

## *Evolution of the Swordsmen Squadron Insignia*

On 1 February 1945, Bombing-Fighting Squadron Three (VBF-3) was established and assigned to Carrier Air Group Three onboard the USS YORKTOWN (CV-10) operating in the Pacific Theater during World War II. VBF-3 split with VF-3 to form two sister squadrons. The two squadrons shared planes, pilots and the maintenance personnel to keep them flying. They also shared the Felix the Cat as a mascot, VBF-3 was known as the "Crazy Cats". In August 1945 the Atomic Bomb was dropped on Japan, thus ending the Second World War and the squadron then participated in peacetime exercises.



On November 15<sup>th</sup> 1946, VBF-3 was redesignated as VF-4A and its sister squadron VF-3 was redesignated as VF-3A. The Felix the Cat mascot carried on with VF-3A but with some heated controversy. VF-6 claimed the mascot also, later VF-6 was disestablished and the Chief of Naval Operations approved the adoption of Felix the Cat insignia for VF-3A, but this left VF-4A with no mascot or Insignia of its own.



R.W. "Duke" Windsor

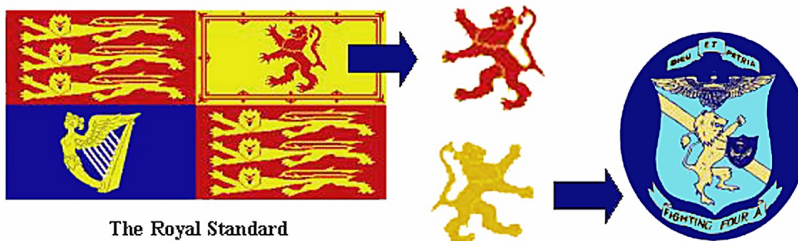
The squadron had a change of command on the 3<sup>rd</sup> of June 1947; LCDR Robert W. WINDSOR relieved LCDR Frank L. LAWLOR (*a fighter Ace and a former AVG Flying Tiger.*). On the 7<sup>th</sup> of June, Air Group Three embarked onboard the USS Kearsarge (CV-33) for its maiden voyage to Europe. The new Skipper R.W. Windsor's call sign was "Duke" which he acquired from sharing the same last name as the Duke of Windsor of England. King Edward VIII was the first monarch to be a qualified pilot and created The King's Flight known as the 32 (Royal) Squadron. On



Duke of Windsor

December 10, 1936, King Edward VIII abdicates the Throne to his younger brother George VI who gave Edward the title "Duke of Windsor".

While on this European cruise, the Officers worked on a design for a Squadron Insignia with Lee Nelson drafting the artwork. They selected a heraldic design of a shield drawn with a Bend that signifies defense or protection and a rampant lion, which is a traditional representation of courage and strength in many European countries. The lion stance on the Duke of Windsor's Royal Standard is used in honor of the squadrons Skipper at the time, LCDR Robert W. "Duke" Windsor, the rampant lion is displayed on the squadron shield.



The Royal Standard

The shield borne on the arm of the lion represents, Defender of the Realm and the pilot aviator wing that adorn the top of the shield gives an association of the Squadron with Naval Aviation. At the top of the insignia is the Motto of "DIEU *et* PATRIA" which is a combination of French & Latin, used because of the Mediterranean presence of the squadron and translates into the English meaning for "GOD & COUNTRY". Later someone notice what was thought to be an error, changed the French into Latin. The squadron colors utilized are the same used by the U.S. Navy, Blue & Gold.



After returning from this European cruise the Insignia for Fighter Squadron Four Able was submitted and approved by the Chief of Naval Operations on March 11<sup>th</sup>, 1948. Fighting 4A was not identified with any name at this time, only by its callsign of "Lawcase". The VF-4A Insignia was short lived as on August 7<sup>th</sup>, 1948 the squadron was redesignated as VF-32 and the bottom banner was changed to read Fighting 32. During the Korean War, the callsign used was "Iroquois", but upon the return to Quonset Point, Rhode Island, the squadron reused Lawcase as its callsign.