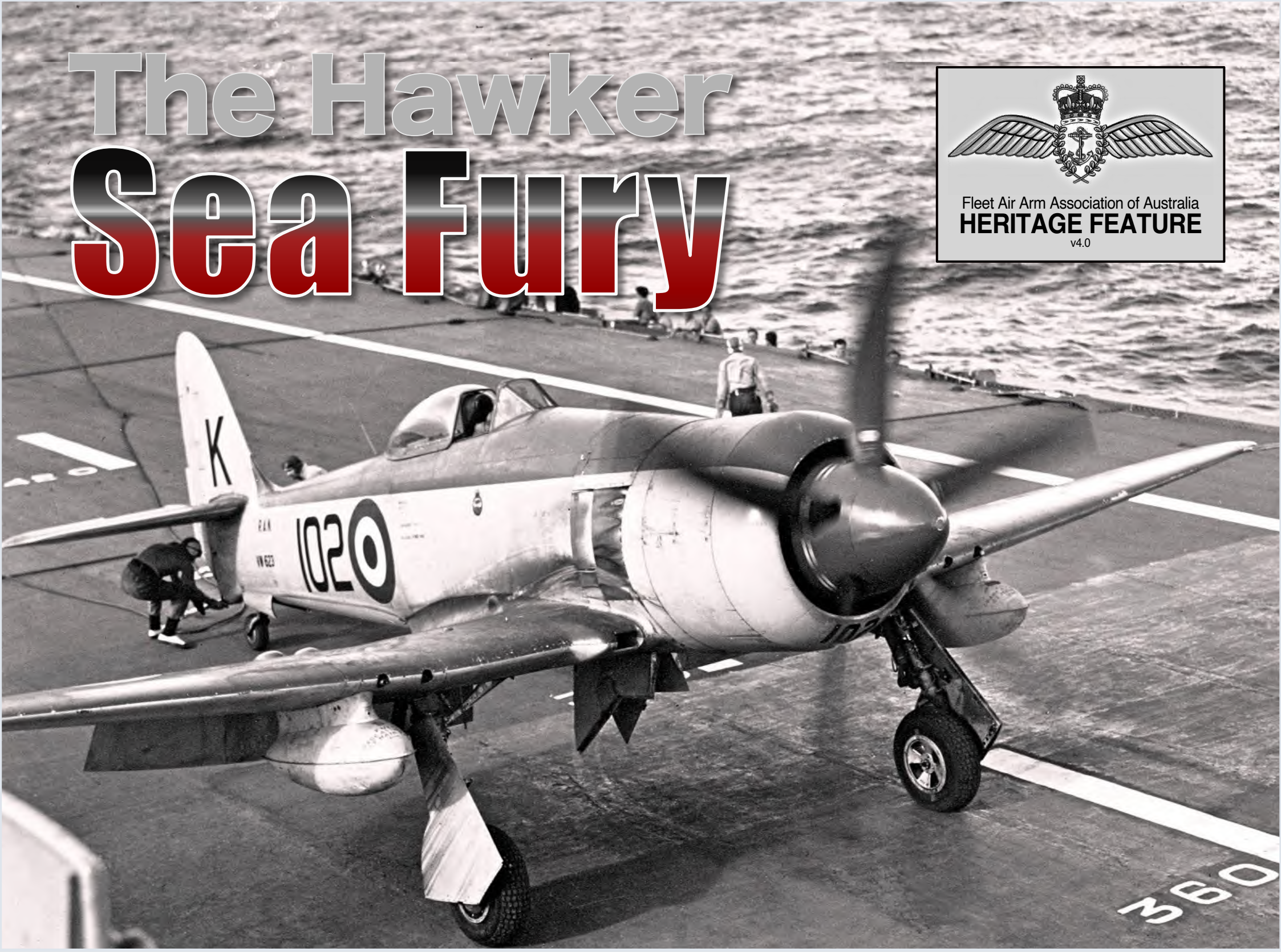
The Hawker Sea Fury

Fleet Air Arm Association of Australia
HERITAGE FEATURE
v4.0



Loved by those who flew and maintained her, the Hawker FB11 Sea Fury was amongst the very first aircraft of the brand new Fleet Air Arm, and filled the gap between the bi-planes of a time just past, and jets poised for the future.

She only served for a few years, but the Sea Fury fought in our only shooting war thus far, and did so with distinction. She was a thoroughbred classic, as Kim Dunstan explains.

The Hawker Sea Fury was one of the outstanding piston-engine aircraft of naval aviation. Ordered by the British Air Ministry in 1942, it was designed by Sydney Camm to meet RAF specifications, with a naval version ordered in 1943. Named 'Fury' and 'Sea Fury' they were a lively, more agile derivative of the Hawker Tempest. By October 1945 several prototypes using different engines had been tested. However, with WW2 ending, and the focus on jet aircraft, the RAF cancelled its order. As the Royal Navy FAA realised its potential – and needed to replace its obsolete and Lend-Lease aircraft – the Sea Fury went into production in March 1947.

Following trials in 1946 on HMS *Victorious*, the Hawker Sea Fury 10 entered RN service in August 1947, followed by the Mk11 FB, which became the front-line RN FAA fighter-bomber, until replaced by the Sea Hawk in 1953. Designed as a day-time fighter the Mk 11 was found to be a superb fighter-bomber and weapons platform. Popular with pilots and maintainers, more than 850 Sea Furies were built – including variants and two-seater trainers. International sales went to the Australian, Canadian and Netherlands navies; with land-based types to Pakistan, Burma, Egypt, West Germany, Burma, Cuba, and Iraq. Both the RN and RAN operated Sea Furies during the Korean War with considerable success. Produced at the start of the jet-age the Sea Fury proved to be a worthy competitor – much admired by those who flew them.

RAN FAA: The Light-Fleet Carriers

In 1947 the Australian government approved the purchase of two light-fleet carriers and the formation of a Fleet Air Arm, with three air groups, and two air-bases. Seeking advice from British Admiralty on suitable aircraft types and training for aircrews and maintainers, the Admiralty recommended the same aircraft types used by the RN – the Hawker Sea Fury and Fairey Firefly – with training available at special Royal Navy Fleet Air Arm schools in the UK, at a cost.

This new arm of the RAN was well-timed, as several RAN officers had qualified as aircrew, and ex-RAAF, ex-RN, ex-RNZN, and RNZAF aircrew were keen to join, as were some ex-RN maintainers, together with numerous RAN sailors eager to trans-

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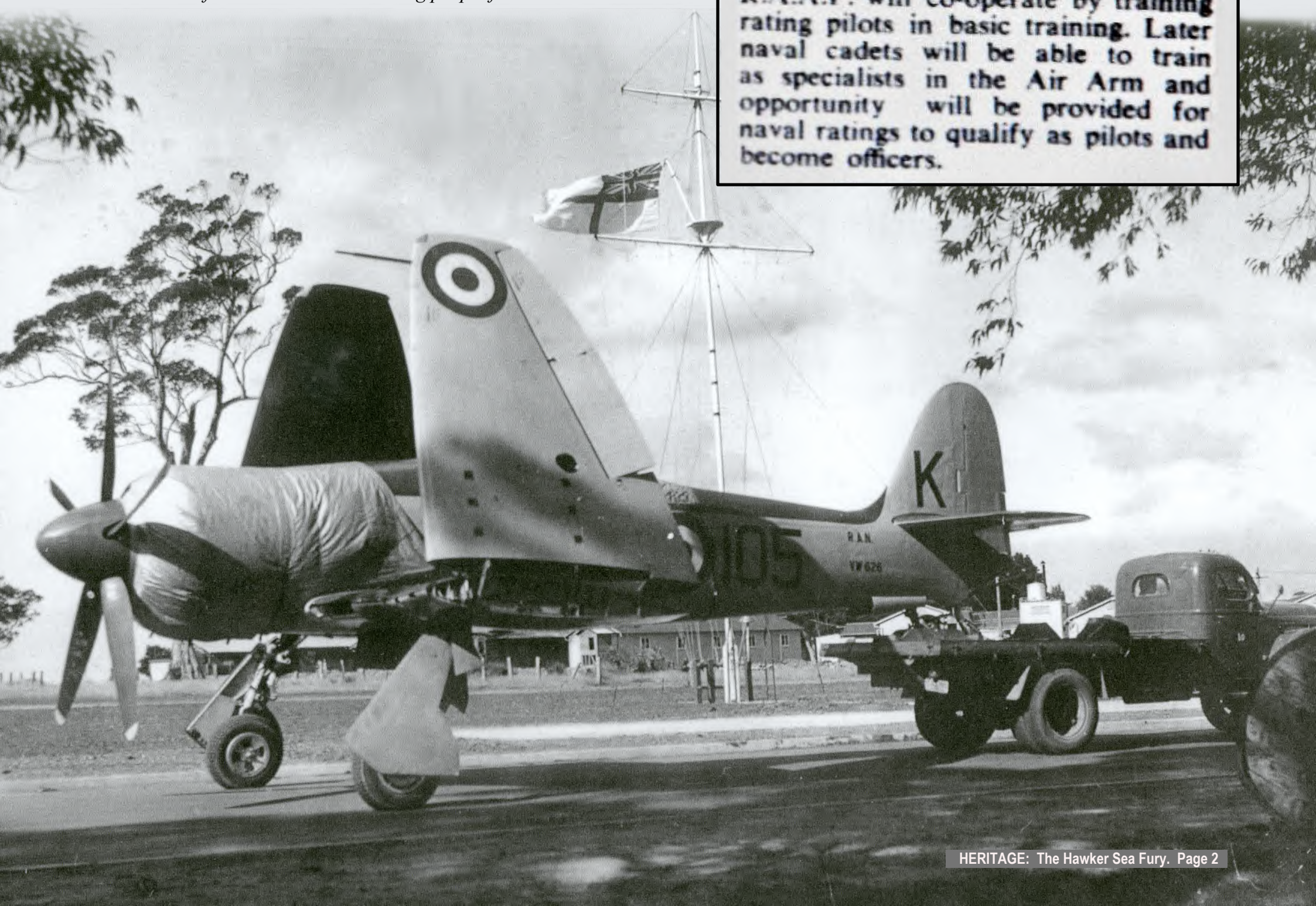
__Above__: Packed like sardines and inhibited against the weather, Sea Furies and Fireflies are transported back to Australia aboard HMAS Sydney. These aircraft, together with the two Air Groups formed and worked up in the UK, formed the nucleus of the Fleet Air Arm. Below: On arrival in Jervis Bay each aircraft was ferried ashore by barge and then transported to the Naval Air Station in Nowra by road. __Right__: "The West Australian" 18 September 1947, which was the first announcement seeking people for the new FAA.✈

THE R.A.N. AIR ARM

Recruiting For Force Begins

MELBOURNE, Sept. 17.—An initial entry of 80 officer pilots recruited from serving naval officers and former R.A.A.F. officer pilots who served in the war would form the basis of the new Naval Air Arm, the Director of Naval Aviation Planning (Capt. E. W. Anstice) announced yesterday. The maximum flying strength would be 94 officer pilots and between 70 and 80 rating pilots, he said. Rating pilots would form about one-third of the pilot establishment of front-line squadrons.

The recruiting campaign for the Naval Air Arm began today. Entry of candidates to train as rating pilots is restricted to youths between 17 and 19 years. The R.A.A.F. will co-operate by training rating pilots in basic training. Later naval cadets will be able to train as specialists in the Air Arm and opportunity will be provided for naval ratings to qualify as pilots and become officers.



fer to the Fleet Air Arm. In 1947 senior Naval Air Planning staff, based in Melbourne, had begun assembling personnel to train as aircrew, initially at RAAF Point Cook to 'wings standard,' and sailors (including civilian recruits) converting to mechanics and maintenance trades – with all groups moving to the UK in 1948.

1948: Preparing Ships & Squadrons

While the manning and training programs were progressing the first of the two aircraft carriers, (the former HMS *Terrible*, launched in 1944 but unfinished) was being prepared for delivery in 1948 as HMAS *Sydney*. The second carrier, *Melbourne*, was delayed while being modified and fitted with an angle deck. During 1948 the focus was on assembling the crew for HMAS *Sydney* and forming the 20th and 21st CAGs (Carrier Air Groups). In April 1948, King George VI approved the names for HMAS *Sydney*, *Melbourne* – and *Albatross* for the airbase at Nowra.

By now the RAN had placed orders for 25 Hawker Sea Fury Mk 11 aircraft and 25 Fairey Firefly Mk 4 and 5 aircraft, with spares for delivery in early 1949. Further orders would follow – totalling 101 Sea Furies and 108 Fireflies. Meanwhile, 805 Sea Fury and 816 Firefly Squadrons were commissioned on 28 August 1948 at RNAS Eglinton, Northern Ireland, forming the RAN's 20th CAG. Aircrew training began in earnest using RN Sea Fury and Firefly aircraft, which included formation flying, instrument flying, navigation, combat manoeuvres, weapons practice, and flight-deck landings. The Firefly aircrews did additional anti-submarine training.

The RAN Sea Fury Mk 11 FB

The first batch of Hawker Sea Fury 11 FBs were delivered to the RAN in May 1949. They formed 805 Squadron, becoming the RAN's front-line fighter-bomber, operating from the aircraft carriers HMAS *Sydney* and HMAS *Vengeance* – and HMAS *Albatross* at Nowra.

The Sea Fury was powered by a supercharged, 2,480 hp (1,850 kw), sleeve valve, air-cooled, 18-cylinder radial, Bristol Centaurus engine, driving a five-blade Rotol propeller. A single-seater, it was one of the fastest production model single-engine fighters built, with a maximum speed of 450 mph (724 km/h), and service ceiling of 35,800 ft. (10,911 m); range 700 miles (1,126 km), and up to 1,040 miles (1,674 km) with drop tanks. [Figures subject to conditions].

The second batch of Sea Furies and Fireflies were collected in the UK, by HMAS *Sydney*, in October 1950. These Sea Furies formed 808 Squadron which was commissioned on 25 April 1950 at St Merryn, Cornwall, as part of the 21st CAG. Further Sea Furies to make-up the 101 purchased were delivered by HMAS *Vengeance* and commercial shipping, with the last arriving in 1953. The front-line Sea Fury squadrons were 805 and 808 and for a short time 850; serving variously on *Sydney* and *Vengeance*, and at RANAS Nowra.

Well-suited to light-fleet carriers, the Sea Fury Mk11 FB featured folding wings, tail hook, lockable tailwheel, catapult hook, and strengthened undercarriage, with extra anti-flak armour fitted to the oil cooler. The Bristol Centaurus used the Coffman cartridge starter, avoiding battery drainage. Weapons: 4 x Hispano Mk V 20mm cannons with 125 rounds per gun; up to 12 x 3-inch (76 mm) unguided air to ground rockets with 60 lb (27 kg) HE heads; 2 x 500 lb (226 kg) or 2 x 1,000 lb (453 kg) bombs, on underwing hard points.

Both *Sydney* and *Vengeance* had hydraulic catapults. Prior to her deployment to Korea the catapult on *Sydney* was rarely used, even during armed serials. Instead the 'free take-off' method was used where air group aircraft would line-up in staggered formation either side of the flight deck, to fly off one at a time. The Sea Furies were often first, using about two thirds of the length of the flight deck. In Korea, however, *Sydney's* catapult was the only launch method used.

Sea Fury Features

The Sea Fury 11 FB was a high-performance aircraft, in addition to its role as a pure fighter they readily adapted to a variety of tasks, including close support for ground forces, attacks on communications, anti-shipping, and pin-point target raids. A gyro gunsight in the cockpit assisted deflection shooting. Sea Furies were capable of good acceleration, speeds not that much less than the jet fighters of the day, and a high degree of manoeuvrability.

The Sea Fury cockpit layout was uncomplicated, with standard stick and rudder controls. The seat was adjustable for height and leg reach and instruments easily visible. In flight the pilot had good forward and downward view; this together with its smooth handling characteristics at all speeds provided excellent control. On approach to the flight deck the large radial engine obstructed forward vision, so pilots were heavily reliant on the Landing Officer whose job it was to guide the aircraft onto the arrestor wires.

Chockman The Brave

It was late 1951 aboard HMAS Sydney off the north coast of Korea, the sea was very rough and the weather very cold. During a break in flying operations, the Flight Deck Chief called me out, "Tom Henry, slip down the after lift, there is another chockman required for a Fury coming up from 'C' hangar for a power run".

As I made my way down to the after lift, I thought to myself how unlucky I was. This aircraft had most probably had an engine change and I was likely to get stuck on the chocks for up to half an hour. The Fury was eventually parked on the Port quarter with the after fuselage aligned over one of the flight deck ring bolts. The mechanics soon had lashing around the after fuselage and secured to the ring bolt.

Prior to that the young pilot had manned the cockpit, I checked the lashings on my chocks, then got into position on the deck with my feet around the after chock and my arms and body wrapped around the wheel and front of the chock. Needless to say, it was a very uncomfortable position and I was grateful for the special issue fur lined helmet and gloves that gave some protection from the frigid weather conditions we were unaccustomed to.

As the powerful Bristol Centaurus engine burst into life, I noticed that the yellow coated Director and the Fireman had moved away, probably to get out of the cold. The pilot ran the engine at medium power for some time. I remember thinking that under these conditions lying on a hard deck was a stupid place to be, the noise and the huge five-bladed prop blowing bitterly cold air over me added to the discomfort. My thoughts drifted to my home town in northern New South Wales where it would be warm and everyone thinking about Christmas and the holidays.

My dreaming came to a sudden halt as I realised that the pilot was increasing the power considerably! At the same time, I noticed that the deck movement was becoming more pronounced, maybe getting rougher or the ship was changing course. The aircraft was approaching full power when my fellow chockman caught my eye by frantically pointing to the rear of the aircraft. I checked to see what was grabbing his attention – the fuselage lashing was starting to FRAY!

From my cramped position I anxiously looked around for someone to get the attention of the pilot – there was no one in sight! My mind started working overtime. What will happen if the lashing parts? Will the aircraft ground loop and go over the side? Or what if…. the possibilities were endless, or so it seemed. It was now freezing cold, the Fury was really roaring, the deck was now heaving from the rough seas and I could sense that something was about to happen. I buried my face between my arm and the aircraft tyre. There was a deafening noise and I was suddenly sprayed with debris, then… all was quiet. I looked up to see the Fury precariously balanced on its nose atop a badly bent propeller.

The Flight Deck Officer and others were soon on the scene and the Fury was restored to its original position. "Good lad Henry, sticking with your chocks! You may have helped save the aircraft," said the FDO. At this point one of my Aircraft Handler mates tapped me on the shoulder and whispered, "You silly bastard. You should have shot through, you could have been killed!" Little did they know, that because of the severe cold and 'Fury Fear,' I was more or less frozen to the spot with fright.

I was thankfully noting that the debris which had struck me was only several layers of deck paint, when the FDO said, "You can go below for a stand easy, Henry." Then added with a grin, "You may need to change your underpants!"

(*'Slipstream' April 1995*) ✈

Sea Fury Mk IIFB Technical Specifications

Type: Carrier-borne fighter Bomber
Manufacturer: Hawker Aircraft Ltd. Kingston-on-Thames, Surrey, UK.
Crew: One
Length: 34 ft. 7 inches (10.55 m)
Wingspan: 38 ft. 4 3/4 inches (11.69 m)
Height: 15 ft. 10 inches (4.83 m) wings folded, tail down
Weight: Empty 9,240 lb. (4,191 kg); Loaded 12,350 lb (5,602 kg)
Engine: 1 x Bristol Centaurus 18-cylinder, air cooled, twin row radial – 2,480 hp (1,850 kw)
Propeller: Rotol 5-blade, diameter 12 ft. 9 inches
Speed: Max 450 mph (725 km/h) in level flight at 20,000 ft. (6,096 m)
Range: 700 miles (1,126 km). With drop tanks 1,060 miles (1,674 km)
Service ceiling: 35,800 ft. (10,910 m)
Rate of climb: 4,320 ft./min (21.9 m/s)
Guns: 4 x 20mm Hispano Mk V cannons
Rockets: Up to 12 x 3-inch (76.2mm) air to ground
Bombs: 2 x 500 lb (226 kg) or 2 x 1,000 lb (907 kg)

Note: performance figures subject to conditions ✈

***Right**: A striking shot of a Sea Fury being moved. The chockmen so close to the undercarriage and the very reduced team numbers pushing it off the lift suggests the aircraft had no brake pressure. That, and the close-by Doggy (Rescue Destroyer), indicates it may have been a hangar reshuffle after flying was completed for the day and before a high-line or message bag transfer. Sometimes a reduced hangar handling team, like this, might pop up one or two aircraft to enable access to a potentially serviceable craft for the next day's flying or to put a potentially extended service aircraft out of the way, up against the fire curtain that divided A and B hangars. HMAS Anzac, a Battle Class destroyer, crosses close astern. (RAN image).*

***Lower**. A Sea Fury launches from the deck of HMAS Sydney.* ✈

As a fighter the Sea Fury was highly manoeuvrable. Spring tabs on the ailerons and rudder produced a lightness and effectiveness in the controls throughout the speed range. The Perspex canopy offered good all-round vision and in an emergency could be jettisoned, together with a cockpit side panel. The windscreen had armoured glass, and vulnerable parts of the aircraft were protected by armour plating, including protection against gunshot from the rear. Radio equipment included VHF, IFF and homing beacon instillations. Oxygen equipment together with cockpit heating and ventilation were provided.

The Korean War

On 25 June 1950 North Korea invaded the South and, in response, Australia contributed ships to the United Nations response. This included HMAS *Sydney* which embarked an expanded Air Group comprising 805 and 808 (Sea Fury) and 817 (Firefly) Squadrons, who worked up on the ship before departing Korean waters in August of that year. She arrived on 25 September 1951, relieving HMS *Glory* which was due for a refit. *Sydney* now joined with RN and USN carriers patrolling the Korean coast in support of the United Nations resolution by flying strike missions against communist forces.

Carrier operations were based on 13 or 15-day patrols, sailing from Japan with replenishment at sea. The Sea Furies began operating over enemy territory in October 1951, with 805 and 808 attacking designated targets with 20mm cannons, three-inch rockets with 60 lb HE heads, or bombs, and the Fireflies striking bridges and railways[1]. Other tasks involved naval gunfire spotting, escort missions and daylight CAP (Combat Air Patrol). Early in her deployment *Sydney* set a light-fleet carrier record when her Carrier Air Group flew 89 sorties in one day.

Sydney's encounter with Typhoon Ruth was a battle of a different kind, with the ship facing winds of 130 km/h and 45 ft. waves, resulting in damage to aircraft and equipment. She ended her Korean deployment on 25 January 1952 and returned to Australia.

The RAN provided a second deployment for peacekeeping operations in October of 1953. The original plan was for the newly commissioned (RN loan) carrier HMAS *Vengeance* to deploy (to relieve HMS *Ocean*) but she was replaced instead by *Sydney*. 805, 850 and 817 Squadron were again embarked for a second (comparatively quiet) deployment, before returning to Australia in June 1954.

Prior to *Sydney's* second Korean deployment the ship exercised in home waters and in September 1952 visited the Monte Bello Islands for the Atomic Tests, and in 1953 visited the UK for the coronation of Queen Elizabeth 11.

A Proud Service Record

The RAN Sea Furies remained in front line service until 1956, when they were replaced by the De Havilland Sea Venom. 850 Squadron decommissioned in August 1954; 808 in October 1954, and 805 in March 1958. During the late 1950s and early 1960s many of the Sea Furies were sold for scrap, although some were acquired by 'warbird' enthusiasts and aviation museums. But several Sea Furies remained active at RANAS Nowra until the early 1960s, attached variously to 723, 724 or 725 Squadrons, performing fleet communication, radar calibration duties and aerobatic displays at air shows around the country. Nowadays, a few restored, airworthy Sea Furies are in private hands, including pylon racing in the US, which can be seen on YouTube.

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Wikipedia

With thanks to Fred Lane, Andrew Powell, John Harrison, Jim Parsons, Lou Burns, and Ron Marsh for advice.

[1] The Firefly (strike aircraft) were on loan from the RN as the RAN F/R5s were being converted to AS6 (anti-submarine) standard at the time. ✈

Friendly Fire!

In February 1951, HMAS Sydney was exercising with the cruiser HMNZS *Bellona* which was towing a splash target while 805 Squadron Sea Furies engaged in some rocket practice. On board the *Bellona* the crew had painstakingly prepared their prize whaler for a pulling regatta following the exercises.

According to reports one of the Sea Fury rockets accidentally fired hitting *Bellona's* Quarter Deck, luckily nobody was injured, and the 60 lb concrete practice head just shattered, severely damaging the timber decking – and the prize whaler. Not surprisingly, suspicious New Zealanders saw this as an attempt by the Australians to eliminate them from the regatta. The pilot of the offending Sea Fury, Lt. Peter Seed, protested saying he didn't fire the rocket "it fired by itself". It later emerged during Sydney's Korean War deployment that the ship's radio transmitters caused the Sea Fury rocket test lamps to flicker. After that it was deemed prudent to avoid radio transmission when rockets were loaded on aircraft. ✈

What Stupid Bastard?

This story is from an internet site titled 'Seafires & Sea Furies':

"I recall the Australian naval aviator who, in the final stages of a batsman controlled approach in a Sea Fury, received a red Very cartridge signal from the flying control position in the carrier's island and for no apparent reason. This was a mandatory go-around instruction over-ruling the batsman. After aborting the approach, and a subsequent quiet circuit and landing, the pilot was still obviously suffering from the stress of the go-around for as soon as he got out of the aircraft, he stormed up to the flying control position in the island which, apart from its normal complement of brass, also housed some very senior officers visiting the ship. Our friend's first, and only, words were "What stupid bastard fired that red?".

Later that evening, after suffering the consequent chastisement, Commander (Air) approached and bought him a large gin, noting "Of course it would have been a lot worse for you if you'd said, "which stupid bastard!" ✈

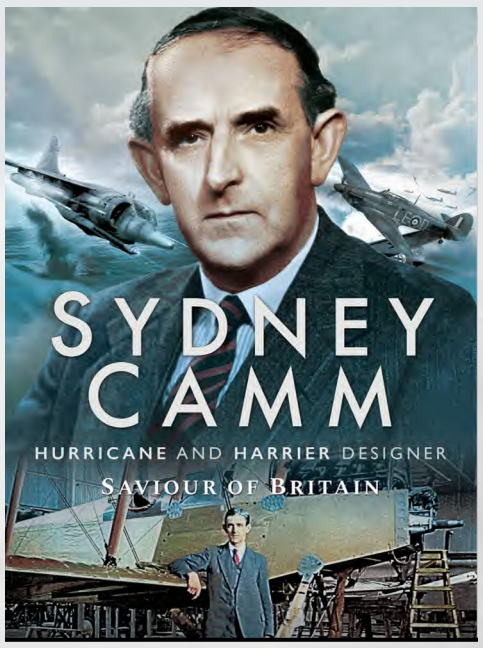
Top. Looking more like battle damage than environmental. When Typhoon Ruth struck there were 13 aircraft on deck just aft of the island, and aircraft handlers secured by lifelines worked ceaselessly to secure loose lashings before going below in a state of exhaustion. One Firefly was washed overboard and six other aircraft seriously damaged

Above. The Squadrons' Armourers were amongst the hardest working trade, especially during Sydney's Korean deployment where they performed constant and rapid turn arounds on the exposed upper deck, often in freezing conditions.. Here, they practice loading 20mm rounds into Hispano cannons in the wing, and a 500 lb bomb onto the port wing of a Sea Fury. (Photos: Alan Porter, (Kookaburra) and the Australian War Memorial, respectively). ✈

***Above**: 805 NAS at Albatross in 1957. The resolution isn't crisp enough to recognise faces, but it gives an idea of the size of Naval Air Squadrons in those days. The small cage in front of the CO, Lieutenant Commander Gill Campbell (whose nickname was "Fair Go") housed the Squadron mascot. It had been donated by the people of Gunnedah (in western NSW) who had organised an Air Display a year or two previously. They had asked the RAAF, who agreed to the proposal, and then as an afterthought also asked the Navy. On the allotted day the Air Force failed to turn up...got lost, perhaps, or couldn't find the town. 805 Squadron's Sea Furies gave a great display, however, and saved the day.*

Gunnedah's grateful citizens gave the Squadron a Galah as a token of their appreciation, which was promptly named after the town. In time 805's sailors taught it to say "Fair Go, Gill!" which it did with great clarity. One wag spent weeks trying to get it to add "You old f....." but to no avail. (Photo Kev Raddatz). ✈

Building the Sea Fury



In late 1942, Hawker Chief Designer Sydney Camm proposed a lighter version of the Tempest fighter, for which Specification F.2/43 was issued in May 1943.

Around the same time, Specification N.7/43 was also issued for a naval interceptor and Camm realised that the same basic design, could fulfil both requirements. Eventually, the two Specifications were brought together under F.2/43.

By the end of 1943, five flying prototypes with alternative power plants (including variants of the Rolls-Royce Griffon and the Bristol Centaurus) had been ordered.

Confidence in the new design was high and in April 1944, orders were placed for 200 examples of F.2/43 fighters, destined for the RAF. Additionally, 200 'navalised' examples were built to Specification N.22/43 for the Fleet Air Arm (FAA).

The second Hawker Fury LA610 was initially flown with a Griffon 85 engine.

The first F.2/43 prototype (NX798) made its first flight on 1st September 1944 at the Hawker Factory at Langley, fitted with a Bristol Centaurus XII engine and four-bladed propeller. The following month, a second prototype (LA610), fitted with a Griffon 85 and six-bladed contra-rotating propeller, made its maiden flight.

It was announced that the RAF version would be named the Hawker Fury I and the naval version the Hawker Sea Fury F.X. However, after the completion of two more Hawker Fury prototypes (NX802 and VP207), fitted with Bristol Centaurus and Napier Sabre engines respectively, the entire RAF Fury order was cancelled. This was due in the main to the end of the Second World War, when the RAF found themselves with an abundance of idle, late-mark Spitfires and Hurricanes.

Additionally, the Hawker Sea Fury order was also halved in January 1945.

When fitted with a Sabre VII engine, LA610 was the fastest of all Hawker's piston engine fighters.

Meanwhile, Hawker Sea Fury development continued and the first semi-navalised example (SR661) with a short arrester hook and non-folding wings, made its first flight on 21st February 1945.

With arrester hook and folding wings, SR666 was the first fully-navalised Hawker Sea Fury prototype.

The second Hawker Sea Fury prototype (SR666) was fully-navalised and fitted with the production standard five-bladed propeller and it made its first flight on 12th October 1945. Later, 50 production Hawker Sea Fury F.Xs were built with the first (TF895) flying on 7th September 1946.

After extensive trials with the second prototype (SR666) it was decided that the Hawker Sea Fury would make an excellent ground-attack aircraft and so all subsequent 615 examples would be built as fighter-bombers, designated Hawker Sea Fury FB.11s.

*Source: BAE Systems Heritage. See the the full article **here**.* ✈

Top. The first Centaurus powered prototype. [2] Fitted with a Sabre VII engine, LA610 was the fastest of all Hawker's piston engine aircraft. [3] SR666 was the first fully navalised Sea Fury prototype. [4] A Fury FB.11 with an impressive display of weaponry.✈

Flying the Sea Fury

Part 1 by Fred Lane

Above: A Sea Fury about to land on HMAS Sydney. Well before the era of angled decks and mirror landing aid, landings were achieved solely by visual contact with the Deck Landing Control Officer ('Batsman') – a feat not made any easier by the nose-up landing attitude and the big Bristol Centaurus engine obscuring forward vision. (RAN image)✈

The Hawker Sea Fury FB11, suddenly popular in 2017's aviation literature and You Tube videos, is frequently touted as the fastest propeller-driven aircraft in the world. It was certainly remarkably fast and a delight to fly. More importantly, it could also pack a reasonable ground attack wallop (4 x 20 mm guns, 2 hard-points, 8 x 3-inch RP with 2 x 45 gallon drop tanks or 2 x 1,000 lbs. bombs and no drop tanks) and shrug off battle damage to boot. The U.K. and The Netherlands built about 860 Sea Furies for nine countries and the RAN purchased 100. Its distinctive "blue note" shallow dive maximum speed of 450 knots (833 km/h) was easy to attain, but many propeller-driven fighters had exceeded that speed by the end of WW II.

Compared with other 1950s ground attack aircraft, the Sea Fury was on a par with the two-seat Fairey Firefly in many respects. Neither aircraft, however, was in the same street as the contemporary Douglas AD Skyraider when it came to weaponry (4 x 20mm guns, 15 hard-points, bombs, 5-inch rockets, torpedoes, etc.), total bomb load (8,000 lbs.) or endurance (eight hours with drop tanks).

The Sea Furies and Fireflies of the 1951-52 Sydney Carrier Air Group were the only RAN fixed wing aircraft ever to see action in a shooting war. In Korea, the deck cycle time was about two hours. This gave the deck crews adequate time to spot, refuel and rearm the next sortie. To give Sea Furies a safe time in the air, they typically carried a 45 gallon drop tank on each of the two wing hard points (total fuel 200 gallons). This left room for only two rocket rails each side, which typically mounted four pairs of piggy-backed three-inch rockets with 60-pound heads. Theoretically, the top rocket would never fire with the lower rocket still attached. In practice this was not so. Once in maybe every 20 sorties a topmost rocket would fire with the lower rocket inert, but still aboard for the ride. The resultant gyrations were memorable.

The Skyraider AD-3 and -4 were bigger than the Sea Fury, but had a similar-powered engine. They carried a larger load – e.g. a dozen 5-inch HVAR rockets. It could also deliver bombs, torpedoes and even nuclear weapons.

Douglas Skyraider

Other than RATOG (Rocket Assisted Take Off Gear), carrier operations in the RAN proceeded smoothly for the first of the pipeline pilots who joined in 1951. In the early days, despite no failures ashore, together with careful testing and re-testing aboard, one side of a Sea Fury RATOG launch from Sydney failed to fire, leading to the loss of the pilot and

About The Author

Fred Lane is the last surviving member of the graduates of the Number One RAN Pilots Course. He joined HMAS *Cerberus* in December 1947, one of 14 direct entry and serving members. Flying Tiger Moths and Wirraways, seven young navy pilots graduated from the first course of the Number One Flying Training School, RAAF Point Cook, in July, 1949.

After voyaging to the UK, they joined Number 13 Course Operational Flying Schools (OFS), flying Seafires or Fireflies from Lossiemouth Scotland, and Eglinton Northern Ireland. Deck landing qualifications in HMS *Illustrious* followed, in March, 1950, and they all advanced to Pilot Third Class (Petty Officer equivalent). All were promoted SBLT on their return to Australia in August, 1950.After a five-month flying hiatus Fred joined 805 Squadron, 3 December, 1950, rushing into a seven-week Sea Fury conversion, weapons qualification and work up for a 25 January, 1951, HMAS *Sydney* embarkation.

In the Korean War he had the unnerving experience of seeing his Division Leader and Squadron Senior Pilot, LEUT Keith Clarkson DFM, shot down 100 metres ahead, 5 November, 1951, and losing his best friend, SBLT Dick Sinclair, exactly a month later. Fred later qualified and served as a Landing Signals Officer (LSO), Qualified Flying Instructor (RAAF QFI A1 Grade) and Senior Naval Officer (SNO) at RAAF Point Cook and RAAF Pearce. Other appointments included Senior Pilot of 817, 808 and 805 Squadrons and twice Commanding Officer of 805 Squadron (Sea Venoms and Skyhawks).

He is probably the only person to serve as a squadron pilot in all three of the RAN carriers, *Sydney*, *Vengeance* and *Melbourne*, and flying, in turn, all three RAN fighters, Sea Fury, Sea Venom and Skyhawk, while embarked.

He retired in his early forties to graduate BA (UNSW), MA and PhD (SUNY Stony Brook, USA) in Clinical Psychology, becoming probably the first Australian career serviceperson to retire with no tertiary qualification whatsoever, and go on to PhD.

Above Left:*The seven RAN Pilots of Number One Course graduating as Pilots Fourth Class (Leading Seaman equivalent) at RAAF Point Cook. Back row from left: Dick Sinclair (KIA); Lofty Lane (Author), Scotty Macdonald and Col Champ. Front row: Shorty Roland, Mick Streeter and Tas Webster.*

Above Right: *What the well-dressed young Sea Fury pilot wore to War in Korea. First, he donned neck to toe thermal underwear, then a two-piece immersion suit, life jacket, helmet, oxygen mask and finally strapped a .38 revolver to his waist and a knee pad to his thigh. Tucked away were a first aid pack, a silk escape map and two emergency ground signal scarves, one fluorescent pink, the other yellow.* ✈

aircraft. Thereafter all launches were either free takeoff or catapult.

In Korean waters, all RAN Sea Fury sorties were catapult-launched and most were of the Armed Reconnaissance type, with frequent designated Strikes, Naval Gunfire Support (NGS), Combat Air Patrol (CAP), Rescue CAP (RESCAP), Photo-Recon and Army Support variations. For Photo-Recon jobs, stray engine oil persistently fouled the built-in fuselage camera ports, so an empty drop tank was modified to carry the big cameras. NGS shoots by Sea Fury pilots ranged from amazingly accurate 16-inch battleships, like USS *New Jersey*, to sometimes woeful 3- and 4-inch frigates. Any briefed sortie could change at no notice into a RESCAP. These included successful searches and cover for baled-out USAF B-29 aircrew as well as fellow Sydney aircrew who ditched, force-landed or baled out after battle damage. A G-Dropper Firefly kept watch on standby. As well as its big five-man dinghy the G-Dropper might contain survival rations, water and an Owen gun. Enemy-inflicted damage was not infrequent. Once, the author's own Sea Fury, flown by the Squadron CO, returned with peppered wings and fuselage after a swan down the Haeju Gorge. The starboard aileron had blown up like a balloon, but the trusty Sea Fury brought the Squadron CO back safely.

Deck landing the Sea Fury was not easy for some of the Olds and Bolds. Brought up on British deck landing signals, they had to convert to the USN system in 1951, whereas the new "pipeline" pilots had learned only the USN system. There was never time to think about what a signal meant on finals approach and some vital reflex-response signals were dangerously opposite. The old "Go lower" signal now meant "You are low". The big Centaurus engine, sleeve valve or not, completely obscured the flight deck during the final stages of a 95 knots deck landing approach. Only the Landing Signals Officer's platform could be seen. At the cut, the nose dropped, the centre line came into view and split-second corrections might be made to line up and flare. After the arrest, the aircraft was allowed to roll back with the brakes off until the wire dropped out of the hook then, obeying the yellow-shirt director, it was on brakes, flaps up, allow two "hookmen" to manually house the hook, off brakes, add lots of power and start folding the wings to cross the barriers quickly to give the next aircraft a "clear deck" to land, a routine 30 seconds behind.

The Sea Fury started replacing the Seafire as the preferred RN fighter in 1947 and during Aerodrome Dummy Deck Landings (ADDLs) a Seafire pilot could take the cut and flare, but just trickle on a little power so that the tailwheel alone touched down. The main wheels could be kept clear as full power lifted the Seafire into the air again. The Sea Fury had no ability whatsoever to copy this. Its flare was a full commitment to a three-point touchdown — or bounce. On the other hand, the Sea Fury with its wide -track undercarriage (12 feet/3.66 m) was less likely to topple sideways (Seafire track 5 feet 9 inches/1.7 m) and it could take a much firmer touchdown. When flared properly it had a much better stick-to-the-deck ability than the highly sprung Seafire.

The Sea Fury's Bristol Centaurus XVIII air-cooled radial twin-row 18-cylinder engine developed 2,480 hp (1,850 kW), giving the aircraft a maximum level flight speed of about 400 knots (740 kmh) at 18,000 feet. Its fuel-injection system automatically corrected

Above*: The pre-Shoenberg atonal Katatonic Kasbah Band possibly struck more terror in friends than any enemy in Korea. Here, during a late evening impromptu rhythm section rehearsal, First Violin Tas Webster exhorts Bongo Drummer Dick Sinclair (later KIA) to keep even worse time. Back row advisers, from left: Toy Xylophone Shorty Roland, Toy Piano Col Champ, Ukulele Schnoz Coleman (later KIA), Boom Box Shiner Wright (RN) and Bell Ringer Arthur Smith (RN).*

Lower*: The Bristol Centaurus had a rare "Sleeve Valve" induction and exhaust system. Instead of cylinder head-mounted poppet valves the entire sleeve moved. Here, all the cylinder walls have been removed to show the sleeve valves. (AWM).*✈

for mixture and injected fuel into the eye of a two-stage supercharger. The sleeve valve design aimed to reduce frontal area, enabling better pilot vision ahead when taxying, taking-off and landing, as well as less drag and better speed in the air. Instead of conventional inlet and exhaust poppet valves sitting high on each cylinder head, every Centaurus cylinder had a single sleeve geared to engine rotation so that two pairs of ports in each sleeve either lined up with intake or exhaust ducts or blocked everything for a power stroke. All this demanded lubrication. Sleeve valve oil failure risked engine seizure in 60 seconds, or disintegration with a strong fire risk to follow.

Maximum take-off power was +9.5 lbs. boost and 2700 rpm. Geared down to a 0.444 ratio the big (diameter 12 feet 9 inches/3.89 m) five-bladed propeller pulled the aircraft along at comfortable 240 knots at cruise power (zero boost, 1500 rpm). However, full power during take-off had to be carefully managed. Sea Fury Pilot's Notes (p. 35, paragraph 62) recognised but somewhat comically understated the problem:

"(ii) Full throttle should always be used at take-off, even though the aircraft may become airborne before the full throttle position is reached.

(iii) The tendency to swing to the right can be controlled easily by the rudder particularly if the aircraft is flown off tail down."

In fact, applying full power early and allowing the tail to rise at its natural rate caused a decidedly uncontrollable swing to starboard, full opposite rudder and full brake or not. Until proficient, new pilots limited the engine to only +4 lbs. boost until they mastered the technique of raising the tail slowly without inducing an uncontrollable swing. Then they applied the rest of the power. For the time being, they accepted a slightly longer takeoff run and impaired tail down visibility directly ahead.

Like many of its contemporaries, such as the "Hose Nose" Vought F4U Corsair, the Sea Fury's engine power also contributed to torque stalls. If the pilot opened the throttle too rapidly at too slow an airspeed like, say, taking a late wave off, the aircraft wanted to rotate in the opposite direction to the propeller and opposite aileron exacerbated the situation.

As a result, the Sea Fury's starboard wing could suddenly stall. LEUT Geoff Litchfield describes this in his self-published 2002 book "*Fly Boy*" . Lightning fast and precise anti-spin recovery action was required to avoid crashing inverted onto the deck, island, the water alongside or all three.

Why a big five-bladed propeller? Before the big scimitar-style propellers became fashionable, the extra horsepower of the bigger engines was considered by many to be best absorbed by a big five-bladed system. Six blades or wider chords in those days risked inter-blade interference and reduced efficiency. Longer blades risked higher Mach numbers on the tips and again loss of efficiency. Sometimes the propeller-tip/ground clearance was a consideration (Sea Fury clearance was a scant 9.5 inches [24.13 cm] in level flight attitude). With its wider effective chord smaller diameter and swept back aspect, the scimitar blade helped to solve some of these problems with more modern aircraft.

***Right**: The Australian War Memorial Sea Fury, showing the large Centaurus engine and five-bladed propeller. Unfortunately, this aircraft was found to be longer than expected and was emasculated by removing nine inches from the arrestor hook. (Wikipedia).*

***Below**: A Division of four 808 Squadron Sea Furies overfly HMAS Sydney, at anchor in Jervis Bay, NSW. Note the "K" designator on the round down (matched by the tail markings of the aircraft), and the straight-though flight deck. HMAS Melbourne, which was to succeed Sydney, introduced the first angled deck, a steam catapult and more modern landing aids. (RAN image).✈*

The Sea Fury's throttle and pitch control were interconnected so that with "auto throttle" (pitch lever fully retarded) the pitch control would be picked up for power above cruise and as the throttle advanced or retarded it automatically re-set a higher or lower rpm. This protected the engine from over-boosting. Unfortunately, this feature was counter-productive in close formation. At cruise power a small throttle advance adjusted the pitch first, causing the aircraft to lose a little power before it caught up. Newbies were tempted to advance the throttle even more, only to suddenly shoot ahead of the leader. Solution? Set the pitch at 2100 rpm and accept the slightly poorer fuel consumption.

Why 2100 rpm and not a lower setting, say around 1800? The Centaurus XVIII was said to have an annoying internal resonance problem between about 1600 and 2000 rpm, so flying in that range was discouraged.

The Centaurus had a couple of dirty tricks. For instance, the engine could overspeed in steep dives. With a fully closed throttle and high airspeed, the engine might overspeed beyond 3000+ rpm and start disintegrating or burning, as the 805 CO designate, LCDR Jimmy Bowles, found during a weapons sortie at Beecroft Range in late 1951. As the wardroom chant said, *"Black smoke came out, red flames came out, Jim Bowles came out, f*** staying in there."* Once the engine overspeeds, there is no recovery. We now know that simply cracking the throttle an inch or so at the start of the dive protects from engine overspeed.

Another alarming condition was a drop in oil pressure. The oil pressure gauge had a broad needle, normally indicating 95 psi. Pressure of 80 psi or lower (less than a needle's width) warned that the engine was about to seize, as SBLT Tas Webster found in 1951 on our way to Korea. He was lucky. He picked up a stray ricochet 20 mm round in his oil cooler during strafing practice on a towed splash-target and noted the oil pressure drop. He called the emergency and flew straight to the downwind leg but the engine failed on cue. He ditched downwind, wheels and flaps down. Abandoning the sinking aircraft, he inflated his dinghy and settled back as the Doggy, HMAS *Tobruk*, rapidly raced to his rescue. Unfortunately, once fired up, *Tobruk* seemed unable to stop and her bow wave rudely tipped Tas back into the ocean for another short swim. *Sydney's* own cutter finally pulled him out.

Incidentally, this was the first successful ditching of any Sea Fury and it put to bed crewroom chatter that the aircraft's heavy Centaurus and blunt frontal aspect (compared to the Seafire) must initiate a steep dive to an irrecoverable depth on first contact with the water. Tas certainly noted an initial dive, unsurprising with wheels and flaps down, but he reported the aircraft briefly popping back to the surface, giving him enough time to escape with his dinghy.

Above. *Sea Furies on the line at HMAS Albatross. The RAN bought a total of 101 aircraft of this type, together with 108 Fireflies - an unimaginably large number in today's procurement paradigm, where orders seldom get out of the teens. The large order was even more surprising as it was the very start of the Fleet Air Arm, when sufficient aircrew and maintainers still needed to be found and trained.*

The last of the Sea Fury's engine niggles might be its sometime reluctance to start. Either one of two problems might intrude. If the cylinder priming time guess or throttle position was not just right, the impetus from a single Coffman starter cartridge might not be sufficient to keep the engine turning long enough. Firing the second or more cartridges from the six-cartridge breech might or might not work. Sometimes it was best to wait ten minutes or so, then try again with the throttle advanced a little more than usual.

The second problem, instead of turning the engine, the Coffman starter might just "fizz" for 30 seconds or so and exude a cloud of noxious-smelling smoke. This indicated a sticky exhaust valve that could only be rectified by opening a big engine cowl and belting the starter with a leather mallet until it responded with a distinctive metallic "click". In the absence of a leather mallet, the heel of a flying boot would do, as one embarrassed young pilot in a brand new shiny Sea Fury was inadvertently forced to demonstrate before a big audience of amused Qantas passengers at Sydney airport.

Flying the Sea Fury was really a pilot's dream come true. It had light, perfectly balanced controls, a 100 degrees a second roll rate, a good range of speed and plenty of engine power. All the essential cockpit switches and levers were within easy reach. It was an ideal formation aerobatic machine, capable of tight turns, loops and other manoeuvres, all within a cloud base maybe half that required by the more modern jets. It had no cockpit lateral trim tab adjustment. The spring tab ailerons did not need it. It really was a privilege and a delight to fly. ✈

Flying the Sea Fury

Part 2 by Andrew Powell

In 1951 when I arrived at Culdrose in Cornwall to convert onto Sea Furies the aircraft was one of the main strike aircraft of the RN, RCN and the RAN. Churchill had instructed the RAF and the RN to jointly develop all single engine aircraft. Hawkers had produced the Hurricane, followed by the Typhoon and then the Tempest. These aircraft had been good fighters and fighter/bombers in world war II. The airframe for the next phase – the Fury – was developed, but a power plant was difficult to find. In the meantime, the RAF developed the Meteor and dropped out of developing the Fury. The RN solved the power plant problem and the name of the new fighter was changed to Sea Fury.

At Culdrose we were briefed on the characteristics of the Sea Fury. Although the pilot's notes said the aircraft was cleared for full aerobatics we were warned not to spin it as the aircraft had poor rudder reaction and recovery from a spin was very difficult at low speeds. In theory, if the aircraft was spinning left a sharp burst of power could stop the rotation. Almost 4 years later I listened as an overconfident, well below average pilot, whose own stupidity had found himself in a spinning Sea Fury. As a last resort he had thrust the throttle open and survived.

With the aircraft set up for landing at approach speed we were also warned not to open the throttle in a rush. Such action could cause a torque stall whereby the aircraft would rotate around the propeller axis with fatal results at low level such as on a deck-landing approach – better to add a few knots for mum and dad, as the rudder control may not allow a quick recovery.

At the end of my time at Culdrose a test pilot arrived with a Sea Fury trainer, and he took me up to demonstrate the initial stages of a torque stall and the recovery – all done at 10,000 feet. When I asked if I could have a go he politely and firmly said "not while I am in the plane."

With a fuel injection system and pressurised lubrication for the sleeve valve engine there were no engine limitations on inverted flying. The power plant was turbo charged from the ground up. There was no limitation on using full power, either. After take-off the pitch lever was moved back to the stop with a drop of around 50 propeller rpm. (Normally with piston engines the throttle was moved back before using the pitch lever to set the propeller rpm.) Thereafter the throttle set the propeller rpm. Normal cruise rpm was 1500. Due to engine vibration the range above 1500 to 2000 was not to be used. For close formation flying, especially aerobatics, it was best to manually select 2200rpm by moving the pitch to set that rpm.

The pilot's notes assured us that the Sea Fury had good ditching characteristics. Korean operations confirmed that to be the case. We were told of three methods of bailing out, but no one knew the best way. Korean operations solved that problem.

On completion of the conversion, weapons training and 20 deck landings, I joined 805 squadron on HMAS *Sydney* in Korea. When *Sydney* was relieved by HMS *Glory* I joined 804 Squadron (Royal Navy). There

A Few Words From The Author

I graduated on number 4 course at Point Cook in Victoria. On being handed our wings we were promoted from Probationary Naval Airman to P4. Two days later I was an Acting Sublieutenant (P). Two weeks later I was a first-class passenger on a liner en-route to Lossiemouth in Scotland to fly Seafires and become a fighter pilot.

I knew a little about the navy; nothing about the Fleet Air Arm and a lot less about the duties and responsibilities of a Naval Officer: it was a case of learning on the job. After Lossie it was Culdrose to convert to Sea Furies. Then, onto a British Airways flight to join 805 on Sydney in Korean operations. When Glory replaced Sydney, it was 804 on Glory. As Ocean replaced Glory in mid-1952 I returned to Australia and joined 808 until it was decommissioned in late 1954.

At that time, I was offered, for the second time, a permanent commission. With the offer was the news that, because of my youth and junior rank, the appropriate appointment was for 2 years on 805 flying Sea Furies until 805 was decommissioned in late 1956. With over 3 years of continuous front line flying I wanted a change. Having declined the offer, I joined 723 to be a taxi driver, drogue tower, radar calibrator etc. for 2 months before my time was up. During that time, I received an unsolicited offer to fly with a domestic airline after my time in the RAN was up.✈

BROTHERS IN ARMS–When a Royal Australian Navy aircraft was forced down at a Marine airbase in Korea, the Leatherneck mechanics turned to help the pilot get his ship back into the air. Shown here, several mechanics swarm over the machine as curious onlookers stand by. (Photo via Jeff Chartier). ✈

were some main differences between the operations of the two squadrons. Of the 25 pilots (I was no 26) on 804, 16 were on their second time and a further three were there for a third time. When the catapult was down on *Glory* we used RATOG for carrier take offs. In May 1951 there was a Sea Fury fatality using RATOG for a take off on *Sydney*. The RAN did not use RATOG for carrier take offs in my time.

On 804 we went from 12 x 60lb air to ground rockets to 2 x 500lb or 2 x 1000lb bombs. The bombing approach began by tracking at high speed onto the target at low level (200 feet), pulling up to 4000 feet, rolling the Sea Fury into a 45-degree dive and tracking the target on the 6 o'clock pip of the gyro-gunsight. The bomb was released at 1500 feet with the Sea Fury mushing down to around 800 feet on recovery. With nose fuses the aircraft was hit with the blast during recovery. Bombs were used on fortified targets, bridges, close air support on the front line, where the ground controllers gave us a good description of the damage and similar targets. On occasion an airburst bomb was used on a flak position, with deadly results. When there was a bomb hang up the section would go to Kimpo where the USAF would provide sand bags and retire to their bunkers, while the looney limey pilots removed the nose and tail fuses before manually dropping the bomb on to the sand bags. The USAF would then reappear to remove and claim the bomb. When *Glory* was relieved by *Ocean*, I returned to the RAN in mid-1952 and joined 808 until it was decommissioned at the end of 1954.

The Monte Bello Tests

In October 1952 there were nuclear tests at Monte Bello on the north-west coast of Western Australia. When the tests were completed the program was for HMAS *Sydney* to sail south to Fremantle and then on along the south coast returning to the east coast. As an exercise in replenishing the carrier on the west coast, it was proposed two flights of 4 Sea Furies from 808 would fly from HMAS *Albatross* to the west coast with the CO's flight joining *Sydney* south Geraldton. That flight consisted of Lt Cdr J Cavanagh, Sub Lt P Wyatt as no 2, Lt Fred Lane as No. 3 and myself as No. 4. All pilots had Korean experience. Cavanagh had been on 808. Lane and myself had been on 805 and Wyatt and myself on 804. To re-

***Above**: Extracts from HMAS Sydney III's Line Book capture the scope of the ship's Korean deployment over the period 1951-52.*

Lower: The Monte Bello test, 03 October 1952. This image was captured at 0935, five minutes after detonation, showing the atomic cloud rising above the site. The weapon, about the same yield as the Nagasaki bomb, was aboard a former WW2 RN River Class Frigate. (Photo: Jack Duperouzel). ✈

Monte Bello Burning. Click to Read

duce the effects of the prevailing westerly winds we flew at low level picking up the iron compass (railway line) and flying west.

After landing at Forrest for lunch the two flights separated at Kalgoorlie with the other flight going to RAAF Pearce air station just north of Perth. As we approached the coast it was evident from the sky that we were heading into a significant cold front. A radio message told us the weather conditions prevented any attempt of landing on the Sydney and we were to go to Pearce – but the same frontal system had closed Pearce. We spent the night at Kalgoorlie.

The next morning after arriving at Pearce we went to HMAS *Leeuwin* near the port of Fremantle. At *Leeuwin* we were told that due to strong winds the port was closed to shipping operations and *Sydney* was anchored in Gage Roads. The captain had decided to attempt landing the 4 Sea Furies while the carrier was at anchor. The wind speed was 30/35 knots gusting to over 50 knots. Normally when landing on a moving carrier the wind was around 10 degrees on the port bow. This took the turbulence created by the superstructure of the island away from final approach path. The approach airspeed was only a few knots above the power off stalling speed. Hitting the island turbulence could be uncomfortable with the elevated risk of a premature aircraft stall. Although there were a few wave offs due to the wind, all four Sea Furies made a normal deck landing. The Captain was thrilled.

At the time, possibly because of Korea, I thought it was all ho-hum. Many years later, when I became aware that it was the last time fixed wing aircraft had made arrested landings on a straight deck carrier of the size of *Sydney* while at anchor with the barriers up and a deck park that I appreciated the skill of everyone involved in those landings.

Once airborne the Sea Fury was easy and a delight to fly. The pilot sat in a bubble cockpit with a good all-round view. The long nose sloped away, and low flying was easy and safe. The cockpit was comfortable with a full instrument panel for cloud or poor visibility flying. The location of the pilot gave one a feeling of complete control. The controls were light and responsive with a relatively fast rate of roll. The Sea Fury had a tight turning circle and the use of the first stage of flap as an air brake made the circle tighter – a big advantage in air-to-air combat. At normal cruising the fuel consumption was around 50 gallons per hour. By using 2 x 45 gallon (normal in Korean ops) or 2 x 90 gallon external drop tanks, the endurance could be increased.

With 4x20mm cannons as inboard weaponry the aircraft had good self-defence. External ordinance could be varied using 30lb or 60lb or 200lb air to ground rockets or 2 x 500lb or 2 x 1000lb bombs. The aircraft was a stable platform for weapons. Towards the end of my time in Korea on 804, the Chinese air force, using Mig 15 jets, became more active and aggressive. We were confident that the Sea Fury was a match for Migs under our conditions at low level. If a Mig pilot wanted to keep his speed advantage at low level, he could not pass under us on attack. Accordingly contact would have to be broken off early or take the risk of a close encounter with our 4 x 20mm cannons under our best aerial fighting conditions. The Mig had a single 30mm cannon in the nose.

We were confident the Sea Fury could out turn any aircraft operating in Korea. On August 8 1952 around 16 Migs took on 4 Sea Furies of 802 Squadron from HMS *Ocean*. After about 4 minutes the Migs broke off their attacks. One was destroyed and burning on the ground. Two more had been damaged and there were doubts as to whether they would have made it to their base north of the Yalu river. Our confidence in the Sea Fury was vindicated.

Some pilots found carrier operations or deck landings stressful and difficult. The deck landing began by flying upwind on the starboard side of the carrier at final approach height. The hook was released as the air craft broke onto the down wind leg where the aircraft was set up for landing with gear down, full flap, height 30 feet above the deck, power set and the speed set at the approach speed. When the aircraft was abeam the stern of the carrier a gentle rate one left hand turn began.

With the American system there was one mandatory signal – "wave off". All the other signals were advisory. It followed that should a pilot ignore the advice then there was a high probability of the mandatory signal. With a 20/25 second landing on interval the batsman would pick the aircraft up around the 90 degree position of the turn. Given the aircraft was correctly set up and trimmed out there were very few signals before the cut.

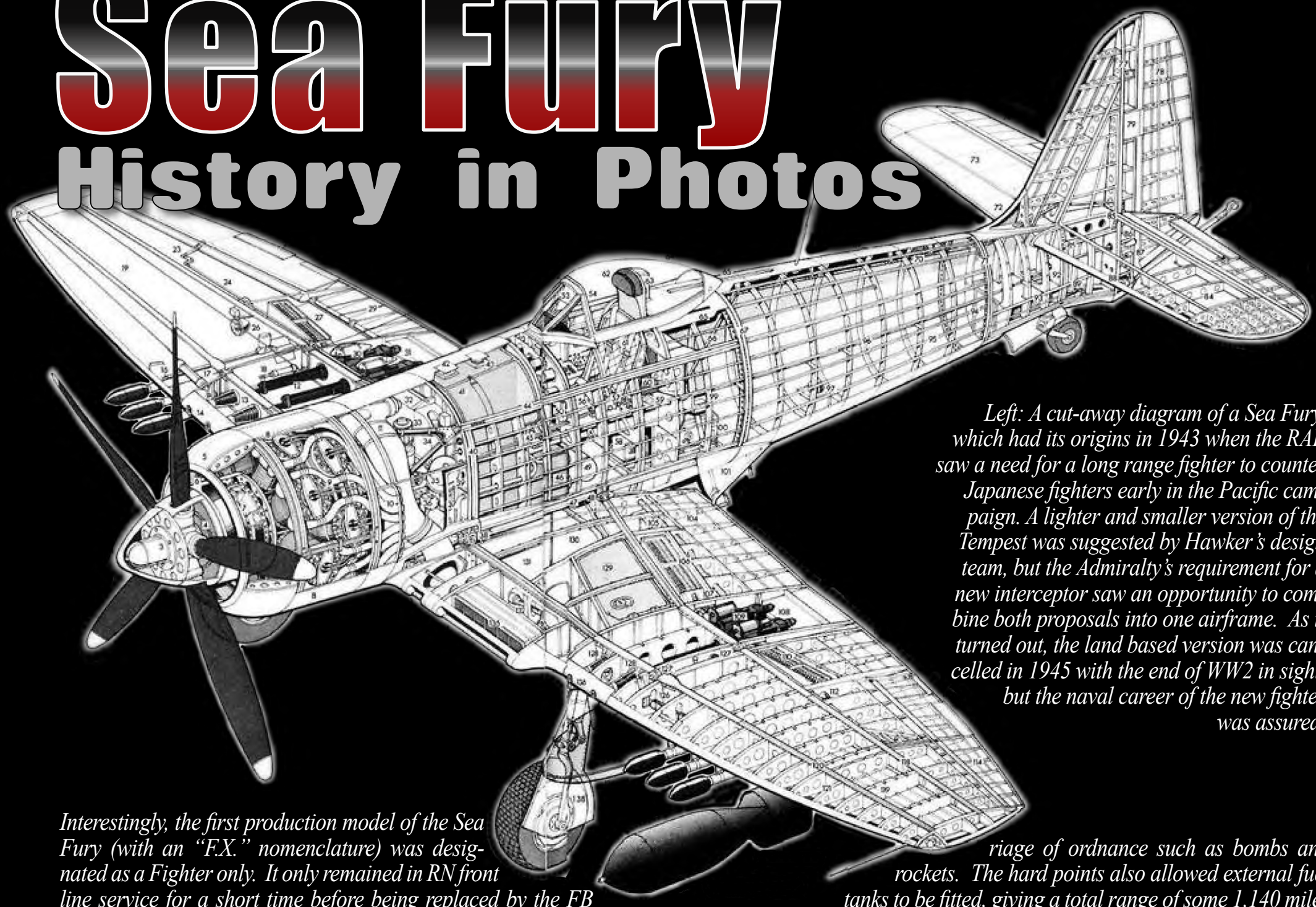
When given the cut the pilot closed the throttle and the aircraft stalled with nose falling away. The Sea Fury had good elevator reaction at slow speed. A good flare out was for the Sea Fury to have the tail wheel well down and the first to touch the deck. On occasions one could hear the clang of the hook as it hit the deck. You knew you were home free. Once the aircraft had stopped the first marshal stepped out of the island hatch giving the closed fist "brakes on" signal. You selected flaps up and lots of power. As soon as the hook man locked the hook up it was a race up the deck to cross Barrier No 2 in less than 15 seconds after touch down, as there was a colleague behind you who did not appreciate a late wave off.

Once over Barrier 2 the pilot unlocked the wings and selected fold. One did not stay in the deck park a second longer than necessary, as the flight deck was a work zone with a high danger rate.

The cheapest experience in aviation is the experience that a pilot can get second hand. Every approach and deck landing were filmed and at the close of the day's flying there would be a debriefing session with all approaches and landings shown with comments. My 21st deck landing was after my first operation over North Korea so I had the benefit of around 50 or more (in one case 106) second-hand experiences a day very early in my front line flying career. I enjoyed carrier operations.

On the downside the Sea Fury had two major disadvantages. With a fuel pressure system and pressurised engine lubrication, the essential elements of a fire were in place. A high explosive shell in the engine nacelle was the ignition for the fire that quickly engulfed the aircraft. An ejection seat would have been a big plus in Korea. When the power plant quit the pilot had to contend with the substantial drag caused by a large 5 bladed propeller in fine pitch. Altitude disappeared at a rapid rate. When the problem happened at low level it was a case of turning into wind and the here and now. There were no options. If the Sea Fury came to an abrupt stop during a forced landing, there was usually an unscheduled meeting of the pilot's head and the gunsight. The pilot's head usually came off second best. A bone dome would have been a help.✈

Sea Fury
History in Photos

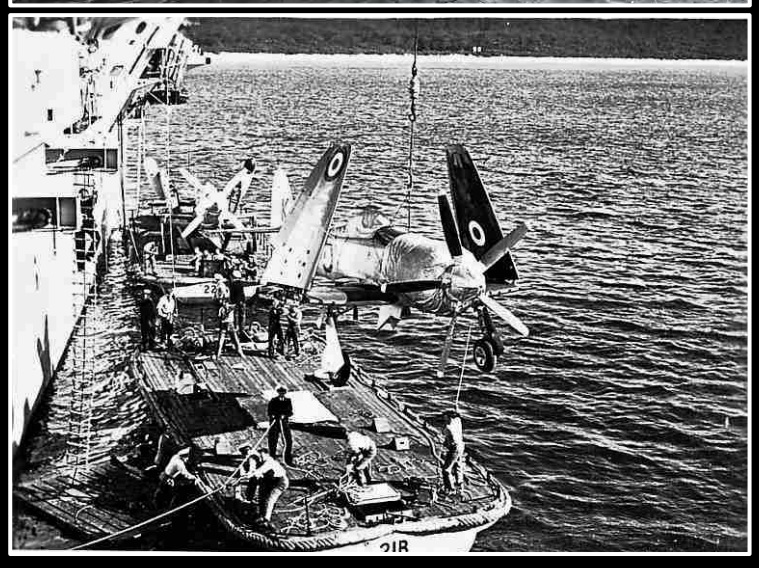


Left: A cut-away diagram of a Sea Fury, which had its origins in 1943 when the RAF saw a need for a long range fighter to counter Japanese fighters early in the Pacific campaign. A lighter and smaller version of the Tempest was suggested by Hawker's design team, but the Admiralty's requirement for a new interceptor saw an opportunity to combine both proposals into one airframe. As it turned out, the land based version was cancelled in 1945 with the end of WW2 in sight, but the naval career of the new fighter was assured.

Interestingly, the first production model of the Sea Fury (with an "F.X." nomenclature) was designated as a Fighter only. It only remained in RN front line service for a short time before being replaced by the FB (for "Fighter-Bomber") Mk. 11. This change was driven by the RN, who saw a need for an aircraft with ground-strike capability, and which believed the fighter version to be capable of such a role. The FB.11 variant differed insofar as underwing hardpoints were fitted, to enable the carriage of ordnance such as bombs and rockets. The hard points also allowed external fuel tanks to be fitted, giving a total range of some 1,140 miles (1,673km). The FB.11 also had provision for Rocket Assisted Take Off Gear (see photo later in this collection with an explanation), and its maximum all-up weight was increased to 14,650lb. The RAN only ever operated FB.11s.

HMAS Sydney arrives at Jervis Bay in preparation to unload her precious cargo on May 25th 1949. 'Operation Decanter' commenced at 0800 when the Air Group officers went ashore. During the day three F.I.R. aircraft were disembarked and towed successfully to Jervis Bay airstrip (the Fireflies were taken by low loader). Nine aircraft were disembarked to JB the following day, and some F.A.E. aircraft taken to RANAS Nowra. The operation was complete by 1500 on Friday 27th May. All JB Sea Fury aircraft were gradually towed to Nowra, typically in convoys of eight aircraft, with the last being delivered on Sunday 29th. In fact, the road to JB had been widened and sealed to allow the evolution to occur.

The 805 Squadron Diary reports that the Squadron offices were still under construction, with painters, electricians and telephone linesmen still working, and that the runways of the air station were 'in no state whatsoever for a full flying programme at the moment', although there was no reason given. There were other problems too: only 100 gallons of Sea Fury engine oil was to be found at the air station, which held up the process of de-inhibiting the embalmed aircraft. There was only one fuel bowser, too, with a limited capacity of only 600 gallons, and every time it needed to be filled it had to drive into Nowra town some 6.5 miles away. One Squadron estimated it would take about 12 hours to refuel all its aircraft, should that be required. Despite these setbacks the first Sea Fury flew took off from RNAS Nowra at 1000 on Friday June 10th, as the runway was at last finished (or at least enough for flying). This marked the beginning of flying operations at the Naval Air Station, and the Fleet Air Arm had its footprint on Australian soil for the first time.



Above. The initial batch of 25 Sea Furies were brought to Australia aboard HMAS Sydney as the fighter component of the 20th Carrier Air Group. A second batch of 32 aircraft arrived in November 1950 (again on HMAS Sydney), two were delivered by ships "SS Sussex" and "SS Stentor" later in March and May 1950 respectively, and further small batches arrived via Sydney and Vengeance between 1952 and 1954. A total of 93 aircraft were thus delivered and another 8 were received from the Royal Navy in Korea in 1951 to bring the total number of 101. The images above show Sea Furies being delivered to HMAS Albatross after their long journey from the UK. The arrival of the first aircraft must have been a momentous event as they marked the beginning of an operational Fleet Air Arm in Australia, as well as delivering a potent force projection. The Sea Furies had a relatively small service life and each aircraft was to suffer its own fate: Sea Fury VW626, shown above right being towed though the main gate of HMAS Albatross, survived its flying days but suffered the ignominy of the scrapyard in June of 1957.

***Left**. Another shot of a Sea Fury being delivered: the terrain suggests it is traversing the eastern side of Nowra Hill, not far from the main gate of HMAS Albatross. The antiquity of the lorry towing the aircraft gives a real sense of the era, now over seventy years ago. (RAN images)*

***Below Left:** This photograph, found in the Fleet Air Arm Museum in 2018, simply has 'Sea Furies in reserve at NAS Nowra' inscribed on the back. Like every picture, it tells a thousand words. The second batch of Furies, including the specific aircraft in the foreground, were received at RNAS Anthorn (the RN Aircraft Receipt and Dispatch Unit) on 14July1950 where they were embalmed (on 18Aug50) ready for their journey to Australia. VX756 was then embarked aboard HMAS Sydney at King George V Docks in Glasgow shortly thereafter, and reached Australia on 07Dec50 for towing to HMAS Albatross.*

It would appear it was then held in Reserve, together with other aircraft. It was then assigned to 850 Squadron as 164/K. This Squadron was short lived: it commissioned in January 1953 under the command of LCDR Reginald Wild RAN (who was killed in a flying accident shortly thereafter) and decommissioned less than 18 months later when Vengeance was returned to the UK. After a varied career with 805 Squadron the aircraft was Struck Off Charge (SOC) in Oct 1965 after being used for fire fighting training at the fire ground. (RAN image).

many invitations issued to them. During the stay twenty three Fireflies and thirty two Sea Furies, together with approximately one hundred tons of Air Stores, were embarked for passage to Australia. One unserviceable Firefly and one Sea Fury were disembarked to Abbotsinch.

15. At 1600 on Wednesday 18th October, the Ship slipped and proceeded to Portsmouth. After an uneventful passage in calm weather and low visibility the Outer Spit Buoy was passed at 1430 on Friday 20th October, the Flag of the Commander-in-Chief, Portsmouth (Admiral Sir Arthur Power, G.C.B., G.B.E., C.V.O.), was saluted and the Ship secured head and stern to X moorings, bows

THIRD VISIT.

It was the Sydney's third visit to Fremantle. She arrived on her first voyage to Australia after being taken over by the Commonwealth Government 18 months ago and she passed through the port in June on her way to England.

The main purpose of her voyage to Britain was to bring back 430 English recruits who have signed on for a six-year period with the R.A.N.; to pick up 64 new fighter planes; and to return with 35 officers and 222 ratings of the newly-formed 21st Carrier Air Group who will fly and maintain the planes. Of the two squadrons in the group, 14 of the officers and 151 of the ratings are on loan from the Royal Navy. They will remain with the R.A.N. for about two years until there are sufficient Australian pilots and technicians to replace them.

Only two of the pilots in the vessel are West Australians. They are Lieutenants Bob Ulrich (formerly secretary of the Royal Aero Club in W.A.), of Shenton Park, and Pat Hannah, of Katanning. Both were wartime R.A.A.F. pilots who joined the Navy nearly three years ago. For the past two years the have been undergoing advanced training at Fleet Air Arm stations in Britain.

The Sydney will sail for the Eastern States at 8 a.m. today.

Carrier Returns With Air Group

The aircraft carrier H.M.A.S. Sydney returned from Britain yesterday with members and aircraft of the newly formed 21st Carrier Air Group. She has been away six months.

Her stay in Melbourne was short. The carrier was due to leave Gellibrand Pier, Williamstown, at 6 o'clock this morning for Sydney to be overhauled.

Several hundred people were on the pier to greet the vessel when she arrived early yesterday morning.

While in Britain, Sydney carried out anti-submarine exercises, and exercises with the 21st Carrier Air Group, off the coasts of Northern Ireland and Scotland.

She returned with 430 British volunteers for the Royal Australian Navy.

More than a score of the air group's 64 aircraft—32 Fireflies and 32 Sea Furies—had to be stored on the carrier's flight deck on the trip from England because there was not enough space in the hangars.

On her way from England Sydney twice became an unofficial "mercy ship." She had to rush medical assistance to an American vessel, near Port Said, and to an Indian freighter between Aden and Colombo.

Several of the ship's company were married while in England. Already some of the wives are on their way to Australia.

Remanded on Murder Charge

Two Czechs and a Hungarian were remanded until December 11 in the City Court yesterday on a charge of murdering a Greek seaman in the Domain on November 25.

They were:—John Nagl, 17 years, Sandor Mede and Andras Toth, 27 years, all of Sydney-road, Brunswick.

The victim, Pangiotis Koutouzos, was found suffocated in a grotto in the gardens early on the morning of November 25.

Detective W. W. W. Mooney said accused had made admis-

Above and Right: *Sydney's second delivery of aircraft brought the 21st CAG home, together with 23 Fireflies, 32 Sea Furies and about 100 tons of air stores. The three clippings tell something of the story from left to right: [1] Copy of the 17 Oct 50 page from HMAS Sydney's Record of Proceedings [2] 'The West Australian' 28 Nov 50 reports on the arrival of Sydney at Fremantle (Trove), and [3] 'The Age', 05 Dec 50 reports on the brief visit to port Melbourne (Trove). The ship then sailed to Jervis Bay to unload both the aircraft and the CAG. Unless you have bionic vision you may want expand the page to better read them.*

Left*: Sea Fury aircrew making their way across Sydney's Flight deck for the camera in Hobart in 1951. From left to right: CO LCDR Jim Bowles, SBLT Fred Lane, SBLT Ian Macdonald and LCDR Fred Sherbourne. Bowles, Lane and Macdonald were to go on to serve in Korea. This image was extracted from the excellent .pdf archive of Phil Thompson.*

Below*: A group of Sea Furies lined up at NAS Nowra. The UN stripes on the wings denote they were engaged in the Korean conflict, or about to be. The design was to be the last of the big propeller driven fighters, as jet propelled aircraft were already in the sky: but their high price tag was a deterrent to countries with fledgling Naval Air Arms, such as Australia and Canada, and the Sea Fury was only overshadowed by them marginally in terms of speed and altitude. Andrew Powell, who flew the Fury in Korea, has some interesting observations about piston vs jet on his page here. (Photo Neil K.)*

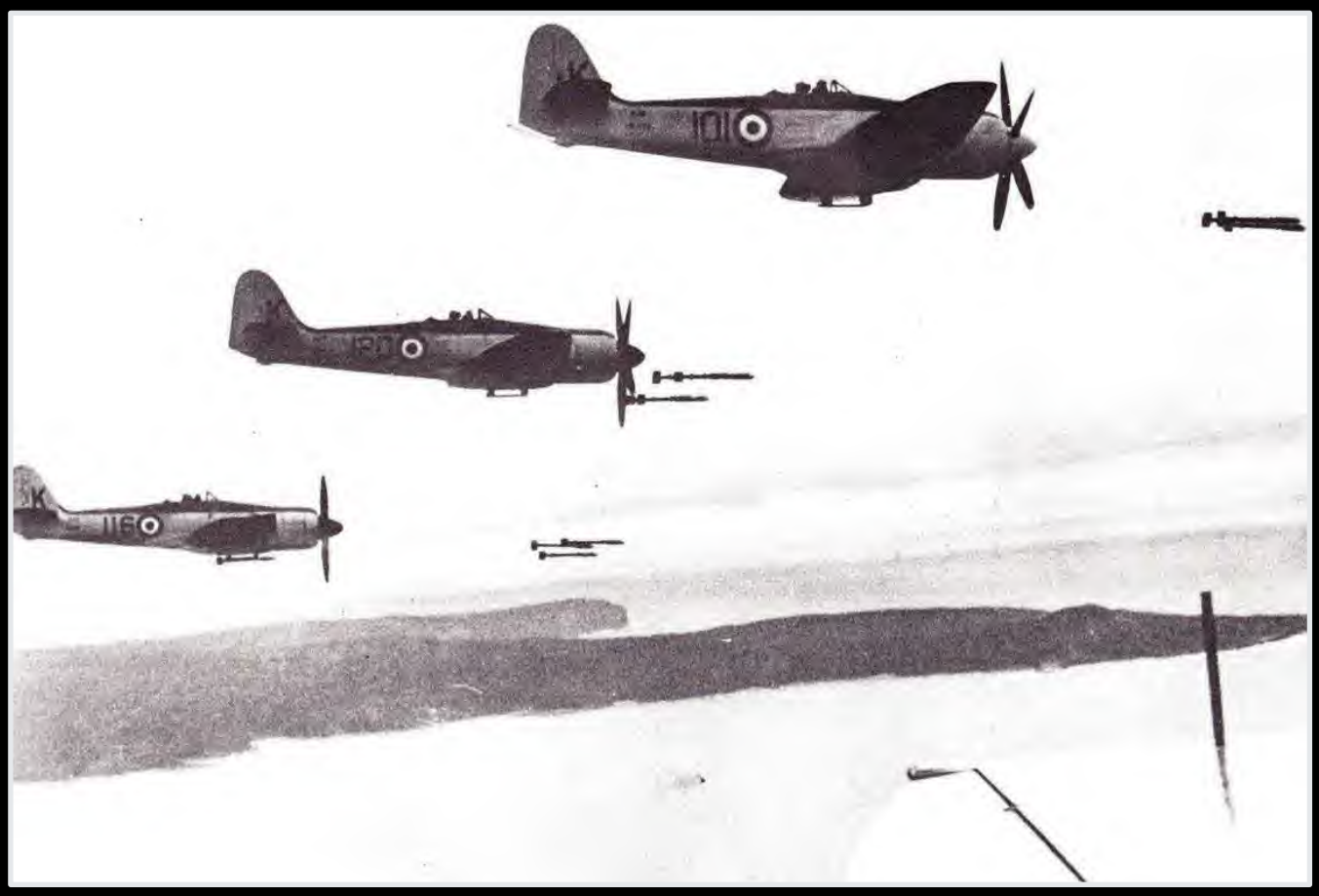
Visitors to the Fleet Air Arm Museum in Nowra will recognise this quintessential image from the days of the Sea Fury operating to straight-deck carriers. It shows a Sea Fury on short finals to the deck of HMAS Sydney on a perfect flying day, with hook down for an arrested landing. It also captures the relationship between the pilot and the Landing Signals Officer ('Batsman'), who worked together to bring the aircraft safely to the deck. Image: AWM.

***Left**. A loose stick of seven Sea Furies head south over Sydney harbour, perhaps bound for HMAS Albatross some seventy miles to the south. Note the warships moored off Bradley's Head, which are most probably the heavy cruiser HMAS Shropshire and the Destroyer HMAS Quality, both of which had been decommissioned and were awaiting disposal. The identity of these ships and the lack of UN markings on the aircraft suggests the photograph was taken circa 1950 – i.e. before Korea. (RAN photo).*

***Below Left:** A Sea Fury taking off with Rocket Assisted Take Off Gear (RATOG). Rocket assisted take-off was used as an alternative to catapult launching for heavily loaded aircraft, or in low wind conditions. One or two rockets were fitted in jettisonable carriers each side of the fuselage, above the wing-root and angled up. The rockets were fired at a pre-calculated distance from the start of the take-off run determined according to aircraft weight, wind speed and take-off run available.*

It was not without hazard. In the early '50s an RN Firefly driver, doing RATOG practice from an airfield in Northern Ireland, pressed the firing button and the rocket motor on the port side immediately departed its carrier and neatly removed (the then) four propeller blades, plus the pilot's beard – which spread out luxuriously from under his oxygen mask. The subsequent noise from a pilot with a burnt beard and a Griffon engine at full throttle under no-load conditions, must have been something.

RATOG was discontinued following the accident in which LEUT Barnett lost his life, when asymmetric firing caused his aircraft to spin into the sea just ahead of the ship.



***Left**: Sea Furies of 805 Squadron near Beecroft Range, Nowra. The image was taken in 1950 as a PR photo-shoot and shows the aircraft discharging their 3-inch rockets. It appears that Fury 116 has a 'hang up' rocket on the port wing – such occurrences were not uncommon and were typically due to the firing pigtail falling out in flight, although it could have been a switchology error by the pilot. (RAN image).*

***Below**. A gorgeous shot of Sea Fury WH587 near Nowra, in NSW. It was not only a potent weapon system of the time, but regarded by many as one of the best looking prop-driven aircraft ever. This particular aircraft survived its service life and was spared the knackers yard, living on to be fully restored as a flying historic aircraft in the United States. (Image: RAN)*

Parachuted To Earth When Plane Burst Into Flames

WHEN the Sea Fury plane he was exercising over heavily timbered country, about 18 miles East from H.M.A.S. Albatross, Nowra, burst into flame, on Wednesday morning last, Lieut. W. O. Bowles, R.A.N., bailed out and the plane crashed to earth about 300 yards from where he landed safely.

It is understood that at a height of 3000 feet, the engine failed completely and Lieut. Bowles who had signalled his intention of returning to the Air Station, noticed smoke billowing from the exhaust and then the engine burst into flame.

Lieut. Bowles' parachute fouled the top of a tree about from 30 to 40 feet tall, and he was dangling from 25 to 30 feet from the ground, but uninjured. He had little difficulty in undoing his harness and skinning his way to the ground.

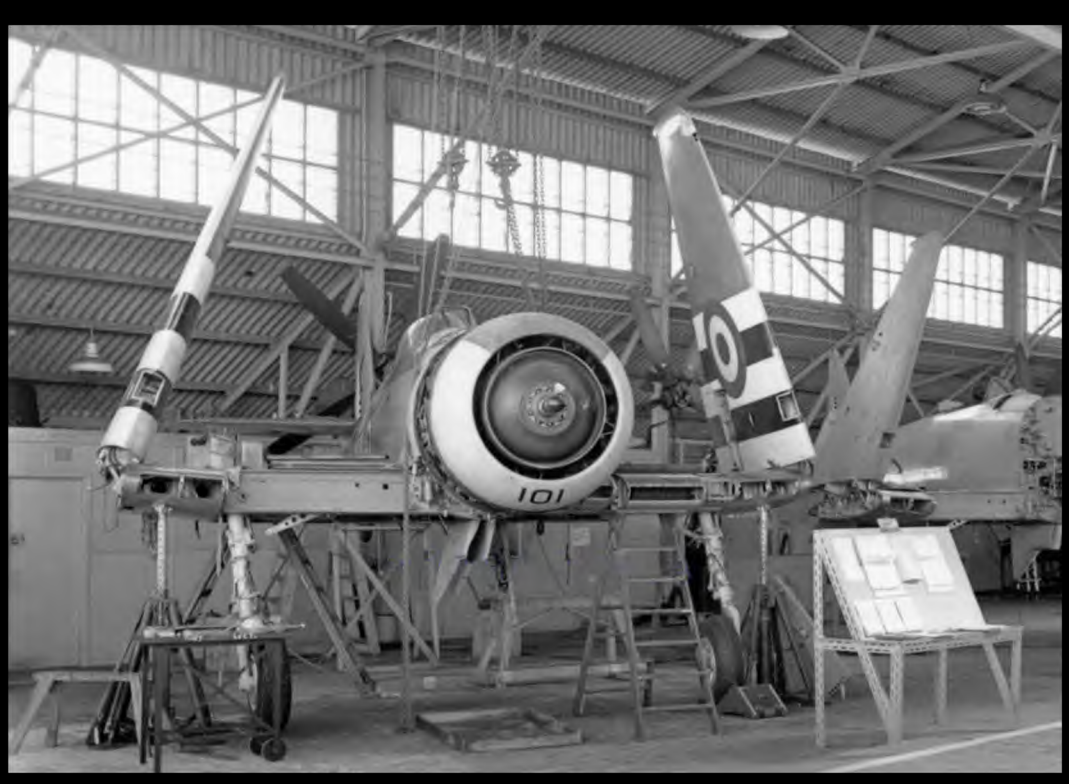
First to reach the scene, after about 30 minutes were two naval ratings who, at the time, were working on the range at Cherrywood, about five miles away

***Left**: A photograph and newspaper clipping from a Nowra local paper describe the loss of Sea Fury WV646 on 22 November 1950, when the CO Lt Cmdr Bowles experienced an engine fire whilst still about 10 miles from Nowra.*

*The 805 Squadron Diary entry for that day states that the dive bombing programme was interrupted at 1050 by the first complete engine failure in 20 CAG – quote: "...shortly [afterwards] his engine made loud noises and started to catch fire as it started to break up...in the words of the ditty – 'black smoke came out, great flames came out, Jim Bowles came out – f*** staying in there.' He got the speed back to 120 knots, jettisoned his hood and got out over the side with his hand around the canopy release. The tail passed over him by a clear few feet but the subsequent investigation showed that his hand must have jerked in the slipstream the necessary one inch to pull the release. It appears therefore the he lost the pilot chute and broke a few rigging lines on the aircraft as he jumped as well as burning a few holes in the canopy. His chute developed a 'rolled periphery' forming two lobes and his rate of descent, to his perturbation, was more than one would have wished. However, his descent took him into a 40' tree which effectively broke the fall and a few minutes saw him on the ground having climbed down the tree none the worse for wear."*

The story goes that having extracted himself from the tree, Bowles was in the need for a cigarette and, while he had the cigarette, he did not have a light. He therefore proceeded to the burning wreck where he was found by Gordon Hardcastle, the 20th CAG Army Liaison Officer, poking a stick into the fire to get a light. Gordon drove Jimmy back to the Air Station in the Army Jeep and, as it was 1300, went straight to the Wardroom bar where many of the Squadron had congregated to ply him with beer. As the bar shutters came down about an hour later, RADM 'Mumbles' Coplans appeared, unamused at the scene before him. Apparently he'd been waiting at the sick bay for the pilot to be brought in for a check. (Source:Gordon McPhee. Slipstream, April 1996).

***Above**: a Sea Fury executes a missed approach very late on finals, to the consternation of several handlers who take evasive action. The photo dramatically illustrates the hazards of a Flight Deck, where things could turn pear shaped very quickly. (RAN image).*



***Above:** This Fury is undergoing significant base level servicing, most probably in Nowra. The UN (Korea) markings indicates it was a 'K' aircraft (HMAS Sydney). There were five Sea Furies sequentially allocated the side number 101/K: two were destroyed in separate crashes in 1949, killing one pilot (Hare) and severely injuring another (Bolton); one was lost off Sydney in December 1950, killing the pilot (Beardsell) and a fourth crashed into Beecroft range in mid 1951, claiming the life of LEUT Leeson. One would have thought the "101" number would have been regarded as jinxed, but it continued to be used. Only the fifth aircraft – WJ279 -survived to its end of life. (Image via Jeff Chartier).*

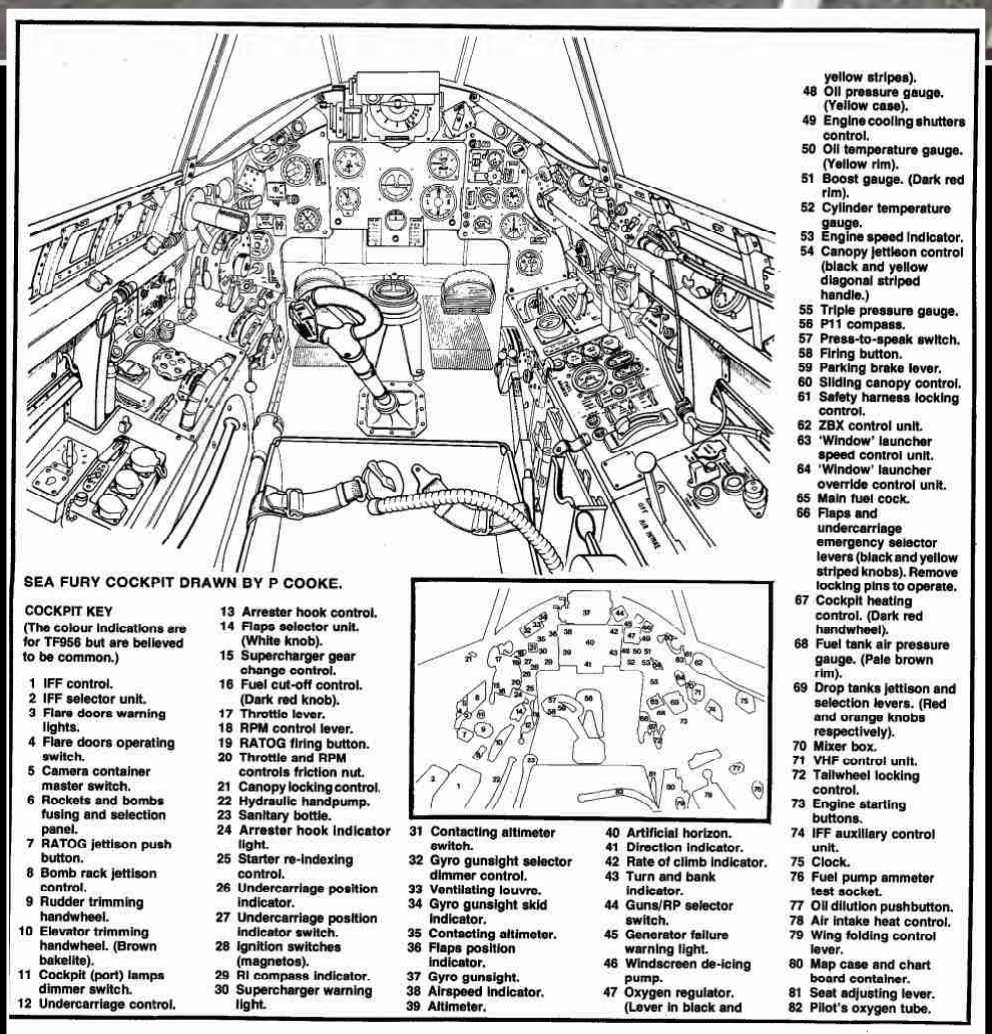
***Left Upper:** A Fury on the deck of HMAS Sydney, awaiting an order to move. The lack of drop tanks and armament rails suggests it was early in the aircraft's career. (RAN image).*

***Left Lower:** Sea Fury VX751 after an engine failure forced a landing at a bush strip on Cape Gloucester, New Britain on 10 September 1952. The aircraft was acting as a communications relay for Fireflies and Sea Furies in transit from HMAS Albatross to rendezvous with HMAS Sydney, which was enroute to the Monte Bello nuclear tests. The pilot survived the crash and the aircraft was subsequently stripped of useful components before being destroyed. (Photo: Jack Duperouzel).*

***Left**. This photograph, supplied by Jeff Chartier, was captioned 'HMAS Sydney Flight Trials 1949'. The take-off flap suggests a free take-off, probably during a work up, which supports the caption date. From Korea onwards, the catapult launched all aircraft. The numbers on the deck abreast each white centreline were distance to the bow for free take-offs. These numbers and the steam jet markers by the aircraft's starboard wingtip were painted over around the time of the Korean conflict.*

The Wind Over Deck Board was maintained by Flyco and set according to the planned aircraft weight and wind over deck speed. This board had room for two aircraft (Sea Fury, Firefly or "Light Sea Fury", "Heavy Sea Fury", etc.) slots. Flyco had a table for aircraft type, weight and planned windspeed. Sydney always had a catapult, unless it was down for maintenance.

The object in the bottom right corner of the photo looks like the Number 1 Barrier knuckle going down, just in time. (Info courtesy of Fred Lane).



SEA FURY COCKPIT DRAWN BY P COOKE.

COCKPIT KEY
(The colour indications are for TF956 but are believed to be common.)

1 IFF control.
2 IFF selector unit.
3 Flare doors warning lights.
4 Flare doors operating switch.
5 Camera container master switch.
6 Rockets and bombs fusing and selection panel.
7 RATOG jettison push button.
8 Bomb rack jettison control.
9 Rudder trimming handwheel.
10 Elevator trimming handwheel. (Brown bakelite).
11 Cockpit (port) lamps dimmer switch.
12 Undercarriage control.
13 Arrester hook control.
14 Flaps selector unit. (White knob).
15 Supercharger gear change control.
16 Fuel cut-off control. (Dark red knob).
17 Throttle lever.
18 RPM control lever.
19 RATOG firing button.
20 Throttle and RPM controls friction nut.
21 Canopy locking control.
22 Hydraulic handpump.
23 Sanitary bottle.
24 Arrester hook indicator light.
25 Starter re-indexing control.
26 Undercarriage position indicator.
27 Undercarriage position indicator switch.
28 Ignition switches (magnetos).
29 RI compass indicator.
30 Supercharger warning light.

31 Contacting altimeter switch.
32 Gyro gunsight selector dimmer control.
33 Ventilating louvre.
34 Gyro gunsight skid indicator.
35 Contacting altimeter.
36 Flaps position indicator.
37 Gyro gunsight.
38 Airspeed indicator.
39 Altimeter.
40 Artificial horizon.
41 Direction indicator.
42 Rate of climb indicator.
43 Turn and bank indicator.
44 Guns/RP selector switch.
45 Generator failure warning light.
46 Windscreen de-icing pump.
47 Oxygen regulator. (Lever in black and yellow stripes).
48 Oil pressure gauge. (Yellow case).
49 Engine cooling shutters control.
50 Oil temperature gauge. (Yellow rim).
51 Boost gauge. (Dark red rim).
52 Cylinder temperature gauge.
53 Engine speed indicator.
54 Canopy jettison control (black and yellow diagonal striped handle.)
55 Triple pressure gauge.
56 P11 compass.
57 Press-to-speak switch.
58 Firing button.
59 Parking brake lever.
60 Sliding canopy control.
61 Safety harness locking control.
62 ZBX control unit.
63 'Window' launcher speed control unit.
64 'Window' launcher override control unit.
65 Main fuel cock.
66 Flaps and undercarriage emergency selector levers (black and yellow striped knobs). Remove locking pins to operate.
67 Cockpit heating control. (Dark red handwheel).
68 Fuel tank air pressure gauge. (Pale brown rim).
69 Drop tanks jettison and selection levers. (Red and orange knobs respectively).
70 Mixer box.
71 VHF control unit.
72 Tailwheel locking control.
73 Engine starting buttons.
74 IFF auxiliary control unit.
75 Clock.
76 Fuel pump ammeter test socket.
77 Oil dilution pushbutton.
78 Air intake heat control.
79 Wing folding control lever.
80 Map case and chart board container.
81 Seat adjusting lever.
82 Pilot's oxygen tube.

***Above Right:** A group of maintenance personnel pose with their Sea Fury. The names have been lost in time, but if anyone knows please tell us! **Above Left.** A cut out schematic of the Sea Fury's cockpit (Drawing: P. Cooke. Click image to enlarge). You can see a copy of the original Pilots Notes here, but be patient while it loads…its a big document.*

Below: Whilst photographs of flying Sea Furies are common, images showing them below decks are hard to find. The two photos above are not particularly good quality but do give an impression of the hangar deck aboard HMAS Sydney, and aircraft either stored or undertaking maintenance. (unknown source).

This image gives some idea of deck operations. The Sea Fury on deck has just landed – number 3 (or 4?) wire is being retracted and the flaps do not seem to be fully up, so the wings should not yet be selected to fold. A second aircraft is approaching the deck to land, with undercarriage and flaps down. He appears to have about 40° still to turn, which suggests he is low and late. In a worked up state, the second aircraft would nearly be in the finals groove at that height. (RAN photo from the Gordon Evans collection. Technical advice courtesy of Fred Lane.)

Above Left and Right.: *A couple of general shots. Left - deck operations often required hastily assembled manpower, as in this case, to push a running Fury backwards perhaps to release a snagged arrester cable. Right - looks like an engine change which is being done on the apron.*

Left*. A Sea Fury preparing for a free deck take off aboard HMAS Sydney. Once the Korean conflict started, free take-offs were abandoned as deck space was at a premium and aircraft were typically more heavily laden. The white numbers painted adjacent to the dotted centre-line were also removed as they were superfluous for catapult operations.*

Left. This Fury has just been been catapulted from HMAS Vengeance, which was on loan from the RN. A second aircraft is lining up for despatch and others await their turn. During operations a carrier's flight deck has often been described as one of the most dangerous places on earth with high winds and moving aircraft and propellers a lethal combination in a small area. A/SBLT ***John McClinton*** *was to find that out to his cost, when he walked into a revolving propeller on Sydney's Flight Deck in early 1954. (RAN images).*

Centre*: Crew members study damaged aircraft on the deck of HMAS Sydney after Typhoon Ruth had passed. She had been lying at anchor in Sase Bo Harbour in Japan, replenishing for her next Korean War operational patrol, but the severity of the approaching storm and the restricted nature of the anchorage forced her to take to sea. She experienced the most critical phase of the typhoon from 5pm to midnight on 14 October 1952, with winds exceeding 68 knots. (RAN photo – CPO Alan White).*

Below*: One of those photographs that could almost be a painting. It shows a Sea Fury about to land on HMAS Sydney in 1953, although the exact date is not known. The LSO is signalling to the pilot and more aircraft can be seen in the distance. The RESDES is escorting to one side. The photograph is from the collection of Kevin Pavlich, who is the cine photographer in the foreground (every landing was filmed for later analysis) but the photographer's name has been lost in time.*

Above Left: A group of Sea Furies approach 'mother' in loose formation. Above Right (1) and (2): Aircraft accidents were relatively common, given the size of the deck, the number of aircraft aboard and the rudimentary landing aids. Most involved striking the forward barrier which was raised to protect parked aircraft on the bow section of the ship. The advent of the angled flight deck, which was first introduced when HMAS Melbourne entered service, removed this particular hazard, although flying operations remained a dangerous occupation. (RAN images).

***Left**. Another mishap during the work up for Korea. On 18 July 1951 VW626 flown by Leut Knappstein trickled over the side of the flight deck, the aircraft hanging by a prayer. Although the 805 Squadron Diary makes light of it, this was one of several significant accidents during this period. LEUT Andrew Robertson (later RADM) is reported to have recorded: 'I was the Gunnery Officer of HMAS Anzac, the brand new destroyer that acted as plane guard for Sydney during some of the work up. Sydney had ten major crashes (within our view) in ten days as she worked up in heavy weather off Jervis Bay. Flying eventually ceased when a [new Pilot's] Sea Fury bounced – and went over the side where the barrel of a Bofors pinned the aircraft like a moth! The pilot went up the wing like a rat up a drainpipe and so onto the flight deck. An OA was trapped under the breech of the Bofors but escaped unharmed. The plane could neither be pushed overboard nor hoisted on the crane – so back to Jervis Bay'. (Photo: LEUT Knappstein).*

***Above Right.** The immediate future does not look good for this aircraft, which has shed its starboard wheel on landing. **Left**: Not all mishaps were at sea. Sea Fury VW640 was one of the originals delivered by HMAS Sydney, being towed though the main gate of Albatross on 31 May 1949. It served until 1953, although it was damaged two years earlier, requiring repairs by Fairey Aviation Clyde. On 18 March 1953 it suffered an engine failure on take off from Albatross and crashed into a nearby field, severely injuring the pilot, LEUT J. Bolton. The aircraft was subsequently reduced to spares in August of that year. (RAN image).*

Above. *More spills. Operating high performance aircraft to a 'straight deck' carrier was inherently hazardous. Most of the accidents resulted from floating over wires, or catching a late wire to strike the forward (No 2) Barrier. Few, if any, injuries resulted from such incidents although the cost on the aircraft involved was high.*

Later generation carriers had angled flight decks which avoided such problems – although the incidence of ditching was proportionally higher as mishaps where a 'go around' wasn't possible usually resulted in the aircraft trickling off the flight deck into the sea.

Below*: Oops! The Squadron Line Book tells the story of aA collision between WZ642 (LEUT Leeson) and WZ652 (LEUT Litchfield) on 15 May 1955 resulted in the tail of the latter being severed. This particular accident happened at Griffith, where dust from five Sea Furies revving their engines reduced visibility. Dust notwithstanding, taxying accidents were relatively common as the visibility afforded to the pilot was severely limited by the nose of the aircraft. Ronald Leeson was to die two months later when his Sea Fury crashed into Beecroft Range (**right**) (Photo: FAA Museum)*

SUNDAY

NAVY PLANES COLLIDE AT GRIFFITH AIR PAGEANT

SEA FURIES DAMAGED: PILOTS UNINJURED

One Navy Sea Fury plane had its tail assembly practically torn away and another suffered damage to its undercarriage when they collided in a deck landing demonstration during the Air Pageant at the Griffith Aerodrome yesterday afternoon.

The planes were coming in at ten second intervals and one had already landed when the second plane came in safely behind it but. it is reported, swerved slightly to avoid the crowd which had encroached upon the landing strip.

The dust cloud from the propellers obscured the planes and the third Sea Fury, coming in, collided with the second plane, tearing its tail away and damaging its own undercarriage considerably.

Neither of the pilots was injured.

It is reported that both planes are a complete write-off and their approximate value is $40,000.

A special crane and crew will be brought to Griffith to move the damaged Sea Furies, which weigh approximately 5 tons.

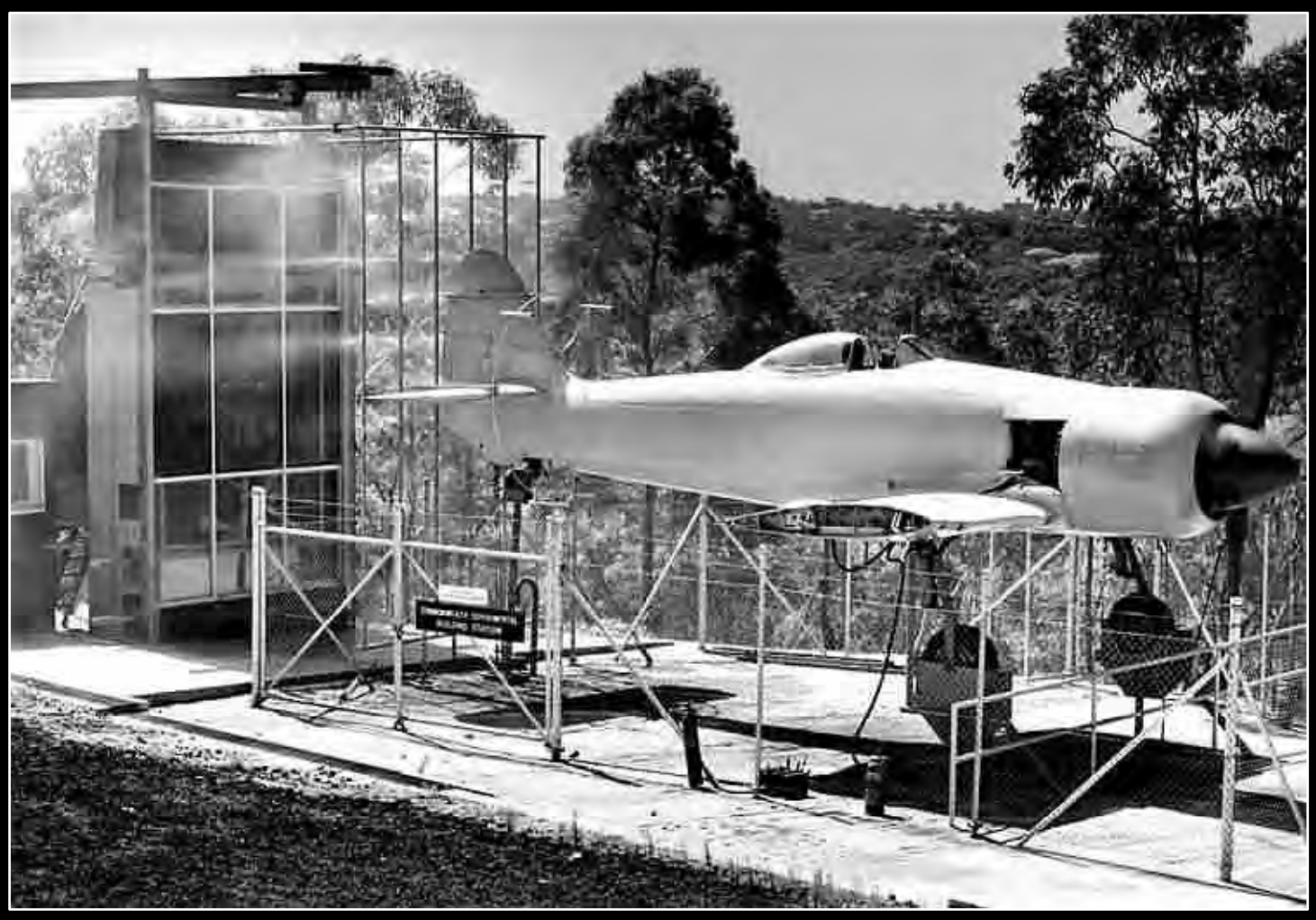
We Can Cut Taxes

It took me only 10-seconds to do all this

Break

BLOOMIN' MUG

it



Above Left: September 1952. Eight Sea Furies at Manus in Papua New Guinea's Admiralty Islands group, site of the huge WW2 American and Allied bases around Seeadler Harbour. Immediately after the war the RAN commissioned part of this complex as HMAS Seeadler, but its name was changed to HMAS Tarangau around April 1950 when it was realised that 'Seeadler' is the German word for Sea Eagle.

Above Right: A few of HMAS Sydney's air group pose with an old RAAF base squadron sign during the same detachment.The late Jack Duperouzel, who took both photographs, is standing second from the left. He was a Radio Mechanic at the time.

Left: This Sea Fury was positioned in front of Melbourne's Museum Victoria Building in 1953. (RAN image) ***Below Left.*** *Inevitably, as the RAN's Sea Furies reached the end of their service life they were disposed of. Most were sold to scrap merchants, but a few survived – at least for a while. VW647 was used by the CSIRO building materials testing establishment in Ryde in 1959, where it served as a wind-generator to test windows against gale force winds and rain resistance. It later found its way to a private collection in the Camden Museum of Aviation.*

Below*: VX730 on a low loader in 1987. According to ADF Serials, this aircraft was sold to the NSW Department of Education in '59. A Fury bearing this serial number is now on display in the Australian War Memorial, although it could contain parts from TF925 and VW232. Additional photographs of surviving Furies will be added here as they become available.*

Slipstream March 1958

FAREWELL THE FURY

The Sea Fury has been a well liked aircraft by the pilo
o have been lucky enough to fly it. The old salts say it
s not easy to deck land and even the sprogs know it los
ue of its appeal after dark, but, if you analyse the variou
nments, you will find no one is glad to see it go.

Developed from the Tempest towards the end of the l
r, the Fury never saw operational service until Korea wh
proved its reliability under "maximum effort" conditions.
l not labour the story of the Fury shooting down a M.I.G
ause I understand that the pilot responsible was even m
prised than the unfortunate M.I.G. pilot, but a Fur
rformance leaves very little to be desired, even today. Thi
s been a certain amount of controversy as to whether it
e fastest single engined piston aircraft in the world, but it
rtain that it is right up with the leaders.

The R.A.N. was equipped with Sea Furies in 1949 and
uadron has had a longer association with them than a
her Squadron in the R.N. or R.A.N. Speaking to some of
lef Petty Officers and Petty Officers, who came ashore w
e Furies nine years ago, I found that they reluctantly
itted that the aircraft has been one of the easiest to mai
in. Although originally built as a pure fighter, 805 Squad
s operated it in just about every other role possible, includ
e glorious Watsun Tracking Details. And most people
member when a certain pilot used one to put a rocket thro
M.N.Z.S. "BELLONA'S" crack whaler just before the rega

Since September, last year, when there were sixteen Fu
the Station, their numbers have been steadily redu
ntil there are only nine. Two were put down on Currarong
each to help deplete the total number and the others h
ther had road accidents or grown too old for further use.
ct five were painted silver and red and have recently gi
mbatic displays over Melbourne and Sydney and local to

The retirement of the Fury has been given consider
ace in the press and on the television screen. This fine a
raft has had to go in the name of progress, but I know th
ll who have been associated with it will not forget.

—J. D. HAGH

***Above and Right**. A brief article in "Slipstream" magazine of March 1958 marks the final days of the few remaining aircraft. Slipstream was never magnanimous in its praise of any FAA aircraft types, so the words here were somewhat remarkable. (FAAAA archive).*

Within a few months the last of the Sea Furies had gone, and the sound of the 18 cylinder Bristol Centaurus was replaced by the whine of the De Havilland Goblin.

***Below**: One of the few surviving Sea Furies, WH587 was first delivered in 1952 and served until it was struck off charge on 23 September 1963: a relatively short life for a military aircraft. Like most restored historic aircraft it was then owned by a succession of well-meaning collectors until it was finally returned to flying status. Its last known location was San Jose, in California. Image: Jim Jackson.*

THE END OF AN ERA

https://www.faaaa.asn.au/wp-content/uploads/2016/08/Slipstream-66-Nov62.pdf

● **Leading Airmen Cole and Smith on their last task before the Furies depart.**

Tuesday, October 30, 1962 marked the end in RAN service of the Sea Fury. On this day the last two of the breed still flying, WH 588 and WH 589, departed from Albatross for final retirement at Bankstown where they will join other retired fixed wing aircraft with the fitting categorisation of R.I.P. These two particular aircraft had arrived in Australia in March, 1952 in an embalmed condition, and were stored until they were brought forward for use in October, 1957. Upon retirement, they had achieved 350 and 400 hours flying time, respectively.

Many consider the Sea Fury to have been the best propeller fighter aircraft of them all, and it is true to say that it has had long and honourable service in the Fleet Air Arm, having been first introduced in 1948 with the 20th Carrier Air Group.

Sea Fury aerobatics were always a popular feature at Air Days and we were reminded of the reason why when Lt. Cdr. Van Gelder and Lt. Cooke gave a final display over the Air Station. Their spectacular "beat up" will be long remembered by all who saw it (and there were plenty of people attracted by the now unusual musical note of Centaurus at high power). It was a most fitting farewell to an old friend.

32

More Reading

KOREA

In July of 1951, only a couple of years after the RAN Fleet Air Arm was put together, it went to war.

“The Forgotten War” as it was to be come known, was fought over North Korea with Sea Furies and Fireflies

Operations were often undertaken in appalling conditions, but with a consistently high rate of success against a determined foe. It was said that enemy war effort was significantly curtailed on the west coast of North Korea and that this was attributed to SYDNEY’s Air Group.

Find the detailed article by clicking on the link below.

KOREA

Sydney Iwakuni. An unusual shot of Sydney leaving Japan on the way home with a load of aircraft, some to be dropped off at Hong Kong

RAN/RN Serial	RAN Code	Type	Delivered	Aircraft History
TF925	110/JR		25/05/49	07/11/49, Reduced to Spares and produce. It is possible some of this aircraft lives on with VX730 at the Australian War Memorial.
VW232	100/K	FB.11	25/05/49	805 Sqdn 24/49. Whilst being flown by 805 Sqdn Senior Pilot LEUT(P) Cunningham during gunnery practice on a splash target the aircraft was sprayed with 20mm ball shot by his number two. The aircraft was ordered to land at Lossiemouth where it was found to be a write off. Ground instructional airframe 30/03/51,NAS Nowra. Rebuilt in RAN service using rear fuselage, outer wings and stern post of TF925. To Australian War Memorial, Canberra displayed on carrier deck diorama as RAN VX730/109K.
VW543	105/K			RN aircraft loaned to RAN Served aboard HMAS Sydney.
VW582	111/K			RN aircraft loaned to RAN Served aboard HMAS Sydney.
VW622	**101/K**		**25/05/49**	**16/07/52, being flown by the Commanding officer of 805 Squadron while doing a low level roll practising aerobatics for an Air Day it crashed on the runway at RANAS Nowra killing the pilot LCDR(P)D.R Hare, RAN.**
VW623	108/K 102/K	FB.11	25/05/49	Construction number 41H/613993 Withdrawn as Gate Guard HMAS Albatross 1965 to 1972. Marked as 102K. To Naval Aviation Museum, Nowra 1974-1995. RAN Historic Flight Nowra 1996 to 2002. Registered as VH-NVS.
VW624	103/K 131/K		25/05/49	08/01/54, Spares and Produce.
VW625	104/K 112/K		25/05/49	06/03/59, Sold to T.Carr & Co. for scrap.
VW626	105/K		25/05/49	04/06/57, Sold to Fitzgibbon & Garthon for scrap.
VW627	106/K		25/05/49	04/02/52, Spares and Produce.
VW629			25/05/49	01/10/65, Fire Fighting -Struck Off Charge (SOC).
VW630		FB.11	25/05/49	26/09/60, Sold to Aluminium Ingots Co. for scrap.
VW631	110/K		25/05/49	25/10/56, Sold to A.G. Simms for scrap.
VW632	102/K 108/K		25/05/49	06/03/59, Sold to T. Carr & Co for scrap.
VW634	105/K 107/K		25/05/49	Damaged 12/11/55 whilst with 805 Sqdn RAN. Wheels up landing at Camden NSW. Fire Fighting S.O.C.
VW635	114/K		25/05/49	02/11/56, Sold for scrap.
VW636	115/K 165/K 165/Q		25/05/49	02/11/56, Sold for scrap.
VW637	116/K		25/05/49	26/09/60, Sold to A.L Ingots Co. for scrap.
VW638	117/K 167/K		25/05/49	Damaged 13/10/54, Nowra. 18/10/55, Spares and produce.
VW639	118/K		25/05/49	Damaged 13/02/54, HMAS Melbourne. 15/11/55, Spares and produce at RANAS Schofields.
VW640	101/K 119/K		25/05/49	18/5/53,aircraft written off after having crashed on take off from airfield at HMAS Albatross Nowra when the engine failed. Pilot LEUT(P)Bolton RAN severely injured. Reduced to spares and produce.
VW642	106/K 109/ 121/K		25/05/49	26/09/60, Sold to Aluminium Ingots Co. for scrap.

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VW643	124/K		25/05/49	03/59 Sold to T Carr & Co for scrap
VW644	123/K		25/05/49	02/11/56, Sold to Aluminium Ingots Co. for scrap.
VW645	107/K 109/K		25/05/49	On Tuesday the 30/08/55 the aircraft whilst being flown by LEUT(P)J.R Bluett RN in company with Sea Fury WZ-650 was credited with the shooting down of a pilotless Auster J/4 Archer aircraft into the sea off Broken Bay. The aircraft had a yellow "Kill" symbol representing the Auster painted onto the fuselage. 04/06/57. Sold to Fitzgibbon & Garthon for scrap.
VW646	103/K 110/K 117/K		25/05/49	22/11/50,the pilot LEUT(P) W.G Bowles RAN on having an engine failure bailed out 9.5 miles from RANAS Nowra landing in a tree. The aircraft crashed and was destroyed nearby.
VW647	100/K 127/K		25/05/49	15/11/59, Sold to Experimental Building Station, Ryde, NSW, Currently located at the Camden Museum of Aviation. This is a privately owned collection and is not open to the public.
VW648	112/K		25/05/49	17/07/51, Ditched in sea off HMAS Sydney by LEUT Goldrick, RAN.
VW660	120/K 972/NW		25/05/49	04/06/57, Sold to Fitzgibbon & Garthon for scrap.
VX627	100/K 161/K		1950	25/10/56, Sold to A. G. Simms for scrap.
VX661	126/K		1950	02/11/56, Sold to Aluminum Ingots Co. for scrap.
VX687	115/NW			Very little information on VX687 except our photo showing RAN tiles and codes. Maybe RN aircraft loaned to RAN? Scrapped at Gosport, UK 04/51 after a forced landing.
VX707			10/12/50	14/2/58,with 805 Sqdn RAN, birdstrike during low level cross country exercise. Firefighting . S.O.C.
VX724			10/12/50	11/11/1951 808 Sqdn HMAS Sydney. Did not lower hook and entered No2 barrier on touchdown. 29/07/54. Spares and produce.
VX725	100/K		10/12/50	25/10/56, Sold to A.G. Simms for scrap.
VX726	**101/K**		**10/12/50**	**29/12/53, the aircraft on being launched from HMAS Sydney crashed into the sea ahead of the ship killing the pilot SBLT(P) Beardsell,RN of 850 Squadron.**
VX727	102/K		10/12/50	08/62,Fire Fighting -S.O.C. 10/65
VX728	103/K		10/12/50	22/10/51, LEUT(P) Knapstein, RAN. Hit by flak and force landed onto a mud flat on the South bank of the HAN River. Rescued by a boat from HMS Amethyst.
VX729	132/K		10/12/50	09/12/55, Spares and produce.
VX730	100/K 109/K		10/12/50	18/6/57,with 805 Sqdn RAN, engine failure and forced landing onto Currarong Beach NSW. 09/03/59, Sold to NSW Department of Education Sea Fury marked VX730 on display in the Australian War Memorial. Some parts of this machine could be from TF925 and VW232.
VX748			10/12/50	During exercises aboard HMAS Sydney in the Hervey Bay area Lt Campbell of 808 Squadron did not flare out on landing and crashed into No.2 barrier. The aircraft flipped over and the pilot suffered superficial head injuries and shock. The aircraft was a complete write off. 01/11/51, Spares and produce. SOC 10/12/51
VX749			10/12/50	14/06/62, Fire Fighting - S.O.C.
VX750			10/12/50	20/01/56, Spares and produce.

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VX751	106/K		10/12/50	10/09/52,the pilot SBLT(P) Ian McDonald, RAN, had an engine failure and force landed on an airstrip at Cape Gloucester, New Guinea, pilot uninjured. Aircraft later salvaged and reduced to spares.
VX752	105/K 131/K. 951/K		10/12/50	14/06/52, Fire Fighting. S.O.C.
VX753	**132/Q**		**10/12/50**	**16/09/54,this aircraft spun in from low level at Jervis Bay airfield killing the pilot LEUT(P)R.G Owen RN**
VX754			**10/12/50**	**03/05/51, Crashed into sea after RATOG take off from HMAS Sydney. LEUT(P)R.W Barnett, RAN killed.**
VX755			10/12/50	08/02/56, Spares and produce.
VX756	100/K 164/K		10/12/50	01/10/65, Fire Fighting - S.O.C.
VX757			10/12/50	26/09/60, Sold to Aluminium Ingots Co. for scrap.
VX758			10/12/50	19/04/58,aircraft had an engine failure ditched and pilot LEUT(P) Williams, RN rescued.
VX759			10/12/50	02/11/56, Sold to Aluminium Ingots Co. for scrap.
VX760			10/12/50	25/10/56, Sold to A.G. Simms for scrap.
VX761	131/K		10/12/50	11/09/51,Oil pressure dropped and pilot elected to land on HMAS Sydney on transit to Korea. Engine failed downwind with wheels and flaps down. Aircraft ditched. LEUT(P) Webster,805 Sqdn RAN - rescued.
VX762			**10/12/50**	**17/05/53, Mid-air with a Tiger Moth over Wagga airfield. LCDR(P) Wilde, DFC, Commanding Officer of 850 Squadron RAN killed. (Tiger Moth occupants unhurt.)**
VX763	133/K		10/12/50	20/02/56, Spares and produce.
VX764	134/K		10/12/50	17/12/51, Shot down over Korea. LCDR(P) Bowles, RAN-hit by AA fire and bailed out.Rescued by a friendly junk and conveyed to an island where he was picked up by a helicopter and returned to the ship.
WE673	103/K 135/K		10/12/50	04/06/57, Sold to Fitzgibbon & Garthon for scrap.
WE674	**103/K, 105/K**		**10/12/50**	**05/11/51,LEUT(P) Clarkson, DFM, RAN killed. Aircraft failed to pull out of a dive whilst attacking enemy transport in the Han river area, Korea.**
WE675	137/K		10/12/50	23/4/57 whilst with 805 Sqdn at NAS Nowra tail wheel broke off on landing and aircraft swung of runway. 06/03/59. Sold to T. Carr for scrap.
WE676	138/K		10/12/50	08/02/56, Spares and produce.
WE677			10/12/50	11/12/51 damaged when with 805 Sqdn HMAS Sydney flared out late, bounced between Nos 2 and 3 wires and entered No 2 barrier. 16/04/52, Fire Fighting -S.O.C.
WE678			10/12/50	26/09/60, Sold to Aluminium Ingots for scrap.
WE679			10/12/50	07/12/51, Shot down in Korea . SBLT(P) Smith, RN rescued.

RAN/RN Serial	RAN Code	Type	Delivered	Aircraft History
WE686			**1950**	**02/01/51,launched from HMAS Sydney on a Carrier Air Patrol during the Korean war SBLT(P)R.J Coleman,RAN disappeared from his formation. He was not found and presumed missing, killed in action.**
WE790				RN aircraft loaned to RAN during Korean War c1951 diverted to US Marine base with battle damage. NB. There is uncertainty about the validity of this story when more facts come to light
WE791			1950	26/07/60, Sold to Aluminium Ingots for scrap.
WE795			**07/12/1951**	**07/12/51, Shot down by AAA over Korea. SBLT(P) Sinclair RN killed whilst bailing out. His body recovered by helo and buried at sea.**
WE796			1951	25/10/51, Shot down in Korea LEUT(P) Wheatley, RAN rescued.
WE797	106/K		1951	13/12/51, Shot down in Korea. SBLT(P) Cooper ,RAN bailed out and rescued.
WE799	105/K ?/NW		1951	Crash landed at Nowra on 22/8/55 engine failure on takeoff.S/LEUT(P)Henry RAN 805 Sqdn . 25/10/60, Sold to A.G. Simms for scrap.
WF591			1951	06/03/59, Sold to T. Carr for scrap.
WF593			1951	26/09/53, Sold To Aluminium Ingots for scrap.
WG627			1952	26/09/60, Sold to Aluminium Ingots for scrap.
WG628	920/NW		1952	06/03/59,Attached to 723 Sqdn. On the 22/11/55 and whilst being flown by LEUT(P)T Branson RAN the aircraft suffered a total engine failure over the Australian Alps.The aircraft glided to canberra airfield where a successful and safe landing was made. A rare green (Commendation) entry was made in appendix C of the pilots log book. The RAN accident report No 448 shows the cause as a "Defect in the Control System" Sold to T. Carr for scrap.
WG630		FB.11	1952	15/11/59, Eperimental Building Station, Ryde, NSW, 1959-1986. Used as wind machine to test building materials. Australian War Memorial, Canberra, ACT, 1986. Naval Aviation Museum, Nowra NSW 1987 to 1991. RAN Historic Flight for restoration to airworthy.
WH581	111/K 111/NW 922/NW		1952	06/03/59, Sold to T. Carr for scrap.
WH583	171/K		1952	25/10/56, Sold to A.G. Simms for scrap.
WH586			**1952**	**12/04/56, Crashed Nowra SBLT(P) Howe, RAN of 724 Squadron killed when returning from a night flying sortie. He dived into the ground near airfield.**
WH587	105/K		1952	BOC 07/03/52 SOC 23/09/63. Sold to G Grieg of Sydney 1963-64. Lord Tefgarne 1964. Shipped to USA 1964. Grant Weaver, San Jose CA 1965-67. Registered N260X. Pylon race number 33. Stan Booker Fresno CA 1967. James R. Fugate, Aurora, OR 1969. Sherman Cooper, Merced, CA 1971-1972.. Westernair of Albuquerque, Albuquerque, NM, 1972. Ellsworth Getchell, San Jose,CA 1975 to present
WH588	114/NW	FB.11	1952	Brought on charge 7/03/52. Struck off charge 23/09/63 then became VH-BOU, N588, G-EEMV . Crashed 12/05/2001 Sywell UK, killing the owner & pilot Paul Morgan. The wreckage is under restoration by Dan Borgstrom in Sweden
WH589	115/NW	FB.11	1952	Brought on charge M7/03/52. Struck off charge 23/09/63. . Now in USA. Aircraft is highly modified for air racing and flies as "Furias". Owned by Bill Rogers and Dale Stolzer of "Everett" Washington USA. There are two other examples of Fury/Sea Fury wearing these same markings The first was an ex-Iraqi Fury registered VH-HFX in 1985. It was exported to UK in 1991 returning to Australia in 2011 as VH-ORN. It has since returned to Europe. The second is an ex-Royal Navy Sea Fury currently registered F-AZXJ. It has no Australian connection. See below for details on these two aircraft.

RAN/RN Serial	RAN Code	Type	Delivered	Aircraft History
WH590	104/K 894/NW		1952	1961, Fire Fighting - S.O.C.
WJ279	101/K 102/K		1953	06/03/59, Sold to T. Carr for scrap.
WJ284	102/K 163/K		1953	26/09/60, Sold to Aluminium Ingots for scrap.
WJ294	102/K		1953	15/03/54, Ditched. LEUT(P) Brettingham-Moore, RAN rescued.
WJ297	955/NW		1953	06/03/59, Sold to T. Carr for scrap.
WJ299	105/K 110/K		1953	14/06/62, Fire Fighting - S.O.C.
WM479	106/K		1953	14/06/62, Fire fighting - S.O.C.
WN480			1953	25/10/56, Sold to A.G. Simms for scrap.
WM481			1953	06/03/59, Sold to T. Carr for scrap.
WM482			1953	26/10/56 Sold to A.G. Simms for scrap
WM490			1953	25/10/56, Sold to A.G. Simms for scrap.
WZ642	102/K	FB.11	27/05/54	With 805 Sqdn 15/05/55 when being flown by LEUT(P)R Leeson RAN while landing this aircraft at the Griffith Air Show WZ642 ran into and cut off the tail of Sea Fury WZ-652. 9/12/55 sold to A.G Simms for scrap.
WZ643	113/K	FB.11	27/05/54	06/03/59, Sold to T. Carr for spares.
WZ644	**101/K**	**FB.11**	**27/05/54**	**21/07/55, Flying locally from RANAS Nowra LEUT(P) Leeson, RAN of 805 Squadron crashed into Beecroft Range and was killed.**
WZ645	102/K	FB.11	27/05/54	14/6/57, Whilst with 805 Sqdn,and being flown by LEUT(P) Davidson RAN, engine overspeed, forced landing on Currarong Beach NSW, aircraft caught fire. 24/03/58, Spares and produce at Nowra.
WZ646	**103/K**	**FB.11**	**27/05/54**	**20/10/55, Crashed into sea off Wreck Bay LEUT(P) Henry,RAN of 805 Squadron killed.**
WZ647	104/K	FB.11	27/05/54	04/06/57, Sold to Fitzgibbon & Garthon for scrap.
WZ648	105/K	FB.11	27/05/54	25/10/56. Sold to A.G. Simms for scrap.
WZ649	106/K	FB.11	27/05/54	31/07/58, Fire Fighting -S.O.C.
WZ650	107/K	FB.11	27/05/54	06/03/59,Flown by LEUT(P)McNay RN of 805 Sqdn on Tuesday 30 August 1955, the aircraft in company with another Sea Fury from 805 Sqdn was involved in the shootdown of an Auster J/4 Archer aircraft that had taken off from Bankstown Airport without its pilot.The Auster was shot down into the sea from a height of 10,000 approx 10 miles North east of Broken Bay. Sold to T. Carr for scrap.
WZ651	108/K	FB.11	27/05/54	06/03/59, Sold to T. Carr for scrap.
WZ652	102/K	FB.11	27/05/54	14/06/57,With 805 Sqdn. Sea Fury WZ-642 cut the tail off this aircraft whilst landing at the Griffith Air Show 15/05/55. Written off 16/05/55. Sold for scrap 15/06/57.
WZ653	109/K	FB.11	27/05/54	02/11/56, Sold to Aluminium Ingots for scrap.