



**The Korean War, which ended nearly 65 years ago, never resonated with the public in the way that World War II did, although it cost the lives of over 37,000 US soldiers alone. Perhaps it was because it was on a different scale to the struggle that had engulfed the world only a few years earlier, or because it wasn't a 'declared' war and ended in a stalemate. Whatever the reason, it earned the name 'The Forgotten War' in the 50s, and has been known as such ever since. But for our FAA personnel who served there, Korea was a deadly conflict against a well-armed and determined enemy.**

Australia provided troops and ships early in the campaign, but the Fleet Air Arm was not involved. All that was to change in May of 1950, when Prime Minister Menzies committed *HMAS Sydney* to the conflict.

The RAN Fleet Air Arm was relatively new. The 20<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> Air Groups, from which the Sydney Air Group was to be formed, had been trained in the UK and had only arrived in Australia the previous year to an Air Station (NAS Nowra) that was somewhat primitive, to say the least. They had worked hard but were unproven in terms of deployment to a conflict. Similarly, *Sydney* was a new ship. Its primary task up to that point had been working up the Squadrons and delivering them and their aircraft to Australia.

## STOP PRESS...LETTER FROM COMFAA

For the latest news and views from the Commander Fleet Air Arm, please see page 11.

Squadron aircrew had a variety of backgrounds. About 75% had flown in WW2, whilst the remainder had undertaken their flying post war. The maintenance teams had mostly been drawn from General Service or recruited from overseas. The FAA relied very heavily on the Royal Navy, on whom it was largely modelled.

*Sydney* began her work up for Korea in mid July 1951, which only gave her a few weeks. It was an eventful period with rough weather and inexperienced aircrew contributing to a string of accidents that eventually drove the ship up north to find more favourable conditions. That done, she sailed for Japan at the end of August, and was in theatre conducting air strikes on North Korea a month later.

The experiences of the work up and the subsequent deployment is a fascinating story of a young FAA cutting its teeth in highly challenging conditions, against a determined foe intent on their destruction. The facts were faithfully captured in *Sydney's* Record of Proceedings and the Squadron records of 805, 808 and 817 Squadrons, from which our Korean history article on the website has largely been drawn. But it is more than facts

and figures, as these documents give a human side to the story as well.

Sydney returned to Australia in February 1952, having lost three pilots and a number of aircraft during her wartime experiences. It was the first time that a Dominion aircraft carrier had gone to war, and it forged the Royal Australian Fleet Air Arm into a formidable fighting force with a professionalism and ethos that remains to this day.



You can read the story of Sydney and her Air Group by **clicking on the image to the left**. Our history contains not only an outline of the reason for the Korean War, but fascinating detail of each of her operational patrols and the stories of

the men and machines engaged in them. You can also read four detailed recollections by veterans who were aboard HMAS Sydney during the conflict, giving a first-hand insight into what it was like at the time. ✈

### Letters to the Editor

Dear Editor,

I must take umbrage at the tone throughout your article on HATS in the March Edition of 'FlyBy' magazine.

In 2018 I would expect that a system such as HATS was available to train Defence helicopter aircrew. I actually find it remarkable that the modern Defence organisation could put together such a program considering, inter alia, service rivalry which I have witnessed first-hand in recent times.

But primarily my gripe is your dark comparison to times gone by. You and I (me for a lot longer than you - first as a student and then a QHI) both served under the old system. A couple of points - firstly the Iroquois was cutting edge technology when purchased and could be the DC3 of the helicopter world. Secondly that "system" trained aircrew who served with gallantry and sacrifice in Viet Nam. Thirdly, as you well remember, that "system" allowed HC723 to accomplish air support for BURSA in short order with very limited resources - both in equipment and manpower. Indeed, only the skill and determination of the personnel of the time made the training a success.

And lastly HATS has dragged the Defence helicopter world into a regime enjoyed by the fighter, transport and maritime arms for decades.

Defence should take no kudos for what has been the neglect of helicopter aircrew training for decades - dare I say centuries.

Ken Vote. ✈

*I agree that the personnel of the time, both maintenance and aircrew, did a remarkable job in producing a first-class product that served us well. Nowhere in my article was there criticism of them, either explicit or implied. But the facilities and equipment they had to work with well... sucked! HATS has now addressed its many deficiencies.*

\*\*\*\*\*

Dear Editor,

I enjoyed the article on the use of RATOG on naval aircraft as

it brought back memories of the early part of my career whilst flying for Trans Australia Airlines (TAA) back in the late sixties.

Whilst we had RATOG available for our DC-3s in New Guinea it was seldom fitted, and the last time that I recall it being used was at Nomad River which is located in the Fly River area of western Papua.

The airstrip had been hacked out of the jungle using just axes and machetes and could be quite boggy after rain, and they received plenty in that area.

It was essentially a light aircraft strip and heavy loads were usually air dropped either onto the runway or in the case of fuel drums, into the adjacent river from either the DC-3 or the PBV Catalina.

On this occasion, the DC-3 had been tasked to try a landing and the end result was that it had become well and truly bogged and was eventually flown out with the assistance of RATOG.

You might find this well-produced video ([here](#)) interesting as it shows the building of the airstrip, the air dropping and the stuck DC-3.

Regards, Ted Goater. ✈

\*\*\*\*\*

Dear Editor,

Thank you for your Flyer, and the FAAA Mag you are doing a great job!

The article on Clive Blennehassett caught my eye, in particular the reference to the 'Bang Seat' boss. The ejection seat was the Armourer's domain, the parachute was serviced by the SE personnel.

Barry Scaysbrook was the Chief Armourer on 805 at that time and he visited Clive in Sick Bay that same evening, and to quote Barry their exchange of words went like this. Barry: "How ya goin mate?" Clives response: "Thank Christ some bastard's doing his job properly!"

Ultimately it was a team effort and the Armourers were always grateful to contribute to the welfare of our aircrew!

Marcus, I also have a very keen interest in the survival of the FAAAA along with the NAA as I am a member of both organisations. Both organisations are experiencing the same problem. I put my thoughts down and forward to you shortly.

Your efforts are appreciated.

Cheers, Bill Hayward, President.

MaroochyWaters Naval Association of Australia. ✈

### More Letters to the Editor on page 10.

### Back To The Future

*Ever wondered what happened to those A4G/K Skyhawks that survived RAN/RNZAF service? Well, those that loved them may find the following article of interest, which is reproduced here with the kind permission of Warbird News (WN). You can read the original article [here](#), and you can see a history of all RAN Skyhawks and what happened to them [here](#).*



Above: Douglas A-4K Bu.154905 was one of eight Skyhawks purchased from the Royal New Zealand Air Force in 2012 some time after the nation phased out its combat air arm. The Royal Australian Navy operated this aircraft as A-4G N13-154905 from HMAS Melbourne before selling it to New Zealand in 1984, where it was upgraded to A-4K status and flew as NZ6213 with 2 Squadron from Nowra. (photo by Kenneth Strohm)

**Draken International – Back to the Future**  
by Mallory Allnut, from Warbird News.

When you step inside **Draken International's** cavernous maintenance hangar in Lakeland, Florida, it is like venturing back in time. Numerous Cold War-era jets are stored or undergoing refit within its walls, and the parts shelves are stacked to bursting with a highly organized supply of spares, almost as if it were a military version of a Costco warehouse. Rather than stepping back in time though, this is more like stepping 'Back to the Future'. For this building is home to the world's largest and fastest growing fleet of civilian-operated military adversary jets. Draken International, along with a small number of similar companies, has gone from strength-to-strength in the modern era, where nations around the globe are streamlining their military spending by privatizing some aspects of their non-combat operations, like tactical adversary training.



Above: Draken International's lineup of low-time, modernized ex-Royal New Zealand Air Force McDonnell Douglas A-4Ks has been a key ingredient in the company's role in civilian operated, tactical air support training for US and US aligned national. The fleet has since expanded to include 4<sup>th</sup> Generation types like the Mirage F1M and Atlas Cheetah as well. (Image via Draken International).

The financial benefits for the military to contract out this work are many-fold, as it saves the wear and tear on active duty, front-line aircraft which would otherwise be employed in the job. The cost savings are enormous; a Draken International jet costs the taxpayer roughly 20% of what a standard front line U.S. military jet, like an F-16, would cost to operate... and as little as 10% in comparison to a 5th generation type like the F-35. Quite simply, it is a much more expedient and cost-effective way of doing business to contract out the work to a company like Draken International. The tax-payer no longer has the year-round burden of owning a large fleet of adversary aircraft, nor the cost of employing the highly skilled personnel involved in maintaining and flying them.



In 2015, Draken International flew its A4K fighter jets as simulated adversaries during operational testing of the F-35 at Edwards Air Force Base, the first instance of any commercial air services company providing adversary support for the F-35. (image via Draken International)

Draken International is an à la carte, on-demand service which can deploy a sophisticated array of assets almost anywhere they are needed. They offer many different and highly specific services, too numerous to list here. It essentially covers everything from Red Air adversary combat training, think "Viper" in the movie Top Gun for those of you needing to picture it, to something as nuanced as

Fleet Missile Defense, where Draken International's multiple, supersonic assets can accurately simulate anti-ship missiles attacking a fleet from many directions at once and therefore effectively train the ship's crews to cope with the threat in as near to a real-world environment as possible, especially if they add in Draken's electronic warfare component.

An additional benefit to the tax-payer is that most of the aircrew and maintenance personnel are retired ex-U.S. military, so their years of experience and expensive training are still providing a valuable service to the nation in helping to maintain military readiness. They describe their hiring practices as follows...

*"Draken International employs world-class, military-trained Fighter Pilots. The team is comprised of an elite cadre of USAF Weapons School Instructors, Fighter Weapons School Graduates, TOP GUN Instructors, US Navy Aggressors, Air Liaison Officers, Thunderbirds Demonstration Pilots, and FAC-A Instructors. Our tactical experts have the experience to challenge today's warriors for tomorrow's fight while continuing to sharpen America's edge in current operations around the globe.*

*Safety and security are our top and immediate priorities. Our fleet of aircraft have been expertly maintained and inspected prior to gaining their airworthiness certifications. Draken maintenance technicians engage in FAA flight safety meetings and scheduled proficiency seminars and have decades of experience and training to ensure safety is at the center of their decision making matrix. Security is paramount and is why Draken International conforms to the same standards that are found at any military installation or government organization. Personal, physical and electronic security standards far exceed the government standards and today's industry standards."*

There are roughly a hundred aircraft in the Draken inventory, with about 80 of them being active. They operate seven different ex-military types currently as follows: McDonnell Douglas A-4K Skyhawk, Mikoyan-Gurevich MiG-21BIS, the Aerovodochody L-39 and L-159E, Aermacchi MB-339CB, and soon the Atlas Cheetah and Mirage F1M.



*For the U.S. Marine Corps exercise Winter Fury in late November, 2017, Draken International took its L-159 'Honey Badgers' out to MCAS Miramar in California. Draken partnered with BAE Flight Systems, who provided advanced electronic attack and flew alongside the Marine Adversary F-5 aircraft of VMFT-401 and FA-18 Super Hornets of VX-9. Together the Red Air organizations delivered large force packages that challenged the F-35B, FA-18, and AV-8B squadrons of 3d Marine Air Wing. Draken flew a total of 46 day and night sorties supporting the exercise and provided mission planners, mission commanders, range training officers, and controllers to assist in the adversary presentations. (image via Draken International)*

According to Jeff Scott, Draken's Director of Marine Operations, "Draken provides the professional threat replication with advanced

*radars and top notch pilots, not just metal in the sky, but a more threat representative adversary." Draken is currently the only contract air provider approved to support the USAF Fighter Weapons School, and has supported 5th Generation training more than any other contract air provider, including F-22, F-35A, and F-35B aircraft from the United States Air Force, USMC and the Royal Netherlands Air Force.*

*Scott, a former USMC weapons school instructor, and F-35B pilot stated, "Draken uses former weapons school graduates and instructors from MAWTS-1, Top Gun, and USAF Fighter Weapons School as well as former and current Aggressor pilots from all of the services." Draken is also currently the only contract air provider authorized to conduct unlimited maneuvering against the Department of Defense. "Draken flies the full spectrum of adversary support, including initial training units like the USAF F-35A training squadrons at Luke Air Force Base all the way up to USAF Fighter Weapons School, Red Flag events, and exercises like Winter Fury where radar and night capability are needed to replicate higher end threats. It was a pleasure supporting Marines and great to be a part of such an outstanding exercise," said Scott.*

WarbirdsNews founder, Moreno Aguiari, made a trip to Draken International's headquarters in Lakeland, Florida recently, and sat down with Maj. Gen. H.D. "Jake" Polumbo USAF (Ret'd.). General Polumbo who assists Draken with its Global Strategy and Business Development. Maj. Gen Polumbo's military achievements are legion, and readers should really check out his full military bio [here](#). As far as his flight experience goes, a key takeaway in his bio is as follows... "[Gen.Polumbo has] 4,000 flying hours in all



*Major General H.D. Polumbo USAF (retired), Draken International's head of Global Strategy and Business Development during his interview with WarbirdsNews very own Moreno Aguiari at Draken's headquarters in Lakeland, Florida. (photo by Kenneth Strohm)*

blocks of the F-16 Fighting Falcon, including combat sorties in Operation Northern Watch. He also holds the distinction as the first Air Force general officer to fly the U-2S in combat and completed 21 operational U-2 missions in Operations Enduring and Iraqi Freedom. The General also flew combat missions in the MC-12W weapon system during Operation Enduring Freedom."

And the interview with General "Jake" Polumbo continues.....

**WN:** "Given your recent acquisitions of L-159s, as well as the Cheetahs and Mirages, is there any chance the MiG-21s will ever be brought into service?"

**JP:** "It's unlikely that any customer is going to ask for the MiG-21 in Red Air presentations. However Draken has a regeneration plan

that would allow us to get the jets flying in 12-13 months if needed. It's simply that there is no request for this type of aircraft. The feedback from the client is that the MiG-21 has such a short coverage (range), especially at high speed and high power settings [after all the MiG-21 was developed as a cold war interceptor – Ed.]

**WN:** "Your deployment to Leeuwarden in June/July 2017 seems to have been quite a success. Do you foresee continued work with Skyline Aviation in the future? Perhaps establishing a permanent Det in Europe?" [Skyline Aviation is a Netherlands based company which provides high performance aircraft support to government and corporate clients].

**JP:** "Skyline has been a terrific partner. We actually sat with them two years ago at the Farnborough International Airshow and worked up this partnership in such a way that Draken could use a European entity to allow us to make the contractual arrangements. We successfully deployed our airplanes ( only L-159s) to the Royal Netherlands Air Force (RNLAf) weapon school at Leeuwarden Air Base. It was a successful deployment and the customer was happy. At the moment Draken has 5 airplanes ( 3 A-4 Skyhawk and 2 MB-339) deployed at Reims – Champagne Air Base (French: Base aérienne 112 Reims-Champagne) in support of the French Navy. This Draken detachment has been in operation for a couple of years now."

**WN:** "Given the explosion of the contract air support in the U.S., Canada, and northwest Europe, is there a possibility of expanding into Eastern Europe, Balkans, or even Asia?"

**JP:** "My expectation is that Eastern Europe is unlikely, just because of the logistical issues with the supply chain [distance from home base Ed.]. Also in order for Draken to operate in another country the requirement is to develop a partnership with somebody local, and that hasn't been developed yet. In the Pacific, the US Air National Guard has signed a five-year contract with Draken. We have also supported the Japan Air Self-Defense Force in the U.S. by providing support to test their new defense radar system."

**WN:** "What is the evaluation process in order to select a specific airplane type?"

**JP:** "This is where our CEO Jared Isaacman is a master at surveying the market globally. Any fighter aircraft type that is available on the market in the world is known by Jared and the executive team. They analyze the fleet and go look at those aircraft that fit the future requirements of the U.S. military. And then they look for the sustainability of those aircraft, parts supply, are there available parts in that package [fleet of airplane for sale Ed.] And they look at the life cycle, the life remaining on those air frames and those engines. The company strategy is to acquire airplanes that were already modernized or have the ability to be modernized and to be used in an advanced training scenario, and ultimately to be able to fly regularly with a good, strong supply chain."

**WN:** "Do you choose airplanes based on the mission they need to fulfill or is it based on what airplane type is available on the market?"

**JP:** "The answer is both, Draken constantly monitors the market. Draken could purchase a specific type of aircraft based on the customer's request."

**WN:** "Are there types of aircraft that you have tried to purchase but were not able to?"

**JP:** "Any of the airplanes that Draken was interested in purchasing were investigated, and if it made sense, purchased. However some were too costly and were not a good investment based on the budgets available to Draken's customers."

**WN:** "Has the USAF ever requested a type of aircraft to train/fly against?"

**JP:** "They are basically asking for airplanes with 4th generation-type capabilities."

**WN:** "Do you hire/work with pilots who flew your jets in their respective air arms to train your former USAF personnel to fly and maintain the Russian machines?"

**JP:** "We primarily hire pilots from the U.S. military services. For the maintenance personnel, we use existing maintenance technicians from the nations we buy the airplanes from to help train our own technicians. In the case of the technicians from New Zealand and the Czech Republic, we ended up hiring some full time because we like to have that pipeline delivery capability. But primarily we like to hire U.S. veterans coming out of the services."

**WN:** "What is the reason behind the acquisition of the Mirage and the Cheetahs?"

**JP:** "The Services are requesting high-fast capability, supersonic capability, with radar that works and long endurance. The Mirages and the Cheetahs are going to have sprint abilities, and will still be able to stay in the training area to support 2-3 strike packages on the range. These aircraft are going to satisfy the needs of our customers, but also give us commonality since the Mirage and the Cheetah use the same engine."

... and that's the end of our interview with General Polumbo. We hope you have enjoyed learning a little about this fascinating company!

**WarbirdsNews** wishes to offer our profound thanks to Sean "Stroker" Gustafson, VP of Business Development, and everyone else who took the time to help us during our visit with Draken International in Lakeland, Florida. It is clear that they are doing important work for the nation and its defense, and we wish them all the best with their plans... especially as they are keeping alive some fascinating aircraft which all of us here have an interest in.

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*By Ed. You can see a short video of Draken by clicking on this [link](#). It includes shots of ex-RAN A4s, beautifully maintained and in great order. You can also see more about what happened to each of our other A4s [here](#). ✈*

### HAVE YOU PAID YOUR SUBSCRIPTION?

At the time of going to press, **30%** of our members have not yet renewed their 2018 membership. Please help by doing so as soon as possible, as we rely on subscriptions to keep going. Every single dollar goes back into the Association and it's less than the cost of a cup of coffee per month! Contact the [webmaster](#) if you're unsure how to renew.



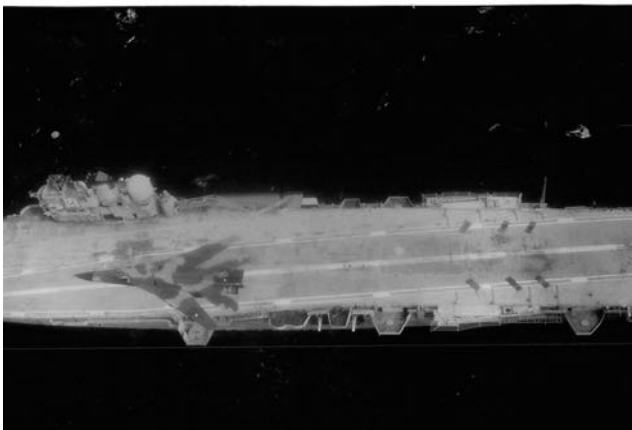
### Mystery Photo 40 - Question

Mystery Photo (MP) 40 is shown above, courtesy of Ron Marsh. It's a bit hard to see here so you might like to click on [this link](#) to view it on our website, where you can also easily reply if you want to have a go.

As MP39 was too easy this is a bit tougher. It shows an aircraft in some strife on what appears to be a busy street. There's a tram to the left which will give you a clue as to the place and the year, as may the aircraft type (for those with eagle eyes).

The questions are: **What type of aircraft, where is it and a rough date (year).** Extra points will be given if you can hazard a guess **where the aircraft was heading and why.** Click on the link above to respond. ✈

### Mystery Photo 39 - Answer



Mystery Photo 39 which appeared in last month's edition was a bit too easy, we think, as a fair number of people got the answer

spot on. The four questions were: **what aircraft, which ship, when was it, and what was the occasion?**

Ben Kelly kindly provided the photo, which is of course *Melbourne* on her last journey to the scrapyards of China. She was under tow at the time, but that didn't stop Ben and FltLt Keith Oliver both making a dummy approach to the old deck, but it was a bit small for the Pig to land on (wouldn't that have been a scoop!). The image was taken by the strike camera in the belly of one F-111 as it flew over the other. Ben's best guess was that it was taken on May 17<sup>th</sup> 1985 at around 1445 off the coast of Ballina.

This is possibly the last photo we have of Melbourne in one piece, so it is of historic interest. If you visit the website page [here](#) there's a brief recollection of her last days, together with a bunch more photographs. ✈

### Wall of Service Update

Our WoS administrator advises that Order No 37 has now been received from the Foundry and has been fixed to the Wall. This order was for the following people:

CDRE V. **Di Pietro**; WOATA D. **Hinds**; POATA R. **Golding**; CPO A. **Mason**; POATA W. **Cooper**; CMDR T. **Wynberg** (dec); NAAH F. **Driver**; CMDR P. **Cannell**; LS G. **Nicholas**; LEUT J. Nestor; LEUT J. **Bartels** and CAPT A. **Dakin**.

Order No. 38 is now open with the following names so far:

LCDR T. **Rieck**; LEUT J. **Davidson**; POATC3 I. **Carroll**; LCDR G. **Collins**; LEUT R. **Waites**; LS P. **Flanagan**, CPO K. **McKenna**, PO R. **Dumigan** and PO H. **Harkness**. We need at least 3 more applications to complete this Order.

See website [here](#) if you want to know more about the FAA Wall of Service and whether you are eligible to be on it. ✈

# ANZAC DAY 2018



**Anzac Day will fall on on Wednesday 25 April, and our website will have a round up of information on where to form up and when, for the most common FAAA venues.**

**We do need some help from those in the Sydney Area though. Typically, the March there is poorly subscribed, so please: if you can make it, turn up and pay your respects.**

**We are required to give approximate numbers to the RSL, who organise the event, so if you think you are marching in Sydney this year perhaps you could drop Mike Perrott a quick email [here](#).**

Anzac Day, 25 April, is one of Australia's most important national occasions. It marks the anniversary of the first major military action fought by Australian and New Zealand forces during the First World War.

When war broke out in 1914 Australia had been a federated nation for only 13 years, and its government was eager to establish a reputation among the nations of the world. When Britain declared war in August 1914 Australia was automatically placed on the side of the Commonwealth. In 1915 Australian and New Zealand soldiers formed part of the expedition that set out to capture the Gallipoli peninsula in order to open the Dardanelles to the allied navies. The ultimate objective was to capture Constantinople (now Istanbul), the capital of the Ottoman Empire, an ally of Germany



The Australian and New Zealand forces landed on Gallipoli on 25 April, meeting fierce resistance from the Ottoman Turkish defenders. What had been planned as a bold stroke to knock Turkey out of the war quickly became a stalemate, and the campaign dragged on for eight months. At the end of 1915 the allied forces were evacuated from the peninsula, with both sides having suffered heavy casualties and endured great hardships. More than 8,000 Australian soldiers had died in the campaign. Gallipoli had a profound impact on Australians at home, and 25 April soon became the day on which Australians remembered the sacrifice of those who died in the war.

Although the Gallipoli campaign failed in its military objectives, the actions of Australian and New Zealand forces during the campaign left a powerful legacy. What became known as the "Anzac legend" became an important part of the identity of both nations, shaping the ways in which they viewed both their past and their future.

*Left: A view looking aft of lifeboat carrying unidentified men of the Australian 1st Divisional Signal Company as they are towed towards Anzac Cove on the day of the landing.*



## Next Month

The RAN Fleet Air Arm was finally formed in 1947 after many years of debate and, for many, frustration. But it was worth waiting for as the foundation for what we have today was well resourced, well trained and well equipped.

Read the continuing story of your Heritage: of the two Carriers we bought, the modern and potent aircraft to go on them, and how within two years they were forged by the crucible of the Korean war.

## Early Anzac Day Commemorations

In 1916 the first Anzac Day commemorations were held on 25 April. The day was marked by a wide variety of ceremonies and services across Australia, a march through London, and a sports day in the Australian camp in Egypt. In London more than 2,000 Australian and New Zealand troops marched through the streets; a London newspaper headline dubbed them “the knights of Gallipoli”. Marches were held all over Australia; in the Sydney march convoys of cars carried soldiers wounded on Gallipoli and their nurses. For the remaining years of the war Anzac Day was used as an occasion for patriotic rallies and recruiting campaigns, and parades of serving members of the AIF were held in most cities.

During the 1920s Anzac Day became established as a national day of commemoration for the more than 60,000 Australians who had died during the war. In 1927, for the first time, every state observed some form of public holiday on Anzac Day. By the mid-1930s all the rituals we now associate with the day – dawn vigils, marches, memorial services, reunions, two-up games – were firmly established as part of Anzac Day culture.

Later, Anzac Day also served to commemorate the lives of

Australians who died in the Second World War, and in subsequent years the meaning of the day has been further broadened to include those who lost their lives in all the military and peacekeeping operations in which Australia has been involved.

Anzac Day was first commemorated at the Memorial in 1942. At the time, government orders prohibited large public gatherings in case of a Japanese air attack, so it was a small occasion with neither a march nor a memorial service. Since then, Anzac Day has been commemorated at the Memorial every year.

*25 April 1916: Australian and New Zealand troops marching down Whitehall London to Westminster Abbey.*



AUSTRALIAN WAR MEMORIAL

P04497.004

## What does it mean today?

Australians recognise 25 April as a day of national remembrance, which takes two forms. Commemorative services are held across the nation at dawn – the time of the original landing, while later in the day, former servicemen and servicewomen meet to take part in marches through the country’s major cities and in many smaller centres. Commemorative ceremonies are more formal, and are held at war memorials around the country. In these ways, Anzac Day is a time at which Australians reflect on the many different meanings of war. (AWM) ✈



## Seymour Vietnam Memorial

Did you know there's a splendid Vietnam War Memorial in Seymour, Victoria? **Harry Harkness** alerted *FlyBy* to it, and we downloaded a bit of information for the interest of readers.

The Wall, pictured right, is set in a Walk and differs slightly from conventional memorials insofar as it seeks to commemorate the service of all who played a part in this period of Australia's history, rather than just those who paid the ultimate price.

The Walk is a meandering red earth path set in native trees and grasses that resemble rubber trees and rice paddies, the two plants synonymous with Vietnam.

The centre piece is the Wall, made up of DigiGlass panels bearing the name of every Australian military person who served in their various capacities in that conflict. The names are separated only by the Service in which they were a part, and are in alphabetical order.

The plinths on which the panels stand have holes for people to place Poppies; the effect is to have a field of Poppies under the names.

You can certainly find the names of loved ones by standing close to the Wall. But if you draw back a little way and look at the pictures behind the names you will also see the story of Vietnam in photos, mainly supplied by Veterans. There are also areas of contemplation for people to use along the length of the Walk.

So, next time you are in Seymour, why not pay this place a visit and contemplate there for a while? Many Australian veterans who served in that conflict returned with permanent scars and others, including three Fleet Air Arm veterans, never returned at all. It is worth a few moments of your time. ✈

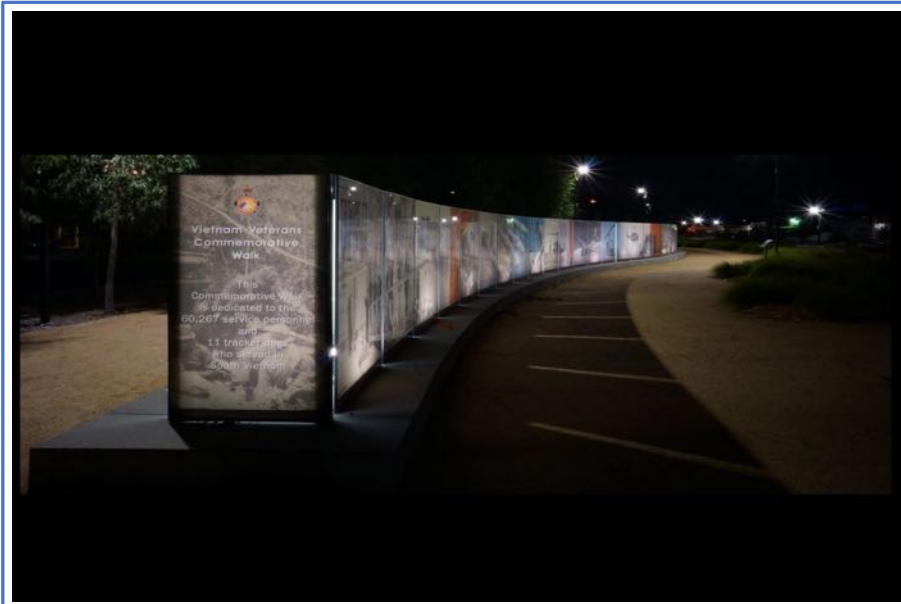
### Do You Know These People?

We occasionally get asked to help track down folk so that old friends can get in touch with them. In that context, does anybody know the whereabouts of the following people?

**Dave Terry**, ex-WOAvn. [John Miller](#) of Idaho is looking for him.

**Albert Riley**, ex 33 Pilots' Course. [Ron Lawford](#) would like to contact him. ✈

We are interested in your views on the contents of this newsletter, and your own stories and experiences. Simply email the Editor [here](#).



**Correction.** In the last edition of *FlyBy* I incorrectly stated that Andrew Powell had been on 812 Squadron, flying with the Brits after 'Sydney' returned to Australia in early 1952. 812 Squadron was equipped with Fireflies. Andrew was actually on loan to 804 Squadron (Royal Navy), flying Sea Furies.



A reminder of the reunions coming up:

### Vietnam Veteran's Reunion, Old Bar NSW

**When:** 17-21 August 2018

**Where:** Old Bar, NSW

**Cost:** Depends on the events you choose to attend.

**Contact:** John Macartney (02) 6557 4165

Open to all Vietnam Vets and their family and friends, and particularly 9 Squadron personnel. Full details can be found [here](#).

### 2018 General FAAA Reunion

**When:** Thursday 25 - Sunday 27 October 2018

**Where:** Nowra Locality

**Cost:** Depends on the events you choose to attend.

The big one! This reunion includes different events including an official 70<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Dinner. You need to register now, so click [here](#) to find out all the details. ✈

## More Letters To The Editor

By Ed: The 10th of March 2018 marked 50 years to the day since three replacement pilots arrived in the Republic of Vietnam – **Marty Ward, Geoff Vidal and Vic Battese**. (Thank you, Mac, for the advice!) I sent them a brief email to mark the event and received responses in return, two of which are as follows:

Dear Editor,

The day had slipped away until I just opened your generous spirited email. A heartfelt thank you.

Geoff, Marty and I were on the same Qantas flight - they destined for 9 Squadron RAAF at Vung Tau and I for the RANHFV/135th Assault helicopter company at Blackhorse fire support base. I have to say I am a little emotional on the reflection and you taking the time to recall it. Perhaps remembering lost youth and good NAS Nowra friends, (**Wayne Keys, Bob Giffen and Meg Morgan**), who came to see me and my rifle off in Sydney. Geoff and I were both single and unattached at the time. Marty farewelled his wife, Dianne and four children; a great family.

Petty Officer **Graham Sharp** was also with us – he came with me to Blackhorse. Geoff and Marty were met by a RAAF Huey soon after arrival in Saigon. Graham and I had to find our own way – after some hours waiting, we hitched a RAAF Caribou to Vung Tau where 9 Squadron accommodated us for a couple of nights until we again hitched a Huey ride to Blackhorse.

I just checked my log book. After getting flight gear including the chest plate of **Pat Vickers**, I did a two-hour check out in the H model with 'Pappy' Chandler on 14th March 1968. Pappy was a second tour US Army IP who kindly pronounced me a good pilot. I then did three days general support (Hash and Trash) and then started the Combat Assault missions. Graham got stuck in with the maintenance platoon where they all did a splendid job, keeping the helicopters in good repair, working as long as it took, day and night.

Geoff and Marty came to Blackhorse and flew with us during their year's tour as part of an unofficial exchange with 9 Squadron. Geoff stayed about 10 days and Marty was purloined to stay for nearly a month as we were very short of pilots when his exchange came up.

Again, thanks for caring.

PS By the way, when **Bursa** came along, I often looked at the young aircrew who had to come up to speed so quickly. In many ways, it was a replay of my early experience – Bursa flying was just as challenging as Vietnam (just no bullets coming our way as luck would have it). And didn't they do well!

Stay well, Vic Battese ✈

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Dear Editor,

Thanks for your message regarding the 50th Anniversary of my deployment to Vietnam. It is greatly appreciated at this time when it is very easy to believe that the things which were so significant in our lives have been relegated to history archives.

## † REST IN PEACE †

Since the last edition of 'FlyBy' we have become aware of the loss of 'Sailor Bill' Corkill and Phil Tuckett. You can read a little more on our Obituary page [here](#).

You have a great memory Vic. I had forgotten Graham Sharp travelling with us and had forgotten Wayne Keys, Bob Giffen and Meg Morgan were at Mascot. I kept a diary in Vietnam which was never comprehensive and always clouded by hang-over. Regrettably, I ran out of diary writing enthusiasm and hardly wrote anything for the last few months before returning to Australia.

Anyway, here is what I wrote about leaving Australia:

*"we departed Mascot in a QANTAS 707 at 10.45pm on Sunday 10th March. Arrived Darwin to collect additional army personnel at 2.30am local time. 3.30 departed Darwin and landed Singapore 6.00am local. Had breakfast there (due to Singapore Government "sensitivities" we were required to wear civvies) and departed at 9.30. Arrived Saigon at 11.30 local where we had C Rations for lunch. Vic Battese who was with us parted company with us and we were collected by a 9 Sqn UH-1H at 2.30. We were at Vung Tau at 3.00pm where Sqn Ldr Jim Cox gave us a brief followed by the Army GLO. Our first meal at VT was a fairly good roast lamb and we stayed in the bar until pretty late."*

Cheers & God bless, Geoff Vidal. ✈

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Dear Editor,

I was chatting with a Naval aviator if the new EC135 training helicopter was going to get a nickname eg Seahawk, Sea King etc. He was contemplating 'Kestral'.

The Kestral is a local predatory bird that hovers. Yellow Tailed Black Cockatoo has the same colour scheme as the aircraft but it doesn't quite roll off the tongue! I wonder if there are any other suggestions?

Cheers, Dave Jones ✈

*Sounds like a good idea, Dave...perhaps COMFAA might like to take up the notion of having a little competition for the best name? Having said that, I remember when the RN ran a similar contest to choose a name for their Sea King replacement, the Merlin EH101. Inevitably a few wags got involved and the suggestions included 'Sea Noff', 'Sea Me' and 'Sea What I Can Spend Money On.' Ed.*

## WARNING! SPAM EMAIL ABOUT OUR WEBSITE!



When I was a kid, Spam used to come in tins. I didn't like it much, but at least it was palatable (well...on a good day). Now it has a more unpalatable meaning: 'SPAM' is a general term meaning unsolicited emails. Often it pretends to be from someone other than the real sender, and it may be trying to trick you into responding.

I'll include a more complete article on Spam in the next FlyBy, but for the moment please be aware there is someone around pretending to be me! It's an email saying that your Account to the FAAAA website has been approved, and asking you to click

on the supplied link to start using it. If you have such an email, delete it without clicking.

I have no way of knowing who this email has been sent to, other than me. Personal Email addresses are generally not shown on our website other than behind the firewall, so hopefully you won't have received one. But in any case, please be aware:

- That any email sent to you about the website, such as about logging on, or passwords, or account approval, will ALWAYS bear my name (Marcus Peake), and be personally addressed to you, and
- Any website link I send you will ALWAYS have the letters 'faaaa' in the address.

The golden rules for any emails you get are:

- Look at it carefully – would the sender really phrase its contents in this way, and
- If you are not sure about it, DO NOT OPEN OR CLICK ON ANY LINK IT CONTAINS. ✈

### Letter From COMFAA



As we come towards the end of the first quarter of 2018 and I enjoy a good coffee in a small café in Launceston, I find myself doing what any red-blooded Fleet Air Arm member does in such relaxed moments; I reflect on what an extraordinary organisation our FAA is and the contribution of those who serve within it, past and present...and then wish I was flying in the blue skies above preferably making my way to some deck in the nearby ocean. The memories are special.

Allowing myself a moment of immersion in nostalgia I offer is fair enough. Last year we celebrated our 100th year of Australia's Naval Aviation, the 50th year since the venerable RAN Helicopter Flight Vietnam embarked to war, the retirement of the S-70B-2 Seahawk and AS350BA Squirrel and this year we will see our 70th year of the Fleet Air Arm since its formation in 1948 following the historic decision by the Commonwealth Defence Council on 03 July 1947 to establish a RAN FAA and buy two light carriers. The end of this year will see the RAN FAA delivering our planned eleven Flights to sea, the maturity of the Helicopter Aircrew Training System training all rotary wing aviators in the Defence Force, and the commissioning of a Maritime Tactical Unmanned Aerial Systems Squadron, re-enforcing that remotely operated flying systems are part of our future.

We have launched in 2017 the Naval Aviation Capability 2040, so we have a good idea where we are going, this plan sub-servient to Plan Mercator which maps out the Navy's path to the outer years, our Navy knows where it is going; and where it is going is something special and something that will serve our Nation well.

This year will see the completion of the re-capitalisation of the FAA and a huge part of NAS Nowra. We are now operating 24 MH60R Seahawks and they are proving formidable, six MRH90 Taipans and their at-sea effect in the support role is singularly impressive; and 15 contracted EC135 training helicopters underpinned by world leading training systems inclusive of three full motion simulators and other advanced training tools. Industry integration into the FAA is now normal business. However the grass does not grow long beneath our feet and we are now well advanced in conducting broad operational evaluations of UAS capabilities with the fixed wing ScanEagle and rotary wing S100 Schiebel. This year we are forecasting a 40-45% increase in flying rate and a day at NAS by year's end may see up to 16 lines of flying. In the decade ahead we are likely to see as many as 10-12 MTUAS Flights in addition to our eight MH60R flights and three MRH90 Flights. One cannot help but be excited, particularly when we see the LHDs gracing our seas and Sydney skyline, new ship and submarine projects down track, an extraordinarily capable surface combatant in the ANZAC frigate and, in the middle of First of Class Flight Trials as I write, the MH60R is aboard HMAS Hobart bringing DDGs back to the RAN. Should you have not seen the magnificent lines of Hobart I encourage you to 'Google it'.

Our operations and deployment cycles continue to increase in parallel with the available Flights. Nine month deployments in the Middle East for OP MANITOU is becoming the norm and the footprint in waters of Asia is continuing to become a place for our travels. The Navy's Task Group deployment Indo Pacific Endeavour (IPE) last year was a significant achievement for Australia and did wonders in extending our regional relationships and reputation. Six ships training with 12 countries, it was a deployment of old and thoroughly enjoyed by the 1200 odd personnel involved. The port visit spectrum is broadening and the team are loving the opportunity to embark – who wouldn't!

Should you have the chance to visit I believe you will find and feel that the FAA and NAS Nowra are ticking and the feeling of growth and achievement is everywhere. As always this is only achieved through the toil and passion of the sailors and officers who make up this magnificent place; and the culture that enables it is the legacy of the many members of the FAAAA and all FAA members of the years past – my thanks for all you have left us.

I most sincerely hope this message finds everyone well and your families thriving. I hope, and look forward to, very much to see as many of you as possible during the various events of the year. All the very best from all of us here who have the honour of currently caretaking our FAA. COMFAA ✈

### NSW Raffle: Results

The annual NSW raffle was drawn at the Annual General Meeting on 14<sup>th</sup> March 2018 and the following lucky people are the winners:

1<sup>st</sup> Prize (painting by John Downton) – **E. Wainman** N1730.

2<sup>nd</sup> Prize (painting by John Downton) – **S. Lowe** N1907.

3<sup>rd</sup> Prize (\$250.00 in cash) – **K. Duffey** N3380.

### Revision of FAA History

As mentioned by **CDRE Smallhorn**, the 1998 History of the FAA in the book “Flying Stations – A Story of Australian Naval Aviation” is to be updated.

The rewrite will also provide an opportunity to fix any errors in the existing publication, and the help of our historically inclined readers is requested.

If you know of any mistakes in the current text can you please advise the FAA Museum Manager, **Mr. Terry Hetherington**. Your input should include a description (and page number) of the material you believe to be incorrect; the proposed correction, and evidentiary material to support the change. ✈

### Did You Work On Sea Kings?

Back in August 2016 we were asked to post the following advice on our website:

*“A recent review into the death of a serving member by the Inspector-General of the Australian Defence Force concluded that the member’s cancer was in all likelihood caused by exposure to respirable asbestos fibres, petroleum, petroleum by-products, toxins or a combination of these whilst serving at 817 Squadron from 1999 to 2012.*

*Former 817 Squadron members should be aware that the Department of Veterans Affairs (DVA) provides health care to eligible ex-ADF members suffering from cancer, even where the cancer was not caused by their ADF service. An ex-member may be eligible if they served on an operational deployment during their career or served at least three years between December 1972 and April 1994.*

*Where an ex-member is concerned that a medical condition may have been caused by their ADF service they should consider lodging a claim with DVA. Additional information on the process is available on the DVA website: <http://www.dva.gov.au/benefits-and-payments/compensation> or by contacting DVA on 133 254.”*

We immediately wrote to COMFAA seeing further specific information as we believed the above advice raised more questions than it answered. We also asked for a copy of the Inspector General’s (IG) report into the death of the member. COMFAA was not in a position to assist us directly but forwarded our request to a relevant authority in Defence HQ.

The full chronology of what happened over the following 18 months can be seen on our website [here](#), which is, by any measure, a poor reflection on the Inspector General’s capacity/willingness to assist an Ex-Service Organisation concerned about the welfare of ADF veterans. Nonetheless, we went through the correct process and we are now pleased to report that our most recent request, directly to the Chief of the Defence Force, has been answered empathically.

In a nutshell, Air Chief Marshall **Mark Binskin**, himself an ex-FAA pilot, has thanked us for our perseverance in pursuing this matter, and advised that although he is not willing to release a hard copy of the report to us, he is prepared to allow members

of the Association to read it in the company of Inspector General staff. Our National President **Mark Campbell** is currently arranging a date and time for both himself and the webmaster to take up this offer.

It is possible the report may not provide the answers we seek, but allowing us to see it is a good start. We will advise our findings, within the boundaries of privacy and sensitivity that we have agreed to, in the next edition of FlyBy (and on our website). ✈



“FlyBy” is a periodical of the Fleet Air Arm Association of Australia.

All contributions are welcome. Simply email the Editor, Marcus Peake, [here](#).