

The Last AB

*As long as we have gone to sea
With names like Wasp and Kennedy
Upon our decks have stood a breed
A band of brothers with "can-do" creed*

*They toil and run upon our roofs
They talk with wands and mouse to shoot
They dress in different colors bold
But yet their story's seldom told*

*They own our mighty catapults
Tractors, gear, and fuel to suit
They run the engines in our skin
To launch our toys when wars begin*

*They eat from boxes during chow
That's if our flight schedules allow
They sleep in stuffy lockers full
On huffers, deuces, catwalks too*

*Their names have seldom made the press
For fighting fires in battle dress
Their efforts saved our Forrestal
For that and more we owe them all*

*And now we hear the winds of change
Of smaller ships as budgets strain
Some heard the words magnetic cats
We wonder where our future's at*

*But as long as ships are sent to sea
To launch their planes for liberty
We know that you shall never see
A Sailor called the last AB*

"On behalf of all naval aviators and peoples throughout the World whom your selfless efforts have helped. Please accept My heartfelt THANK YOU and MAY GOD BLESS AB'S"

CAPTAIN THOMAS F. KEELEY U.S. NAVY
COMMANDING OFFICER,
NAVAL AIR TECHNICAL TRAINING CENTER,
PENSACOLA, FLORIDA
2001 ABMA Symposium Professional Working Group Conference
July 18, 2001