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# ***SLIPSTREAM***

## **ALBATROSS TODAY**



Aerial view of the Helicopter Hangars close to where the pig farm resided. Main entrance is off Braidwood Road



Sikorsky MH-60R Seahawk

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**EDITORIAL COMMENT**

This edition of 'Slipstream' has been co-edited by the National Executive and the New South Wales Division. Our editor Paul Shiels has had to resign on health grounds and the National Executive is focussing on a longer-term solution. We are most grateful for the support of the NSW Treasurer, and former Slipstream editor Mr Ron Batchelor in drafting the September and December issues.

# Commanding Officer Captain Robyn Phillips RAN

Welcome to HMAS *Albatross*, home of the Royal Australian Navy's Fleet Air Arm.



HMAS *Albatross* is the largest operational Naval establishment and the Navy's only Air Station. The primary task of HMAS *Albatross* is to support the five naval Squadrons, which provide air support to the fleet.



HMAS *Albatross* is also home to the **Fleet Air Arm Museum**. The museum exhibits former naval aircraft ranging from a WW1 Sopwith Pup to the recently retired Sikorsky Seahawk S-70B-2.

## Squadrons

The five Squadrons and the aircraft they operate are:

[723 Squadron](#) with [EC-135T2+](#) helicopters

[725 Squadron](#) with [MH-60R](#) Seahawk helicopters

[808 Squadron](#) with [MRH-90](#) Taipan helicopters

[816 Squadron](#) with [MH-60R](#) Seahawk helicopters

[822X Squadron](#) with [unmanned aerial systems](#).



The EC-135T2+ helicopter is operated by 723 Squadron.



The MH-60R helicopter is operated by 725 and 816 Squadrons.



The MRH-90 helicopter is operated by 808 Squadron.

**The Air Station is home to the Australian Navy Fleet Air Arm. The Commander Fleet Air Arm (COMFAA) has responsibility for delivery of aviation capability to the Government.**

## History

The decision to build an airfield on the land now occupied by the Naval Air Station was taken soon after WWII was declared in 1939. The Royal Australian Air Force (RAAF) occupied the new base on 7 May 1942 and was soon followed by the US Army Air Corps and the Royal Netherlands East Indies Air Force.

In 1944, the British Admiralty directed forces to the South-West Pacific necessitating shore base establishments in Australia to support the Royal Navy and its Fleet Air Arm.

RAAF Base Nowra was considered ideal because of its proximity to Jervis Bay, which was large enough to accommodate the entire British Pacific Fleet. The Royal Navy's Fleet Air Arm began operations at Nowra in late October 1944, and the base was renamed HMS *Nabbington*. In March 1946, the base reverted to RAAF control "to be retained but not maintained".

In July 1947, the Commonwealth Defence Council approved the formation of a Fleet Air Arm which would be controlled and operated by the RAN. The initial planning included purchase of two aircraft carriers, aircraft and establishment of shore facilities. The carriers were named HMA Ships *Sydney* (III) and *Melbourne* (II), and the shore facilities were at Nowra.

HMAS *Albatross* was commissioned in August 1948 and the 20th Carrier Air Group, comprising Sea Fury and Firefly aircraft, was brought from England to Australia by HMAS *Sydney* (III). These aircraft, operated by 805 and 816 Squadrons, disembarked to Nowra in May 1949. In November 1950, they were joined by the Carrier Air Group of 808 and 817 Squadrons, also flying Sea Furies and Fireflies.

HMAS *Albatross* has been expanding ever since. As more capable aircraft have been acquired, so ground support facilities have had to be built. In 1955, Sea Venoms and Gannets arrived, requiring radar workshops and test facilities. More aircraft necessitated stricter standards of air traffic control and a new control tower was built in 1958. In 1964 the introduction of Wessex helicopters, with a dunking sonar capability, required a further expansion of services.

In 1965, it was decided to buy American aircraft to replace the ageing British Gannets and Sea Venoms. McDonnell Douglas Skyhawks and Grumman Trackers were chosen and additional avionics facilities were built to service the complex equipment they carried.

The helicopters now based at HMAS *Albatross* have restored to the RAN much of the anti-submarine capability lost when the Tracker squadron was disbanded in 1983.

In recent years significant redevelopment has taken place, continuing the operation of HMAS *Albatross* and recognising its strategic importance as the sole Royal Australian Navy Air Station.

Training—For the most up to date information on Navy Aviation careers go to:

<https://www.defencejobs.gov.au/jobs/Aviation?tab=category-jobs&page=1&perPage=21&query=>

## **Officers**

**Officers who have completed their initial (NEOC) training at HMAS *Creswell* and posted to HMAS *Albatross* can expect to undertake training as follows:**

**Officers undertaking Pilot training can expect to be posted to Tamworth NSW to undertake Basic Flying Training (BFTS) for 120 working days utilising CT4 trainers. On completion of BFTS, graduates will proceed to 2FTS (RAAF Pearce, Bullsbrook WA) to continue training for 170 working days utilising PC9 trainers. Successful graduates will then proceed to 723 Squadron HMAS *Albatross* (Nowra NSW) to conduct rotary conversion on AS350B Squirrel helicopters for approximately 12 months. On successful completion of rotary conversion, students will then conduct Operational Flying Training (OFT) [including type conversion] on either 816 Squadron (Seahawk), or 817 Squadron (Sea King). The length of OFT is dependant on aircraft type, ranging between 9-12 months.**

**Officers undertaking Observer training can expect to be posted to RAAF East Sale for Basic Observer Course (BOC) for 39 weeks utilising King Air aircraft. Upon successful completion of BOC, students will then proceed to 723 Squadron HMAS *Albatross* (Nowra, NSW) to conduct rotary conversion on AS350B Squirrel helicopters for approximately 12 months. On successful completion of rotary conversion, students will then conduct Operational Flying Training (OFT) [including type conversion] on either 816 Squadron (Seahawk) or 817 Squadron (Sea King). The length of OFT is dependant on aircraft type, ranging between 9-12 months.**

## **Sailors**

**Once AT trainee sailors graduate Recruit School as Seaman Unrated Air Technical - SMNAT, they will be posted to the RAAF School of Technical Training at RAAF Base Wagga, NSW.**

**For sailors serving at RAAF Base Wagga Wagga, you along with other SMNAT sailors will form part of a Division who will live together, take lessons and study together and form great friendships which last throughout their Naval careers. Each Division will be managed by a Divisional Officer (exactly the same as Recruit School at HMAS *Cerberus*), who looks after everyone's administration, instruction, discipline, welfare and morale.**

**AT Aviation (ATV) and (ATA) category training is 360 working days in duration.**

**Upon successful completion of ATA/ATV Category Training at RAAF Base Wagga, sailors will be posted to Training Authority Aviation (HMAS *Albatross*, Nowra NSW) for their Equipment Application Course (EAC). This training is tailored to a specific airframe and can take up to 11 working weeks.**

**Upon successful completion of EAC, the sailor will then be posted to the squadron as a maintainer with the airframe they completed their EAC on (either 816 Squadron (Seahawk) or 817 Squadron (Sea King)). Opportunity exists for AT members to advance with promotion through the Senior Sailor ranks to Warrant Officer**

## Accommodation and meals

Officers and Senior Sailors take their meals in the Combined Mess with cooking undertaken by a Defence Primary Support Contractor. Meals are served three times per day with a great selection on offer. Bathrooms and toilets are shared with females. Laundry is located on lower ground floors.



Cabins are quite comfortable and equipped with built-in wardrobes, built-in desk/study area, fridge and sink. Showers and toilets are shared.

Ship's company accommodation consists of multi-storey accommodation blocks with a common room and complete with TV, radio/CD and kitchen facilities including fridge. Cabins are comfortable and fairly spacious.



Cabins are quite comfortable and equipped with built-in wardrobes, built-in desk/study area, fridge and sink. Showers and toilets are shared.

All junior sailors living onboard take their meals in the Junior Sailors' cafeteria where meals are served three times per day. A wide variety of wholesome and tasty food is on offer with at least three main choices at every meal including a vegetarian option.

The lifestyle in this regional area is very relaxed. It is a welcoming, friendly community with many sport clubs and associations active within the area. There are a number of schools catering for pre-school children through to year 12 students and which have won acclamation for their academic achievements.

For Officers and Senior Sailors, the Combined Mess at HMAS *Albatross* offers many great facilities including private swimming pool, cable television and wi-fi hotspot.

For Junior Sailors, HMAS *Albatross* has an excellent Junior Sailors' mess know as the Cockpit Tavern, which has undergone significant refurbishment over the past two years.



The mess offers recreation facilities including an internet cafe, and allows all Junior Sailors to unwind and relax and bring friends (civilian guests) onboard. Facilities include BBQ, swimming pool, cable TV (Austar), table tennis, snooker, darts and of course the Tavern serves alcohol (not to personnel under 18 years of age).



## Sport

It is a mandatory requirement that all personnel be healthy, fit and active and ready to deploy, and sport is therefore encouraged. The ADF is the only organisation that pays you to play sport eg, golf, adventure training, sailing, Aussie Rules and rugby union, just to name a few. If you are really good you can be selected to play for Navy in Inter-Service competitions against Army and RAAF, and play all around Australia and possibly overseas.

*Albatross* caters to a number of different sporting activities including football (league, union and AFL), netball, basketball and golf. There is a fully equipped, newly built modern gymnasium on board for all personnel to use.

## Extra curricular activities

From time to time ship's company including AT trainees will be required to undertake outside activities such as leadership expeditions out bush, small arms training and adventure training. Trainees can also expect to undertake guard training for specific events, such as Freedom of Entry to the town of Nowra or Anzac Day.

## Leave

If you are not rostered for duty, and have no service commitments, then personnel can proceed 'ashore' on local evening/overnight leave. Note: If you are under 18 years of age, then you are required to return to quarters before 11:59pm.

## Geographic and demographic information

*Albatross* is located approximately 6kms from Nowra, (population of 90,000 for the Shoalhaven area). Nowra boasts a major shopping centre, public and private hospitals, TAFE College, cinema complex and a variety of other entertainment options. The Shoalhaven area supports a fishing industry and is a mecca for the tourists and holiday-makers alike. *Albatross* is a short drive to any of the 36 towns and villages dotted along the coastline, each boasting their own unique style and quick access to oceans and lakes.

This coastal region is a popular haven for fishing, swimming, water skiing and a magnet to holiday makers during the Christmas/new year holiday period.

Other recreational activities include horse riding, trail bike riding, canoeing, sky diving and gliding (just to name a few). See [Shoalhaven Tourism \(external link\)](#) for more information.



## 808 SQUADRON

### Multi Role Helicopter MRH-90

The MRH-90 multi-role helicopter replaced the ADF's existing Black Hawk and Sea King helicopter fleets with increased and improved capability, ability and capacity to meet emerging requirements. 46 MRH-90 aircraft have been acquired for the Navy and Army.

The first two aircraft were accepted into service in Brisbane on 18 December 2007 in a ceremony attended by The Hon Greg Combet MP, Parliamentary Secretary for Defence Procurement.

The MRH-90 capability has more built-in safety features that meet or exceed the ADF's requirements and utilise the latest technology including composite materials and fly-by-wire systems that will provide more efficient maintenance.

The MRH-90 will be available for two airmobile squadrons, one special operations support squadron, and one maritime support helicopter squadron, 808 Squadron, able to provide airmobile and maritime support capability to the ADF from land bases as well as the Canberra Class Amphibious Assault Ships.

Multi Role Helicopter	
Manufacturer	Australian Aerospace (Eurocopter subsidiary)
Number in use	6 (from a pool of 46 shared with the Australian Army)
Origin	Europe (as part of the NH Industries consortium)
Length	16.13 metres
Height	5.23 metres
Weights	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>6400 kilograms (empty)</li> <li>10,600 kilograms (max takeoff)</li> </ul>
Speed	300 kilometres per hour (maximum)
Range	800 kilometres
Crew	2 pilots, 2 loadmasters
Engines	2 × Rolls-Royce Turbomeca RTM322-01/9 turboshaft, 1,662 kW (2,230 shp) each
Performance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Service ceiling: 20,000 feet</li> <li>Rate of climb: 8 metres per second</li> </ul>





## 723 SQUADRON

Under the JP 9000 Phase 7 Helicopter Aircrew Training System (HATS) project, a new joint helicopter training system provided by Boeing Defence Australia for both Army and Navy aircrew will utilise the EC-135 T2+ helicopters, along with flight simulators and a new flight-deck equipped sea-going training vessel *MV Sycamore*.

The EC-135 T2+ is a military training helicopter that offers a glass cockpit with high visibility, a multi-axis auto-pilot, plus other advanced technologies to help instructors perform training missions. The EC-135 offers the performance and safety of a twin-engine helicopter that replaces both the Navy Squirrel and Army Kiowa single-engine helicopter types.

A total of fifteen EC-135 helicopters will be operated by Navy, Army and civilian instructors and will be based at HMAS *Albatross* in new state of the art facilities

Type	EC-135 Training helicopter
Manufacturer	Airbus Helicopters
Origin	Germany
Number Ordered	15
First Delivered	31 March 2016
First Flight	16 January 2015 (N52-001)
Length	5.87 metres
Height	3.35 metres
Width	1.56 metres
Weights	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 2910 kg (maximum)</li> <li>• 1130 kg (maximum cargo)</li> </ul>
Speed	155 knots
Crew	2 pilots + 7 passengers
Engines	2 x Turbomeca Arrius 2B2 turboshaft engines
Operated by	723 Squadron



# 725 and 816 SQUADRONS

The MH-60R Seahawk is the Royal Australian Navy's next generation submarine hunter and anti-surface warfare helicopter and will form a very important part of its operations for years to come.

The MH-60R is equipped with a highly sophisticated combat systems designed to employ Hellfire air-to-surface missiles and the Mark 54 anti-submarine torpedo. The primary missions of the 'Romeo' helicopter is anti-submarine warfare and anti-surface warfare. Secondary missions include search and rescue, logistics support, personnel transport and medical evacuation.

The MH-60R and its mission systems replaced the fleet's S-70B-2 Seahawk aircraft, which retired from service on 1 December 2017. The Australian Government approved the acquisition of 24 MH-60R Seahawk 'Romeo' naval combat helicopters at a cost of over \$3 billion.

The helicopters are largely military off-the-shelf built by Sikorsky and Lockheed Martin and were acquired through the Foreign Military Sales (FMS) process from the US Navy.

Type	Anti-submarine/Anti-surface/Search and Rescue helicopter
Manufacturer	Sikorsky/Lockheed Martin
Origin	USA
Number Ordered	24
First Delivered	2013
Last Delivered	2016
Speed	180 knots
Range	245 nautical miles
Crew	3
Engines	2 x General Electric T700-GE-401
Weapon Systems	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>AGM-114 Hellfire air-to-surface missiles</li><li>Mark 54 anti-submarine torpedo</li></ul>
Operated by	816 Squadron and 725 Squadron





## 822X SQUADRON

822X Squadron's mission is to conduct experimentation and evaluation activities with contemporary Unmanned Aircraft Systems (UAS) and advanced payloads to develop operational knowledge and experience, develop orders and procedures supporting safe UAS operations, and to assess UAS capability options that support integrated warfare outcomes for the future Fleet.

The Navy UAS Development Unit (NUASDU) was formed in late 2012 with the primary purpose of conducting experimentation activities with an exemplar UAS in order to develop an in-depth understanding of the potential capabilities of MTUAS. Secondary tasks involved establishing policy and procedures, developing and testing crew models, tactics, understanding support requirements, gathering cost of ownership data and informing future acquisition projects that may have a UAS requirement. Unit strength was a mere five personnel. NUASDU commenced flight operations from Jervis Bay Airfield (near HMAS Creswell) in March 2013 with a leased ScanEagle UAS supported by contract staff from Insitu Pacific.

After successful land based trials, approval was granted to embark the ScanEagle into HMAS Parramatta for an initial embarked demonstration. On 8 May 2013, ScanEagle AV1422, call-sign ScanEagle 22 became the first Maritime Tactical UAS operated from an Australian warship by a Navy crew member. With a requirement for more in-depth embarked evaluations to explore MTUAS concepts of operation, Navy acquired two ScanEagle systems in June 2015 and expanded to 13 personnel to support two deployable UAS crews, managed by a small executive.

To recognise the maturing of the evaluation program, the unit was renamed the Navy UAS Unit (NUASU) and introduced a new call sign - 'Omen'. The Omen call sign is used for all Navy UAS to indicate to other airspace users that the aircraft is unmanned. To date, evaluation activities with the ScanEagle system have been conducted from land bases at Jervis Bay, Beecroft Weapons Range and a three month deployment to Christmas Island. Embarked operations have been conducted from several Navy ships including HMAS Ships Parramatta, Choules and Newcastle, and the Multi-role Aviation Training Vessel MV Sycamore. The HMAS Newcastle embarkation and subsequent deployment to Operation MANITOU in 2017 represented the first deployment of an Australian Navy UAS to an operational area, albeit for operational evaluation purposes.

The Schiebel Camcopter S-100 UAS was acquired by Navy in late 2016 to broaden the Navy's understanding of Vertical Take off and Landing (VTOL) UAS. The S-100 was accepted into Navy service on 30 April 2018. NUASU expanded to 32 personnel, enabling the deployment of one ScanEagle flight and one S-100 Flight to sea for embarked evaluation activities while maintaining one ScanEagle Flight at Nowra for training and land-based experimentation activities.

In June 2018, then Chief of Navy, Vice Admiral Barrett, AO, CSC, RAN announced his decision to commission Navy's first Maritime Tactical UAS Squadron, 822X Squadron, signalling a new era in Maritime Aviation operations. This is the first time the 'X' nomenclature has been used by the RAN, and reflects the Squadron's experimental and developmental nature. 822X Squadron commissioned on 25 October 2018 at a ceremony at HMAS Albatross.

Navy Unmanned Aircraft Systems (UAS) has an association with Unmanned Aircraft Systems dating back to the 1950s, when unmanned target towing aircraft were introduced into military service to support training operations. Navy operated the Jindivik, Turana and Kalkara UAS in this role for over five decades. Many navies are exploring the use of Maritime Tactical UAS (MTUAS) from ships in support of maritime operations, primarily in Intelligence, Surveillance and Reconnaissance (ISR) roles taking advantage of the UASs long endurance, covert nature and high quality optical sensors. The RAN has been conducting experimentation, demonstrations and trials since 2012, aimed at increasing Navy's familiarity and experience with Maritime Tactical UAS.

### UAS Roles

Unmanned systems specialise in roles described as dull, dirty or dangerous. Navy seeks to complement the existing capabilities provided by its advanced MH-60R Seahawk and MRH90 Taipan aircraft, taking advantage of the inherent MTUAS strengths; sensor capabilities, covertness and long endurance.

The core role of tactical UAS is Intelligence, Surveillance and Reconnaissance (ISR). Presently, high quality video and still imagery is provided to the operator in near real-time significantly improving battlespace awareness.

In a Naval context, UAS may undertake roles that contribute to tasks such as:

Surface Warfare, Amphibious Warfare, Anti-Submarine Warfare, Fire Support, Search and Rescue, Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief, Interdiction Operations and Force Protection.

**822X SQUADRON**



**ScanEagle is launched from the flight deck of HMAS Newcastle in the Middle East region.**



**Able Seaman Avionics Technician Avionics, Rik Murtagh, showcases the 822X Squadron S-100 Camcopter Unmanned Aircraft System at the Australian International Airshow**

# The Angled Flight Deck

The angled deck was one of the three improvements to aircraft carrier design conceived by the Royal Navy that made fast-jet operations both possible and safe. The idea of canting or skewing the landing area to port of the ship's centre-line had evolved from experiments with a rubber deck and Sea Vampire fighters without undercarriages in HMS *Warrior* in 1948. Although the rubber deck itself proved impractical, the 'skewed deck' as it was called at first, was seen as a very effective way of making arrested landings safer on existing, relatively small, flight decks.



***A Gannet approaches the barricade***

The generation of jets planned for the 1950s were much heavier than their predecessors, had higher landing speeds and would have needed most of the deck available to complete an arrested landing. The standard technique of centre-line landings with a barrier to protect the deck park forward from aircraft that missed the wires was no longer tenable and, with little or no room for the deck park, the number of aircraft that could be operated was small.



***An A-4G Skyhawk 'boltering'.***

Worse still, if the whole deck had to be clear for every landing the number of aircraft operated at any one time would be low and the speed with which they could be recovered would be slow. The angled deck solved this dilemma by providing a landing runway that was longer than the portion of deck aft of the existing barriers. The sum of the lengths of the landing and launch/parking areas was greater than the length of the ship. Trials were carried out on an angled deck painted on HMS *Triumph*, on USS *Antietam* the first carrier actually fitted with a full angled deck in 1953 and in HMS *Centaur* the first British angled deck carrier in 1954.



(shown above) in November. The Australian ship was, therefore, one of the most advanced ships of her day despite her small size.

The trials were successful, so successful that every carrier navy moved to copy the idea quickly, led by the USN. Not only did the angled deck provide a longer runway in which the arrestor wires could be moved nearer the centre of pitch to make landing easier in bad weather but other advantages soon became apparent. There was no longer a need for a barrier since, with clear deck space ahead of the wires, an aircraft that missed the wires, known as a 'bolter', could open the throttle to go round for another circuit.

The area to starboard of the runway gave clear parking space for a number of aircraft, allowing rapid multiple aircraft recoveries and a deck park for refuelling and re-arming.

Although simple in concept, the conversion of existing carriers to have angled decks involved structural alterations, loss of the armament and airdrops mounted on the port beam. The arrestor wire machinery had to be re-aligned to lie athwart the angled deck. Once the new structure was installed, it provided useful volume for mess decks and machinery.

Three new aircraft carriers joined their respective fleets in 1955 with all three British improvements to carrier flying. They were HMS *Ark Royal* in February, USS *Forrestal* in October and HMAS *Melbourne* (II)

## Deck Landing Mirror Sight

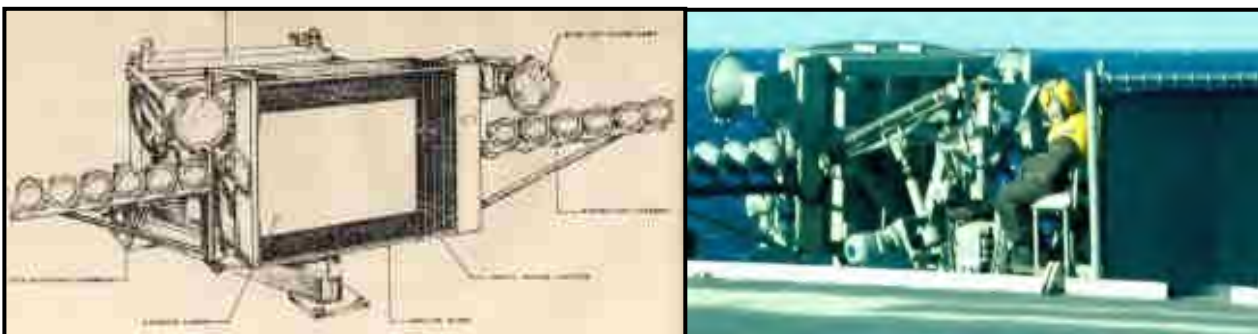
Trials after 1945 by the Royal Navy revealed that the new jet aircraft had slow throttle responses and could not safely use the standard deck landing technique then in use. Worse, their landing speeds at up to 110 knots were considerably in excess of piston engine aircraft and emphasised the inadequacy of 'batmen' to deal with the rapid changes in situation that occurred during these high speed approaches. Considerable thought went into a solution and Commander(E) HCN Goodhart RN conceived the idea of putting a large mirror on angled deck carriers, in which the pilot could see his approach, relative to the ideal glideslope. This proved impractical but the use of a smaller mirror reflecting the image of source lights 150 to 200 feet further aft proved to be both effective and practical.

Trials carried out at the Royal Aircraft Establishment (RAE) at Farnborough and at sea during 1953 in HM Ships *Indomitable* and *Illustrious* drew universal praise from pilots. These were drawn from the RAE, the RN Service Trials Unit and front line squadrons operating a variety of types, carrying out 106 day and 24 night deck landings. The concept was improved after the trials by making the mirror concave so that the reflected light, known as the 'meatball' could be seen from the crosswind leg of the carrier circuit. This enabled a tight circuit with a short final line up with the deck.

From 1954 mirror landing aids, or derivatives using the same technique with projected lights have been fitted to every aircraft carrier in the world designed to operate fixed wing aircraft. They continue in use in the US, French and other navies including the RN which used the same technique to bring Harriers to a hover alongside the deck at night. HMAS *Melbourne* (II) was one of the first aircraft carriers to be completed with the three British inventions that made the operation of jet aircraft possible, the mirror landing aid, the angled deck and the steam catapult.

In operation, the mirror is set up with a line of horizontal green datum lights level with the middle of the mirror. When the pilot sees the 'meatball' between the datums he is on the ideal glideslope; if the 'meatball' drops below the datums he is low; if it goes high he is high. The whole sight was stabilised to give a constant glideslope regardless of pitch and, whereas 'batmen' had stood right aft, the sight was well up the deck near the centre of pitch. It could be flown with precision, reducing the number of arrestor wires needed to accept landing impact 'spread' and worked as well, or better, at night.

To put his arrestor hook onto the target arrestor wire safely, a pilot needs to get three things right. Line up is achieved by painting a bright line down the centre of the angled deck. Flying the correct airspeed could be a distraction if the pilot had, constantly to look into the cockpit at the airspeed indicator but this problem was solved by fitting audio speed indicators or projecting lights onto the windscreen where they could be seen while monitoring the sight. Introduction of the mirror landing aid and the angled deck made possible a new standard landing technique in which jets fly a constant attitude, constant speed approach to the wires, literally flying into the deck.



# NSW ASSOCIATION RAFFLE

For many years John Downton a renowned Australian and International artist has donated the Association two of his paintings to be used in a raffle run by the NSW Division. The books were only sent out to the NSW Members and now other Divisions are receiving the same opportunity. Below are the paintings for the raffle to be drawn at the NSW Annual General Meeting in March 2023. Tickets are at \$2.00 each or \$20.00 for the whole book. If you would like to participate, "hard copy" subscribers let me know and we will enclose a book with the December issue of 'Slipstream'. "Soft copy" subscribers just send a reply address envelope with payment and I will write out the tickets and send them straight back to you.

Address: PO Box 4022 Post Office East Nowra 2540.

Cheers Ron Batchelor NSW Division Treasurer

*(I know some of you will state that is a con from the NSW Division to put money into their coffers. You do not have to buy any if it goes against the grain.)*

1st Prize 6584. Hawks Amongst the Cumulus RAN Yesterday

Image 24" x 30" 61cm x 76.2cm

Value \$3,500.00

2nd Prize 6547 Mesmerizing Shore Culburra Beach NSW

Image 4" x 30" 10.2cm x 76.2cm

Value \$880.00



## FAAA OF A.NSW RAFFLE

Paintings by International Australian Local Artist

JOHN DOWNTON OAM

FBAS. FRAS. FASMA.

The paintings are all in oil and are valued at the listed prices.



## COST OF TICKETS \$2 EACH



### 1<sup>st</sup> Prize

6584. Hawks Amongst the Cumulus. RAN Yesterday

Image: 24" x 30" – 61cm x 76.2cm

Value: \$3,500.00

*Building up Mandatory Flying Hours. No Armament Required.*

RAFFLE NO 24

CFN 12501



# 3

chances



### 2<sup>nd</sup> Prize

6547. Mesmerizing Shore. Culburra Beach. NSW

Image: 4" x 30" – 10.2cm x 76.2cm

Value: \$880.00

*A Beautiful Day At a Beautiful Place. Manna for the Soul.*



### 3<sup>rd</sup> Prize

Sound System

Value: \$250.00

Prizes will be drawn Sat 18<sup>th</sup> March 2023. Winners will be notified, results will be published in the South Coast Register (Nowra). The next issue of "SLIPSTREAM", also in FLYBYS. All prizes will be delivered.



## **VETERAN WELLBEING CENTRES**

**A**n election pledge by the former Morrison government to create six veteran wellbeing centres was made without consulting the relevant department, a Royal Commission has been told.

About three weeks before the May 2019 Federal poll, the Coalition announced centres would be established in Darwin, Townsville, Adelaide, Perth, Nowra and Wodonga.

Repatriation Commission deputy president Kate Pope told The Royal Commission into Defence and Veteran Suicide that to her knowledge the Department of Veterans' Affairs was not consulted on the initiative before it was unveiled.

Ms Pope, whose commission oversees the provision of benefits and treatment for veterans and their families, also said she didn't believe the Government undertook research into the centres before the announcement.

She said she was not aware of the criteria used by the Federal Government to identify suitable locations.

The six centres, announced in April 2019, formed part of a \$63 million package to provide services and support to ex-service personnel.

Funding was provided in the 2021/22 Federal Budget for additional centres to be set up in Tasmania and southeast Queensland.

The Commission was told a lead agency for the program had not yet been locked in for Tasmania.

Ms Pope said a joint-commissioned feasibility study from the State and Federal Governments was completed in April 2021 but not released until December because of a change in ministers.

Tasmanian Veterans' Affairs Minister Guy Barnett told the inquiry earlier this week he was unhappy with the delay and was fine with the report being swiftly released as part of the public consultation process.

The Commission is holding seven days of hearings in Tasmania, home to more than 17,500 veterans – understood to be the most per capita of any State or Territory.

RSL Tasmania chief executive John Hardy on Wednesday told the inquiry it was a major challenge providing veterans with support in the island state due to its isolation.

The commission will on Thursday hear evidence from an Australian Defence Force veteran.

On Friday, it is expected to hear from Tasmanian senator Jacqui Lambie, who was medically discharged from the Army in 2000 and for years pushed for a probe into veteran suicide.

It will hand down its interim report on August 11 after receiving more than 1900 submissions and hearing evidence from hundreds of witnesses.



## **VETERAN WELLBEING CENTRES**

My own account of the Nowra Veteran Wellbeing Centre was not what I expected and was very disappointing. I had some issues that I wanted to find out what I could do to resolve them. So I decided to visit the Centre and my first problem was that I had to park two blocks away as the six car spots in front of the centre were taken up by the staff members, and me being on a walking stick didn't help at all. Anyhow I was meet by a nice young fellow who helped me sign in on my phone and took me to his office. I explained my problems and he stated he was not up to date on DVA matters and would get the lass who was in charge of that department. I once again explained my problems to her and she went away and brought me a pamphlet on Illawarra Retirement Trust (IRT) and said now ring up DVA. I was dumbfounded and shown the door. At present they are building a new two-storey building especially for this so called Centre. I hope the people running it do a few courses before it is finished and will be able to help veterans when they need it the most.

Ron Batchelor  
NSW Division Treasurer

## **WALL OF SERVICE NOTICE**

Gents,

As discussed at this month's FAAAA (NSW) meeting the price of WoS plaques will increase by \$10.00, this is due to an increase in foundry costs.

Meaning the new price for members will be \$200.00 and non-members will be \$250.00. Our last price increase was back in July 2018.

The new price will come into effect immediately.

Regards

**John Balazic**  
CPOATA  
Ship Helicopter Integration Section  
NASPO

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**Department of Defence**  
HMAS Albatross | NOWRA HILL NSW 2540  
E: [john.balazic1@defence.gov.au](mailto:john.balazic1@defence.gov.au) | T: (02) 4449 2011 M: 0414 562 940

## A COUPLE FROM THE OLD PHOTOGRAPHIC ALBUM



**A-4G & TA-4G SKYHAWKS**



**HAWKER SEA FURY FB.11**



TOO CLOSE  
FOR  
COMFORT

***NORTH AMERICAN AT-6 HARVARD TRAINER***

## LIEUTENANT BARRY EVANS

*Edited by John Perryman*

Former Senior Naval Historian - Sea Power Centre Australia



**Barry John Evans** was born in Cairns, Queensland, the second of five boys. His father was a magistrate and the Evans family moved frequently during his childhood.

Barry matriculated in Kingaroy and first learnt to fly when he joined the Kingaroy Soaring Club. After obtaining a Diploma in Aviation, via correspondence, he then applied to all three branches of the Armed Services in which he hoped to pursue a flying career. The Army advised him to come back the following year while the Navy asked him if he would switch to the Air Force should they tell him he had been selected - Barry replied that he would not and, with his word being his bond, the RAN willingly accepted him.

At age 19 Midshipman Barry Evans joined HMAS *Cerberus* as a member of Basic Air Training Course 2/70. After completing his initial entry training he joined No. 1 Flying Training School, RAAF Point Cook, Vic, as a member of No. 78 Pilots' Course for flying assessment.

On successful completion he then proceeded to No. 2 Flying Training School, RAAF Pearce, WA, to undertake what was at that time known as the 'all through jet pilots' course'. This course saw trainees undertake 210 hours training in Macchi MB-326H jet trainers. Having gained his 'Wings' Barry was posted to VC724 Squadron at Naval Air Station (NAS) Nowra in September



*Barry Evans, fourth from left in the back row, while undertaking No 78 Pilots Course*

1971 as an acting Sub-Lieutenant (A/SBLT) and member of Course No. 8 Operational Flying School (OFS). There, with A/SBLT's John McCauley and Jerry Clark, he mastered flying Douglas A-4G Skyhawk fighter bombers, an aircraft he was to have a close association with during a notable flying career in the RAN.

On successful completion of OFS, and having spent further time in VC724 Squadron, Barry was promoted Sub-Lieutenant and posted to VF805 Squadron in July 1973, embarking in the aircraft carrier HMAS *Melbourne* for workups in preparation for Exercise RIMPAC 73 based out of Hawaii. During August the carrier was to set a new record of 100 arrested landings and catapult assisted take-offs in a fourteen hour period of intensive day and night flying, 42 of

which involved Skyhawks.

In September 1973, 805 Squadron's Skyhawks conducted live strikes on Hawaii's Kahoolawe Range and exercised air-to-air refuelling before the carrier entered Pearl Harbor on 8 September, preparatory for the RIMPAC Exercise. The sea phase began on 11 September and Barry and his fellow pilots were to find themselves participating in a series of realistic opposed ocean passage serials providing excellent training value. Disappointingly, a catapult failure would later curtail fixed wing flying operations but this was ameliorated at the end of the exercise with 5 days R & R in Pearl Harbor. The ship returned to Sydney, via Suva, in October to take part in celebrations surrounding the opening of the Sydney Opera House.

Later that year Barry again embarked in *Melbourne* with 805 Squadron deploying to South East Asia. On 8 November 1973 while the ship was on passage to Singapore, Barry was involved in an incident that saw the Skyhawk he was piloting (889) ditch into the sea ahead of *Melbourne* following a failed catapult launch. Trapped in the aircraft after a failed ejection attempt he passed under the ship before freeing himself from the aircraft and surfacing about 100-150 yards astern of the carrier.

## Barry Evans Takes Up The Story:

*"The subsequent investigation of the catapult revealed that a disconnected solenoid was responsible for the malfunction of the cat-shot. As a consequence, after approximately just 9 feet of travel down the catapult, all the steam pressure was dumped resulting in an end speed of only around 90 knots instead of the 120 that was required for the aircraft to take flight. (Not certain of these speeds but I am certain of the result). I attempted to eject using the top handle but the seat failed to fire. The canopy came off as part of the sequence but as fate would have it a striker plate that should have turned as part of the ejection seat mechanism was frozen solid (determined by the fact that 4 of the remaining 7 aircraft on board had the same or similar problem) causing the seat not to fire. There are some who suggested that I was lucky that the seat didn't fire believing that I would have been outside the ejection envelope but I would argue differently.*

*I hit the water in an almost vertical attitude and as my canopy was missing, the cockpit immediately filled with water. At the same time my head hit the canopy bow and dislodged my oxygen mask so I had to hold my breath. I was braced for the impact with the water but had completely overlooked the fact that all 22,000 tons of HMAS Melbourne doing 22 knots was mere feet away. When the ship hit the aircraft it tumbled quite violently and I was temporarily disorientated. Realising I was starting to panic, I told myself to count to 10 and then find the manual seat harness release to free myself. (It wasn't as calm as that sounds and counting to 10 consisted of 1, 10, but it achieved the necessary refocusing). On my first attempt to leave the cockpit I got stuck and had to pull myself back in to free whatever it was that was impeding my egress. While I was doing this I heard the very loud sound of the ships propellers passing over the top of me so obviously someone was looking out for me. I surfaced 100 – 150 yards astern of the ship with Pedro [the rescue helicopter] hovering over the top of me to the very surprised look of the winch-man at the door of the Wessex."*



In May 1974, 805 Squadron re-embarked in *Melbourne* to begin work-ups prior to participating in Exercise KANGAROO 1 which, at that time, was Australia's biggest multi-nation, inter-service military exercise. During the work-ups the dangers of flying in fast jet fighter-bombers were highlighted when a T-A4G aircraft from HMAS *Albatross* crashed into the sea during a simulated strike on the aircraft carrier claiming the life of Lieutenant Ralph McMillan RAN. A gifted and popular pilot, McMillan's loss was deeply felt throughout the fleet, including Barry, to whom he had been a friend and mentor.

*"We had been launched in very rough weather in conditions that were, at the very least, marginal and on return to the ship none of the 5 aircraft were able to recover on board. A decision was made to divert all aircraft to RAAF Amberley and it was just after we all joined up that I had a total electrical failure. The flight of 5 arrived at Amberley where the weather was low overcast and with heavy rain. The flight leader decided to do a normal initial and break and I ended up being last to land. As I touched down my right main wheel blew a tyre, possibly due to trampling an F111 arrestor wire at carrier tyre pressure of 480psi, causing the aircraft to take an immediate swing to the right. I left the runway doing about 100 knots, about 45 degrees off the runway heading. I elected not to eject and came to rest with the left wing tip and nose of the aircraft in the mud. The A-4 was subsequently moved to the tarmac where I was given the necessary electrical parts to repair it and left to my own devices. Fortunately for me there was an A-4 squadron visiting from New Zealand and I procured the help of a Kiwi Flight Sergeant to help me install the new green house, CSD and generator."*

With his aircraft repaired he was able to later rejoin *Melbourne* at sea from which successive A-4 strikes were launched against opposing US forces operating near the eastern end of the New Guinea island chain in the Solomons Sea. The exercise ended on June 17 and the Carrier Air Group disembarked for NAS Nowra the following day.

At the end of the year VF805 Squadron was announced as the winner of the coveted Collins Trophy for Efficiency and Distinction. During 1974 the squadron flew in excess of 1000 sorties, including Air Combat, Combat Air Patrol, Fleet Support and all forms of Strikes and Air-to-Ground Weaponry. The Skyhawks expended over 700 rockets, 1200 live and practice bombs and 300 rounds of 2077 ammunition in both air-to-air and air-to-ground roles.

The following year Barry rejoined *Melbourne* with 805 Squadron to begin working up in preparation for RIMPAC 75. *Melbourne* arrived at Pearl Harbor on Tuesday 4 March for the harbour phase of the exercise before sailing for the sea phase a week later. Thirty-one ships, 200 aircraft and 17,000 personnel participated in the multi-national exercise which again saw 805 Squadron's A-4 pilots fully engaged in maritime strike and force protection roles.

Prior to *Melbourne's* return to Sydney in April 1975 the Carrier Air Group disembarked for NAS Nowra. During that time Barry was selected to fly as a member of VF805's Checkmate Aerobatic Team. The team usually comprised four A-4G aircraft and was led by Lieutenant Commander 'Dusty' King RAN. Fellow pilots Peter Cox and Barrie Diamond flew in the #2 and #4 aircraft while Barry flew as #3. A fifth pilot, Jerry Clark, became the 5th solo member of the team which would participate in air shows and flying displays on special occasions throughout the year. Following his time with VF805 Squadron Barry was posted to VC724 to undertake No.2 Air Warfare Instructor (AWI) course. Promotion to Lieutenant followed in August 1975.

The Australian AWI training was a post graduate course designed to cover the many aspects of air warfare and weaponry appropriate to the RAN environment of operations. Previously this training had been conducted in the UK with the Royal Navy's 764 Squadron, at Lossiemouth, Scotland. Barry's course 'buddy' was Lieutenant David Ramsay RAN, and both men found that the course fell a long way short on what had previously been completed in the UK. In an attempt to improve its content both Barry and David were sent to the US to complete various additional courses - the primary one being Top Gun at the US Navy Fighter Weapons School. Disappointingly, they did not belong to a parent squadron in the US and therefore did not have access to their own aircraft, which at that time was a requirement in order to participate in the Top Gun air combat manoeuvring serials. Consequently they were to miss out on much of what the course had to offer. They did, however, fly in both TA-4J and Tallon T38 aircraft but were not permitted to occupy the front seat. In spite of that, both pilots were to gain valuable experience that they in turn would pass on.

Returning to Australia as a qualified AWI, Barry remained with VC724 as an instructor before rejoining VF805 Squadron in December 1977. The following year he sailed in *Melbourne* to participate in what was up until that time the largest RIMPAC exercise held. During that deployment Barry had the opportunity to cross-deck onto the nuclear powered aircraft carrier USS *Enterprise*, an experience he was to enjoy immensely. On recalling his first catapult launch from the deck of the 'Big E' Barry was to remark that:

*"I almost ejected because it was so soft compared to what I was used to [on Melbourne], I was totally impressed with the whole operation."*

On returning to Australia in May 1978 *Melbourne* embarked a number of VIPs, including a number of politicians, and Barry was nominated to prepare and lead a weapons demonstration for them.

*"Five Skyhawks were used, all loaded with various weapons which we all duly fired or released and I understand achieved the desired result. We then all reformed, carried out a fan break over the ship and the plan was for each of us to do one touch-and-go. As lead aircraft I would then end up behind the 5th aircraft (forming a daisy chain) before lowering our tail-hooks for an arrested landing - each landing being separated by approximately 17 seconds. Unfortunately on my first touch and go, my port main wheel came off (later found to be a result of the thread being over machined), my stub axle snagged an arrestor wire, the aircraft went slightly sideways but after applying full power, a boot full of right rudder and almost full back stick, the wire let go and I managed to get the aircraft back into the air, I had no idea what had happened. As one might imagine, this started a series of events. Ball bearings from my wheel assembly took out the mirror landing system, the Flight Deck Officer was almost taken out by my errant wheel (he was watching what he thought was the wheel but it turned out to be the brake discs) and it took forever to recover the remaining 4 aircraft because 2 wires had to be removed, the one I damaged with my stub axle and its pair. This was done using axes and blocks of wood, understood to be the quickest way of completing the task."*

*"In the mean time I was airborne holding above the ship, with my landing gear down (because my utility hydraulic light had come on momentarily) and quickly running out of fuel. While the check list basically said I should have ejected, the suggestion was made that I was to be recovered into the aircraft carrier's barrier (net), a suggestion that I didn't think very highly of (and later got into significant trouble over my response). A tanker was subsequently launched and I received sufficient fuel to divert to RAAF Amberley, Qld. Arriving at Amberley I carried out a couple of practice approaches on Runway 22, a short but smooth runway and then landed on the un-foamed surface stopping in just over 1400 feet. I later returned to the ship to face the wrath of the Captain while my colleague Nev French got to fly the aircraft back to Nowra after some very minor repairs."*

Barry resigned from the RAN on 26 February 1980 at a time when great uncertainty existed surrounding the future of fixed-wing aviation in the RAN. In 1982 HMAS *Melbourne* decommissioned and the Fleet Air Arm's fixed wing aircraft squadron's operational status was significantly reduced. In June 1984 the A-4G Skyhawks flew their last sortie before being sold to the Royal New Zealand Air Force. The Australian Government would later lease them back from New Zealand in order to fulfil a significant fleet support capability gap.



During Lieutenant Barry Evans' flying career in the RAN he was, in good humour, given the call-sign 'Jack Ass'. In contrast he was to prove anything but that, receiving the AJ Robertson Weapons Proficiency Trophy, a Flag Officers Commendation (1979) and an Air Force Cross for his contribution to naval aviation and without doubt for the skill shown by him in averting personal disaster and saving two multi-million dollar aircraft.





**United States Marine Corps MV-22B Osprey performs deck landing maneuvers onboard HMAS Canberra during Exercise Rim of the Pacific (RIMPAC) 2022.**



**Taipan Squirrel 723 Squadron**



**Bristol Sycamore**



**RAN Grumman S-2G Tracker**

The Grumman S-2 Tracker commenced operational service in 1954, and served the Royal Australian Navy from 1967-84. They were deployed in Vietnam and afterwards from the aircraft carrier HMAS Melbourne.

This aircraft is now located on Phillip Island at the National Vietnam Veterans Museum. The yellow windsock shows how strongly the wind was blowing.



Australian Naval Institute



**FAAAA**

Fleet Air Arm Association of Australia

## **Fleet Air Arm Seminar**

### ***75 Years & Beyond***



**To celebrate the 75<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the RAN's Fleet Air Arm the Australian Naval Institute and the Fleet Air Arm Association will hold a half-day Seminar to discuss the FAA's achievements to date and its exciting future.**

**0830-1130  
21 October 2022**

**Fleet Air Arm Museum  
Nowra**

***Free Registrations Now Open***

Register your attendance at: <https://www.trybooking.com/CBXCM>

The Seminar will be followed by the launch of the commemorative book  
*Flying Stations Volume II* by Desmond Woods OAM



# UNKNOWN AUSTRALIAN WWI SOLDIER LAID TO REST IN BELGIUM

16 July 2022

The Australian Army has laid to rest an unknown Australian World War I soldier with a military funeral today at the Commonwealth War Graves Commission's Tyne Cot Cemetery in Zonnebeke, Belgium.

Believed to have fought in the Battle of Menin Road in 1917, the unknown soldier's remains were discovered in 2017 by archaeologists near Zonnebeke and were identified as Australian.

As part of Army's ongoing commitment to remember our fallen soldiers, the unknown soldier was honoured with today's military funeral and burial, and a dedicated Last Post Ceremony yesterday at the Menin Gate.

The funeral was supported by a group of Army members recently awarded the Jonathan Church Good Soldiering Award for their embodiment of Army values. The group is representing Army for a series of ceremonial activities at war cemeteries in France and Belgium throughout July.

Chief of Army Lieutenant General Simon Stuart, AO, DSC, honoured the courage and sacrifice of those who served in the World War I and the importance of Army's work to honour our military's past.

*"Australian Army's Jonathan Church Good Soldiering Award recipients are our future leaders who personify compassionate and ethical soldiering," Lieutenant General Stuart said.*

*"Today's funeral is a reminder that we all owe a debt of gratitude to those who have served our nation, and it is a genuine and rare honour for our serving soldiers to lay to rest this unknown soldier," he said.*

*"Army's commitment to identifying our fallen soldiers is an important duty, and our ongoing work continues to identify unknown World War I soldiers and bring peace to their families."*

The Australian Military Representative to NATO and the European Union, Major General Matthew Hall, attended the funeral and said it was an opportunity to reflect on the enormous sacrifice of our World War I soldiers.

*"Today was a very special opportunity to reflect on Australia's history and sacrifice in this region, and a reminder of our long and continuing role in partnering with Europe to provide global security," Major General Hall said.*

*"As we fought alongside our European partners during World War I, we continue to stand by them today, honouring our fallen soldiers 105 years on."*

## 723 Squadron 70th Anniversary



Royal Australian Navy personnel from 723 Squadron celebrated the squadron's 70th birthday on Thursday, 07 April 2022 at HMAS Albatross with a luncheon and the cutting of a birthday cake. The gathering included many former Commanding Officers and retired members of 723 Squadron.

## HMAS Stirling Hosts Indigenous Pre-Recruit Program

By Lieutenant Josephine Rider  
27 July 2022



Eight future Indigenous sailors, soldiers and aviators graduated from the recent Indigenous Pre-Recruit Program (IPRP) held at HMAS *Stirling*.

Their graduation included a Welcome to Country Smoking Ceremony conducted by local Elder Uncle Anthony Abraham.

It also included traditional Torres Strait and Aboriginal dance routines performed by the recruits based on teachings they received from members of the local Indigenous community during the six-week program.

In his address to the recruits, Officer in Charge Lieutenant Commander Christopher Thornton said they should be proud of their achievements.

"You will follow in the footsteps of other proud First Nation Australians that have served before you and you will continue that tradition," Lieutenant Commander Thornton said.

The completion of IPRP marks the first milestone of the graduates' careers in the Australian Defence Force (ADF) – the IPRP included intensive physical and adventure training, military skills, and cultural lessons and activities.

### **Recruit Jackson Hussey-Smith is joining the Air Force as a chef.**

"I joined this program mainly for the fitness component but it has opened my eyes to how deep my heritage and culture runs," Recruit Hussey-Smith said.

### **Recruit Shauna Hobson is a proud Kuuku Ya'u woman from Lockhart River in Queensland.**

"I joined the Navy so I can build a better future for myself and show young teenagers in my community that anything is possible," Recruit Hobson said.

Her next destination is Recruit School at HMAS *Cerberus* before starting her category training as a Boatswains Mate.

### **Similarly, Recruit Nicky Bond from New Mapoon, Queensland, will now go on to the Recruit Training Unit at RAAF Wagga to pursue his goal of joining the Air Defence Guard.**

"My mob is the Yupangathi and Wuthathi people," Recruit Bond said.

"I joined the Defence Force to challenge myself and to make my community and family proud."

IPRP and the Navy Indigenous Development Program were developed in response to the Defence Reconciliation Action Plan which has seen many Indigenous Australians gain employment in the ADF as part of the Australian Government's commitment to closing the gap.

The ceremony was attended by members of Stirling Command Team, Recruit School Commanding Officer, Commander Alisha Withers, Army Recruit Development Company representatives and a number of local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community members.

Opened in 2016, the Navy Training Systems Centre – Randwick (NTSC-R) was built to provide in-service training for operators and maintainers of the Landing Helicopter Dock and Air Warfare Destroyer class ships.



Instructor Scott Dempster (right) shows Lieutenant Daniel El Aawar a replenishment at sea on the Auxiliary Oiler Replenishment class simulator at Navy Training Systems Centre – Randwick, NSW.

## Shoalhaven Vietnam Veterans Day Service

On Thursday 18th August National Secretary Terry Hetherington represented the FAA Association at the Shoalhaven Vietnam Veterans' Day service at Walsh Park Bomaderry.

The organisers said that it was the best turnout of veterans and guests for many years, notwithstanding Covid.

Our wreath, first on the left, was supplied free of charge by Hyam's Florist of Nowra.

The speakers included Captain Robyn Phillips, CO of HMAS Albatross, who spoke of the history of the RAN Helicopter Flight–Vietnam, Federal member for Gilmore Mrs Fiona Phillips and Mr Carl Robinson, a former war journalist with the American Associated Press.

Carl lived and worked in South Vietnam from 1962 to 1975 and migrated to Australia with his Vietnamese-born wife and family following the fall of Saigon.



## AFTER 100 YEARS A PIECE OF HMAS CERBERUS HISTORY HAS RETURNED TO ITS ORIGINAL HOME.

The English built Priestman Steam Crane arrived on 24 June 2013. The steam crane was utilised in the construction and operation of HMAS CERBERUS (formerly the Flinders Naval Base) from 1912 to 1946.



The Priestman steam crane is lifted into its temporary position at HMAS CERBERUS. From the temporary tracks, the steam crane will be stripped down and restored piece by piece before being reassembled.

### JIM BUCHANAN'S DFC

Lieutenant James Collier Buchanan of the RAN Helicopter Flight-Vietnam fourth contingent was awarded the Distinguished Flying Cross for conspicuous gallantry.

On 4 December 1970 Buchanan performed an extraordinary act of flying skill whilst operating in the U Minh Forest area. The RANHFV, which at this time was based at Dong Tam in the Mekong Delta region, was called to evacuate a crewman of a South Vietnamese patrol boat.

When the two patrol boats were located the evacuation began while the second boat stood off. Lieutenant Buchanan began the extraction of the crewman. Suddenly the group came under a heavy enemy attack. The patrol boat standing 50 metres away took a direct hit from an enemy rocket and was blown out of the water.



Realising that the boat with which he was operating was disabled and drifting towards the enemy-held shore Lieutenant Buchanan pressed the skids of his helicopter onto the deck of the vessel and pushed the boat to safety. All the while, his aircraft was receiving heavy automatic weapons and 82mm mortar fire. For his coolness, determination and courage under fire in the face of a determined enemy, Lieutenant Buchanan was awarded the Distinguished Flying Cross.

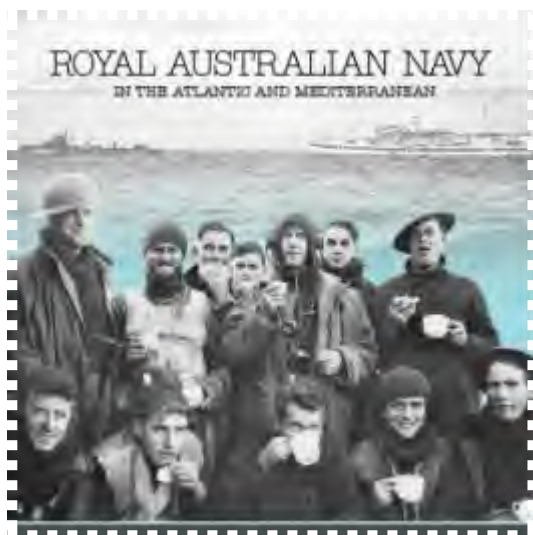
## Auster J-5G Autocar



The first variant of the Auster J-5 Autocar was designed as a four seat touring aircraft and first flew in August 1949. A demand for more power, in order for it to better perform under hot and high conditions, led to the development of the J-5G variant that first flew in July 1951. The majority of the J-5G variants were exported from Britain and two were delivered to Australia; on the aircraft carrier HMAS *Sydney* upon her return to Australia following the coronation of Queen Elizabeth II in 1953.

The two RAN aircraft were used as communications aircraft, and for general transport duties, between 1953 and 1963 before being taken out of service and sold. One is held in the Fleet Air Arm Museum.

Type	Communications Aircraft
Manufacturer	Auster Aircraft Limited,
Number Ordered	2
First Delivered	7 June 1953
Length	23 feet 2 inches
Height	7 feet 6 inches
Width	36 feet
Speed	116 mph
Range	500 miles
Crew	1
Engines	One Blackburn Cirrus Major
Operated by	Naval Air Station Nowra



This commemorative publication is a part of the series; Australians in World War II. This resource focuses on the Australians who sailed in the Royal Australian Navy (RAN). It tells the story of their training, their operational lives and experiences during the war.

Department of Veterans' Affairs  
 Publisher

ISBN: 978-0-9925839-6-5

Access a designed version to download or print

## Auster J5-G Autocar



1952 Auster J-5G Cirrus Autocar G-ARKG marked as Royal Australian Navy A11-301

Although never operated by the RAN, G-ARKG is painted to represent one of two Blackburn Cirrus-powered Auster Autocars operated as communications aircraft in the 1950s



CAC CA-25 Winjeel trainer, introduced in 1955 and used to train all military pilots until 1975.

# Aussie pilot lost without a trace

AMONG the 543 US Navy members killed during the Battle of the Coral Sea was an Australian-born fighter pilot.

Grumman F4F Wildcat pilot Ensign Leslie Lockhart Bruce Knox (pictured) was born in November 1916 in Brisbane's Kelvin Grove, and later moved to the US with his family, where he attended school in New Jersey.

On the evening of May 7, 1942, 11 Wildcats led by LCDR James Flatley climbed above USS *Yorktown* to intercept Japanese aircraft, amid haze, rain showers and failing light.

Ensign Knox, then 25, was flying in the rear of the formation as wingman to LT William Woollen.

Suddenly, a formation of six Japanese Type 97 'Kate' torpedo bombers appeared from a cloud and flew below the Wildcats, moving in the opposite direction.

Ensign Knox had the best opportunity to attack and broke formation to chase the enemy aircraft, destroying one with his first machine-gun burst and dispersing the formation.

Meanwhile, the remainder of LCDR Flatley's formation attacked a group of Type 99 'Val' dive-bombers, breaking up that formation too, destroying 21 of the 27 attacking Japanese aircraft.



As the US fighters were making their way back to the *Yorktown*, several Japanese aircraft also joined the landing pattern, mistaking the US carriers for their own, but anti-aircraft fire repelled them after lookouts saw the different colour of their navigation lights.

Ensign Knox did not return to the *Yorktown* and no trace of his aircraft was ever found.

The US Navy posthumously promoted Knox to lieutenant for his actions on May 7, 1942, and awarded him the Navy Cross, the second highest gallantry award for US Navy personnel after the Medal of Honour.

In 1943, the US Navy named the destroyer escort, DE-580, in honour of Ensign Knox and the USS *Leslie LB Knox* went on to serve with distinction in the Atlantic and Pacific oceans.





**VALE**

**FREDERICK CLAUDE MCCREANOR**

**CPO Aircrew**

**7th July 1940 - 27 July 2022**

*A Port Augusta man's history in the Navy and Police Force*

**By Kara Johnson for THE TRANSCONTINENTAL Port Augusta Newspaper Jan 2018**

Barely an adult, but determined to help others, Fred McCreanor signed up for the Royal Australian Navy aged 18.

A lifelong idea, along with inspiration from his father who fought in World War II, became reality.

"I just went along and they said, 'yeah no worries' and that was it," he said.

Mr McCreanor ended up staying in the Navy for around 15 years and encountered many interesting events, in addition to saving a couple lives.

"I started off as a Seaman but I got a break and was transferred to Fleet Air Arm as aircrew, and I did search and rescue as well," he said.

Being part of the search and rescue team not only meant Mr McCreanor actually ended up saving the lives of others, but he was also awarded a Queen's Commendation for his brave efforts.

An article in the *Royal Australian Navy News* from June 1966, said Mr McCreanor helped a pilot by judging the height of the waves and directing him to position the helicopter.

He then coiled a wire and threw it just in front of a man, who was safely in the helicopter minutes later.

The entire rescue saved the lives of four men after their ship, the *Atlas*, had sunk.

"It wasn't hard but it was dangerous because there were 30-foot waves, it was just luck of the draw that we actually found them," he said.

That wasn't the only memorable experience during his time in the Navy, there was one in particular where Mr McCreanor almost lost his own life too.

"There was one where we went off the front of the *Melbourne* in a Navy aircraft and we only got about half a mile and the aircraft lost both engines on take-off," he said.

"We ditched into the sea in front of the *Melbourne* and there was a big carrier coming down towards us.

"There was three crew and we all got out."

Mr McCreanor left the Navy in 1973 and soon after moved to Queanbeyan where he attempted to join the New South Wales police force, but didn't meet the requirements so he joined the Commonwealth Police instead.

He said wanted to join as it was interesting and coming out of the Navy it was good to go into something like that.

After just over a year on the job he took his chances and applied to move to the Victorian police force, continuing his dedication to serving the country.

He stayed there for close to a decade before an accident during his lunch break took him out of work.

"I was dragged along by a stolen car," he said.

"I was out running at lunch time from the police station and I saw the car as we discussed it that morning, I went into a house opposite to ring the police station.

"While I was on the phone, I saw a chap get back into the car, so I put the phone down and ran outside, I just told him the car was stolen and asked what he was doing there so he tried to drive off.

"So I was dragged along the side of the car and put head first into an oncoming car."

The accident left Mr McCreanor with spinal injuries and months of rehabilitation to complete.

Despite all of this, he still enjoys reliving the days when he served his country and protected the public.

## **ANDY PERRY'S SILVER STAR**

*Extracted from the book "Too Bold To Die" by Ian McPhedran*



AUSTRALIAN Navy pilot Andy Perry was flying low and fast against a hail of enemy fire as he manoeuvred his Iroquois 'Huey' helicopter into a hot jungle landing zone in South Vietnam on May 18 1970, when he felt a bullet slam into his right boot. Unsure whether he had been seriously wounded, Perry kept flying into the maelstrom to deposit a dozen or so Army of the Republic of Vietnam (ARVN), troops onto the battlefield. The enemy fire was so intense that as the men piled out of the machine most of them were hit.

In the darkness Perry had landed right in front of an enemy bunker during a combat assault mission with the US Army. They [the enemy] were dug in, they had trenches, they had bunkers, they had lots of automatic weapons and they had a big force,' he recalls. 'As I'm flying in there are tracer coming

up, and I could hear [pilot] Dave Farley telling me that he was taking .50 calibre fire, so he just kept on climbing. I think he was at 5000 feet in the end to stay away from the .50 cal's.'

'Usually you are already in the flare before they open fire and sometimes they even wait until the skids hit and you are most vulnerable, you are stopped, but I started taking fire at like 1000 feet. I was still miles away. It was all coming at me ... the whole flight was yelling about taking fire from everywhere. Anyway we went in, and we put it down and I put the machine down, but the biggest problem I had was that one of the pilots down the back turned his landing light on.

'They were Air Cavalry and they weren't used to [combat assault] so they pulled out. "We're not up for this, f\*\*\* off, we're going home," and they did. That was after the first assault and, yeah, we took a lot of fire. I landed, there was a bunker in front of me, troops got off, most of them were hit, the machine was hit all over the place.'

As he bent down to check the damage to his right foot, a burst of automatic fire peppered the Plexiglas windscreen and tore through exactly where his head had just been. 'I thought I'd taken a round through my foot, but it was just where it struck the pedal and my foot is on the pedal. That sort of made me bend down and when I came up there were all these holes right across the windscreen ... so I think that was lucky. Nothing was damaged and I was still flying, so that's all you care about,

A .30-calibre round had hit the rudder pedal, creased his boot and lodged in his seat. Miraculously the bullets that penetrated the windscreen missed any vital equipment and Perry and his crew made two more sorties into the hot landing zone that night.

Acting Sub-Lieutenant Perry of the Royal Australian Navy was seconded to the 135th Assault Helicopter Company of the US Army's First Aviation Brigade, known as 'The EMUs', short for Experimental Military Unit. Their motto was 'Get the bloody job done'. And that usually meant flying hard and fast under fire into hot landing zones, dumping troops and getting out as rapidly as possible. The EMUs were the only fully integrated multi-national helicopter company fighting in Vietnam.

More than 200 Australian navy pilots, plus observers and maintainers, were posted to the US unit on 12-month cycles between 1967 and 1971. 'For an adrenaline junkie it is the ultimate, because every single time you are doing it, you are betting with the highest of stakes — your own life — and when you come off, when you come out of there and go "Phew!", and you look at your mate, you've got this shit-eating grin on your face. "Wow, far out, we are all alive, everybody OK?" "Yeah, we took a few rounds today, is anything dripping or anything like that?" "No, no, we are good sir." "OK, we'll go back and do that again."

For his efforts on the night of 18 May, Perry was recommended for the US military's Silver Star. This is the highest American award that can be given to non-Americans and the third highest award for bravery in combat behind the Medal of Honour, the American equivalent of the Victoria Cross, and the Distinguished Service Cross. By contrast, the Australian Government presented him with a Mentioned in Dispatches — the same award given to the postal clerk at Vung Tau for good service.

But thanks to politics, quotas and bureaucratic incompetence it would be a quarter of a century before the Silver Star would be pinned to Perry's chest. In mid-1970 a senior US officer arrived at the EMUs' base in Vietnam for a medal presentation ceremony. 'The whole Company stood down for the day and they were going to have an American medal ceremony,' Perry recalls. 'A bunch of guys were going to get Air Medals, and Purple Hearts and everything. I don't know who the general was. It might have been the boss who flew in to shake everybody's hand.'

But during the Vietnam War, no Australian serviceman was permitted to accept and wear an individual military decoration from a foreign country. When the American general was told that he wouldn't be able to pin the Silver Star on the young Australian pilot, he called the whole thing off so there was no medal ceremony at all.

'He said, "If we can't do the big one we are not doing any of it," ' Perry recalls. 'He came over and we had our cucumber sandwiches with the rinds cut off and we stood around and he shook me by the hand and said, "Bloody good job, son," and "Piss-poor on your government's behalf, it's a bloody shame and one day we might get over it, and get it sorted, but right now I can't do anything. That's what the politicians have told me; it's come down from even higher than me."

Andy Perry was unhappy that his medal could not be presented but the war went on and the next day it was back to flying and 'getting the bloody job done'. That job included clandestine and highly illegal flights into neighbouring Cambodia carrying a variety of American passengers, many of them dressed in civilian clothing.

The government had ordered Australian personnel not to enter Cambodia or Laos, or even go within a certain distance of the border, under any circumstances. The Australian Embassy in Saigon had reinforced the point just before the EMUs began operations into Cambodia, but Perry says he and other RAN pilots working with the 135th regularly flew across the frontier on secret missions for the US 5th Special Forces or Navy SEALs who were infiltrating the southern end of the Ho Chi Minh Trail that ran from North Vietnam into Laos and Cambodia and then back into South Vietnam. US forces ran an undeclared secret war in both countries in a bid to stem the flow of supplies along the trail.

'They even gave me the uniform, bits of which I've still got. They were marines mostly, but they did all kinds of stuff. Their callsign was Cheap Tricks. We also worked with the SEALs, and the SEALs had the odd Australian with them as well,' he recalls. 'They did Phoenix jobs and stuff like that, all single ship work, people dressed in civilian clothes, and they'd want to go somewhere — "We'll tell you when we get there."' 'The special forces boys would often request pilots by name and Perry was popular because he was willing to have a go at most things, regardless of what the government said.

Fortunately Acting Sub-Lieutenant Perry, who celebrated his 21st birthday in Vietnam, survived the cross-border missions physically unscathed. So after an eventful ten-month deployment he was back at HMAS Albatross, at Nowra on the NSW south coast, trying his best to transfer out of the training base.

His US Silver Star citation sat in a safe at Defence Headquarters in Canberra for years during one of the most shameful periods in Australian political history, when Vietnam veterans were being vilified and treated as pariahs.

In January 1985 the Defence Minister, Kim Beazley, responded to one of Perry's many representations through his local member of parliament, Peter White, with a flat denial that the award had ever been given. 'Mr Perry's service records contain no evidence of a Silver Star being awarded to him,' Beazley's letter said. 'Enquiries have revealed that it is now difficult, and in many cases impossible to validate claims by individual Australians for United States awards which were made in the field. In these circumstances I regret that it is not possible to establish whether the Silver Star was awarded to Mr Perry.'

By mid-June the following year the American citation had been discovered in a separate honours and awards file. But the Minister for Sport, Recreation and Tourism, John Brown, in another letter to Peter White, stood firm about the government's policy. 'Given that the traditional British awards were available to our servicemen, there is no justification for granting permission to formally accept and wear these foreign awards,' his letter said.

Three Australians serving with the EMUs were granted Member of the Order of the British Empire, eight received the Distinguished Service Cross, five the Distinguished Flying Cross, one the British Empire Medal and 25 were Mentioned in Dispatches. This was more than half the honours awarded to Navy personnel during the entire conflict.



But he makes no secret of his pride in the professionalism of the EMUs. 'If they wanted the best people for the job, the EMUs got the job because we could do more with less and we could fly faster, harder, whatever it took, because we were into it. You are there to do the mission, to "get the bloody job done" and we were really imbued with that philosophy.' He says that he was just a 20-year-old kid from Tassie doing his job and having the time of his life.

In April 1995 the medal injustice was finally corrected when Andy Perry received his Silver Star in Townsville. The Commander of the US 7th Fleet, Vice-Admiral Archie Clemins, complete with an honour guard, pinned the medal to his chest aboard his flagship, the USS Blue Ridge, in Townsville Harbour.

*Extract from the book 'Too Bold To Die' By Ian McPhedran. Published: 1 September 2013. HarperCollins*

# VALE



**THEO BUSHE-JONES**  
**LEADING AIR MECHANIC – ORDNANCE**  
**27 March 1930 - 10 June 2022**

He was an architect of the Fleet Air Arm Association, along with others now departed.

- The First President of the WA Division
- The First President of the Fleet Air Arm Association
- The First Life Member of the Association and of WA Division
- He was an Advocate and Pensions Officer for over 20 years

I'm sure there will be many, many people wishing to pay their respects to him and to his family.

We have lost the man we so much admired and loved.

Yours in sympathy  
Keith Taylor  
Secretary WA Division



**WILLIAM 'BILL' DUNLOP**  
**LEADING AIR MECHANIC – AIRFRAMES**  
**10 April 1933 - 01 July 2022**

Bill was respected member of FAAA and was one of the originals who put the WA Division together. He had been in the care of his daughter Tracey for some time before his death. Bill's other career was that of a Detective in the WA Police.

He will be remembered as a bright, happy, funny and warm-hearted man, who enjoyed good company and good friends. He loved his family above all and was best mates with his dearly loved son Greg, who pre-deceased him August 2021.

He was very proud of his service both in the Royal Australian Navy (nine years) and the WA Police Force (31 years), from which he retired with the Commissioned rank of Superintendent.

His funeral was held at Pinaroo West Chapel WA on 12 July and was attended by many friends and family, and associates both from the Fleet Air Arm Association and the WA Police Force.

**ENOCH (IAN) FEBEY**  
**NAVAL AIRMAN AIRCRAFT HANDLER**  
**23 December 1932 - 26 June 2022**

**Members and Committee Dunalley Golf Club, Tasmania**

It is with sadness we note the passing of our esteemed Life Member Ian Febey, his assistance in setting up the course was invaluable.

Ian was also a member of the Tasmanian Division of the Fleet Air Arm Association of Australia, Member

## Aircrew Graduates Receive Their Wings



The first aircrew to graduate from 723 Squadron – Joint Helicopter School in its 70th year have received their wings and initial qualifications in a ceremony fittingly featuring a flyover of EC-135 training helicopters.

Army's ARH Tiger and Air Force's PC-21 also joined the formalities, along with the Navy band and the 23 graduates' families and guests.

The graduates included four Navy and nine Army pilots, and two Navy and four Army aircrew, all from No. 723 Squadron, plus four remote pilot warfare officers from No. 822X Squadron.

The graduates had completed a rigorous training course to achieve their initial helicopter qualification, and the Army pilots and Navy aircrewman were presented with their respective service flying brevets, or wings

Army Lieutenant Alex Powell was awarded dux of the pilot course, while Leading Seaman Benjamin Price and Sergeant Joshua Tewson were duxes of the Aircrewman course for their service. The remote pilot warfare course dux was Acting Sub-Lieutenant Jordon Creek. Their perpetual trophies were donated and presented by Boeing Defence Australia.

Reviewing officer for the parade, Commander Fleet Air Arm Commodore David Frost, encouraged the graduates to continually improve throughout their aviation careers.

"Many aspire to fly with the Royal Australian Navy and Army; however, few realise this dream," Commodore Frost said.

"You have shown determination during the course of your training. So have your family and friends.

"Your graduation has sealed your part of a great lineage that is interwoven with soldier and sailor – a team that has served our nation with distinction and honour for more than a century.

"You are in a profession where excellence is essential and your desire to improve must be ingrained. You can be sure that your leadership and courage will be tested."



The graduates will now advance to operational training with their respective services in the coming months, and will ultimately be employed in operational roles in Navy MH-60R, Army ARH, MRH, CH-47 and Navy unmanned aerial systems.



# FLEET AIR ARM ASSOCIATION

## SOUTH AUSTRALIA INC.

Secretary: Roger Harrison. Email [coroman@bigpond.com](mailto:coroman@bigpond.com)

### SLIPSTREAM

Well, I am still trying to get my head around Olivia Newton-John's death in early August. Beautiful and talented as she was, there is no escaping the grim reaper. While we are on this morbid subject, Ian Laidler and I travelled to Port Augusta on Friday 5<sup>th</sup> August to supply the Navy component for Fred McCreanor's funeral service. Fred was a well liked and respected Air Crewman in the 60's and 70's. A good turn-out of friends and neighbors. The NOC-SA CMDR Emma McPherson-Kerr, organized the White Ensign to be draped over the casket, a nice touch. I am pleased Ian, and I did the 7-hour return trip to Adelaide. If I never, do it again, that will be soon enough.

Thank the Lord that Ron Batchelor has picked up the gauntlet again as temporary Editor of Slipstream in place of our Paul Shiels who, for health reasons, has handed the job over. This specific naval magazine has been around forever and to lose it now would be unforgivable. I have always enjoyed the varied stories of sailors present and past who have been published inside these issues. It is just like Fred's funeral eulogy where stories of his exploits are exposed for all to hear and sometimes for the first time. The fact that he received the Queens Commendation Medal for saving 4 lives after the Atlas capsized in 1966 when he was attached to 723 Squadron. This was a memory reminder for me as I was also on that Squadron along with Pancho Walters.

Our FAAA General Meetings are still being held at the Keswick Military Barracks and appear to be more than acceptable with location and a varied lunch menu. Next meeting is on the 21<sup>st</sup> of September. 1130 muster for 1200 lunch followed by a short meeting, and tall stories.

Ian McBeath, Treasurer, and me, Secretary, will be involved in this year's FAAA AGM held in late October. Both he and I plan to drive over separately on different days as Ian plans to fit in an Air Show somewhere in northern Victoria, I think. I plan to spend a few days with Leon and Judy Brown in Cambewarra. What I am hoping for is that they aren't climbing out the back window while I am knocking on the front door. We currently (August) have our State President, John Siebert, in the USA for a catch up with friends stopping on route via Honolulu then onto Denver.

Health topics. Our past Treasurer, Gordon Gray, is battling ill health at present along with the administration concerning his needs and medical results. Our past President, Michael 'Stubbo' Stubbington, is battling various health issues. The fact that he is no longer allowed to drive has hit him quite hard. Ian McBeath has battled successfully, the dreaded Covid-19. Being younger helps!

John Siebert, and I, visited the Avoca Hotel, Edwardstown, to check on the menu and food quality over lunch. This is in readiness for our December Christmas lunch. Results were ok and the service excellent. Let's see what December 18<sup>th</sup> and their Christmas menu can do.

The Kapunda trip is ON for the 10<sup>th</sup>, 11<sup>th</sup> and 12 of November. The FAA Division will once again be involved with the country town Remembrance Day Ceremonies where we will lay a wreath for the FAA and then take a back seat on proceedings. The tours will be like last year, but I am happy with that as it is always difficult to absorb all the visual aspect and details thrown up at you while on the tour. Ex-Secretary Jan Akeroyd will assist in the planning with the team.

Ian and Dee Laidler travelled to Glenelg on the 13<sup>th</sup> of August to witness the 'Naval Freedom of Entry' down Jetty Road at 9.30am. They arrived about 9.15am to see the troops and band heading down Jetty Road early. Someone altered the step-off time.

I will stop here to give Ron a chance to get this lot into the Slipstream before he goes off the idea.

Wishing each and everyone of you continued good health through to the New Year. After that we will re-assess where we are at.

Regards

**Roger Harrison**  
**Hon. Whipping Boy. SA.**

# VICTORIA DIVISION REPORT



Greetings to all members from the Victoria Division.

Having had a quiet last few months with not many chances for a get together, it was good to finally catch up this past weekend (27<sup>th</sup>-28<sup>th</sup> August) with our Annual Dinner at the Waverley RSL and our Memorial Service at HMAS Cerberus. Numbers at both events were slightly down on previous years but with COVID, Influenza and members seeking warmer weather at this time of the year this is understandable.

Our annual dinner at the Waverley RSL was a departure from our usual venue and seemed to be well received by those present. The club made us welcome and I suspect that this may be a regular venue for future functions.

HMAS Cerberus turned on a perfect day for our memorial service. As most of you who have spent any time there at this time of year would know, this is unusual. We were honoured to have the CO of Cerberus, CAPT Ainsley Morthorpe attend and take part in the wreath laying. His time is valuable and his presence was appreciated.

It was gratifying to see some new faces at both events and some who had travelled long distances. Mark and Yvonne Carr, Frank and Janet O'Grady, Stephen and Julie Hutchins, Allen and Meg Clark, David Hobbs, Greg Williams, Wayne Keys, Stephen, Lynette and Kelly Hemsley (Happy Clark's family), Jeremy and Marie Butler along with their two daughters.

Since our last report we have had many members travelling to escape Melbourne's winter. Committeeman Rob Gagnon and wife Sandy have spent three weeks in New Zealand and barely returned before heading off again this time to WA. Our President Chris Fealy has recently returned from the trip of a lifetime touring all over UK. Many of us (myself included) have headed north to soak up some sunshine.

I mentioned in my last report that we were looking to arrange a trip to Mt Buller to stay at the Navy Ski Lodge. Plans are well advanced for the weekend 12<sup>th</sup>-13<sup>th</sup> November. I am indebted to Jeremy Butler and Greg Williams for their work on this project.

Yours Aye

Mal Smith



## **NSW Secretaries Report for September 2022 Slipstream**

**By Jeff Dalgliesh**



Changing of the guard in the NSW Division Committee-long serving Division Secretary Dick (Pincher) Martin has retired from the Secretary position and has been replaced by Jeff Dalgliesh. Dick has served both as National Secretary and NSW Division Secretary and will remain as a valued member of the NSW Committee. Jeff is a newcomer to the committee but has been a Member of the FAAAA for several years. He spent time both in General Service and the FAA during his RAN career.

For Secretarial matters contact Jeff @ PO Box 28 Nowra NSW 2541 or by email: [jeffd.secnsw@yahoo.com](mailto:jeffd.secnsw@yahoo.com)

### Committee:

President: Phil Carey

Vice President & MLO: Keith Boundy

Secretary: Jeff Dalgliesh

Treasurer: Ron Batchelor

### General Committee:

John Balazic

Howard McCallum

Dick Martin

### Slipstream Editor

Ron Batchelor a past Editor of Slipstream and currently Treasurer of the NSW Division has stepped forward to replace Paul Shiels as the Slipstream Editor for the next two editions. We would like to thank Paul for his service over the last 3 years that he has been Editor and wish him well in his recovery.

### Vietnam Veteran's Day

On Thursday 18<sup>th</sup> August Terry Hetherington National Secretary represented the FAAA Association at the Shoalhaven Vietnam Veterans' Day service at Walsh Park Bomaderry.

The organisers said that it was the best turnout of veterans and guests for many years, notwithstanding Covid.

The speakers included Captain Robyn Phillips, CO of HMAS Albatross, who spoke of the history of the RAN Helicopter Flight, Federal member for Gilmore Mrs Fiona Phillips and Mr Carl Robinson, a former war journalist with the American Associated Press who lived and worked in South Vietnam from 1962 to 1975. Carl migrated to Australia with his Vietnamese wife and family following the fall of Saigon.

### Weekend of 21<sup>st</sup> October 2022

Several events are in planning both from the FAAAA perspective and from HMAS Albatross's point of view. Final details from the RAN and FAAAA will be available shortly and published in FlyBy and Slipstream.

#### Friday 21st October

NSW Division is proposing a Dinner for the evening of Friday 21<sup>st</sup> October hoping to attract Members and Delegates attending any of the weekend events including the FCM the following day. Planning for this event is well under way but there is possibility of a clash with RAN events that evening so final approval is pending.

#### Saturday 22nd October

FAAAA Federal Council Meeting (FCM). This is the FAAAA "Annual General Meeting" and is particularly important, as every three years (2022), all office bearers in the National Executive are 'spilled', and the Council votes who to replace them with, from nominations received.

Understand that the Fleet Air Arm intends to conduct it's Postponed 75<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Open Day on this day and pending weather conditions include some flying demonstrations.

Take careful note of September "Slipstream" and September and Octobers "FlyBy" for finalised programmes for this weekend.

Jeff Dalgliesh

Secretary NSW Division





# **FLEET AIR ARM ASSOCIATION**

## **QUEENSLAND INC**

Hi Ron,

Good to see you in action again.

And just to link up with Queensland the following has happened.

After a stuttering start to the year that saw the cancellation of the AGM noted for end of March through lack of a Quorum due to illnesses, we finally managed to get it together for June 30th as well as using Zoom. Our committee mostly stood again.

President, Stephen Huxtable, Vice Pres Ray Murrell, Sec/Treas. John Stewart, with Allan Arnell and Ian Hendersen being joined on the committee by Scott Naughton and Marion Sullivan, who took on the position of Assistant Secretary. Good to see young bloods standing.

This gives Ron Marsh a break from committee as he is undergoing severe treatment for Bone Cancer.

The only outing this year was the Anzac Day Parade. We managed to get our Banner assembled but lacked the Flag Bearers. We assembled about 30 marchers. Very few were members of our Division but good to have the others as we are getting a bit thin on numbers. The march in the last 20 years has had a remarkable run of dry days. But this year was different with showers to put up with just about the whole way. Left us pretty sodden for after the march meeting, but a few did make the effort to get to Gillhooley's.

This year we won't be holding an end of winter b/bque as they have been poorly attended. No thanks to Covid. However we will be holding our Remembrance Day Service, Friday 11th November at the Fleet Air Arm Dedication Plaque in front of the Queensland Air Museum. Then having a b/bque in the grounds of the museum where they hold 90 odd aircraft.

All the best from me.

Regards John Stewart.

**Did I read that sign right?**

**TOILET OUT OF ORDER. PLEASE USE FLOOR BELOW**

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**In a Laundromat:**

**AUTOMATIC WASHING MACHINES: PLEASE REMOVE ALL YOUR CLOTHES WHEN THE LIGHT GOES OUT**

-----

**In a London department store:**

**BARGAIN BASEMENT UPSTAIRS**

-----

**In an office:**

**WOULD THE PERSON WHO TOOK THE STEP LADDER YESTERDAY PLEASE BRING IT BACK OR FURTHER STEPS WILL BE TAKEN**

-----

**In an office:**

**AFTER TEA BREAK, STAFF SHOULD EMPTY THE TEAPOT AND STAND UPSIDE DOWN ON THE DRAINING BOARD**

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**Notice in health food shop window:**

**CLOSED DUE TO ILLNESS**

## 817 SQUADRON OF OLD



Fairey Firefly Mk.VI RAN Serial WB518. Owned and flown in California by former US Navy Commander Eddie Kurdziel

## 817 SQUADRON



817 Squadron pilots - 21st CAG. Photo courtesy ANAM.

Left to right: LEUT. M H Simpson RN, SBLT. N E Lee RAN, LCDR R B Lunberg RN (CO), SBLT. C E Champ RAN, LEUT. A C Oakley RAN, LCDR M Weatherspoon RN, LEUT. W E Dunlop RAN, SBLT. A J Roland RAN, LEUT. J Gledhill RAN.



1956. A Firefly carrier-borne fighter anti-submarine and reconnaissance aircraft was forced to land on Callalla Beach.

# RIMPAC 2022



Lieutenant Samuel Laidlaw controls air traffic from the Flight Bridge on board HMAS Canberra during Rim of the Pacific (RIMPAC) 2022.



The aviation support team from HMAS Canberra transfer an embarked U.S. Marine Corps MV-22B Osprey into the ship's hangar during Exercise RIMPAC 2022.

# RIMPAC 2022



A United States Marine Corps MV-22B Osprey performs deck launches and recoveries onboard Royal Australian Navy Landing Helicopter Dock HMAS Canberra (L02) during Rim of the Pacific (RIMPAC)



A U.S. Navy MH-60S Seahawk helicopter lands on the flight deck of HMAS Canberra during Rim of the Pacific (RIMPAC) 2022.

# RIMPAC 2022

Royal Australian Navy Landing Helicopter Dock (LHD) HMAS *Canberra* embarked two MV-22B Osprey Military Aircraft onboard and successfully moved the Osprey off the flight deck, down the elevator lift and into the hangar for the first time at sea during Exercise Rim of the Pacific 2022. The trial with the Ospreys is part of the Aircraft Maintenance and Flight Trials Unit (AMAFTU) testing Australia's ability to embark and stow the aircraft with their pilots, ground crew and maintainers to understand what can be achieved and for what duration.



The aviation support team from HMAS *Canberra* transfer an embarked U.S. Marine Corps MV-22B Osprey into the ship's hangar during Exercise RIMPAC 2022.



Representatives of the United States Senate, U.S. Marines and Royal Australian Navy personnel pose for a photo in front of a U.S. Marine Corps MV-22B Osprey in the hangar of HMAS *Canberra* during Rim of the Pacific (RIMPAC) 2022.

# RIMPAC 2022

Approximately 1,600 Australian Defence Force personnel have joined twenty-five international partners to undertake the world's largest international maritime exercise.

Held across training areas in and around the Hawaiian Islands and Southern California from 29 June to 04 August 2022, Exercise Rim of the Pacific 2022 (RIMPAC) is a biennial international military exercise hosted by Commander, U.S. Pacific Fleet.

The ADF contribution is substantial including HMA Ships Canberra, Supply and Warramunga, two RAAF P-8A Poseidon aircraft, a submarine, mine warfare and clearance diving capabilities, and a Joint Landing Force led by the 2nd Battalion, Royal Australian Regiment accompanied by personnel and capabilities from across Australian Army units.

RIMPAC aims to be the premier joint combined maritime exercise and enables Australia to strengthen international partnerships, enhance interoperability and improve readiness for a wide range of potential operations.

This year RIMPAC will feature twenty-six nations, 38 surface ships, four submarines, nine national land forces, more than 170 aircraft and approximately 25,000 personnel.



**Members for the Aviation Execution Department and crew from the United States Marine Corps VMM-363 Tiltrotor Squadron stand on the flight deck of Royal Australian Navy Landing Helicopter Dock HMAS Canberra (L02) during Exercise Rim of the Pacific (RIMPAC) 2022**



**The aviation support team from HMAS Canberra transfer an embarked U.S. Marine Corps MV-22B Osprey into the ship's hangar during Exercise RIMPAC 2022.**

# RIMPAC 2022



**A United States Marine Corps UH-1Y Venom helicopter launches from the flight deck of Royal Australian Navy Landing Helicopter Dock HMAS Canberra (L02) above a Marine Corps AH-1Z Viper helicopter during Rim of the Pacific (RIMPAC) 2022 in the Pacific Ocean. United States Marine Corps helicopters from HMLA-169 Squadron touched down on the flight deck of HMAS Canberra for a refuel during Exercise Rim of the Pacific 2022.**