

## **THE DRAWINGS**

This volume of drawings represents a fair selection of RAF Marine Craft as they were in RAF Service, but includes craft of same type operated by other services or nations. They are the result of many hours work and of course even more hours of researching to source the originals. Sourcing the drawings was made a great deal easier with the assistance of Ken Hunter at the RAF Museum and my colleague Donald Smith. The drawings arrived in rolls, copies of GA's from builders and from magazines etc - a considerable number of sources came up with the goods after many phone calls, letters and lately e-mails. One drawing was even found on the Internet - and I have yet to find the same drawing from any other source. It was an unlikely source as well, as I found it- by accident - whilst looking up "Rowing Boats" and found a site dedicated to transatlantic rowers which had a drawing of an airborne lifeboat amongst its "archives". Sadly, but out of necessity, several drawings arrived in folded form via the post; which only added to the work that had to be done.

All the drawings were copied; those that were larger than A3 were copied at their original size and also reduced to a size where each section could be used at A3, the originals were then returned. The A3 size copies were then to be used as masters and were hence copied once more to produce the working copy. The larger copies were stored - rolled - so that they could be used if a mistake/accident occurred with the A3 copy master. Drawings that arrived at a workable A3 size were simply copied three times, one as a master, one as reference copy and the third as a working copy. Drawings that arrived, where the original was A4 (or smaller) were copied as archives, then enlarged to A3 to produce reference and working copies. Thus for each drawing received, an original copy was made and two copies produced at A3 size.

In the copying and reproduction process, any blemishes, distortions, fold lines and a whole host of markings on the drawings were of course still in evidence. Details were recorded of the drawing number, originator, date and of course any other relevant information contained on the drawing. At this stage I had to decide whether to trace over the A3 working copy to produce what I wanted, or simply!! Snopake out all the marks, fold lines and the black blotches etc. A considerable amount of time, effort, and care was taken during this process to avoid having to draw back areas that I had "erased" with snopake. All the wording was "expunged", as even at A3 reduction it was unreadable, or if it had been enlarged, looked awful. On some drawings, I had, by the time I finished with the snopake, wondered why I had not just started again. These A3 masterpieces were then carefully stored flat - to roll them or fold them would have ruined all my "artwork". Carefully transported to the copy shop, the heavily snopaked copy was then laser copied at full A3 size. The result was a mass of lines that didn't join up etc etc. The next stage was to use my A3 size light box and place the laser copy over the A3 reference copy and carefully redraw in all the lines and parts I had had to erase to get the effect I wanted.

For some drawings the text on the original indicated parts of the craft and I felt it was important to replace these. Although it was difficult, the original text was removed and I used the computer to print out suitable "legends etc" in a font size, that when reduced to the size required for the book, could still be readable. This was done initially by trial and error, but after a few, I mastered the art of size and font reduction! Thus the result was an A3 size drawing which was clean and showed exactly what I wanted and was not "overcrowded" with detail. This copy was now my new master - all previous editions were flat-packed into A3 drawing folios. Back to the copy shop and with my smart masters, I produced a further A3 copy, an A4R copy and an A5 copy (16cm in length), all by laser process all from the same master. My master was then archived and the A4R retained for reference and other tasks. The smallest version was then cut to fit into the book and was stuck in using Pritt. Thus when the book was printed, it was not yet another copy of a copy.

The current edition of craft, in the main, in full hull outboard view, was produced from the A4R and A3 master copies. Most had to have all the internal details- the dotted construction lines- removed, outboard hull lines inserted and the roundels and numbers marked on. I found at this stage that for some drawings I needed to marry up a profile with a GA/Construction drawing to gain the underwater section. The light box came into use again!! I hope that you cannot tell the true "amended" versions from those that I have completely redrawn, but as an example - the 3D view of the RTTL Spitfire on the following page is but one of the many of the drawings I have done that were "amended". The original reproduced in small scale shows all the blemishes etc, the final version is obviously much clearer, and is the result of many bottles of snopake and use of the light box and my drawing pens.

Many of the drawings contained in this edition have not been used in the books to date. Some are completely new, and some are additional copies with extra detail taken from photos that I did not possess when the respective volume was compiled.