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REVEILLE



SUPER HORNET OR JSF WHAT LIES AHEAD FOR THE RAAF?



"Lest We Forget"

The Voice of New South Wales Serving and Ex-Service Men and Women



UP IN THE AIR

DELAYS THAT ARE DOGGING THE DEVELOPMENT OF JOINT STRIKE FIGHTER MAY WORK TO AUSTRALIA'S ADVANTAGE. REVELLE LOOKS AT THE IMPLICATIONS AND OPPORTUNITIES THAT IT PRESENTS THE RAAF.



Australian Super Hornets ferry across the Pacific to Australia. Photos courtesy Department of Defence.

On January 30, the winds of change on Australia's future air defences turned. After more than a decade of unfailing commitment to purchase up to 100 Joint Strike Fighters, Defence Minister Stephen Smith said that it was only legally bound to take only two of the jets and the delivery of 12 more on order for the next five years were to go under immediate review. It came in the wake of

the US government announcing massive military budget cuts four days earlier that included slowing down of the JSF rollout.

For defence analysts, the announcement represents the first real fraying of Australia's ties to the JSF. Last year in particular, the JSF flew into a storm of cost blowouts, delays, technological failures and criticism,

but Canberra and the RAAF haven't flinched on the project until now.

The Government's decision has opened the door on the reality that other options need to be considered. With that, Reveille looks at what we've currently got, what we're expecting and what may well be the face of Australia's air strike capability for the foreseeable future.

THE JOINT STRIKE FIGHTER

Otherwise known as the F-35 Lightning, the JSF's design brief was brilliant, simple and audacious – to mass-produce a totally new, one-size-fits-all multi-role fighter that was the most advanced, lethal and, most importantly, cheap to buy and run. Its intention was to replace the bulk of the US military's ageing combat fleet in one fell swoop and it also made excellent sense to a handful of allied nations including Australia, which was ready to retire its



RAAF Williamtown members of all rank levels are all ears as Air Vice Marshal Kym Osley presents a brief on the F35 Joint Strike fighter

Hornets and F111s, all due for retirement around now. So, in 2002, Canberra jumped on board the JSF, deciding it would be the bedrock of Australia's air defences for the next 40 years.

While relatively slow, the essence of the JSF is the electronic and stealth edge that it's intended to have over every other tactical aircraft in the world. This, its developers say, is more important in future missions than speed and manoeuvrability. Described as a "fifth generation" fighter, its aim is a phalanx of attack, camouflage, defence and long range detection capabilities which will allow it to see and attack the enemy first – as opposed

to pure dog-fighting skill. Last year, Gp Capt Steve Robertson, commander of 82 Wing, the strike and reconnaissance arm of Air Combat Group, described the F-35's potential as "phenomenal".

While the JSF's promise is a giant leap in airborne prowess for any air force in the world, since the first production model rolled off the line in 2008, its test fleet has been dogged by structural faults, technological glitches and groundings. Only a few dozen have currently been

(\$A123m) and rising.

Regardless, last October the F-35A reached its top speed of 1.6 mach for the first time. The RAAF is currently committed to getting two JSFs in 2014. They will be stationed in the USA and be used to train RAAF air and ground crews. Decisions on the remaining 12 that were expected to be delivered by 2018 will be made by the end of the year, says Stephen Smith.

The Super Hornets

The final delivery of the last of 24 Super Hornets in October last year was perfect timing for the RAAF to get its hands on what is looking to be our most modern and effective deterrent for the coming decade. It represents a real jump in Australia's ability to perform in the new electronic battlefield, as well being the first new jet for the RAAF since 1985.

While on paper the Super Hornets lack sting – it is the slowest fighter that Australia has had in almost 50 years – its strengths lie inside the advanced gadgetry and systems that it bristles with, to give it first-look, first-shoot, first-hit capability.

Although not as capable as the JSF, it can still see more, attack more and defend more targets than anything the RAAF has ever had. Importantly, it will also act as a skill, maintenance and technology bridge for the RAAF in preparation for the JSF. Currently several F111 pilots and ground staff have been transitioned across to the Super Hornets and Boeing has 72 staff stationed at Amberley in support.

Wing Commander Glen Braz, who has trained in the new all American-made aircraft, has said: "I have flown in the original Hornet, and I'm simply blown away by what the Super Hornet brings . . . In a nutshell, we are now truly multi-role."

Initially intended as a US Navy upgrade of the original Hornet, the Super Hornet is essentially a totally redesigned aircraft.

Lockheed Martin F-35 Lightning II technical specifications (subject to change)

Cost	Initially US\$55.2 million unit cost, now current an estimated US\$133
Role	Multi-role fighter
Crew	One
Engine	Pratt and Whitney F-135 planned. General Electric-Rolls Royce F-136 also under consideration.
Airframe	Length 15.6m
Wingspan	10.7m
Weight	Maximum take-off weight in excess of 22,700kg
Range	1100km combat radius
Weapons	A wide selection of US and UK air-to-air and air-to-ground weapons including AMRAAM, ASRAAM, JDAM, laser-guided bombs and an internally-mounted 25mm gun

made, instead of the hundreds planned, and a report in November last year cited severe shaking and the failure of key electrical components as two problems that will further delay development and add to a cost that has spiralled. Initially it had a US\$55.2 million (\$A51.5m) unit price tag. It's currently at an estimated US\$133 million



Above: Flying Officer Adam Grinyer straps into his FA18 with the assistance of a ground technician from 77Sqn at Nellis Air Force base.

It's larger, heavier, has more thrust and a longer range, as well as an extra crewmember working as a weapons expert.

And while its top speed is a mere Mach 1.6, the devil is in the details. Its backer says its radars, jammers and communication systems are the equivalent of what speed and manoeuvrability were for air superiority in the past – that is, the leading edge of air dominance today.

On delivery of the first Super Hornets in 2010, US Navy Rear Admiral Mark Skinner said the jets brought new levels of “range, payload, lethality and survivability”.

Much like the RAN's Air Warfare Destroyer, the first of which is due for delivery in late 2014, the Super Hornet's radar systems are able to simultaneously track air and ground targets including incoming missiles to create a protective bubble around it. Combined with the ability to communicate with hardware such as the AWD, it will be able to make huge early warning umbrellas, particularly well suited for defending Australia's vast coastlines.

Many of its features have an emphasis on survivability. As well as having a

reduced radar cross-section, its flight systems detect and correct for battle damage. Gp Capt Steve Robertson said: “It is fair to say the jet has proven to be more robust and exceeded what we thought.”

It was first introduced into the US Navy as aircraft carrier jet in 2001. Its Super Hornets have seen combat in Afghanistan, Iraq and off the Somali coastline, primarily for bombing and ground target missions.

Robertson has said that the RAAF, however, intends to operate the fighters more like the way the US Air Force flies the Boeing F-15E Strike Eagle – a multi-role fighter capable of long-range missions without needing supporting electronic warfare aircraft.

Also, half of the Super Hornet fleet are being configured to be able to take the US Navy's Growler electronic warfare attack system that creates an overarching jamming umbrella that is understood to be effective against all known surface-to-air missile threats. These will be used to assist the RAAF fleet, including the F/A-18 fleet, as well as provide a further and more advanced skills test bed for RAAF personnel for cutting edge technologies. The US Navy's Growlers first saw live action during last year's no-fly zone over Libya.

For Boeing the \$6 billion deal for the 24 planes signed in 2007 represented the first (and to date, only) purchase outside of the US Navy and, importantly, created a strategic toehold onto the RAAF in anticipation of further delays with the JSF programme. Five years down the track, with the Government looking to buy more planes to tide over the JSF delays, the Super Hornet looms as a prime contender. In September last year, the US Navy ordered 124 Super Hornets to deal with another four-year delay in the JSF program. Whether the RAAF purchase more for the same reasons is to be decided by the end of 2012.

Boeing F/A-18F Super Hornet technical specifications

Cost \$55million fly away, Australia's \$6 billion package works out to be approx \$240 million per aircraft (including maintenance and support)

Role Multi-role fighter

Crew Two

Engine Two low-bypass F414-GE-400 turbofans (9,800kg thrust each)

Airframe Length 18.3m, height: 4.9m

Wingspan 13.6m

Weight 13,387kg basic, 29,900kg maximum take-off weight

Speed Mach 1.6 (1,960km/h)

Range Ferrying 2,700km (without refuelling)
Interdiction over 1,000km
Combat radius 740km

Ceiling Above 50,000 feet

Weapons

AIM-120 AMRAAM active radar guided missiles

AIM-7 Sparrow radar-guided long-range missiles

AIM-9 Sidewinder infra-red seeking missiles

Harpoon anti-ship missiles
conventional and laser-guided bombs
M61 20mm nose-mounted cannon

Avionics

Hughes APG-79 multi-mode radar
GPS

inertial navigation system

VHF omni-directional range/instrument landing system

two mission computers

head-up cockpit display

multi-functional cathode ray tube displays

F/A-18 Hornets from Number 3 Squadron lined up on the hardstand at sunset prior to a night sortie with the coalition forces in Afghanistan

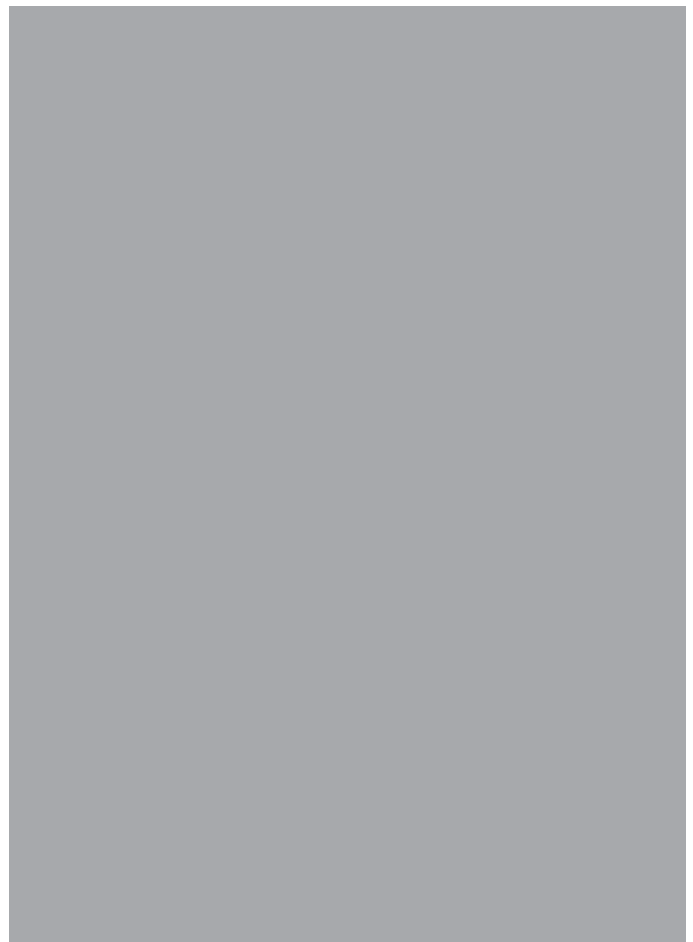


The F/A-18F Hornet

When Australia started introducing this highly nimble, single-manned and largely Australian-made fighter (only two of our 71-strong fleet were made in the US) in the mid 1980s it was the most capable in region and today it remains the bulk of Australia's air strike capability.

Originally designed as a dog fighting jet for the US Navy, it's proved to be a highly versatile aircraft and its RAAF roles include air interception, air combat, close air support of ground troops, and interdiction of enemy supply lines including shipping. Fourteen Hornets from No. 75 Squadron were part of the Iraq War operation in

escort and ground attack roles, flying 350 sorties and dropping 122 laser-guided bombs. Over the past decade a \$2.2 billion upgrade has kept the Hornets capable and effective by fitting them with new weapons, jamming and radar systems, laser targeting equipment and a helmet mounted cueing system that allows the jet and its weapons systems to react to the pilot's eyeball movements. However on physical air superiority indicators such as speed, manoeuvrability, range and payload, it can't compete with the Su-27 and Su-30 fighters owned by most regional neighbours. Most recently, many older Hornets have also had the central fuselage barrel – to which the wings and undercarriage attach – replaced to draw out their working lives until their planned withdrawal date of 2020. Three of the RAAF's Hornet squadrons are based in Williamstown, Newcastle and the fourth is at Tindal near Katherine in the NT.

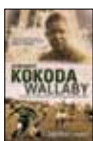


BOOK REVIEWS

Books reviewed in this section are NOT available from State Branch, nor from Acumen Publishing. Members should order books from their local bookshop, giving them the details printed under the title. These are the only details we have.

KOKODA WALLABY **The Story of Stan Bisset**

BY ANDREW JAMES
ALLEN & UNWIN (02) 8425 0100
PUBLICITY@ALLENANDUNWIN.COM
ISBN 9781742376967 \$32.99



This is the first book written by our author, and it is great! Andrew James found a unique character in Stan Bisset and told his story expertly and interestingly; clearly this book is also a credit to the editor(s).

By a twist of fate two Bisset boys, Stan and Hal, became interested in Rugby Union in the Aussie Rules state of Victoria. No doubt both could have represented their state in AFL but they moved into Rugby and helped establish what was to become the most powerful rugby club in Melbourne, Power House. Just prior to WWII four Victorians were selected in the 1939 touring side, including Stan, but war intervened and the tour was cancelled.

The war took Stan and Hal to the Middle East where they both fought with distinction against the Vichy French in Lebanon in a number of actions. This part of WWII has had little attention paid to it but was a credit to the Australians who served in that part of the world. After this was over Stan and Hal returned to Australia and then to Papua and the Kokoda Track to support the exhausted and maligned 39th Battalion. Stan and his brother were part of that fighting retreat back along the Track until the Japanese ran out of men and supplies and were pushed back, all at considerable cost in Australian casualties, including Stan's brother, Hal. Later he saw action in the capture of Gona where he planned and led a significant action in which he earned his Military Cross.

Stan was at a place called Koitaki, not far from Port Moresby, where his Battalion was addressed by General Thomas Blamey when Blamey disparaged these fighting men of the Kokoda Track, stating to the effect that "the rabbit that runs away was the rabbit that gets shot". To men who had fought, and seen comrades die of wounds and disease, these were unbelievably insensitive remarks.

Warren Baker

COMMANDO KAYAK: The man behind Australian Folboats

BY JOHN HOEHN
HIRSCH PUBLISHING
54 VOLITANS AVENUE, MT ELIZA, VIC
3930 \$36.00 SALES@HIRSCHBOOKS.NET
ISBN 97830033017177



This is not, at first, what the title suggests. It is the story of the development of the folding kayak which was known as a "Folboat". The Folboat is made in two sections, which can be quickly assembled into a one-man, but mostly a two-man kayak.

The story is, in part, a biography of Walter Hoehn and his struggle to develop the Folboat, and touches on his life both in Melbourne during WW II and his upbringing in Switzerland, prior to his family's emigration to Australia.

Early in the Pacific War the Australian Army saw the need for small portable boats that could be deployed around the Japanese-held parts of New Guinea and the Philippine and Indonesian archipelagos. Walter was tracked down by the army in a Melbourne suburb and quickly produced a prototype. As a result 25 were ordered almost immediately.

Walter overcame numerous obstacles, such as the non-availability of multi-layered rubber skins, waterproof plywood

and the like, producing the first kayaks to be used for training in Cairns. But not only was the procurement system slow, Walter alleges that his patented design was provided to another, bigger manufacturer, Hedley's, to compete and produce approximately 600 of the 1000 kayaks supplied to the army. Walter further alleges that some of the procurement officers were actively assisting Hedley's.

For Walter whose heart and soul went into these commando kayaks the difficulties he experienced detracted from what was an Australian success story. The raid on Singapore using these kayaks is just one of many detailed in this book.

The production of this book also requires some comment. The book is printed in A4 format and the chosen type face is too small, making reading somewhat difficult.

Warren Baker

WE WERE THE SQUADRON

BY NEVILLE EDWARDS.
AVAILABLE FROM AUTHOR - 9601 3528
OOGGY.EDWARDS@BIGPOND.COM.AU
\$50 PLUS \$9 (P&H) OR AUSTRALIAN
MILITARY HISTORY PUBLICATIONS
9542 6771

This book is the personal life story of a country boy – the author – who qualified as a sapper in the 1st Field Squadron of the Royal Australian Engineers. He describes two tours in New Guinea: working on a bulk oil project at Milne Bay; and at Aitape where the 6th Australian Division, supported by this Field Squadron, was ordered to clear up the remnants of a Japanese Army. It should be noted this campaign was of secondary importance as the strategy of island-hopping had proved very successful. The author has given

an accurate account of the trials and tribulations faced in New Guinea: the tropical climate with all its attendant hazards of disease and pests; heavy rainfall; difficult terrain; and of greatest importance, although fragmented, a formidable and fanatical enemy.

The latter part of the book about returning to civilian life is superfluous; also some of the appendices are, at best, of marginal relevance. For example, there is a five-page list of members who attended a Squadron dinner.

An accurate and well written account of wartime army life; however, the engineering function, although a vital one, is not a gripping subject. Although the book will probably be nostalgic treasure to the army engineering fraternity, it is unlikely to enjoy wide appeal.

J.G.Cornish

POZIERES

By SCOTT BENNETT.

SCRIBE PUBLICATIONS (03) 9349 5955

WWW.SCRIBEPUBLICATIONS.COM.AU



The Australian campaign on Pozieres was the first major Australian operation following the disaster of Fromelles, in which the 5th Australian Division was decimated as part of a British Army attack. Pozieres was located in the Somme and the capture of Pozieres was aimed at getting a slightly higher vantage point to aid the general offensive planned for September 1916. The British Commander in Chief, Haig, believed that the area could be taken, and thus give the British an advantage. Pozieres had been attacked six times prior to the Australian assault and the Australians were proud of their success, but the cost was unbelievable

The attack would involve an advance

of approximately two to three kilometres against a very determined German defence. The author has broken the campaign into manageable sections: the storming of Pozieres by the 1st Australian Div, followed by the capture of Pozieres Ridge by the 2nd Australian Div, the old German trenches by the 4th Australian Div and then later Mouquet Farm by a much reduced mixture of divisions. With each division having approximately 10,000 troops the fact that these three divisions suffered 23,000 casualties is staggering and this book is their story.

The personal stories of families dealing with whatever “missing” meant are very revealing. Ten thousand names on a wall means little when families back in Australia must deal with up to three family members who cannot be found or traced.

A telling final chapter in a compelling read.

Warren Baker

THE 10TH – Reflections of National Service and life in the Australian Army, 1967-69

By RICHARD “DICK” BARRY

PO BOX 43 NARRABRI 2390, 2011.

(02) 6792 3114

RICHYVON74@HOTMAIL.COM



This is a personal account of a young Australian conscript – a Nasho – who found himself in an army uniform and at war in Vietnam in 1967. Some 64,000 young men were conscripted into the Army between 1964 and 1972. Some 50,000 Australians served in Vietnam and some 17,000 were conscripts or National Servicemen.

Richard Barry was one of these young men who has now put pen to paper and documented his time in the Australian Army and his service in Vietnam in particular.

He has a delightful introduction

by George Mansford, who retired as Brigadier, and from David Butler AO DSO Major General (Retired) former CO of 6 RAR/NZ (ANZAC) Battalion. Barry, having been conscripted into the 10th intake, served in the 6RAAR/NZ Battalion.

Writing in the third person, Barry reflects and reminisces about his experiences from the initial letter he received advising him that he was confirmed and registered for call-up and how his girlfriend at the time promptly tore up the letter as she was against him going away.

Through some 550 pages of story and observations, he relates and recalls his fellow soldiers and their trials and tribulations.

A great personal read and of great interest to any other National Serviceman of that period.

The book contains a wide range of personal photographs of both army personnel and miscellaneous regalia used by Barry and the army of that period.

Patrick W Medway

THE ARCHITECT OF KOKODA – Bert Kienzle – the man who made the Kokoda Track

By ROBYN KIENZLE

HACHETTE AUSTRALIA, 2011 \$35

(02) 8248 0800

PUBLICITY@HACHETTE.COM.AU



In recent memory the Kokoda Trail (gazetted as the official name in 1972) has become an extension of the ANZAC legend. Having assumed it was a natural walking track used by local inhabitants, I was therefore surprised to learn much more about the story of the Trail itself.

Robyn Kienzle’s book tells the story of her father-in-law’s extraordinary exploits in both constructing and maintaining the Trail. It puts in a new light his incredible

BOOK REVIEWS

efforts to assist the Australian soldiers fighting this most difficult campaign.

Despite German ancestry, which had caused the family internment in the Great War, pioneering in Papua New Guinea in the 1930s had favourable results for Bert Kienzle and his brother Wallace. After becoming the manager of a large rubber plantation Bert mastered the local language, which was to prove most valuable to Australia's interest. In 1934 he joined the Yodda Goldfields Company and in subsequent years, prior to the war, formed his own gold production business. Kokoda (the place of the skulls) was the nearest airstrip for supplies.

When war broke out, Kienzle volunteered for the AIF, and became an officer in the Australian New Guinea

Administrative Unit (ANGU). He had clear instructions in June 1942 to undertake "the construction of a road from McDonald's (corner) to Kokoda, and the maintenance of supplies to the forces in the Kokoda district, to be completed by 26 August 1942"! The task was to demand all his skills for the next three full years.

While the single map of the Kokoda Trail was helpful in identifying places mentioned in the story, three or four more detailed maps could have enhanced the understanding of the tasks undertaken by Bert Kienzle before, during and after the war. However, this aside, the story is well presented and certainly gives great credit to the man.

Roland Millbank

WHISPERING DEATH

By MARK JOHNSON

ALLEN & UNWIN

8425 0100 \$35.00

PUBLICITY@ALLENANDUNWIN.COM



This book is sub-titled "Australian Airmen in the Pacific War" and let me say at the outset this is an excellent read because it sets out the sacrifice and bravery of the RAAF in clear and unassailable terms.

The author quickly takes us through the pre-war RAAF, a very small organisation, and then into the Empire Air Training Scheme (EATS), where Churchill was merely looking for NZ, South African, Canadian and Australians to defend his island and to hell with

other countries under threat. Besides taking all our men, we only received in place of them tired and dated aircraft ill-suited for fighting the Japanese. That part of the RAAF we still had was thrown into the defence of Malaya, the Netherlands East Indies and then the Australian mainland. Utilising largely Kittyhawks, Australians flew up to meet the Japanese's nimble Zeros/Zekes, accompanying a mixture of Japanese bombers. With these attacks on Darwin, New Guinea and Timor the Japanese spread quickly to the front door of Australia.

Our author takes us in tight, on the conditions in which ground crew and pilots operated throughout the tropics. We learn to know the airmen and ground crew by name and are continually stunned by their personal bravery as we hear of yet another air crew die at the hands of the enemy and the flying conditions. Collisions, friendly fire, clouds and the futility of some missions, consume airmen for no point, but are part of the fabric of this well told story.

I have reviewed Pacific War books about the RAN, the Army and now the RAAF, and what comes through is the arrogance of MacArthur and his willingness to sideline not just three Australian armed services, but anyone, for his own aggrandisement. Once again this fact was revealed to me in *Whispering Death*.

The Australian Army and the US Army both praised the ground support capability of the RAAF and it is clear that their efforts contributed to the saving of many allied lives; however, I now realise the price.

Warren Baker

CENTRAL COAST ROLL OF HONOUR

AVAILABLE FROM WYONG FAMILY HISTORY GROUP
 PO Box 247 WYONG NSW 2259. \$49.00 (\$6 P&H WITHIN
 NSW & \$10 INTERSTATE)
 ISBN 9780980570021

This monumental project could only have been achieved by a team of dedicated local enthusiasts, who shared the passion to record the names of those men and women who enlisted from the Central Coast of NSW, comprising Gosford City and Wyong Shire.

Through their meticulous research and collation of details, taken from memorials, plaques, honour rolls and other sources, this group has ensured that such a definitive record will appeal to a broad range of interested parties.

Presented by town and village in alphabetical order, details are recorded for those who enlisted for service in the war in

the Sudan 1885, the Boer War and through the wars of the 20th century.

There are numerous images of local honour rolls, plaques and memorials, supported by brief biographies of many local veterans and a useful glossary of military terms.

This is clearly an important reference work that sets a standard for other communities to follow. Excellent work is now being done by family and local history groups with the support of local governments and their libraries.

Though presented as an index, the 100 pages (the book is 399 pages) of some thousands of names are in themselves a Nominal Roll for the Central Coast District. The bibliography offers a reference to other interesting publications, including the highly regarded *Every Mother's Son* (M. Rooksberry – Gosford City Library 1997) which was an earlier record of honour rolls and memorials within this district.

Rod White

