



GRAMPAW PETTIBONE

Hung Hawk

The night was fine for carrier qualification landings when this *Skyhawk* pilot left the catapult for his first go at night landings. CCA picked him up forward of the ship and turned him downwind. He made the normal abeam call and a few seconds later was turned into the final bearing. The eager driver picked up CCA glide slope at two and three-quarter miles and called the ball at one mile with a fuel state of 3,400 pounds. He went a little low and slow during the initial portion of the approach and subsequently corrected to a slightly high. Paddles called for a little power as he corrected from the high ball and the driver dropped the left wing slightly as he crossed the ramp.

The A-4 touched down left of centerline, engaged number four cross deck pendant and almost came to a full stop when it dropped into the port catwalk. The ambiguous *Hawk* hesitated for an instant; dropped a little further; hesitated again and finally dropped completely off the deck edge. The tailhook held on to the cross deck pendant and the A-4 came to rest with its nose barely in the water and the engine delivering 100% power.

A completely confused and disoriented pilot thought of his Dilbert Dunker training but, since he was still dry and uninjured, decided to leave well enough alone. After several radio calls, Paddles got through and instructed the wayward lad to bring the throttle aft and secure the engine. As things came back to normal, this young fella safetied his seat and organized his thinking. The ship had slowed to a stop by this time and a few lines were draped over the side to aid the pilot. Owing to the precarious position of his aircraft (hanging straight down), it was difficult for this lad to maneuver or to see

This stuff ages you!



Colborn

the effort taking place on deck to retrieve him. He grabbed one of the dangling lines with hopes of being hauled on board but, to his dismay, found it unattended. It

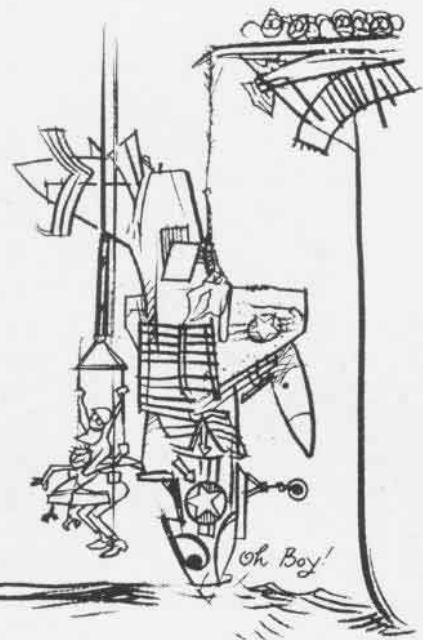
came down upon him when he tried to take tension. Confusion ensued with instructions to abandon the aircraft by getting into the water and other instructions to remain in the cockpit as help was on its way. It was finally decided that a man would be sent down on a painter (sling) lowered by tillie.

As the rescuer (descending on the painter) arrived in the vicinity of the cockpit, he threw a line to his victim who was subsequently hauled close aboard. Working together, the twosome tried to release the rocket jet fitting so the pilot could sit on the helper's shoulders. This maneuver didn't work. The pilot then placed his left knee on his buddy's left shoulder and holding onto the lines both gymnasts were hauled to the flight deck. The A-4 (still hanging on the wire) was hoisted aboard shortly thereafter by tillie.



Grampaw Pettibone says:

Fetch me another aspirin tablet! This one strikes an old used



Oh Boy!

ILLUSTRATED BY *Colborn*

and badly abused nerve of Gramps.

As many years as we've been in this business, you'd think everybody'd know you gotta have that line up when ya cross the ramp. Paddles didn't do this fella any favor by just lettin' him get aboard. The only way to get these newcomers indoctrinated is to make 'em get set up proper or send 'em around. And droppin' that wing for line up after crossin' the ramp is about as sensible as catchin' rain water in a sieve.

And now about sittin' in that danglin' bird. Having my druthers, I think I'd druther get clear of it and ride the carrier's helo than take the chance of having it break loose and take me down with it.

Pinless-Prang

After a routine preflight, a pilot and copilot manned their s-2F for an instrument flight. Turn-up and taxi were normal and the aircraft departed the East Coast air station at approximately 0900. The flight proceeded VFR to a nearby NAS at 4,500 feet to practice ADF and GCA approaches, but when the pilot lowered the landing gear to begin a let-down, he noticed the starboard gear showed barber pole. He raised and lowered the gear several times but each time got the barber pole on the starboard gear.

The pilot returned to home base and notified the tower of his problem. En route, he and the copilot checked the NATOPS manual to make sure they were using proper procedures for a hung gear. The squadron sent a representative to the tower who instructed the pilots to climb and, among other things, to try pulling positive and negative G's and skid maneuvers in an attempt to get the starboard gear down. All efforts failed to break the gear out of the well and soon another s-2F joined on the aircraft for a visual check.

The pilot reported that the wheel well doors appeared fully open and the shrink strut extended. After this inspection, the pilot of the s-2F with the hung gear attempted to pump the wheels all the way down, rather than drop them first. Then he tried to tear the "jay" hook out by raising and lowering the gear.

While the pilots were trying to remedy this situation, arrangements were made to land the s-2F on a foamed runway at a nearby NAS. The pilot calculated his fuel consumption in order to land with approximately 300 pounds of fuel. While descending to the traffic pattern, he went over the check-off list and prepared for a wheels-up landing.

The approach was started four miles out at an altitude of 1,500

The nut on the outboard door connection backed off and the bolt fell out due to normal vibration. Records clearly showed that the starboard landing gear door actuating cylinder had been replaced but the aircraft had flown 41 hours since replacement.

It's pretty easy to see that the man responsible for replacing the cylinder forgot to install the cotter pins, but what about the quality control people? Where were they? Also, the plane captains, pilots and crews who sup-

Somebody
SAVE me!



feet with hook down, auxiliary pumps off, and gear up. At about three miles and 110 knots, the port engine was feathered and secured. Flaps were then at one-third and were lowered to two-thirds about two miles out. At 200 feet and 100 knots, flaps were lowered to full, the starboard engine feathered, secured and the prop aligned by the copilot. The s-2F touched down on centerline at an airspeed of 85 knots in a nose-high attitude and skidded approximately 1,400 feet before stopping in the center of the foamed runway. There was no fire and both pilots left the aircraft uninjured.



Grampaw Pettibone says:

Holy cow! What a way to bang up a perfectly good bird. It really wasn't too hard to locate the problem with the starboard gear once the investigators got a look at it. Cotter pins had not been installed in the bolts connecting the starboard landing gear door arms and the actuating cylinder.

posedly preflighted the aircraft for the 19 hops prior to this one must accept part of this blame. Many people were involved in mashing up this little bird.

I sure have to hand it to pilot and copilot for the way they handled this mess. Looks like we had a couple of well checked-out gents driving this bird and it's a real pleasure to add their names to Gramps "Ole Pro" list.

Loud and Clear

Safety doesn't depend on a series of new and brilliant ideas. Safety is, basically, the product of professional slugging along day in and day out. Safety is the product of long and especially persistent effort and determination.

There is nothing glamorous or romantic about flight safety. It's the monotonous accomplishment of the minute chores. It's doing what you're supposed to do when you're supposed to do it, the way you're supposed to do it. If you do, flying is safe. If you don't, it isn't. It's just that simple.