



# GRAMPAW PETTIBONE

## Look Ma — No Wings

Ltjg. Shortwings received word that he would night carrier qualify that evening. Following dinner and the preflight briefing, the young lieutenant departed for his A-7A. Preflight was uneventful except that the A-7A did not have a full fuel load, necessitating refueling prior to launch. After starting and receiving an okay from the final checker before leaving the line area, Ltjg. Shortwings taxied to the fuel pits to hot refuel. (The flight leader had informed the pilot that the rest of the flight would meet him at the ship.)

While taxiing to the pits, the lieutenant decided to put his kneboard on his right leg, partially obscuring the fuel gauge, caution and advisory panels, and he also folded the A-7's wings to facilitate hot refueling. Fueling was normal. Ltjg. Shortwings pulled out of the pits, turned on his anti-collision lights, and called for taxi clearance to the duty runway. During this time, he was thinking about making his Charlie time, the speed required to make it, and the procedures for CCA's. Shortwings "looked around the cockpit" and, seeing nothing unusual, pulled on to the duty runway for takeoff. He added takeoff power, checked his instruments and commenced his takeoff roll, progressing normally up to 145 knots. He initiated rotation with approximately 3,500 feet of runway remaining. The aircraft began a roll to the left, heading toward the left edge of the runway. The pilot, thinking he had a runaway trim, checked his gauges. They indicated normal. He applied right rudder and right stick and succeeded in touching down again on the left edge of the runway. He considered aborting; however, he noted a "couple of hundred feet of runway remaining." He also noted that he was too far to the left for a successful arrestment. Ltjg. Shortwings continued the takeoff with the idea of ejection. He was airborne again at the end of the runway and, as



was only during his ride back to the hangar that Shortwings realized he had made a takeoff with the wings folded!



**Grampaw Pettibone says:**

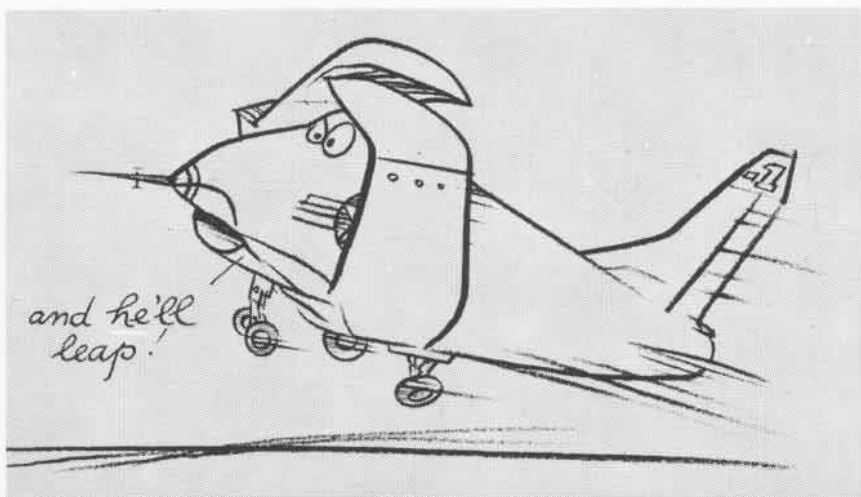
**Great leapin' lizards! Checklists, checklists, checklists, checklists! Kneboard, smeboard! This lad's gonna have to shape up or ship out. If he was dead sure of his CCA procedures before the flight, he could'a concentrated his efforts on the task immediately at hand — takeoff checklist! I don't care what knee you put your kneboard on — there's no excuse for violating NATOPS! This just represents another completely needless loss of an aircraft, to say nothin' about the potential hazard to the pilot! "Lookin' around the cockpit" ain't 'nough, boy! Let this be a warning to all who do not follow checklists!**

## Check Pilot

he passed through 150 feet, he felt the rudder shaker and pulled the alternate ejection handle. The ejection equipment functioned as advertised. During his short descent, Shortwings saw the aircraft stall and impact approximately ½ mile from the end of the runway. He was still unaware of what caused the erratic behavior of his machine. It

Three aviators were scheduled for a combined logistics, photographic and crew training flight in an HU-16D *Albatross*. The crew consisted of a lieutenant commander, the aircraft commander; a lieutenant receiving his aircraft commander check; and a lieutenant junior grade copilot.

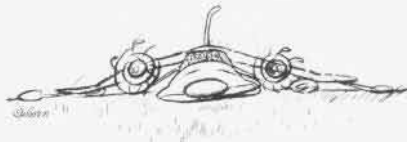
The flight commenced at 0915 from



NAS Pacific Island with the first leg about 45 minutes to a nearby island field to discharge cargo. En route to the next airfield, they photographed some nearby islands. The lieutenant commander was occupying the right seat, giving a check ride to the lieutenant in the left seat.

Arriving at the airfield, they made a low pass to check field conditions. The weather was estimated at 2,000 scattered, visibility seven miles plus, with a 30-degree crosswind of six knots on the runway. The runway was 2,730 feet long with an overrun of approximately 100 feet. Following a low pass, the pilot was all set up for landing and, as part of his check ride, the aircraft commander ordered a go-around. On the next approach, the pilot used 80-85 knots and full flaps. He planned to touch down in the first 100 feet of the runway. There were numerous power changes during the approach and nearly all the witnesses in the aircraft thought the aircraft was "low" during the final approach.

The *Albatross* touched down approximately 100 feet short of the runway. The starboard main landing gear failed, followed by the nose gear, as the aircraft slid 400 feet down the runway to its final resting point. After



the aircraft stopped, the uninjured crew secured the engines and left the aircraft. The HU-16D was damaged beyond economical repair.



**Grampaw Pettibone says:**

Leapin' lizards! How could a gent with as many flying hours as this lieutenant commander allow that poor approach to continue? With a calculated landing roll of 1,300 to 1,500 feet — why shoot for a landing in the first 100 feet even though the runway is only 2,730 feet long? That's poor planning combined with complacency!

The landing was well within the capabilities of the machine. Those pilots just plain goofed. I'd down both the upgrade pilot and the check pilot. Every check pilot and instructor should



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**decide now just how far they're goin' to allow the other fella to foul up before they do something. In this case, it was too far.**

### Paper FOD Program

Following briefing and preflight, two Marine captains manned their TA-4F *Skyhawk* for a scheduled day carrier landing practice hop. The instructor was in the rear seat. The student, in the front seat, was a recent graduate of Air Force flight training and was enrolled in the Naval Aviators designator syllabus in a Marine training squadron. Start, post-start checks and taxi were all normal. Following completion of the engine run-up and manual fuel check, the aircraft proceeded to a nearby field to conduct practice carrier landings.

Following takeoff from the sixth touch-and-go landing, at approximately 200 feet, the engine began to unwind and run rough. The instructor pilot took control and attempted to push the throttle forward but it was already at full military power. The nose began to fall through the horizon as both pilots ejected.

The pilots and the LSO heard a minor explosion just prior to ejection, and the LSO detected a slowing of the engine rpm. Ejection functioned as

advertised with both pilots landing uninjured on the runway. The aircraft impacted approximately 4,500 feet down the runway and slid to a stop, still on the runway. Both main gears and nose gear were broken off at impact. The TA-4F was a total loss.

Investigation revealed a pair of water pump pliers in the compressor section of the engine.



**Grampaw Pettibone says:**

Egad! Alive?! Now here's one for the book! With all the preachin' we do on FOD, it still cost us this aircraft. Apparently there are still people around who are talkin' when they should be listenin'. This unit has a great FOD program—on paper! Each maintenance action must be signed off by quality assurance personnel with the FOD stamp that all tools are accounted for. Now ain't that nice—that is exactly what was done, "signed off." This accident board did a commendable job and put the blame right where it belongs—supervisory! Mr. Maintenance Officer, you better take a second look at your FOD program—looks like a paper tiger. How 'bout you other fellas? Is your FOD program really effective? Are your quality assurance personnel actually checking for missing tools, safety wire, etc.? Review your program, *now*!! Close the barn door before the horse gets out!