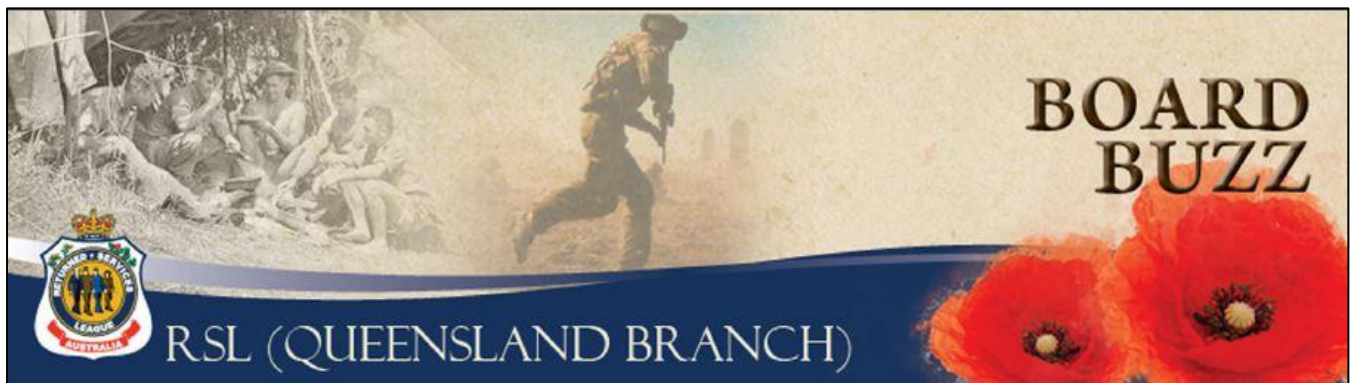




Allan George's Gems

The DFRDB Battle – Is the end nigh??

The DFRDB fiasco seems to be approaching a finality, it seems the message is finally reaching those it should. The newsletter of the Qld Branch of the RSL, "Board Buzz", had an article on retired ADF Members' Superannuation and explained the current situation very well. This is part of that article:



"That with the utmost vigour the RSL press all members of Parliament to honour all understandings and agreements, and the spirit and intent of the legislation that it supported unanimously in September 2007, and extend to all veterans' disability pensions the 2.7% increase in the MTAW benchmark (11.4% in cash terms) that was granted to all other major government pensions in the 2009 Budget."

In 2007 the Howard Government, with unanimous support from Labour, legislated to ensure the General Rate was to become fully indexed – the same as the Service Pension and the AGR (Above General Rate) component of the 3 higher pensions. This 2007 legislation meant that the General Rate was now tied to the movements in the Service Pension and was fully indexed. The General Rate, and the I.M, EDA and the SR were all now completely indexed to MTAW (Male Total Average Weekly Earnings) and in the same manner as the Service Pension.

The September 2007 legislated arrangements ensured that any adjustments to the Service Pension or any other government income support pension would flow on to all veterans' disability pensions. In the 2009 Budget all major government pensions except DVA disability pensions (DPs) were increased. The government pensions benchmark of 25% of MTAW was raised to 27.7% of MTAW. It was not a normal 6 monthly indexation increase – it was a one-off increase of 2.7% in the MTAW benchmark. This 2.7% increase translates to a cash increase of 11.4% in all government pensions except DVA DPs. No DVA DPs from 10% of the General Rate to the Special Rate was included in the 2009 Budget increases. This flies in the

face of the 2007 legislation that ensured that any adjustments to the Service Pension would flow to Disability Pensions.

*The 2009 Budget increases were not applied to DPs due to the government surreptitiously making provision in their 2009 legislation to bypass the provision contained in the 2004 and 2007 legislation. Despite much government spin this fact can't be denied – **it is a fact**. The incoming Rudd Government betrayed the spirit and intent of the previous legislation for which they voted unanimously in 2007. The Labour Government betrayed all understandings and agreements that resulted from the previous 2007 legislation.*



We must ensure that all politicians keep their election promises and that these pensions do not erode further.

We must also ensure that once obtained, Veteran and Service Member disability pensions should never be allowed to erode as happened with the Rudd Labour government.”

I was sitting in a restaurant and got hit on the back of the head by a prawn cocktail.
I looked round and this bloke shouts, 'That's just for starters!'

At the moment Independent MP Rob Oakeshott has a notice of motion ([Definition](#)) before the house to:

“increase the Military Superannuation and Benefits Scheme Pension, Defence Force Retirement Benefit Pension and the Defence Force Retirement and Death Benefits Pension twice annually by the greater of the Consumer Price Index.”

It received the unanimous support of all 150 MPs.

And Bob Katter, (the Mad Hatter), decided he's like to get into the act too. He recently suggested that he intends to introduce a Bill into the house, titled: 'Fair Indexation of Military Superannuation Entitlements Bill 2012'. It will read as follows:



“The Minister must, not later than 6 months after the day on which this Act commences, take legislative action that has the effect that military entitlements are, as soon as practicable and with ongoing effect, to be indexed using the same indexation methodology that applies for the Age Pension under the Social Security Act 1991 at the same frequency.

In this Act Legislative action means:

- (a) *in relation to the Military Superannuation and Benefits Scheme—make a legislative instrument amending the trust deed for the scheme; and*
- (b) *in relation to the other schemes—cause to be introduced into the House of Representatives a Bill for an Act amending the legislation governing the schemes.*

Military superannuation means an entitlement under any of the following superannuation schemes:

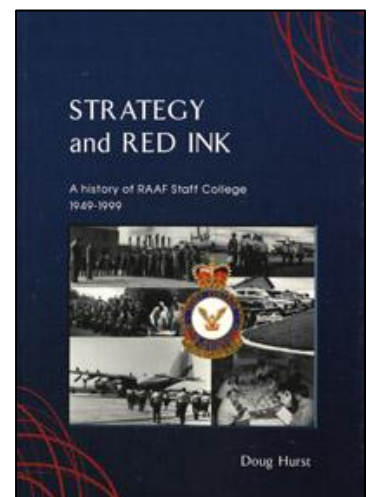
- (a) *the Defence Force Retirement Benefit Scheme;*
- (b) *the Defence Force Retirement and Death Benefit Scheme;*
- (c) *the Military Superannuation and Benefits Scheme.”*

I don't think we can expect too much to happen this year, with the Christmas break not far away, but the first few months of next year will be very interesting indeed.

Strategy and Red Ink: A History of RAAF Staff College 1949-1999

Strategy and Red Ink traces the history of the RAAF Staff College within the context of the main decisions and events influencing the RAAF since World War II. Beginning with the War Staff Courses, it outlines the main eras that saw RAAF staff training change from a six month, all RAAF affair, into the present course with its diverse student body and strong international flavour.

Widespread use is made of personal recollections, anecdotes and photographs to support the essential facts and figures, and help put things at a personal level for the reader. All Course photographs, along with those of the Commandants, are reproduced in separate appendices.



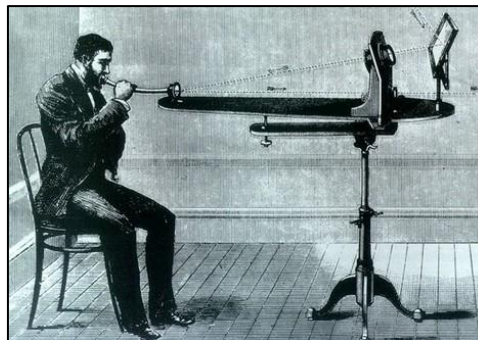
If you would like a hard copy of the book you can buy one from the RAAF Air Power Development Centre (<http://airpower.airforce.gov.au/Default.aspx>) for \$16.00 or you can download a free scanned version in PDF format from [HERE](#). It's a big file (21 meg) and will take a while to download.

Fibre Optic Cables.

Fibre Optic Cables have been with us for quite a while now and it is hard to imagine how our modern world would operate without them. They work by transmitting light through long fibre rods of either glass or plastics in a contained manner, that is, with negligible loss. The light travels by a process of internal reflection whereby the core of the rod or cable is more reflective than the material surrounding it. This causes the light to keep being reflected back and forth into the core where it can continue to travel down the fibre.

These days they are everywhere, underground in front of our houses, strung on poles, laid under the ocean, everywhere, But, even though they are common-place, not many know how we came to get them and how they work.

In 1854, John Tyndall demonstrated to the Royal Society in the UK that light could be conducted through a curved stream of water, proving that a light signal could be bent. In 1880, Alexander Graham Bell invented his 'Photophone', which transmitted a voice signal on a beam of light. Bell focused sunlight with a mirror and then talked into a mechanism that vibrated the mirror. At the receiving end, a detector picked up the vibrating beam and decoded it back into a voice the same way a phone did with electrical signals. Many things, a cloudy day for instance, night??, could interfere with the Photophone, causing Bell to stop any further research with this invention.

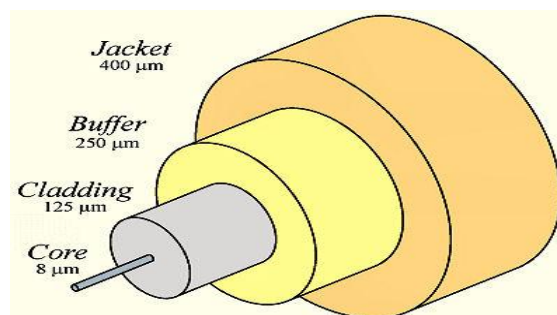


In 1880, William Wheeler invented a system of light pipes lined with a highly reflective coating that illuminated homes by using light from an electric arc lamp placed in the basement and directing the light around the home with the pipes.

In 1888, the medical team of Roth and Reuss of Vienna used bent glass rods to illuminate body cavities.

In the 1920's, Englishman John Logie Baird and American Clarence W. Hansell patented the idea of using arrays of transparent rods to transmit images for television and facsimiles. In 1930, a German medical student, Heinrich Lamm, who was looking for a way to see inaccessible parts of the human body, assembled a bundle of optical fibres into the one cable. He found that he could transmit the image of a light bulb, even though the image was of poor quality.

The theory of transmitting data via optic cable had been established, but the problem of losses still remained. It was found that losses averaged 1 decibel (dB) per metre, totally unacceptable for commercial purposes and experiments continued looking for a loss rate of 1 dB per kilometre. In 1970, the US Army in conjunction with Corning Glass researchers began experimenting with fused silica, a material capable of extreme purity with a high melting point and a low refractive index. They found that they could carry 65,000 times more information in their optic cable than they could using copper wire and the information could easily and unerringly be decoded at a destination over a thousand miles away.



Problem solved!

In 1975, when the cable began to be produced in commercial quantities, the United States Government decided to test link the computers in the NORAD headquarters at Cheyenne Mountain using fibre optics to try and reduce interference – and it worked. Soon after, in 1977, the first optical telephone communication system was installed under downtown Chicago, and each optical fibre carried the equivalent of 672 voice channels.

The Engineering Guy shows how the whole process works – you can see it [HERE](#).

Been on a diet for a few months now, but I will never get down to my original weight, I mean, 7 pounds 2 oz. just isn't realistic.

The Chisel man.

This bloke has a craft which was probably handed down by all his grandfathers over the last couple of thousand years. And look - not a band-aid in sight!

Look at the size of the chisel - no little tiny ones for the delicate bits and he appears to still have all his fingers and toes! Talk about amazing hand/foot co-ordination.

Just imagine this man on a real lathe!

If you want to see a tradesman at work, click [HERE](#).

Birds of a feather!

No one knows why they do it. Yet each Autumn, thousands of starlings dance in the twilight above England and Scotland. The birds gather in shape-shifting flocks called murmurations, having migrated in the millions from Russia and Scandinavia to escape winter's frigid bite. (*Murmuration is the collective noun for a bunch of starlings like Pride is the collective noun for a bunch of lions.*)

Scientists aren't sure how they do it, either. The starlings' murmurations are manifestations of swarm intelligence, which in different contexts is practised by schools of fish, swarms of bees and colonies of ants. As far as we are aware, even complex algorithmic models haven't yet explained the starlings' aerobatics, which rely on the tiny birds' quicksilver reaction time of under 100 milliseconds to avoid aerial collisions—and predators—in the giant flock.



Despite their tour de force in the dusky sky, starlings have declined significantly in the UK in recent years, perhaps because of a decline in suitable nesting sites. The birds still roost in

several of Britain's rural pastures, however, settling down to sleep (and chatter) after their evening ballet.

Two young ladies were out for a late afternoon canoe ride and fortunately one of them remembered to bring her video camera. What they saw was a wonderful murmuration display.

[Enjoy.](#)

Eddie Izzard.

Edward John "Eddie" Izzard (born 7 February 1962) is an English stand-up comedian, actor and writer. His comedy style takes the form of rambling whimsical monologue and self-referential pantomime. He had a starring role in the television series *The Riches* as Wayne Malloy and has appeared in many films such as *Ocean's Twelve*, *Ocean's Thirteen*, *Mystery Men*, *Shadow of the Vampire*, *The Cat's Meow*, *Across the Universe*, *The Chronicles of Narnia: Prince Caspian* and *Valkyrie*. He is also the voice in several animated films, such as *The Wild*, *Pixar* and *Cars 2*.



Izzard has cited his main comedy role model as Monty Python and John Cleese once referred to him as the "Lost Python". A reasonably fit sort of bloke, in 2009, he completed 43 marathons in 51 days for Sport Relief in spite of having no prior history of long distance running. Back in March 2007, Izzard was listed as number 3 of the 100 Greatest British National Comedians (just behind Peter Kay at number 2 and Billy Connolly at number 1 by Britain's Channel 4 TV Station.

In 2007 he did a comedy skit based on the Star Wars series, using Lego – it is very funny but contains a few words the little ones perhaps should not hear. You can see it [HERE](#).

**Men have feelings too.
For example, we feel
hungry.**

And sometimes Ad Agencies come up with commercials to promote a company's product that are sensitive, succinct, concise and a pleasure to watch. [THIS](#) surely is one of them.

Julian Morrow, the bloke from the ABC shows “The Chaser”, “CNNNN”, and “The Chaser’s War on Everything” took his camera to the US to interview people on the street – what he found is [UNBELIEVABLE](#).

It is funny when my
girlfriend gives me the
"silent treatment."
She thinks it is a
punishment.

YoYo's

When we were kids, we all had a Coca Cola YoYo – along with hoola hoops, roller skates, Daisy air rifles etc they were the big thing in their day, and everyone had to have one. We would all do tricks in the school play-ground like “Walk the dog”, “Around the World”, “Rock the Cradle” etc, etc, but how would the Yo Yo have worked if we could have taken it into space – well, NASA astronaut Don Pettit is a bit of a Yo Yo freak and he took his into space to try it out.



Have a look at [THIS](#).

Pantomime.

Pakistan and India are not the best of neighbours – in fact, it is probably fair to say that relations have been strained since the partition of British India in 1947. They have a border crossing that is closed at dusk and opened again the following morning and being a very expressive people they make a bit of a song and dance of the whole occasion. Their treat is so seriously but to the casual onlooker it looks like a complete circus, and for two people who don’t get on, you can only wonder what they think of each other’s performance. Surely the onlookers would have to meet over a beer and have a laugh about it.

If you have never seen it before, it’s a sight to remember, it is absolutely hilarious – see [HERE](#).

Dear Dr. Ruth

I'm writing to tell you my problem. It seems I have been married to a sex maniac for the past 22 years.

He makes love to me regardless of what I am doing ironing, washing dishes, sweeping etc. I would like to know

if there is anything you may know of my situation
or if I am overreacting

Thank you

My name

Slow Mo!!

The slow motion camera has been with us for a while now (actually it is a high speed camera that is played back at normal speed) and scientists have used them to discover all sorts of things, like how does a bee fly, what happens to a golf ball when it is hit, what happens to an opponent's face when it is hit in a boxing ring, what happens to an aircraft's wing in turbulence, what happens when water freezes, what happens to metal when it is heated etc etc. There are a million uses.

If you ever wanted to know what happens to a balloon which is filled with water then dropped onto a solid surface, well, we can now tell you – have a look at [THIS](#).

Sean is the pastor of a Church of England parish on the Northern Ireland/Southern Ireland border and Patrick is the priest in the Roman Catholic Church across the road. One day they are seen together, erecting a sign into the ground, which says:

TA END IS NEAR! TURN YERSELF AROUND NOW AFOR IT IS TOO LATE!



As a car speeds past them, the driver leans out his window and yells, "Leave people alone, you Oirish religious nutters! We don't need your lectures." From the next curve they hear screeching tyres and a big splash.

Shaking his head, Rev. Patrick says "Dat's da terd one dis mornin'."

"Yaa," Pastor Sean agrees, then asks, "Do ya tink maybe da sign should just say, 'Bridge Out?'"

Kite Flyer extraordinaire.

For those of you who like the smell of avgas or avtur in the nose, here is something different, just rely on wind and a fair bit of skill.

Ray Bethell flies kites, he lives in Vancouver, BC Canada and is without a doubt the world's best multiple kite flyer. He started sport kite flying in 1980 and for many years he flew in team competitions with his team "The Vancouver High Flyers", often placing first, second or third in North American competitions. Individually Ray always was an innovator and began flying two kites around 1984. It was a long road to success since there was no one to copy or learn manoeuvres from let alone find the required accessories. Slowly but surely Ray developed and refined a kite flying technique that is now copied by many multiple kite flyers in the world. Being a craftsmen by profession it also didn't take him long to develop and manufacture special handles, kites suitable for his style of flying and find the proper lines required to



achieve the perfection he is so well known for. He has built hundreds of different kites. Some his own design, others copied but modified to suit his needs.

Ray first taught himself to fly two sport kites simultaneously, one Kite from the hip and the other steered with his hands. Adding special handles to his kites was later able to add a third Kite to his routine: One Kite attached to his waist, One Kite in the left hand and the last Kite in his right hand. While competing with his team, organizers started to ask him to give demonstrations during the festivals. It wasn't long before Ray began competing with his three kites in events like Freestyle, ballet, and mystery ballet at kiting competitions. With his team, Ray was a competitor in the first Sport Kite World Cup held in the U.S.A. during 1990. They also qualified to represent Canada again at the 2nd World Cup at Bristol UK in 1991.

His success in competitions, combined with the popularity of his multiple Kite demonstrations soon attracted the attention of kite manufactures and event organizers. Slowly but surely sponsorships to events came knocking at Ray's door. His first international sponsorship was to the World Kite festival in Napier, New Zealand, followed by the Australian Nationals in Melbourne in 1990. During these events Ray gave many demonstrations and was also present as a judge. This was the beginning of Ray, the multiple Kite and frequent flyer. From small, local kite festivals to international and World Cup events Ray was sponsored to the US, Europe (UK, Germany, France Italy), Asia (Japan, Malaysia, Thailand, Singapore, Hong Kong, Taiwan,) South America (Columbia) Australia and New Zealand. During the past 2 years alone Ray's sponsorships have taken him on over 50 trips throughout 12 different countries. He takes his sponsorships very seriously and flies his demonstrations even in less than adequate conditions.



He has continued to compete in the Freestyle event during national and international events. As the list of 1st places proves he was and is the World's Number 1 multiple Kite flyer. He even received a perfect "10" score during international competitions in Australia in 1995. This has never before been achieved and many believe it will never be repeated. But at the South Padre Sport Kite Competitions in February 2004 Ray scored another perfect 100.

But what makes watching Ray fly so incredible is the fact that you can see himself in his Kites. They are no longer pieces of nylon and graphite, but have come alive. He moves like his Kites graceful and in harmony, and his strength is reflected in the slow and precise movements of his kites no matter how strong the winds are. He has the technical sophistication of an aerodynamics engineer, he has the poise and precision of a ballet dancer, and he has the endurance of a professional athlete as proven again and again by his World records.

Another reason for watching Ray is that as a spectator you are always sure that he is performing only for you. And he will do anything to make sure you won't walk away disappointed and will always remember kiting as a unique experience. He is never too busy to invite schools to watch him practice or make a detour on a trip to let everybody enjoy kiting as much as he does. His demonstrations are known and sought after worldwide and on several occasions he has been asked not to fly, so that the attention was focused on competitions and

not his performances. It is estimated that this year alone over 3 million people has watched him perform his magic. Many kite festivals now add another flying arena just for Ray to perform his all day multiple kite demonstration in.

Ray has also had many occasions to star in film and TV productions on both local and Canadian national Television programs, including Canada AM and Midday, as well as many international film and newspaper documentaries covering the amazing art of multiple kite flying plus being interviewed on radio stations in France, UK, Germany, New Zealand, Australia, Thailand, US, and Canada.

Have a look at the master [HERE](#).

Casualty of war.

Major General John Cantwell fought in Iraq in 1991 and again in 2006. In 2010 he commanded the Australian troops in Afghanistan. Upon his return, he was in the running to be the Chief of Army – instead, he found himself in a psychiatric ward.

You can read the full story [HERE](#).

More ADF Medical news.



A not-so-good news story was reported in a recent edition of the Townsville Bulletin. Seemingly with little if no consultation the ADF has let a contract to outsource all ADF health services to Medibank Health Solutions. In turn, this contract has been sub-contracted to ASPEN Medical.

Because of the lack of transparency, little is known about how those health services are to be delivered, nor whether there is a likelihood that there will be a degradation of those services in terms of accessibility and/or quality. What is known is that several major bodies representing specialist doctors are adamant that the new scheme is unworkable. That includes the Australian Society of Orthopaedic Surgeons and the Australian Society of Anaesthetists. Many individual senior specialists who have been providing their services to the ADF have indicated that they will not sign up to the new arrangements. If this is so then it will affect ADF members.

What's happening????

Army's Abrams gets its First Lift on Board Air Force C-17A

For the first time, an Army M1A1 Abrams tank has been flown on board a RAAF C-17A Globemaster III transport.

On May 11, the C-17A carried the Abrams from RAAF Base Darwin to the Capricornia region as part of Exercise Hamel, where it will participate with other Defence units in the Shoalwater Bay Field Training Area.

AIRCDRE Gary Martin, Commander Air Lift Group, said the Abrams is one of the heaviest single loads which can be carried on board the C-17A.

"At 61 tonnes, the Abrams comes close to the total payload capacity of 70 tonnes for the C-17A," AIRCDRE Martin said.

"Loading an Abrams on board a C-17A is a careful task requiring a steady hand and close cooperation between the driver and loadmaster, to ensure no damage to vehicle or aircraft."

The Abrams is carefully driven up the cargo ramp of the C-17A and restrained to the cargo floor in a precise position, allowing the aircraft to remain balanced in flight.

The flight of the Abrams provides vital experience for Army and Air Force personnel, and emphasises a key strategic capability for Defence.

"Australia is possessed with a great geographic expanse, requiring a responsive strategic airlift capability to quickly deliver Defence Force personnel and cargo," Air Commodore Martin said.

Commander of the Darwin based 1st Brigade, Brig Gus McLachlan AM, says the airlift demonstrates the high level of interoperability now available between the branches of the Defence Force.

"The airlift of the M1A1 Abrams by Air Force C-17A is an important milestone," Brig McLachlan said.

"It demonstrates the great capability now afforded to the ADF and shows the Australian public that we have the ability to deliver our forces if needed, with relative ease to any place we need them to be."



An M1 A1 Abrams tank shortly after being unloaded from a C-17

HOW WOMEN IN FRANCE BURN CALORIES.

We bet a lot of blokes will watch this, it's short, only 45 seconds, but very interesting. Click [HERE](#).

PTSD.

If you did not see a recent SBS Insight Program on PTSD, you would probably find it very interesting; it's a bit lengthy but very factual and tells it as it is. It's an important reminder that we have a responsibility to make sure our younger veterans are properly looked after.

You can watch it [HERE](#).

The definition of “A Mate.”

