

THE EVER

SKYHAWK ASSOCIATION JOURNAL VOL 30-1



Hook 24
Aug 22-24
Grand Sierra Resort, Reno

Contents:

It Was a Bad Flying Day
History of Marine Attack Squadron 214
Unlikely Skyhawk Friends
Hell Jelly

Spring 2024
<https://skyhawk.org>



THE PREZ SEZ

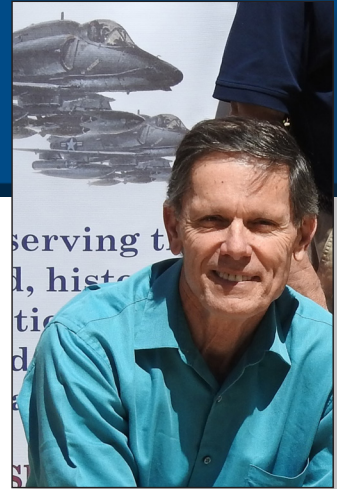
Gene "Blade" Atwell

Our Spring Board of Directors meeting was recently held in Pensacola and you can go to the website to read the details.

Interested in helping our group continue into the future? We're looking for volunteers to help Hide and Stephanie continue producing the magazine you're now reading.

Personally, I'm curious to know the reasons you chose to join the Skyhawk Association? Please send us an email to sa-boa5rd@a4skyhawk.net.

Blade sends!



Gene "Blade" Atwell

NEW MEMBERS

Max Bolin, Indianapolis, IN
Janson Kinsley, Jacksonville, FL
Bacin Mark, Santa Paula, CA
Michael Potter, San Diego, CA

Lynda Southworth, Fort Lauderdale, FL
Kenneth Udcoff, Bedford, TX
Clare Weidman, Eagle Rock, VA

Join or renew, and give
someone a one-year gift
membership for \$20 more.

Contact Terry Cooney at
skyhawkasn@gmail.com or at
2421 Clubside Dr., Beavercreek, OH 45431



A-4 Skyhawkers Reunion!

USMC Skyhawkers have a reunion planned at the
Hilton and Holiday Inn Resorts,
Pensacola Beach, FL,
11-13 November 2024 (Mon-Wed)!
All drivers, maintainers and aficionados welcome!

Point of contact is Mark Williams at
rogerwilco14@gmail.com,
10432 Button Willow Dr, Las Vegas, NV 89134,
or 702-778-5010.



SAVE THE DATES!



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

◆ ◆
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BOMBS AWAY!

• Spring-2024 •

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————— Published by the Skyhawk Association © 2024 —————

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We actively seek contributions from members, including news, photos, historical documents, anecdotes and other items of interest.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 magazine. Contributions may be emailed to the Journal Editor at sa-journal-editor@skyhawk.net. Stephanie Davis, graphics, msleefi@gmail.com. Paper issues printed by Acculink, Greenville, NC.

On the Cover: Now, Captain Bob "Ripper" Stumpf, USN was on exchange duty with the Royal Australian Navy in 1980/81, flying the A-4G from HMAS Melbourne. He now lives in Orange Park, FL.



TAKE NO PRISONERS

Letters to the Editor

sa-journal-editor@a4skyhawk.net



■ **From: Jim “Sandy” Sandberg**

Subject: Naval Aviator decor



Hide, et al: The attached office décor might be worth considering for inclusion sometime in *The A-4ever...* or not. Especially if the “owner” James “Zippy” Trower is a member.. or even if he’s not. FLY SAFE

.....
■ **From: Doug White**

Subject: Trivia – Can an E/F exceed Mach one

Yes, they could. But not in 1g flight. Been there done that. Go to altitude, unload in a 0G decent and you will get there.

.....
■ **From: Lihi Lothan**

Subject: Rami Lothan

I was so moved to read your wonderful words about my father in the last Skyhawk Journal.

He is such a unique and one-of-a-kind person (and the best father in the world) - I know, I’m biased :) but it’s so great to see other people think that as well.

■ **From: Peter Mersky**

Subject: Bob Hoch’s Memorial Service

Below is a painting I did for Bob when his CO’s tour was complete in 1977. I couldn’t get to the service, which was a real disappointment for me. I should have been there! One sketch of him ejecting occurred on a return trip to Andrews from California. As he descended, his close friend Bob Norrell circled Bob, even though he was getting low on fuel. He left only when Bob was safely on the ground and waving he was OK. As Bob Hoch trudged along hoping to find a house, a farmer and his son came up in their truck, which was also carrying a cooler case of cold beer. Naturally, they offered Bob, who was really thirsty, a can, which he gratefully took and drank. During a post-ejection examination, the flight doc asked how come there was alcohol in Bob’s blood. I am sure Bob explained the circumstances in his affable way.



.....
■ **From: Bud Southworth**

Subject: Fatal carrier accidents email string

The Skyhawk’s big mother. The A-3D Skywarrior. A-3D = All Three Dead! No ejection seats. Crew: pilot and two electronic warfare specialists.

From: Ted “Bear” Langworthy

I was waiting for a cat on the Enterprise when an A-3D had a soft shot, went over the bow. Pilot & Copilot killed but BN survived. I was on the starboard side

Send your letters to sa-journal-editor@skyhawk.net

and watched him wave as he floated by and deck hands throwing life rings, etc. He was picked up astern by a Kaman helo, hoisted about 120' in the air when the hoist cable broke and he fell to the water. They "claimed" he was probably critically injured during the initial crash but I have always had my doubts as he was very much alive and waving when I saw him.

From: Dennis Carroll

On the Nimitz night ops in the Gulf of Sidra dueling with Libya ops. The Det Whale onboard having trouble getting aboard multiple bolters. No tankers airborne. Low on fuel they rigged the barricade.

It was a really bad feeling watching this evolve. I understood a less experienced pilot as well. He was high so given the cut early repeated many times. He flew over the barricade -- except his hook! -- brought them down off the angle in the far sea. No survivors. I had seen many ways to crash aircraft around the ship. This was one of the two most sickening due to the time it took to kill those guys.

The other I did not witness, but it was a Skyhawk with hung gear down one up. He "binged" to Cubi dirty, tried to fuel but broke the probe. Tried to eject but it failed. Tried manual bail out by rolling upside down. Plane crashed into the sea. Those were not the days to remember, but they never go away.

From: Pete Cole

The Skyhawk fatal mishap you are referring to was Bruce Carrier, VA-212/Hancock/1975. Originally a total hydraulic failure, then everything went downhill with loss of probe while trying to tank, and ejection seat failure. Also, and this **burns** me to this day, the CO of the Hancock would not let him take the barricade since the ship could not go fast enough to create enough wind over the deck for the barricade engagement even though the CAG LSO pleaded with him that he could get Bruce aboard. It was a mere 5 kts difference! I was on the Accident Board. I agree, the memory never goes away!

■ **From: Numerous Skyhawk Association members on an email string**

Subject: Search for Cindy, the daughter of LTC Wilzie Eston Cooley

LtCol Wilzie Eston Cooley, was killed on Saturday 5 November 1966 when his Marine A-4B Skyhawk (BuNo142699) crashed shortly after takeoff in a wooded area two miles south of Munford, TN and exploded. Cooley was part of a flight of three planes which had taken off from NAS Millington. Flying with him when he crashed were Captains, J.W. Massenburg and R.F. Leftwich.

Frank Leftwich has been contacted and his contact information is as follows: "This is Frank Leftwich (rleftwich@hotmail.com, 972 345-1103). LtCol, USMCR retired. Indeed I was leading the flight of two with LtCol

Cooley as my wingman. Joe Massenburg was not in the flight. It was Saturday of drill weekend and we were commencing a cross country to NAS Key West. The weather was barely above minimums at takeoff. I would be more than interested to speak with Col Cooley's daughter, so feel free to pass on my particulars."

LtCol Cooley's daughter's first name is Cindy. Her last name and contact information is unknown. If anyone has her information, please contact Dave Dollarhide at davedollarhide@msn.com.

■ **From: Max Bolin**

Subject: "Death Flight" Revisited

I recently listened to your episode on "So There I Was" Podcast.

You briefly mentioned a story about some young Marine aviators on their way to Westpac and the event was dubbed "The Death Flight." I am almost certain my father was flying one of those A-4s that day! I am currently a member of Skyhawk.org but I can't seem to find the article. Is it on the website? If so, do you have the name of said article?



From: Editor

The Death Flight 1 and 2 were published in issue 27-1. Then part 3 of the story was told in issue 27-2 by the Air Force tanker copilot, who also had been a Marine A-4 pilot. It was a fun series generated in our magazine with a small-world flare connecting you and others to the original story. It was written by Rick "Peachy" Keene, who passed a number of years back. I've copied Hoby Harmon, who put the story together and was in the flight. I hope you find that your father was involved.

Read?

you think we read?

The Skyhawk Years

The A-4 Skyhawk in Australian Service 1968-1984

Authors: Peter Greenfield and David Prest
Avonmore Books, South Australia. 2023
216 pp. Ill. \$48.95
Reviewer: Peter B. Mersky



HMAS Melbourne with 4 A-4G Skyhawks and 6 S-2 Trackers on the flight-deck. Courtesy Australian War Memorial.

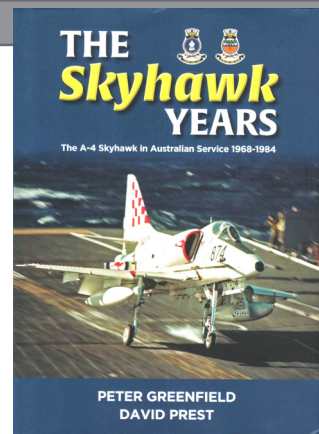
A surprising offering direct from a relatively unknown source—at least outside the Royal Australian Navy (RAN)—of the Aussies' experiences with our beloved A-4. The two authors are a former Skyhawk pilot and an enlisted maintainer. During the middle Vietnam years, the RAN was trying to resuscitate its carrier fleet, which had seen action during World War II and Korea.

Following Australia's Defense Review of 1947, the RAN focused on anti-submarine warfare (ASW) with its assets reduced from its wartime three-carrier complement to a single carrier and five front-line squadrons. The Royal Australian Air Force's (RAAF) new concern would be something like close air support during the so-called Malayan Emergency in the late 1940s using



A Royal Australian Navy (RAN) Sea Venom F.A.W. (Fighter, All-Weather) Mk. 53 of No. 724 Squadron traps aboard the Melbourne, catching the No. 1 wire in the mid-1950s. Thirty-nine Mk 53s were shipped aboard the Melbourne in 1956, to serve with No. 724 Squadron based at R.A.N. Nowra, New South Wales, the RAN training squadron, which was like the USN RAG (FRS) concept. The Mk. 53 Sea Venom was built for the RAN and eventually served with Nos. 805, 808, and 816 Squadrons aboard the Melbourne. The Mk. 53 differed slightly from the Royal Navy's F.A.W. Mk.21 in its radar and combat-related equipment. Courtesy, Fleet Air Arm Association of Australia

land-based Lincoln bombers, a major redesign of the war-time Lancaster bomber that partnered with U.S. B-17s and B-24s in the strategic aerial campaign against Germany. Besides the *Melbourne*, the HMS *Vengeance*, borrowed from the RN along with the HMAS *Sidney*, the complicated situation was further exacerbated by the fact that Britain's Royal Navy's main carrier asset, the carrier-based, nuclear-capable Blackburn Buccaneer jet strike aircraft was too big to operate from Britain's carriers of the 1950s, one of which was the *Melbourne*, which was operating Fairey Gannet AEW turboprop aircraft along with the DH Sea Venom and Scimitar jet fighters, fairly large aircraft, themselves. Other countries in the Pacific, such as Indonesia, with its large population were becoming minions of the USSR, which was supplying them with its own fighters and bombers, as well as surface ships and diesel-powered submarines. This growing threat demanded revamping the RAN's capabilities.



VC724 A-4G and Macchi trainer in formation – Credit Seapower Centre

Starting with HMAS *Melbourne*, the RAN began bringing its once-three-carrier force back to operational status, first with old types of jet aircraft such as the De Havilland Sea Venom, then with a front-line jet attack bomber such as the American Douglas A-4F Skyhawk that could also function as an occasional fighter with underwing provision for four AIM-9 Sidewinder missiles as well as two 20mm cannon, one in each wing. This modified Australian variant was designated the A-4G.

Of course, there was the need to build a cadre of specially-trained pilots and ground crew. No small task. The RAN had pilots qualified in the less-capable Sea Venom that had seen limited combat in the 1956 Suez operation, that was not the equal of the A-4, so heavily involved in Vietnam with the U.S. Navy and Marine Corps, which would certainly fill the bill for the revitalized RAN's new one-carrier "fleet." The U.S. was open to the idea of sending its aging Scooters to a favorite ally, even to training the required pilots and maintainers in the U.S., which to its credit Australia would pay for.

This book describes how the RAN student aviators went through the same training syllabus at VA-125 at NAS Lemoore, while trying to fit in with their U.S. Navy and Marine Corps compatriots. Fortunately, Americans and



TA-4Gs showing the yellow and blue checkered markings of the VC724 markings - John Hopton collection

Australians have always had an affinity for each other, especially recalling the dramatic days of 1942 when both nations fought the oncoming Japanese Pacific steamroller first to a stand-still in the Coral Sea in May, while repelling their mutual enemy's advance on the Australian homeland. To this day, port calls by American aircraft carriers are greeted by still-enthusiastic Australians who once again take American sailors into their hearts and homes.

Beginning with an expansive five-page glossary that often includes what I can only respectfully with humor, refer to as "Aussie speak," that will both educate and amuse us "colonials," the pages are full of facts and individual recollections of experiences and activities aimed at interpreting the newly-acquired American jets. Though often reproduced in a somewhat small size, the many color photos also add to the book's value, letting us see our familiar Skyhawks in different colors and in unusual national insignia that features a bouncing kangaroo.

During the first years of the A-4's time "Down Under," its service was taken up as expected with its pilots and ground crews getting to know their new aircraft then going out on their "new" but aging carrier to participate in exercises. There were two RAN Skyhawk squadrons. VF805 (sic) was the fleet squadron, assigned to the *Melbourne's* air wing, while VC724 was shore-based at RANAS Nowra, New South Wales (on Australia's southeast coast between Canberra and Sydney) to give continuing training and support. The two squadrons were, of course, separate commands, with RAN lieutenant commanders as their commanding officers, who often had time in Sea Venoms, so they were not without carrier-based jet time.

As time went on, the Navy and its two A-4 squadrons started to move away

from their first tentative activities where they gained knowledge and confidence in flying their American fighter-bombers, and the book is filled with first-person accounts of what it was like to fly the A-4G, and also to keep it mission-capable in Australia's new position as part of the West's defender in the Pacific. (Actually, Australian A-4s never saw combat.)



A-4G 886 firing a Zuni rocket. The dark paint areas on the fuselage are corrosion control repairs.

As with any new aircraft, there were ejections and occasional mishaps that colored the A-4's service that eventually played a role in an early termination of the *Melbourne's* period of service in 1982, and that of the Skyhawk in 1984, but the pride and interest in their new equipment keeps the memories of its pilots and maintenance crews sharp.

For instance, pages 80-84 carry what amounts to a very amusing essay on what it was like living aboard the carrier with its very limited crew and cramped spaces, something that will bring pained smiles to U.S. Navy sailors, but the Aussie enlisted apparently had it much worse.

Each contributor definitely has his cache of memories that give important depth to the book as they struggled to keep their small and decreasing cadre of A-4s mission capable. Even members of the RAN's sister air force, the Royal New Zealand Air Force (RNZAF) have their anecdotes of flying their A-4Ks. There are examples of RAN flying exercises and displays such as RIMPAC 78 and Sandgroper 78 including occasional visits to USN carriers while they were cruising near Australia. The flight deck of the USS *Enterprise* (CVAN-65) must have seemed outlandishly huge to RAN aviators making a few touch-and-goes, or actual traps on the American nuclear-powered flattop compared to their old

ship, something akin to flying from WWII-era American 27Charlie *Essex*-class ships during the Vietnam War.

The book's narrative moves back and forth between people, groups of officers and enlisted, involved with the A-4, dealing with life aboard a carrier, particularly an older ship and the special requirements, such as existence demanded, all of which will certainly ring true for American readers.

Page 106, starting Chapter 12, focusing on support people, is very unusual, describing "support people," including a "flying doctor," who is a flight surgeon qualified on A-4s with time in VX-4 at Pt. Mugu.

By the way, there is good news for A-4 Association members from Casemate, the American distributor in Pennsylvania. Casemate has created the discount code SKY-15 for a 15% discount via their website. The book is available through this link:

<https://www.casematepublishers.com/9780645700411/>

To use it, put the book in the "shopping cart" and then there is a spot for the discount code. There is no end date as we don't know exactly when this review will be published at the time of writing. (*Hard copies are available on Amazon for a Prime user's price below \$20. – Ed*)



Deck shot A-4G 884 in the catapult steam – Credit Seapower Centre

Commander, USNR (Ret). CDR Peter Mersky was a writer then editor for *Approach*, the US Navy's (and Marine Corps and Coast Guard) aviation safety magazine for 16 years. He has been the book review editor since 1982 for *Naval Aviation News*, the USN's oldest aviation publication, starting out as a newsletter in 1917.

It Was a Bad Flying Day

By Doug Bohs

3 June 1965 Thursday

"Yesterday I had the duty. It was a bad flying day. We had 3 aircraft shot down in the air wing, two A-4E Skyhawks and one A-1 Skyraider. Four people died in the A-1 crash. The pilot in one of the A-4E's ejected but his chute did not open. The other A-4E pilot ejected and has probably been captured.

More bad times today. This afternoon Paul Ilg and I were on an 'Operation Barrel Roll' recce. All was peaceful until we ran into a flak trap. Paul was hit hard. He ejected and the plane crashed within 200 yards of him. He hid in the jungle and may have a chance to get away. I stayed in the area over ½ hour but never did see him after he went into the trees."

These diary notes were made by LT Dan Gildner of VA-22, based aboard the U.S.S. Midway. Paul Ilg was LT Raymond "Paul" Ilg, also of VA-22. The squadron flew the Douglas A-4C Skyhawk. "Operation Barrel Roll" was a joint U.S. Navy and Air Force operation conducted over the Kingdom of Laos. It was a covert operation intended to cut off, or at least slow the supply of war material to the North Vietnamese Army via the Ho Chi Minh Trail. Trucks would be the prime target.

Lieutenant Ilg was flying his 29th combat mission on Thursday June 3, 1965. This was supposed to be a routine armed road reconnaissance mission ("ROAD RECCE"), but that changed drastically.

LTs Ilg and Gildner were about 300 miles from the USS Midway over northern Laos. They were over Route 65 about ten miles east of Sam



Neua (Xam Nua). LT Ilg was flying at 3,500 ft, while LT Gildner was flying a weave pattern about 500 feet above him. Suddenly, Ilg felt an extremely hard jolt and the aircraft started a roll to port. With flames streaming from his A-4, he managed to eject before it went inverted. His automatic ejection seat malfunctioned and he saw the ground rising quickly below him. He separated from the seat and deployed his 'chute seconds before he hit into the tops of the trees. This actually worked in his favor as he could see flashes from ground fire during his descent. His chute opened in time for him to make a couple of swings before he hit the trees. LT Ilg covered his face, closed his eyes and crossed his legs as he descended into the jungle. All he felt at the time was a soft landing on the jungle floor.

He could hear Gildner's plane circling the area. Although he knew he had to leave the crash site with

his parachute so plainly visible in the trees, he also knew he had to try to make radio contact with LT Gildner. Staying as low as possible Ilg moved about 500 yards when he heard men approaching. He crawled into an area filled with thick bushes and fallen trees. They approached from three sides and he heard them calling to each other and shooting into the air. At least two of them closed within 15 feet of his position. They searched for LT Ilg for about two hours in this general area before they moved off. By now it was approaching sunset and he moved out of this position as quietly as possible. As stated earlier, Gildner circled the area where LT Ilg was downed for about a half an hour. Being low on fuel he had to head back to the Midway. He was not able to make radio contact with Ilg that day.

Ilg moved south and crossed a fairly large pile of rocks and headed into a deep ravine filled with a thick growth of trees. By now it was almost completely dark. He came out of the trees at what he judged to be the edge of an enemy bivouac area. Here, he spotted several campfires, the nearest perhaps 40 to 50 yards away. There was quite a bit of activity in the area so he waited on the edge of the clearing and slept for a couple of hours. When he woke, things had quieted down and it was very dark. In the dark, the bivouac area appeared to be somewhat cleared, but he could not tell how large it was. Ilg knew he had to leave this area. Rather than risk meeting the enemy whose campfires were still visible on the edge of the area and not wanting to make any noise in trying to move through the jungle at night, he



VA-22 A-4C Skyhawk USS *Midway* circa 1967 – 2.75in rocket salvo

started across the area. Before moving very far LT Ilg was “clotheslined” by what he determined was a volleyball net. Before leaving the area he also fell into a slit trench and a foxhole. He was sure the noise would wake someone but no one seemed to hear it. LT Ilg was captain of the wrestling team at the Naval Academy. His athletic ability was proving very useful and would do so again. He made his way through the dark for about 3 hours, passing close to a road. He soon saw 3 trucks which moved onto the road from a tree

covered parking area with their lights on. He could see soldiers in the trucks.

By now Ilg was running on pure adrenaline. He pushed on through the night moving as far from the crash site as possible in the thick tangled jungle.

During this first night on the ground Ilg heard a high-altitude aircraft and tried his radio. He was able to make contact with an Air Force F-101 Voodoo pilot. This information was then relayed to Air America. The services now knew this was a rescue situation.

4 June 1965 Friday

About 5 A.M., LT Ilg spotted a very high rise covered with thick undergrowth. He climbed to near the top and settled into the undergrowth, pulled off several ticks and leeches and slept again.

Early that morning several planes from *Midway* were dispatched on a RESCAP mission to LT Ilg’s downed position. VA-22 pilots included LT Gildner and LTJG R.M. “Skip” Brunhaver. VA-25 pilots LT Clinton

continued...

“Clint” Johnson, CDR Harold “Harry” Ettinger and Ensign Holt Livesay of VA-25 flying the A1-H Skyraider were part of that group. F-8 Crusaders of VF-111 were also sent to the crash site.

Ilg soon heard propeller-driven planes overhead. Suddenly the entire valley below him erupted with anti-aircraft fire. Until he heard the deafening roar of the guns LT Ilg had no idea how close he had settled into the enemy’s anti-aircraft emplacement. While planes from the *Midway* were carrying out their RESCAP mission, Ilg spotted T-28’s with Royal Lao markings attacking the anti-aircraft positions. Ensign Livesay’s personal log provided the following: “*Much flak – enemy shot down T-28 escorting helos (It was later learned these were Air America operatives.) – Saw pilot bail out & plane crash – Pilot picked up.*” These anti-aircraft positions shot down Ilg and were protecting a truck park.

It was about this time Gildner heard Ilg make radio contact with the Air America coordinator. LT Gildner and Ensign Livesay heard the coordinator advise Ilg to move further south as the flak was still very heavy. As he moved south, LT Ilg had a feeling his radio transmissions may have been overheard as he spotted enemy troops at the base of the hill. He stopped transmitting which probably confused his rescuers. After what seemed like a couple of hours he saw two soldiers moving through the brush toward his position. They stayed about ten minutes poking around very close where he was hiding. At one time he estimated they were no more than 10 feet away. After a few more minutes they moved on. Soon after they left, he saw three more soldiers at the base of the hill. They must have had an idea where he was. Luckily, they did not have dogs as many enemy units did later in the war. Two soldiers with only pistols came walking up a path and LT Ilg went into hiding again. If they were looking for him it was not obvious. Due to the number of enemy soldiers

he was encountering, LT Ilg’s ability to communicate with anyone to coordinate a rescue was severely limited.

For the first time, Ilg was able to analyze his options in terms of planning his rescue with his coordinators as well as avoiding capture. He initially considered a field on the opposite side of the ridge from the flak emplacement as a possible rescue site. He discounted that option as it was still too close to the anti-aircraft position. He then decided to investigate the next ridge to the south. He moved to the near edge of the field and headed toward the ridge. He still had some daylight left as he started toward the tree line atop the ridge.

Night approached as he reached the base of a very steep grassy slope just below the ridge. Here he was able to rest for a short time. It was dark when he started his ascent. The ground was very slick with mud and wet grass from a strong thunderstorm which had moved in later in the afternoon. (This caused the RESCAP planes to leave.) The slick soles of his flight boots were not made for this terrain. He fell several times in his attempt to climb the ridge. Finally, he scaled the worst part of the slippery ridge using his arms to aid in his ascent. Halfway up the slope behind him, he spotted what appeared to be flashlights moving about. He immediately scrambled for a bamboo thicket making considerable noise in his efforts. It seemed he couldn’t move far or fast enough in his effort to hide once again. Suddenly when the lights were about 200 yards away they all went dark. Was this a sign he had been spotted and they were trying to get closer without themselves being seen? In the daylight he could at least see the enemy. Now, he could only guess where they were. For the second time, he felt he was in danger of being captured. He lay perfectly still in the thick undergrowth with his knife across his chest for what seemed like an eternity. It was now about 2:00 A.M. and he was chilled to the bone from the rain. Finally, he was able to curl up and doze off.

5 June 1965 Saturday

On the third day, RESCAP planes were again launched from *Midway*. At first light LT Ilg made contact with his rescue coordinator. He continued his ascent of the ridge but now had to navigate through a very thick mass of bamboo, which made travel very difficult. By now he had put considerable distance between himself and the enemy assets he discovered earlier. From this location he could hear aircraft overhead.

After about three hours he broke from the tree line on the top of the ridge. Although he heard what sounded like someone chopping wood off in the distance he also heard the sounds of birds. This was a good sign he was probably alone. He headed down the other side of the ridge as the trees at this location were 90 to 100 feet high and very thick. A rescue from this area would be impossible. LT Ilg kept moving while keeping in contact with the rescue coordinator. At about 4:00 P.M. he found an area with shorter and less dense trees. Once there he felt this was a good place to initiate his rescue. He soon heard what sounded like a helicopter and other aircraft overhead. He made his way up a medium sized fallen tree which was at about a 30 degree angle, turned on his radio and made contact. He fired his first pencil flare but the Air America UH-34 helicopter pilot did not see it. He fired the second flare and again they did not see it. At this point, Ilg was able to talk the pilot, Captain Julian Kanach, to an area directly over his location. They lowered a “horse collar” and he was hoisted aboard. He had spent a total of 47 hours on the ground.

LT Ilg was taken to an Air America “Lima Site” in Laos. From there he was taken to Udorn Air Base in Thailand aboard a de Havilland Caribou. The next day a Douglas A-3 Skywarrior from *Midway*’s “Heavy Eight” (VAH-8) flew in to bring him back home.

continued...



USS Midway displaying unit
insignia plaques on the island.
US Navy photo

Aboard *Midway*, Ilg was debriefed by Air Intelligence as well as Carrier Division Seven Intelligence. He then briefed Air Wing Two on his experience. LT Ilg then left Yankee Station and was sent back to the states for a debrief with the Pentagon. After that debrief, he made presentations to the Midshipmen at Annapolis as well as the Navy's Survival School. He then returned to the *Midway* and flew another 70 combat missions while in VA-22.

For his actions in locating the enemy assets which were destroyed, LT Ilg was awarded the Bronze Star.

Postscript

Since contact had been made with LT Ilg by the Air Force, the previous evening, the authenticity of the radio contact had to be verified. "Skip" Brunhaver was authorized to obtain LT Ilg's Personal "Authentication Code" from VA-22's files. This was a code chosen by each flier, which would, by radio contact, verify the fact that the flier was who he claimed to be, and not the enemy leading the RESCAP into a trap. Brunhaver and his wingman made contact with Ilg the morning of the 4th and verified the code. After confirming the code, Brunhaver and

his wingman promptly returned to the *Midway*. This information was then handed off to *Midway* personnel, probably Air Intelligence.

LT Ilg reported it was difficult to climb in the damp slippery jungle. Sometime during his debriefing, he mentioned having smooth-soled flight boots made climbing extremely difficult, if not almost impossible at times. It wasn't long before all of the pilots on *Midway* received new flight boots with "knobby" soles. This was probably true of the entire 7th Fleet although this has not been verified.

While moving away from his parachute, which was still in the trees, to the location where he was rescued, Paul

estimated he almost covered a mile. Considering the density and the hilliness of the terrain that was a considerable distance; especially with people constantly looking for you.

Thanks to Dan Gildner for the perfect lead into the story and his detailed information from his diary notes. Thanks to "Skip" Brunhaver (sadly, now deceased) for his input from a great memory. "Skip" was captured after a hydraulic failure on a bombing run on August 24, 1965. He was released on February 12, 1973.

Thanks to Holt Livesay for his input from his personal log.

Thanks, of course, to Paul Ilg for his patience in helping me put this story together.

Slightly more than three weeks prior to this incident LT Ilg landed his A-4C aboard *Midway* with two rudders after a midair collision and "transfer of parts." The account of this incident is outlined in the Spring 2023 issue of this publication. He went on to have a very distinguished career and retired as a Rear Admiral in 1991.



Photo credit - Life Magazine, August 6, 1966

SAFE RETURN. Following his rescue from North Vietnam after being shot down, Lt. Paul Ilg is welcomed back (*right*) by Commander Don Wyand, skipper of the Fighting Red-

cocks. His arm around Ilg's shoulders, Wyand praised Ilg for his ingenuity in avoiding capture. He said, "I haven't been out here long enough to kiss you on both cheeks, but I'm tempted."



HISTORY OF MARINE ATTACK SQUADRON 214

Douglas SIS Dec 1969, no author name - permission Boeing Aircraft

Marine Attack Squadron 214 (VMA-214) was originally commissioned as Marine Fighter Squadron 214 (VMF-214) in early 1942 at Ewa Airfield, Oahu, Hawaii.

In August 1943, the squadron was located at Espiritu Santo in the New Hebrides Islands. Also present at Espiritu Santo were some pilots who, because of illness, wounds, break-up of squadrons, or other reasons, were unassigned at the time. Many were combat veterans, some had already recorded enemy kills, and all were eager to return to the fray. Twenty-seven of these pilots, along with eight F4U "Corsairs," were placed under the command of Major Gregory "Pappy" Boyington to form the original "Blacksheep" of VMF-214. They chose the black shield of illegitimacy, the bar sinister, a blacksheep, a circle of stars, and an image of their aircraft (the "Corsair") as their emblem in recognition of the manner in which they were formed.

In less than four weeks, Major Boyington molded this group into a fighting organization which, during only 84 days of combat, destroyed or damaged 197 enemy aircraft. Major Boyington accounted for 26 of these kills and was awarded the Congressional Medal of Honor.

Since that time, the squadron has operated in many places and flown in many different aircraft. It has served with distinction in both the Korean and Vietnam conflicts. The squadron deployed many times for major exercises, normal training, carrier cruises, and cold war contingencies. The original "Blacksheep" spirit has been continuous throughout the squadron's entire history.

Shortly after World War II, the squadron was decommissioned. It was commissioned again in 1948 at MCAS El Toro, California and was again assigned the F4U "Corsair." Most of the training effort from 1948 to the beginning of the Korean conflict in 1950 was spent aboard various aircraft carriers operating off the west coast of the United States.

During the Korean conflict, the "Blacksheep" took part in the landing at Inchon. They also provided close air support for the ground forces while operating from the USS Sicily Straits, and later from the USS Boxer. The squadron had the distinction of being the first Marine squadron in action during this conflict.

Late in 1950, the squadron aided in the withdrawal from the Chosin Reservoir with almost continuous airborne cover. By the time the fighting in Korea had ceased, VMF-214 had completed two combat tours, and had inflicted heavy damage on the enemy, including destruction of enemy troops, gun emplacements, shipping, bridges, supply lines, and tanks.

Shortly after the end of hostilities, the squadron was again based at MCAS El Toro, and entered the jet era by trading "Corsairs" for F9F-2 "Panthers." These aircraft were traded for

F2H-4 "Banshees" in the spring of 1953 when the squadron was relocated to MCAS Kaneohe, Hawaii, and was redesignated VMF(AW)-214.

Following a WESTPAC deployment aboard the USS Hancock in 1957, the "Banshees" were replaced in 1958 by the FJ-4B "Fury." In January 1958, VMF(AW)-214 was redesignated VMA-214. Over 27,000 flight hours were flown in the "Fury" and the squadron was awarded the CNO Safety Award for Attack Squadrons on 29 August 1961.

On 23 January 1962, the "Blacksheep" transitioned from the FJ-4B "Fury" to the A-4B "Skyhawk." In March 1964, the squadron departed MCAS Kaneohe flying transpac to MCAS El Toro where they exchanged their A-4B's for the newer A-4C "Skyhawk." Then, after a two-week weapons deployment at MCAS Yuma, the squadron flew their new aircraft home to Kaneohe. With this aircraft, the squadron served with distinction in Vietnam from June 1965 until the end of March 1967. During their first tour in Vietnam, which lasted eight months, the squadron flew 3971 combat missions totaling 5274 combat hours.

After their second tour in Vietnam, VMA-214 returned to El Toro and was reorganized as an operational training squadron for attack pilots, many of whom are replacement pilots for Vietnam. With them came the aircraft that served them so well - the A-4C "Skyhawk."



Unlikely SKYHAWK FRIENDS

By Don Ricci with CAPT Jack Ashmore



The restored cockpit of 147815.



Don Ricci beside his restored forward fuselage.

DON RICCI

I am with the Pacific Coast Museum here in Santa Rosa, CA and the private owner of the cockpit section of A-4L BUNO 147815. I have spent 5 years on restoration and research into the history of this airplane. Thanks to the Skyhawk Association and their website, I was able to come up with most of her deployments and squadron assignments. It turns out, "815" deployed to Yankee Station from 1965 to 69 with VA-144, VA-153, VA-112, and VA-22 on the *Tico*, *Connie*, and *Ranger*.

I am one of the world's biggest A-4 fans and always questing for more history of the airplane. I was watching YouTube videos and ran across one by Eric Johnson, where he interviewed several A-4 drivers in front of a few A-4s. I loved it and hung on every word, especially the interview with a **Capt Jack Ashmore (Ret)** who was talking fondly about his time flying the Skyhawk over North Vietnam and as Commanding Officer of VA-22 aboard the USS *Ranger*. Jack is such a great story teller. He was talking about how tough the scooter was and how it took tons of damage and always got you home.

That is where this story clicked for me and things started getting interesting. Ashmore spoke of a strike over Kep Airfield in March of 1968, rolling in on the target and having an 85MM AAA round take the nose of his airplane "clean off" from the windscreen forward. The round hit the airplane, but the VT fuse did not set off the explosive charge. He was in the dive and after the hit, dumped his stores and climbed with the jet still flyable, but the engine was shaking after ingesting a bunch of debris from the impact. He pulled out, headed out over the water and was able to safely trap aboard the *Ranger*.

Aboard ship, the A-4 underwent extensive work to get it flying again as it was missing everything from the windshield forward! So, as I was watching his interview, it struck me, that I



BUNO 147815 on the #1 catapult of USS *Ranger*.

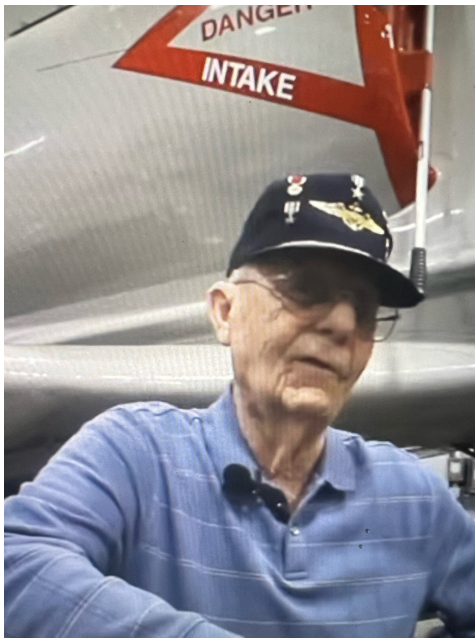
have a cruise-book photo of my A-4 on a *Ranger* catapult in 1968, assigned to VA-22 and loaded with Snakeyes. The thing that has always caught my eye, for as long as I've had the photo, is the weirdly painted radome that "Beef Eater 212" had on it. (Beef Eater was the official JANAP 119 call sign for the VA-22 Fighting Redcocks – Ed) It was obvious the radome was different and had been replaced at some point. I looked and saw that then CDR Ashmore was the CO of VA-22 on that deployment! I wondered if there was a chance that he was flying 147815 when he was hit over Kep?

So, the next day I contacted the videographer who filmed the interview and he remarked what an amazing man Jack Ashmore was when he interviewed him in 2019 at the age of 91! I asked him if he had a phone number to reach him or his family? He said 'he is actually living in Reno Texas and here is his email!' So, I gave it a shot! I constructed a letter much like this one and sent it off. I was sitting in my kitchen with my wife talking to her about Jack and his story, when the phone rang and amazingly, it was Jack Ashmore himself!

continued...



CDR Ashmore on the boarding ladder of his VA-22 Skyhawk.



Jack Ashmore as viewed by Don Ricci on YouTube.

My jaw dropped and blood flew with excitement! Our talk was amazing and so full of information, laughs, stories, and triumphs of his time commanding the VA-22 "Fighting Redcocks" during the most active time of airstrikes in North Vietnam. He broke out his log book and went through his entries. It turned out that he'd logged 5 combat fights in 147815, including March 30, 1967, when the nose was blown off over Kep! "Yep Don, your A-4 is the one that got me home," Jack remarked. It's thrilling when you can talk to living history, especially history you are now so involved with. From him flying this A-4 in '67 to now, 56 years later, that exact front airframe and cockpit bringing us together. We have become strong friends and have been talking on the phone constantly!

Such a witty, intelligent and funny man, he is sharp as a tack and his recall is astounding! You can just hear the sense of pride in his voice as he relates his exploits -- especially his gratification in bringing EVERY ONE of his pilots home from that cruise! He said, "We put some airplanes in the drink but we were able to fish every pilot out. -- very proud we didn't lose anybody!"

The cockpit section has been painted in VA-22 livery and his name will forever live on the side of HIS A-4! I am so proud to be able to tell this great man's story! He even gave me a foot locker full of the EXACT flight gear

that he flew with during that mission! It's an honor to be entrusted as the caretaker of his history!

I have so much to be grateful for in this story, I'm so grateful that fate allowed two friends to meet after so much time. I'm grateful Jack entrusted me with his friendship, his history, his time and his personal flight gear! I tell him all the time, one of the things I am VERY grateful for is that he didn't put 147815 into the Tonkin Gulf and she got him home to the *Ranger* so they both could fight another day!

KEP AIRFIELD STRIKE

Related by CAPT Jack Ashmore and transcribed by Don Ricci

As stated, then CDR Ashmore took a AAA hit that blew the nose from his Skyhawk while attacking his target, which resulted in the loss of his radios, nav-aids, and flight instrumentation. *"I was departing the 'perch' during my run-in, in a 90-degree bank when I was hit. The round went through the nose and knocked it off but the round didn't fuse and detonate. The VT fuze was supposed to make the big shell explode within 100 feet of the target, or on impact. Thank goodness*



Skipper Ashmore manning up for a combat flight.

the guy doing the fusing wasn't that good. If it had exploded, 'good lord, here I come!' It took the nose off forward of the windshield. A ton of debris was ingested into the motor and it ran rough but it never quit. The airplane was shuddering and shaking, I jettisoned all the stores and pulled away. I almost ejected, but it kept wanting to fly, so I stuck with it. I didn't want to punch out over North Vietnam. The engine kept working. You've got to love that J-65! With the nose gone forward of the windshield she flew kinda wobbly. She wouldn't go very fast. Every time I'd advance the throttle it would get really wobbly. My wingman, LCDR Lacey Collier, flew up next to me after I was hit and headed for the water. He couldn't believe his eyes! We went feet-wet over the Gulf and I stuck to his wing.

Lacy was communicating with the ship, cause I didn't have any radios. We were using hand signals. He talked to the 'Airboss' and they advised to get near the ship and punch out and they'd fish me out. He signaled that to me, but I didn't want to do the 'silk letdown' and go for a swim. I gave him the only hand signal I thought would convey that -- the 'one finger salute!' Lacy then told the ship, well get ready, he's coming in. I flew the approach with no nose, thus no AOA (or air-speed indication – Ed) at all. I had so much time in the A-4, I knew how it felt to be at the right angle-of-attack. I also knew when my AOA was right (correct for landing-Ed) when the forward slats would deploy to half, so I flew the approach watching the slats and got an 'OK3wire' (landing grade from the LSO – Ed).

Jack's flight gear he flew with in Vietnam.



It was one of my best landings! 212 took a bunch of damage but we brought it back to the ship. We put another nose radar package on it, stole some radios from an F-4, grabbed a spare radome off the wall and we were back in service! It flew like a dream except for the ADF, we never got that to work. Gotta love the A-4 for how she could take so much damage and get us home!"



CAPT Jack Ashmore and the custom flight jacket created by Don Ricci.

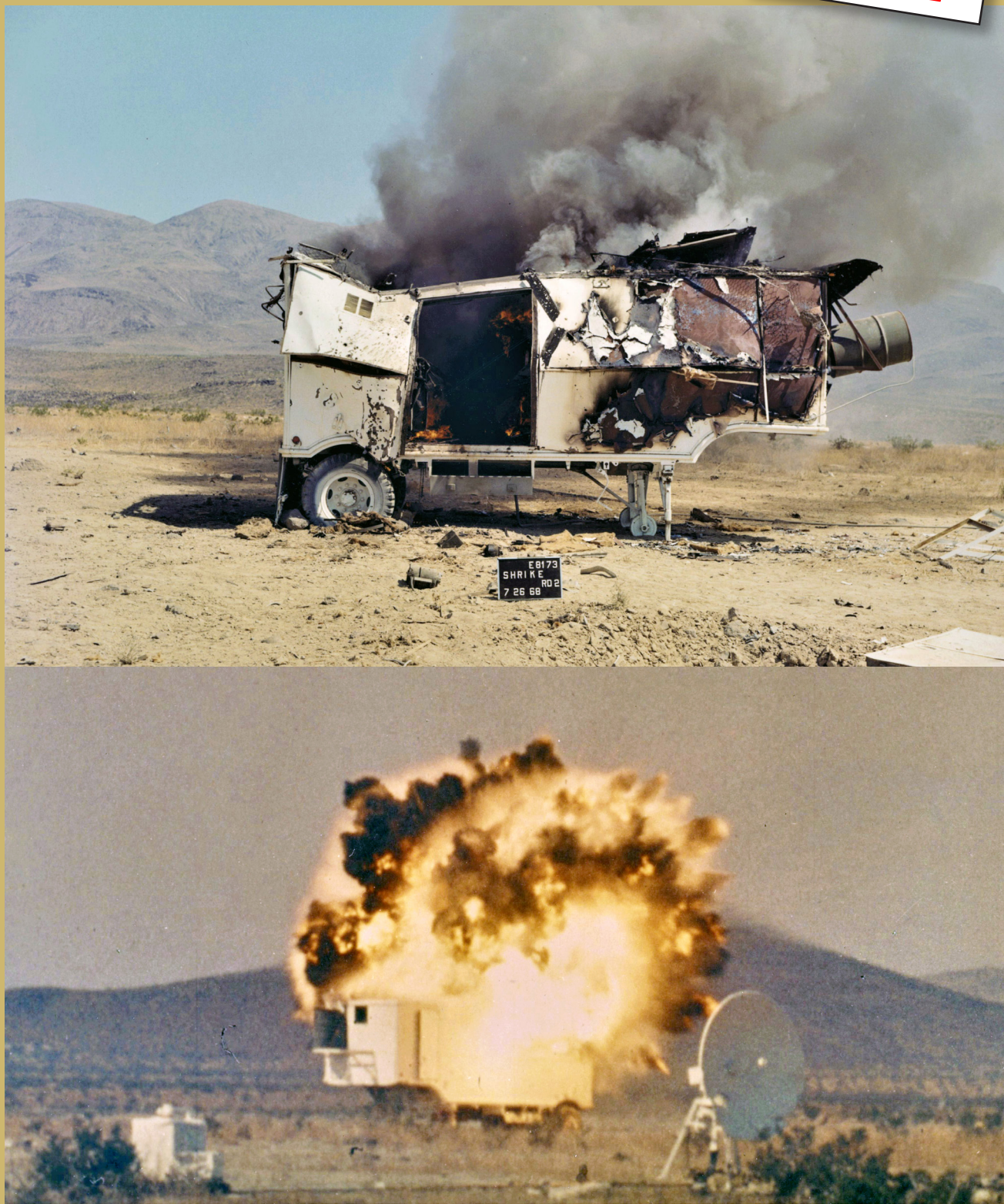


AGM-45 SHRIKE

1968 CHINA LAKE TEST FIRING

From the files of Gary Verver

RDT&E



Gary Verver and China Lake Alumni YouTube Channel



Gary has established the rarest of rare YouTube channels, containing numerous videos from many years of activities within the confines of the historic China Lake Naval Ordnance Test Station. Go in and poke around!

youtube channel <https://www.youtube.com/channel/ucjbrelabpcz5svfysot2aja>

In Memorium



The Skyhawk community recently lost one of its finest A-4 combat pilots and true Naval Aviation icons when Admiral Snuffy Smith passed away in late November 2023. Snuffy is renowned for many things, including flying over 280 combat missions in Vietnam and later, for commanding the NATO force tasked with implementing the Dayton Accords in the former Yugoslavia. He is perhaps best remembered for his stellar leadership and unforgettable humor.

To honor Admiral Smith's legacy a memorial scholarship has been set up through the Tailhook Educational Foundation (TEF). This named, perpetual scholarship will be awarded annually to high school graduates who are the natural, step, or adopted child or grandchild of a current or former (U.S. Navy, U.S. Marine Corps, or U.S. Coast Guard) Naval Aviator, Naval Flight Officer, or Naval Aircrewman. Also eligible are children/grandchildren of those who are serving, or have served on board a U.S. Naval Aircraft Carrier.

Tax deductible Charitable contributions/Donations to this can be made several ways:

1. Mail checks to: *Tailhook Educational Foundation, 9696 Business Park Ave., San Diego, CA 92131-1643*
 - TEF Tax ID Number: 33-048778.
 - Note on check: *For Admiral Leighton "Snuffy" Smith Scholarship Fund.*
2. Credit cards can be processed by calling Beth at the TEF, (858) 689-9223 and she will process.
3. Donors can go to the TEF website at The Tailhook Association | Tailhook Education | United States

In either case, indicate the donation is for ADM Smith's scholarship.

All donations will help make Admiral Smith's scholarship one that will benefit many families tied to carrier aviation while honoring the memory and legacy of a true hero and icon of Naval aviation.



Admiral Leighton W. "Snuffy" Smith, 28 Nov 2023, Pinehurst, NC
Doug Cutter, 27 Dec 2023, Ocala, FL
Robert G. Hoch, Jr., 25 Dec 2023, Colleyville, NC
John Goodman, 21 Jan 2024, Peachtree City, GA

TAPS notices may be sent to
Dave Dollarhide
• davedollarhide@msn.com •



For lists of A-4 KIA and operational
losses, members can sign into
<http://skyhawk.org>
and go to the "Ready Room."

"HELL JELLY!"

Email Comments by Bill "Jigger" Egen
(Found in a folder - Jigger is now deceased - Editor)

Ah yes, the evil Hell Jelly! That's the first time I have heard that expression. I got lots of education in and out the cockpit on Napalm. We put many a MK-77 (500lb) and MK-79 (1000lb nape) on tree lines in front of Con Tien in Nov '67-- North Vietnam was also in front of Con Tien so I guess we violated some rule.

After Tet '68 quieted down, I was on an emergency divert from Ashau Valley to a Marine recon outfit just to the west of Quang Tri in the hills. They, and a NVA outfit were throwing grenades at each other on opposite sides of a ridge line. Nape was the answer, given the danger-close reality of fragging the good guys. The lead and I put jelly on the north side and eventually the recon guys were extracted. It was a good lesson.

Much later-on in the early 80's at HQMC we had to write the duty letter every year to CNO requesting napalm and rockets regarding the Non-Nuclear Ordnance Requirements (NNOR) drill. I was the HQMC "Rep" to the NNOR. Bill Newman, OP-507, hated nape and rockets and wanted the procurement of such items suspended.

A few lessons were learned about the utility of those weapons, that (CV issues notwithstanding) kept us in the business, but you could not use dive angle, speed, mil setting, etc. to convince anybody you could hit something with nape since it's a tumbler, it had a ballistic accuracy that was off the charts and the computer always rejected it, regardless of a short time of fall. The good thing was you could scare a good guy and wipe out a bad guy!!

They used them in Desert Storm but they were called Fire Bombs, so as not offend the future snow-flakes! We called "Snakeye" and "Nape" "soft ordnance," regarding proximity to troops. We also used MK-77 cans to carry CS gas (tear gas riot control agent) and left many a smoke trail in the jungle and in the caves -- at least that was the theory. My last boss at McD/Boeing was Bill Westerman and I believe he got bagged dropping nape from an A-6 on barges in close to Hai Phong early in the war -- not sure that one was "weaponized" right.

Jigger

We miss you, Jigger!

Puresome Unplugged

~ The Further Adventures of Youthly Puresome ~

By CDR Jack D. Woodul, USNR(Ret)



Jack "Youthly Puresome" Woodul



Diving down through monsoon rain
gunsight centered on the train
cannons firing, red tracers find
the locomotive and the cars behind

Clouds of smoke, clouds of steam
Hateful, hellish midnight dream
floating fireballs searching back
seek to stop the swift attack

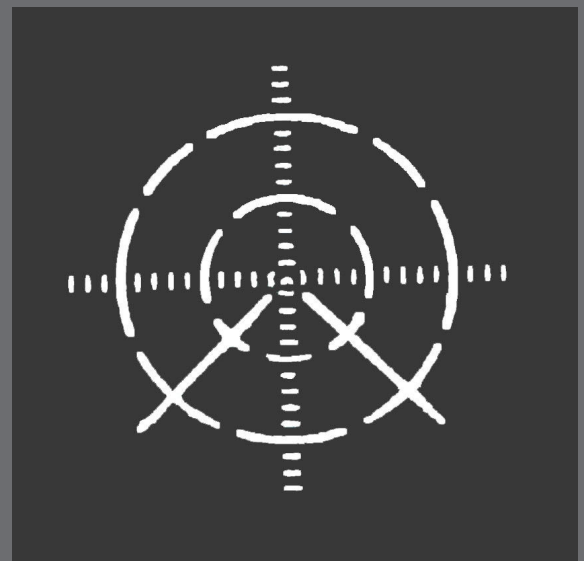
Pulling up and zooming clear
jinking because the flak is near
But rolling over and coming round
to finish killing what he's found

Rending metal, burning cars
bursts of bullets like flying stars
flare and flash like little suns
against a train that no longer runs

Then the firing comes to an end
no more ordnance to expend
cursing now because it's done
with more to do before he's won

He beckons others who have the
taste
to pick iron bones, and not to waste
the leavings of a strafer's skill
airborne vultures to the kill

Beneath the flares on another night
he knows he'll find another fight
certain to win, perhaps to lose
his to do, fate's to choose



FROM THE ATTIC



The Deadly Mark Seventy Six "Blue Racer"

Brought by: Jim "Sandy" Sandberg and James "Bull" Weaver
"Should I save this or not?"

ATTACK SQUADRON ONE TWO FIVE
WEAPONS DEPARTMENT

THE DEADLY MK 76 WAR
By LT G. F. WHEATLEY, VA-172

Taken from APPROACH/March 1965

In itself, the 25-pound Mk 76 practice bomb is a relatively simple and harmless tool. Attack pilots use them by the hundreds in performing their primary peacetime mission of training for war. Training with live ordnance on every flight would be very desirable although highly impractical from the standpoint of cost and finding appropriate targets. With its low cost and comparable ballistic characteristics, the Mk 76 is a reasonable substitute with one exception-its use! The methods of employing it may breed contempt or a false sense of security that can be completely shattered by the explosion of one 500-pound bomb.

How then can we find ways to keep pilots constantly aware of the hazards involved in the Mk 76? How can we insure that half of our pilots would not come back with self-inflicted holes gaping in their aircraft, or not come back at all, if they were called out on a combat mission tomorrow?

To answer these questions, let's take a brief look at our training methods, including the way we use the deadly Mk 76.

Consider first the training profiles. In most cases, minimum pull outs, release airspeeds, and other criteria for conventional ordnance are used in these profiles. The Mk 76, with an appropriate ballistic connection, is substituted for the real thing.

Here is the first big pitfall because these profiles are designed for combat. The unsuspecting weapons training officer who assumes that they insure adequate protection in peacetime is easily misled when the time comes to drop live ordnance in a training exercise.

A quick look at NWIP 20-1 will show that minimum pullout altitudes and other criteria for peacetime use of live ordnance differ tremendously from combat criteria. The difference may be so great that the old familiar bombing profiles cannot be used. Are we then saying that our live ordnance training methods for wartime have not conditioned us to use live ordnance in peacetime? Not really. If a pilot has disciplined himself to bomb correctly with the Mk 76, he should be able to switch easily enough to any profile required for live ordnance. Above all-he must know the criteria set forth in NWIP-20-1 for the weapon being carried.

Let's consider the complex environment next. Does it lead us into pitfalls when we switch to live ordnance?

The complex is the father of the canned run and the mother of the tight pattern. The goal is to get the best possible hits within the limits of the particular exercise.

Most people agree that the closer you get to the target before ordnance release, the better your hits will be. Can we blame a pilot for wanting to get good hits and pressing his pull-out altitudes to the last foot? No, as long as it is the Mk 76-the forgiver of all those who pull-out below minimum altitudes. No one is the wiser except perhaps an alert flight leader or complex observer.

But-what about fragmentation patterns and the length of time that fragments hover above a bomb blast?

What would a typical tight pattern look like superimposed on the fragmentation pattern of live bombs? The intent here is not to condemn the complex system or the practice bombing patterns because they are effective methods of teaching and improving bombing skills. The point is, can we become so engrossed in these procedures that we forget what we are really training for?

At this point, let's consider again where our training is supposed to lead us. We stated earlier that the peacetime mission is to train for war. For an attack squadron, this might simply mean getting to the target, destroying it and coming home in one piece. Getting there and coming back means little if the ordnance doesn't get on the target. Actual mission accomplishment may require precise, coordinated attacks, faultless close air support procedures and the ability to safely and accurately deliver ordnance under clouds, near mountains, while being shot at, and when given targets of opportunity. You could say that it is necessary to learn to shoot from the hip, and for this reason, the present system of training in the Mk 76 complex environment is questioned.

So, what is the answer? As in many other areas, the biggest single factor affecting the direction a squadron takes in its training is command attention. Along these lines, the following questions might be asked and answered:

To what ends are the squadron objectives oriented?

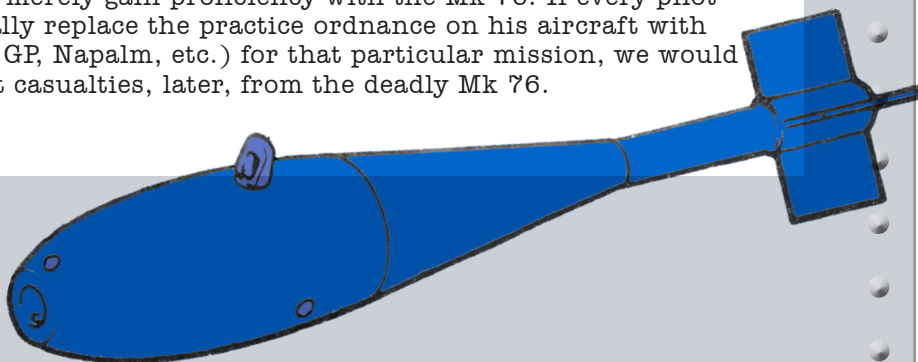
Does the squadron operations plan and the training syllabus point to combat readiness as the primary goal?

Is the weapons training officer the most qualified man for the job? Does he demonstrate initiative, responsibility, follow-through and direct supervision or does he merely keep records?

Do the operations officer and the safety officer continually stress the necessity for treating the Mk 76 like the real thing-do they keep a watchful eye on the pilots who push below the pullout or minimum altitude limits?

Each of these questions can be summed up into one that has the greatest importance; if every pilot in the command went on a conventional weapon combat mission today, how many would be there and destroy the target without blowing themselves out of the sky in the process.

It is of primary importance to understand that the Mk 76 is a training aid and not a substitute for live ordnance. Every attack pilot must understand that he is training to use live ordnance and not training just to merely gain proficiency with the Mk 76. If every pilot on every training flight were to mentally replace the practice ordnance on his aircraft with the appropriate live ordnance (100 lb GP, Napalm, etc.) for that particular mission, we would see a marked reduction in the indirect casualties, later, from the deadly Mk 76.



"Bull, When I checked into the 1stMAW at Iwakuni in July '73, I must have been 'the next guy to come in the door,' because I was sent to MAG-12 Staff to be the Human Affairs & Drugs Officer 'HADO,' until my friends in VMA-311 rescued me in October. Well, weekend Group Duty Officer chores were pretty slow in July, so I was rummaging around the office and found one of those GI green hardback notebooks which was the last Group Duty Officer Logbook from Bien Hoa (maybe the first?). Since I had nothing else to do and needed to sharpen my typing skills, I transcribed some of the interesting (and not-so-interesting) logbook entries 'for posterity.' A couple of weeks ago, I was cleaning out old files, etc. and came across the results (attached) (MK 76 article - ed). I plan to send it in to the Editor of the Skyhawk Association's 'A-4 Ever' magazine to see if it's of any interest, but thought you might have been there and might have some anecdotes to add... or not! Sandy." (GREAT IDEA! Editor)



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