EDITORIAL

Peter Simpson

In this issue our cover features the Kiowa, mainstay of the Australian Army aviation reconnaissance, command and liaison effort for forty years. We began with leased US Army Kiowas in South Vietnam in July 1971. Since then scores of Army pilots have relied on the capabilities of this great little aircraft. A venerable workhorse indeed – how much longer will it soldier on?

Helping serving and ex-Service Army Aviation personnel and their immediate family members who have become handicapped, disadvantaged or infirm is the first listed objective of the Australian Army Aviation Association. PTSD is a crippling infirmity that is difficult to detect in others who try to soldier on under its weight. Its long-term effects have become the focus of much effort by welfare agencies in recent years. In this edition we publish an article written by one of our most highly respected aviators who reveals that he suffered deep depression silently and alone while commanding an AAAvn squadron. He has written about this in order to lend a hand to others who are in a similar plight.

In this edition we are fortunate to have a shortened version of a recent speech by Major General Jim Molan, Honorary Colonel of AAAvn and one of the most senior of our badged pilots. As we have come to expect from Jim, retired but never retiring, it is an entertaining read with a challenging message. And Alf Argent, perhaps our most prolific contributor over the years, recalls in quite amazing detail the time when he and Laurie Doyle undertook Instructor Training in the UK in the 50s.

If you enjoy the range of topics presented in Fourays and would like to add to it, just send an article with images, or simply write a letter to the editor. Articles should be between 900 and 2000 words, in Microsoft Word format and accompanied by images – the higher the resolution the better. They can be e-mailed to the editor (preferred) or mailed on a CD or DVD.

The editor will assist with spelling, grammar and so on, so do not feel your contribution is not worthy of publication just because you think it needs a bit of polish.

As always with Fourays, the views expressed are those of the writers. They should not be construed as being those of the Australian Army Aviation Association or the Australian Defence Force. So, serving contributors, we encourage you to present your personal views without some of the constraints you might feel are present in normal service channels.

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Bill Mellor

I t is a cliché to commence a report on the previous six months’ activity in the Association with ‘it has been a very busy time’ but it is no less true for that. Your committee has been at work on a number of fronts to improve the services to members and ensure the sound financial position of the Association.

Elsewhere in the magazine is a report on the Fourays Photos competition and the subsequent decision to publish a calendar. At the time Fourays was going to print sales for the calendar were encouraging, if not spectacular, so if you haven’t got a copy yet use the order form on the back of the mailer, or download it from the link on the website. The calendars will make excellent Christmas presents.

One area of committee activity that has seen enormous growth in the past few years is welfare, and it is worth highlighting a few statistics to provide a snapshot of what our advocate, Kevin Moss, actually does.

In the past twelve months to September this year he conducted 23 interviews with members and others for repatriation matters! On the welfare front he has received 119 enquiries resulting in 61 interviews with family and friends. Of these, 87% were successful and the other three are still under consideration.

Kevin has noticed in the past few years an increasing rate of claims from Vietnam veterans as they have reached retirement age and left the workforce. While this is to be expected, sometimes the entitlement to benefits following the onset of sudden and serious illness can take time to establish if the claimant is not known to DVA. This may result in the veteran or his family being seriously out of pocket at a time of great stress and concern for all, but it is a situation that need not arise. All that is required is that DVA be aware of a veteran’s identity to set up a file as a precaution, something similar to making out a will. Then if something untoward does happen, Kevin can help establish the entitlements in a timely manner which can save a great deal of stress and angst in the unfortunate circumstance of a major illness.

For those who want to take advantage of this planning, please contact Kevin either through the website or from the details on the advertisement on page 31.

One other area of significant change has been the re-development of the Association website. Unfortunately, due to the absence of key personnel this has been delayed, but there is work being undertaken behind the scenes. The new look has been tested among a select group and has been favourably received. I anticipate that the new website will be unveiled early into the New Year.

At the end of June, a ceremony was held at Oakey to rename the base Swartz Barracks, after the first Honorary Colonel of the Australian Army Aviation Corps, Sir Reginald Swartz, KBE, MBE(Mil), ED. The ceremony was well attended and held in the presence of a large gathering of Sir Reginald’s family. At the Annual General Meeting in September, a motion was passed to complement this action by naming the airfield at Oakey Constable Army Airfield, after Major George Constable, who was killed in action in South Vietnam in 1968 while the Officer Commanding of 161 (Independent) Reconnaissance Flight. While it is noted that the naming of Defence establishments is entirely a matter for Defence to decide, I have written to the Director General of Aviation, Brigadier Neil Turton, who is Head of Corps, to advise him of the AGM decision and recommend the naming of Constable Army Airfield.

It remains for me to wish all our members and their families a happy and safe Christmas and all the very best for the New Year.

STOP PRESS

As this issue was in the final stages of editing I received a reply from Brigadier Turton indicating that the naming of Oakey Army Airfield after George Constable was a ‘great suggestion’ and it would be considered at the next meeting of the Aviation Corps committee. Very encouraging news.

PRESIDENT’S MESSAGE

Bill Mellor

COMMANDERS MESSAGE

Brigadier Greg Lawler

I t has been said, you can’t teach an old dog new tricks and I think the saying may be partly true, especially if you substitute it with an ‘old pilot’.

Two months ago I had the opportunity to fly one of the 1st Aviation Regiment’s Armed Reconnaissance Helicopters on a training mission around Darwin and the training areas. As an aircraft and a weapons platform the Tiger is an incredible machine. Aussie Tiger is leading the way and is the most advanced Tiger type helicopter in the world. The Australian Army is scheduled to take delivery of the 22nd and final aircraft from Australian Aerospace on the 1st of December this year.

From a pilot’s perspective this aircraft is exceptionally easy to fly with the firepower that can be bolted to the wings — the Tiger is a formidable, modern and agile weapon of the 21st century battlefield.

My sortie was hands on experience with this new capability. Much to my delight, of the 2.4 hour mission, I had 2.3 hours on the controls. The Tiger is able to provide an amazing amount of information to the pilot through the LCD panels in the cockpit and also displayed into the visor of the helmet. Being the old pilot and the pedestrian instructor that I am, this was a difficult and different experience, from flying with your eyes outside.

The biggest take away from the sortie, is our aircraft are becoming increasingly more sophisticated inside the cockpit. Pilots want to look at everything. What I want to reinforce is the pilot must still do the basics, the “old tricks” first and do them well: Aviate, Navigate, Communicate and Administer. I may not be able to be taught all the new tricks, but I reminded our young and talented pilots of the old tricks. The kit may be fantastic, but we still have to fly it.

During the year, I have been privileged to see the excellent work of Battle Group Cavalier, which included the first Tiger squadron mission during the lead up activities to Exercise Talisman Sabre in Shoalwater Bay. LTCOL Jobson took more than 400 soldiers to the field and put an Aviation Battle Group into a greenfield site.

It has been more than 12 years since we have put a Battalion sized organisation in the paddock. Most of the young soldiers had not been in the field with Army Aviation before, but had seen many operational deployments in East Timor or Afghanistan.

As with all exercises I saw tradesmen and groundcrewmen worked harder than anyone else on the position (cooks and OPSON being the only exception). These soldiers are the true unsung heroes of our capability. I look forward to the next large exercise and the further development of the Tiger capability, as it is yet to be released to operational service.

I would like to reflect on the year, and the first year of my command of the 16th Aviation Brigade. The year started earlier than usual with most of the Brigade being recalled to help with Operation Queensland Flood Assist and Operation Yasi Assist. I was inspired by our people when they left their loved ones and homes in Townsville, threatened by Cyclone Yasi, to protect our aircraft and help others in need. Our combat aviators demonstrated true professionalism during the summer of natural disasters.

We continued to do a marvellous job in East Timor with another two rotations and yet another rotation of Chinoos to Afghanistan. No one expected to hear the news on the early morning of the 30th of May when we were informed we had lost one of our young officers, Lieutenant Marcus Case, had five crew injured in the accident and Chinook 102 was destroyed. Marcus was a young pilot from the 173rd Aviation Squadron and had been attached to the RAAF, deployed in Afghanistan flying Unmanned Aerial Vehicles. We brought him home on the 6th of June to his family and friends.

This year has also seen many firsts in the history of Army Aviation. Black Hawk has never flown so much and achieved a record number of hours. As mentioned earlier, the Tiger has flown its first Squadron sized mission during its deployment to the field in Shoalwater Bay and has integrated into the land battle extremely well for a true combined arms effect.

Recently two of our combat aviators were seriously injured in a rogue Afghan National Army shooting incident where three Australian soldiers lost their lives. They are now home, resting in hospital and I wish them a speedy recovery.

As I write this, our people are still working very hard preparing for the next rotation overseas or have just completed training for CHOGM and the Presidential visit. We are committed to the job until the task is done but ready for a well-deserved break at Christmas with friends and family.

I have thoroughly welcomed the challenges presented this year and look forward to the next. I wish everyone in the Association a very happy and safe Christmas and prosperous New Year. All is well.
2011 has proved to be a vintage year for formal recognition of those associated with Army aviation, with no fewer than eleven individuals being recognised with civil and military awards under the Australian honours system.

Heading the list on the civil side of the house are Helen Bawden and Frank Benfield, two very well known Association members, who have been awarded the Medal of the Order of Australia.

In Helen’s case it is for her services to the community in respect of her work as a volunteer and secretary of the board of the Museum of Australian Army Flying, the Oakey Carers Support Group and on the board of Toowoomba, Golden West and South Burnett Tourism. A very dedicated volunteer at the MAAF for more than 30 years, Helen has worked tirelessly in promoting the museum in the regional area and wider. Her efforts in organising the annual MAAF Fly-In are fundamental to the success of the event, which has elevated the Museum sixth on the list of most popular tourist attractions on the Downs.

Frank has been awarded the OAM for his services to the veteran community, and again he has been a committed advocate for improving services and conditions for ex-service men and women for many years. A former President of the 161 Recce Association, he has been a member of the Veterans Review Board for the past 12 years and is currently serving on the Prime Minister’s Advisory Council on Ex-Service Matters. Frank has also served on the Military Compensation Board.

Another on the civil list is Brian Huddleston from the Army Aviation Centre at Oakey who has been awarded the Public Service Medal for outstanding service as the Project Manager of the MRH 90 project and his planning for the helicopter’s introduction into service.

The military list also sees the services of two other Association members recognised and three other serving members have also received awards.

Brigadier Shayne Elder was appointed to be a Member of the Order of Australia in recognition of his outstanding performance over many years culminating in four years as the Deputy Commander and then Commander of 16 Aviation Brigade. During this time Brigadier Elder reinforced the warfighting ethos of the modern combat Army aviator.

Operationally, Captain Michael Whitney’s service as a Chinook troop commander in the Rotary Wing Group 4 in Afghanistan in 2009 has been recognised with the award of a Distinguished Service Medal. This is an outstanding achievement and reflects very favourably not only on Michael’s worthy performance, but on the RWRG as a whole.

Similarly, the award of a Conspicuous Service Medal to Sergeant Thomas Bauer, the forward repair team leader and maintenance manager of the Timor Leste Aviation Group XII on Operation Astute during 2009-10 is fitting recognition of his logistic skills and dedicated service and again highlights the commitment of many Army combat aviators over the long time that the Black Hawks have been in Timor Leste.

The other members of the Army aviation capability to be awarded medals recently are Major Terry Johnson who has been awarded the Conspicuous Service Cross for his outstanding achievement as the Staff Officer Grade Two Maintenance Standards at Headquarters 16 Aviation Brigade; Warrant Officer Class Two Vivian Anderson awarded the Conspicuous Service Medal for meritorious achievement as the acting officer-in-charge of the Oakey Detachment of the Joint Logistics Unit (South Queensland); and Corporal Ben Balchin from the 6th Aviation Regiment, who has also been awarded the CSM for his achievements in very difficult and demanding circumstances performing the ground liaison duties in the Highlands of Papua New Guinea during the recovery of bodies from an aircraft crash site.

Finally, Group Captain David Scheul from the Defence Materiel Organisation has been awarded the Medal of the Order of Australia in the Military Division. David is a software engineer on the Tiger program and Program Manager of the MRH90 project and has worked tirelessly in the interests of Army aviation. Even though both programs have suffered delays and problems, his superior efforts have helped to stave off even further delays.

The Simkin Trophy for 2011 has been awarded to Major Andrew Middleton, the Officer Commanding 173rd Aviation Squadron, 6th Aviation Regiment. As such he has been responsible for the professional and technical development of many junior and inexperienced junior officers and has approached that task with zeal and determination.

Major Middleton set about establishing and developing the governance, technical, safety, training and administrative framework for the squadron in a particularly measured and comprehensive manner. As a result 173rd Aviation Squadron has been able to exceed transformation and development milestones in order to reach full operating capability in a timely manner. The unit has provided effective support to numerous Army units and has made a significant contribution to the Queensland Flood disaster; thereby, proving its operational ability and raising the profile of the Army Aviation Capability.

The Aviation Soldier of the Year trophy, sponsored by the Army Aviation Association, has been awarded in 2011 to Craftsman Lachlan Fraser of 5th Aviation Regiment. Craftsman Fraser is an armament fitter working on the Chinook mini-gun system who demonstrated maturity and moral courage when he identified a systematic error in the management of the maintenance procedures of the system. Having alerted the chain of command about the problem he then set about rectifying it and instigating robust measures to prevent recurrence. A soldier not afraid to shoulder the extra effort required, Craftsman Fraser is highly regarded by all as a hard working and professional soldier and a very worthy recipient of the ASOTY award.

The Swartz Shield for 2011 has been awarded to B Squadron, 5th Aviation Regiment. In an extremely busy twelve months the Squadron has continued to refine and develop its own airmobile skills and those of supported units throughout Australia as well as providing support to a wide range of individual training and administrative and VIP tasks. Over the Christmas New Year period the Squadron was called out to provide assistance to the Queensland floods and shortly after again to assist in the clean-up after cyclone Yasi. During this entire period, the Squadron, ably assisted by the Technical Support Squadron of the Regiment more than doubled its allocated domestic Rate of Effort; a clear indication of the resilience, professionalism and commitment to excellence of the men and women who make up B Squadron, 5th Aviation Regiment.
LIEUTENANT MARCUS CASE

LT Marcus Scan Case, who died in an aircraft accident on operations in Afghanistan, was a very much liked and loved member of 173rd Aviation Squadron based at Holsworthy. His likable character often led to more larrikin behaviour both around the Squadron from day-to-day and often also into the weekend in his social life.

Since Marcus’ passing there have been many anecdotes passed around by his many families and friends, over a quiet beer, in gatherings all over the country and at times the world. Although incredibly sad, Marcus’ passing has brought together his many families and highlighted just how much he was loved and respected in life. His loving parents Bernard and Lee, his adoring older brothers and sisters, Robert, Michael, Jackie, Liz and Chris took great pride in nurturing the fiery redhead into the young man that would touch so many people’s lives. After leaving home Marcus’ joined the Military family, first as a Commando and then as an Aviator.

It was through the sad events of the 30 May 2011 that these families and many other friends came together to share their lives and stories of Marcus. His 173rd brothers took great pride in being invited to Bernard and Lee’s home to get to know the family. Although the Case family were thankful, the honour really rested with the men of 173 in being able to share this time with such amazing people. We just hope that through the days, weeks, months and years that follow that we can continue to gather together, all his families, to continue to recount and learn new anecdotes of the man we so tragically lost and who was loved by so many.

Within the Squadron we have taken it upon ourselves to ensure Marcus is not forgotten, his face will now adorn the walls for all that are here now and for all that will follow. In his old office still remain two passport photos of him, moustache and all, stuck on the white board as a cheeky reminder of the larrikin that once graced this office. I often look at these photos, as the stress of the week gets to me, and have a quiet chuckle to myself and am comforted in the knowledge that I had the privilege and honour of knowing such a likeable, lovablle and always cheeky man.

LT PAT WALTON

The Army aviation community lost one of its true characters in the recent aircraft accident in outback Australia that claimed the life of Gary Ticehurst and two of his ABC-TV journalist colleagues. Gary never forgot his military roots and was a strong supporter of the Association and the current Army aviation capability. A member of 16 Army Course, Gary got his wings at Oakley in 1974 and was posted to 161 Recce Squadron, Holsworthy, at the old Anzac Rifle Range site and shortly thereafter relocated on the then new Luscombe Army Airfield. He achieved early notoriety when, not long after the move, while in the circuit at the new location, he misjudged the pullout from a wingsuit and made pretty severe contact with the ground. He and his passenger suffered only minor injuries, and the accident was put down to the contractor building the airfield four feet too high!

Apart from his courses, Gary spent all his time in Army aviation at Holsworthy, albeit from that firm base he ranged far and wide. A survey operation in the Torres Strait and on Cape York Peninsular in 1975 lead to a keen interest in the history of the early outback explorers, which in turn lead to his early exposure to the television industry on an expedition to retrace an explorer’s early journey. In 1980 he resigned from the Army to commence flying with the nascent NSW Police Air Wing and eighteen months later he set up his own aviation company and secured a contract with ABC-TV. It was a contract that he was to hold for nearly thirty years during which he became one of the most accomplished media pilots in Australia. His film work includes working on Australia, the Matrix series, Superman Returns and many others. During his coverage for ABC-TV of the tragic 1998 Sydney to Hobart yacht, Gary spent many hours out in the appalling weather providing information and direction to the rescue services and comfort to the distressed crew.

In a flying career spanning nearly forty years, Gary Ticehurst amassed a total of 16,000 hours. Always good company, with a ready smile, he will be missed by all who knew him.

To his family and friends, the Australian Army Aviation Association offers its condolences.

BILL MELLOR

GARY TICEHURST

Since 2003, Fourays has published reviews on more than twenty books. The vast majority of these have had an aviation theme of some description or another, and a good percentage have featured Army aviators from several nations in action from Vietnam through to Afghanistan. Immediate Response is a variation on the theme. Mark Hammond is a Royal Marine officer and a helicopter pilot; one of 60 or so in the RM. He has flown Lynx and Gazelle in the UK and Whisky model Cobras on exchange with the US Marine Corps. Seemingly at the end of his RM flying career a loaded staff appointment beckoned; he considered emigrating to Australia as an alternative. Enter a kindly mentor who arranged for Hammond to be posted to one of the several RM exchange positions with the Royal Air Force flying Chinnooks. This, of course, meant deploying to Afghanistan where the RAF Chinoop fleet was heavily committed. Immediate Response is an account of Hammond’s second and third tours in 2006 and 2007.

In the same way that the Iroquois and the Cobra became emblematically linked to the Vietnam War so have the Chinnook and the Apache come to represent the rotary wing support to the war in Afghanistan. Black Hawks are there in numbers, of course, but the elevation of the terrain in many of the regions has limited their effectiveness. The deployment of the new Mike model Black Haws is redressing this imbalance somewhat but, in the public view, it is the venerable old ‘Chook’ that is seen to be leading the way and, for the British forces, is the vehicle of choice for medevac.

Hammond provides the obligatory ‘how a Chinook flies’ segment in the book, supported by a two page see-through diagram of a Chinook annotated with 139 individual parts of the aircraft! He describes the modern operational of the RAF Chinoop fleet which, while based in Kandahar, are regularly forward deployed into Camp Bastion. It is out of Bastion that most of the action takes place, including some very impressive night flying into some heavy enemy fire to recover casualties. This action ultimately results in the award of a Distinguished Flying Cross to Hammond. His account of the various actions, however, is, to this reviewer, diminished by the constant use of slang and vernacular that is the everyday language, apparently, of RAF Chinook pilots. Some of it emerges on the juvenile, and it becomes distracting and an impediment to a clear understanding of what is happening. But, on occasions, clarity breaks and it is as if the ghost writer, Clare MacNaughton, has gained the upper hand and insisted on writing intelligible English. The further this reviewer advanced into the book, more ardent was the wish that MacNaughton might have gained that upper hand on page 2 and retained it until the end.

Of course, operations are not non-stop action, and Hammond feels obliged to fill in the space between the excitement with descriptions of how he and his crew steal a Humvee from the Americans, dissuade an Army officer from using the toilet in their lines and other riveting activities such as pumping iron and smoking. Fortunately such sojourns are few but, combined with the language, they reduce the impact of the book from a serious account of warfare to a boys-own adventure in the desert. Get this one for your adolescent son or nephew; he will probably enjoy it.

There is no doubt that Major Mark Hammond is a very brave and competent pilot, and that he more than deserved the DFC the Queen pinned onto his chest. But if Immediate Response is anything to go by, he should stick to his day/night job, and leave the writing to the professionals.

BOOK REVIEW | Dee Vee

IMMEDIATE RESPONSE
THE DOG THAT BIT ME WAS BLACK

TOM PARTRIDGE

For me, the worst thing about Vietnam was coming home. The vilification from our peer group was particularly galling and I can neither forgive nor forget the bitterness, anger and hurt veterans felt at their betrayal.

The next seven years of my service was okay, but sometime thereafter I began to suffer anxiety and depression. In September 1978 I was promoted from 2IC to OC at 161 Recce Squadron. In 1979, all seemed to be reasonably successful with 161 being manifested itself by severe cramps followed by bloody diarrhoea, which made flying very difficult indeed.

In 1999, my colleague at Ten in Brisbane crashed and burned and I was advised over the radio while airborne. I was immediately transported back to Vietnam and was convinced that my controls had ceased to function and that we would plunge forward into the ground. From that time on, I suffered continual flash-backs and panic attacks while flying and Paddy O’Kane’s death in 2000 was the last straw, so I resigned following the Sydney Olympics.

In 2001 I had a breakdown and friends, who were themselves TPIs, took me to see the Vietnam Veterans’ Association to seek help. I was diagnosed with ‘chronic severe post-traumatic stress disorder, with deep depression’. Department of Veterans’ Affairs agreed that I was breaking mad and presented me with a gold card as an unemployable TPI.

While all this was going on, I searched for answers, so I studied Psychology at UNE, graduating in 2003. This knowledge, together with my experience as a psychiatric patient (four months in a psychiatric clinic thus far, and monthly visits with my shrink plus considerable medication for these past ten years) has helped, but I’m not out of the woods and never will be.

I wish to thank my beautiful wife Beverley for supporting me over many difficult years. Her loyalty and support is treasured.

Now to the crux of the matter: I feel that I may be in a position to help anyone who can relate to the above. I have helped several fellows over recent years by chatting and guiding them (full confidentiality) in the direction of professional help, and to gaining TPI in one case.

If anyone feels the need, please contact me (from January 2012) at:

Tom Partridge
105 Mahogany Drv
Pelican Waters Qld 4551
Mob: 0427 227 237
email: tpartridge@bigpond.com
pneumatic and there was a cartridge engine start. The standard six in those days differed from today’s analogous in that the altimeter was placed under the ASI on the left and the VSI and turn-and-balance were on the right of the central AH and DI. There were two-stage amber for IF practice when we donned violet goggles, though winter skies meant frequent actual. There were many days when the airfield was closed due fog. A wartime poet summed it up in a few words: “...Flat fields, no sun, the muddy, misty dawn, / And always, above all, the mad rain dripping down…. “

In addition to ab initio training of cadets and refresher courses for those already badged, there were courses that ran for two weeks, mainly for Air Ministry staff officers. Included in these were a number of Battle of Britain and Bomber Command pilots, now wing commanders and group captains with rows of decorations and ribbons. A regular visitor was Air Commodore J E Johnson, the RA F’s leading fighter pilot of WW2. He flew up from London, solo in an Avro Anson on Friday afternoons, and returned the following Monday morning. He often came to our crew room for a chat. During the Korean War he was attached to a USAF squadron flying the F-86 Sabre.

Our Course ended in February 1957, so with our White Cards as proof of our competency to handle the English weather, and my Log Book showing “Provost T Mk 900 in 2011 money) per hour. This covered administrative overheads, a slice of the pay and allowances of our instructors as well as the direct and indirect running costs of the Provost.

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Looking around the room, I see what is perhaps an unusual coming together of the military, Territory and Federal government, Territory and Federal officials, lobby groups, and of course, the sinews of war - defence industry.

I have been asked to speak tonight on the Anzac spirit. I am going to take the coward’s route and not define that in the confidence that we know it when we see it.

The role of today’s Anzacs is to fight our current wars and to prepare to fight and win our future wars. Our current wars are difficult but our Anzacs are doing what the Government bids them, and doing it superbly. I happen to think that the operational aim is wrong but that is another speech.

If we make the mistake of thinking that the biggest challenge that we face is running our very limited current operations, then when we have to get involved in the kind of war that we are buying JSFs, AWDs, AEW&Cs, MRITs etc, (the alphabet soup) for, we will be in for a big surprise. To conduct sophisticated joint warfighting operations against anything even approaching a peer competitor is at least one thousand times harder than maintaining 1550 personnel in the Middle East Area of Operations.

But most people say, we will never have to do that will we? And if we do, we will have lots of time to prepare, won’t we? And the US will be there, won’t they?

Well I hope so. But then I come from an army that actually believed the Defence strategists when they said that we would never fight in the Middle East again, who said that our only enemies were to be “nongs in thongs”, the same strategists who missed the fall of the soviet union and the rise of Islamists, the same department of Defence who reacted to the Russian invasion of landlocked Afghanistan by buying frigates?

My father was in the Army during WWII. This army was the result of seeing the Great War as being the war to end all wars. It was not initially a highly efficient or effective army, because due to unpreparedness, it expand far too fast.

When you heard him talk, he used to talk of the indomitable spirit of his mates, the Anzac spirit, and the triumph and tragedy of their situation. But who were the diggers mostly trying to overcome – our Japanese enemy? No way! It seems to think, but national unpreparedness

I end all wars. It was not initially a highly professional soldiers, originally slave soldiers, who dominated warfare across the Muslim world for 400 years. The Brits lost 30 killed, the Mamelukes lost 5000 and ceased to exist after 400 years. Rather, he annihilated them. The French invaded Egypt in 1798 and at the Battle of the Pyramids, he defeated the Mamelukes. Rather, he annihilated them. The French

The lesson for Australian generals is to never become complacent. Just because you quote Trotsky who said to all those people who say, arrogantly and mindlessly, that they do not believe in war: “You may not be interested in war”, asks Trotsky, “but is war interested in you?”

So generals and politicians must be as much Anzacs as the digger in a hole in the ground. They too must have the Anzac spirit.

Let me expand more on the Anzac spirit by talking about Napoleon.

When you become a general, you are given a ceremonial sword called the Mameluke Sword. Mamelukes were professional soldiers, originally slave soldiers, who dominated warfare across the Muslim world for 400 years. The Brits so respected the Mamelukes as soldiers that they adopted the Mameluke sword, and with our Brit traditions, we too wear that sword.

This sword teaches, or should teach, Australian generals a lesson. Napoleon invaded Egypt in 1798 and at the Battle of the Pyramids, he defeated the Mamelukes. Rather, he annihilated them. The French lost 30 killed, the Mamelukes lost 5000 and ceased to exist after 400 years.

The lesson for Australian generals is to never become complacent. Just because you seem to have been top dog for years, look out for the new boy on the block. Never believe your own propaganda. Napoleon used new technology and new techniques, and applied intellect to the practice of war.

A summary of a speech delivered to the Australian Industry and Defence Network — Northern Territory In Darwin on 25 Oct 11 by Major General Jim Molan, Honorary Colonel of AAAvn

ANZAC spirit

and the Mameluke Sword

When you heard him talk, he used to talk of the indomitable spirit of his mates, the Anzac spirit, and the triumph and tragedy of their situation. But who were the diggers mostly trying to overcome – our Japanese enemy? No way! It seems to think, but national unpreparedness

I end all wars. It was not initially a highly professional soldiers, originally slave soldiers, who dominated warfare across the Muslim world for 400 years. The Brits lost 30 killed, the Mamelukes lost 5000 and ceased to exist after 400 years. Rather, he annihilated them. The French invaded Egypt in 1798 and at the Battle of the Pyramids, he defeated the Mamelukes. Rather, he annihilated them. The French

The lesson for Australian generals is to never become complacent. Just because you quote Trotsky who said to all those people who say, arrogantly and mindlessly, that they do not believe in war: “You may not be interested in war”, asks Trotsky, “but is war interested in you?”

So generals and politicians must be as much Anzacs as the digger in a hole in the ground. They too must have the Anzac spirit.

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The lesson for Australian generals is to never become complacent. Just because you seem to have been top dog for years, look out for the new boy on the block. Never believe your own propaganda. Napoleon used new technology and new techniques, and applied intellect to the practice of war.
I personally believe that the situation in the Defence bureaucracy is so bad that not much short of a first principles, public review of Defence, with a willingness to totally reform Defence including (critically) the ministerial function, will suffice.

But even a first principles review of defence will fail if we do not state our strategy as a strategy, operationalize our strategy (that is express the strategy in real world operational terms not fuzzy, self-serving bureaucratic terms), ensure that the strategy is achievable by the force to be created by any strategy document such as a white paper or a DCP, and defence industry is a basic part of all this, and then allocate (or not allocate) resources.

In this way, efficiency, effectiveness and accountability can be managed. This is what I would call an operational accountability statement, which should be made public taking on our behalf, and the democratic process can function.

This Mameluke sword, unlike the one that I carried, may even have a cutting edge. This might produce ministers who share the Anzac spirit with their soldiers. At the moment it is hard to say that ministers are held responsible for the success or failure of the defence function or, given the current state of the ADF, we see a littering of sacked ministers. We don’t see that Defence ministers don’t seem to be accountable, at least for the prime defence function.

What I offer you is a the view that there is no point in trying to make Defence more efficient and more accountable unless you make the ministerial function and Parliament more efficient and definitely more accountable by stressing operational effectiveness.
After a year's absence the Fourays Photos competition was again run in 2011, and what a difference a year makes. In 2009 the quality of images submitted was high, but the number of entrants and images was low. In 2010, only three entries were received and the competition was suspended, however, this year we had a good number of entrants, and plenty of high quality images.

The judges, former DAvn and current editor of Fourays, Peter Simpson, renowned artist and Army pilot, Conway Bown and the graphic designer of Fourays and principal of Renegraphics, Melinda Rene, had their work cut out for them. All personal identifying information was removed from the images, and by a process of elimination the field was reduced from forty six images down to final round of twelve, with the top three images being awarded the prizes on offer. As it turned out there was a clear winner and the $600 first prize went to Captain Dan Guillaumier from the Training Centre, but the next two couldn’t be separated and so equal second was awarded to both Corporal Stuart Evans of 5 Regiment and Captain Chris Heinemann from 6 Regiment. The second and third prize money of $400 was shared between them.

With such a bumper crop of imagery, the management committee took the plunge and commissioned the first ever Fourays Calendar. Designed by Melinda Rene and featuring imagery from thirteen of the entrants of the 2009 and 2011 competition and a restored Australian Flying Corps image from the MAAF collection, the calendar first went on sale at the Fly In at Oakey in October and has been a steady seller on the Association website ever since. At the time of Fourays going to press there were still some calendars available. Either use the reverse of the mailer or download an order form from the website and get your order in. They won’t last.

The committee plans to run the competition again next year but don’t think you have to have all the best multi-megapixel, SLR camera gear to enter. In the past there have been scanned slides and photos entered and some made it into the calendar. Others have submitted images from ordinary point and shoot digital cameras, and even the ubiquitous phone cameras were well represented. If you have photos of Army aviation that tell a story and are well composed then keep your eye out for the 2012 Fourays Photo competition. Who knows, you might be in the 2013 Fourays calendar.
Throughout the months of June and July, the Australian Army warfighting capability has been given a massive boost through the raising, training and employment of an Aviation battle group. Battle Group Cavalier was formed by bringing together numerous personnel, squadrons and aircraft from across 16th Aviation Brigade, Army Aviation Training Centre and elsewhere to form a formidable fighting unit of over 400 personnel, 90 vehicles and 25 helicopters.

Battle Group Cavalier was the second of the contemporary, evolved aviation battle groups after Battle Group Pegasus was formed in Townsville in 2010 for Exercise HAMEL. Battle Group Cavalier consisted of the following:

- Battle Group Headquarters: Headquarters 6th Aviation Regiment
- Combat Team Marlin: 162 Reconnaissance Squadron, 1st Aviation Regiment
- Combat Team Warhorse: 8 Squadron, 6th Aviation Regiment
- Combat Team Redback: 173rd Aviation Squadron, 6th Aviation Regiment
- Combat Team Berserker: Support Squadron, 6th Aviation Regiment
- Intermediate Staging Base Team: Logistic Support Squadron, 5th Aviation Regiment

This year, as the framework lead of Battle Group Cavalier, 6th Aviation Regiment sought to learn the lessons from 5th Aviation Regiment from Exercise HAMEL in 2010 and to take this modern, highly capable warfighting organisation into a deployed setting in Shoalwater Bay Training Area to be used with the troops of 7th Brigade during Exercise DIAMOND DOLLAR and Exercise TALISMAN SABRE.

This was one of the most successful training endeavours for 21st century Army aviation - clearly articulated by Chief of Army, Commander Forces Command and Commander 7th Brigade. It was an exercise of firsts, successes and evolutions not previously seen in Army Aviation's history. The first ARH squadron mission was flown on Exercise DIAMOND DOLLAR in June, followed by three more in July. It was the largest strategic deployment by the Army aviation capability in memory - from four major centres, utilising strategic airlift, road and air self deploy. Eight helicopters were deployed by strategic airlift. It was the largest Intermediate Staging Base activity in the previous 15 years and the first time Army Aviation had deployed an entire aviation battle group into an austere field location since 1997. That was completed twice. It was the first major aviation support to 7th Brigade since its creation.

Extremely gratifying was the level of upskilling provided to combat aviators of all ranks, trades and corps. For two months Combat aviators delivered high pressure missions, conducted patrols, counter improvised explosive device, numerous downed aircraft recovery teams, counter ambush, vehicle check points, casualty clearance, Forward Arming Refuel Point (FARP) deployments, command & control step-up, logistic and mission planning & tracking. There were numerous staff appreciations, live firing exercises, liaison teams with ground battle groups and the position was attacked by ground insurgents, armoured vehicles and attack helicopters - this last attack was courtesy of Combat Team Redback, commanded by Major Andrew Middleton, who had deployed to Williamson Airfield for this stage of the exercise to support the enemy forces. For two months the soldiers of the battle group cooked, planned, repaired, refuelled, packed, unpacked, dug, shot, patrolled and flew missions from the field. Combat aviators supported the troops of the combined arms team and were living in the same location and conditions as the troops of the combined arms team.

Without a doubt, one of the most impressive accomplishments was the first aviation battle group-level mission conducted in June, followed by another in July. In the first, a massed squadron of ARH conducted a live fire time on target Joint Air Attack Team into the Mt Hummock Sector with eight FA-18s out of Darwin. On completion, a troop of ARH executed an airborne Transfer-of-Authority to the armoured squadron who subsequently inserted an assault company into an airfield. The remaining ARH hot loaded through a deployed FARP and then returned to the Pyrr-Phen Sector to shoot 30mm cannon and 70mm rockets in support of an infantry combat team live fire conducted by Battle Group RAM (8/9 RAR). Meanwhile the armoured combat team completed the company airfield seizure and dispatched a troop on an airborne VIP movement. Once the infantry combat team live fire finished, they conduct a battlefield clearance which included an aeromedical evacuation performed by another Black Hawk of the armoured squadron. The ARH is returned to the FARP for another hot load and then executed more live 30mm and 70mm shooting at Townsend Island Sector. Throughout all this time, the aviation battle group Forward Operating Base came under ground attack, which involved a combination of ground Quick Reaction Force response and ARH close combat attack. For a short time a Black Hawk was even in action!

Finally, two Kiowas maintained station in an airborne Restricted Operating Zone to allow Command & Control to be effected by the Battle Group Commander.

The second battle group mission involved the allocation of a discrete Engagement Area (Killing Ground) to Battle Group Cavalier for destruction of withdrawing enemy armoured forces by Combat Team Marlin.

The area was protected by an integrated air defence system. Battle Group Cavalier conducted a three day deception campaign against the air defence in order to set the conditions for the final ARH assault, while concurrently providing aeromedical evacuation, close combat attacks, armed reconnaissance and patrol insertions for 7th Brigade lead battle groups. On the final day, the enemy launched a surprise attack on the extreme flank of 7th Brigade, which consisted of 20 M113 Armoured Personnel Carriers driving rapidly toward a lightly equipped friendly battalion in a defensive position. The Brigade Commander ordered Battle Group Cavalier to destroy the enemy armoured attack, which was duly achieved in quick succession by Major Hayden Archibald, Officer Commanding Combat Team Marlin, in a massed ARH squadron ambush along the enemy axis of advance. At the same time the enemy launched ‘sleepy’ sections of armoured vehicles deep in the rear area of the brigade, which included Battle Group Cavalier Forward Operating Base and the Brigade Reserve. This in turn disrupted command & control for the 7th Brigade and things were looking difficult until the launch of the Battle Group Cavalier Command & Control aircraft. Commanded by Major Tony Dennis, Officer Commanding Combat Team Warhorse, the Black Hawk was able to provide essential airborne communications which enabled the situational awareness of Headquarters 7th Brigade and a successful outcome for the battle.

This is 21st Century mission execution for Army Aviation delivered by an impressive new presence on the Army’s order of battle. The aviation battle group has ensured Army Aviation has responded to the direction of the Chief of Army to reclaim Army’s warfighting capability. A whole generation of Combat aviators has been up-skilled and imbued with the knowledge, wisdom and capacity to deploy to any environment and deliver close combat aviation support to the troops of the combined arms team.

1 The last time a regional aviation group supported 7th Brigade was when it was 5th Brigade in 1994.
The review of Vietnam on Canvas – Ken McFayden: An Artist at War in the last edition of Fourays favourably commented on the contributions of artists in recording military history and highlighted the emotional impact of paintings and drawings. Photography is no less important in recording this history. The preservation of our Army aviation heritage is performed by a dedicated group of volunteers at the Museum of Australian Army Flying.

Bob Bell and Cindy Gordon form part of the photographic team at the MAAF. Bob Bell is well known to anyone who has served at Oakey in the past twenty years; a former RAEME warrant officer, he ran the base printing shop for many years following his retirement from the Army. Cindy Gordon was a reservist with 25 RQR and a member of the Photographic Club of Toowoomba. Bob became aware of her interests and invited her to join the effort at the MAAF. Craig Robarts, also a former RAEME soldier, has helped the section get on its feet in the past.

Some images have come from surprising sources. An example is the ‘Amberley collection’; in a clean up, the photographic section at RAAF Amberley found negatives from the days of 16 Army Light Aircraft Squadron. These were mostly photos of graduations and technical images to support defect reports. Thankfully, they contacted the MAAF and several hundred negatives of the early days of modern Army Aviation were sent to Oakey. Similarly, a collection of images of 6AD’s time on the airfield and early deployments of Army aviation detachments to Papua New Guinea, Irian Jaya and Thailand have also been preserved.

Most of the work is scanning images from negatives, slides, prints and documents. The team have a couple of high resolution scanners, one capable of scanning at 12,000dpi. Once scanned, the image is restored with the painstaking removal of dust marks and other flaws, correcting the brightness, colour and contrast. This can take many hours to achieve. An example of the team’s work can be found in the 2012 Fourays Calendar. The August image is of a group of Australian Flying Corps men in front of an RE8 in France in 1918. It has been restored from a shabby print that Bob bought at a flea market, and the end result is a magnificent photo of early Army aviation.

The MAAF is always on the lookout for images. If you have some that are of the early days, contact the Fourays Production Editor (email address on page 1) and arrangements can be made to scan in your images and have them returned to you. The MAAF is establishing an imagery library that can be used for research well into the future, and you can help make it happen.
EMERGING FROM THE SHADOW...

And it’s a re-run in the truest sense... the aerial OP is back! Twenty years in the making and Army has a Tactical Unmanned Aerial System (TUAS) delivered by Joint Project (JP) 129 Phase 2 – the RQ-7B SHADOW 200.

BY MAJOR KEIRIN JOYCE

Requirements for JP129 first emerged in Project Land 53, more commonly known by its program name, NINOX (named after the Powerful Owl, Ninox Sterra). This program was a land systems program charged with enhancing the Army’s night fighting and surveillance capabilities. Most readers will know its success through the night fighting and night vision equipment rolled out to the Army in the late 1990’s through Phase 1, but it was in the surveillance systems that it is more infamously known. Land53 Phase 2 aimed to equip the Army with an Unattended Ground Sensor (UGS) and a UAS capability. The UAS activities during Phase 2 were broken into two sub-phases, 2A to evaluate systems and technologies, and 2B to go and buy a system.

Phase 2A commenced in 1990 (yes, 21 years ago) after the ADF approved a series of studies, culminating in 1993 with a concept technology demonstration involving UAS supplied by Israel Aircraft Industries (IAI). These trials were run in July and August 1993. For the trials, IAI were contracted to bring out to Australia the SCOUT and SEARCHER Air Vehicles (AV). No systems at this stage of technology development had automated take-off and landing capabilities, and as such, they required an external pilot to launch and recover the aircraft (think radio controlled aircraft control handsets) - the personnel selected to undertake this function, to fly the AV’s, were a group of four RAEME CPL’s (Chambers, Choyce, Skriveris, and Towell) from 173 General Support Squadron. Once airborne, the automated functions of the UAS mission (waypoint navigation and sensor operation) were undertaken by a mix of AAAtm crew and RAA personnel.

The exercises, flown out of Kununurra and Tindal and evaluated by DTRIALS and DSTO were rated a great success, however, acquisition bureaucracy intervened for the next three years as the case was progressed up the chains of command until 23 May 96 when the capability committees agreed that Phase 2B, the acquisition of UAS, should proceed as a high priority. Year of Decision was scheduled for 97/98, ironically the same year that Project Air 87 Armed Reconnaissance Helicopter (ARH) was presented for approval.

But it didn’t go well... When Land 53 Phase 2B went to committee, STRIKE 1! It was decided to break it away from Land 53 and create a separate program, titled Joint Project 129 (JP129). The program was broken into two phases; Phase 1 was a risk mitigation phase (more studies and trials), and Phase 2 was the acquisition.

The studies started with support to a DSTO program, Project INGARA, which was an in-house developed Synthetic Aperture Radar (SAR) system designed as a plug and play payload for small aircraft – initially onto NOMAD, then onto the ARDU C-47B Dakota for Exercise KANGAROO 95, and then onto a King Air 350 operated by 173 General Support Squadron. The King Air INGARA system flew for Army on Exercise PHOENIX in Aug 98 and then again on Exercise CROCODILE in 99.

These broad area capabilities then narrowed in to focal area capabilities and the project conducted a study by leasing a Vertical Take-off and Landing (VTOL) UAS in 1999; the Bombardier Guardian. This allowed Exercise CROCODILE 99 in Tindal, aimed to test the validity of an EO/IR sensor on board a tactical UAS supporting a Brigade. The trial demonstrated the utility of the system to the Joint Task Force (JTF) Commander and paved the way for JP129 Phase 2.

Phase 2’s tendering processes achieved Second Pass Approval six years later in 2005. That approval was for new facilities in Enoggera, the establishment of 20 STA Regt, and the acquisition of two IAI Malat I-View 250 UAS through the prime contractor Boeing Australia Limited (BAL). This contract didn’t progress very well due to technical difficulties, was one of the first projects on the Government’s Projects of Concern list, and was terminated on mutual terms in September 2008. STRIKE 2!

A market survey in late 2008 demonstrated that there was only one system that could meet the majority of Army’s requirements, the RQ-7B SHADOW 200 TUAS in-service with the US Army and USMC. A new acquisition strategy was called for and Government approved JP129 Ph 2 to pursue a Foreign Military Sale (FMS) from the US Army in July 2010.

And what a whirlwind innings the ninth has been! In the space of twelve months from Government approval JP129 Ph 2 has brokered the FMS Case and obtained a diversion offer from the US Army that will see the first of the two systems issued from US Army inventory in order to enable expeditious fielding ahead of a manufacturing production schedule.

We have trained the first operational rotation worth of personnel, received our simulation equipment, and commenced the final phase of deployment training. 29 Operators (of which four are Instructors), 10 Technicians and 5 Platoon Leaders have graduated their US Army training in desolate Fort Huachuca, and will soon fly the first Australian SHADOW 200 sorties in Woomera. Live flying aside, they have been flying the portable simulator since June.

While it does not stay airborne for the sortie duration we have come to expect from the SCANEAGLE over the past five years, it is a very large step-up in capability as it carries, all at the same time, an electro-optic camera, infra-red camera, laser pointer, laser rangefinder, laser target designator and VHF secure communications relay payload.

So where to from here? Deployment over summer to replace the SCANEAGLE in Afghanistan and the coming full circle for Army fixed wing aviation… there might not be a person in the aircraft, but the Royal Australian Artillery are once again conducting Aerial OP, and with bite – the Laser Target Designator is selectable for the full range of NATO laser guided munitions and the Laser Rangefinder provides target grid accuracy enough to employ joint fires.

This is SHADOW, Oscar Papa standing by...
Whether on the front counter taking admission or making sales, or wandering around the floor of the displays checking the cleanliness or tidiness, Barry has been a volunteer in the MAAF for more time than most people spend in the Army. He has been as much a fixture of the museum as many of the display items and similarly has a background every bit as interesting, and inspiring.

Barry Bawden was a National Serviceman, called up in 1968, and shortly thereafter accepted for flying training. He had a three month wait for officer training and so Barry headed off to Puckapunyal and completed recruit training before entering the Officer Training Unit at Scheyville. He graduated with the Skill at Arms prize and was sent to the Training Battalion at Singleton as an instructor for six months while awaiting a position on the Army course at Point Cook.

Following the course on Winjeels at No 1 Flying Training School, Barry headed up to the Training Squadron of 1st Aviation Regiment at Amberley where he did his wings course on the then new Pilatus PC6 Turbo Porter. It was ironic that Barry was on the first Porter course, because immediately he had graduated he commenced a conversion course on to the old Cessna 180, as he was posted to Sydney and 171 Air Cavalry Flight which had not yet been equipped with the newer aircraft. Needless to say, when the Porters arrived in the Flight eighteen months later Barry was sent back to Amberley for a refresher!

Selected for instructor training in 1972, Barry was disappointed to find out that the course was not to be in the UK, where all previous fixed wing instructor candidates had gone, but at East Sale at the RAAF Central Flying School. As the only Army pilot, he hid his disappointment at the location by topping the course. Capitalising on his standing among his RAAF peers, the Army then sent Barry to 1 FTS at Point Cook where he instructed on Winjeels and helped introduce the CT4 trainer into service.

Eight years in the Army and seven in Aviation, Barry finally made it to Oakey in 1976 to 173 General Support Squadron, once again on Porters and now the Army’s twin engine Nomad. His time with 173 included two deployments to Irian Jaya (now West Papua) on survey operations and numerous trips around Australia on tasking. His aeronautical experience and skill
eventually to Toowoomba. His recovery was several weeks in hospital in Canberra before was initially not expected to live. He spent a result of an accident on an historic rail Aviation. It was during this posting, while steam trains and photography, and then it spend a bit more time on his other passions, pleasant two years, that allowed Barry to

was once again deskbound, but this time of Queenscliff led to Canberra and so Barry Australia where he assisted with the Nomad Development Unit at Edinburgh in South which was to the RAAF Aircraft Research and

2 1968 OTU Graduation Skill at Arms Prize 10 October

At the end of the year nearly all roads out of Queenscliff led to Canberra and so Barry was once again deskbound, but this time in a particularly prestigious appointment as the staff officer to a two star. It was a pleasant two years, that allowed Barry to spend a bit more time on his other passions, steam trains and photography, and then it was back to Oakey, by now a senior Major, as the Senior Instructor of the Advanced Flying Training Wing at the School of Army Aviation. It was during this posting, while on a trip to Canberra, that Barry’s life was changed forever.

On Sunday, the 24th of August 1986, Barry suffered severe head injuries as a result of an accident on an historic rail trip. So severe were the injuries that he was initially not expected to live. He spent several months in hospital in Canberra before being transferred initially to Brisbane and eventually to Toowoomba. His recovery was slow and very painful, not only for Barry but also for his wife, Helen, and two daughters, Bronwyn and Diane. Unable to speak and with little memory initially, it was thought that a return to anything approaching a ‘normal’ lifestyle would be very unlikely and a miracle if it were to be achieved. Helen, however, was not about to give up, and neither was Barry. As part of his therapy she and later Len Avery would take him out to the Museum, then in the old Lysaght hangars, to be around aircraft and the military system. As a result of his acquired brain injury, Barry was discharged from the Army in November 1987, and at about the same time he returned home to live for the first time since his accident. Helen persisted with speech therapy for Barry and the visits to the museum, and evident progress was being made. While Barry still possessed a valid driving licence, the Army paid for him to have driving lessons and an assessment. The instructor took Barry down to Brisbane in peak hour and he drove around without any difficulty. Another hurdle overcome Slowly but surely he regained confidence and some independence. Of course, his personality and manner were irrevocably changed, but with patience and understanding a new ‘normal’ pattern for Barry’s life came into being and Barry, his family and those with whom he had regular interaction adjusted accordingly.

While he has not devoted much time to the steam trains since the accident, his love of aircraft and flying has not abated. Mostly this has manifested in his work as a volunteer at the MAAF, but he has, on occasion, taken to the sky with instruction, all of who have remarked that his innate piloting skills are seemingly undiminished. Barry might not recall quickly what the HSI stands for, but he can recognise a level 30 degrees angle of bank from the aircraft attitude and hold it without any problems. During the recent MAAF Fly in at the beginning of October, Matt Dunning took Barry up in a CT4, an aircraft he helped introduce into service nearly 40 years ago. The weather was not ideal, with the strong winds that the Fly in seemingly has attracted recently, but Barry handled the aircraft as if he was still current. Four and a half thousand hours has implanted skills that even an acquired brain injury hasn’t been able to shift!

Similarly undiminished are his skills with the camera. If you google ‘Barry Bawden steam’ up will come footage shot by Barry of a steam train in action. If you move in railway historical circles you will find more than a few steam aficionados have copies of Barry’s videos and photography. Nowadays it is all aircraft. Barry won the inaugural Fourays Photos Competition in 2009 with an image shot at the museum. His photography is represented in the inaugural Fourays Calendar for 2012.

Barry has now been volunteering at the museum for more than 22 years. It has been, in effect, a second career that has now lasted longer than his time in uniform. His contribution to the museum before the advent of the Army History Unit involvement in managing museums has been vital, if not fundamental to the existence of the MAAF. Through the understanding and accommodation of friends, colleagues and family, and his own perseverance and, at times, bloody-mindedness, Barry has demonstrated that there is always hope after brain injury and that the presence of an acquired brain injury is not a bar to a fruitful and productive, even ‘normal’ life.
After completing our stint in Standardisation Flight, we moved to Intermediate Flight, also commanded by a gunner major. Here were our first real live students of 123 Air OP/Light Liaison Course. The aircraft flown were the reliable Auster T7. Most of the students were National Service second lieutenants who had completed their elementary flying training at Middle Wallop on the Chipmunk. The exercises I liked best were field landings where we landed, over hedges usually, on to property owned by generous farmers, after the usual low level clearing run. Each of these fields had a number that we pencilled on to our 1:636 360 maps and also wrote into the Authorisation Book. There was also a low-level route back to Middle Wallop from these fields.

My Log Book shows that most months I averaged 60 hours. I was then converted on to the Auster Mark 9, with the intention that I would be an instructor in Exercise Flight. This aircraft differed totally from all other Austers. To begin with, it was relatively comfortable and there was no adverse aileron yaw. The air-cooled, inverted four-cylinder in-line engine, a Lycoming was a 173 HP and it had a Pratje carby and starter. The slotted ailerons automatically drooped down when the split flaps were lowered. Electrics were 24V. The Mark 9 cruised 85 IAS at 1200 rpm and had a wide track of 6 ft 8 inches that lessened ground loops and the low pressure tyres (12 ps) allowed the aircraft to taxi on muddy conditions. Its main drawback was the small fuel capacity - only 15 Imp gallons (68 l) in the starboard wing root. The fuel was accessible through the firewall by removing the cover (inboard of the left wing strut), shoots on the Larkhill Range for the gunners and night cross countries. I also recall cable laying and the smell and smoke arising from friction as the wire rapidly unreeled due to the heavy plummet.

300 feet circuits were flown from 100 yard sealed strips set in the grass at one side of Middle Wallop. Approach IAS was 45 kt, full flap 50 degrees. For the air photography exercises I had the students take shots of the Australian Army badge and an outline of the Australian continent, amongst other badges, on the chalk hillsides of the Fovant Valley, about 25 nm west of Middle Wallop. These were carried during the Great War. Occasionally students would say they had difficulty in identifying the briefed objects but a gentle reminder from me about night flying and getting "volunteers" to lay the flare path and take it up again at the end of the session soon improved recognition skills. To get to Fovant Wallop and Salisbury Plain one had to pass RAF Boscombe Down, 7 nm west of Wallop. This called for authorized low flying as the corridor, just north of the field, was below 500 ft AGL.

On 27 July 1957, the Glider Pilot Regiment, raised in 1941, was disbanded and the ceremony was held at Middle Wallop. Next day blue berets were replaced by a variegated array of bonnets, caps, berets and badges. However, the blue beret soon came back again for, on 1 September, the Army Air Corps was raised and the RAF Light Aircraft School became the Army Air Corps Centre.

On 27 August 1957 I left Exercise Flight to join 1966 Independent Light Liaison Flight and next day the Flight of two Auster 9s, two Skodetens and two Sycamores departed Wallop in loose formation for Detmold, Germany, a flight distance of 455 nm. But that, as they say, is another story.

We had a fair few foreign students training at Oakey; they certainly seemed to think on a different plane, if you will excuse the pun… One was concentrating on a short take-off in a Nomad; he selected wheels up before commencing the roll, as that would be one less check when things got very busy on lift-off. No doubt he felt that the limit switch would prevent retraction until he was airborne. He was speedily disabused by his QFI, who also knew that even a small bump on the surface would reduce the weight on the wheels and the Nomad would be sliding along on its wheel pods.

Another complained of a ‘hot spot’ in his helmet after a lengthy sortie. When the offending bone dome was removed, he was seen to have a pen stuck through his rather bushy hair...

The Nomad was an interesting aeroplane, which could bite you hard when you least expected it. One experienced pilot was doing a test flight after major maintenance, and was checking stall behaviour. Flapless and take-off stalls were fine, with full flap the Nomad flicked inverted and went into an incipient spin. With nothing but brown fields filling the windscreen, the pilot rapidly hearkened back to his Point Cook training, and stopped the yaw with rudder. Mindful that rolling g could rip his wings off – to say nothing of the very fragile tail, he managed to stop the roll before heaving back on the control column. The asperron was some 20 knots above VNE and increasing the last time he looked, and he pulled quite a few g to get out of the dive. He returned to Oakey, did a flapless approach, u/s’d the bird for an overspeed and overstress, and told the groundcrew in no uncertain terms what he thought of them and their flap adjustment procedures.

On another occasion, with fortunately two experienced pilots on board, there was a runaway on both props. Pulling the power levers to idle enabled the right prop to run out of oil and leather; the left engine continued until they were sure it was about to come through the window at them. In desperation the senior pilot punched the overspeed governor test switch, which somehow brought the prop out of overspeed and no doubt saved their lives.

We promptly bought the aircraft back to the UK, the mechanical condition being excellent. The aircraft were declared flight-worthy. We then took delivery of an additional two Austin 9s and the T7s were retired.

Several of the students had pooled their resources and purchased a Vauhall Vivaro. They were shown how to do an oil change on it, by draining the sump with the plug, and refilling with new oil. This they did, but then found the engine would not turn over. They had enthusiastically filled it so full it was overflowing out of the rocker cover through the filler cap opening.

The Base Safety Officer (BSO) at Oakey had fun staging crash rescue exercises at awkward times. He decided to check the fire sergeant’s progress in setting up a staged accident, and noted said sergeant was splashing petrol from a can around a pit full of jet fuel, to be lit by a firestick thrown from a safe distance.

Alarmed at what he saw, the BSO suggested the sergeant swallow the cigarette in his mouth… which he did, with a very pained expression. Very shaken, he walked away, sat down and spat out the now mangled and extinguished cigarette. After some time he looked at the BSO and uttered a true heartfelt ‘Thanks!’

One rainy morning the blacksoil was extremely slippery. An airfield crash rescue exercise was staged and the fires hurried across the grass in their brand new yellow vehicle. The young driver braked hard, the wheels locked and the heavy vehicle slid towards the site, obviously destined to end up in the blazing pit.

Observers saw a flurry of hands working controls inside the truck, and the large spray system shot from the roof into the fire as the truck slid the last few metres into the edge of the pit. To everyone’s amazement, the spray blanked the flames until the driver could back away.

Email progers@serv.net.au with your contribution to Tales from the Dreamtime
During the construction of Oakey base in the 70s, the BSO (recently back from the USA) walked into the Mess for lunch with the senior government engineer supervising the project. Pushing his way through the glass doors, the BSO remarked that in the USA, doors to public areas opened outwards to enable easy egress in an emergency, and Australian standards must be different. The miffed engineer declared that our standards were just the same; he then looked down at the doorhandle in his hand and realised that all the mess doors were fitted incorrectly… they were subsequently modified to open outwards.

The BSO also pointed out that in several buildings used to store POL the fire alarms and extinguishers were installed on the rear walls (due to a draughtsman’s error), at the furthest point from the exits. It would take a true hero to fight his way through a burning fuel store to get to the fire-fighting stuff...

At a Friday happy hour the BSO tried to mend fences by complimenting the engineer on the magnificent new School of Army Aviation – truly a pleasant place to work with its polished floors, windows with blinds, and uncluttered ceilings in the corridors. The engineer told him that he needed glasses, because the corridor ceilings had its polished floors, windows with blinds, and uncluttered ceilings in the corridors.

In the late seventies Oakey was devastated by a massive weekend thunderstorm, which took out a lot of our aircraft parked on the tarmac. They were so parked because the Minister for Defence had decreed, following the destruction of most of the Navy’s fixed wing a year before in a hangar fire started by an arsonist. Such is the interference of politicians…. The president of the court of enquiry asked how wind gusts were measured. He was shown the Met Office wind recorder, which indicated a pleasant 15 knots. It suddenly shot up to 40 knots as a lone thunderstorm appeared overhead. The emergency phones then sprang to life, the first call from a lady in Oakey who had lost her roof and her chocks. The president turned to the BSO and said, ‘You organised this for our benefit, didn’t you?’

An Army driver drove the BSO down to Brisbane to pass the time, the BSO asked if he had his next posting. The driver said he was reluctantly leaving the Army at the end of his second tour, even though he enjoyed the work. He said sadly that he had joined the Army to take up the offer to complete his Intermediate Certificate. However, his application was rejected twice in two years by his unit commander, who said that he would not recommend him as he considered him too dumb. The BSO, feeling awkward, asked him what he would do in civil life. He was stunned when the driver told him that five years previously he and some mates had bought a share in an old house in Toowoomba. They eventually bought out their shares, and using the old house as security, he carefully bought and sold other rentals. To that date he had acquired 32 rental properties in Toowoomba. With a smile, the driver said, ‘Sir, it is really so silly. My unit commander says I am too dumb to complete my Intermediate – and yet he does not realise that he is living in one of my houses which is rented through an agency!’ The driver left the Army and later married into a family of like-minded people. By the early eighties, they owned 84 quality rentals in the Toowoomba district.

In the late sixties, RAAF Point Cook closed down for a re-organisation. As the meant that a bunch of Army Aviation hopes would not be able to train there, it was decided to send them to the USA for primary training. They would become the first all-through helicopter course. There was one small hitch, they would all have to pass a test in English, well, American as she is spoke. The penalty for failure was to do a three week American language course at Lackland AFB – the USAF equivalent of the Point Cook School of Languages… the test was about a Grade 4 level in Australia – and, for whatever reason, the whole Australian contingent failed. They did resist the test a few days later and passed with flying colours, but still had to complete the three-week course.

Even the USAF had not the heart to make them sit through the drudgery of the classroom, so en masse they accompanied an escort officer with a vehicle and a chequebook (sorry, checkbook) who gave them guided tours of bases and institutions until they had to report to Fort Wolters TX for ab initio training on the TH-13. This helicopter was like our Sioux, only different: wooden blades, a saddle fuel tank, a Franklin engine which was flat out lifting instructor and student on a hot day in Texas, and hard thin cushions for seats. (And watchers of M*A*S*H can see this type in the opening titles).

All this was followed by a 3-day instrument course at Fort Rucker, Alabama, so they all got to see a fair bit of the States before returning home to the speed, power and luxury of the Bell 47G3-B1 Sioux…
Landowners lunch

30 September saw the start of a very busy three days for the Museum Staff and Volunteers. Around 1200 people attended the annual Land Owners Lunch at the MAAF, hosted by the Army Aviation Centre and their staff. All current aircraft were on display on the tarmac and a couple of the Fly-In stall holders set up early for the day so as the visitors had plenty to entertain them. WO2 Scott Downs was kept busy during the day doing guided tours for the many people who were eager to know more about the aircraft displays we have in the Museum.

The weather was perfect and the crowd enjoyed the aircraft participating in flying training exercises.

Fly-In

We all felt that 2011 would be “third time lucky” and we would have perfect weather like we experienced the day before. This was not to be. There was no rain; but the wind was bitterly cold both days and the sky very overcast. In spite of this a successful Fly-In was once again held and I would like to personally thank the Army Aviation Centre and Training Centre for their support with preparations for the event.

To the Staff, Board members and Volunteers who assisted and gave up time to help where it was needed, I also say thank you. Without us working as a team, events like this cannot eventuate.

The RAAF Roulettes were, as predicted, a huge crowd attraction and also Tony Blair doing aerobatics in his Rebel 300.

The 161 Recce Association’s magnificent display of plaques and medals depicting the progression from the beginnings of Army Aviation to present day, proved to be very popular and thanks must go to Len Avery for spending many months researching and obtaining these plaques and medals. This display travels through the years of our Aviation history and it is a valuable asset of our memorabilia.

This year for the first time a DVA Men’s Health Peer Education stand was in situ, where Kevin Moss was kept very busy imparting education to the many visitors who were interested to know about the services of DVA and the help available for men.

Phyllis Kopcsandy visits the Fly-In

Phyllis, the sister of George Constable visited the museum during the Fly-In with a number of her friends and close relatives. George Constable was Officer Commanding 161 (Independent) Reconnaissance Flight in Vietnam when on 23 May 1968 he was killed when the aircraft he was flying (a US Army Cessna Bird Dog) crashed after being hit by enemy ground fire.

Whilst at the museum, Len Avery took the opportunity to show Phyllis and her friends the framed display of George Constable’s medals as well as two of the aircraft in the museum which George Constable flew, Cessna A98-045 and the Mk III Auster, A11-41. Prior to leaving the Base, Len organised for Phyllis and her friends to visit the outdoor chapel where they held a small memorial service in memory of George Constable and the other Army pilots who have been killed whilst on operational service.

Phyllis and those who accompanied her were delighted with the visit to our museum. We also thank Phyllis for the generous donation she gave the museum.

Membership of the Museum

I urge all serving members and past members to join the Museum. With our dedicated team of office staff and volunteers striving to make the Museum of Australian Army Flying the best presented Army Museum, we need your help to do this.

Anyone who would like to become a member can contact Board Secretary, Helen Bawden OAM nedwab@bigpond.net.au and I will email you a Membership Application Form. A form can be printed from our Webpage: http://www.161recceflt.org.au/MAAF/Homepage.htm or obtained from the front office desk at the Museum.

Admittance to the Museum is $5.00 adults, $12.00 family (2 adults and up to 3 children) and $2.00 children. Concessions are available for Pension Card Holders and Group Bookings.

Images by Barry Bawden

Top left: Landowners Lunch at the Museum
Below left: Kevin Moss with his DVA Stall
Top middle: Tiger display
Below middle: Roulette display
Left: Len Avery and Skeeta Ryan with Phyllis Kopcsandy
A GOLDEN OSCAR

By Len Avery with Bill Mellor | There aren’t too many helicopters still flying, let alone working, that have celebrated their 50th birthday, but recently one that started its life in uniform came to light. Thanks to an historically minded owner and some detective work from the 161 Association’s Len Avery, we discovered one of Army’s very early helicopters still working, almost on our back door.

It all started with a chance email. Jan Becker, co-owner with her husband, Mike, of Becker Helicopters Pty Ltd at Maroochydore, emailed Len seeking some information and background on a Bell 47 G2A that they have owned and operated for 15 years.

Jan knew it was an ex-army aircraft but wanted to know more about its history and whether there were any early photos of it in military service. She was also interested to know if there were any of the early pilots around.

A quick review of the records showed that the aircraft, currently registered as VH-ORC, began its life as A1-660. It was introduced into service in 16 Army Light Aircraft Squadron on 12 May 1961, just a touch shy of six months after the squadron, and Army aviation as we know it today, came into being. The first Army pilot to fly 660 was none other than ‘Rotary’ Ross Harding, the first Army helicopter pilot! He test flew the aircraft on 15 May 1961 with FLTLT Ray Meredith, the Engineering Officer, in the other seat. The aircraft was the first of three G2A Siouxs introduced to Army, and had slightly better performance than the G2s then in service.

It was this performance that cemented 660’s place in Army aviation history as being the first Army aircraft to be deployed overseas since the First World War. A personal request to the Prime Minister at the time, the right honourable R.G. Menzies, for assistance in searching for his son, Michael, lost in the wilds of Dutch West New Guinea, resulted in A1-660 being dispatched north. In fact, two aircraft were loaded in to a RAAF C130A at Amberley, the first time such transport had been undertaken, and curiously the second aircraft was a civil G2A. It belonged to the proprietor of Bell Helicopter Australia, Mr Frank V. Sharpe, who had loaned it to the Army for the task, as the other Army G2As had not yet been delivered. Despite ‘Army’ being painted on the fuel tanks and kangaroo roundels on the cockpit side, it remained on the civil register as VH-FVS and two of the detachment pilots, Tony Hammond and Ken McLoughlin were hastily provided with civilian licences to fly it legally.

LTs Dick Knight and John Ross were the other pilots and they were restricted to flying 660. Maintenance support for this historic deployment was provided by SGT Lloyd Larney, CPL Ray Bowman and LAC Tony Crosby, all RAAF members of 16 Squadron. The full story of the deployment has been told in previous issues of Fourays, Vol 1 No 1 of March 1995 and Vol 1 No 11 of 1999, by Dick Knight and Lloyd Larney.

It wasn’t long before 660 was again heading overseas, this time in February 1962 to Papua New Guinea, and in company with a Cessna 180. The journey was in the back of a C130 and the unloading of the aircraft and subsequent test flights led one of the indigenous observers to recount with sincere authority how a large bird in final labour had to land at Wewak to give birth to small but obviously healthy offspring!

For the rest of its life in uniform, A1-660 was employed on training and support to exercises and survey operations. With the
pending withdrawal from service of the Bell 47 G-2 from the Australian Army there was a consolidation of aircraft in 1971 and the remaining Bell 47 G-2’s and the sole surviving G-2A (A1-660) were allotted to 171 Air Cavalry Flight at Holsworthy in Sydney. They were subsequently withdrawn and placed in storage pending disposal when the Kiowas arrived at the in 1972.

The picture becomes a little blurred around this time and it is believed that 660 was donated to the Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology as a training aid. RMIT undertook artificer training for RAEME senior NCOs so it was a natural progression for an aircraft surplus to Army’s requirements. Around 1986, it is suspected that it was exchanged at RMIT for an Enstrom F/28A and 660 became a working aircraft again. It appears on the Australian civil register for the first time on 26 June 1986 as VH-ORC owned by Aero Company Pty Ltd. Mike and Jan purchased the helicopter in 1996 from the owner of Snowy River Ski Lodges at Jindabyne, Jeff Staney, who flew the aircraft between the snowfields and Queensland, but it is unclear if he had owned it since its RMIT days.

When Beckers first got it, the aircraft had worn a number of paint schemes, some of which were still visible around and through the current covering. It was not pretty and for some reason it was thought to resemble the Sesame Street character of Oscar the Grouch. The company decided that the aircraft needed a special paint scheme as it was to be part of a new era and a new generation of pilots trained through Becker Helicopters and an all over bright yellow scheme was adopted, along with the affectionate nickname, Oscar.

‘Oscar’ has been maintained in pristine condition for the past 15 years and used extensively for flight training over a 13 year period. There are many pilots all around the world who have learnt to fly a helicopter in ‘Oscar’. Whilst being used in the training role the aircraft has flown over 1400 hours per year and received a new engine every year.

‘Oscar’ has become very significant in Jan and Mike’s life. They often donate flights in ‘Oscar’ for the Cancer Fund during Daffodil Days. In 2010 their 14 year old daughter was diagnosed with cancer and ‘Oscar’ became a symbol of hope in his bright yellow daffodil colour. Jan’s grandad was also a world expert grower of daffodils – so ‘Oscar’ has woven quite a story – all for the love of flying.

‘Oscar’ (VH-ORC) is currently undergoing a complete overhaul at Tadgel Aviation at Caloundra Airfield and it is anticipated that it will be flying again before Christmas. During the course of contacting the pilots who flew A1-660 in the Army we have assembled a significant collection of photos including some photos from Army Aviation Association and the Museum of Australian Flying at Oakey. Jan and Mike Becker have also kindly allowed us access to some excellent photos of ‘Oscar’ (VH-ORC).

The expansion of the flying history of A1-660 is an ongoing task therefore we would appreciate it if you could check your log books and let us know if you flew this aircraft and if you would allow us access to your flight details in this aircraft, if you haven’t already done so.

A copy of the flying history of A1-660 will eventually be given to the library in the Museum of Australian Army Flying.

It is now over 50 years since A1-660, VH-ORC, ‘OSCAR’ first flew and we greatly appreciate the efforts of all the pilots and in particular Jan and Mike Becker for preserving this unique piece of our Army Aviation history.
WE’RE READY

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