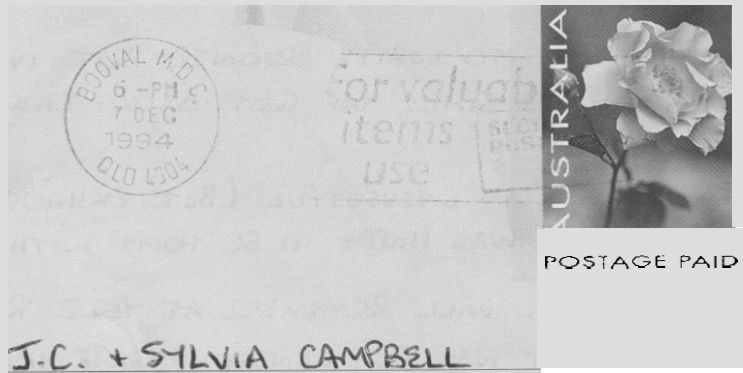
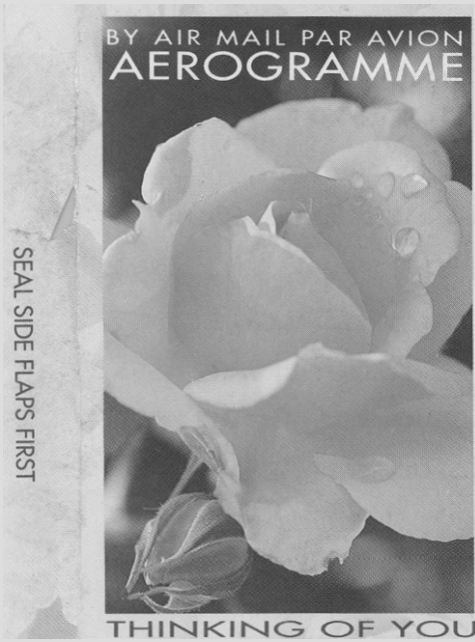




Sender's name and address

Ron Baker

If anything is enclosed or any tape or sticker attached, this form must bear the appropriate postage for an air mail letter.

913 2650 271633



TO OPEN SLIT HERE FIRST

DO NOT WRITE BEYOND THIS LINE

HI FOLKS!

I MEANT TO WRITE SOONER BUT I'VE BEEN INVOLVED IN SO MANY THINGS SINCE WE GOT BACK, THAT TIME JUST GOT AWAY FROM ME.

WE HAD AN UNEVENTFUL (BUT EXHAUSTING) JOURNEY BACK FROM LAS VEGAS. I WAS HAPPY TO BE HOME WITH MY FAMILY.

JC, YOU WILL REMEMBER AT YOUR REUNION THAT SOMEONE (I ASSUME IT WAS BOB WINSTON) GAVE YOU A LETTER REQUESTING YOUR ASSISTANCE IN OBTAINING A SHIP'S COMMENDATION FOR THE 'MELBOURNE.' I WAS UNAWARE THAT YOU WERE GOING TO BE ASKED TO DO THAT. I DIDN'T SAY ANYTHING THEN, BECAUSE I WASN'T SURE WHERE IT HAD ORIGINATED FROM. AFTER SPEAKING WITH REAR ADMIRAL HORTON I'M NOW AWARE THAT IT IS SOMETHING THAT HAS BEEN THOUGHT UP BY BOB WINSTON AND GREG ELLIS. IT IS NOT AN INITIATIVE OF THE 'HMAS MELBOURNE ASSOCIATION.'

TONY HORTON AND I (AND OTHERS) FEEL THAT IT IS AN INAPPROPRIATE REQUEST. THE HELICOPTER SQUADRON WHICH CARRIES OUT RESCUE OPERATIONS WAS COMMENDED, AND THE INDIVIDUALS WHO DESERVED AWARDS WERE SO AWARDED. THE REST OF US DID OUR JOBS AND SEEK NO FURTHER AWARDS OR COMMENDATIONS. IF YOU HAVEN'T ALREADY DONE SO, PLEASE DON'T BURDEN CAPTAIN MCLEODS WITH IT.

IT IS OUR OPINION THAT WINSTON AND ELLIS ARE CONCERNED ONLY WITH SOME FORM OF COMPENSATION. ENOUGH OF THAT!

I HAVE BEGUN PLANNING FOR OUR 30TH REUNION GET-TOGETHER IN SYDNEY IN JUNE 1999. EVERYONE I'VE SPOKEN TO ABOUT IT IS VERY EXCITED AND SUPPORTIVE.

I HOPE TO BE ABLE TO GAIN ACCESS TO SOME VERY EXCITING VENUES AND, WITH THE YEAR 2000 OLYMPICS BEING HELD IN SYDNEY, I'M SURE THAT ANY OF YOU GUYS WHO COME OUT HERE WILL HAVE A GREAT TIME.

I'VE SPOKEN TO THE LOCAL FIRE BRIGADE AND THEY ARE INTERESTED IN SWAPPING BADGES. SO IF YOU WANT TO SEND SOME DOWN, I'LL FOLLOW IT UP FOR YOU.

HOPE THIS LETTER FINDS YOU IN GOOD HEALTH AND THAT YOU AND YOURS ENJOY A SAFE AND HAPPY FESTIVE SEASON

STAY WELL
WARMEST REGARDS

Row Baker