

# 102,000th LANDING

On the morning of September 15th a Hornet Air Group pilot lost the distinction of making the 102,000th landing when an A-1H from the USS Coral Sea snagged the honors.

The "Spad", piloted by LTJG C.F. Thom, was on a mission off the coast of Vietnam when a chip detector light in the cockpit indicated possible engine trouble. The pilot returned to the Coral Sea but was unable to land as the attack carrier's deck was spotted for an impending launch.

He was vectored to Hornet where he made a precautionary landing—marking our 102,000th arrested recovery. Hornet's mechanics went to work on the aircraft and soon detected the difficulty.

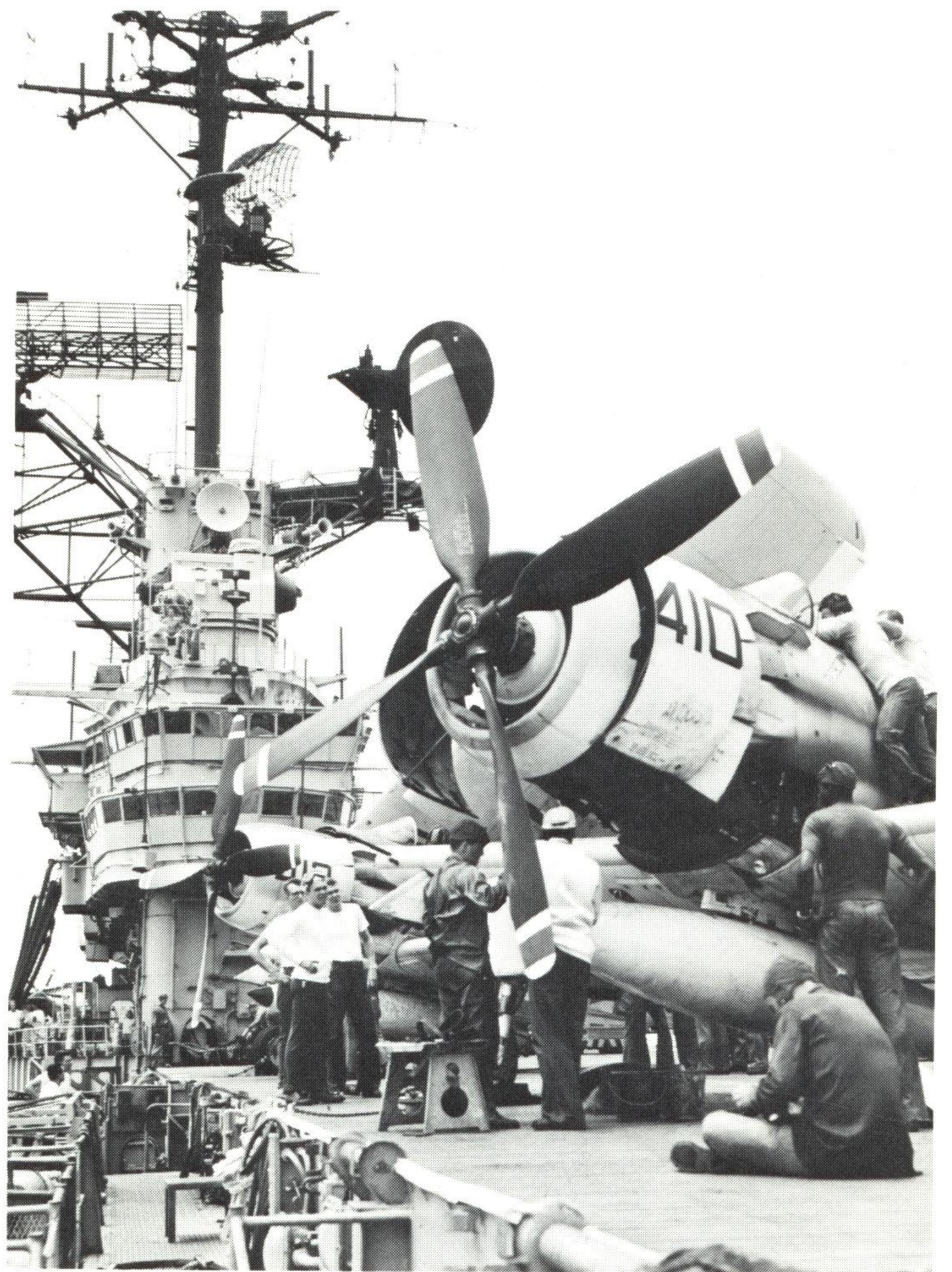
Meanwhile, LTJG Thom cut a hastily prepared cake commemorating the event on the flight deck.

Having stolen the glory, LTJG Thom was catapulted from Hornet later that afternoon. Captain Robertson sent the grinning pilot off with the coveted "102,000th landing" cigarette lighter and a piece of the cake for the Commanding Officer of the Coral Sea.

Hornet's disappointed pilots awaited the 103,000th . . . .



The Spad on the cat ready to return to the Coral Sea



Hornet's maintenance personnel make repairs to the Spad



"It's mine," said LTJG Thom of VA-25 from the USS Coral Sea. "But it should have been mine!" said CDR Harlow, Commander of our Air Group which normally would have had the honor of making this landing