

THE EVER

SKYHAWK ASSOCIATION JOURNAL VOL 20-4



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Winter 2014/15

www.a4skyhawk.org

Skyhawk Association Annual Meeting
September 11, 2015
Sparks, NV



THE PREZ SEZ

By Bill "Jigger" Egen



Bill "Jigger" Egen

Just to remind again, we are publishing this edition of the A4ever in digital format, and it will be resident on the Skyhawk Association Journal page for access by members. This will be routine from now on – three mail-out journals and one winter journal in ones and zeros.

FOX 2!

It's that time of year again, and the burbs in this area are awash in parades. Starting with Veteran's Day and running through Christmas, every whistle stop and municipality (more than 2 whistle stops) seems to want to put on a parade. In support of these noble and mostly worthwhile endeavors, our Military Affairs Committee (MAC), which supports MCAS Cherry Point, donates time and effort in the form of three golf carts, slightly-converted into the shape of F-18s. These fighters execute precision maneuvers and embellish the egos of long-retired jocks who revel in the theory of "The older we get, the better we flew!" At my most recent adventure in pretending (fancy word for retired), we mustered at Emerald Isle after the usual trailer hook-up and cart load followed by the harrowing trip to the parade site from Havelock.

While motoring my fighter jet in and out of the parade marshalling area (keep an open mind – it ain't flying, but we do get to throw candy at children), I had a chance to score a kill – FOX 2 on the Shriner fire engine! You've seen these little, very maneuverable Shriner vehicles before. They kind of look like cock roaches scurrying all over the place when you turn the lights on in the garage! This particular target was minding his own business when I managed to jam a PVC AIM-9 on my



right wing into his rear end while checking my 9 o'clock for threats. No harm, no fowl, but a loud noise and wounded ego on my part. But, I got a confirmed kill to be painted on the side of the fighter cart – a kill is a kill!

TRIBUTE

On a more somber note, our past President, Dave "Hide" Dollarhide, was contacted by Gary Frith about a fly-over tribute to his father, LCDR William C. Frith, JR, who recently passed away. Bill Frith finished his Navy career flying A-4s, and Gary knew of the A-4C that Hide flies for The Valiant Air Command War Bird Museum in Titusville, FL. Using the A-4C was cost prohibitive, and Hide suggested that the Dreamland Squadron, of which he is a member with his RV, could do a flyover at the funeral. The mission was accomplished (see photo), and Gary Frith graciously made a donation to the Sky-



hawk Association in memory of LCDR Bill Frith (2nd from left in photo). Your Association will put the donation to good use supporting various A-4 venues. Gary, thanks for the donation, which was a wonderful tribute to your father.

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IN MEMORY OF
M. DAVIS "WHIZZER" WHITE, D.D.S.
(1939-2007)
FOUNDER OF THE SKYHAWK ASSOCIATION

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BOMBS AWAY!

• Winter 2014/15 •

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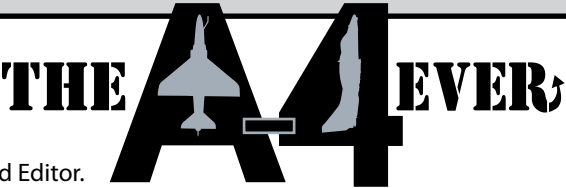
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Contributions
We actively seek contributions from members, including news, photos, historical documents, anecdotes and other items of interest. Submissions may be edited due to space limitations in the newsletter. Contributions may be emailed to the Journal Editor at sa-journal-editor@a4skyhawk.org or mailed to Bob Hickerson, 1222 Balcones Drive, Fredericksburg, TX 78624. Stephanie Davis, graphics, skyhawk@ncflight.com. Printed by NCCOAST Communications, Morehead City, NC.

On the Cover:

This photo from Mike "Bloke" Robinson of Draken International captured the trans-Atlantic movement of the former BAE Skyhawks from Europe to the Draken base in Lakeland, FL. See Skyhawk News this issue.

PLAQUES, BRICKS AND STATIC DISPLAYS

Recently, Steve “Dwarf” Linder, our board member and SDO for VMA-214 was informed by a former Black Sheep avionics technician of a VMA-214 painting hanging in the O’Club at Kaneohe Bay which depicts WE A-4Bs in the attack. Association Marine VP Todd “Hun” Frommelt exchanged emails with Shar Marsh, daughter of R.G. Smith, and was able to determine that the image is a painting done by R.G. in 1964 at the request of ADM Thomas. To clearly identify the source and heritage of the painting, the Skyhawk Association has



donated a plaque that has been hung adjacent to the painting. If anybody has any good stories to go along with the painting, please contact sa-journal-editor@skyhawk.org.

Additionally Hun successfully coordinated purchase of a Skyhawk Association brick to honor A-4 MIA and KIA aircrew that is now in place at the National Naval Aviation Museum in Pensacola. This brick is identical to one placed by Skyhawk Association at the recently-dedicated NAS Lemoore Aviator Memorial.

The Indiana Military Museum recently acquired A4D-2 144906 and will refurbish it for static display. They need

good high quality photos of the A-4B cockpit interior for the rebuild. Also, if anyone lives near southwestern Indiana and wants to help, it will be appreciated. Contact Frank Roales at froales@nwcable.net.

This brings up an opportunity to solicit cockpit photos in general. If anybody has good quality pho-

tos of A-4 cockpits, all models, please send them to sa-a4-research@a4skyhawk.org. The Association research team maintains a file that may help with future restorations. Here is a good A-4B example (before and after pictures of A-4B 142741, located at Vietnam War Museum, Orlando, FL, via Dave Dollarhide):



MOVING RIGHT ALONG

If you get a chance, check out The Museum of Flying (formerly the Douglas Museum and Library) in Santa Monica, CA, at <http://www.museumofflying.com>. Obviously, the site maintains interesting heritage displays of Douglas aircraft.

The Skyhawk Association board has scheduled its mid-year board meeting 24-25 April at the Holiday Inn Fairborn in Dayton, OH. Association members are always welcome, so watch for more info on our web page soon.

The USMC Skyhawkers are planning an All-Marine Skyhawk reunion 8-11 October, 2015, in San Diego at the downtown Embassy Suites. Contact Mark Williams at roger.wilco@comcast.net to get on the distribution list. If you are a member of the Marine Corps Aviation Association, you may have seen a notice of this reunion in the latest *Yellow Sheet*. Please ignore the contact information published in that notice. Mark Williams is the go-to guy for this reunion.

To keep the circulation going, check out <http://theaviationist.com/2014/10/23/hornet-ball-2014>. Great video!

SEMPER FI AND A-4s FOREVER, Jigger

Read?

you think
we *read*?

Swashbucklers and Black Sheep: a Pictorial History of Marine Fighting Squadron 214 in World War II

Gamble, Bruce

Zenith Press. 2012. 216 pages. \$40.00

Reviewed by Bob Hickerson

The VMF-214 Black Sheep squadron of WW II days has been relentlessly documented over the years, and in fact, in the Winter 2013-2014 issue of this journal Peter Mersky reviewed Carl Dunbar’s 2011 work titled *Before They Were Black Sheep: Marine Fighting Squadron VMF-214 and the Battle for the Solomon Islands*. CDR Mersky’s review underscored the fact that most accounts of VMF-214’s exploits in WW II focus only on the two combat tours in the Solomons which were led by the colorful “Pappy” Boyington. Dunbar’s book helped to broaden the popular history of 214 by documenting the pre-Boyington history of the squadron in the Solomons, when 214 was known as the Swashbucklers.

If few people know much about the 214 Swashbuckler years, even less are familiar with the history of the squadron following the second combat tour led by Boyington. When Pappy simply disappeared during a fighter sweep over Rabaul on January 3, 1944, the glory days of the squadron were essentially over. Following a final mission on January 6th, the squadron was pulled back to the rear and later transferred to Southern California.

VMF-214 reformed at MCAS Santa Barbara on February 9, 1944. (*Ed. note: I sure wish the Marine Corps had kept that air station!*) Almost a year of training followed, at a cost of “seven fighters destroyed, another dozen damaged, and four pilots killed or missing—all due to training mishaps.” The squadron qualified aboard USS *Ranger* off Alameda in January 1945, and in early February loaded aboard USS *Franklin* (recently repaired following damage from a kamikaze attack) for deployment to join the legendary TF 58 commanded by ADM Marc Mitscher. Pausing in Hawaiian waters for additional training, the squadron experienced

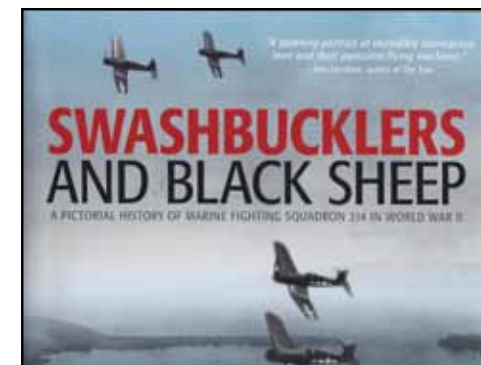
more bad luck with the loss of four more Corsairs and three pilots in gunnery and landing accidents.

Following *Franklin*’s arrival at Ulithi atoll, Task Force 58 sortied to conduct strikes against airfields on the southern Japanese island of Kyushu. There the squadron’s run of bad luck, started during their deadly training period in Santa Barbara, continued with the loss of one pilot on the very first raid: John Stodd, who was captured, imprisoned and later repatriated after five months in captivity. On the second day of operations, March 19, 1945, immediately following the launch of a strike, *Franklin* was hit by a near-perfect, low-level bombing attack by an enemy Yokosuka D4Y3 (Judy). A well-placed bomb exploded on the hangar deck, which was packed with aircraft being loaded and fueled for the next strike. The ship was quickly engulfed in flames, and the Black Sheep ready room became an inferno. Six officers were killed instantly or lost after jumping into the cold Pacific to avoid the flames. In addition, twenty-six Black Sheep troops (half the squadron’s complement) were killed in the mess hall. The twelve 214 pilots that were on the morning strike returned to *Franklin* only to be diverted throughout the task force.

Although *Franklin* wasn’t sunk in the attack, the war was over for the Black Sheep. 1945 hadn’t been kind to the squadron:

“Eleven pilots had died during the training evolution, and one was shot down and captured on the squadron’s first mission over Japan. Only two more strikes were completed before the *Black Sheep* lost six officers and twenty-six men in the *Franklin* disaster.”

Telling the story of the Black Sheep post-Boyington is not the only strong point of this work. Although presented in large format and lavishly illustrated with heretofore unpublished photos and illustrations, Gamble’s work is not just another coffee-table decoration. The work contains a simple, yet compelling narrative that invites a straight-through reading, and the



reader will find a welcome surprise at the end. Unlike other Black Sheep narratives, *Swashbucklers and Black Sheep* provides a short narrative of the squadron’s history after WW II.

Resurrected after the war at MCAS El Toro, CA, the Black Sheep responded to the Korean emergency, spending the brutally cold winter of 1950 – 51 at K-1 near Pusan. Returning to El Toro after a 15-month tour, jet transition had the Black Sheep operating in succession the F9F Panther, the F2H Banshee and the FJ-4 Fury. After a short stint as VMF(AW)-214, when in 1957 the Black Sheep became the first Marine squadron to qualify in nuclear weapons delivery, the squadron was converted to an attack mission, becoming VMA-214 on July 9, 1957. The first commanding officer of the “attack” squadron was, interestingly enough, John Bolt, one of the original WW II Black Sheep who is recognized as the only naval aviator to ever qualify as an ace in two wars (he amassed six kills in WW II and six victories during the Korean conflict as an exchange pilot flying the F-86 Sabre with the USAF).

The squadron’s long association with the A-4 Skyhawk, Vietnam, the transition to the AV-8B *Harrier* and deployments in support of Iraqi Freedom and Operation Enduring Freedom rate a few pages at the end of the narrative, including some excellent photos by Ted Carlson. Although the reader will appreciate this meager attention to the Black Sheep history following WW II, the narrative provided will only whet the appetite of the true Black Sheep fan. That modern history is a story that needs telling – perhaps someone reading this review will fill that gap one day.

I highly recommend this book to anyone interested in aviation history, particularly WW II and most particularly the Black Sheep squadron. It’s an attractive and interesting work, and a steal at the recent street price of less than \$27.00 (Amazon).

CHINA LAKE

PROJECT 1-63

By Gary Verver

More than fifty years ago, I was freed from my involuntary servitude in the mess hall and reported to the NAF China Lake Line Division in time for Project 1-63, so called as it was the number ONE project for the U.S. Navy in 1963. Project 1-63 was the conventional ordnance demonstration for President John Fitzgerald Kennedy (JFK) on the 7th of June 1963. Within the Line Division I was assigned to the A-4 line-crew, along with the other recent arrivals to the transient line crew. At that time, China Lake was an airplane nut's paradise, as NAF China Lake had around 60 aircraft. Included were two A-1G Spads, thirteen A-4 Skyhawks (models A, B, C & E), three TF-10B Skyknights, one F-4A Phantom, ten F-8 Crusaders (models A, B, C & E), one NTF-9J Cougar, one SP-2E Neptune, two S-2 Stoofs (models A & D), three helicopters (CH-19E, SH-34G and SH-34J), one F-1C and four

DF-1D Furys, two DT-28B Trojans, fifteen QF-9G Cougar drones, two C-117D Skytrains, and one TC-45J Bug Smasher. The VX-5 Vampires had around twenty aircraft consisting of one A-1E and two A-1H Spads, thirteen Skyhawks (models B, C & E), one F-4B Phantom, one O-1C Bird Dog, one T-33B Seastar and one TC-45J Bug Smasher. In addition to the China Lake complement of aircraft, the VX-4 Evaluators were present with another A-4C Skyhawk (for the Bullpup demonstration), and the VA-163 Saints and VA-164 Ghost Riders were present with their squadron's complement of A-4B Skyhawks. NAF El Centro was onboard with two TF-9J Cougars for the RAPEC demonstration, and former VX-5 Vampires Project Pilot USMC Major Hal Vincent returned with a VMFA-314 Black Knights F-4B Phantom. The VA-165 Boomers also participated in the demo with their A-1H Spads, but weren't onsite given the lack of line space.

continued...



Temporary A-4 line at NAF. Gary Verver photo.

In addition to all of the rehearsal activity, the transient line was also extremely busy with USAF transports bringing in the presidential limos, Ike's 1956 Cadillac and JFK's 1961 Lincoln Continental, which to me were as different as the administrations. JFK's Lincoln Continental was left unguarded next to the line shack, and we drooled all over it as none of us had been around a car like that where we grew up. In addition to the presidential limos, there were another five-six new Cadillacs that made up the motorcade. I don't recall if the two VH-3A Sea King White Tops

flew in on their own power, or were flown in on USAF transports.

On the day of the demonstration, as Ed Sullivan would say, the "really big shew," the press corps' Pan Am 707 and an assortment of C-117's, C-118's, C-121's, C-131's and C-140's, were on the airfield, with room left over for Air Force One. The airfield padeyes had all been filled in with cement as there were, besides the President of the United States, pooh-bahs galore, including Secretary of the Navy Fred Korth, Under Secretary of the Navy Paul Fay, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff General

Maxwell Taylor, Governor Edmund G. Brown, Senator Clair Engle, Senator Thomas Kuchell, Senator Richard Russell, Congressman Harlan Hagen, Chief of Naval Operations Admiral George Anderson, Capt. Tazwell Shepard (Naval Aide to the President), Rear Admiral G.G. Burkley (Medical Aide), and White House Press Secretary Pierre Salinger. Among other visiting Naval leaders were Admiral John H. Sides, Commander in Chief of the Pacific Fleet; Vice Admiral P.D. Stroop, Commander of Naval Air Forces, Pacific Fleet; Vice Admiral R.T.S. Keith, Commander of

the First Fleet; General David Shoup, Commandant of the Marine Corps, and Rear Admiral William Blenman (Ret), brother of Naval Ordnance Test Station (NOTS) CO Captain Blenman. Also aboard were 250 members of the press. General Maxwell Taylor was a notable attendee as he had just published *The Uncertain Trumpet*, which stressed the need for a robust conventional weapons capability, rather than an all nuclear focus. JFK had read the book, and the U.S. Navy had apparently heeded its message.

Visitors by the thousands (includ-

ing my wife who was a Navy dependent at China Lake) poured through the gates, and as described in the *Rocketeer*, joined:

"Cheering throngs, racing for vantage points for a fleeting glimpse of President John F. Kennedy as his huge 707 jet plane settled at the Naval Air Facility, shattered the mood of calm preparation that had prevailed during the final few hours. Secret Service and Station Security officers, aided by newly arrived Seamen Guardsmen, found the task of containing the crowd's enthusiasm one of the biggest problems of the day. By early afternoon, the effort became pointless. The handclasp, symbol of brotherhood and friendship down through the ages, served as a prime objective for thousands of spectators who tore through police lines to touch the President's hand. They found a willing one awaiting theirs."

continued...



A really big show! Air Force One at China Lake 7 June 1963. Limos await dignitaries. USN photo via Gary Verver.



President Kennedy greets the crowd. USN photo via Gary Verver.

I had a front row seat for Air Force One's arrival and deplaning, as I was one of the ground crew. JFK didn't deplane through the aft door until sometime after everyone else had deplaned. A number of the notables aboard Air Force One, including Gov. Brown, took shelter in the shade of the wing while they waited for the motorcade to depart for the Presidential viewing stands on G Range. Unlike the Pan Am Stewardii who graced the Presidential viewing stands, my view of the demonstration wasn't great because I stayed at the airfield to help launch, fuel and recover aircraft.

After the Presidential motorcade left for the viewing stands on G Range following the airpower demonstration, most of the visitors left for Mainside to cheer the Presidential motorcade. We got busy with the post demonstration activities, the USMC barracks stand-down and the President's speech. The area between hangar 2 and hangar 3 was set up for the meet and greet, with participating aircraft and crew from each event lined up on the west side of hangar 3 running from south to north. The quadrant north of that was set up for the Marine Corps Honor Guard, consisting of three officers and 64 enlisted men, who were inspected by JFK prior to his departure. Also present in that area was the 33-member Fleet Marine Force, Pacific, band from MCAS El Toro and the China Lake Marine Detachment which retired the Barracks colors. It was the detachment's last official appearance before being disestablished after 18-years of duty at NOTS. The south side of the quadrant included the President's podium, two USMC SH-3A Sea Kings and two USMC VH-3A Marine One White Tops.



JFK inspects the USMC Honor Guard. Gary Verver photo.

Twelve NAF pilots and ten pilots and three crewmen from the VX-5 Vampires joined 27 pilots from Carrier Air Groups 11 and 16 to stage the range-blasting aerial demonstration, no doubt aided by targets that were well laced with aviation fuel and HE.

Other than the HVAR's, Sidewinder, photo and two strafing runs it was pretty much a Skyhawk show with Shrike missiles, napalm, Bullpup missiles, Zuni FFARs, HIPEG, Gladeye Lazy Dogs, Padeye smoke screens, Sadeye cluster bombs, retarded fin Snakeyes, Walleye and Weteye demonstrations. In fairness I should note that USMC Maj. Hal Vincent (150458, VW-19) and his VMFA-314 Black Knights F-4B Phantom with a load of 24 Mk-82 500 lb. bombs and the similarly configured VX-5 Vampires F-4B did manage to reduce to splinters one or more of the wooden ship targets constructed for the event.

continued...



President Kennedy meets VMFA-314 pilot then-Maj Hal Vincent at left. Lt. Paul McCarthy of VX-5 at left. Gary Verver photo.

And now the blow-by-blow for the really big show, narrated by VX-5 Vampires XO Cdr. Joseph E. Schwager. I should note that there was a separate unclassified script for events 10-28 that was narrated for the press by NOT's Technical Officer Captain Carl O. Holmquist.

COMMENTARY FOR NOTS 1-63

Introduction
(Boatswain pipes “All Hands”)
Mr. President, distinguished guests: The demonstrations you have witnessed at sea have shown how the Navy can move through a hostile air and submarine environment to enable Navy and Marine forces to project U.S. power to almost any trouble spot in the world. Today we shall see a projection of that power - - the air support required by our tactical ground forces.
Your host today is the Naval Ordnance Test Station (NOTS), a laboratory of the Bureau of Naval Weapons, commanded by Captain Charles Blenman from Tucson, Arizona. Its Technical Director is Dr. William B. McLean of Pasadena, California. I am CDR Schwager, your narrator.
Most of the weapons you will see today were born at this station. They were conceived in the Michelson Laboratory, which you will visit later, and developed and tested on these ranges.
The purpose of this demonstration is to contrast our stock-piled limited war weapons - - their tactics and their effects - - with some of the more effective limited war weapons now under development. We believe that these new designs will give our fleet, our sister services and our allies greater capabilities to meet limited war situations through the availability of weapons of greater effectiveness, economy and simplicity.

A miniature carrier deck-edge elevator now ascending to your level in the center stand will lift displays of the newer weapons at appropriate times during the program.
On your immediate right front, Mr. President, and for your convenience, a photographic display will, when suitable, illustrate aircraft which are configured with the weapons to be delivered.
Television will provide close-ups of key events and will rake targets after each attack so that you may assess target damage.
All aircraft will approach from your right and will generally be difficult to see until close in -- a disadvantage which we sincerely hope will be shared by defense units on actual strikes. In order to improve your chances for early detection, however, some of the aircraft will trail smoke. Furthermore to assist you in locating the target for certain events, I will mark target positions with a smoke signal as I am now doing for position “A”.
Military and civilian personnel of the Naval Ordnance Test Station, the Naval Air Facility and Air Development Squadron FIVE, all based at China Lake; Carrier Air Group 16 operating from U.S.S. Oriskany; and Carrier Air Group 11 operating from U.S.S. Kitty Hawk, have combined their efforts into this demonstration.
Our first nine events illustrate current conventional air-strike capabilities of carrier-launched attacks. These sorties will be flown by pilots from Carrier Air Group 16, commanded by CDR “Bob” Baldwin of Fargo, North Dakota.
With your permission, we will get under way.

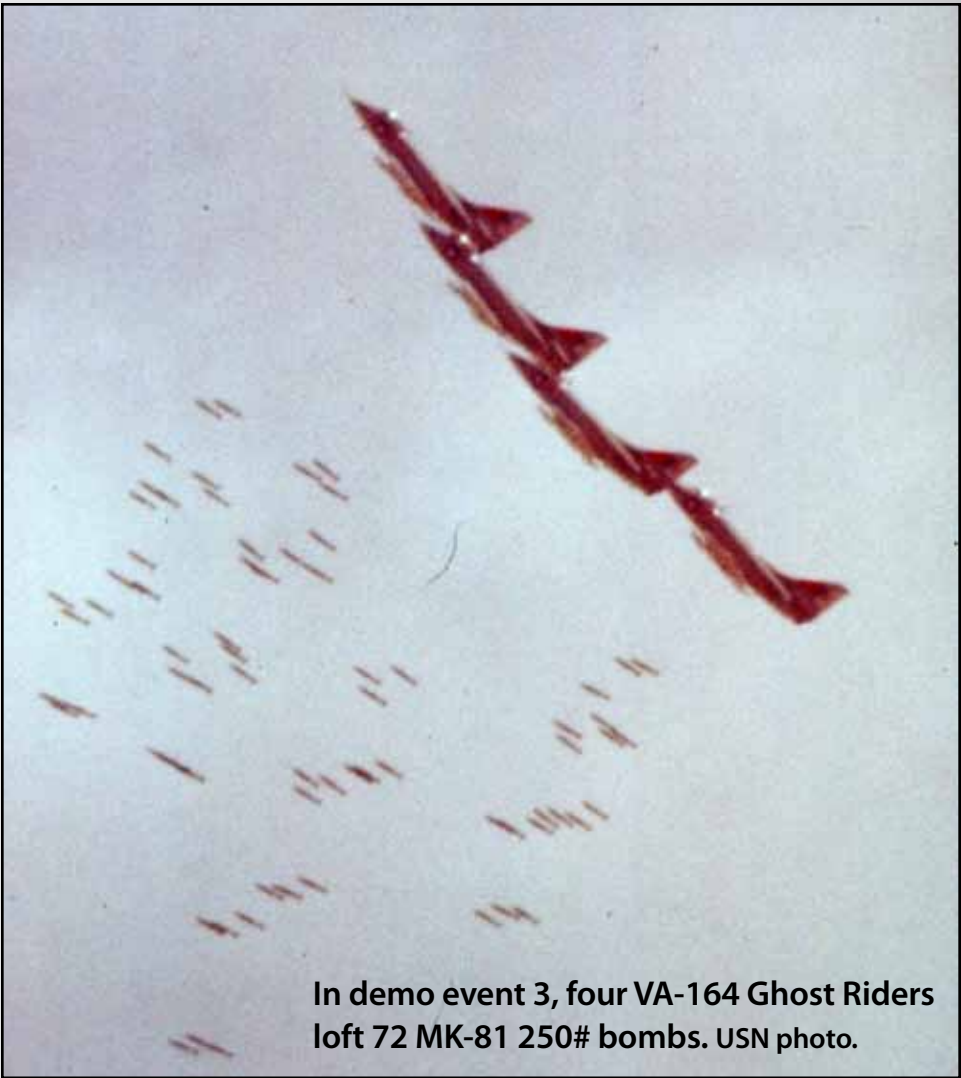
(Ed. note: only Skyhawk events are included in this article.)



President Kennedy views aerial demonstration at G-1 range. JFK Presidential Library photo.

EVENT #3:
A-4B (4 VA-164 AIRCRAFT)
MK-81 LOFT DELIVERY

Narrative:
Closing at 450 knots near ground level, Douglas Skyhawk jets (AH-401, AH-403, AH-407, AH-417), each with eighteen 250 lb. bombs, approach their pull-up point for a loft attack.
Both the aircraft and tactic are examples of modern carrier air-strike potential. The Skyhawk is the Fleet's primary light attack aircraft and the tactic provides stand-off for protection from modern target defenses. Fast, low-level penetrations like this are difficult for an enemy to detect and counter.
Arcing upward shortly and releasing their ordnance, the Skyhawks led by CDR Banks, from Marshall, Texas, will execute escape tactics while nine tons of bombs hurtle for three miles toward the target beyond position “C” not marked by smoke. This low-level stand-off tactic is devastatingly effective against heavily defended areas.
A Multiple Carriage Bomb Rack developed by the Navy gives the Douglas Skyhawk and other jets up to six times the number of bombs they could otherwise carry.



In demo event 3, four VA-164 Ghost Riders loft 72 MK-81 250# bombs. USN photo.

EVENT #4:
A-4B (2 VA-163 AIRCRAFT)
BULLPUP DEMONSTRATION

Narrative:
Although aircraft vulnerability is reduced by stand-off attained with the loft tactic just demonstrated, that technique lacks the accuracy required for attacking point targets and is generally limited to stationary or area targets on pre-planned strikes. To increase accuracy and versatility to attack small targets of opportunity from a distance, the Navy has developed the supersonic, guided, air-to-surface Bullpup missile.
Visually guided by the pilot through radio-control after launch, Bullpup “A” can accurately deliver a 250 lb. warhead against small hard targets, mobile or fixed, from ranges up to nine miles.
Attacking from 7,000 feet altitude, two Douglas Skyhawks (AH-307, AH-311) led by CDR Short from Warsaw, Maryland, will each fire a Bullpup missile against the bright green target “D” on your far left.
Thiokol Corporation developed the liquid propellant for Bullpups now in the fleet. With the Martin Company as prime contractor, the Navy developed Bullpup has been manufactured in quantity for the Navy and Air Force and has been released to NATO.

EVENT #7:
A-4B (4 VA-164 AIRCRAFT)
ZUNI ROCKET DELIVERY

Narrative:
The need to extend a multiple 5-inch rocket capability to our jet attack aircraft led to the completion at NOTS, late in 1958, of the Zuni rocket.
Zuni is a 5-inch, high performance, folding fin aircraft rocket suitable for air-to-air and air-to-ground missions. Four interchangeable warheads permit the weapon to be tailored to the target. Carried in a pod of 4 suspended from an ordnance station, the rockets may be fired singly or in salvo. Zuni has twice the velocity of the HVAR and ten times the warhead weight of the 2.75 inch FFAR previously demonstrated.
A flight of Douglas Skyhawk jets (AH-415 and three others) at 7,000 feet altitude, each armed with 8 Zuni's in two pods of four and led by LCDR “Dutch” Netherland from Beaver, Pennsylvania, attack the ship target near position “G” in a 30° glide.
Zuni is respected as one of our finest pieces of ordnance and is also used by the Air Force. Released for Fleet use in 1960, Zuni has quadrupled our jet rocket attack capability.

continued...



In demo event 8, four VA-163 Saints led by LCDR Harry Jenkins deliver 8 napalm canisters in laydown attack. Gary Verver photo.

EVENT #8: A-4B (4 VA-163 AIRCRAFT) NAPALM DELIVERY

Narrative:

Having subdued an enemy's defenses with bomb and rocket assaults, low-level napalm attacks to burn surface targets can be pressed to close quarters.

Few assaults are as fearsome as a napalm attack. NOTS is striving to increase the effectiveness of this devastating kill mechanism and to be more compatible with modern high performance aircraft.

In the distance at ground level, Douglas Skyhawks AH-300, AH-305, AH-310, AH-313) led by LCDR Harry Jenkins from Suitland, Maryland, each with 2 Napalm bombs, close at 500 knots to saturate area "H" with an inferno of fire.

Better and more effective additives, new fuels and improved igniters are sought, as well as new techniques to hold flames on the target for increased fire damage.

Part 2 Demonstration of Weapons in Development

(Ed. note: although classified at the time of the demonstration, the narrative of the remaining events/weapons has been declassified.)

Although the preceding events have been separated by lengthy intervals for demonstration purposes, one should sense the deadly effectiveness of a modern coordinated, rapid fire, carrier-launched air-strike. These missions have illustrated various tactics and conventional weapons currently used by our naval air forces.

By way of contrast, the remainder of our program will be devoted to new weapons presently undergoing development or test here at the Naval Ordnance Test Station and is classified CONFIDENTIAL. Flight demonstrations will be made by pilots from the Naval Air Facility commanded by Captain Jack Hough from Council Bluffs, Iowa, and Air Development Squadron FIVE, commanded by CDR Harry O'Connor from Winthrop, Massachusetts.

The Naval Ordnance Test Station is the Navy's largest in-house weapons laboratory. Managed by the Bureau of Naval Weapons, it is our mission to perform research and development and to support the fleet's operational requirements for weapons. This is pursued in a close, personal relationship between operationally-experienced naval personnel and capable civilian scientists, engineers and technicians here at China Lake. This team work lends itself to the timely production, by industry, of effective and versatile weapons for the fleet. Indeed, NOTS can boast that nearly all of the Navy's air-to-air and air-to-surface weapons have been developed here -- many of which are also used by the Air Force, Army, NATO and other countries.

Some of these devices you are about to see are in the test and evaluation stage and will soon be available to the Fleet. Others, however, are still undergoing feasibility tests or development and will, of necessity, utilize laboratory models which have not yet been perfected to our standards of reliability. May I emphasize that the events to follow illustrate weapons in various stages of development and test. Like parents bracing themselves for the possible embarrassments of a child's first recital, we continue.

EVENT 13: A-4B (1 NAF AIRCRAFT) WALLEYE CAPTIVE FLIGHT DEMO

Narrative:

Accurate air attacks against heavily defended hard targets are difficult. An accurate stand-off, air-to-surface homing weapon is required to neutralize such targets. Walleye is such a weapon. Its feasibility has been recently demonstrated and development is now underway at NOTS.

Walleye is an air-to-surface, homing glide weapon. Its mission is to passively home on and destroy tactical land and sea targets which have been visually acquired and identified from the launching aircraft. An internal automatic-tracking television system first demonstrated in principle by the Naval Ordnance Laboratory, Corona, provides the weapon with its own guidance and thus frees the pilot of any control responsibility after release. Since the guidance system is entirely passive, there is no known way to jam this weapon.

Walleye is still in the feasibility stage and, unfortunately, cannot be demonstrated today as a completed weapon. However we will illustrate the Walleye guidance system with a live telecast relayed from a captive Walleye in flight so you

may see on your television monitor exactly what the Walleye sees as it homes on target "J." Far to the south, a Douglas Skyhawk (BuNo 142085) carrying a Walleye approaches to attack. The pilot, CDR Jack Sickel from Annapolis, Maryland, will not release the weapon. Instead, he will fly a trajectory, similar to a released weapon, as close to the target as possible. At the last moment he will break-away. Bear in mind that this telecast is not part of the tactical weapon.

In operation, the pilot first visually acquires and identifies the target. He then shifts his attention to a television monitor on his instrument panel which shows the target as seen by the weapon's television camera. A set of double cross-hairs, in the center of the television picture, indicates the weapon aim point. The pilot maneuvers his aircraft to place the double cross-hairs over the target and switches the weapon to automatic track. After checking weapon tracking action the pilot releases the Walleye then turns his aircraft to attack other targets or leave the area.

Many of us believe that Walleye will be the most accurate and effective air-to-surface conventional weapon ever developed and will vastly reduce the number of sorties or weapons needed to destroy a target. Its size and weight will make the Walleye compatible with both light attack and fighter aircraft. Stand-off ranges of twenty miles or more will drastically reduce the vulnerability of attacking aircraft.

continued...



Prototype Walleye television-guided bomb loaded on A-4B 142085 for demo event 13. USN photo.

EVENT #19: A-4C (4 VX-5 AIRCRAFT) SNAKEYE DEMONSTRATION

Narrative:

Bomb delivery accuracy improves as range decreases. Danger from his own bomb fragments determines a pilot's minimum release range and, in a sense, the limit of his delivery accuracy. NOTS has devised a retarding tail assembly for existing bombs which reduces the minimum safe release range, thus improving accuracy and permitting a variety of high-speed, low-level tactics which were previously impossible.

This new retardable weapon is carried in a collapsed condition. Upon release from the aircraft, the tail assembly assumes its retarding configuration, if the pilot has

elected to use this feature. Thus a pilot has the option of using it as a regular bomb for targets which need penetration, or as a retarded bomb for improved accuracy or new tactics.

A flight of Douglas Skyhawks (XE-3, XE-4, XE-8, and XE-9) in two sections, led by LCDR Palmer from Baker, Oregon, each carrying three 250 lb. retardable bombs will attack buildings at the position "M". Here comes the first section in a 10° glide.

(After first section passes)

The second section now approaches for a fast, low-level, lay-down type delivery. Tactics like this permit penetrations below the radar horizon and hamper visual detection by enemy defenses.

Developmental assemblies were fabricated by the Douglas Aircraft Corporation. Delivery to the Fleet is expected in 1964.



A-4C 145127 ready for demonstration event with three MK-81 bombs fitted with prototype Snakeye fins. Gary Verver photo.

EVENT 20: A-4E (2 VX-5 AIRCRAFT) ROCKEYE DEMONSTRATION

Narrative:

Small hard targets are difficult to kill. Many types of ordnance have the ability to put a hard target out of action, if it can be hit. To increase kill probability, NOTS has designed a cluster weapon which disperses bomblets having individual killing power.

The cluster weapon to be demonstrated in our next event uses ninety-six stockpile 2.75-inch shaped charge

warheads. These warheads, or bomblets in this application, are stacked around a ZUNI rocket motor. After release, the rocket fires and disperses the bomblets.

Douglas Skyhawks (XE-00, XE-22) led by LT Robert Rice from Akron, Ohio, armed with cluster weapons developed by NOTS, will attack the armored vehicles positioned at station "O".

This cluster weapon has a tactical delivery envelope extending from 50 to 400 feet altitude, at speeds up to 600 knots, and will be available to the Fleet by 1964. An improved version using specifically designed bomblets is also under development.

continued...



VX-5 A-4Es conduct MK 20 Rockeye attack on armored vehicles. USN photo.

**EVENT #21:
A-4C/E (2 NAF AIRCRAFT)
SHRIKE DELIVERY**

Narrative:

In future hostilities many ground targets will be protected by radar-guided surface-to-air missiles, often called SAM sites. To provide us a means of knocking out SAM installations, as well as inhibiting the use of other radars, NOTS has developed the Shrike missile.

Shrike is an aircraft launched missile containing its own passive guidance system. It is designed to home on an active enemy radar antenna.

When locked on by the pilot, the missile is automatically released by a computer system during a variety of maneuvers.

A radar antenna, in line with and beyond position "P" (approximately 10 miles down-range to your far left), is the target for this next event. We are picking up the radar's beam with detection equipment which will impress a background audio-signal on the PA system each time the beam sweeps through our position.

Two Skyhawks (BuNo 147680 and BuNo 149969), led by LT A. L. Tambini will approach for a Shrike attack. The missiles will be fired from in front of the reviewing stand and will impact approximately 80 seconds later.

(Pause for firing)

Once fired, SHRIKE is on its own thus leaving the pilot free to either initiate further attacks or leave the area. If our demonstration attack is successful, the radar signals on the FA system will suddenly stop. Your television monitor will scan the radar installation at impact so you may observe the damage.

The Shrike and aircraft system tell the pilot not only that an active radar is in its scan, but also gives information about the nature and location of these radars - - thus allowing selectivity when multiple targets appear.

The Shrike warhead consists of 22,000 steel cubes, bonded in an explosive charge. A proximity fuse detonates the warhead at a position which maximizes the fragmentation effect. These steel cubes riddle the antenna and wave guides to render the radar inoperable.

The Shrike missile is compact enough to be carried along as a part of the total ordnance load on light attack aircraft.

(Wait for impact)

Conceived and developed by NOTS, the guidance system for this lightweight, simple, and inexpensive missile will be manufactured by Texas Instruments, Inc.

Shrike project development was started under NOTS technical direction in 1958, prompted by the effective use of radar-directed, anti-aircraft weapons used by the Chinese Communists in Korea.

Shrike will be delivered to the Fleet in limited quantities later this year.

CONCLUSION:

Mr. President, distinguished guests: As a finale to our demonstrations, Carrier Air Group Eleven, recently returned from duty in the Western Pacific and operating from the USS *Kitty Hawk* at sea, approaches in formation to salute you. The Air Group commander is CDR O'Neil of Boston, Massachusetts. Aircraft in their wake will lay down a covering smoke screen to draw a curtain over our demonstration area and to close our program. This act will conclude your briefing at the instrumented ranges of the Naval Ordnance Test Station.

Within a few minutes you will be escorted on a tour of the station. May we wish you continuing fair winds and tides and pledge that the might and expanding knowledge of the United States Navy stands ready to assert its role in national defense.



CVW-11 flyover following demonstrations. USN photo.

**JFK ADDRESS TO OFFICERS AND MEN
7 June 1963**

The following is a paraphrase of the comments of President John F. Kennedy to the pilots who participated in the weapons demonstration at NOTS China Lake, California, on 7 June 1963.

"I wish to take this opportunity to thank each of you for your fine efforts in putting on this weapons demonstration today. I was greatly impressed by the skill of the pilots in delivering these weapons. Today's weapons are the product of continuing advances in technology. As the weapons and weapons systems become more technically advanced, it is necessary for the pilots to become more technically advanced and more technically proficient in their use.

While the pilots of World War II aircraft had longer time over target and could make repeated attacks, the modern aircraft has little time over target and cannot normally repeat attacks. Therefore, the weapons of today must have the capability of doing their job the first time rather than as a result of repeated delivery. As a result of this advanced weapons technology and the speed of modern aircraft you, the pilots, must have the requisite talent and skill to accomplish your mission, As President of the United States, I can say that you have amply demonstrated that here today."



Gary Verver has been an active member of the research team for the Skyhawk Association since 2004.

As a recent graduate of ADJA School in Memphis, he reported to the Line Division at NAF China Lake just in time for the visit of JFK in June 1963. Within a year, he was elevated to Line Supervisor and worked on

the aircraft involved in numerous exotic projects, including Shrike, Walleye, FFARs, Sadeye, Weteye, Snipe, Rockeye, Padeye, Snakeye, Fireye, Gladeye, Briteye and HIPEG.

He left the Navy after his first enlistment for a job maintaining German Luftwaffe F-104s at Luke AFB, later deciding to go back to school to learn computer programming. He worked primarily in the financial sector, starting with the Federal Reserve Bank in Denver, rising to the level of Vice President in the Denver office.

Besides volunteering with the Skyhawk Association, Gary manages the China Lake Alumni website and is widely recognized as the principal authority on the history of China Lake.

The Last Attack of the Halcones

By Pablo Calcaterra

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On June 13th 1982, the A-4B Skyhawks of the Argentine Air Force's 5th Air Brigade (Brigada Aérea) carried out the last attack by Argentine fighter-bombers during the Malvinas/Falklands War. This is the story of this mission.

The target of the Halcones (Note 1) was a concentration of British troops on the northeast face of Twin Sisters north of Puerto Argentino/Stanley. The Argentines had detected a large concentration of troops and helicopters along with heavy electronic communications in the area. It had to be an important target. They were right because Major General Jeremy Moore was at the 3rd Commando Brigade HQ planning for the final offensive of the war. The mission consisted of: (Note 2)

OF 1319. Callsign: Nene. Four planes armed with three parachute-delayed bombs. Nene 1 (C-230 Capt. Antonio Zelaya), Nene 2 (C-227 Lt. Omar Gelardi), Nene 3 (C-212 Lt. Luis Cervera), and Nene 4 (C-221 Alférez (2nd Lieutenant) Guillermo Dellepiane)

OF 1320. Callsign: Chispa. Four planes with the same armament. Chispa 1 (C-222 Capt. Carlos Varela), Chispa 2 (C-250 Lt. Mario Roca), Chispa 3 (C-235 Lt. Sergio Mayor), and Chispa 4 (C-237) Alférez (2nd Lieutenant) Marcelo Moroni).

Dellepiane's plane (Nene 4) had a mechanical problem. He changed to the spare aircraft, C-225, but was too late to takeoff with his flight. He was already strapped into C-225 when he heard that Capt. Varela (Chispa 1) was getting

ready to takeoff, and he asked for permission to join Chispa Flight. Permission was granted and, as a consequence Nene Flight had only three planes and the trailing Chispa flight, had five planes (the leader in the center with two wingmen on each side). Dellepiane called it a "symmetric formation"

They soon reached their refueling point with the KC-130, but during the refueling process, jet fuel splashed all over Capt. Zelaya's plane (Nene 1). It entered the air intakes causing an explosion in the compressor. He broke contact with the Hercules and returned to base. "Tucu" Cervera (Nene 3) took command of Nene flight, and Dellepiane rejoined his original flight as Nene 4.

Although Nene Flight was originally supposed to lead the attack, Capt. Varela (Chispa 1) having more experience than Lt. Cervera (Nene 3), asked Lt. Cervera if he would allow Chispa Flight to lead the attack. Cervera agreed and Nene Flight took up a position 30 seconds behind Chispa Flight.

Their route took them to the north of the islands where a 90 degree turn south put them on a straight line to the target area. They descended thru five layers of clouds. The leader of the trailing flight, Cervera (Nene 3), lost sight of Chispa flight many times...but as he was keeping a uniform rate of descent and direction using the Omega system, he managed to find himself above and behind

the leading formation every time they broke out of the clouds.

Before reaching the islands, they were flying at zero feet in areas where it was raining heavily. This made it difficult to follow Capt. Varela (Chispa 1) - his light grey Skyhawk was perfectly camouflaged in the rain! (Note 3) The only way his wingmen were able to see Varela's position was to follow the white wake C-222's jet exhaust was making on the surface of the sea. It was like following the waves made by a speedboat!

Soon, they were flying over the islands. They were so low that radar could not find them. Suddenly, they heard the Argentine radar operator at Puerto Argentino/Stanley calling:

"Is there anyone in the air?"

"Chispa" Varela sharply answered.

The radar operator warned that there were four British CAPs in the air located as follows: one each at Mount Pleasant, one at the north entrance of San Carlos/Falkland Sound, one east of Stanley/Puerto Argentino, and one at the south entrance of San Carlos/Falkland Sound.

In other words, they were surrounded. But Capt. Varela reasoned that if the Argentine radar was unable to see them...neither could the British. Varela thought: "I won't give up when I am only two minutes away from the target". So he pressed on. Cervera (Nene 3) suggested that after attacking they should retrace their steps, as it would give them



C-212 Cervera's plane during the war. Note overpainted brown yellow ID bands. (Fernando C. Benedetto)



C-222 The famous Tordillo during the war. (Fernando C. Benedetto)

a better chance to escape. Capt. Varela accepted the idea.

Shortly afterwards the Argentine radar operator told the Skyhawk leader that two of the British CAPs were flying towards them. It seems that the British troops on the ground had passed on their position to the Harriers. It was a race against time and the trap was closing...

Halcones to the Attack

The Skyhawks were following every valley and hill in their quest of not being picked up by enemy radar. The Skyhawk's camouflage and their maneuvers made Nene Flight's task of following the lead flight quite difficult. Reaching the top of a hill, Varela (Crispa 1) saw a British soldier strolling peacefully. The soldier froze and Varela saw the surprised look on his face. Beyond the soldier in the next valley was the British command post. They had made it! There were tents, modules with rotating antennas, and helicopters on the ground and in the air.

Chispa Flight attacked first. Flying side by side to maximize the effect of their bombs Varela said:

"Bombs gone... NOW, NOW, NOW!"

Twelve 500-lb. bombs fell simultaneously. Initially caught by surprise, British troops started to fire back: guns, missiles, and machine guns...everyone was shooting at the Skyhawks. The following flight (Nene) saw where the smoke of the explosions on the ground. The leader of the following flight, Cervera (Nene 3), fired his guns at the enemy concentration. He saw 4 or 5 helicopters in the area and the destruction caused by the Crispa Flight's bombs. He also saw soldiers running to take cover. Clearing the smoke, he saw helicopters on the

ground, module-like containers, troops; he decided to attack them. He ordered his men to drop their bombs.

While leaving the area, a Sea King crossed Cervera's path from right to left. As his gun sight was set for low-level bombing, he had to aim without it. He saw his tracers flying towards the enemy helicopter and it seemed that they were entering the structure. He remembers that the pilot had a light blue helmet.

The neat formation of Skyhawks broke up as each plane tried to avoid the ground fire. The planes were crisscrossing, breaking, turning; their pilots shouted warnings to each other. Roca (Chispa 2) called out:

"Chispa 1, a missile has just exploded between you and me!"

Seconds later, Varela (Chispa 1) saw the flash of the explosion of yet another missile beside him and the plane shud-

dered. Mayor (Chispa 3) told him to eject, as Varela's plane seemed to have been hit. But the C-222 was still flying.

"Tucu! Break right!" called Dellepiane (Chispa 4). Cervera reacted immediately and two chasing missiles continued straight ahead passing him on his left. At that moment, he jettisoned his external load (pylons and fuel tanks) and the sudden shudder of the plane almost caused Cervera to loose control and his plane nearly impacted the ground!

Dellepiane saw a Sea King (ZA298 of 846 Sqn - Lt. Commander S. Thornewill) in the air squarely sitting in his gun sight. He pressed the button, but only two shots came out from the 20mm. Luckily, one of the rounds hit one of the helicopter blades (passing thru cleanly without exploding) and the pilot had to make an emergency landing. Dellepiane was able to see the pilot's green helmet. Taking off again, Thornewill landed in a valley and checked the damage. A new blade was sent and replaced and the Sea King was flying again hours later.

More helicopters were in the air. Dellepiane tried to fire at another one, but his guns were still jammed. Therefore, he passed as close as he could to the flying helicopter's blades. *continued...*



Sea King's replacement of blade. (Tucu Cervera)

The Halcones Turn for Home

Varela (Chispa 1) put another helicopter in his gun sight and was about to fire, when he checked his instrument panel and saw his engine was overheating. The missile had indeed damaged his Skyhawk. Varela forgot the helicopter and turned to get out of there and to return to base as soon as possible. At that point, he realized that the engine was running rough and was vibrating making strange noises. To lighten his plane, Varela pressed the emergency release button and all the external stores fell away. As he had not communicated this decision his wingmen did the same.

Varela ordered his men to break up, head north as there were no Harriers there, keep silence on the radio, and return individually to divide the attention of the incoming Harriers. Roca (Chispa 2) decided to form on Varela. To Varela's surprise he heard Lt Gelardi (Nene 2) on only his 3rd mission shouting:

Leave him alone and allow him to make his own decision!"

"And where is north?"...To which Lt. Mayor (Chispa 3) answered in a casual and jokingly way: "To the right, my son, to the right!"

On the ground, two more helicopters suffered damage during the attack: Gazelle ZA728 and Scout XT637 from 656 Sqn. They had to be airlifted to San Carlos for repair at the 70 Aircraft Workshop.

Cervera saw the shadow of a plane chasing him. No matter what he tried he was not able to shake it...until he realized it was the shadow of his own plane. Nerves were playing tricks on him. Escaping on a northern route (same way they had entered the area minutes before) and now flying low over the sea he checked his fuel status and realized he barely had enough to return to his base (2,000 lb when 1,900 were needed). He was about to start to climb when only 700 meters ahead of him he saw a British warship! Gently turning west and trying to put distance between him and the warship as fast as possible while keeping a constant eye on his threat, Cervera left the ship behind. He cannot, even today, explain why the British ship allowed him to escape without firing a single shot.

Dellepiane's Ordeal

Cervera climbed as high as he could and put the engine on a reduced consumption regime. The other pilots called out their remaining fuel...and then Dellepiane realized he had less than what he needed to return to his base...and he had not even crossed Falkland Sound! He needed to climb to save fuel, but he was worried about the Harriers. He asked the radar where the enemy planes were. The answer came back, but the stressed "Piano" (his war name) was not in a state to comprehend. He asked radar to make it easy for him. The not-so-technical answer came back. The Harriers were not close to his damaged plane. Therefore, Dellepiane started to climb...and fast. Even at 100% power the plane did not seem to be moving...

Lt. Dellepiane asked Capt. Varela for advice. He was told that if he had not crossed the Sound yet he should look for a safe place to eject. But that point was now behind him and he also remembered that they had been told they had to save the planes at any cost. The other pilots were giving him advice jamming the air, but Varela shouted:

"Leave him alone and allow him to make his own decision!" Silence in the air...

Dellepiane asked the pilot of the KC-130 TC-69 (Vice Commodore Luis Litrenta) to get closer to the islands to help him, as he was not going to make it to the tanker's current position.

Cervera decided to leave the Hercules for Dellepiane, and without refueling he continued to the continent. Risking being hunted by the Harriers, the pilot of the "Chancha" (as the Herks are called in Argentina) flew at maximum speed to rescue Dellepiane who was broadcasting continuously to help the KC-130 find him. All the other pilots were giving him encouragement on the radio, telling him to keep up hope. They kept on calling their fuel status and Dellepiane said: "Some of you are so lucky..." His companions kept encouraging him, but Dellepiane answered:

"I have to be realistic! I only have 300 lb left!"

"That's more than enough, don't worry!" answered Litrenta from the KC-130.

"That's only enough for 10 minutes more!"

"More than enough, we are almost there!"

Varela (Chispa 1) answered:

"Don't worry, Piano (Dellepiane). It looks that the two of us will end up in the drink! My rpm are fluctuating and the engine is overheating!" His Skyhawks's engine was at 83%.

"I've only have 200 lb left!!" said Dellepiane.

"Coco (Litrenta), please don't leave me alone!" He touched his breast pocket. "At least I will be able to smoke and have some chocolate before I die" he thought...these were presents from Capt. Carballo before the mission.



Dellepiane's plane streaming fuel on the return leg. (Hernan Casciani)

"We believe we can see you! Turn right! You should be able to see us!"

"How far would you get if your engine stops?"

"To the middle of the ocean..."

"How much "juice" do you have left?"

"200 lb"

"Oh! That's more than enough..."

"I said 200, not 2,000!"

From time to time, Dellepiane was insulting them, asking them not to leave him alone. When Dellepiane had 150 lb Litrenta on the TC-130 said:

"I think we've found you! Waggle your wings"

But it was not him. It was Cervera. After this brief period of hope, Dellepiane's spirits sunk. He was going nowhere with only 100 lb left. He was over the ocean. Alone. No chances of gliding to any piece of land... The Puerto Argentino/St Stanley radar came on the air:

"Keep your hope Piano as the Virgin Mary is with you!"

With the fuel reading almost 0 lb, Litrenta said:

"We believe we can see you! Turn right! You should be able to see us!" And yes, down there on the right was the Hercules. They had spotted the damaged Skyhawk thanks to the fuel streaming behind it. Dellepiane asked the pilot to turn in order to make his refueling more easily as his gauge was reading zero (cero).

"I'll give it all! Full power to catch you!"

The engine was going to cut out any moment. But the surge of power had made the Skyhawk too fast and Dellepiane asked the KC-130 pilot to dive in order to gain speed.

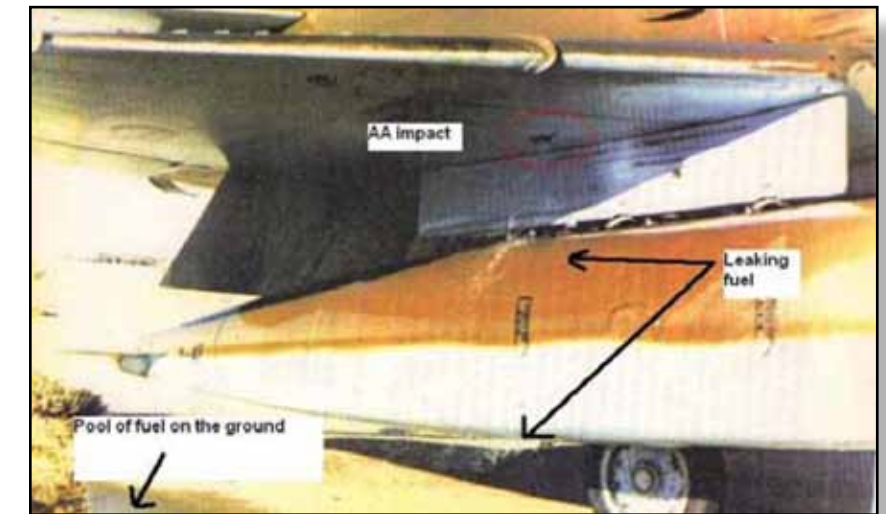
"Diving for a loop!" was the answer he got while the Hercules went nose down. The deployed hose was in front of Dellepiane. Almost there...almost there...he opened his airbrakes and in his first try he managed to get his refueling probe into the basket at the end of the hose of the KC-130. Immediately his fuel gauge started to climb. He was saved by the courageous decision of the KC-130 pilot. Dellepiane could see thru the windows of the Hercules that the crewmembers were jumping, shouting, and embracing each other. On the radio the Skyhawk pilots were shouting "Y no hay quien pueda! (No one can succeed against us!)" This is the war song of the Halcones.

Congratulations and cries of happiness rained from the radio.

"Tucu! We are going to get soooo drunk tonight!" said Dellepiane to his friend Cervera.

Almost all the fuel that was being passed to the damaged Skyhawk was being lost thru a 18cm (almost 10 inches) hole in his right wing. Therefore, staying hooked to the tanker, Dellepiane flew his plane back to his base.

Upon uncoupling over the runway, he had a second emergency...the nose landing gear would not come down. Flying in circles above the base and loosing the little fuel he had left, Dellepiane desperately tried to lock it down. It finally came down and locked. When he touched down, his plane was engulfed in a cloud of fuel vapor. When the plane came to a stop, Dellepiane climbed out in haste. Beneath C-225 there was a big pool of fuel. Dellepiane could not believe he was safe back on the ground. As it was a Sunday, he went straight to Mass.



C-225 on the ground leaking fuel after the mission on June 13th. Yellow ID bands on the wings can be seen overpainted in dark brown. (Pablo Carballo)

The Skyhawks Can Take It!

Going back to Cervera's predicament: He was also in a critical situation. After many minutes and with only 300 lb of fuel left he descended towards the runway. Suddenly Moroni's Skyhawk (Chispa 4) cut in front of him on finals! He asked Moroni how much fuel he had left and when he answered 1,000 lb. Cervera asked him to abort his landing as he was in an emergency due to low fuel. Cervera then landed safely with only 100 lb left in his main tank!

Tucu remained in his cockpit without moving. He was drained. And then the crewmembers started to gather around C-212 and point at the tail. When Cervera finally left his plane he looked and found that four shots had passed thru the base of the rudder without even scratching the hydraulic lines in the area!

In the meantime Capt. Varela had managed to get to base without further incident. But after landing, when he tried to idle the engine it just quit. He left his plane and along with his ground crew they looked into the air intake. They could not believe their eyes. The turbine blades had melted to less than half their length! The Skyhawk could not have flown in that state...but it did. A providential engine setting, the constant airflow into the engine, and some help from Above had helped Varela.

This incident only increased the mythical fame of the Skyhawk as it was considered to be indestructible and it would always bring her pilot back. Although some of them were badly damaged, all the *continued...*

Skyhawks had returned to their base. The pilots celebrated their success and safe return noisily and with lots of alcohol. Dellepiane had to be carried to his room...

All the Halcones' Skyhawks were repaired and served in the Air Force many more years. Capt. Varela's light gray C-222 was repainted in standard brown/green camouflage with kill markings on the nose (HMS Argonaut and RFA Sir Galahad).

Epilogue

All the Argentine Skyhawks A-4B were retired in 1999. C-222 (ex-BuAer142752g) now rests at the Area Material Rio Cuarto where it has been repainted in the light gray it carried on 13 June 1982. (Note 4)

This mission was a fitting end to the stellar achievements of the Skyhawks in the war: the most missions flown, the most targets hit, the most ships sunk (HMS Ardent, HMS Argonaut, HMS Coventry, RFA Sir Galahad, Foxtrot 4 from RFA Fearless) and disabled (HMS Argonaut, HMS Glasgow, RFA Sir Tristram) besides others damaged like RFA Sir Lancelot. However, they paid a terrible price in blood



C-235 Mayor's plane on June 13th. Note snow on the ground during last days of the war. (Fernando C. Benedetto)

with nineteen planes shot down (out of 38 that took part in the war) and seventeen pilots dead including two Squadron commanders - Capt. Palaver and Capt. Garcia on May 25th - during the 282 sorties flown between May 1st and June 13th.

"Y no hay quien pueda!"

With thanks to: 1. Luis Cervera for the permission to use the information from his blog and his answers to my questions. Gracias Tucu! 2. Guillermo Dellepiane for some of the details about June 13th that I have included here. 3. Tony Zelaya for his help and support (as always!). 4. Pablo Carballo for allowing me to transcribe parts of his books yet again (Gracias Cruz!). 5. Exequiel Martinez for his permission to share with you his painting. 6. Fernando C. Benedetto and Hernan Casciani.

Pablo Calcaterra (SAFCH #1728), Canada.



Pipi Sanchez (left) and Tucu Cervera (right). in their pilot's room. Note the helmets with the white and red reflective bands and their yellow scarves that identify them as pilots of V Brigada Aerea. (Tucu Cervera)

- Notes
1. Halcon (Falcon) is the name given to the Skyhawks pilots in the Argentine Air Force.

2. Orden Fragmentaria (Fragmented Order) is a brief mission instruction that afterwards is fully detailed.

3. In 1982, Skyhawk C-222 was going thru a major inspection in Area Material Rio Cuarto (Cordoba province). Due to the need to get as many planes as possible combat ready, C-222 was sent to the Rio Gallegos base without camouflage and painted only with anti-corrosion paint (light gray). The pilot that flew the plane on April 27th was my friend Capitan Antonio ("Tony") Zelaya.

4. The camouflage colors of Argentine Skyhawks during the Malvinas/Falkland War were: A-4B from V Brigada
- in brown and green with sky undersides...except for Tordillo. A-4C from IV Brigada in sand, brown, and white undersides. A-4Q from Navy in light gray.
- References
1. Tucu Cervera's blog: <http://losacuatre-ros.blogspot.com/>

2. Falklands Air War, Chris Hobson

3. Halcones de Malvinas, Pablo Carballo

4. Dios y los Halcones, Pablo Carballo

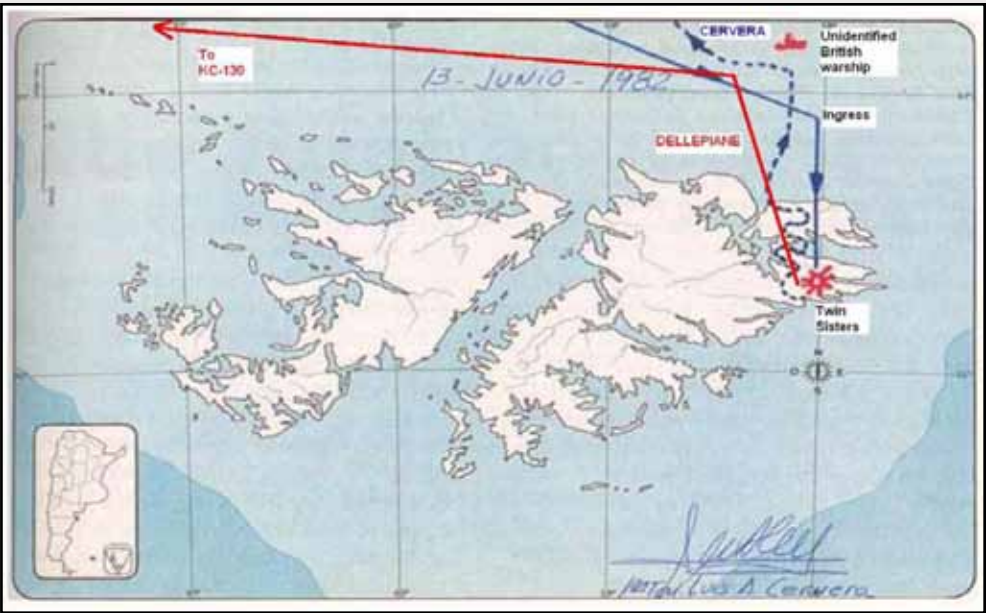
5. A-4B Skyhawk, Nunez Padin

6. A-4B y C Skyhawk, Fernando Benedetto

7. Historia Oficial de la Fuerza Aerea Argentina, volume VI, book 1 and 2



Tucu Cervera on the left and Pipi Sanchez on the right in front of C-236 in an ein-forced shelters at their base in the south. (Tucu Cervera)



Halcones' mission of 13 June 1982. (Cervera and Dellepiane)

Pablo Calcaterra was born in Argentina and has been following the actions of the Argentine Air Force since the 1982 South Atlantic war. He has met and interviewed several of the Argentine and some of the British pilots that flew in that combat. As a result Pablo has written several contributions to websites, magazines and books (i.e. Scooter!) sharing with the English public the little known Argentine's experiences. Because of this, in 2009 his work was recognized by the Argentine Air Force Fighter Pilots Association. He now resides in Canada with his family.



The mission of the **Small Air Forces Clearinghouse (SAFCH)** is to "promote interest in the history and modeling of the aircraft of the smaller countries." In support of this goal, the SAFCH encourages international cooperation in researching aviation history, both military and civil, from all periods of time, and for all the smaller countries.

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Draken Translant of BAE *Skyhawks*

Skyhawk News – December 2014

By the Editorial Staff

Various press releases have recently documented significant changes in the status of A-4 related contract air services and the deployment of Skyhawk assets. Todd “Hun” Frommelt, Skyhawk Association’s “Keeper of the [Skyhawk] Count,” reported the following surprise move which occurred in December:

“While Top Aces/Discovery Air Services are in the middle of positioning their formerly ATSI A-4’s over to Germany, just recently heard that the BAE A-4N’s that were being flown back to the boneyard have diverted to Draken International in Florida!”

continued...

On deck in Keflavik. Photo by Mike Robinson.

As reported by PRWEB (Lakeland, FL) – December 12, 2014:

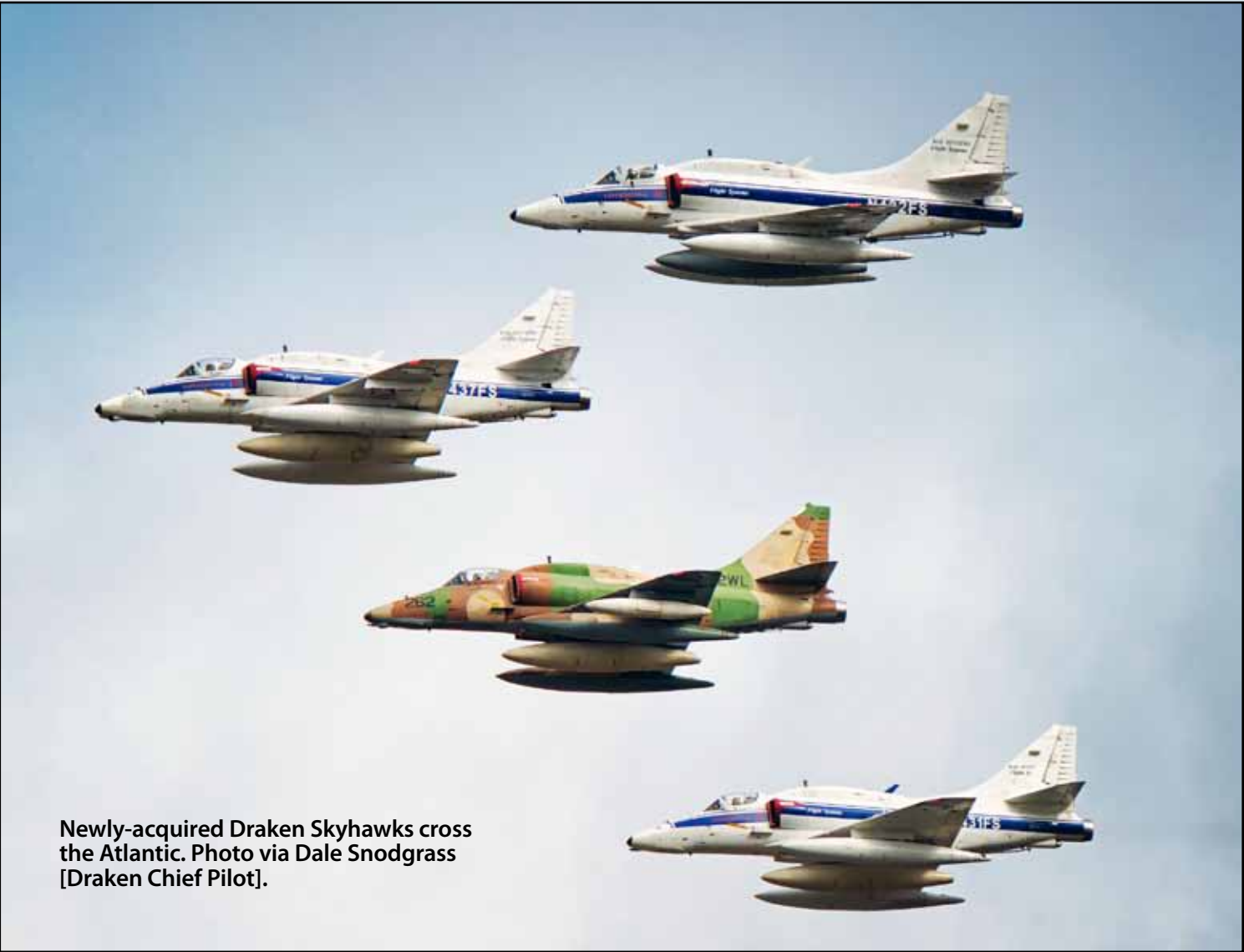
Draken International Adds Six A-4N Skyhawks to Growing Fleet

Draken International, a provider of 4th-generation tactical flight support, has completed an acquisition of six McDonnell Douglas A-4N Skyhawks from BAE Systems and has successfully flown these aircraft back to the United States from Germany. These aircraft are in addition to eight A-4K Skyhawks previously purchased from New Zealand, bringing the company’s fleet to a total of 14 A-4 Skyhawks.

Draken International CEO Jared Isaacman states, “The A-4 Skyhawk has proven to be a very capable aircraft and is well-suited for tactical flight support. We are glad to have this opportunity to add these six additional aircraft to our growing fleet. The flight operation involved considerable planning and logistics expertise given the harsh and sometimes unpredictable weather of the North Atlantic. The Draken team did a tremendous job in all aspects of the operation including maintenance, pilots, flight planning, and logistics. This marks the fourth overseas acquisition of fighter aircraft and is highlighted even further by such a safe and successful trans-Atlantic flight operation.”

In a related move, reported by Combat Aircraft Monthly – January 2015:

“Discovery Air Defence Services, a subsidiary of the Canadian company Discovery Air has begun to deploy its ex-Israeli A-4N Skyhawks to Wittmund, Germany. The seven refurbished jets, with ‘glass’ cockpits, will be used as air combat training adversaries under a five-year German armed forces contract, beginning in January 2015. In that time, the fleet will provide the German military with around 1,200 hours of fast jet airborne training services.”



Newly-acquired Draken Skyhawks cross the Atlantic. Photo via Dale Snodgrass [Draken Chief Pilot].



Somewhere over the Atlantic. Photo by Mike “Bloke” Robinson.



Draken pilots Gustafson, Snodgrass and Eberhardt after arrival in Lakeland. Photo via Dale Snodgrass.

Look for an article on the trans-Atlantic movement of the BAE Systems A-4Ns from Germany to the Draken facility in Lakeland, FL, in the spring 2015 issue of *The A-4Ever*. In the meantime, here are some photos of the ferry operation, completed on December 9, 2014.

CROSSDECK 1969

By Ray "Dutchy" Brauer, RAN

In May 1969 I was one of a group of Royal Australian Navy VF805 Squadron personnel selected to accompany one of our 'Scooters' to the carrier USS *Kearsarge* (CVS 33). *Keasarge* was a submarine hunter, as was my ship HMAS *Melbourne*. Both ships were outfitted with Grumman S-2 Trackers and Sikorsky Sea King helicopters, although *Melbourne* was rather more versatile in the attack role due to the presence of VF805 Squadron's Douglas A-4G Skyhawks. One of 805 Squadron's A-4s was configured as a tanker, having been fitted with a Buddy Store, which is a self-contained, hydraulically powered in-flight refueling pod. This buddy store equipped the A-4 for use in the Carrier Air Protection (CAP) role, and so it was that on a May day in 1969 somewhere in the South China Sea a VF805 Scooter sat 'HOT' (that is pre-flighted with the pilot strapped in and ready for a rapid start and launch) on the flight deck of USS *Kearsarge* during 'Flying Stations.' The mission was to be ready to launch should an A-4, on completion of its mission, have insufficient fuel remaining to return it safely to its familiar trap on the flight deck of HMAS *Melbourne*.



Navy PR photo (hence cap on flight deck). Dutchy secures an A-4 tanker buddy store turbine, April 1969, South China Sea. Photo via author.

A few days earlier a U.S. Sea King helicopter had lobbed onto *Melbourne*'s flight deck, loaded the selected group of maintainers and equipment and delivered us in a few short minutes to the

Kearsarge. *Kearsarge* was an older ship whose flight deck was timber and the catapults were rather more sluggish hydraulic units compared to *Melbourne*'s steam unit. As the first RAN Skyhawk catapulted from *Kearsarge*, a selection of various pieces of debris went tumbling down the flight deck with it. These foreign objects included a selection of buddy store scupper drains and covers, including miscellaneous hardware which had been torn from it by the voluminous bundle of webbing belts which were used to prevent the catapult strop from leaving the ship. We were quite surprised that this catapult strop retention arrangement did not compare at all well with the vastly superior design and lower profile of the system on *Melbourne*. While an A-4 without the buddy store would have had no issue with the launch, this event effectively sabotaged our joint exercise. Although disappointed at this unanticipated turn



USS *Kearsarge* (CVS 33) had been during her lifespan a CV, CVA and, as shown here, a CVS, reflecting her anti-submarine role. USN photo.



HMAS *Melbourne* with A-4G and S-2 Tracker compliment onboard. RAN photo.



RAN A-4G low pass on *Melbourne*. Photo via author.

of events, the ground crew were suitably consoled on receiving a message from the ship's Captain congratulating us on our display of professionalism during the start and pre-launch checks procedure. These skills had been well honed on our own flight deck since departing Garden Island some weeks earlier.

During our few days with *Kearsarge*

we certainly enjoyed and availed ourselves of such facilities unheard of on *Melbourne*, as a shopping arcade complete with 7-11, a jeweler, a coffee lounge/milk bar, clothing (including uniform) store and a hair dresser among others. A television station from which *Rosemary's Baby* was beamed to messes throughout the ship and a radio station operated 24/7 (this movie had only re-



Ray Brauer late 1960s. Photo via author.

cently been introduced in cinemas back home). In the restaurant-style dining area was a wondrous selection of flavored drinks to be had with the rather alien selection of foods (which was served with such surprising speed when, having joined the cue it was snaking around the hangar deck between aircraft and equipment). I must admit to an unhappy feeling of trepidation at the *continued...*



USS Kearsarge and USS Frank E. Evans (DD754) during a replenishment at sea (RAS) operation. Photo via author.

Kearsarge mug given to Ray Brauer at end of cross-deck experience in 1969. Photo via author.



collision at sea just a few weeks later at 0312 on the 3rd of June 1969. 

(Ed. note: the USS Frank E. Evans and HMAS Melbourne collided at sea early on the morning of June 3, 1969, as the Evans was maneuvering to the plane guard position on Melbourne. Seventy-four of the 273 crewmembers of the Evans perished in the collision, most believed to have been trapped within a severed bow section which rapidly sank. More information is available at www.usffee.org/the74.html.)

SCHEDULING

Reunions & Requests



PLAN AHEAD

- **Skyhawk Assn Mid-year Board Meeting:** April 24-25, 2015, Holiday Inn Fairborn, Dayton, OH. Contact is Terry Cooney [tcooney8@gmail.com]. Members are invited. Watch POD at www.a4skyhawk.org for details.
- **Marine Corps Aviation Association 2015 Symposium and Reunion:** May 14-16, San Diego, CA. See www.flymcaa.org for more information.
- **Skyhawk Association 2015 Annual Meeting and Luncheon at Tailhook:** 12:00 noon, September 11, 2015, Nugget Hotel.
- **Tailhook Association Reunion & Symposium 2015,** Nugget Hotel, Sparks, NV, September 10-13, 2014.
- **All-Marine Skyhawk Reunion:** October 8-11, 2015, Embassy Suites downtown, San Diego, CA. Contact is Mark Williams, roger.wilco@comcast.net.
- **VA-55 Reunion:** initial planning for reunion in fall 2015. To get your name on the email list, contact Denny Sapp at djsapp@comcast.net.

List your reunion or event with Skyhawk Association, both print journal and website. Contact the editor at sa-journal-editor@a4skyhawk.org.



Puresome Unplugged

~ YP's Excellent Adventures ~

Breaking News on the Literary Front!

Good news for all the fans of CDR Jack Woodul's highly acclaimed stories published first in **The Hook** and for the last ten years in **The A-4Ever** as *The Further Adventures of Youthly Puresome*. Jack's stories have finally been collected in an e-book, *The Breaks of Naval Air*, *The Further Adventures of Youthly Puresome* (Kindle edition), that is sure to excite the many loyal fans who have followed his stories for years. See Amazon, Barnes and Noble or Apple iBooks for more information.

This review from noted aviation author Barrett Tillman:

Five Aren't Enough



January 9, 2015

Jack Woodul is one of the most unappreciated writers in America. I've been reading him since 1991, when his first "Adventures of Youthly Puresome" appeared in *The Hook*, the quarterly journal of aircraft carriers. It was apparent from the outset that the former attack and fighter pilot was on to something. "YP" was Woodul's alter ego--the junior officer's Everyman who survived the same experiences as his Vietnam generation of naval aviators. But he captured the institutional ambience and the closed culture of that esoteric band of warriors in a way that was fresh, innovative, irreverent, and downright funny. Woodul is one of the few writers who can make you laugh aloud, in the way that PJ O'Rourke and Ann Coulter can make you laugh.

Part of Woodul's appeal is his style. It's self-composed and original, infecting friends and correspondents who find themselves defaulting to a YP-ism: "That's wot I thunk" or "I forgot to remember to ax permission." In a lesser writer it might be self-conscious or even narcissistic. In the Youthly tales it's integral to the story. In that regard, the medium is the message.

Yet there's something more. While YP's essence is the literary genie who emerges from the bottle to tinkle on political correctness and conventional wisdom, he also sprinkles emotional pixie dust. Every so often--sometimes when least expected--he puts the brakes

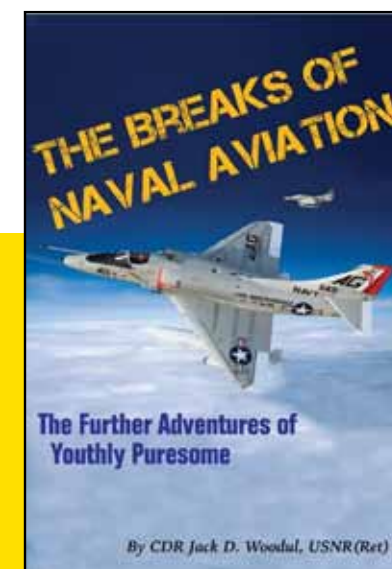
on the hard-charging trouble-plagued "JO" long enough to reflect on the larger context. Read "Shrill of the Bagpipes" for insight into the warrior's creed and a warrior's mind. There's more here than appears even to some of Woodul's admirers. Beneath the single-malt, red-meat persona beats a thoroughly human heart (he would say "hort") that is softer at its core than the exterior appears.

To a wider extent YP's tales touch upon other people, other generations. He alludes to Patton-esque trumpet triplets echoing down the ages, for he descends from that hardscrabble Scots-Irish breed that knows occasional loss but never defeat. Nor does he overlook the vital contribution--and the vital life-force--of his child bride "Tunita del Mundo" and the sisterhood of military aviation wives who saw it all, endured it all: from the rigors of training to adolescent bar-room antics to cherished friends forever missing in Lyndon B. Johnson's "Crazy Asian War."

The book's organization is ideal for casual reading, either chronologically or episodically. However you peruse it, you'll likely find that five stars are not enough.



Jack "Youthly Puresome" Woodul



The Further Adventures of YOUTHLY PURESOME

by CDR Jack D. Woodul, USNR(Ref), artwork by Carl Snow



“And that be...a horse on you!” ENS Heinz hollered into Youthly Puresome’s ear as he triumphantly examined the dice that had somehow retained their shape and had not been driven through the table by the manly slam of the dice cup. Twenty-one Spad drivers roared their approval

“Frabb me in the heart!” sighed Puresome, who was not only the solitary Tink driver at the table of oil soaked, rotating-speedbrake-driver combat veterans off of USS *Coral Sea* (CVA-43). He was from the newguy air wing to WestPac and not even righteously shot at yet. But there were two carriers anchored there in beautiful Subic Bay, and 98 percent of both air wings were in the Cubi Point O’ Club engaged in whiskey elimination, noise production and the occasional game of smack-’em-inthe- mouth.

The Great Cubi Shootout

Meeting Lost Friends

It was only natural for Puresome to run into people he knew, and he had known ENS Heinz through preflight, primary and basic training. Puresome had then gone to jets, and Heinz had gone to fly Skyraiders on the libertine West Coast. As it happens with Naval Aviators, they eventually lost track of each other.

So Puresome was glad to say heighdy and joined Heinz at his squadron’s table to catch up and maybe overhear a few war stories. When the dice cup was produced to roll for drinks, Puresome’s strength was as the strength of ten because he knew “you can’t get hurt in a big roll.” Puresome and Heinz yelled at each other and waved their hands as the Filipino band played “You Better Quit Kickin’ My Dog Around.” Many trays of drinks arrived, and the dice cup made its relentless trek around the table.

ENS Heinz was not really an ensign anymore—he had inherited the rank for life from the time during preflight when he was the number one springbutt in



the class, leaping to his feet to answer every possible question with the preface, “ENS Heinz, sir!” But many months of vibrating around for hours in the long-legged Douglas Skyraider while perched on his inflatable donut had mellowed him out, and he by now had almost as many lies in his repertoire as did Puresome.

“There was this Spad guy flying around at night...” Heinz was trying to launch a sea story, but was interrupted by an A-6 bombardier/navigator weenie doing almost a one and a half with a full twist from the overhead beams into a nearby table. It wasn’t more than a

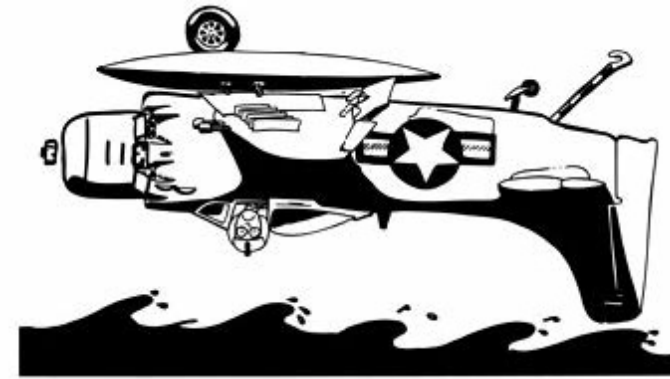


few minutes ago that he had been trying a full-systems lay-down delivery of a shot glass onto his XO’s person. Puresome took the opportunity to lose another roll.

It Ain’t Going To Be Tonight!

“Anyway,” Heinz continued, “this guy has been droning around all night, he’s all numb, and it gets to be recovery time. He shoots his CCA, flies his pass, gets the cut, and...he bolters! Spads never bolter! Paddles is yelling ‘Bolter! Bolter!’ This guy is in a fog, and goes dribbling down the deck and off the angle. Finally, he wakes up and cobbbs it...and torque rolls it over on its back! Yaaa! Realizing this ain’t good, he sucks off some

power, turns it back over, cobbbs it again and fogs off into the distance, blowing spray...”



“Sounds like the time my map got all unfolded during a low-level,” Puresome interjected manfully.

“Anyway, it being all dark, nobody’s seen any of this, and after a couple of minutes, this snuffy down in CATCC comes up with this calm voice on the radio and says, ‘Bumflusher 311, when comfortable, climb to 600 feet and turn to 130 degrees for the bolter pattern.’ Complete silence. The CATCC guy says again, ‘Bumflusher 311, when comfortable, climb to 600 feet and turn to 130 degrees.’ Again, complete silence. Well, CATCC is starting to get bothered, and calls Bumflusher for a radio check. Bumflusher 311 answers, ‘Loud and clear!’ So CATCC says again, ‘When comfortable, climb to 600 feet and turn 130 degrees for your bolter pattern!’

Bumflusher comes back and says, ‘You said to do all that stuff when comfortable. Well, pardner, that ain’t going to be tonight!’”

After The Beginning

And, in the Darkness over The Great Wets where birdfarms plowed the waves, Ruled a willful Goat God called Grong, who called out his evil son, Prang, and his almost as evil son, Bolter.

For his pleasure, he summoned up the rolling seas and pitching decks of birdfarms, causing their blunt ends to describe figure eights and righteous aviators to dispaireth and develop a pox called chickenshit-itis and having a bad night, and the piercing eye of their saviours, called Paddles, to shed salt tears.

And night noises disturbed powerful engines.

And darkness sucked lift from swept wings.

And, yea, Prang and Bolter reigned.

Puresome nodded his head and allowed his lip to curl a bit in appreciation of the story, and was beginning to launch into “There I was at 50 feet, 300 knots, and my map jumped me,” when the dice cup showed up again. Despite the wisdom of the ages, it had gone ‘round and ‘round before ending up with...Puresome and Heinz!

The Shootout

The whole table had cheered when the first round went to Heinz. Honor was involved here, and Puresome went all squinty-eyed, knuckled down, buckled down and did it, did it, did it...and rolled two sixes and three of nothin’ in particular. Pushing the two sixes aside, Puresome stuffed the other dice back into the cup and went into his patented wind-up.

“Six savers never win,” snarled Heinz.

“Sticks and rocks may give me pocks, but Spad pukes will never harm me!” Puresome delivered as he slammed the cup down and produced... two more sixes!

“Four sixes in two, and over to you,” Youthly chortled as he handed the cup to Heinz, who promptly rolled garbage twice. The horse was on him.

As it was the next roll. Puresome again saved sixes and, to the disgust of all, won. When the bill came, it was for \$2.20.



By Jack “Youthly Puresome” Woodul

Yet, Paddles re-girded his loins, and he calmed the poxes and caused sucking it up and the flying of the ball.

And Grong smiled his crooked smile and was sore pleased.

And he reigned in his evil sons.

And there were traps until all the righteous had returned to where the food was.

And manly beverages were swilled and sliders consumed.

And aviators maintained that, though they may have verily boltered some, it was not because they were not good.

But they knew that every night would be at Grong’s pleasure,

And that it would be known as the breaks of Naval Air.

The A-4Ever Index
Summer 2004 to Fall 2014

This index is sorted by Issue beginning with Summer 2004. Additional indices sorted by Author and Category (such as Skyhawk History or Skyhawk Operations), can be found on the Skyhawk website at www.skyhawk.org. We hope that this index will be useful to our members by providing a means to quickly locate articles and other items of interest.

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Mares	Ernest	Shooting Stars	Summer	2014	20.2	12	Skyhawk History
Smith	R.G.	Royal Australian Navy A-4Gs over HMAS Melbourne	Summer	2014	20.2	15	R.G.'s Art
Frommelt	Todd	Skyhawks Still Slipping the Surly Bonds	Summer	2014	20.2	16	Skyhawk Operations
Garcia	Carlos	Blue Angel Diorama	Summer	2014	20.2	18	Modeling
Verver	Gary	Vertical Seeking Ejection Seat	Summer	2014	20.2	20	Skyhawk History
Woodul	Jack	Hosing Santini	Summer	2014	20.2	22	Puresome
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