

## MARITIME SQUADRONS ASSOCIATION



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## Newsletter

May 2020

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### *President's Message*

Dear Members,

What a year!! There is no doubt that 2020 is proving to be a challenging year, beginning with catastrophic bushfires, then floods and now the COVID-19 pandemic. I trust you are all managing to stay safe and well and are surviving the social isolation measures.

Regrettably, due to the COVID-19 restrictions we had to cancel the Canberra MSA function in March, which had changed from a dinner to a lunch event, and the Adelaide MSA lunch that was to have been held on 5 May. Given the latest government advice re social distancing and the likelihood that restrictions will remain in force for some months, there are obvious question marks hanging over the two remaining MSA functions planned to be held this year: the NSW Dinner due to be held on 25 July and the Brisbane Dinner and AGM scheduled for 24 October 2020.

As many of our MSA members are in the COVID-19 high-risk group, a number may be reluctant to attend a function due to the potential risk, particularly if infections are still occurring. However, the final decision on whether to hold any MSA event is one for the individual State Representatives, considering the prevailing situation and government/health advice at the time. I am aware that our NSW Rep, Rod Smallwood, is keen for the dinner at HARS in July to go ahead and we will just have to await the outcome of his investigations. The Brisbane function is slightly less problematic as it is still over four

months away and things may be back to some semblance of normality by then.

**Vale Peter Hodge.** It was with great sadness that we received the news that Peter Hodge passed away on 22 May after a long fight with lung disease and heart problems. Peter excelled in the role as our Treasurer for many years and was a real stalwart and guiding force behind MSA. He will be sorely missed by all. Our deepest sympathies are with Beth and the family at this time of loss.

**Eligibility of 10 Squadron Members to Join MSA in the Future.** As I advised in our last newsletter, in alignment with its new role as an intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance (ISR) specialist squadron, command of No 10 Squadron has transferred from No 92 Wing to No 42 Wing. Therefore, strictly speaking, it is no longer a 'maritime' squadron and we need to consider the eligibility of future 10SQN personnel to join MSA. You can expect to receive an email in the near future seeking your input to decide this question.

**Guidelines for State Representatives Organising MSA Functions.** All State Representatives will shortly receive an email from the Secretary providing guidelines for those who may be organising MSA functions. These guidelines are based on previous policy and custom and are intended to ensure an equitable distribution of MSA funds to our members.

If you know of any current serving or former members who would be eligible to join MSA, please encourage them to do so. As with any organisation, the injection of new blood is essential if we are to remain relevant and viable.

Regards

*Keith Brent*

President

# *Member News*

## Departed Members.

Since the last Newsletter we have noted with much sadness the passing of the following friends and members:

- |                 |                  |
|-----------------|------------------|
| • Jim Roche     | 12 November 2019 |
| • Tommy Trinder | 25 March 2020    |
| • Peter Hodge   | 22 May 2020      |

## New Members

Only one new member has joined the Association since the last newsletter.

Please welcome.

**Paul Fuller**

## QTH

Still looking for any information on Jim North and also Leslie Simpson.

Would anybody know where Mal McLean is these days?

From Gordon Johnstone

Hi Maurice,

Doyle (Ollie) Ireland contacted Joan and asked to be remembered to all the Maritime guys.

He has been looking after his wife for the last three years at home as she gradually descended into dementia. It finally became too much for him and they both have moved into Horizons RSL Dubbo. Beth does not remember many people. She does not want to join in any activities, and only wants to be with Doyle. She is docile and childlike . A pity to see such a lovely lady in that condition.

Doyle says that he is OK mentally but does have a heart issue. He sold the property at Dubbo (at a loss) to pay for staying at Horizons, and he says it is not cheap. He is trying to get some assistance from the Government but is not having much luck at the present time.

The address is 57 Minore Road, Dubbo 2830, (02) 6882 8663.

Cheers, Gordon

### **Not a member but known to many**

Maurice,

Don Stewart was a SIG in 10 SQN before becoming a pilot and flying Hercs. Could you please pass this on to the members.

Don has rallied and has fought his way out of 'near death care' but of course his days are limited. Some days are better for him than others and on the good days he has a memory of some of us. All the kids and grandkids are gathering to see him as he hangs on for the 10th June (80) but are only allowed 30 minutes contact under C19 rules. Please pass this on to anyone who may not be in the loop.

From: PETE WARE <[peter46ware@gmail.com](mailto:peter46ware@gmail.com)>

### **2020 Subscriptions**

***Subscriptions for ordinary members were due in **January 2020 and are now overdue**. If you have not paid at this time can you, please do so through the Treasurer.***

**Email** – if you are receiving this newsletter via Australia Post & you have an email address, then you can choose to receive newsletters and other updates via email (and save the Association some money). Just let the Secretary know your email address.

If you change your address or email, please inform the Secretary.

## *Information please.*

From Daryl Hill

Kemp Twycross was killed in Butterworth on 9JAN82 whilst on a 10SQN Gateway det.

The 'PLTOFF John Kemp Twycross Trophy' was instituted in 1990 as an annual award for the best imagery captured by a P3 crew whilst on detachment ex-BUT. The trophy now resides at HQ 92WGDET and is displayed along with the winning imagery.

Current CO 92WGDETBUT (SQNLDR Benn Carroll) confesses that corporate knowledge of Kemp aka Wedge has been lost in the mists of time. Operation Gateway is about to witness its' fortieth anniversary, the longest ADF commitment in history. Benn wishes to reinvigorate the trophy and permit the award to Poseidon crews, and the anniversary seems to be a fitting moment to do that.

I have undertaken to provide background in an effort to lift Wedge from a name on a plaque and make him a person again.

Recollections from his contemporaries are needed. I am tracking down Kemp's family in WA and our fellow pilot trainees, but herewith a request to anyone ex-92WG with memories or photo's that might be incorporated. Your information will be gratefully received, and anything not suitable for public consumption will be suitably edited.

[hillyhkg@yahoo.com](mailto:hillyhkg@yahoo.com)



P2V5 information wanted. (From last newsletter) Do any members have any information about the bracket attached near the cockpit of P2V5 shown in this image?

From Gordon Johnstone;

I have done some investigation about that bracket, and I have found that the three aircraft on Operation Westbound were A89-305, 311 and 312. They departed on 20/02/1957 and returned on 4/4/57.

The skippers were Clarrie Donnelly, Bull Mc Mahon and Jack Ingate. The aircraft took the Minister for Air Mr Osborne, representing the Prime Minister, to Ghana for their Independence celebrations on 6/3/57. They stayed there for 8 days and then went west through the States and Fiji before coming back to Richmond. One of the aircraft needed an engine change at the Azores.

A89-311 seems to have been given most of the publicity on the trip, so it would be fair to assume that this one was flown by the CO, Bull McMahan with the Minister on board. Of course, the bracket was for flying the flag when they arrived in Ghana.

Although I could not see any evidence of the bracket on -311 in the photos, I have been able to find, I think it was on one of these aircraft and the logical one would be -311.

There are only one or two of that crew still alive, so any further checking would have to be via newspapers of the day.

## *News from here and there*

To: Gordon Johnstone <g.johnst@bigpond.net.au>  
Subject: FW: Tail Turret

Dear Gordon,

We are progressing well with the reconstruction of Neptune 302 and as you can see from the attached photos we have been offered an as-removed from service and cocooned Neptune tail turret. We think this would be an important part of RAAF history to include with 302.

We however need a sponsor for this turret. Apart from transport from the US we need to find A\$7,000 to get it. Could you see if any RAAF colleges would like to help in full or in part please. Tax deductible of course. We would make a plaque and involve them and their families in the project recognition.

Kindest Regards  
Bob

Bob De La Hunty OAM  
HARS President and Chief Pilot  
Historical Aircraft Restoration Society Inc Historical Aircraft  
Projects Pty  
Ltd

## **Doco tribute to WWII Catalinas and their crews awaits take-off**

The crucial yet often overlooked role Catalina flying boats and their crews played in WWII is the subject of a new documentary. But as its producer ROBERT COCKBURN tells The Senior, getting the story on screen has been a mission in itself.

Inspired by a remarkable group of men now in their 90s - the last surviving WWII RAAF flying boat crews - the doco produced by me and edited by Noel Sadler tells a true and uplifting story of everyday genius against impossible odds.

Now a new documentary argues that they were indeed *The Plane that Saved Australia* - the name we gave the film.

It was an audacious plan to send the "Cats" in night after night, low level, under fire, to lay mines right inside every major enemy port across the Pacific all the way to China. Crews flew vast distances on missions up to 24 hours long, stopping Japanese warships, oil and supplies ever reaching the frontline. Countless lives were saved, and vast destruction prevented.

The Australian Commonwealth war historian estimated Catalinas proved 100 times more effective at stopping Japan than fast land-based bombers.

Crews relied on their own initiative and daring innovations - like removing the flying boats' heavy protective armour plating to reach their increasingly distant targets.

They were dubbed the Black Cats for painting their aircraft black for some protection. Flying in crews of 10 they grew close to each other and to their antique aircraft.

"We worshipped it!" navigator Doug Nolan, later to crew Qantas Boeing 707s, told us. "It was such a reliable aircraft. I had about 1500 hours in Catalinas. Lovely aeroplane."

There is humour in the film too. The airmen laugh at the extraordinary ways they pulled off their secret missions.

*The Plane that Saved Australia* has been rejected by Australian broadcasters and film funding body Screen Australia. Production was kept alive by the kind voluntary work of friends like cinematographer Miriana Marusic, who filmed *The Castle*, broadcaster Mark Davis and many others.

But the delays mean some of our cast died before seeing their film: Doug, Cyril, Tiger and Catalina restorer Neville Kennard. Via Peter Turner

## HARS Parkes Neptune P2V-5 progress

Work has continued on our ex-RAAF, Lockheed P2V-5 Neptune, A89-302 at Parkes. The reciprocating engines and propellers together with the radar dome have now been fitted. In addition, painting of the wing centre section has been completed.

With the closure of the museum only limited activity is anticipated in the coming months. It is hoped in the second half of this year we will be able to fit the wings, wing tanks, jet pods and vertical stabiliser which, once these tasks are completed, will see the aircraft largely complete.







From Tony Jones

Hi Maurice, you and the members may be interested and probably disheartened to know the Officers Mess at Townsville is no more.

Demolition is almost complete. Certainly, the destruction of an iconic building with many memories for lots of us. Anecdotally, I heard the building was in the restricted 'black zone' for noise was one of the reasons for the demolition.

The Airmen's Mess and Ration Store have also gone, demolished a month or so ago. Good news is they are keeping the Sergeant's Mess and re-using for other purposes.





## **Ōhakea air base to home four P-8A aircraft, infrastructure upgrade begins.**

Upgrades at Ōhakea air base are under way as it prepares to home four maritime surveillance aircraft.

The Government announced last year in July it would buy four Boeing P-8 Poseidon aircraft, along with two flight training simulators, at a cost of \$2.34 billion. The project requires a revamp at Ōhakea, with two hangars, an operations centre, warehousing, and training and maintenance facilities planned.

### **The Nation: Jakarta**

Indonesia is considering the purchase of submarines from Turkey or Germany, a Defense Ministry spokesman said Thursday. Defense Minister Prabowo Subianto is in the process of comparing the equipment from the two countries, said Dahnil Anzar Simanjuntak. "The minister is still contemplating whether to buy it from Turkey or Germany. Currently he is visiting Germany," he told Anadolu Agency. After the visit, he will report to President Joko Widodo. The spokesman added that geopolitical and geo-strategic issues were Indonesia's main concerns in acquiring submarines.

## **The US Navy (USN) has taken delivery of its 100th Boeing P-8A Poseidon maritime patrol aircraft.**

The company notes that this is the 94th mission capable aircraft, with six jets earmarked as test examples.

Boeing adds that the 737NG-based type, which is also operated by Australia and India, has accumulated 300,000 flight hours.

In late March, the USN awarded Boeing a \$1.5 billion contract for 18 P-8As. This comprised eight examples for the service, plus for the South Korean navy, and four for the Royal New Zealand Air Force.

The P-8A features the fuselage of the 737-800 mated with the wing of the 737-900ER. *Flight International* 18May2020

## **The US Navy has deployed Triton to Guam and has begun its operational history.**

According to an article on *USNI News* by Gidget Fuentes published on May 12, 2020, a pair of MQ-4C Tritons operating from Guam has been integrated into fleet operations and provide reach across the Indo-Pacific.

“The Navy is counting on the Triton, which can operate at greater than 50,000-foot altitudes and at the 2,000-mile-plus range, to provide an unmanned platform for persistent, maritime intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance capabilities and work alongside its manned fleet of reconnaissance and surveillance patrol aircraft.

“The Tritons with Unmanned Patrol Squadron 19 – the Navy’s first unmanned aircraft squadron – arrived in Guam in late January to support CTF-72, which oversees the patrol, reconnaissance and surveillance force in the U.S. 7th Fleet region.”

**The Indian Navy** is expected to begin inducting a second batch of Boeing P-8I Neptune advanced maritime patrol/anti-submarine warfare (ASW) aircraft this April, according to Indian defense (sic) officials.



In 2016, the Indian Ministry of Defense (MoD) placed a \$1.1. billion follow-on order for four additional P-8Is with deliveries set to begin in the first quarter of 2020.

“Based on the contract, the first of the four aircraft will be delivered in mid-2020 and the remaining three in 2021” a Boeing Spokesperson was quoted as saying by the *Economic Times* on February 17, 2020

## *History Corner*

### *In Europe*



No 95 Sqn Sunderland Mk 1, Pembroke Dock ca1941

## **No 10 Squadron**

Effective 01 April 1940, No.10 Sqn transferred from Pembroke Dock to Mount Batten (near Plymouth), Devon.

### **GOING TO WAR**

Operations in April 1940 were of a more “routine nature”, as all German U-boats had been ordered to return to Germany to prepare

for the Norwegian campaign, from 9 April until 10 June 1940. German forces successfully invaded Holland, Belgium, and France on 10 May 1940, leading to an allied evacuation from Dunkirk, France later that month.

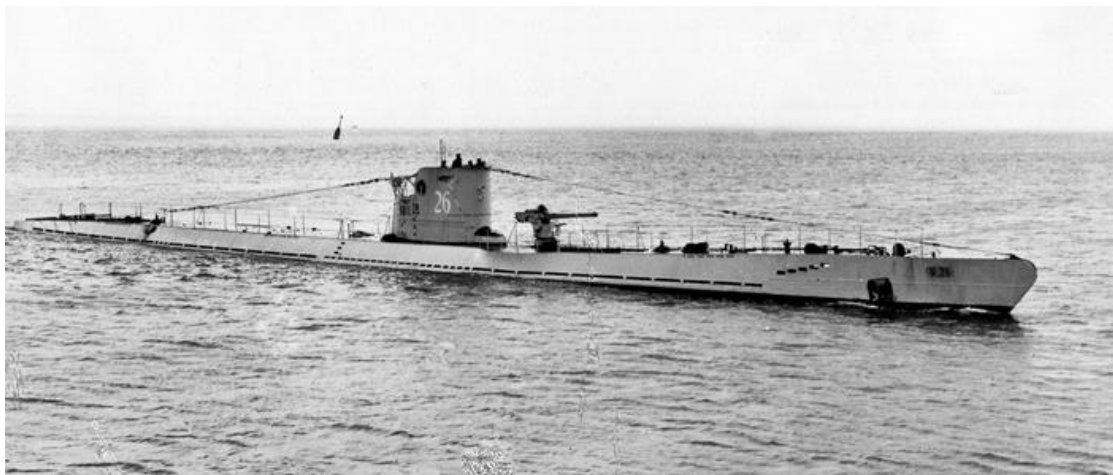
No.10 Sqn was tasked with several “special flights” in June 1940. The initial operation resulted in the first fatalities while on active service for both No. 10 Sqn and the RAAF since the latter’s foundation in 1921. Flight Lieutenant John Bell, pilot, from Farina, South Australia (SA) and Sergeant Charles Harris, observer, from Windsor, New South Wales (NSW), plus two other non-squadron members were lost on 18 June 1940.

Their Supermarine Walrus amphibian crashed in France when attempting to rescue the wife and children of General Charles de Gaulle. Two additional flights took place in June, when No.10 Sqn Sunderlands flew high-ranking British military and government delegations to Bordeaux, France and Rabat, Morocco. The purpose of both missions was an attempt to persuade French forces to continue fighting on from North Africa. Neither diplomatic mission proved successful, possibly influenced by France signing an armistice with Germany on 22 June 1940.

The aircraft of No 10 Squadron were constantly engaged in patrolling the South-Western Approaches, an area bordered to the north by the Irish Sea, to the southeast by the English Channel and to the west by the Atlantic Ocean. Crews often sighted lifeboats, some empty, others with survivors, to which they would direct rescue vessels.

This period of June-October 1940 was known by the U-Boat crews as the “happy time”, during which 274 vessels, totalling 1,390,000 tons, were sunk for the loss of only six U-boats. One of these was U-26, which had previously been damaged in a depth charge attack about 300 mi/485 km west of Brest.

On 1 July 1940, a No.10 Sqn aircraft patrolling the area located U-26 on the surface. The submarine had already dived when the Sunderland attacked, dropping 4x250lb/113kg anti-submarine bombs slightly ahead of the U-boat’s projected course.



U Boat Type 1 U-26

Shortly after, U-26 surfaced and was again attacked, the bombs falling near the conning tower. At this point, the U-boat commander ordered his crew to scuttle and then abandon the boat. All 41 crew were rescued by a Royal Navy (RN) corvette. The sinking was shared between the Royal Navy and No.10 Sqn. The squadron's next submarine sinking would not occur until almost three years later.

## *In Australia*

### No 11 Squadron

Operations from Pt Moresby were generally relaxed except for the occasional search for rumoured aircraft or ships.

Early in May one C-Class aircraft (A18-11) returned from Sydney after being modified with equipment suited for military operations. This included a bomb aiming position, two defensive machine guns and long-range oil and fuel tanks.

One interesting flight by A18-11 was to a North Queensland bay to refuel Supermarine Seagull A2-11. An on-sea refuelling.

Later in the month A18-11 was used to fly the CAS on an inspection tour of the facilities at Tulagi and Rabaul.



No

11 Sqn C-Class flying boat A18-11 (before mods) taking off from Pt Moresby harbour

## **No 14 Squadron**

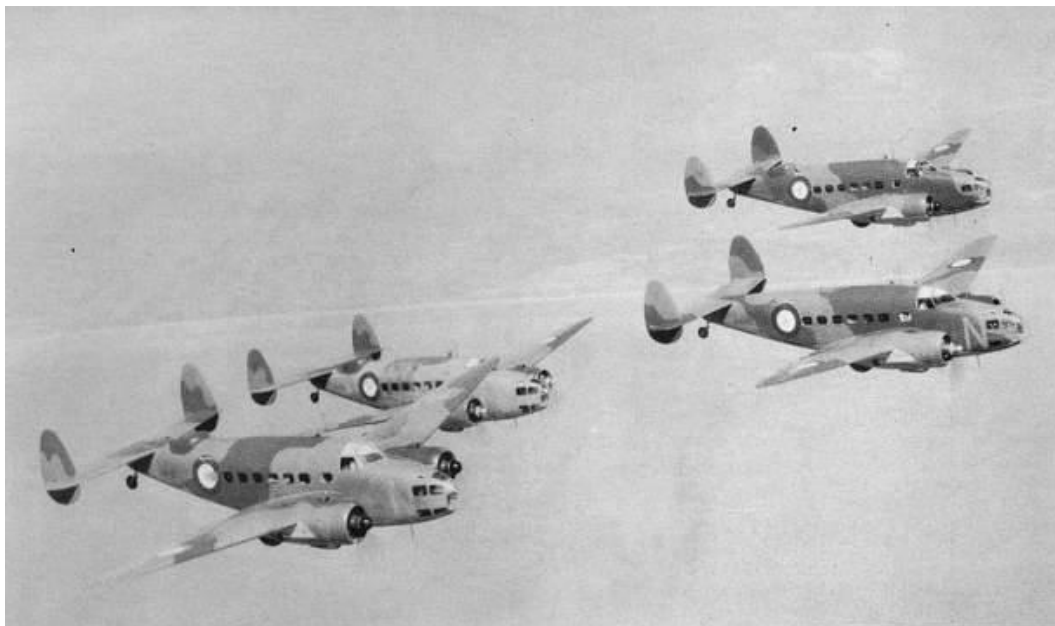
Most flying at this time was in support of Troop convoys leaving from Albany for the Middle East. During May the Avro Anson aircraft were replaced by Lockheed Hudsons.



## **No 13 Squadron**



In Darwin, this Squadron was formed on 01 June 1940 from two Flights of No 12 Squadron. Designated a General Reconnaissance Squadron it initially used Avro Anson aircraft. These aircraft were soon replaced by Lockheed Hudsons and the Squadron was soon performing shipping and coastal patrols from Darwin.



No 13 Sqn Hudsons over Darwin Harbour

**On 1 May 1950**, the members of No 11 Squadron based at RAAF Rathmines were posted onto the strength of the newly formed RAAF Station Rathmines. On this day, the Station's Catalina A24-105, enroute to Darwin, crashed at Georgetown, Queensland, at about 0935 hours. The aircraft had developed a fuel leak in the port engine and, whilst trying to conduct a forced landing at Georgetown, the aircraft overshot the landing strip, crashed into trees, overturned, and caught fire. Five members of the crew were killed; one crew member suffered serious injuries and burns, and the remaining crewmember escaped from the aircraft uninjured.





A condensed report from the SMH  
R.A.A.F. CRASH: FIVE DIE Catalina In Flames

BRISBANE, Sunday. —Five airmen were killed when a Royal Australian Air Force amphibious Catalina flying-boat crashed and burst into flames at Georgetown, 335 miles south-west of Cairns, at 10.30 a.m. to-day. The plane carried a crew of seven. One of the survivors was seriously injured, but the other had a remarkable escape, suffering only minor scratches and bruises.

It arrived at Townsville from Rathmines (N.S.W.) yesterday afternoon and left Townsville at 7 a.m. to-day on a flight to Darwin. An hour before the crash, it radioed Townsville aero-drome that it intended landing at Georgetown for a minor engine repair.

Group-Captain A. G. Carr, Commanding Officer of the North-Eastern area, R.A.A.F. Headquarters, said the five men were probably killed as soon as the Catalina hit the ground.

The Catalina casualty list so far available is:

KILLED:

Northey, the pilot, of Kilaben Bay, Lake Macquarie.

Maurice Wood, 33, flight engineer, who lived at Rathmines air station with his wife.

The full official list will be issued when the next-of-kin have been informed. SMH

**26 May 78 - First 10SQN P-3C Orion arrived at Edinburgh**



The final aircraft, A9-760 was delivered on 16 January 1979.

## 23 May 03 – RAAF commander in Middle East



On this day, Air Commodore Graham Bentley replaced Brigadier Maurie McNarn as the Australian national commander in the Middle East Area of Operations (MEAO) after the successful invasion of Iraq and overthrow of dictator Saddam Hussein. Following the end of Operation *Falconer*, about 1000 Australian Defence Force personnel remained in the Middle East, carrying out tasks such as air traffic control at Baghdad International Airport, security for the Australian Representative Mission, location of Iraq's presumed weapons of mass destruction, and ongoing maritime patrol duties in the Persian Gulf and air transport tasks. These members now came under Air Commodore Bentley as the first Australian Commander Joint Task Force–Middle East Area of Operations (ASCOMD JTF–MEAO). He filled this post until November, when he was duly replaced by a naval officer of one-star rank. It was a year before another RAAF officer again succeeded to this command.

### A Final thought

"If it (Australia) participates in our global scheme, not only will the disposal of its exports be settled easily, but its defence can be secured (sic) also. From these viewpoints we can hardly comprehend why Australia is continuing its resistance against us." 1942 or 2020?