



# The Scribbler

RAN Writers Association

October 2004

Volume 1, Issue 5

## President talks—Lew Horsfield

Greeting Fellow Scribes,



We continue to receive positive feedback on “The Scribbler.” We will endeavour to ensure it remains a professional looking document, and that it contains interesting and informative articles for everyone. To this end I must send a Bravo Zulu to our more Senior Writers, who have donated some of their personal “History” to be printed each month.

Biography Section – Lots of space – How about we try to fill it up. Photos also appreciated if we do not have you. We have about 160 odd photos on display, but we have about 1400 on our list so we still have a way to go. .

I see a lot of our younger readers were putting some good stuff on the Notice Board, but with the “Black Out” imposed by Defence on the site now means you can only access it through private computers, so if you think you have some “real good material”[don’t want to say ‘dirt’] that you would like published please forward it to us and we will print it in the newsletter. Please send it to the Vice President & Web Master Geoffrey at [scribes@ranwriters.com](mailto:scribes@ranwriters.com).

We have been very lucky in the production of the newsletter, one of our members volunteered to help out with the printing. How long he will be able to continue this for we don’t know, we hope it will be for an extended period as it is most appreciated.

Acting on advice we have decided to register our selves up as an Association [Incorporated], and we are in the process of completing the necessary paper work. Full details will be advised. We will be known as the Royal Australian Navy Writers Association Inc., and membership will be open to all those who have worn or are wearing the Gold ‘W’

Donations continue to trickle in and for that we are truly grateful. But we will always welcome more, big or small.

Sorry to keep flogging a slow horse, but our Missing List seems to be growing. This is in part due to people changing their ISP etc and not informing us. We must say the actual “Snail Mail” post out returns are diminishing. Others have possibly have moved into a retirement mode and suffering from a bit of CRAFT Disease and so it slips their whatdoyacallit for a while.

If at any time an email bounces on us from the address we have on file, then we will send you a copy of this newsletter by Snail Mail. If after receiving a Snail Mail copy PLEASE contact us and give us your new email address

We are now entering into the year of “The Way We Were”. Yes it is only twelve months until Adelaide becomes the “word”. Please forward your registration into the Adelaide Committee as soon as possible, so all the events they have planned for this momentous event can be put in concrete. As you can imagine, it is not an easy thing to arrange an event such as this, so please help them by getting your registration in as soon as.

For those who attended the National Naval Reunion 2005, all I can say is that both Geoffrey and I thought it was an overall disappointment. BUT the Writers Lunch on Friday 6<sup>th</sup> was up to its usual high standards, saddened by the sudden demise of our colleague J.J. ‘Bomber’ Atkinson the next day. He will be remembered, amongst other things, for all the hard work he put in organising the Sydney Lunches. VALE Old Friend.

Remember – Be a Good Writer – Not a bad Correspondent.

**Donations Welcomed—The National Writers Association requires funds to produce this newsletter, maintain the web site and associated costs. We recently donated \$50 to the Victor Chang Cardiac Research Institute in memory of Jim (Bomber) Atkinson. Renewed our domain name ([www.ranwriters.com](http://www.ranwriters.com)) for a further ten years - cost \$220. Registration as formal Incorporated Association is ongoing with associated costs.**

**Donations can be forwarded to: PO Box 5020 Chisholm ACT 2905. Thank you to the following Scribes who have forwarded donations to us since July 2004: Kev Cummins, Kevin G Baker, Norman Cann, Jim Wylie, and \$10 for Vietnam Book donation.**

## Scribblers News—We heard from.....

**Kev Cummins** has sent us his biography and also writes that he is residing at Bomaderry NSW (02-44232454) and generally has a spare bed or two for anyone traveling through. Intends purchasing a caravan later this year with the intention of joining the "Grey



Nomads" in April 2005 and heading north (or possibly west) for around 6 months. Hope to catch up with some old scribes. (His biog is on our web site).

**Marc Henderson** Petty Officer Writer/Chief Clerk is working at the Defence Force Recruiting Centre - South Australia.

**Norman W Cann** (Writer 42-46) wrote that it is great to see interest taken in your association and ensuing improvements in functions and publications. My service as a Writer was from 1942-46 initially at Rushcutter then on to Westralia and eventually Penguin for demobilisation. Our Newcastle sub section of the Naval Association at one stage had ex Writers as President Vice (Female), Secretary and Treasurer (Norman). My grandson is LCDR Matthew Shand presently a 'birdie' instructor at Nowra.

**LEUT Simon Gourlay**, says he was an ex-writer and now serving as Command Legal Officer at HMAS Stirling. Whilst I only did a short stint as a Writer, it was always in my blood to return to the RAN as a lawyer. Joined Jan 1973, Morrow 42nd then Writer's course in 1974 (Sid Nolan). I was very saddened to hear about the passing of Sid. I noted with interest some of the people I actually served with, Bob Baird (a hard but effective task master as I needed lots of coaching with pay issues), Mick Kelleher (HMAS Harman pay office), Peter Hassell, Russ Nelson, LEUT Les Roberts, DSO (HMAS Creswell) Dave Groves, Rod Laycock, John Kent and Allan Hardy (HMAS Brisbane) Ray Hamilton, Kevin Drinkwater (FOCAF).

**Steve Salmon** sent his biography in. He undertook the Writers course 6/74. Spent some time between Supply School and Management school. Involved in the introduction of DEFMIS before picking up WO boards and spending time at KUTTABUL as SO (Cash) rounding out with time in the newly created Commodore



Training area looking after Supply and Defence Co-operation training. Discharged from the PNF 1991. Returned to Defence in 1994 in a civilian instructional management role within the Supply and Health Faculty at HMAS CERBERUS.

Heard from ex Leading Wran Writer **Janice Pidgeon** R85700 served 1963 - 1965. Currently checking details of the reunion to see if I can make it to Adelaide.

**Ken Dusting** joined RAN Jan 64 and after serving three years as TO changed branch to Data Operator in 1967. Following a decision to discontinue the Data Operator Branch in 1969, transferred to the Writer's Branch as PA/LWTR in Jan 70. Served three years as LWTR and discharged in Jan 1973. After that he joined the RAAF for 12 years and from 87 to 2002 Naval reserves with 12 months full time service at Vic Barracks.

**Sid Nolan** - Ralph Burge says they were close mates in the sixties and we shared many good times together. When Sid and I were living in the "Married Quarters" at Cerberus, he invited me to go fishing with him. We didn't go far - stayed on the base and parked his old FJ, I think it was, on a bank above the water. While sitting patiently for a nibble, we suddenly heard a worrying noise - it was Sid's car heading towards the water. It thundered past us into the salty ocean!!

**Gavin Calderwood** is currently doing CFTS in Canberra until December 2006.



**TAF Fauchon** served 57-77 retired as WOWTR, is now President of the Newcastle Naval Association, Hon Sec/ Director of Hunter Legacy and Vice Pres of Greta RSL Sub Branch—His biog is on our site.

**Grahame Stewart** says good day to all his old mates, he is now living in Salisbury SA. Grahame is an Ex POWTR Served January 1969 to August 1979 and paid off in HMAS Cerberus where he was an instructor.

**Neville Ivey** served as a scribe from 1983 - 1990 with postings to HMAS Creswell, HMAS Jervis Bay, HMAS Harman (attached to DEW-N), RAN Relief Trust Fund and HMAS Lonsdale. Currently working Warrnambool Victoria for NCI Workforce Solutions.

**Jo Laudess (Nee:Blomley)** says she was a baby scribe in "Writers 52". I have just been informed about this site & think it is great. I plan to send the link to other Ex-scribes I am still in contact with - so

thanks heaps.

**Lisa Lynch** (nee Struik) is currently serving at Stirling as POWTR with a discharge imminent Date of May 2005.

**George Edgell** says he is based in Tyabb during summer, now enjoying life as a grey nomad, caravanning North Australia during Victoria's Winter.



**Anne White** PO) has moved to Williamstown Vic and is soon to be COSEC of NUSHIP TOOWOOMBA.

**Phil Bottaro** advises that he is currently working as a civilian in Russell doing overseas conditions of service. Phil served from 1981 to 2001 and paid off as a POWTR. Partner Monica.

Marg Hardy (Nee Huxtable) says she keeps in touch with Liz Budek. The recent newsletters brought back memories – working with Di Klem at Albatross. Marg is married to Dan Harcy ex CPOFC who left in 1987 and is now working as occupational health and Safety Coordinator for Northern region Queensland Police. Marg says anybody who knows her from the early 1970 era is welcome to contact her. (Just let us know at the Scribbler and we will pass on any messages)



Heard from **Sandy Green (Nee Paul– Pic 1968)** she is looking for Janine Carr. She has recently found Lynne Higginbottom, Rita Solomann, Georgie Lowrey, Sherry Vandenberg.



Picture from the past: HMAS "Tarangau" in 1955. L/Wtr Alan "Salty" Eckel, of course, is the one in the middle, with SA Keith Whale on his right and SA Shawyer on his left. He was the writer of the regular column in "Navy News" as "Salty in the North."

Shayne Pemberton served 1980—2000 and paid off as a LWTR is currently working at the High Court in Canberra.

### Medals

If you have a question regarding the award of medals, you can contact the medals section as follows:

Mailing Address:

Directorate of Honours and Awards T-1-49, Department of Defence, CANBERRA ACT 2600.

Toll-free Medals Inquiry Phone line: 1800 111 321 (Operating Hours: 0830-1700 Monday to Friday)

Enquirers calling on the 1800 telephone number should be aware that these numbers can experience busy periods and delays may be experienced.

Email: [dpe.honoursandawards@defence.gov.au](mailto:dpe.honoursandawards@defence.gov.au)

### Cerberus Museum



The Cerberus museum have been given a picture of a Supply Captain possible 1930-1950

could be R.C. Negus, of E W Trivett – can you identify the person ?

They also they are looking for information on a Writer who started the Cerberus Journal in 1925 Harold Alexander Hodkinson RAN - original from Tasmania. If

you can help please advise the Cerberus museum at: [cerberus.museum@defence.gov.au](mailto:cerberus.museum@defence.gov.au). And let us know at: [scribes@ranwriters.com](mailto:scribes@ranwriters.com)

Disclaimer: The RAN Writers is a body of volunteers and try at all times to present accurate information and to recommend reliable links. At all times we will act in good faith to provide the information sought. However, we do depend on information given to us by ex and serving scribes, and the general public and because of this the RAN Writers National Committee cannot accept liability for providing any information or advice, no matter how or in what form it may be provided.

### More on Writer Tom Douglas

Kevin Baker (Writer, RANR 42 to 46) wrote about the "anecdote" on the fate of Writer Tom Douglas. I was in BRISBANE'S Ship's Office not long after the Rabaul contingent was written off the Ship's Office ledgers. I would like to add a little more to the events leading up to Tom Douglas's demise. The RAN contingent of 10, under Lt.Cdr.LA.McKenzie, RAN, evacuated Rabaul on 22 *January*, 1942 shortly before the Japanese landed in force and virtually unopposed.. Together with a small group of Army personnel they set off for the south coast of New Britain. After re-grouping with others, the party turned north and on 24th February, dysentery broke out. Yeoman G.P.T. Knight and Tom Douglas were too sick to continue and were left at a Mission Station at the head of Wide Bay. Chief Yeoman S. Lamont volunteered to stay behind and nurse them. The three were not seen again. Chief Yeoman Lamont was captured but was later lost in the sinking of the POW ship MONTEVIDEO MARU on 1st July, 1942 by an American submarine off the Philippines.

### The Hurricanes in Florida USA.

Ian 'Ambrose' Palmer who retired in 1990 as a Chief, lives in Florida, USA and forwards this update. 7/9/04 Hurricane Charlie (Category 3 - 3 weeks ago) was tracking for Tampa then veered a little right and went ashore 60 miles to the south of us, then tracked NNE within 40 miles of my place in Valrico - hell of a tropical storm where we were, but it went down to a Category 2 hurricane as it went over the top of Orlando and exited the state at Daytona Beach after weakening somewhat. (Hurricanes weaken as they move over land as they don't have the warm tropical waters to fuel them). Then, just this last weekend Hurricane Frances passed right over the top of us. It crossed land at West Palm Beach (north of Miami) tracking WNW, and by the time it got to us it had been downgraded to Category 1 (70-75 mph winds) thank goodness. We hunkered down without electricity with torches at the ready and non-perishables to snack on. Freezer full of ice which kept solid for a long time. The "eye" passed over us at around 1800/5th (local time) which was an eerie experience, but then the back-end circulation bands kicked our arse for 20 hours (and 8 inches) of pounding rain and high winds. Lost some tree limbs and the power for about 30 hours, but other than that, we came through it okay. I've always been a firm believer that you can drink your way through anything, but these were a lot hairier than the storms I watched at Coonawarra. If that wasn't enough, Hurricane Ivan (Category 4 - not good) is now zooming towards Florida and if the extended tracking forecast remains close, it will hit the west coast of Florida also - probably near Tampa again. The state is already flooded from the first two storms and people haven't had time to rebuild or even make repairs! Hurricane Ivan tracked to the west below Cuba before turning north into the Gulf of Mexico so we on the Florida peninsular were spared. However, it slammed into the Florida panhandle at Pensacola as a strong Cat. 3 hurricane and wreaked massive damage as it crossed land. The storm then weakened into a tropical depression dumping heavy rain all the way up the eastern seaboard, then turned back around to the south and re-entered the Gulf of Mexico. Unbelievable! Then yesterday (Sept. 26th), Hurricane Jeanne passed over us in the Tampa area, on a very similar track to that of "Frances". Up until last Friday, the so-called experts had her tracking north up the east coast of Florida, but it didn't take the expected turn and just kept coming at us. Came ashore on the east coast as a Cat. 3, then weakened to a Cat. 1 as it crossed the state and got to us. "Jeanne" moved much quicker through the area, but had a smaller eyewall so the winds were stronger than "Frances". It still lifted some roof shingles on my house, knocked down some drain pipes and brought down tree limbs. I actually had a rolling swell in my swimming pool. We lost power again for only 8 hours this time, but I had a small battery operated TV to watch the football. Now we have Hurricane Lisa out in the Atlantic, but the National Hurricane Centre shows her tracking north away from Florida, but we don't believe anything anymore. Only Mother Nature knows where it's going. People are tired of these storms. Four hurricanes to hit Florida in six weeks is highly unusual and the seasons not over.....

Regards to all, Brose.



**RAN WRITERS REUNION ADELAIDE 2005 REGISTRATION REQUEST**

**NAMES**

1 Given:.....aka:.....Family:.....  
 2 Given:.....aka:.....Family:.....  
 3 Address:.....  
 4 Phone (...)  
 E-mail.....

**Registrations must be accompanied by a non – refundable deposit of \$25.00 per attendee**  
 (This pays for your generic badge)

Please register me/us for the following functions:

1 Meet and Greet	No...	@\$ 5.00	per person	Total \$
2 Dinner Dance	No...	@\$85.00	per person.	Total \$
3 Barbecue [#]	No...	@\$30/15	per person	Total \$
4 Girls Only Lunch	No...	@\$15.00	per person	Total \$

I would like to order the following badged merchandise:

1 Polo Shirt/s	Navy or White	@\$25.00	per garment	Total \$
	Sizes S M L XL 2XL 3XL 4XL	(please circle your colour and size)		
2 Cap/s		@\$15.00	per garment	Total \$

I would like to book the following tours:

1 Saturday AM Half Day	No	@\$48.00	per person	Total \$
2 Saturday PM Half Day	No	@\$44.00	.per person	Total \$
3 Saturday Full Day	No	@\$85.00	.per person	Total \$
4 Monday Full Day	No	@\$99.00	.per person	Total \$

Please include me/us in the following activities:

- 1 Golf.....Number attending @\$20.00 per person Total \$.
- 2 Races.....Number attending.....gratis
- 3 I/we will be using the bus to Port Adelaide on Sunday from Glenelg and return to Glenelg
- 4 I /we will be using the bus to Port Adelaide on Sunday with drop off at the Airport

**GRAND TOTAL\$**

\* see BBQ/Bus notes bottom next page



Some of the Scribes committee organising the 2005 do next year:  
 BJ Brian Tucker, Mick Kelleher, Ted Ozols & John (Chuck) Trafford



PAYMENT ADVICE—Deposit of \$25 per attendee is required in the first instance to offset administration/name badge costs. This is a non – refundable deposit Writers Reunion South Australia: BSB 105 042 Account No: 058798040 Bank: SA

I have remitted the amount of \$ \_\_\_\_\_ to the nominated account by direct deposit/internet on \_\_\_\_\_

Or

Check/Money Order/Cash enclosed for \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Deposits are not refundable. Allotments are acceptable.

All money due is to be in the hands of the organisers by 31 July 2005

When completing registration application please include names of each person attending

Our data system is a single line entry and has to be edited to cater for different ordering requirements.

Note. This information will also be used to manufacture the name badges If you want a nickname or alias or in the case of ladies, your former name, please indicate, otherwise you will get DAVE Rudd

e.g..

1. Dave BLUEY Rudd
- 2 MABEL Rudd (Smyth)
- 3 DAVE Rudd

Please forward Applications for Registration to

RAN Writers Reunion  
PO Box 344  
Brighton 5048  
SOUTH AUSTRALIA

#### NOTE.

PRINTED TICKET WILL BE SUPPLIED AT REGISTRATION FOR EACH EVENT AS RECEIPT FOR PAYMENT.NO TICKET NO ADMITTANCE

\* Tickets will be sold at Registration times. \*The price includes a good quality BBQ lunch served from 1200 to 1500 and all/any drinks between 1000 and 1600. The all inclusive price for this event can be selected as drinkers \$30 (includes ALL/ANY drinks or non drinkers \$15 (includes ALL non alcoholic drinks)

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### **Adelaide Reunion Program 2005**

#### Friday 30 September

1500 onwards Registration at the Stamford Grand Hotel

1830 Meet and Greet in Ball Room 1 and 2 at the Stamford Grand

#### Saturday 1 October

0900 onwards Registration for latecomers

TBA Golfers depart for Golf day

0930 Half Day Tour - Adelaide and Environs

0930 Full day tour - Southern Vales Goolwa and Victor Harbour

TBA Leave for Race Meeting

1230 Girls Only Lunch at a City Venue

1330 Half Day Tour - Cleland Park and Hills

1900 Dinner Dance in Ball Rooms 2 to 5 at the Stamford Grand

#### Sunday 2 October

1000 -1600 Farewell BBQ at the Port Adelaide Naval Association Clubrooms

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**Our web site has reached 91,000+ hits at 30th September 2004**

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## Lost Comrades

Jim (Bomber) Atkinson—7th August 2004

Ray Morgan ex CPOWTR from Penguin days died on the 16th May 2004.

JF O'Brien POWTR PM 3058

R W Otter POWTR S3384

JF Yeomans LSWTR S5294

Ron Battams O/N 35264 peacefully passed away on August 13, 2004

Douglas Pyers—at Eagleby Qld 20th September 2004

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### OLD SAILORS

Old sailors sit and chew the fat  
'bout how things used to be  
of the things they've seen  
and places they've been  
When they ventured out to sea.

They remember friends from long ago  
and the times they had back then  
of the money they've spilled  
and the beer they've swilled  
In their days as sailing men.

Their lives are lived in days gone by  
with thoughts that forever last  
of cracker-jack hats  
and bell-bottom blues  
and the good times in their past.

They recall long nights with a moon so bright  
far out on a lonely sea  
and the thoughts they had  
as youthful lads  
When their lives were unbridled and free.

They know so well how their hearts would swell  
when the flag fluttered proud and free  
and the southern cross  
made such a beautiful sight  
as they plowed through an angry sea.

They talk of the bread ole' cookie would bake  
and the shrill of the boatsun's pipe  
and how the salt spray fell  
like sparks out of hell  
when a storm struck in the night.

They remember mates already gone

who forever hold a spot  
In the stories of old  
when sailors were bold  
and lubbers were a pitiful lot.

They rode their ships through many a storm  
when the sea was showing its might  
And the mighty waves  
might be digging their graves  
as they sailed on through the night.

They speak of nights in a bawdy house  
somewhere on a foreign shore  
and the beer they'd down  
as they gathered around  
cracking jokes with a busty whore.

Their sailing days are gone away  
never more will they cross the brow  
But they have no regrets  
for they know they've been blessed  
'cause they honored their sacred vow.

Their numbers grow less with each passing day  
as their chits in this life are called in  
But they've nothing to lose  
for they've all paid their dues  
and they'll sail with their shipmates again.

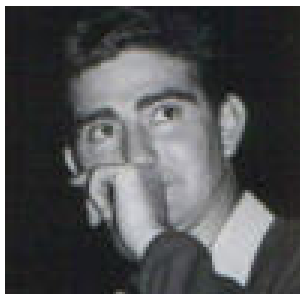
I've heard them say before getting underway  
that there's still some sailin' to do  
and they'll exclaim with a grin  
that their ship has come in  
and the Lord is commanding the crew.

The original piece was written by Larry Dunn, a USN retired Command Master Chief, in June 2001 and amended to reflect Australia by Angela Hillis.

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## Sid Nolan by Dick Gottschalk

By Dick Gottschalk -Sid Nolan – what a character. I always remember the time when Sid was the commander's Writer at CERBERUS where, as a part of his duties he controlled the fortnightly drawing of the depot's Tombola. We got hold of POWTR Boots Britain's Tombola ticket, copied his numbers down



and put his ticket back in his drawer. I think Max Sharples went over to Sids Office, filled Sid in on what we were up to and came back to the pay office and proceeded to call the false numbers. This was not an ordinary Tombola this was a huge jackpot under a certain number of numbers drawn. Anyway Max calls the numbers and I can still hear Boots saying "got that one" "got that one too". It was just so hard to keep a straight face. Max even chucked in No 91 and Boots replied, "nope haven't got that one". Anyway of course Boots has got all the numbers way under the required, drops everything and runs over to Sids office. I don't know how Sid managed it but he kept the charade up for 10 minutes before Boots finally caught on. When Boots came back all he said was "you pack of bastards". We weren't really – but I still think its funny.

## **STATE REPRESENTATIVES**

If you have any difficulties in contacting your State Rep. please contact us, here in Canberra. Email – scribes@ranwriters.com or – PO Box 5020 Chisholm ACT 2905.

### **ACT & National Committee:**

President and Treasurer: Lew Horsfield. Phone: 041 200 1636.

Vice-President/Web: Geoffrey 'British' Hardwick. Phone: 0411241821

Secretary: Denis 'Tiger' Lyons. Phone: 02 6254 3453

ACT. Members Link. Vacant – Volunteer Wanted

### Northern Territory.

Brendan Rochford: PO Box 579 Howard Springs 0835. Phone: 040 483 1590.

### Tasmania.

Dick Gottschalk: 19 Lumeah Ave, Lenah Valley 7008: Phone 040 247 1562.

### New South Wales.

Mark Mobley. 22 Maughan St Lalor Park NSW 2147

Phone: 02 9690 7381 [W] or 02 9264 4842 [H]

Robert McKeown – State Treasurer. Phone: 041 750 6451.

Nowra Area: Anthony 'Irish' Vickers. Phone: 041 504 3513

### South Australia.

B.J. Tucker. 41B Margate St. Brighton SA 5048. Phone: 040 896 7806.

Bruce Hambour. 2 Jib Court Gulf Point Marine, North Haven SA 5018

Phone: 08 8341 8860

### West Australia

Frank Carville. 16 Dalgety St. East Fremantle WA 6158

Phone: 08 9339 1883 One More Wanted

### Victoria.

Marty Grogan. 1 Balaka Ave. Aspendale Vic. 3195

Phone: 041 988 2397

### Queensland.

Rod Pope: 31 Hanson Rd. Salisbury Qld 4107 Phone: 040 782 3338

Kevin 'Thirsty' Drinkwater: 38 Coronet Cres. Burleigh Waters. Qld 4220

Phone: 040 958 4694



Clear Lower  
Decks!

RAN Greenies, Skilled Hands (Scribes),

Naval Association

Meet n Greet

Date: 13/11/04

Time: 1800 til late

Townsville RSL

Charters Towers Rd, Townsville

Wine, dine and dance the night away with your old stepping oppos and your current significant other.

\$20 per head for meals

Entertainment \$TBA

Drinks at RSL prices.

**Call John at 0412724141 to confirm attendance**



# Looking for HMAS Supply sailors

Hello to everyone, my name is Ken Witchard I am the Secretary of the Naval Tankermen Association and would like to contact anyone in your lists who served aboard the Grey Lady HMAS Supply during their time in pusers. I can be contacted at the email listed below. Many thanks Regards:

Ken Witchard tanker73@bigpond.net.au

<http://www.witchweb.net.au/default.html>

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**Jim Atkinson by Catherine Harvey:** I am new writer to the website, I have been in for 10 yrs and am currently serving at Defence Force Recruiting in Newcastle. I attended my first Writer's Reunion on Friday in Sydney, I was so totally shocked at the loss of Jim (Bomber) Atkinson. At 08:00 yesterday morning I received a phone call from LCDR Andy Hobbs to say, "We have lost one of our own!", and that is exactly how I felt, which was a first for me.

I listened to so many stories on Friday, of days of old and the world of writers over time, and the thing that amazed me the most was that things haven't changed that much. We are still playing the same practical jokes at sea, still have the same mateship, doing the same work, still have that list of names of people who rub you the wrong way and then want their pay fixed.

And then there was 'Bomber"! I worked with 'Bomber' last year at MHQ in Sydney! He never changed, talking at 100 miles a hour, buzzing around talking to everyone, just being larger than life, and of course talking about medals! He even had a go at me because I haven't completed my Advance LSWTR course for promotion. I got my course notes out last night because the last thing I need is 'Bomber' looking down on me shaking his head!

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## The Voyager Disaster 1964 by Bill Grundy

Many among his fellow Voyager shipmates have harrowing tales of how the fickle hand of fate saved their lives.



Bill Grundy is one of them. On that fateful night, Mr Grundy was rostered to work until 9pm in the ship's pay and administration office, next door to the forward cafeteria and below the bridge. His superior officer, in a spur of the moment decision, closed the office about 15 minutes earlier than usual. Mr Grundy walked to the cafeteria and sat down with his back against the bulkhead. Only a few minutes later, the bow of HMAS Melbourne sliced through the office he had just left, splitting the ship in two. Had he left the office a few minutes later he would have been killed instantly Mr Grundy said. However, his ordeal was far from over. In darkness and rising water he and his mates somehow went down a hatch and seconds later the forward section of the ship turned turtle. When it turned upside down they were a deck above and guess

that was what saved us in the end." he said. We were pulled up into the next deck which was really the bottom deck but he was sucked back away from an escape hatch there. The section went under and he began drowning, all the while hearing music and videos of all the good things that happened in life. Then it went up again and he took a breath, went down again and he thought if the ship goes up again he had to get out of here. It did and as water came out he says he sort of surfed out.

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**By Geoff Hardwick the editor—** We hope you like this edition—however we do need contributions from you—stories, anecdotes, photos, biographies, luncheons, meetings etc. This is your newsletter. Next edition will be 1st February 2005 so how about putting pen to paper or email us . Cheers British  
E-Mail Address: [scribes@ranwriters.com](mailto:scribes@ranwriters.com)



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Association

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