posted to UK. Immediately he finished the instructor course he flew back to Australia for a week, got married to Sandy and then preceded on his two-year honeymoon (exchange) in 705 Squadron. The highlight of the exchange for him was instructing the students through all phases and to getting their wings. Vince did a short stint as the commentator for the Sharks Display team.

Tony Reyne arrived in UK in November 1983. He won a prestigious prize on his instructor course. He converted several RAN Tracker pilots who had transferred to the RN, to helicopters following the scrapping of the RAN's seaborne fixed wing operations. With one Tracker pilot during a box-knocking flight in winter off Cornwall and with all doors off, it started to snow and they decided that two Aussies did not need to be there and headed home. He was able to fly over the Channel on navexs and managed to visit family in Europe on these flights. He had a fantastic time teaching young kids to fly and he looks back on those days with great memories.

Ian Sangston arrived in 1986 as a 29-year-old Lieutenant from the HMAS *Sydney* flight. He had an interesting time flying with his French Air Force instructor during his instructor course. On one of 705's two annual continental navexs to Europe, to Kiel, he was the navigator in charge of a RN detachment, in French designed helicopters, flying through several countries in Europe and landing in Germany: for an Aussie what an experience! On one orientation flight he took the student into cloud at l000ft, conducted the sortie in cloud and recovered by an instrument approach, something that was totally alien to an Australian. He would have loved to stay in 705.

Tony Dalton arrived in UK in 1988 with his wife as a 26 year-old Lieutenant around the time of the Berlin Wall coming down. The Cold War was coming to an end and there were aspects that Australians did not fully understand: gas masks drills and NBCD suits and drills for Russian bomber raids. For an Australian to have to instruct new students on these drills was "slightly out of the ordinary".

Jeff Konemann had a very successful tour; he flew in the prestigious Sharks Display team in 1991. He and Wendy increased their family while on 705. His number one highlight was with the students and thoroughly enjoyed teaching them. Jeff and Wendy attended the RN Sharks Helicopter Formation Team's Reunion at RNAS Yeovilton on 7 August 2010.

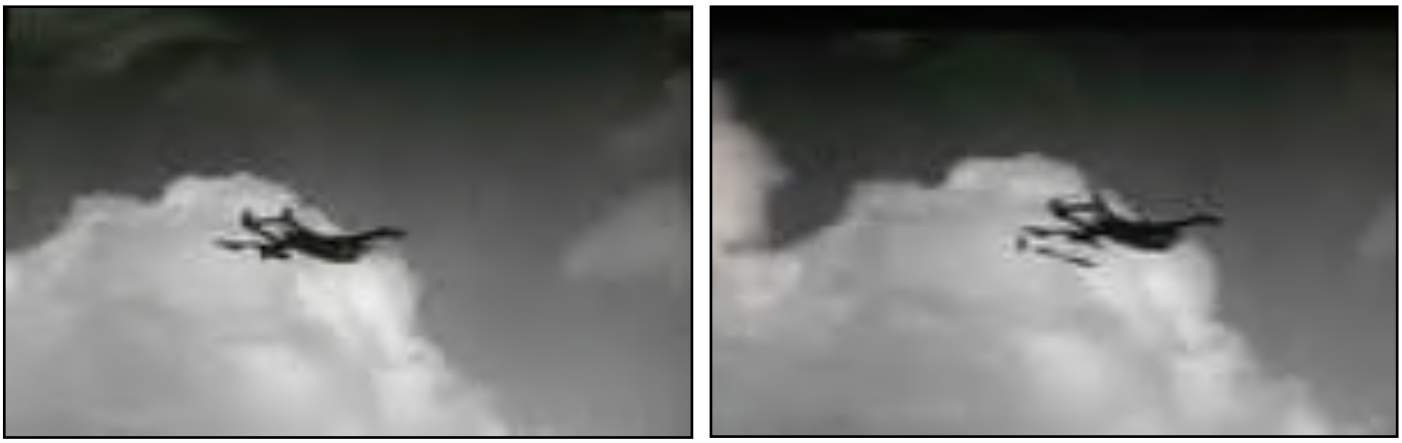
Tim Leonard arrived in UK in 1992 with a heavily pregnant wife and an 18-month-old son. His second son was born while he was on his instructor course; he even got a day off. Tim was a member of the RN Helicopter Display Team flying in a pair of Gazelles during the 1993 UK airshow season; he had a ball but was glad when the season was over as the displays were on weekends.

Next came **Jeremy Butler (Harry)** in 1996. He was the last of the 22 exchange officers. During his tour he led one of the pair of display helicopters for the UK airshow season. The Sharks had been disbanded after the 1992 season due to economic constraints. However, he did take part in a half dozen air shows where a four-ship display was put together. For him 705 was a great posting, too many highlights to mention, but the Sharks would have to be the best and flying across the Channel solo in a Gazelle. His final year, 1996, was the diamond jubilee of 705 Squadron and tails were painted to celebrate.

Tri-service helicopter flying training is now conducted at the Defence Force Helicopter School at RAF Shawbury mainly by civilian contractors most of who are retired service QHIs.

The final word on the 33 year exchange program goes to Rowley Waddell-Wood (DFC): "705 was an excellent squadron, great spirit, great instructing, great fellers, yes we got on very well."

Trevor Rieck conducted this research project in 2008-9. Nineteen ex-705 instructors were video interviewed, some by John Perryman and/or Peter Djokovic of the Sea Power Centre at the Defence Central Media Centre, Canberra. A two hour 20 minute DVD was produced of this significant episode in the history of the RAN. Andrew Craig narrated the DVD. It was distributed to all those involved and to the RN and RAN FAA Museums.



Sea Venom WZ897 at Woomera SA carrying an Ikara torpedo and then releasing it as part of the trials

FAA Pilots Conduct Airborne Ikara Trials

By John Da Costa

RAN Fleet Air Arm pilots were involved in development trials of the Australian Anti-Submarine Ikara missile, including in support of the development of the torpedo release mechanism. This part of the programme involved 723 Squadron (modified Firefly Mk VI aircraft) and 724 Squadron (modified Sea Venom FAW53 aircraft). I write only of my own involvement, but other pilots also took part in these particular trials, including Lieutenants Eddy Bell (Fireflys), John Cooke and Neil Louer (Sea Venoms). No doubt there were others. Details were extracted from my Navy Pilots Flying Log Book as my memory is not that good!

There were many flying hours involved, mostly in transit between NAS NOWRA and the airfields from which trials sorties were flown at Avalon, Victoria, RAAF Base Edinburgh, South Australia, and the Weapons Research Establishment (WRE) airfield at Woomera, South Australia.

The initial series of trials that I flew out of Avalon airfield involved Firefly aircraft (variously, serial numbers WB 271, WD 826 and WJ 109) carrying a reduced-scale model of the Ikara missile body mounted under the port wing. Releases of the scale dummy torpedoes over Port Philip Bay were filmed from the rear cockpit of the aircraft by civilian Aeronautical Research Laboratory (ARL) scientists and/or from an accompanying Firefly. My involvement in the Firefly phase was in the period 7June to 31 August 1962.

Sea Venom-based torpedo-release trials flown by me over the period 12-22 February November 1963 were more extensive.

Only aircraft serial number WZ 897 was used and an ARL civilian scientist flew in all trials flights. A number of sorties were flown out of Avalon airfield in preparation for those to be conducted at the Weapons Research Establishment (WRE) Woomera, for which much longer transit flights from Nowra were necessary.

The trial flights at WRE involved the mounting, at RAAF Base Edinburgh, of a full-scale model of Ikara under the port wing of the Sea Venom and, to off-set the resultant high aerodynamic drag and weight, the mounting of four inert rocket projectiles under the opposite wing (what a "dog" it was to fly!). The aircraft was then flown to WRE Woomera for release trials on the fully instrumented Range, were the Sea Venom simulated IKARA by flying at the same airspeed and altitude as would the missile.

In summary, in support of the torpedo-release trials, I flew about 7 hours in Firefly aircraft in transit between Nowra and Avalon and about 3 hours on actual trials. In the Sea Venom, it was about 27 hours in transits and 4 hours of actual trials.

Ikara on Launcher of an RAN Ship

Letters to the Editor

The Gazelle helicopter in RAN markings!

Dayglo, Orange Adhesive, Black Texta and a pair of Scissors can do wonders!!

Congratulations on a terrific *Slipstream* this month. REALLY good reading!

Just thought the attached picture might be of interest…..my last flight as exchange Aussie at 705 NAS was a little different in so far as, aided by Dave Rollo the manager of Airworks/Fields contracted maintenance on the Squadron, I made a couple of livery 'changes ' to Gazelle 38 and then flew it around the local area (14 March 1984 - XX431 with co-pilot LEUT Paul McIntosh). My last stop was to hover outside Wings' office in the tower to wave him a fond farewell and heartfelt thanks for a great posting! A bit of dayglo orange adhesive sheet, a black texta and a pair of scissors was the necessary 'modification' kit (photo above)!

The cartoon on page 22 triggered a fond memory!

Vince Di Pietro

Rivetter Dollies in the Wheel Well

John DaCosta's account of a rivetter's dolly in a Vampire Trainer's wheel well (Letters, page 24, *Slipstream* March 2021) reminds me of a similar episode with a Sea Venom. A Bankstown to Nowra delivery job late one Friday afternoon was normal until downwind on RWY 21. However, there was no electrical failure this time so the undercarriage red light was the prelude to protracted air-ground communications and other distractions.

Like John, after selecting "down", my first inkling of impending doom was two greens and a steady red light indicating failure of the starboard undercarriage to lock down. A cheery chat with the Tower and a flypast followed. Assured that all three wheels looked down and locked, it was time to test the thesis.

Leaving the undercarriage down, I made a slightly fast approach on runway 21, touched down on the port wheel, then deliberately greased the starboard wheel on. It started to fold. Pig farm or Plan B? Full chat, go Plan B!

Encouraged by dozens of suggestions from the Tower, and with valuable observations from Col Patterson trailing in another Sea Venom, I must have recycled the undercarriage a couple of dozen times or more. This included recycling under positive 6 g and negative 2 g, mostly with the aircraft right side up but also upside down, as well as with and without maybe 80 degrees bank in a side slip, all at undercarriage limiting speeds ranging from fast to snail pace. Col remined me, at one stage, that perhaps we should avoid lengthy periods trundling about at 130-140 knots upside down at 1,000 feet. This was more than gratefully noted.

Letters to the Editor

After 15 or 20 minutes, for no apparent reason, three greens!

Meanwhile, being late Friday afternoon, the Nowra-Sydney liberty caravan was noticeably thinner but the golf course goofers gallery had swelled substantially.

Sending Col back in to land and ensuring we had no other fixed-wing airborne, I made a gentle port-wheel-starboard-wheel touchdown. Anticlimax! The undercarriage did its job. Secure the fire wagons. Goofers go home.

Post flight, another rivetter's dolly was found in my wheel well, its thin end matched quite a bulge in the starboard wing's upper surface.

Fred Lane

Marines for the RAN?

I am at a loss to understand the fact that the Royal Australian Navy have no Marines.

Most other first world nations have Marines within their Naval structure, but not us.

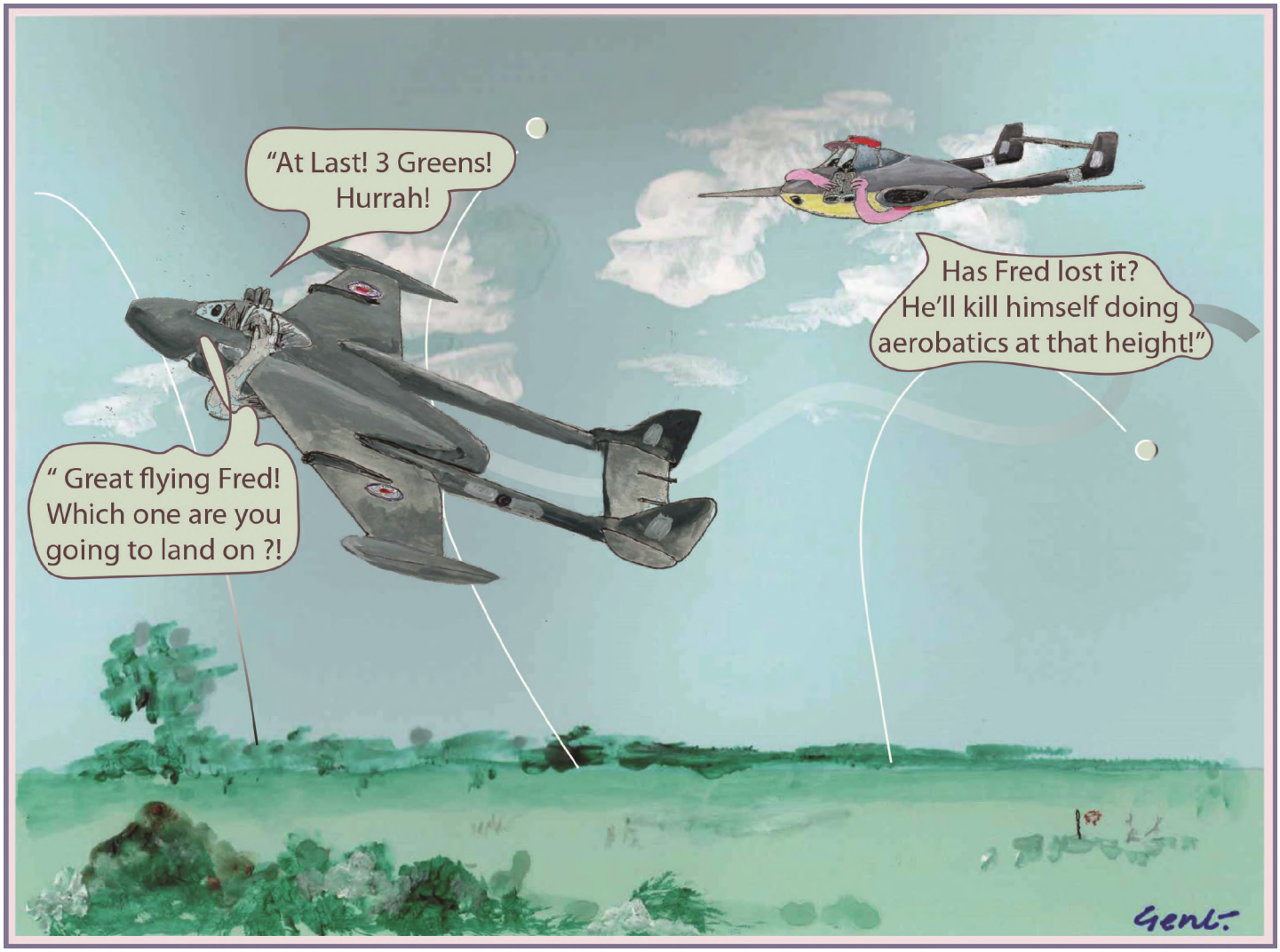
Certainly, we have the Army to operate from the new RAN LHDs, but not Navy.

Implication here is that the Navy somehow cannot wage war in land operations, but history has shown that they can quite effectively. Refer to the Royal Marines, as part of the Royal Navy.

With our island neighbours to our north and a constant concern for the Department of Defence to maintain our large maritime borders and trade, surely it suggests the RAN have that ability to control an Amphibious Ready Group for immediate deployment. Is it time for the Army to take on the amphibious role under Naval control and be called Marines?

If it's a matter of duplication with Army/Navy doing the same deployment or the shear cost of maintaining a separate Marine Corp, then we should let history write the records.

Roger Harrison



Enemy Flight . . . . . Continued from Page 7

A Bv 222 at a mooring, the same type aircraft where the German co-pilot tried to commit suicide before 'Winkle' took control

'shakes' because of the German V1, V2 and jet aircraft." The Prime Minister, Winston Churchill instructed the Director of RAE to set up a mission to go to Germany as soon as peace occurred with three (3) priorities:

1. Find and bring back super sonic wind tunnels. (Seven (7) were identified of which five (5) were returned to UK);

2. Find and fly captured German aircraft and assess them; and

3. Find Germany's Scientist and Test Pilots interrogate them and if you think they have much to offer bring them back to Britain.

One of the 'wind tunnels' found in the US zone had been designed to test super sonic flight up to an unbelievable mach 4.4. It was transported to Maryland, USA where it was still operating as of 2014. These 'wind tunnels' were paramount in the development of sweptback, forward-swept wings, all-wing and delta shapes (e.g.Me262, Horton Ho 229) and later in supersonic flight.

The Germans had experimented with solid fuel rockets for propulsion in aircraft as early as the 1920s, and liquid fuel rockets in unmanned vehicles. But, the breakthrough came in the early 1940s with the use of liquid fuel rockets which were throttleable and gave the pilot a much needed degree of flexibility, whilst doing nothing to remove the highly dangerous volatility of the fuels used.

The whole range of German supercharged piston engines gave speed increases of some 20 to 30 mph. Compression ignition (diesel) engines were developed for long endurance operations, and were fitted mainly to flying boats with successful results. Whilst test flying these aircraft 'Winkle' found them very quiet but dirty and smelly.

Although Britain had an initial lead in jet propulsion technology, this was dissipated by bureaucratic inertia, allowing Germany to overtake Britain and build the world's first single- and twin-turbojet-engine aircraft

A successful development for the Germans was that of the Schräge Musik (inclined organ pipes) fitted to night fighters, and consisting of 2 x 30mm cannon slanted forward at 60 degrees and located between the tandem cockpits. These were fired into the un-

The Late
CAPT Eric 'Winkle' Brown
CBE, DSC, AFC, RN

The photograph to the right shows 'Winkle' in his capacity as an Hon. ADC to HM the Queen.

Over the years 'Winkle' spent many hours giving presentations and interviews. Many can be found on YouTube by searching "Eric 'Winkle' Brown interviews". Attached **here** is an hour long BBC video on 'Winkle'. The are many and varied video presentations that range from just a few minutes up to nearly two (2) hours. So I'd encourage you to view the other videos but, if you want the full story I'd recommend 'Winkles' book 'Wings on My Sleeve'.

Heinkel He 219 the first production aircraft to be fitted with Ejection Seats

derside of a bomber once the crew had identified it in silhouette as an enemy target. On the first operational sortie of an He 219 using the system, it shot down six Lancasters.

Ejection seats were in use by the Germans at the outset of World War II, and indeed the first ejection in anger was made in January 1943 from an He 280 twin-jet which got into icing difficulties. The seats were propelled by compressed air, and besides being fired by pulling the seat face blind, they had a secondary trigger fitted to the side of the seat at thigh level to deal with high 'g' emergencies. The first production aircraft fitted with ejection seats was the He 219 two-seat night fighter.

The Auto dive recovery was fitted in the German Ju 87, Ju 88 and He 177 bombers. It was activated by opening the 'speed brakes', which initiated the pull-out when the bombs were dropped at a preset release height. It was an effective and reliable system on the Ju 87 and Ju 88, but never used on the He 177.

It was found that electronics were widely used in German aircraft in place of hydraulics, which were considered more vulnerable to combat damage. One of the more interesting applications of electronics was the Kommandogerät, which was intended to free fighter pilots in combat from the demands of controlling engine boost, propeller pitch and engine rpm by having these automatically controlled through a single throttle lever.

Another feature discovered was the propeller reverse thrust fitted to the Bv 222 flying boat's middle engine on each wing of this six-engine giant to facilitate water maneuvering during taxying. It was also fitted to the very aerodynamically clean tricycle-undercarriage Do 335, which had a very long landing run. Use of reverse thrust on the front tractor propeller reduced the landing run by 25 per cent.

Considerable progress had been made in Germany in rotary-wing development, and some types reached the production stage, then operational status, though in very small numbers because of Allied bombing of their manufacturing facilities.

Towards the end of 1945 all the acquired captured aircraft were back at RAE Farnborough, as the Enemy Flight had completed their work in Europe. Further testing was then carried out on these aircraft. Once completed aircraft were either destroyed or sent to many Museums throughout the world including the Australian War Memorial Canberra where a few captured German aircraft are held.

German Aircraft Flown by 'Winkle' on Page 42

DEATH NOTICES

BELL, Edward 'Eddy' Stannington CMDR RAN (Rtd). Died on 4 June 2021 in Canberra aged 88. Details of his death were unavailable at time of publication. What is known is that a celebration of Eddy's life was held at the Tickety Boo Bar on Thursday 10 June. It is presumed a funeral service was held prior.

John DaCosta

BIRKENHEAD, Peter CPOATA3 RAN (Rtd). Died on 1 June 2021 at Shoalhaven Hospital. Nowra NSW. Peter leaves wife Anne and two daughters and a son. A funeral service was held at Shoalhaven Crematorium Chapel on 8 June 2021.

Mick Wright

GEDLING, Dean Francis ex -RAN. Naval Photographer (rank unknown) died on 22 December 2020 at Bradbury NSW, aged 73. He leaves a wife Denise, two daughters Carolyn and Allison and two grand children

Graham Spencer

HOBBA, Ron ex RAN. POEAC died on 21 May 2021 aged 83, following a long illness with cancer. He is survived by his wife Fredene and family

Michael Cain

KILLINGSWORTH, Mike 'Killa' LCDR RAN (Rtd) died 26 May 2021 aged 70. A Funeral to celebrate the life of Michael was held at 'The Dunes', Surf Beach Road, Ocean Grove on Friday 4, June.

'Daffy' Donald

LEE, Nigel NAM(AE) ex-RAN. died on 15 May 2021. Nigel leaves his partner Ana and his adopted daughter Nigella. He had suffered from cancer for several years.

Keith Taylor

Obituaries

(link to FAAAA Website Obituaries here)

Lieutenant Commander Gwynfryn 'Taff' Morris RAN (Rtd)

Taff Morris onboard HMAS Sydney during the Korean War as a Firefly Observer

Gwynfryn 'Taff' Morris died on the 29 April 2007 aged 82. 'Taff' was one of the original RN Telegraphist Air Gunners (TAGs) who entered the RAN on the formation of the RAN Fleet Air Arm after World War II and trained as an Observer alongside several other ex RN TAGs.

He was in the RN FAA as a TAG from 23 February 1943 to 5 March 1946. As TAG he flew in a variety of RN FAA aircraft and squadrons. 'Taff' then joined the RAN on 6 January 1949 for initially a period of six years entering as a Naval Airman (TAG). On 7 February 1949 he was reclassified and promoted to A/Leading Aircrewman (II).

It was then that he commenced Observer training transferring between various RN Air Stations until completion of the course. He was then promoted to Observer II (PO) on 25 September 1950 followed by promotion to Observer I (CPO) on 30 December 1952.

On returning to Australia in December 1950, various postings followed between HMAS *Albatross*, HMAS *Sydney* as well as between 816 and 817 Squadrons on Fireflys. During this time 'Taff' saw service in the Korean War.

In March 1953, he was posted to 723 Sqn where he remained until April 1958 during which time he completed a Gannet OFS. Gannet flying continued with 816 and 817 Sqns until he was commissioned as an ASLT SDAV O on 1 August 1965. He then completed ATC training before being confirmed in the rank 12 months later.

Promoted to LEUT SDAV O ATC on 1 August 1967, 'Taff' completed the Ground Controlled Approach course at RAAF East Sale before a posting to the CAG for ATC duties in 1969.

On 16 February 1976 'Taff' was appointed SATCO NAS Nowra in the rank of A/LCDR before being confirmed in the rank prior to leaving the RAN. He retired in the late 1970's.

'Taff' spent nearly 34 years in both the RN and RAN. Another great guy to work alongside, particularly when he became SATCO.

Paul Shiels

Naval Photographer Dean Gedling RAN (Retired)

Dean Gedling (Dino) was born on 3 July 1947 and passed away in Bradbury, NSW on 22 December 2020 aged 73.

He joined the RAN in 1964 from South Australia aged 17 for a period of nine (9) years, serving at HMAS *Albatross, HMAS Penguin, HMAS Harman* and in HMAS *Melbourne.*

During his service in *Melbourne* he travelled to many South East Asian countries which included the Philippines, Thailand, Singapore, Japan and other destinations.

After his service with the RAN, Dean spent many years at TAFE NSW as a photographer in the production of training films then had a career change to become a private investigator.

He was a dedicated family man, loyal supporter of many a friend and colleague; and an avid reader and historical buff.

Dean played a role in the HMAS *Melbourne* Association for several years and was also a member of the Fleet Air Arm Association of Australia (NSW Branch).

Graham Spencer

Obituaries

(link to FAAAA Website Obituaries here)

Commander Edward Stannington Bell RAN (Rtd)

In April 1955, Ed Bell, a 22-year-old boilermaker-welder from Broken Hill, enlisted in the RAN as a Recruit Naval Airman – Aircrew. He commenced pilot training with the RAAF in July 1955 and was promoted Acting Sub-Lieutenant on graduation in October 1956.

A month later, in November 1956, he posted to HMAS *Albatross* and commenced Operational Flying School in RAN squadrons. A cycle of postings to 723, 724, 725, 816, 817 and 851 Squadrons was the typical pattern over the next eight years, including front-line squadron service in the aircraft carrier HMAS *Melbourne.* He was promoted Lieutenant in 1958.

Eddy was posted to the UK for the Qualified Helicopter Instructors' course and two years exchange with the Royal Navy. After a short holding pattern in 706 Squadron he was appointed as Senior Pilot of the basic helicopter training squadron 705. This was a surprise to everyone as that slot was considered by the RNs as a career progression posting, and it was therefore a unique feather in his cap.

Upon promotion in 1966, Ed was appointed Lieutenant Commander 'Flying' in HMAS *Melbourne,* and on two occasions he commanded 725 Squadron, (Jun'70 – Feb'71 and Oct'71 – Oct'72) with Wessex helicopters.

The Sea King Flight UK was established in 1974 and the newly promoted Commander Ed Bell served as the Officer in Charge for the acceptance and testing of the RAN's latest anti-submarine helicopters. He then took command of 817 Squadron for a very brief period when it re-equipped at HMAS *Albatross* with the Sea King in 1976.

As often occurs, promotion brought with it postings away from the aviation world and Ed then worked in the Directorate of Naval Recruiting before retiring in 1982.

Ed Bell maintained his involvement in helicopter aviation, becoming an Examiner of Airmen with the Civil Aviation Safety Authority and then Chief Pilot with a major Australian commercial helicopter operator. Apart from aviation, Ed enjoyed touring on his BMW motorcycle well into his senior years.

John DaCosta

LCDR Michael 'Killa' Killingsworth RAN (Rtd)

Lieutenant Commander Mike "Killa" Killingsworth was 70 when he died. Born on 6 April 1951 in Geelong, Mike attended RANC at Jervis Bay after leaving school. Initially failing an eye test for the Pilot's Course, it was later found that his eye sight test had become mixed up with another entrant. Mike told stories of hardship at RANC, but always reflected on the mateship the Navy experience brought him.

The Navy allowed him to literally spread his wings after passing pilot's course in 1971, and he enjoyed tours in Trackers on HMAS *Melbourne* and two exchanges with the US Navy.

In December 1976 Mike married Jennie at HMAS Watson, and together they had two children. When the Fleet Air Arm was dismantled the family moved to Perth where Mike worked as SNO RAAF Pearce while part-time studying for his ATPL. He was later accepted into Cathay Pacific and soon after upgraded to command the Boeing 747.

In 2006 Mike retired to his childhood home of Ocean Grove. Mike's interest in aviation continued, as did a passion for classic cars and local Veterans Affairs. A unique soul, Mike loved a good "old-fashioned" joke, and every now and then gave people a roaring laugh with his "Balfang" rendition.

Paul Shiels

Naval Air Mechanic (AE) Nigel Wickham Lee RAN (Rtd)

Nigel was born on 3 March 1944 and died on 15 May 2021 aged 77. He enlisted in the RAN from WA on 7 April 1962 discharging on 6 April 1974 after a service of 12 years.

He served in HMA Ships Albatross, Sydney, Melbourne and various Squadrons including 816 (Gannets), 723 Iroquois and the RANHFV.

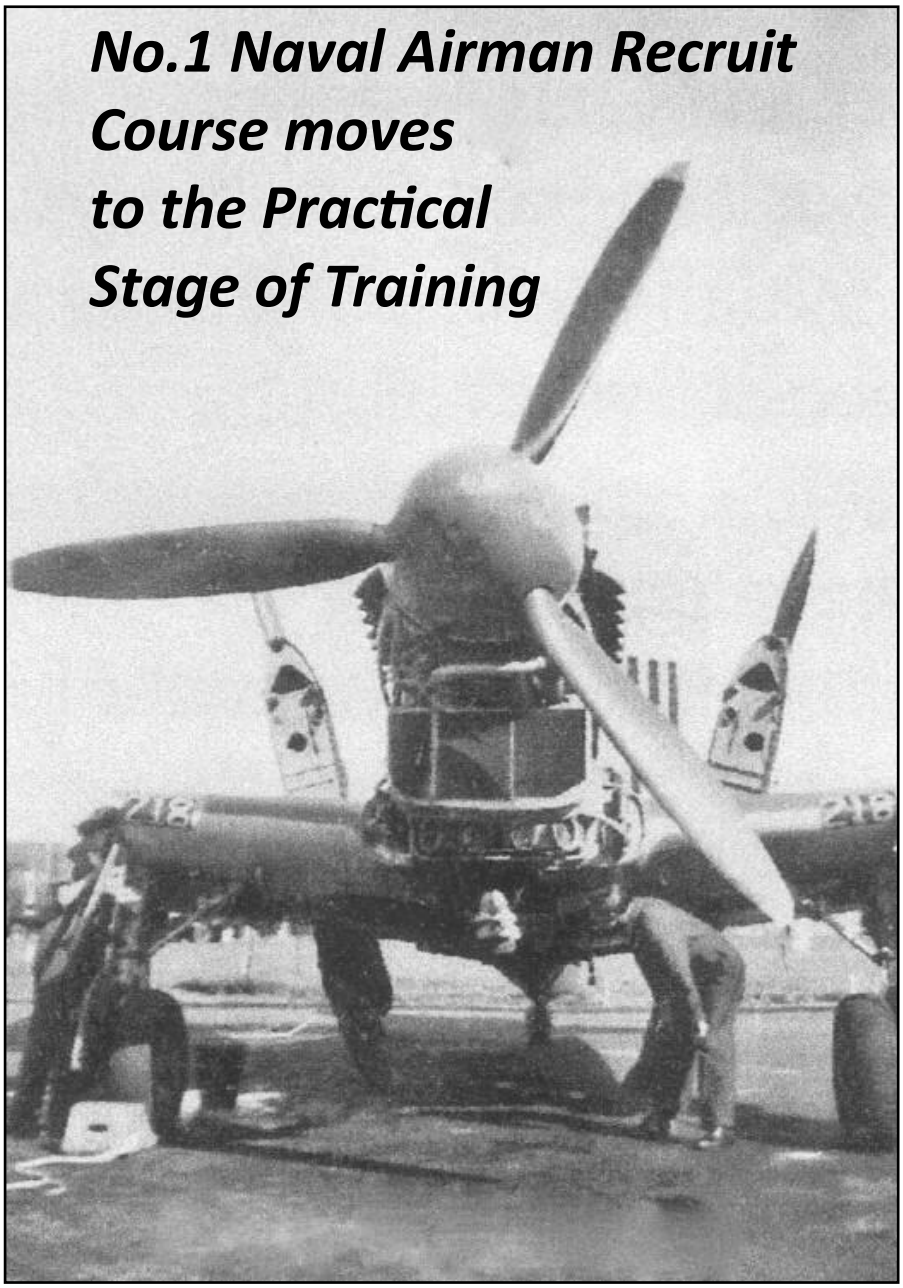
Whilst serving in the 135th Assault Company, Nigel was awarded the US Air Medal. This medal was awarded to those RAN aircrew who served with this company during the Vietnam War.

This would indicate that aside from his NAM(AE) qualifications, Nigel qualified as an Air Gunner during his service in Vietnam. His service with the RANHFV was from 3 September 1969 until 8 October 1970, in the third contingent.

Nigel was known to be a great mechanic and for a 'getting things done' man!

Graham Spencer

No.1 Naval Airman Recruit Course moves to the Practical Stage of Training



Firefly maintenance allowing No.1 Course trainees to gain more experience

From the Booklet by Les 'Jukie' Matterson and other contributors from No.1 NAR Course

Prior to leaving HMS *Gamecock* the RAN trainees were divided once again this time into four smaller groups plus one individual, each of which travelled by rail/ferry to a designated air station to undergo a period of practical training. The establishments supported second line squadrons which operated a variety of aircraft. Each trainee was assigned to a squadron and to an experienced RN air mechanic, initially to observe and then participate under supervision in all maintenance activity.

The range of work involved the movement of aircraft to and from the hangar, fuelling, defuelling, Before Flight Inspection (BFI), Daily Inspection (DI), system replenishment, inspection for security, leakage and damage, cleaning aircraft/engine and directing aircraft under power to and from the flight line. In carrying out these tasks many supporting skills were exercised e.g., the proper use of ground equipment and tools, identification and preparation of replenishment fluids, pressure charging procedures, inspection methods, minor repairs, usage of cleaning materials, associated safety measures and the use of aircraft maintenance manuals and documentation.

Within a few months all trainees were sufficiently experienced and confident to sit for and pass the Qualified to Sign (QS) examination. This was the final stage of basic training, qualifying the NAM to sign the aircraft form A700 documentation to certify, with regard to trade category, that the aircraft had been inspected and was deemed serviceable for flight. Engine category sailors could also qualify to start and ground run engines to check the correct operation of the magnetos i.e. mag drop and dead mag checks.

The single trade category courses advanced with regular testing providing assessments of progress. The final test was completed in April 1949 and a pass was awarded to all RAN trainees. They had earned the right to wear a category badge consisting of the plan view of an aircraft above the letter A or E embroidered on a patch worn on the upper right sleeve of the uniform and working dress to signify the trade of the wearer.

Those not required for duty could proceed on short leave outside working hours. On week days this usually constituted a bus trip of about four miles to Nuneaton to see a movie, attend a dance or perhaps enjoy an ale and a game of darts in the Nags Head, returning before leave expired at 2300. On occasions some chanced their luck to slip through the perimeter fence and cross a few fields to visit the Blue Pig near the village of Hinckley. At weekends leave could be taken from noon Saturday to 2300 Sunday, allowing ample time to visit nearby towns and cities. Coventry, Birmingham, Leicester and Tamworth were within easy reach by bus.

Long leave of 14 days duration taken twice per

A Firefly — one the aircraft RAN Trainees gained practical experience on at designated RNAS including HMS Vulture

year allowed for a much broader compass with many travelling to localities in Scotland, Ireland and Wales. London was very popular. The extent of one's travels depended on available finances. It was an advantage to have resident friends or relatives. To overcome the food rationing situation, food coupons were issued to cover the daily needs for the leave period for items such as meat, sugar, butter, eggs, etc. For those wishing to avail themselves of the facility, a food parcel containing goods not readily obtainable in the UK could be purchased from Canberra House, Jermyn St., London and gifted to friends or relatives. Canned fruits, butter, ham and fruit cake were popular choices. Those who wished to remain on board in lieu of travelling spent the time sightseeing locally, reading and relaxing to popular music like Nature Boy, Galway Bay, Buttons and Bows and Doggie in the Window.

After becoming QS, the NAMs were streamed into Maintenance Units to increase their experience. Those units undertook higher level maintenance and repair work than that normally done in the squadrons.

Although the work varied considerably it consisted of the more detailed periodic inspections — Main checks 1, 2 and 3; major component changes — engine, mainplane, oleo leg; modification work and repair — skin damage, heavy corrosion, refinishing. In the time available, only samples of these tasks were actually experienced. However, it served the intended purpose of exposing RAN personnel to as wide a range of maintenance tasks as possible.

Watch routines were employed in all establishments and the duties varied with the requirements of each organization to which the trainee was assigned. Short leave and weekend leave allowed personnel to travel to nearby towns for sightseeing and relaxation. Team sports, athletics and, when the water temperature permitted, the occasional ocean swim, provided some recreation.

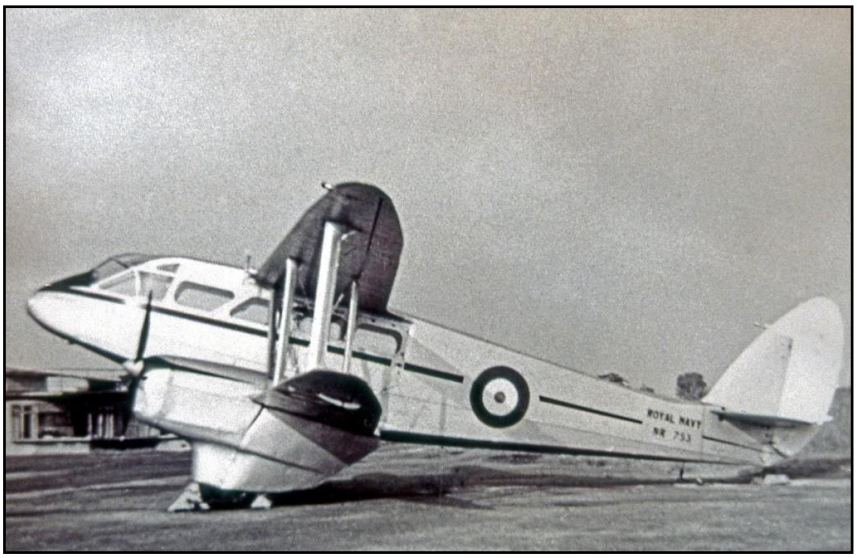
Those 20 years of age or older could draw the RN daily rum ration or "tot". For junior sailors this was about a third of a cup of Jamaican OP mm diluted with twice the quantity of water — commonly referred to as "grog" or "bubbly". Senior sailors were given their ration undiluted— "neaters". The tot issue was usually made in the dining hall before the midday meal and supervised by a member of the Regulating Branch.

Names were listed with the annotation UA (tender age and ineligible), G (grog-eligible) or T (temperance — elected not to draw a ration). An UA sailor who wanted to obtain a ration could sometimes come to an arrangement with an otherwise T listed sailor, whereby the latter elected to draw his tot and surreptitiously handed it over. This was a very risky transaction and highly illegal.

Large huts fitted with bunks and pot belly stoves for heating provided the accommodation on the air stations. In most cases the living areas were located remotely from the hangars and workshops, necessitating a transport service. This was a feature of wartime planning to limit losses in the event of air attack. The air stations to which the RAN NAMs were posted spanned the length if not quite the

Sea Fury another aircraft No.1 NAR Course trained on

breadth of the UK. They are recorded below with a few associated details: HMS *Daedalus* RNAS Lee-on-Solent, Hampshire, England: A well-established air station on the southern coast about five miles from the main naval base of Portsmouth and a short ferry trip across the Solent to the Isle of Wight. It supported 781 Squadron which was equipped mainly with Dominies and Expeditors for communication flying and with Sea Otters for search and rescue in the Channel. Instrument Examining and Bad Weather Training Flights were also located there.



RN Dominie aircraft used for communications work

It also provided the opportunity to see a wide range of aircraft types such as the Barracuda, Fulmar, Sea Otter, Sea Hornet, Sea Mosquito, Sea Vampire, Meteor, De Havilland Dove, Anson, Oxford, Dragon Rapide, Hellcat, Avenger and Sycamore — all of which were of interest.

In addition to exercising the practical aspects of trade training and the application of responsible judgement, important human experiences were encountered also: adapting to different working environments at short notice; socialising with local communities; forming working relationships with aircrew, many of whom were Australians (also undergoing training), particularly when assisting to strap them into the cockpit before flight, directing them on the flight line and meeting them after flight. Regrettably, but fortunately very rarely, there were occasions when aircraft did not return, or crashed on or near the airfield with fatal results. Although not in the syllabus, these events were also part of the learning experience.

With practical training completed the 57 RAN NAMs were to proceed to specialist training courses in the south of England. However, they did not go together as one group, possibly as the result of course programming constraints. The first members were posted from their establishments to HMS *Heron* about mid November 1949: the last members finally departed in late December 1949.

Refugees Reunite
(from Page 9)

A Captain's 'Duty'

Captain Tam said seeing the plane again that had rescued his passengers and his family was a powerful experience.

"The first time I saw this aircraft I was on the boat, so this is the second time," Captain Tam said.

"I am very happy and very emotional. I feel like I may burst into tears when I see it."

Four decades have passed but Captain Tam remains in touch with the Vietnamese refugees on his boat and has always tried to keep them connected.

"We brought them here, took them with us," he said.

"My duty is to support them, to keep them together in community."

The restored RAN Grumman S-2G Tracker 851 remains on display at the HARS aviation museum in Hanger 1 to commemorate the miraculous rescue.

Stephen Nguyen at HARS to view the actual aircraft that helped rescue him. A Wessex is in the background (ABC Illawarra: Sarah Moss)

A Seafire is fuelled at RNAS Yeolvilton by Naval Air Mechanics in the late 1940's

From the Booklet by Les 'Jukie' Matterson and other contributors from No.1 NAR Course

Type aircraft and engine specialist courses for No.1 Naval Airmen Recruit (NAR) course begin

A school of Aircraft Maintenance was located at HMS *Heron*, RNAS Yeovilton, Somerset, England. Here specialised courses were conducted on new or updated aircraft and related equipment. School of Aircraft Maintenance Courses (SAMCOs) served the purpose of acquainting trained maintainers with the pertinent details of an aircraft or engine type, thereby qualifying them to work on the equipment immediately after successfully completing the course.

The RAN was being equipped with Firefly Mk 5 and Mk 6, and Sea Fury FB 11 aircraft powered by the Griffon 74 and Centaurus 18 engines respectively. As the SAMCO training on this equipment was conducted at *Heron*, the first of the RAN Naval Airmen (NAM) arrived to begin their A and E category courses. Each of the four courses was of ten instructional day duration.

The A category NAMs attended the Firefly Mk 6 and Sea Fury FB 11 aircraft courses while the E category personnel undertook the Griffon 74 and Centaurus 18 engine courses. On completion of each course tests were conducted and qualifications awarded accordingly. Course content covered details of the various aircraft and engine systems, component location and operation, and inspection requirements. Instruction was carried out in classrooms and the aircraft and engines were available in the hangar to facilitate learning.

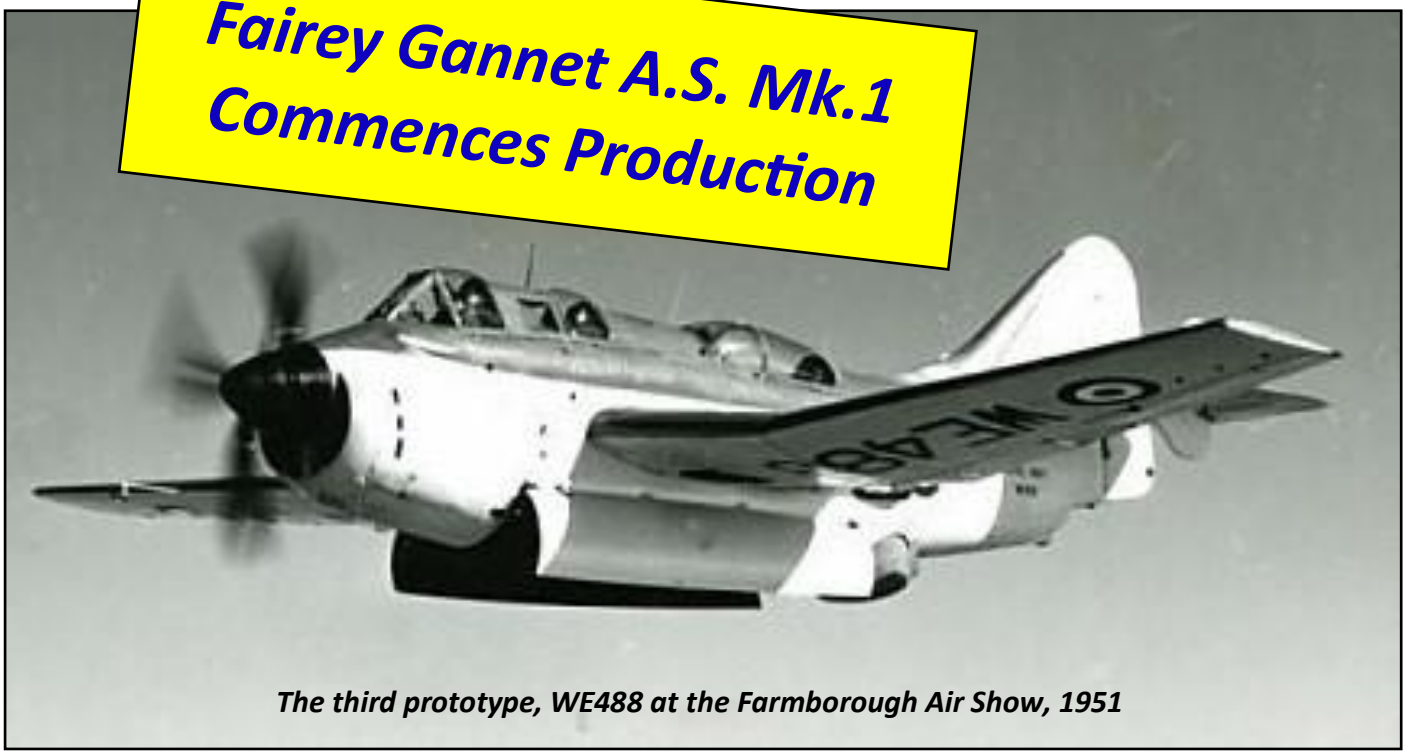
Although winter had already arrived, the south of England was a more agreeable place to be than Lossiemouth or Eglinton. The air station was located near Yeovilton in farming country about three miles from Ilchester and nine miles from the larger agricultural and manufacturing centre of Yeovil, where Westland Aircraft Factory was situated.

Leisure time could be spent enjoying an ale and perhaps a game of skittles in one of the local taverns. Weekends provided an opportunity for a stroll along some of the country lanes or a visit to Yeovil. *'The Three Choughs'* and the '*Podimore'* were well known watering holes. Cider, commonly known as "scrumpy", was a local brew of some notoriety. It was occasionally imbibed with what can only be described as stunning results.

These courses represented the final technical training for the RAN NAM A/E group in the UK. The first arrivals completed their courses, took Christmas leave and departed in early January 1950 on a transitory posting to HMS *Daedalus* to await notification of future movements. The last group to arrive in late December 1949 completed their training and departed for *Daedalus* about mid February 1950.

Next Issue will see No.1 Naval Recruit Course in a 'Transit Period' and 'Sea Passage Back to Australia'

Fairey Gannet A.S. Mk.1 Commences Production



The third prototype, WE488 at the Farmborough Air Show, 1951

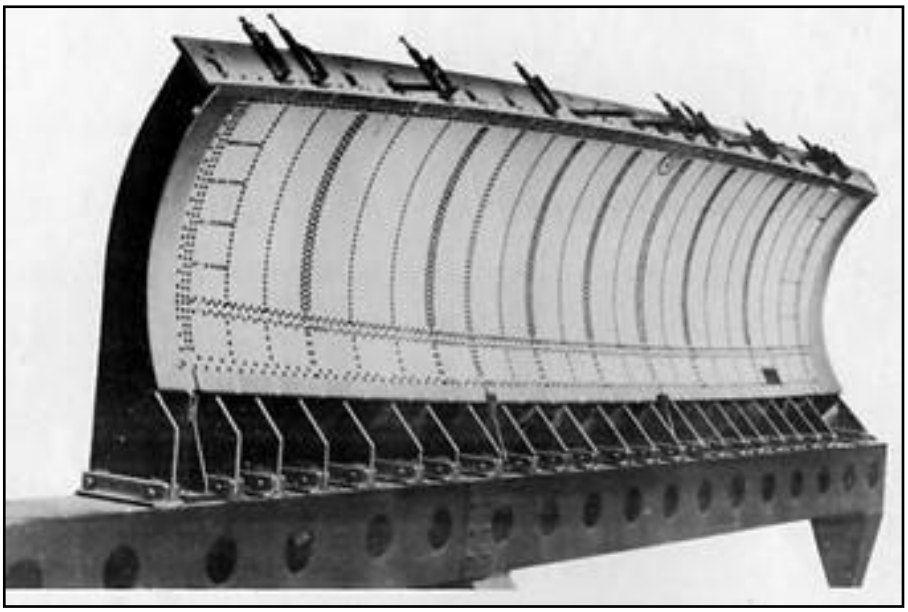
By Ben Patynowski author of the 'Submarine Hunter'. Ben has approved the FAAAA republishing excerpts from the book and pages not previously published.

A radical method of aircraft production had been used for the manufacture of the Gannet A.S.Mk.1. This method, known as Envelope Tooling, was fundamentally a complete reversal of the conventional system and had been developed by the Fairey Aviation Company after many years of study and research into the problems of quantity production.

In the past, it had been the universal practice to erect the structural framework and then apply the skin plating but Envelope Tooling reversed this process and the components were assembled inwards from the skin by use of special jigs. As the jigs were based on the aerodynamic envelope, greater accuracy of the finished job was ensured and a higher degree of interchangeability between assemblies was permitted. An additional advantage was the decrease in pre-production costs.

Specifications: Fairey Gannet AS. Mk 1

Type	Three-seat anti-submarine strike aircraft.	
Powerplant	Armstrong Siddeley Double Mamba 100 turbo-prop rated at 2,950shp (2200kW)	
Performance	Maximum speed, 310 mph (499 km/h) with a maximum cruising speed of 299mph (481 km/h)	
Service Ceiling	25,000 ft (7620m)	
Range	943 miles (1518 km)	
Weight	Empty, 15,069 lb (6835 kg) with a maximum take-off weight of 21,000lb (9798 kg)	
Dimensions	**Wingspan**	54ft 4in (16.56m), 19ft 6in (5.94m) when folded
	Length	43ft (13.11m)
	Height	13ft 8 ½ in (4.18m), 13ft 9in (4.19m)with wings folded
Armament	Torpedoes, depth charges, sonobuoys and under-wing rockets or bombs for a total weight of 2000lb (907kg)	



The Contoured drilling template mounted on accurately profiled formers for bomb door

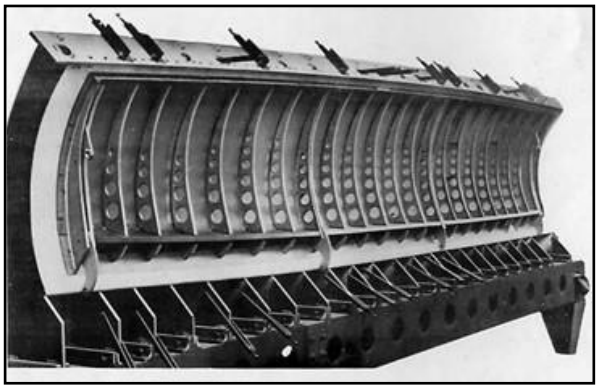
The prevailing conditions necessitated preparations being made at an early stage of production for the eventuality of factory dispersal and its associated problems; Envelope Tooling, enabled more accurate mating of the sub-assemblies by supplying the answer.

The external form of the aircraft was of the utmost importance from a design aspect, being the primary feature to be stabilised by the designer, and had to be maintained within stringent limits.

For this reason the outside contours of the aircraft were lofted at a very early stage and remained as "master" throughout the design. Envelope Tooling made common practice of this feature and, as the outside shape of the aircraft was least affected by modification action, the skin contour became the development thus permitting the tool design and development of assembly fixtures to be started at the preliminary design stage of a new aircraft. This method eliminated the possibility, common in the old system, of an accumulation of errors that could alter the aircraft contour.

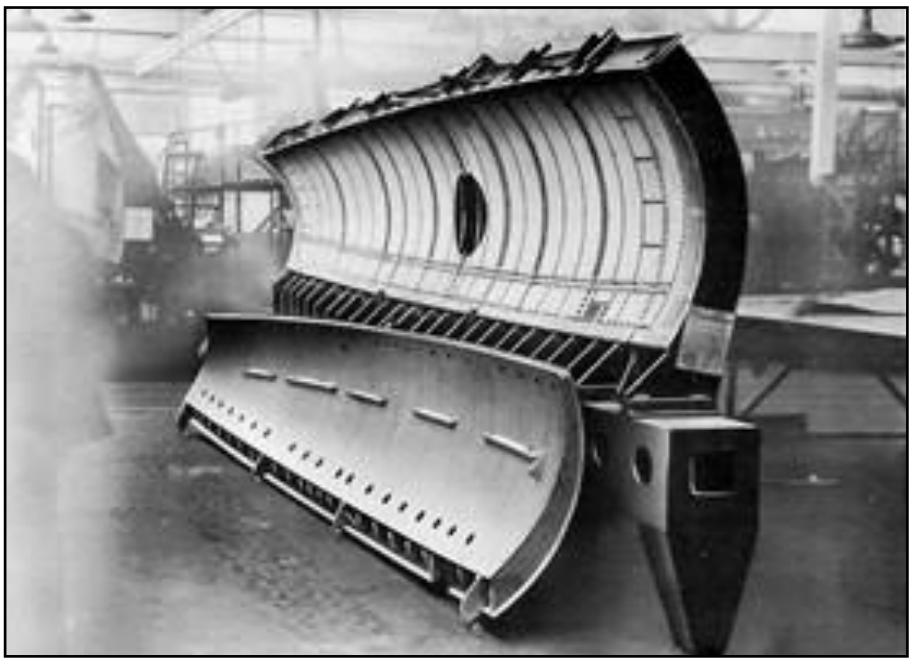
It was important to note that with a double-skinned component, such as a bomb door, it was only necessary to utilise one assembly fixture during the assembly stage of the outer and inner skins. The type of component could thus be completely finished in the one fixture, thereby reducing any likelihood of distortion occurring before final riveting.

Assembly Fixtures … briefly, the assembly fixtures consisted of a series of formers mounted on a rigid base, to a common datum. They were accurately lofted to represent the contour at a predetermined distance outside the actual aerodynamic outline. Attached to the formers was a skin or contour-template, the inside surface of which corresponded to the outside contour of the aircraft component.

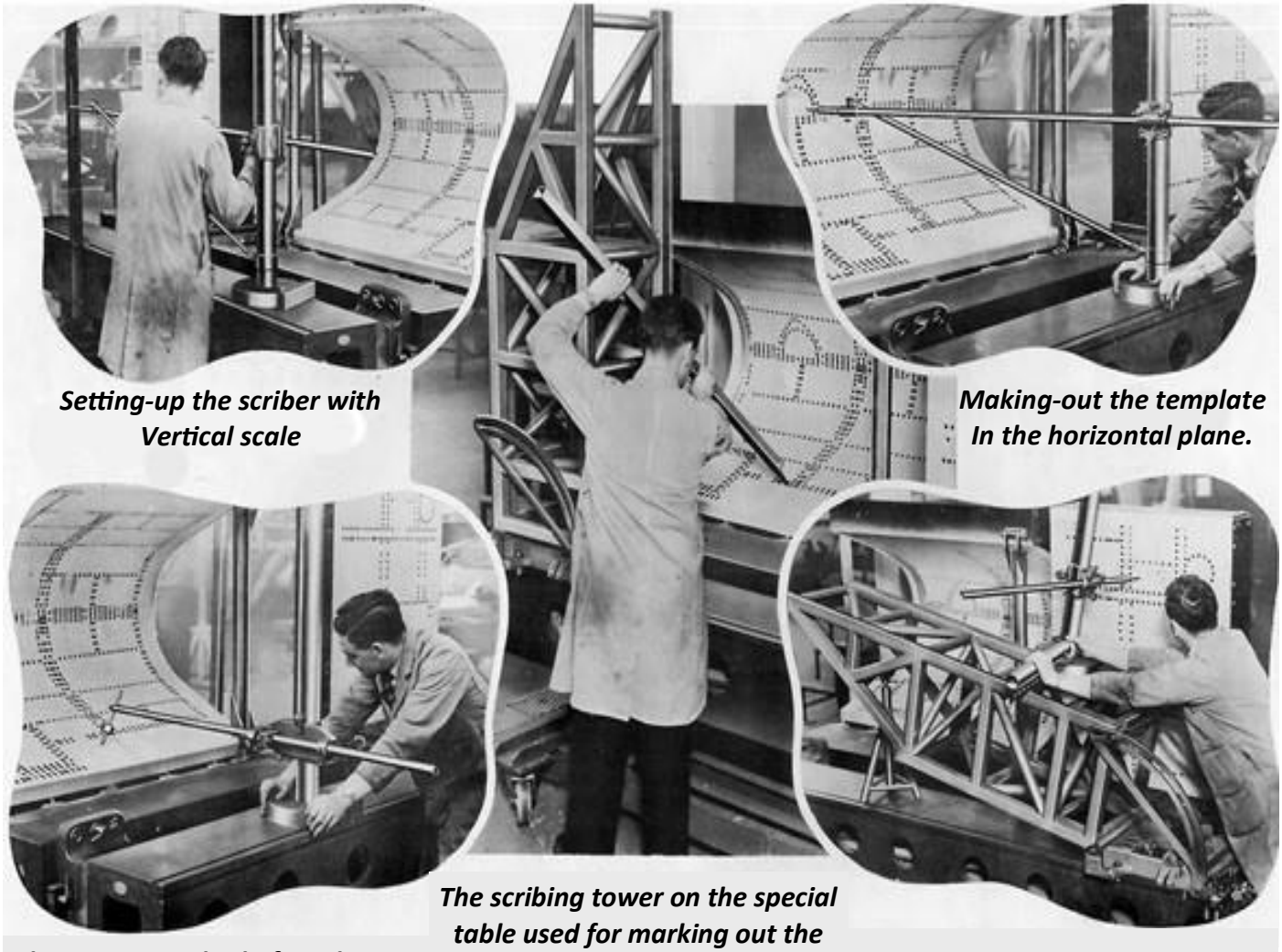


The partially completed bomb door; all assembly operations have been "in situ"

This contour template was then accurately marked out, by special equipment, with details of rivets, facings, trim lines, cut-outs, doors and access panels etc., so the template also became a drilling template lofted in three dimensions.



Completed bomb door removed from final assembly fixture



Setting-up the scriber with Vertical scale

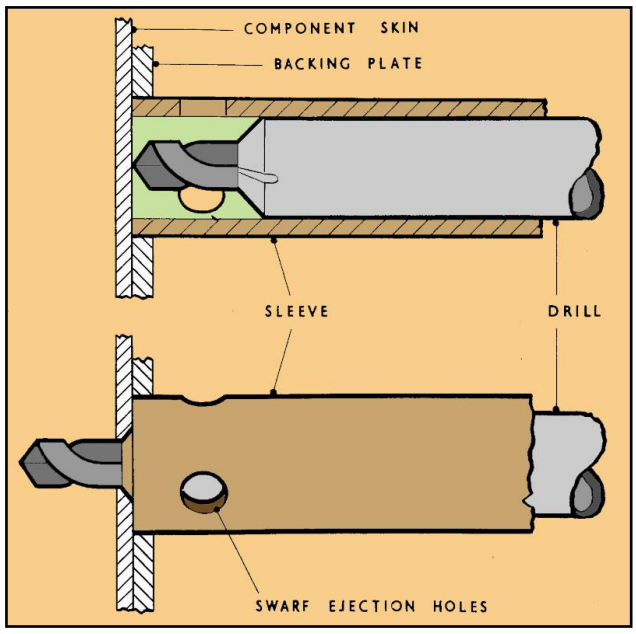
Making-out the template In the horizontal plane.

Alternative method of marking out template

The scribing tower on the special table used for marking out the template in the vertical plane

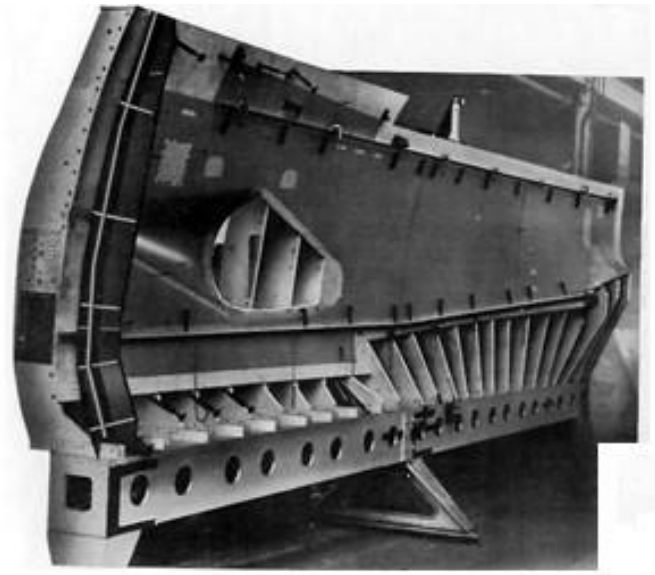
The scribing tower set at a low angle and supported by an adjusted tripod

Marking Out … the disadvantage of the conventional method of marking out was that no permanent record was retained for the purpose of checking for later modifications. Envelope Tooling not only ensured the accuracy of the marking out but left a permanent record for inspection, which could be checked before a component was built. Special equipment had been devised for marking out on the assembly fixture and the efficient use of this equipment was the basis of the whole process of Envelope Tooling. In the accompanying views, some of the special equipment can be seen in use.

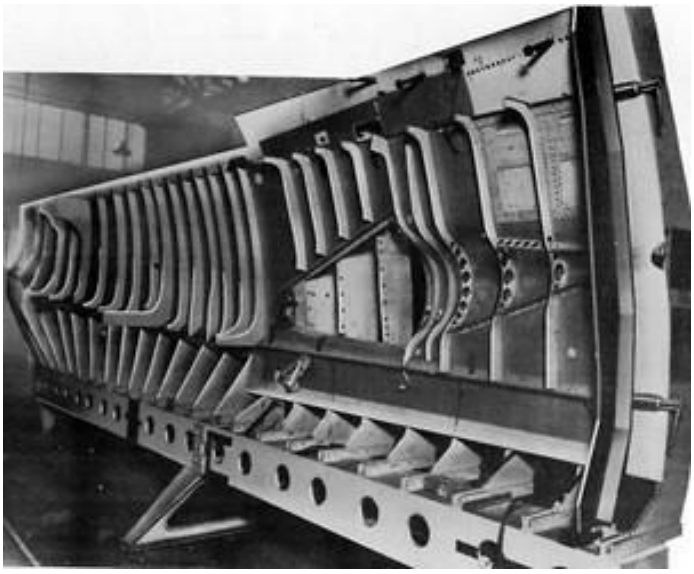


Rotary tools were fitted with sleeve extensions to find and hold the centre. The small sectioned detailed an extension in use which was illustrated on this page and show how the drill and counter bore were combined into one tool, which was housed within the sleeve. The sleeve could pick up holes in the assembly tool, which ensured that the drill was held true. Pressure caused the sleeve to slide back, against a spring, permitting the tool to engage. A stop regulated the amount of movement, to ensure accurate depth control .

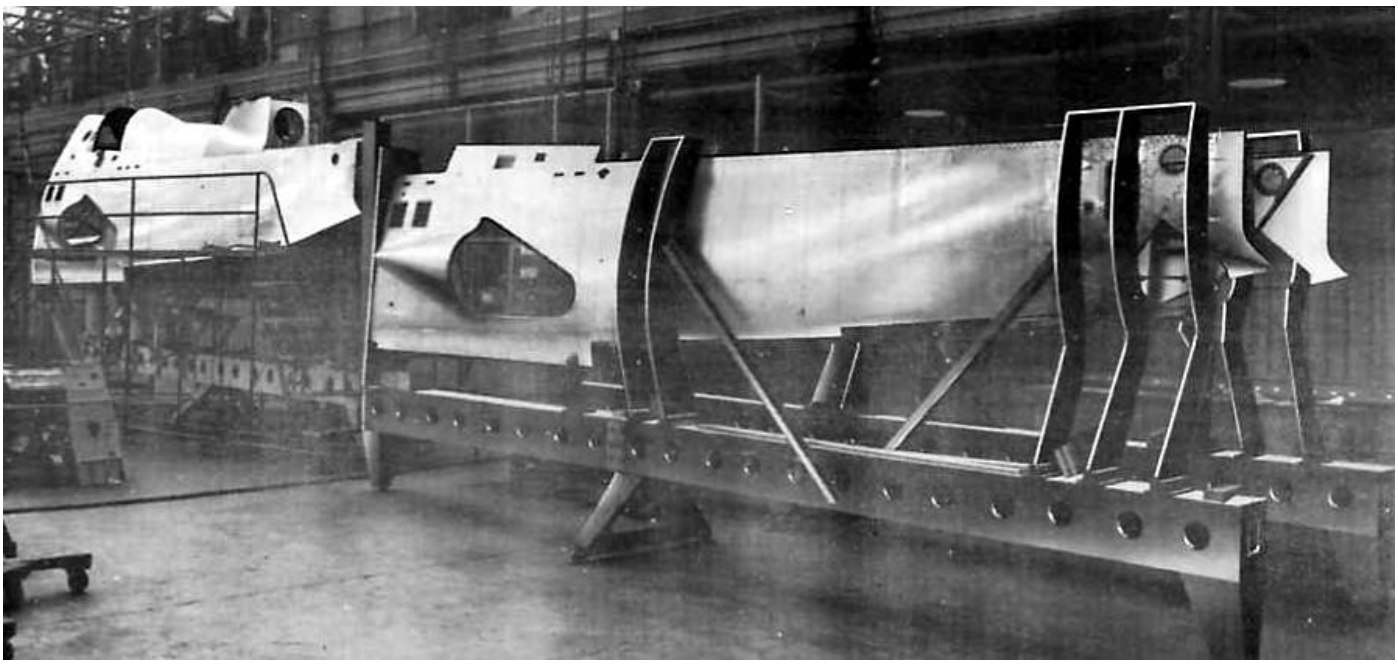
*(Note: **Lofting** is a drafting technique [sometimes using mathematical tables] whereby curved lines are generated, to be used in plans for streamlined objects such as aircraft and boats. . . . . Ed)*



Rear fuselage side panel mounted in the final assembly fixture. Note the top and bottom longerons in position.



Rear fuselage side with frames riveted in position



Complete Gannet rear fuselage sides mounted in fixtures for cockpit assembly. Note completed component in background

Good Luck Mr. Gorsky!!

When Apollo astronaut Neil Armstrong first walked on the moon, he not only gave his famous "one small step for man, one giant leap for mankind" statement but followed it by several remarks, usually communications traffic between him, the other astronauts and Mission Control. Just before he re-entered the lander, however, he made the enigmatic remark: "Good luck Mr. Gorsky."

Many people at NASA thought it was a casual remark concerning some rival Soviet Cosmonaut. However, upon checking, there was no Gorsky in either the Russian or American space programs. Over the years many people questioned Armstrong as to what the "Good luck Mr. Gorsky" statement meant, but Armstrong always just smiled.

But, (on July 5, 1995 in Tampa Bay Florida) while answering questions following a speech, a reporter brought up the 26 year old question to Armstrong. This time he finally responded. Mr. Gorsky had finally died and so Neil Armstrong felt he could answer the question.

When he was a kid, he was playing baseball with a friend in the backyard. His friend hit a ball which landed in the front of his neighbour's bedroom windows. His neighbour's were Mr. & Mrs. Gorsky. As he leaned down to pick up the ball, young Armstrong heard Mrs. Gorsky shouting at Mr. Gorsky, "Oral sex! You want oral sex?! You'll get oral sex when the kid next door walks on the moon!"

Apparently a true story.

WA Events of Over Past Quarter reflect a Committed Division

By Sharron Spargo

17 April. "WA Division Annual Sausage Sizzle". Bunnings Balcatta

This ubiquitous Aussie staple is our major fundraiser for the year and once again it was a great success. It was a typical Perth autumn day, cloudless blue sky, 26 degrees, the onions were aromatic, the snags were hot and the sauce flowed. There were the tradies with their double sausage and extra onions, the mums, dads, kids and even the family dogs who can't get enough of the humble snag on a soft white bun. The one thing that continues to surprise me is the move away from the original, humble condoment, tomato suace, to the more exotice combo of BBQ sauce with American mustard. I was asked on a few occasions to make it a combo of tomato, BBQ and Mustard! Obviously its been a while since I've frequented a Bunnings anywhere but Perth so I wonder if this sacrilege is just regional? Or is this 'throw caution to the wind!' approach the younger generation putting us Boomers in our place? Food for thought.

Serving at the 'WA Division Annual Sausage Sizzle at Bunnings

A BZ goes once again to Mike and Lyn Keogh who did all the organising and preparation for what was a wonderful day.

25 April. "Anzac Day Get Together" at Johnny Fox's, Northbridge.

The best laid plan. It was heartbreaking to once again have our ANZAC Day cancelled. Undoubtedly, we've been very lucky here in the West but to have this day cancelled at the very last minute was a massive disappointment. We live in hope of being able to be together in 2022.

Gathering at a Dawn Service on a previous occasion

For the second time we commemorated at the end of our driveways and this solemn contemplation in the quiet dawn, reflects that experienced by our ANZACs so long ago. While we all missed being together and being able to enjoy the collective solemnity of the dawn service and see the love for our veterans as they march past, we look forward to being able to be together again soon. Lest We Forget.

2 May. "Family Day Picnic in the Park" at Kings Park, Perth.

Kings Park was the venue for our annual Picnic in the Park this year and once again it was a very happy crowd who made the best of the sunshine, good food and the odd coldie! As it was a family affair, the grandies enjoyed all the games and the prizes, curtesy of Mike and Lyn. Our 6 year old granddaughter was thrilled to win a very loud 'electric' guitar and proceeded to serenade us all for the rest of the day. Although it made a change from all the creaking knee and hip joints tested by the games of dexterity organised by the Keoghs for the adults, the 'instrument' had me wishing I had a hearing aid, just so I could remove it! Sadly, its 'extremely hard to find' batteries have been lost forever! It was a great day of laughs, conversations and catching up after our short lockdown and I'm looking forward to doing it again next year…minus the musical interlude!

Families join together at the 'Family Day Picnic in the Park'

30 May. "Members Mid-Year Lunch" at Chin's Chinese, Leemi

We welcome four new members: John Weller, Michael Stewart, Anthony Bathe and Christopher Tonkin. Anthony and Michael joined us in Kings Park and we hope to welcome them, along with John and Christopher for a Chinese lunch on 30 May. Barring another Covid outbreak, the second half of the year will see us settle into Jonny Fox in Northbridge for our meetings. Our Social Committee do a great job to keep us connected and our events are always well attended, and a good time is had by all.

17-22 November. "HMAS Sydney(2), 80th Anniversary Memorial Event. Geraldton.

The biggest event of 2021 is of course the 80th Anniversary of the sinking of HMAS Sydney (2). Many of our members and their families will join thousands of others from across Australia (if that damn Covid allows!) who will travel to Geraldton to take part in this commemorative service. The highway is expected to be busy with caravans and camping trailers joining the snaking line of cars, but my husband and I are planning to get the Harley out and blow some cobwebs away instead. Fingers crossed for warm, dry weather. The Geraldton memorial remains on of the most beautiful and poignant in Australia, and you cannot help but be moved by the 645 Silver Gulls which make up the Dome of Souls. While I have visited before, I've never been there for the commemoration on November 19th, so I look forward to paying my respects. If you are able to make the trip, it will be a wonderful and moving experience.

HMAS Sydney (II) Memorial Geraldton

December 12th. "WA Division Christmas Party" at Johnny Fox's. Northbridge.

It is hard to believe that we're talking about our Christmas Party already! I guess we've all learned in the past 18 months or so that there really are no certainties. We have no idea if we'll be able to celebrate Christmas or not, but it does feel good to have the plan in place anyway. Jonny Fox is our planned venue this year and it will be our first Christmas since the pub has changed hands and although our last year's party was a great event, not being able to be in our 'home', just wasn't the same. Our merry band has a fairly robust social calendar this year and we plan on doing it all again in 2022 so we'd love to welcome any Eastern Staters who find themselves in the West.

Photographs for *Slipstream*

Photographs supplied by the WA Division embedded in a Word Document for this quarterly report were the same size (5cm x 2.5 cm) as shown in the report on Page 38.

Unfortunately, to expand and resize the photographs, even proportionally, would only 'blur' them further .

The pixels remain the same whether reduced or increased in size. However, by reducing the size the overall effect is not altered—as seen in the example on the right.

I'd prefer scanned photographs (Portrait or Landscape) to be a minimum of 10cm x 15cm (4in x 6in) forwarded in one of the following formats: JPEG, TIFF, PNG, GIF, BMP, or PSD separate from the Word Document. Alternatively, photos can be forwarded in this size via normal mail (e.g. by VIC).

With regards another matter, when forwarding photographs please ensure the subject/people in the photograph are as near as possible to the camera. A similar problem occurred with reports from the SA and VIC Divisions as seen on Pages 44 and 45 (notwithstanding both provided 10cm x 15cm pics). Otherwise it is near impossible to identify the subject/people in the photograph.

Examples are the 'WA Annual Sausage Sizzle', 'Family Day Picnic in the Park' and 'SA AGM' where those photographed are near impossible to identify.

Editor

Example of a Pic provided in 10cm x 15cm (4in x 6in) Portrait and reduced in size proportionally. Pixels remain the same and picture remains clear.

Tracker 845 Brings Back "Brake Dancing" Memories

Tracker 845 as seen at HARS today

By Owen Nicholls
(Pictures and story courtesy of HARS Newsletter)

The morning of 4 December 1975 was just like any other, or so it seemed. At the time, I was a LEUT pilot on 816 Squadron.

The sortie was mutual instrument flying with a crew of two pilots in S-2E Tracker 845.

Briefing, pre-flight and start were all routine with weather not being a problem – light wind, good visibility and scattered cloud. After takeoff the crew completed two NDB approaches and one GCA (Ground Controlled Approach). At the end of an hour a second GCA to a touch and go landing on runway 26 was flown.

On touchdown, the co-pilot reselected the flaps for takeoff and signalled this to the flying pilot who advanced the throttles. On power application the aircraft yawed firmly to the left – a classic sign of left engine failure. Right rudder was applied to control the yaw and the throttles closed to abort the takeoff. As power was being reduced a quick scan of engine instruments failed to indicate any problem – torque pressures, RPM and manifold pressure were all matched.

This is where things started to get really interesting.

With throttles at idle and full right rudder the aircraft still did not track straight. Significant right brake application was added and still a straight landing roll could not be maintained. The only thing left was differential power so the left throttle was advanced progressively. In the end a sustained 52 inches of manifold pressure was required (takeoff power is 56.5 inches!). This made for an "interesting" ride.

When the aircraft came to a stop the engines were shut down and the crew egressed. The left tyre was blown and a skid mark about a thousand metres long traced the path of the aircraft back towards the threshold.

Problems continued.

Emergency vehicles arrived on the scene closely followed by the salvage truck. Salvage quickly got a jack and replacement Tracker mainwheel out. The problem was the bottle jack would not go under the oleo jacking point. A tripod jack was manhandled from the truck – but it would not fit under the port wing. The airfield crane was summoned and the whole aircraft lifted to enable the wheel to be change.

By sheer bad luck the aircraft's final stopping point was on the runway intersection so all runways were fouled. No problem for helicopters but a Skyhawk that was airborne was running short of

It's well and truly flat!!

Tracker 845 about to be lifted for tyre change after landing

fuel. It made an uneventful short-field arrested landing on runway 21. Salvage was now working overtime with a disabled Tracker on the intersection and the Skyhawk needing to be released from the arrestor gear.

The aircraft jacking problems experienced by salvage were caused by the wheel being ground down (see photos) causing the aircraft to "list to port". Engineering investigation found an internal failure of the left brake adjuster valve had admitted full 1500 psi system pressure to the left brake without pilot input. In short, the brake was locked hard on and the wheel never turned. I have never heard of another case like this.

The following lessons were learned or reinforced:

1. Emergencies can occur at any time – when you least expect a problem.
2. Symptoms can be misleading.
3. Not every problem is in the Flight Manual emergency procedures.
4. Maintaining control of the aircraft is the first priority
5. Be prepared to use whatever resources you have.
6. Your emergency may cause a consequent operational problem or emergency for other aircraft

It was just as well I did not lose control of the aircraft and run off the threshold of runway 03 – there were works in progress and a trench about a metre deep just short of the threshold.

(Footnote: In 2019 845 was acquired by HARS and moved to Shellharbour airport where it is now on display).

National Secretary's Report

At the 2020 Federal Council Meeting it was agreed that the 2021 FCM would be conducted by Zoom, given the uncertainties surrounding interstate travel due to the ongoing COVID pandemic.

The 2022 Federal Council Meeting will also be the triennial election of the National Executive office-bearers. It is hoped that this FCM will be able to be held in Nowra with all delegates present. No decision has yet been made if there will be a National Reunion, coincidental with the FCM. The year 2022 marks 75 years since the Australian Government agreed, in July 1947, to the establishment of the RAN Fleet Air Arm.

Any Divisions considering the award of Life Membership, Diploma of Merit, Certificate of Service or Certificate of Appreciation to any of their membership are requested to forward any such recommendations so that he appropriate documentation can be prepared and dispatched well in advance of the Federal Council Meeting. It is suggested that awardees be invited to log-in to the ZOOM FCM or be present at your specified locality on the day of the FCM to accept their awards.

Terry Hetherington
National Secretary

Obituary

POEAC Ron George Hobba RAN (Rtd)

Ron joined the RAN on 11 February 1964 as an adult entry signing on for 12 years but only completing nine. Prior to enlisting he had been a Police Officer with SA Police from 26 January 1958 until 5 January 1964. Earlier he worked for the NSW PMG .

Following recruit school, Ron was classified as an Ord EM (A) then selected for 'air communications' serving in 725 Sqn (Wessex) including detachments in HMAS *Sydney* taking troops to Vietnam then later in 851 and 816 Sqns (Trackers).

He settled in QLD with his family and gained employment back with the PMG (at the time both Post and Communications were combined - so with his skills went to what is now known as Telstra investigating fraud).

Ron died on Friday 21 May 2021 following a long illness with cancer aged 83.

Michael Cain

Captured German Aircraft Flown by Eric 'Winkle' Brown

Research by Paul Beaver (Eric 'Winkle Brown's biographer) has included the logbooks and Eric Brown's personal notes of Captured German aircraft 'Winkle' had flown:

Arado 96B
Arado 196A
Arado 199
Arado 232B
Arado 234B
Arado 240
Blohm & Voss 138
Blohm & Voss 222
Blohm & Voss 141B
Bücker Jungmann
Bücker Jungmeister
Bücker Bestmann
Bücker Student
DFS Weihe
DFS Kranich
DFS 230
Dornier Do 17
Dornier Do 18
Dornier Do 24
Dornier Do 26
Dornier Do 27
Dornier Do 217
Dornier Do 335
Fieseler Storch
Focke-Wulf 58
Focke-Wulf 190
Focke-Wulf Ta 152
Focke-Wulf 189
Focke-Wulf Ta 154
Focke-Wulf 200
Henschel Hs 123
Henschel Hs 129
Heinkel He 111
Heinkel He 115
Heinkel He 177
Heinkel He 123
Heinkel He 129
Heinkel He 162
Heinkel He 219
Horton IV
Junkers Ju52-3M
Junkers Ju86
Junkers Ju87
Junkers Ju88
Junkers Ju188
Junkers Ju290
Junkers Ju388
Junkers Ju352
LF-1 Zaunkönig (Wren)
Messerschmitt Bf 108
Messerschmitt Bf 109
Messerschmitt Bf 110
Messerschmitt Me 163
Messerschmitt Me 262
Messerschmitt Me 410
Nationalsozialistisches (Fliegerkorps SG38)
Winter Braunschweig

DVA Pensions and Allowances Rises from 30 March 2021

Service Pension	***Old Rate (pf)***	***New Rate (pf)***	***Increase (pf)***
Single Person	$944.30	$952.70	$8.40
Couple (each)	$711.80	$718.10	$6.30
War Widow			
War Widow(er)'s pension	$960.40	$968.90	$8.50
Income Support Supplement	$284.20	$286.80	$2.60
Disability Pensions			
T&PI (Special Rate)	$1451.80	$1464.70	$12.90
Intermediate Rate	$985.80	$994.60	$8.80
EDA	$802.30	$809.50	$7.20
100 per cent	$516.20	$520.80	$4.60
10 per cent	$58.55	$59.01	$0.46
Veteran Payment			
Single Person	$1021.80	$1031.10	$9.30
Couple (each)	$796.30	$803.50	$7.20
MRCA			
Wholly dependent partner payment	$480.20	$484.45	$4.25
Special Rate Disability pension	$725.90	$732.35	$6.45

Victoria Division Report for April—June 2021

By Mal Smith

Greetings to all members from the Victoria Division.

Not long after sending off my report last month regarding the cancellation of our ANZAC Day March, the situation changed and it was reinstated.

The format was different with groups being mingled together and all banners were massed together at the head of the march. It wasn't ideal and our numbers were down. This was mainly due to the many changes and having to register online beforehand due to COVID-19 restrictions with many stating that the online site was not particularly user friendly. This requirement changed a few days before the march but I suspect by then many had decided it was all too difficult.

Whilst our march participants were down, we had one of the best number of members for some time attend the after march reunion/lunch. It was great to see quite a few family members joining us and The Mission to Seafarers along with our regular Caterers made sure that the day went well.

I mentioned in my last report that John Champion and George Self were both in sick bay. I caught up with them both for lunch recently and they are both well on the road to recovery.

Preparations have commenced for our next major event of the year, the Annual Dinner at the Hastings Club and Memorial Service at HMAS Cerberus. These two events will take place on the weekend of 28th and 29th August. At this stage I am in the process of obtaining the various approvals required to hold our service at HMAS Cerberus. The most important one is the CO's permission to enter and this has been given. I have invited Captain Morthorpe to attend and hopefully he is able to accept this invitation. The head Chaplain has agreed that we can hold our service at ST MARKS CHAPEL and he or another chaplain will officiate. The Bandmaster has agreed to supply our service with a bugler and we have permission from the Joint Operations Support Staff. It seems to get more difficult each year but maybe I am just getting old and grumpy, a distinct possibility.

Our Victoria Division President Chris Fealy was recently invited to give a lunchtime speech on the current role aviation plays in the RAN. This was at the prestigious Athenaeum Club. I was unfortunately under the weather and unable to attend but several committeemen were present. From all reports Chris's speech was well received and those present enjoyed themselves.

Victoria Division Anzac Day Pics on Page 45

A 'Snippets' 'from Nowra Tower

The funny things you remember! Here's one that just came to mind. About 1974 or 75 I was flying in an S2 (Tracker) as a sensor operator with Frank Doe as TACCO. Can't remember the rest of the crew.

We were waiting at the holding point of RWY 26 and were told to wait for a Wessex on GCA finals at four (4) miles. The Aerodrome Controller was KD (Len Kenderdine), an older officer who joined on the formation of the RAN Fleet Air Arm after WWII. KD had served in the RN as a TAG during the war and trained along with many other RN TAGs in the RAN as Observers.

Throughout his career KD had a wry sense of humour.

Frank asked for an expedited departure in front of the 'Wally' which was a speck in the distance out towards Shoalhaven Bight.

"Hold Position" the Aerodrome Controller, KD commanded. Frank in a sarcastic tone replied: "Wake me up when it goes past".

Some minutes later and KD had found a 'Bosuns Call' and played 'wakey wakey' all the way through then cleared us for take-off.

John McCormack

SA Division Elects Committee for 2021

By Roger Harrison
Hon. Whipping Boy SA

In the last *Slipstream*, I mentioned how amazed I was that it was already three months of the current year sorted. Here we are now at the six-month mark with little to show for my troubles other than thinning hair, extra wrinkles and the thought that "Age CAN weary them". I am the proof. Not poof, Mal Parrington, proof.

The SA March 2021 Meeting was our AGM and the Division was well represented with reliable members wanting to be involved with the nuts and bolts of the organisation. At the end of the meeting, a new President was elected as Michael (Stubbo) Stubbington was stepping down through health issues mentioned in the last Slipstream. No other committee positions changed hands. They are:

President:	John Siebert
Vice President:	Roger Harrison
Secretary:	Jan Akeroyd
Treasurer:	Gordon Gray
Auditor:	Michael Cain

Committee Members: Ian Laidler, Mike Stubbington, Gerry Dowling, Trevor Grant and Vic Byers.

Several issues were discussed and settled on, then the New Committee closed the AGM books for another year and settled down to drinks and chatter.

ANZAC Day was down on numbers as was the cheering masses who were asked not to attend unless they were directly involved with veterans. Bands were static which helped reduce that Doppler affect of sound bouncing off buildings. The bands were cleverly positioned next to the "Eyes right" flags thus making our leader up front, John Siebert in uniform, shout in an alarming fashion to be heard. I handed out the last of my "Fly Navy" bumper stickers received from Marcus. Dawn Service saw our Senior man, Henry Young, lay a wreath for the FAAA at the Cenotaph. Great effort by Henry (97) and team. Not all heroes wear capes.

SA Division members gathered for the AGM

Lunch at the Windsor Hotel was cancelled due to an administration error by the Whipping Boy, so it was "Fend for yourself". Most of the troops marching ended up at the Queens Head for lunch. All in all, a good catch-up. Photos maybe.

Continuing with the ANZAC weekend. A bit pissed that the dis-banded 817 Squadron Reunion at their adopted Town of Goolwa over the ANZAC period was never disclosed to the SA FAAA in time for our involvement or attendance in some small way when showing the FAA flag to the great unwashed. Communication breakdown? Is this the problem where those serving don't talk to those that are no longer serving? Pity about that but I hoped someone local may have attended and took photos which could be shipped to Paul Shiels, Editor *Slipstream*.

President John Siebert has suggested we revisit the plans to spend a weekend at Kapunda nestled in the Barossa Valley, north of Adelaide, around mid-year to look over all that the town and countryside have to offer. This is Secretary Jan Akeroyds territory. No duelling banjos please. More on this one to follow.

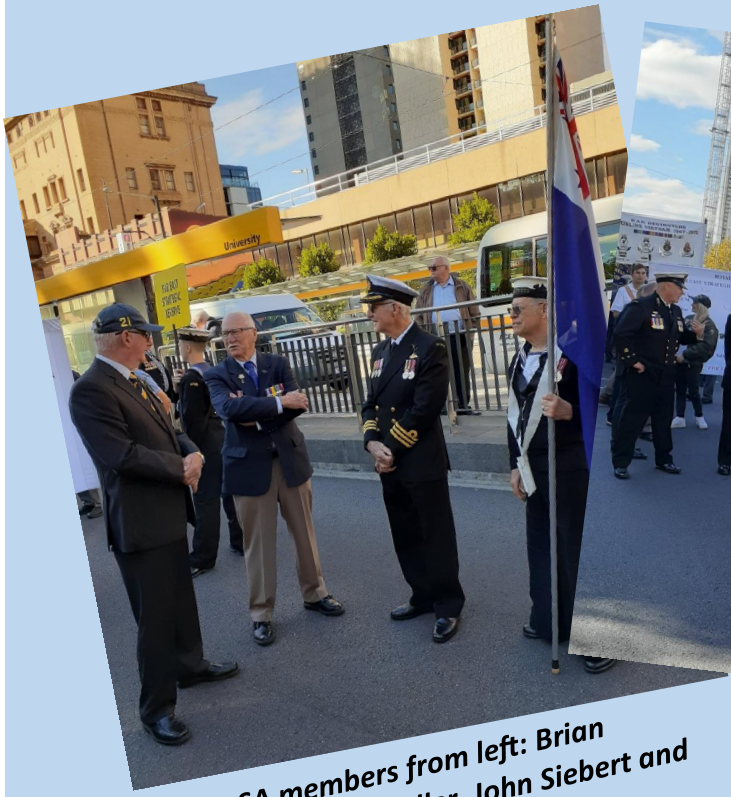
Member Vic Byers has managed to badly gash one of his legs recently which has put him out of action on several levels including attending Meetings or marching on ANZAC Day. Fortunately, he is young enough to repair more rapidly than a lot of us could. Ask him how it happened. A comedy of errors worth a chuckle at Vic's expense.

The approaching May 19th General Meeting for this Division will finalize the SA donation of $1000 to the HARS-Navy restoration aircraft. This money was originally allocated to the Website rebuild but was redirected by the hard at it, Marcus Peake. The committee are having trouble sourcing a suitable brown paper bag.

Speaking to Leon Bomber Brown from Cambewarra recently, and he said Don Parkinson and Ted Winning were visiting with their wives. Muttered about them both bad mouthing me in the background. Love those guys. I suggested the group photo they sent me could have been improved if Judy photo shopped the boys out. No offence intended, well maybe a little.

Regards to you all

Anzac Day Pics SA & Vic



SA members from left: Brian Thompson, Ian Laidler, John Siebert and Gordon Gray

A small SA contingent ready to step off with the SA President John Siebert at the head.

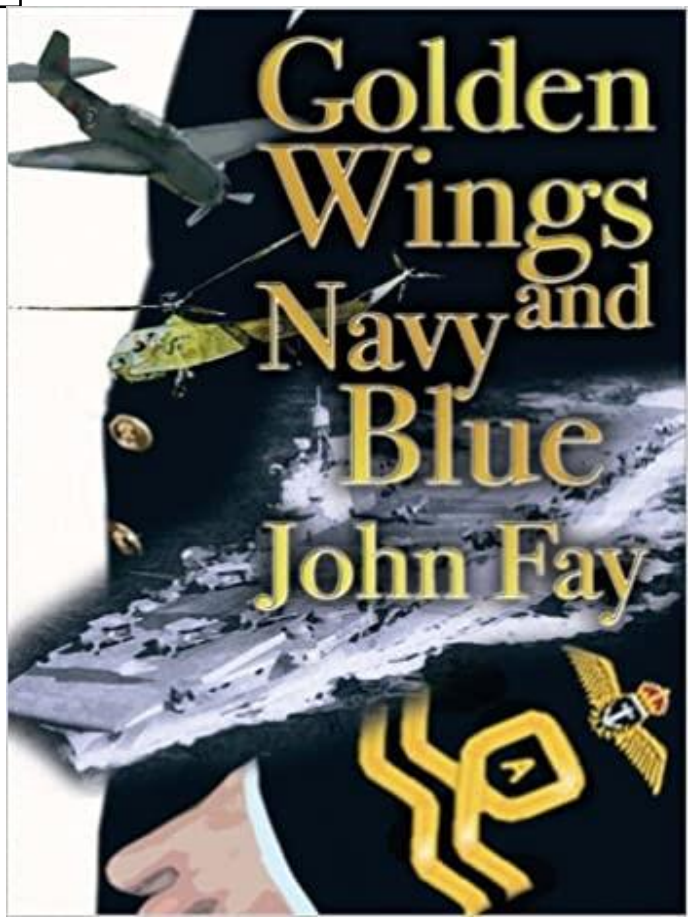
VIC members back row left to right: Mal Smith, Rob Gagnon, David Hobbs, Paul Thitchener, Chris Fealy.
Front Row left to right: Ken Pryor, Scotty Myers, Rob Earle, Ron Christie .

The group of VIC members at the Anzac Day Reunion and Luncheon

Golden Wings & Navy Blue

By John Fay

BOOK REVIEW



***Golden Wings and Navy Blue* is the story of the author's experiences as an RN Fleet Air Arm pilot during World War II. The book provides an intriguing insight into those days when Fleet Air Arm pilots were continually exposed to attack. Overall the book covers his time from flying fixed wing aircraft to his undertaking the first helicopter course.**

In an unusual beginning the book describes the exchange of RN 832 Squadron (Avengers) to USS *Saratoga* with a USN Fighter Squadron joining HMS *Victorious* in the Pacific in 1943. The author provides a brief description of his take-off in an Avenger which resulted in him crashing into the sea and his subsequent escape underwater from the up turned aircraft. The book then changes tact moving in a logical sequence through the author's early years of applying for the Fleet Air Arm, his call up for basic training on 16 September 1940 followed by elementary, then advanced flying training .

Fifty hours of elementary flying training was undertaken at Luton in the Miles Magister. Unlike the Tiger Moth, it was a monoplane.

The next phase of his war time experience entailed travelling to Canada by ship where he was to undertake advanced flying training. Included in the 'passenger' list were almost 700 German POWs bound for internment in Canada. Following the POWs arrival the daring escape by one Oberleutenant Fritz Von Werra who escaped by train and eventually managed to get back to Germany, astonished many. Some may recall the book and film: *The One That Got Away* by Paul Brickhill which describes this event.

On arrival at Kingston, Ontario the author commenced 31 Service Flying Training School (SFTS) on the Fairey Battle and the Yale (similar to a Harvard) for aerobatics from January to May 1941.

This was followed by a posting to a 'Torpedo Spotter Reconnaissance' course first flying Swordfish and then the Fairey Albacore. Once complete it was off to Arbroath for Aerodrome Dummy Deck Landings (ADDNLs). Shortly after he was sent to the Orkney's to join 832 squadron in HMS *Victorious.* However, as the ship was still at sea, a temporary appointment to 771 Squadron (Fleet Requirement Unit) at RNAS Hatston in the Orkney's during which he flew the Blackburn Roc and Blackburn Skua. This flying primarily involved target towing.

It is apparent from this very detailed book that meticulous records were kept including diary entries and flying log books which provided sufficient material for the basis of this book.

At the time of joining *Victorious* at Scapa Flow the ship was equipped with two squadrons of Albacore aircraft (817 & 832) and one fighter squadron 809 flying Fairey Fulmars.

The author provides a breakdown of the *Victorious* operations around Scapa Flow, Iceland and the Artic generally. It also describes its involvement on the notorious Russian Convoys and its part in hunting the *Tirpitz.*

In late December 1942, *Victorious* made her way to the Pacific via Norfolk, Virginia in the US to pick up Avengers for 832 Sqn. With training complete *Victorious* sailed for the Pacific via the Panama Canal. The later chapters focus on the ship's operations in the Pacific with US Forces. It returned to the UK in the latter half of 1943. This included 832 Sqn's period on loan to USS *Saratoga.*

After fulfilling his duties in *Victorious* in September 1943, the author was posted to 778 Sqn (Services Trials Unit) at Crail. The objective was to make landings on new aircraft carriers flying many and various aircraft. One of those attached to the Sqn was Eric 'Winkle' Brown referred to earlier in this *Slipstream..* February 1944 saw the author's flying change when selected for No.1 Helicopter Course. The remainder of his Fleet Air Arm service was spent with helicopters until demobbed in January 1946.

Overall a good read and a good insight into aircraft carrier operations in WWII

Paul Shiels

Golden Wings and Navy Blue by John Fay is obtainable through Navy Wings UK shop here for £8.95 ($AUD16.23 on present exchange rates) + postage (tracked and signed). For postage costs, contact Navy Wings.

Without Warning

by Jed Hart

Jed Hart's first novel, Without Warning, is an engrossing thriller, which moves between the UK and Brunei, where most of the action takes place. The story is partly autobiographical, taking in Jed's flying days in the Navy, especially his Vietnam War experiences and later ones in the commercial world.

Those who know Jed will wonder if that is the extent of the autobiographical flavour – and indeed it does go well beyond those early Navy flying days! The impact of those early days on later life emerges as an interesting backdrop to the narrative. Most, if not all of the locations mentioned in the book are genuine (at least as far as Google Maps is concerned!) thus contributing to the authentic feel of the narrative.

The story revolves around the planning, conduct and official reaction to a major terrorist operation in Brunei. There is a strong and complex UK linkage; including the unwitting involvement of a UK-based oil company with extensive oil and aviation operations in Brunei. The main characters, Jake Hunt, pilot turned aviation executive and his engineer colleague, Nicole Roswell, are very credible and easily relatable to for readers. Jed's own commercial flying experiences have enabled him to craft a believable company environment, with the expected tensions between operators and management.

There is a wide set of supporting characters, including of course those involved in the terrorist cells in the UK and Brunei. A prominent member of the British Royal family plays an important and believable, if unknowing, part in the story. Police and security agencies, official and otherwise, also feature strongly and the interactions between them provide a fascinating subplot. In all, the supporting characters are very well crafted, exhibiting the usual

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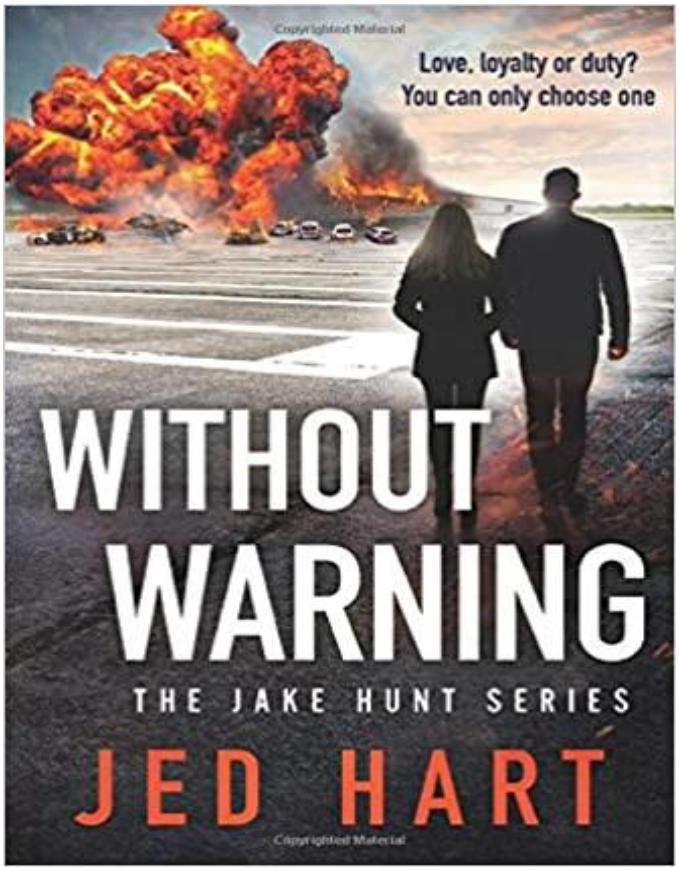

human strengths and weaknesses, especially those involved in the terrorist plot.

Among the real strengths of the book are the insights into terrorist groups, their methods and motivations, especially as they apply to the recruitment of ordinary people to the cause. The author also succeeds in creating real tension at many points in the story, with a plot that is both intricate and fast moving. Furthermore, the narrative builds in a way that maintains suspense to the very end.

"Without Warning" is a definite page turner and this reviewer is very much looking forward to book two of the Jake Hunt series.

"Without Warning" Book One: The Jake Hunt Series, by Jed Hart, Feather Knight Books, 2020. Rrp: $24.95

Jack McCaffrie

(I ran this novel review as a one off. It's not normal for Slipstream to review novels. However, I was asked by several members whether the publication might reconsider this decision. My thoughts are to concentrate more on biographies and history which consider Naval Aviation, the Navy, Military Aviation and Civil Aviation overall . . .Ed)

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to be into the Editor Slipstream

for September Issue

By 1 September 2021

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