



## Allan George's Gems

### Tanks.

The following appeared in the Melbourne Herald Sun on the 2 August. It is reproduced here without comment.



Want proof of how the defence budget has been slashed to ribbons, leaving Australia almost defenceless? What you see in this Gladstone paddock is every tank we have that's ready for action - and not in mothballs, maintenance or training. One big bomb, and they're all gone.

It shows no less than 29 M1A1 Abrams main battle tanks of the Army's 1st Armoured Regiment awaiting transport back to Darwin following the conclusion last month of Exercise Hamel in Shoalwater Bay, Queensland. If ever there was an image that captures the paltry state of the Australian Army's much-anguished over heavy armoured capability in this Rudd/Gillard era of defence neglect, this is it.

We bought a total of 59 Abrams tanks from the US in 2005/06, with first deliveries in 2007. Of those 59 tanks, only 41 are actually available for operations – the remainder being set aside for training and attrition stocks. In time of conflict, 41 tanks are all we would have available to send on operations.

Those 41 tanks are operated by 1st Armoured Regiment in Darwin, which is our only tank unit. Now comes the Gov't intention, announced during the May Budget, [to 'mothball' a squadron of tanks](#), bearing in mind there are 14 tanks in a squadron. Therefore, 41 minus 14 = 27 tanks left.

So in fact the photo you see shows 2 tanks too many! The actual number will be 27 tanks.

Retired Major General Jim Molan confirms that this would indeed be our entire tank regiment in the field, and says no defence cut is more serious than those which have shredded our armored division.

“The centre of the army is firepower, and the firepower of the army centres on the tanks.” For comparison, when Molan was chief of operations of all coalition forces in Iraq, fighting an insurgency, he had 400 tanks at his disposal, most of them US.

In Afghanistan, Australia had not one of its own.

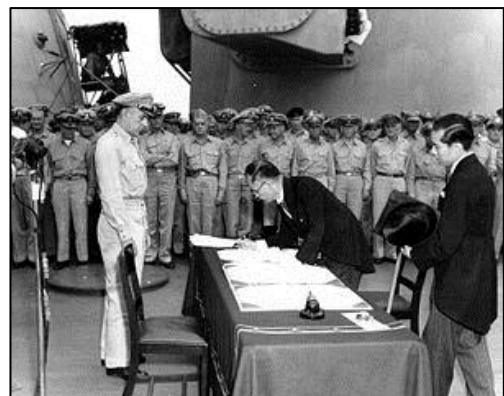
Look again at the picture. Think also that we're lucky to be able to deploy just two submarines at any one time, and that our fighters are ageing, but their replacements have just been delayed for budget reasons.

How defenceless do we now look?

Little Billy asks his Dad for a telly in his room. Dad reluctantly agrees. Next day Billy comes downstairs and asks, 'Dad, what's love juice?' Dad looks horrified and tells Billy all about sex. Billy just sat there with his mouth open in amazement. Dad says, 'So what were you watching?' Billy says, 'Wimbledon.'

## Surrender.

The surrender of the Empire of Japan on the 2<sup>nd</sup> September 1945, brought the hostilities of World War II to a close. By the end of July 1945, the Imperial Japanese Navy was incapable of conducting operations and an Allied invasion of Japan was imminent. While publicly stating their intent to fight on to the bitter end, the Empire of Japan's leaders, (the Supreme Council for the Direction of the War, also known as the "Big Six"), were privately making entreaties to the neutral Soviet Union to mediate



peace on terms favorable to the Japanese. The Soviets, meanwhile, were preparing to attack the Japanese, in fulfillment of their promises to the United States and the United Kingdom made at the Tehran and Yalta Conferences.

On August 6, 1945, the United States dropped an atomic bomb on the city of Hiroshima. Late in the evening of August 8, 1945, in accordance with the Yalta agreements, but in violation of the Soviet–Japanese Neutrality Pact, the Soviet Union declared war on the Empire of Japan, and soon after midnight on August 9, 1945, the Soviet Union invaded the Imperial Japanese puppet state of Manchukuo. Later that day, the United States dropped another atomic bomb, this time on the city of Nagasaki. The combined shock of these events caused Emperor Hirohito to intervene and order the Big Six to accept the terms for ending the war that the Allies had set down in the Potsdam Declaration. After several more days of behind-the-scenes negotiations and a failed coup d'état, Emperor Hirohito gave a recorded radio address to the Empire on August 15. In the radio address, called the Gyokuon-hōsō ("Jewel Voice Broadcast"), he announced the surrender of the Empire of Japan to the Allies.

On August 28, the occupation of Japan by the Supreme Commander of the Allied Powers began. The surrender ceremony was held on September 2, aboard the United States Navy battleship USS *Missouri* (BB-63), at which officials from the Japanese government signed the Japanese Instrument of Surrender. Allied civilians and military personnel alike celebrated V-J Day, the end of the war; however, some isolated soldiers and personnel from Imperial Japan's far-flung forces throughout Asia and the Pacific islands refused to surrender for months and years afterwards, some even as far as into the 1970s.

The state of war between Japan and the Allies formally ended when the Treaty of San Francisco came into force on April 28, 1952. Four more years passed before Japan and the Soviet Union signed the Soviet–Japanese Joint Declaration of 1956, which formally brought an end to their state of war.

The US made a film of the surrender and you can see it [HERE](#).

## **Microwaves**

Ever wondered how a microwave oven works. Bill, the Engineer Guy, shows in a small video how the, now common to every kitchen, microwave oven heats food. He describes how the special vacuum tube, called a magnetron, generates radio frequencies that cause the water in food to rotate back and forth and shows the standing wave inside the oven and how you can measure the wavelength with melted cheese. This is a very well done presentation.

See it [HERE](#)



## Telstra.

There are lots and lots of enterprises who make their money by enticing you into buying a ring tone or a horoscope or joke of the week or whatever which they get you to download onto your mobile phone - at a huge cost to you. These little 'nasties' are called Premium SMS and if you don't watch it, you can be out of pocket big heaps. If you use Telstra as your phone provider you can block these little nasties from sneaking into your phone.

To do so, log onto [www.telstra.com/psms-barring](http://www.telstra.com/psms-barring), fill in the form and click "Send." Telstra will put a bar on your phone, will email you to confirm the bar is in place and you won't get caught.

## From the Ground Up!

For 45 years, from 1948 until 1993, the RAAF conducted an apprentice training scheme to provide skilled tradesmen for its engineering and radio musterings. The many thousands of youths who passed through the scheme comprised not just Australians but Pakistanis and New Zealanders too, and in its later years included girls as well as boys. For such a technical service as the RAAF, apprentice training was a key element in providing a solid foundation for supporting and maintaining an increasingly complex range of aircraft and other equipment systems.

A book, titled "From the Ground Up", was specially commissioned by the RAAF to commemorate the unique contribution apprentices made to the service over nearly half a century. It provides a documented record of the scheme's origins, rationale and development and traces the debate which gave recognition to the service's changing requirements and ultimately led to the termination of the apprentice training.



You can download a free copy [HERE](#).

## Holden Volt.

Holden are about to release their much trumpeted electric car, The Volt. This medium sized car (about the same size as the Cruze) is all electric, it is not a Hybrid like the Prius but it does have a 1.4 litre 63kW petrol engine that drives a generator which can be used to charge the battery pack. And, it can also be recharged via a home powerpoint. If you use the power from your home to charge the batteries it will take about 6 hours provided you have a 15 amp supply. If you use the onboard petrol engine to charge the batteries, it will use (average) 4 litres of petrol per 100 kms. We got to thinking, if these things sell well (say 25,000 of them) and



everyone uses their home power to charge the batteries (cheaper than using the onboard engine) that would mean every night there would be 25,000 cars, all pulling (say) 10 amps from the grid, which is 60 megawatts per hour in total.

We wonder where that power is going to come from.

AND!!! Assuming the Volt takes 10 amps for the full 6 hours to charge (possibly the worst scenario) and you do 150 klms per day, the cost of charging the car (at 25 cents/kw) would be \$3.60 or 2.4 cents/klm. Compare that to the diesel powered Holden Cruze which around town would use about 6.5 litres for every 100klms or 9.75 litres for the equivalent 150 klms and would cost (at \$1.40 per litre) \$13.65 or 9.10 cents per klm.

But, the Holden Volt costs about \$50,000 whereas the Cruze costs \$28,500 - whoops!!!

## **A Moment of Truth.**

A forgotten US Vietnam Veteran's sacrifice receives unexpected honour when he meets an active-duty soldier Click [HERE](#).

## **The man who rode the thunder**

In the summer of 1959, Lieutenant Colonel William Henry Rankin was flying his F8 Crusader and had to climb to clear a thunderhead that peaked at 45,000 feet when, 47,000 feet and at mach 0.82, he heard a loud bump and rumble from the engine. The engine stopped, and a fire warning light flashed. He pulled the lever to deploy auxiliary power and the handle broke off in his hand. Though not wearing a pressure suit, at 6:00 pm he ejected into the -50°C air. He suffered immediate frostbite and decompression caused his eyes, ears, nose, and mouth to bleed. His abdomen swelled severely. He managed to make use of his emergency oxygen supply. While in the upper regions of the thunderstorm, with near-zero visibility, the parachute opened. Rankin was then carried by updrafts and was hit by hailstones. Violent spinning and pounding caused him to vomit. Lightning appeared, which he described as blue blades several feet thick, and thunder that he could feel. The rain forced him to hold his breath to keep from drowning. One lightning bolt lit up the parachute, making Rankin believe he had died. Conditions calmed and he descended into a forest. His watch read 6:40 pm. He searched for help and eventually was admitted into a hospital suffering from frostbite, welts, bruises, and severe decompression.



You can see a video of his experience [HERE](#).

## HOW DOES HE DO THIS

### Veterans Retreat

An old cattle station in Western Australia's Pilbara region has been transformed into a camping getaway for war veterans and servicemen and women from all around the country. Along the banks of the Nullagine River, near Marble Bar, is the new Meentheena Veterans Retreat. Vietnam veteran Bill Thompson describes it as beautiful country. "At the moment there's not even a cloud in the sky and you can see for distances around here, and the different colours of the hills, you get the sense of peace and tranquillity in the area, and it's nice," he said.

The idea was to develop a retreat where veterans could unwind and share their stories. Veterans' Retreats WA is a non-profit organisation which helps veterans cope with their experiences in past conflicts. It was the president Norm Whitburn, who came up with the idea to get permission to access a large section of the state-owned Meentheena station. "The purpose of the retreat is mainly to get veterans who are still suffering from their operational experiences and also veterans who are in Pakistan, Afghanistan, Iraq, navy, army, air force, police, fire fighters and ambulance", he said. Mr Whitburn hopes the retreat can act as a respite centre for veterans.



Norm Whitburn and Peter Fitzpatrick

"Meetheena is 75 kilometres east of Marble Bar and it's in a remote area," he said. "The veterans have got nothing else to do but sit down and talk, walk around, do a bit of fishing, sit down on the banks of the Nullagine River, catch a cat fish or two, talk to their mates or anyone who is there, it's really an ideal situation. "We have set it up as a camp, it's mainly a camp because people can relax a little bit better at a camp and it brings people closer together as a camp".

Among the many people who helped get the retreat up and running, were those from Meentheena's neighbouring station, Warrawagine. Robin Mills says it was great to be able to lend a hand. "They contacted us and said they needed to be able to lift some dongas, so we quite willingly organised for two loaders to come down, and we also have a grader which came down, and re-do the airstrip and clean up the camp," he said. "So, all in all, over a two year period we had quite a bit of equipment and people coming down and helping out with things." Mr Mills says it was all in the name of respect.

They said to us at the time, why do you do that and not charge for it?" "I said, I was never of an age to be a servicemen and so forth and you guys put your lives on the line and it's a little way that we can help to give something back for the effort you put in years ago so that's how

we came to be involved in it. "We now have the security of knowing that there's people you can rely on and keep an eye on this end of the property; it's a big relief to us."

At the official opening of the retreat, Regional Development and Lands Minister Brendon Grylls said he was pleased the State Government could help the VRWA make their vision a reality. "I am very heartened to see so many people here, some displaying medals, who might find some comfort from being able to come here and share some rest and relaxation," he said. "If that can help veterans move on, or people who have been in the services who have had difficult times, that's a great thing. "Hopefully this is some small recognition that your service was very much respected and valued. "As time goes on, the understanding of the Vietnam campaign becomes stronger and stronger, and that my little guys Tom and Jack and Oliver, they need to understand what people who served in Vietnam went through why and how. "I hope that Meentheena station veterans retreat can be a place for reflection but also for celebration and mateship and allows people to move on through difficult times in their lives."



Mr Whitburn says veterans and service men and women from around the country are invited to visit the site. "We do have facilities out there for disabled veterans, we have a four-bedroom donga it has a shower toilet and also air-conditioning," he said. "We have hot showers, toilets and a solar electrical system which is powering the camp. "This is stage one of the camp, and stage 2 on the other side of the river, I am hoping the veterans will take hold of it and develop that as well." Mr Thompson encourages fellow diggers to plan a visit to Meentheena. "Why wait until ANZAC Day, that's the major day, but if you can get together some time throughout the year and meet up with old faces, like the men you have served with," he said. "It's a comradeship, it's a place where you can come to and enjoy life as it's suppose to be."



You can see further info on the retreat [HERE](#).

Everybody repeat after me....."We are all individuals."

## **ACS**

Many moons ago, the RAAF had an organisation called Aerodrome Construction Squadron. These people would be dropped into inhospitable places and be expected to build an airstrip for soon to arrive aircraft. They still have these people though these days they are called Expeditionary Combat Support Squadron and they still do a magnificent job.

Have a look at [THIS](#)

## The GYM

Some people should just not go to the gym – see [HERE](#).

A young jackaroo from outback Queensland goes off to university, but halfway through the semester he foolishly has squandered all his money. He calls home. 'Dad,' he says, 'you won't believe what modern education is developing.. They actually have a program here in Brisbane that will teach our dog Ol' Blue how to talk. 'That's amazing!' his Dad says. 'How do I get Ol' Blue in that program? "Just send him down here with \$2,000,' the young jackaroo says, 'I'll get him in the course. 'So .... his father sends the dog and \$2,000. About two-thirds through the semester, the money again runs out. The boy calls home. 'So how's Ol' Blue doing, son?' his father wants to know. 'Awesome! Dad, he's talking up a storm... but you just won't believe this. They've had such good results with talking, they've begun to teach the animals how to read. "Read?' exclaims his father. 'No kidding! How do we get Ol' Blue in that program? "Just send \$4,500. I'll get him in the class. 'The money promptly arrives. But our hero has a problem. At the end of the year, his father will find out the dog can neither talk nor read. So he shoots the dog. When he arrives home at the end of the year, his father is all excited. 'Where's Ol' Blue? I just can't wait to talk with him, and see him read something! "Dad,' the boy says, 'I have some grim news. Yesterday morning, just before we left to drive home, Ol' Blue was in the living room, kicked back in the recliner, reading the Wall Street Journal. Then he suddenly turned to me and asked, "So, is your Daddy still bonking that little redhead barmaid at the pub? "The father groans and whispers, 'I hope you shot that bastard before he talks to your Mother! "I sure did, Dad! "That's my boy!

The kid went on to be a successful lawyer and politician!

## Models.

When I was a kid, we used to make model aircraft out of balsa wood. The engine was nearly always a length of rubber attached to the prop at the front with the other end anchored to the back of the model. You wound the prop backwards a few million times until there was a lot of energy stored in the rubber then you launched it. Provided it was correctly trimmed, it used to fly quite well and when all the energy was used up in the rubber, it would land itself.



When I got a bit older, I progressed to a model with a small glow plug engine which you controlled with two wires and the thing flew in circles around you.

Look what they have [TODAY](#).



Last year, I replaced all the windows in my house with those expensive, double-pane, energy-efficient kind. Today, I got a call from the contractor who installed them. He complained that the work had been completed a year ago and I still hadn't paid for them. Hellloooo,.....just because I'm blonde doesn't mean that I am automatically stupid. So, I told him just what his fast-talking sales guy told me last year... ....that these windows would pay for themselves in a year. Helllooooo? It's been a year, so they're paid for, I told him. There was only silence at the other end of the line, so I finally hung up. He never called back. I bet he felt like an idiot.

## Imported fish.

The Mekong River in Vietnam is the source of much of the farmed catfish (aka basa) which is sold in North America, Europe and Japan. It is also one of the most overcrowded and polluted waterways on Earth, a place where cement plants and salt factories stand side by side with residential housing, agriculture and aquaculture. Where industrial pollutants, sewage and waste water drain freely from the river into the fish ponds and back again.

A short yet powerful video that may change the way you eat imported fish.

See [HERE](#).

## Scamwatch

I thought that it might be a good time to remind everyone of some very real dangers. I might add



that I have received phone calls from people purporting to "fix" my computer, so be warned the scammers are there and they will call you.

If anyone calls me and claims to be from a charity I ask them to send the details to me by mail. If they won't do this then do not deal with them! Simple! The Australian Government's [SCAMwatch](#) is warning consumers and businesses to be on the look-out for carbon price scams, particularly calls asking for personal information in order to receive compensation.

Carbon price scams may come in a number of forms, targeting consumers and businesses.

- Beware of phone calls seeking your personal banking details to pay carbon 'tax' compensation into your bank account. These are very likely to be scam calls.

- Scammers may set up fake websites which look very similar to official Australian Government websites. The sites may ask you to enter your personal or financial details, or offer to sell you fake carbon credits.
- Scammers may also make telephone calls posing as government officers, asking for your personal information (such as banking details or identification numbers) in order to claim household assistance from the government. Tell them to buzz off.

The Australian Government will never call you to ask for your bank account details or to offer you carbon price compensation. Government services are never paid via wire transfer. The Australian Government website <http://australia.gov.au/> is a safe portal for finding government services.

Be alert to scam telephone calls which ask for personal, business or financial details. Hang up immediately if you receive a phone call out of the blue:

- asking for your bank account or personal details;
- claiming you need to pay or transfer money, or provide your banking details, to receive a compensation payment or tax payment;
- asking for personal details, such as your Department of Veterans Affairs/DVA client number or other identification or offering to sell you carbon credits or permits for a carbon pricing mechanism or emissions trading scheme.

Never provide or confirm your personal or business details over the phone (including banking details or identification numbers) unless you made the call using contact details you found yourself and you trust the information. If you think that a call might be a scam hang up and check by using official contact details which you have found independently. Never use phone numbers, email addresses or websites provided by the caller. If you receive a phone call or letter asking for personal information such as your DVA client number or banking details, do not answer straight away. Contact your nearest DVA office on 133 254 or 1800 555 254 from regional Australia to confirm the source is legitimate.

Never enter your credit card or banking details on a website unless you have checked it is authentic and secure. Legitimate websites which ask you to enter sensitive personal or business details are commonly encrypted to protect your details. This is usually identified by the use of “https:” rather than “http:” at the start of the internet address. This can also be identified by a closed or unbroken key or padlock icon at the bottom right corner of your browser window. If the ‘s’ is missing or there is an open padlock or broken key icon, your information may not be secure and the website could be a scam site.



If you think you have provided your account details to a scammer contact your bank or financial institution immediately.

You can report scams to the ACCC via the report a scam page on [SCAMwatch](#) or by calling 1300 795 995

My wife told me this morning that she just heard on the news that Davy Jones from the Monkees had died. I thought she was joking .....Then I saw her face, now I'm a bereaver.  
Sorry Rupe!



**Velly Intelesting – but stupid!!!!**