



Sick Parade.

If you know someone who is a bit crook,
let us know so we can give them a shout out..



Dear Dorothy Dix and Agony Aunt,

I don't wish to trivialise this very important issue but, after all the recent and worthy publicity in regards domestic violence within the Australian society, I wish to bring to your attention an incident which recently involves yours truly.

As you can see from the attached image, I certainly received some severe attention of which my daughter, Fiona, has captured the gory details via a White Mans' Magical Digital Photographic Device.

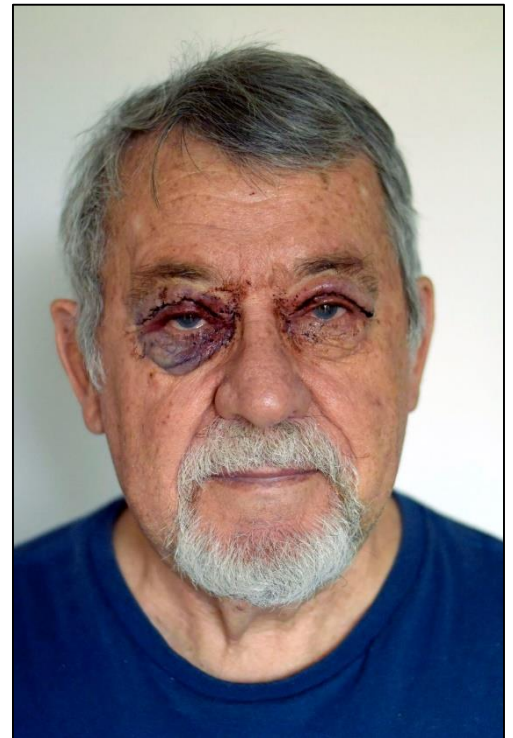
So dear DD and AA, my questions to you are as follows:-

Do you think Fiona has composed a pleasant image using the Rule Of Thirds,
Has she made the correct exposure,
Should she have used a different f-stop, shutter speed and/or ISO,
Is the model (ie moi) composed and relaxed?

Notwithstanding the post-Christmas and New Year festivities, I would hope you can make a speedy determination to my questions otherwise see the info below.

With the highest regards in your wisdom.

Actually this is a result of my "Chick Magnet" procedure in which the overhanging skin was surgically removed from my eye-lids. I'm gunna ask for a refund as I haven't been rushed with offers from said Chicks - sigh!!





Tom Mills.

John Sambrooks writes, "I had a call from Tom on the 22nd Feb, he still remains very optimistic and positive but he needs to have chemo and he may have to stay in hospital for five days. One session is eight hours and the other is one and a half hours. He is in no pain at this stage although if he sleeps on his left side he's enlarged spleen gives him some pain, he also sweats a lot at night and has a fan to try and stay cool. Blood tests show his iron and protein counts are low and they are not sure but they thought he might have stomach cancer as well. If so, that would require surgery but at this stage he will leave that alone as his bone marrow is a problem as well his immune system which hasn't recovered.



He has to have chemo every fourth week and that may require five days in hospital. He has been in remission for almost 12 months to the day and is very disappointed that he won't be able to make the Cooktown trip. He and his wife went on a cruise recently and Cooktown was on the itinerary but the tenders needed to take them to shore couldn't be launched as it was too rough for them to operate so they never made it. He reckons his next target for a holiday is 7th October when he hopes to do the Flinders Ranges.

With his wonky immune system, he tries to avoid as much contact with people as he possibly can. I told Tom we are all thinking of him and wishing him well and will stay in touch where and when possible. He won't be able to make Anzac Day as well and sends his apologies to everyone.

Bowel Cancer.

I had a nasty scare recently. Some time ago my GP recommended I go for a colonoscopy because, as she said, "once you get to 70 you should!" She wrote me a referral and I took it home and it sat next to my bed for a month or two. Eventually I got around to making the appointment and after reading what was involved, I headed off for what I considered to be the ultimate crushing of the small amount of dignity I thought I had left.

On Friday the 26th February, after living on next to nothing for 3 days prior, then having to drink 2 litres of what tasted like radiator flush and spending most of the day prior on the toilet wishing to hell I hadn't succumbed to this foolishness, I headed for the hospital for the business.

When I awoke from the procedure, expecting to be given a nice chicken sandwich, an orange drink and a lukewarm cup of coffee, I was rushed down to X-ray for a CAT scan, several blood tests and then given the not so reassuring news that I was off to see the surgeon on the following Wednesday as there was a considerable amount of FOD in places there shouldn't be.



On the following Wednesday, I was informed by the surgeon that I had a large amount of bowel cancer and it had to be removed ASAP – I was booked in for Wednesday the 9th March – a mere 10 days after the initial consultation.

In recovery.

On Sunday the 6th March, I was back on the starvation diet and on the 8th March it was time to digest another “flush” though this time it was 3 litres and supercharged, the eye of a needle sprang to mind on several occasions.



I was dropped off at the Holy Spirit Northside hospital at 11.00am on the 9th and I can remember looking at the clock in the theatre at 3.00pm as I was wheeled in. I can't remember much more about that day but my family tell me they saw me being wheeled back to the recovery area about 9.30pm that night – it was a big one.

The next two days were not at all pleasant – I hurt a fair bit and that small amount of dignity I thought I had went flying out the window as I was stand-up showered by two lovely young nurses, both of whom were younger than my own daughters. And, en route to the shower I discovered I was attached to a pair of clear plastic tubes, both of which were attached to delicate places on one's person, places that normally do not have things attached. On further inspection I found there was a clear plastic bag at the end of each tube and each bag contained some disgusting looking stuff which kept oozing from my person. Logic revealed that when full, some poor nurse would need to either empty or replace those bags.

God has definitely created a special place in Heaven for nurses – where would we be without these wonderful dedicated and caring people? I reckon they are one of the most important and irreplaceable people in our community. They have what is possibly one of the worst jobs on this planet yet they do it with a smile on their face, they care for you and they can cheer you up. Although these days nursing is a unisex occupation, a vast majority of Nurses are still female as it seems females are hard-wired and can't help but be caring and comforting.

Nurses – “I loves youse all.”

As the mist cleared a bit more, logic also revealed that those tubes could not stay there for ever – at some point in the near future they would need to be removed. I don't remember them being fitted, that happened while I was in the theatre, away with the fairies, but I quickly realised that when they were to be removed, it would be done by one of those lovely young nurses and this time in broad daylight.

Then Saturday came and it was time!

In came this lovely young nurse wheeling a stainless trolley full of scary things and I was told to adopt the birthing position, “lay on your back with legs apart and knees in the air.” It was time to



remove the front one. They put these things inside you then blow up a little balloon which is on the inside end of the tube and this stops it from falling out. So, to get it out, the balloon has first to be deflated, this requires quite a bit of “handling” and the only thing you can do is pick a spot on an opposite wall, focus on it intently and try and think of other things.

Then it was time for number two. I was told to “roll over on your side, away from me, knees up near your chest”. Same procedure as number one, check the wall for an appropriate spot while she deflates the balloon then slowly pulls it out, “it” feeling the size of an 18 gallon keg.

With all tubes gone, I started to feel human again. I could sit comfortably in a chair, though getting out was a slow and painful process, I could walk up and down the hallway and more importantly I could shower myself.



The following day (Sunday the 13th) I heard those few magic words – “this man can go home”!! I packed my bag, rang the family, signed out and bolted!

But that’s not the end of the story – not by a long shot!!

The first couple of days at home were pretty good, although still a bit sore I was getting around OK, a few mates came around to say howdy and to confirm I was still alive – the world was good again.

Wednesday morning changed all that!!

I woke that morning with a stomach that looked like it contained quads a week before birth, accompanied by a regular two minute apart stomach-muscle spasm. They say a woman’s contractions are pretty bad but I bet they had nothing on what I had, mine, after all, was man-pain and everyone knows man-pain trumps woman-pain every time.

I couldn’t move until about midday after which I managed to make an appointment with the surgeon for 3.00pm that afternoon. I was in his rooms at 3.15pm and luckily I had taken out an extended warranty as I was back in the Holy Spirit Hospital at 3.45pm. This time they really got serious!!

First up I was wheeled down to the X-ray area where they told me they were going to inject some dye into my plumbing and then pass me through this huge dough-nut thing and take some pics to see what was the problem. They didn’t tell me where they were going to inject the dye though, I didn’t find that out until I was on the bed, strapped down and powerless. Then peripheral vision spied a pretty young nurse wheeling in a stand which held a plastic bag with



what looked to me to contain about 44 gallons of some liquid and from the bottom of the bag coiled about 10ft of plastic tubing. Realisation instantly smashed through.

I was rolled over on my left side with knees tucked up under my chin and told they were going to insert this “thing”, which was on the end of the tubing, into one end of me and then pump me full of dye which would allow them to see all the relevant bits of piping in living colour on the X-ray. This “thing” was at least 2ft in diameter, 10ft long and seemed to be going into me for ever. Then came all the liquid after which they cranked up the dough-nut and the bed on which I lay started moving into the machine - “take a deep breath, hold your breath, breath normally” was heard a bunch of times and finally it was all over.



But then, all that dye had to be removed, so they just placed the bag on the floor and allowed it to drain out again. After my past few experiences with this sort of thing, I, for one, cannot see the attraction in having fun the alternative way – but each his own I suppose!!

Then it was back to the ward where another team of lovely young ones took control, put up a huge sign saying NBM and gave me this small plastic container of some aniseed tasting liquid and I was told to drink it. This mysterious liquid has the properties of being able to liquefy any solid to which it comes in contact – and I was given it to drink?? I was told that possibly due to the insufficient intake of fluids, material in the pipes had solidified and wasn't allowing anything to pass. This had resulted in considerable back pressure which threatened to erupt with the force of Vesuvius. Comforting thought indeed!!

I was then allowed to sleep.

Next morning there wasn't much of a change, I was till 8½ months pregnant with quads and the contractions were now about 1 minute apart when in walked another of the lovelies with another aniseed drink. This one worked!!!

Less than half an hour later, all solids in the offending pipes were instantly morphed into a liquid the consistency of water and being liquid, headed for the lowest point urged on by gravity. I did what seemed the 100yd dash for the toilet in under 9 secs, the heavens opened up and the Nile gushed forth in a tremendous flood. The eye of the needle had nothing on this one. My pregnancy was terminated.

That 100yd dash experience was repeated several more times that day, then just before lights out, I was given another of those explosive aniseed drinks. This worried me as I began to visualise the heavens opening while I was asleep – what would happen?? It didn't bear thinking about. But the night passed without a hitch and for breakfast I dined on another 20 kiloton drink which did work resulting in another horrendous déjà vu.



By lunch time any semblance of pregnancy had long gone as had all the contractions and I could actually bend forward from the waist again. The NBM sign was removed and I had my first taste of solid food for days – nothing ever tasted so good.

By 2.00pm on the Friday (18th) my FIGMO had counted down and with the best wishes of the lovelies, I was sent packing with my “as new” cut and polished interior.

But wait, there’s more!

For a few days I revelled in my new freedom, I was home, I wasn’t being woken at God awful hours to be given a tablet or have my blood pressure taken, there were no square wheeled trolleys being wheeled up and down the hall-way outside my door and the coffee started to taste like it should once again. Easter was just around the corner and I was looking forward to the planned 4 day break down on the Tweed. On Easter Thurs (24th Mar) I packed the car and along with the rest of Brisbane headed south down the highway for the Tweed. After a leisurely 2¾ hour drive, a journey which normally takes just over an hour, we arrived, unpacked, moved in and settled down for an anticipated wonderful break.

Murphy, you have a lot for which to answer!!!

I woke on Good Friday doubled up in bed in the foetal position, feeling like death warmed up, my interior had turned once again into running water and gravity was once again exerting its inexorable force. And to make things worse, Murphy had tossed in a dose of the hic-cups. Easter passed in a blur and while the family ate, drank and was merry, I went into an unwanted rapid weight loss program evacuating all un-necessary bits in a gush. Somehow Easter passed and we managed to get back to Brisbane. Back to the doc on Tuesday and back to Hospital on Wednesday - still hic-cupping. This time I was billeted at The Prince Charles Hospital where it was discovered I had contracted a bug called [C.diff](#).



Now if you’re going to catch a bug, do yourself a favour, stay clear of C.diff – it’s a baddy. I was closeted away in isolation in my own room and fed anti-biotics. Eventually the pill won the battle and I was able to eat and drink again and on Monday 4th April I was able to head for home once again.

I must thank the doctors, nurses, orderlies and everyone else who worked on me at HSN and at the Prince Charles, you were wonderful, thank you!!



Now for the lecture!!!

It's all well and good being tough, brave and strong, but TBS can kill you! Men are stupid when it comes to medical things, going to see the doctor is considered "sissy" and we just put up with things hoping they will go away. I was lucky, if I had left it for another month things would have been vastly different.

We're lucky in Australia, we have one of the best (if not *the* best) health systems in the world, no matter where you live today, first class health care is readily and easily available. We used to check our aircraft every 100 hours, yet we allow our bodies to go for years without so much as an A service. It doesn't make sense!!!



Turn your life around, once you get to 60, make it a pattern and have a thorough check-up at least once a year.

It could save your life.

tb

Bugs Rose.

Alf Smith writes, he says "An update on Mal Rose reported sick in the previous RAM.

I was alerted to Mal's situation a month or so ago through mutual contacts and I have visited Mal both at the St Agnes hostel and later at his home. He is not at risk and his suspected dementia was actually the result of a high potassium level in his blood causing dementia like symptoms. He attended our RSL Sub Branch meeting in January and he was his usual, slightly cranky, self".



That's good to hear Alf - thanks!

THE RAM

THE MAGAZINE BY & FOR SERVING
& EX-RAAF PEOPLE & OTHERS



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