THE RAM

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

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Sadly, in the few months since our last issue, we have once again lost some very good mates.

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Our lovely Page 3 girl this issue is Susan Mallett and we have lots of old time pics.

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Internet speed tests.

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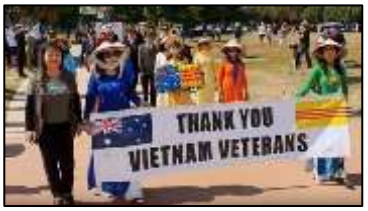

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The Rockwell B-1 bomber is one mean machine.

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- From now this page will be devoted solely to DVA issues.

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The Index is now finished - all references have been linked so if you're looking for a topic or a photo of someone, click on the Index link on the top of each page and just follow the links.

DVA Brisbane

In January this year DVA Queensland's State Office in Brisbane moved from its precious address at 259 Queen Street, to 480 Queen Street, Brisbane.

Although the new address is 480 Queens St, it's a bit confusing as you enter the building from Adelaide St, The easiest way to get there is come by train, get out at Central, cross Anzac Square to Adelaide St, turn left, walk towards the Story Bridge end of Adelaide St, then once you cross Wharf St it's on your right hand side.

The new offices of DVA are on the 6th floor. All the existing contact telephone and fax numbers will stay the same.

Veterans and their families visiting the new office will find better amenities in a more modern building at 480 Queen Street. There are cafes and restaurants on site. The mailing address remains the same: GPO Box 9998, Brisbane, Queensland 4001. All mail for the department should be sent to this address, irrespective of the state in which the intended recipient is based.

DVA's general inquiries telephone number is 1800 555 254. The fax number for the Queensland State Office is (07) 3223 8304.

Opinion

Nearly 4 years ago, the Office of the Inspector General of the Australian Defence Force began an inquiry into possible war crimes in Afghanistan. Today that longest and most secretive inquiry undertaken by the Defence Force appears no closer to finishing its work. For a country curious to know whether its special forces are shot through with war criminals, this delay is

troubling. For those soldiers caught in the teeth of the investigation, the glacial pace has been devastating.

One of those soldiers is Ben Roberts-Smith, a most decorated war veteran and so far the only individual to be named publicly in connection to the tangle of inquiries probing the conduct of Australian forces in Afghanistan.

Last Sunday (29th Sept) the Nine Network's 60 Minutes took the allegations against Roberts-Smith a notch further, naming the Victoria Cross recipient as being party to the battlefield execution of an Afghan villager in Darwan, Afghanistan, on the 11th September, 2012.

Ben Roberts-Smith has DENIED these allegations of course, but he's up against the might of the Press which can sway public opinion one way or the other. Why they (the Press) chose to air these allegations before the inquiry has finished its deliberations is beyond us, it can only be for profit, report some fantastic, as yet unproven, piece of information, and hundreds of people will want to read it and they (the Press) will sell more papers. The ABC's Media Watch got involved too, see HERE.

Freedom of the Press? What a bloody joke! These people seem to think they are above us mere mortals, they think they have a God given right to report anything in the interests of "the right to know". Like any business, the Press is a profit making business (apart from the ABC which is political wing) and its (the Press) number one aim is to make a profit - no matter what! We think they should be subject to the same rules as any other business. Why shouldn't the Police be able to search their homes or offices, under warrant, if there is a suspicion of wrong doing, you try it and see what happens.

The Age have thumped their chests and reported why they are such great people and have reported these allegations, you can see that HERE but where is the public support for Roberts-Smith. Years ago the RSL would have leapt to his defence with a vengeance. If Bruce Ruxton was still alive and head of the RSL, things would be much different.

Sadly not any more, the RSL is fast becoming a paper tiger.

The Courts will ultimately determine this, Roberts-Smith has commenced legal action against the publishers of the Sydney Morning Herald, The Age, The Canberra Times and 3 journalists. It will be interesting to see how this goes.

Buying a new car?

If you're a Radschool member and contemplating buying a new car, we could save you thousands. The Radschool Association has done a deal with Australia's biggest car brokers whereby you can purchase a car (your choice of make, colour, specs etc) at fleet discount prices.

One of our blokes made use of this facility recently and bought a Toyota Rav4 and saved thousands. You can too!

To see further details, go to the Radschool Assoc home page (HERE) then click on “New Car Purchase”.

Discounts.

Current financial members can now receive a 12% discount on the base rate of the day when hiring a car from Thrifty. If you’re thinking of hiring a car or an SUV or a people mover, this could save you heaps. If you’re a member, send us an email HERE and we’ll send you the promo code.

Savings for veterans.

Once (If ??) the Proof of Service Card – or Veterans’ Card as it will be called, is implemented, major corporations will be encouraged to offer special services and/or discounts to holders. Businesses will be encouraged to offer discounts on everything from groceries to power bills.

The details of the card will be worked through with state and territory governments and businesses. It will be separate to the Department of Veterans' Affairs health cards but will be similar to the approach adopted by Canada and the US. Already Woolworths, Coles, Kmart, Bunnings, Target, NRMA and Clubs Australia have signed up, while Westpac has expressed support for the idea. The reported percentages where between 5 and 10 per cent.

At present, many businesses and services find it hard to identify who is a veteran, with the problem most acute in states such as NSW and Queensland, each of which are home to more than 80,000 veterans.

A hunter walking through the jungle, found a huge, dead dinosaur, with a pygmy standing beside it. Amazed, he asked "Did you kill that?" "Yes" said the pygmy. The hunter asked "How could a little bloke like you kill a huge beast like that?" The pygmy said "I killed it with my club". "How big is your club?" asked the astonished hunter. "There are about two hundred of us" said the pygmy.

Membership.

We’ve decided to go with the following membership.

- Full membership for $35.00 to 30 June 2021.

There's no more annual Membership, only full Membership which will expire on the 30 June 2021.

As we've said, full membership is not compulsory, you can still receive the RAM which will remain open, free and available on the net.

So, if you'd like to contribute and help us with the ever increasing costs, please join as a full member.

If you are already a member (ie: if your name is on this LIST), please fill in the form below and send it to us, if you haven't already joined (if you're not on the list), please use the form HERE.

First name: Surname:

Your email address:

Membership type:

Your State: Sum transferred: $

Submit

Please transfer your joining contribution to:

BSB: 124-021 **Account number:** 1048 7401 **Title:** RAAF Radschool Association.
Bank: Bank of Queensland.
and include your name in the "Remarks" window on the deposit.

You can of course pay more if you wish!!

AND!! If you work for a firm that would be kind and generous enough to sponsor the Radschool Association, please get in touch.

RAM thought for the day.

The two most important days in your life are the day you were born and the day you find out why.

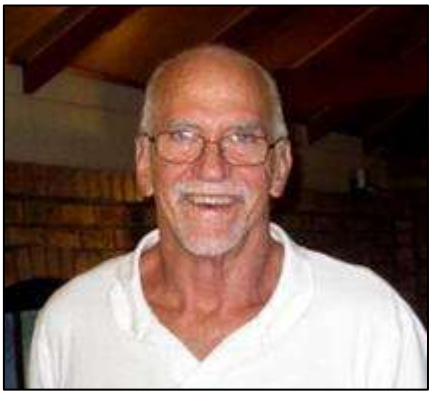
Errors

Our aim is to have this site error free – but that's probably impossible. But with your help I reckon we can get pretty close. If you see any errors, be they punctuation, spelling, links that don't work, facts wrong etc, (no matter how small) please let us know so we can fix them.

Thankfully, Ken Morris, who lives over in the West, proof reads our print before it goes public and points out our many errors, Thanks Ken.

IN MEMORY OF

Allan “Casa” Casalegno.



Brendan Godwin told us the sad news of the passing of Allan Casalegno who died of a cardiac arrest on Saturday afternoon (20 July) whilst walking his dog with friends on Sunshine Beach near Noosa. Allan arrived at 114 MCRU Amberley in 1972 via 3CRU to do the display course.

After he left the RAAF he worked for Tandem Computers which had a number of name changes over the years, but ended up being Hewlett-Packard. Casa actually got redundancy twice from them, the first time in Adelaide, then they put him back on in Brisbane, and he was made redundant there a few years ago.

Sadly, his passing was so unexpected. He had a couple of stents around his heart and had had a pacemaker fitted about a month before, but after that he told a couple of people it was the best he had felt for ages, and he was extremely fit, in fact he had climbed Mount Tibrogargan (one of the Glass House Mountains) only two weeks before hand.

Allan's Memorial was held on Monday 29th July at Castaway Beach on the Sunshine Coast.

Henry Monkhouse.

John Sambrooks advises John Henry Monkhouse from the Eighth Apprentice Intake (7 Armament) left us at 1.30am on Thursday 8th August at the age of 81. Unfortunately, towards the end he was in bad shape but stoic to the end. He wished to go.

The family held a private cremation but held a "Good Bye to John" gathering at The Caboolture RSL on Saturday 24th August 2019. Just a little get together to say hooroo, John didn't want a big fuss.

Graham McDonaugh

Alyn Hawkes advises that Graham McDonaugh passed away on the 19th July 2019, aged 70, he had been suffering from pancreatic cancer for a number of years. He lived in Melbourne, had joined the RAAF in 1969 and served for 6 years. His funeral was held at the Joyce Chapel in Fawkner, a Melbourne suburb, on the 30th July.

Sorry, no further details

Ryland E Gill

Peter Blair-Hickman advises that Ryland "Gilly" Gill, a Navy Midshipman and a fellow member off his pilot's course (No 36), passed away at home on the 19th August. Peter said Ryland's son, Warren, had rung and advised him of his father's passing.

Gilly had been living in Cairns.

Christian Bennett.

Ernie Gimm advises the death of Christian Bennett, who lost his life as the result of a motorcycle accident. Christian's funeral was held at the Norwood Crematorium Chapel ACT, on the 30th of August.

Chris served 27 years full time in the RAAF and another 15 years in the Reserve. He retired as a Wing Commander and was 71 years of age. He had only just completed his Law Degree and exposed aspects of the DFRDB saga not previously considered by anyone else. We will miss his very valuable contribution to our cause. May our dear friend rest in peace.

Anthony "Tony" Montgomery.

Fred Gosbee advises the passing of Tony Montgomery. He says "I would like to advise Funeral Notice in the Blue Mountains Gazette which recorded the death of Tony Montgomery, 9 Apprentice Course, at the Wesley Hospital in Brisbane on the 20th July, 2019. Last time I spoke to Tony he was going to QLD. to be with a daughter whilst continuing his cancer treatment. At the end of March I rang Wally Hull, 9 Apprentice Course, to see if he was aware of the DFRDB review. Daughter Karen answered the phone and advised Wally had passed away that morning.

9 Course started at Frognall in March 1955 with 42 members and finished at Ballarat in 1958 with 30 members however that number has now diminished significantly.

Brian Kevin Constable

Tina Ramsay wrote: "I am writing to inform you of some very sad new for our family and friends. My father Brian Kevin Constable (12/12/47) passed away on 20/8/19, aged 71 years. You may also know him as Bryan or BC. He had your association details in his files so I thought he would have wanted us to let you know. His funeral was held at the Creek Memorial Gardens, Albany Creek Road, Bridgeman Downs (Qld) on Wednesday 4th Sept at 10.30am."

Brian was on 2TMT at Laverton in 1967/68 after which he spend a lot of time in Darwin.

Fred Romeyn

Doug Mepham advises the passing of Fred Romeyn who served with 35 Sqn in Viet Nam from April 1970 to Apr 1971. Fred was a framie and was born in August 1948 in Holland.

Fred passed away peacefully at the Mater Hospital in Townsville on the 2nd Sept 2019 and his funeral was held in Townsville on Wednesday the 11th September, 2019. He was 71 years old.

Anthony “Ned” Kelly

John McDougal advises the passing of Anthony 'Ned' Kelly on the 17th September 2018. Ned was an Apprentice on No. 14 Appy course. (January 1960). He passed away from cancer at age 74. He was laid to rest on Tuesday 25 September at Ross Funerals and Crematorium at Hervey Bay, QLD. Ned was very quick witted and popular with all his course mates. He served as a Corporal Motor Transport Fitter with 2 Squadron in Ubon from June 1965 to Nov 65, then Vietnam from May 1969 to May 1970.

Bob McInnes.

We have only just learned that Robert “Bob” McInnes, who was president of the Caloundra RSL sub-branch, a crusader for the rights of veterans and a deliverer of inclusiveness and equality suffered a fatal stroke last year.

Heather Christie, secretary of the RSL sub branch said Bob was a larrikin of a character who always had time for everyone no matter who they were. "I called him Mr have-a-chat,” she said. "He took a genuine interest in everybody no matter the age, male or female. "He always told jokes even though he told them terribly.”

Bob served in the Air Force from 1963 – 1969 as a ClkA and spent time in Malaysia during the Vietnam war.

Described as a country boy at heart, the 76-year-old was well-known within the community for his devotion to the well-being of veterans and others suffering within the community. He had recently been working on a partnership that gave the families of patients at Dove's Cottage free gym membership at the RSL. "He thought the families should have a place to let off steam,” Mrs Christie said. "Bob comes up with some wonderful ideas - he was just that type of man.”

Bob was the one who brought the Iroquois helicopter to its place of pride at the RSL gardens. "He always referred to that helicopter project as his greatest accomplishment.”

I knew Bob and you wouldn’t meet a nicer bloke in a day’s march – tb. Very sad!

Alan Hardy

John Stewart advises the passing of Alan Hardy on Sunday 28 July, 2019. He was aged 90. Alan was a member of 3 Telecom unit. Sorry, no further details.

Peter Clemence

Peter joined the RAAF in 1942, was shipped off to England but didn't see any action. He was repatriated back to Australia, spent 4 years as an Air traffic Controller then it was back to flying duties on the Lincolns. In 1953 he converted to Mustangs and Vampires and was posted to Korea.

After he returned to Australia, he was posted to the RAAF's Antarctic Flight after which it was off to Williamtown then Butterworth. After Butterworth, it was Canberra and onto helicopters and in 1967 he retired from the Air Force.

What followed was more trips to Antarctica, this time flying helicopters. Peter died on the 18th June 2019 after living an adventurous life. You can read some of it HERE.

Faye Connors.

The Imperial Avior Club of Australasia advises the sad news that Faye Connors, wife of "Chuck" Connors, RAAF Caribou pilot, lost her battle with pancreatic cancer in the Wesley Hospital Brisbane on Saturday morning, 28th October, 2019, having been diagnosed at the end of April. She suffered no pain throughout and her family was with her at her bedside.

Faye's request was for a private family cremation and there will be a celebration of her life at a later date to be arranged.

Faye was well known and loved throughout the Avior community and we all send our condolences to Chuck and his family, who have suffered a grievous loss.

Dennis "Ned" Kelly

Noel Hadfield advises that Dennis Kelly passed away on the afternoon of the 8th September. Dennis grew up in Australia and joined the Royal Australian Air Force aged 19. He flew operations as a wireless operator / air gunner with 467 Squadron during WW2.

Returning from his 30th and final bombing mission over France in July 1944, a German night fighter attacked, the rear gunner was killed, the pilot also died. Dennis Kelly and the others had to bail out or die. His is a remarkable story of survival and evaded capture with assistance of the French resistance. He was the recipient of the French Legion of Honour.

HERE is a link to one of the interviews he has given.

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Page 3 Girl.

Susan Mallett (nee Cameron)

Susan was born in Lismore, NSW and grew up in Tweed Heads. She attended Tweed River High School and had a great lifestyle growing up on the north coast of NSW, close to beautiful beaches and the Gold Coast.

On finishing Year 12, she attended TAFE to complete a Secretarial Training Course, learning typing and shorthand! On completion of her studies, she applied for, and enlisted into the Air Force in March 1984, recruited in Brisbane, and travelled by Hercules and bus to Adelaide (via Richmond) to be put onto 11/84 Recruit Training Course at 1RTU in Adelaide. Susan is a twin and her sister Jayne coincidentally ended up on the same course – constantly confusing 1RTU staff. They are still both serving as reservists and still cause confusion among acquaintances!

The recruit training was a massive culture shock, but thoroughly enjoyable and certainly built up her discipline and resilience skills. On completion of her training she was posted to 92WG in Adelaide (a long way from Tweed Heads), a real surprise, but a great way to start her career into the workforce. It started off a wonderful, exciting and adventurous 22 year long career.

She joined as a Stenographer and was employed as the Officer Commanding's Secretary at each of her early postings. The stenographer mustering disbanded in 1985 and she remustered to CLKA, then changed again in 1994 to CLK, which is now known as PCS (Personnel Capability Specialist).

One highlight of Susan's time in the permanent Air Force was her participation in inter-service and ADF volleyball teams. Her involvement in the sport spanned many years and included numerous trips to varied defence establishments and with much rivalry between the State teams, particularly NSW v QLD (state of origin volleyball!)

Her pride and joy - an MGB convertable.

One trip that stands out from the rest was in 1994, when she had the privilege of representing the ADF and travelled to Hawaii, staying at Pearl Harbour, and playing various US defence teams.

Aside from the sporting highlights, she also enjoyed 22 permanent years of postings including Melbourne, Williamtown and Amberley, and is still a Reservist at 82WG HQ at Amberley.

A memorable workplace reflection was her posting to No 77 Squadron in 1998. She was fortunate to deploy to Kuantan, Malaysia for Exercise CHURINGA 98, as well as deployments to both Townsville and Darwin for local Exercises. To be posted to a flying squadron as a CLK is a great learning experience to discover the air power ability that Defence applies.

The comradeship and mateship Susan enjoyed during her career will stick with her for life. The work ethics and life lessons learned, even from her 'Rookie' days remain with her. It helps her to encourage, promote and incorporate positive influences, values and experiences on all colleagues, acquaintances; and indeed family.

C-130H Training Course, 1978.

The C-130H Avionics Systems Familiarization Maintenance Training Class (Class #1) – held at the Lockheed-Georgia Company 09 Jan - 20 Jan 1978.

L-R: Leon Smith, Brad Carlisle, Michael Conlon, Arthur Rooney, Adrian Maidment, Thomas Barker, David O'Hearn, John Rutland, Ian Hoffman, Graeme Buchanan, Phillip Palmer, D. S. Goodman (Instructor).

The way it used to be done.

Way back before WH&S got involved in our lives, when a job had to be done, blokes and blokettes just got in and did it using whatever bits of gear were available to get the job done. We think the pics above and below were taken back in 1966 and show a Caribou (A4-179) from 35 Sqn, which was stationed at Vung Tau at the time, undergoing an engine change at the top end of Luscombe Field, which was the airstrip at the Army Base at Nui Dat.

To lift the engine off then install the new one, the 35Sqn sumpies called on a couple of Army vehicles, one with a crane on its back. An aluminium ladder and an International 4 X 4 tray-back truck were used as engine stands to get the blokes up to height and the crane truck did all the heavy lifting.

They don't do things like that anymore! Those days are gone. No longer are t-boots and shorts the dress of the day, standing on 44s to service engines is now a big no no, no longer do you see those unwieldy wheeled yellow engine stands in hangars, these days you get the facilities above, these days the stands cost nearly as much as the aircraft itself.

Softies!!

Base Sqn Townsville, 1971.

Back Row L-R: Mick ??? (PTI), Norm Jenkins (Cinema Operator), Mick Cook (SP), Bob Stevenson (GHAND), Jack Coad (EDPOP), Eddie Mergans (CLKA),
Middle Row L-R: John Barker (Civilian Staff Clerk), Noel Pound (PTI), Bruce Jones (CLKA), Stephen Hawkins (CLKA), Peter Jubb (EDPOP), Carl Campagnoli (EDASST), George Mellick (Civvy Clerk),
Front Row L-R: ???, Cliff Hodges (CLKA), Josie Long (ADMINO), Henry Ratnick (ADMINO), Chalky White (WOD), Christine Richens (CLKA).

Black Hawk tragedy, 1996.

Twenty two years ago Australia experienced its worst peacetime military aviation disaster when a Black Hawk training exercise went terribly wrong, killing 18 men, fifteen from the SAS and three from the Army's 5th Aviation Regiment.

In June 1996, during a Black Hawk training exercise near Townsville, 18 men died when two helicopters collided mid-air and crashed. The Special Air Service (SAS) Regiment and Army Aviation Corps involved were carrying out a night-time counter-terrorism training operation, in preparation for the upcoming 2000 Sydney Olympics.

The incident significantly changed Australian Army and SAS training protocols.

It also deeply affected survivors, including helicopter pilot Major Matthew Barker, who watched the accident unfold just metres in front of his aircraft.

Now retired from active service, Major Barker recalled just how close to death he came that night. (Click HERE)

He was piloting "Black 4" in the six-helicopter formation training exercise, and was directly behind Black 1 and 2 which collided. "In that last moment, number 1 has seen number 2 and he's taken avoiding action trying to get out of the way," said Major Barker. "His main rotor blades have contacted number 2 and unfortunately for him those main rotor blades came off and he went underneath my nose only by 10 or 20 feet. He's just missed me. I saw number 1 going under my nose upside down. I watched number 2's tail removed by the rotor blade contact and I basically, as I was trying to get up and over the top of them, I watched him the whole way to his impact. Because he's just lost his tail rotor and he basically spun two or three times prior to contacting the ground."

Fourteen men were later awarded bravery decorations for their rescue efforts.

Major Barker said the rescue operation was extremely difficult. It was night and fires from the two downed helicopters made landing almost impossible. "There was a big issue because of the fires and trying to land in that impact area, because the fires were shutting my night vision goggles down. But before I'd landed, all of the SAS in the back of my aircraft had gone — they'd probably jumped at 10 or 15 feet, desperately keen to help their friends and colleagues."

"I just remember [the] injured being loaded onto my aircraft and people jumping on, and then the flight back to Townsville, desperately trying to get there as quick as we could with these guys in the back working on their friends which was very difficult time because you could hear everything going on. "Even with the noise of the Black Hawk and your helmets on and radios on you could definitely hear what was going on and it was quite a difficult time to stay focussed on getting them back to the hospital."

In 1997 ABC's Four Corners program investigated the tragedy, and the consequent controversial inquiry into the accident which blamed errors of judgement as well as organisational, training and command deficiencies. You can watch that show HERE.

Charges were laid against three senior officers, but all were later dropped. Major Barker participated in the inquiry, and believes the right outcome was reached. "They came to the right conclusions. But I do believe that it's one of those accidents that is, it's the entire system is to blame and it's not one guy in an instant where maybe a mistake is made," he said.

"These sort of accidents are very complex and there are layers from political, senior military all the way down to the people who were flying that night. From risk management, to spare parts that gave us more flying hours, to developing a singular role for one of those squadrons of pure anti-terrorist roles, where that's all they do and they get very very good at it," he said.

Why dogs are better than men.

- Dogs don't have problems expressing affection in public.
- Dogs miss you when you are gone.
- You can train a dog.
- Dogs are very direct about wanting to go out.
- Dogs understand what "NO" means.
- Dogs mean it when they kiss you.
- When dogs play "fetch," they don't laugh at how you throw.
- Dogs are colour blind.
- Dogs understand if some of their friends aren't allowed to come inside.

Vung Tau, Vietnam, June 1970.

L – R: SqnLdr Michael Miller, Medical Officer; SqnLdr Peter Kennedy, CO, 1OSU; FltLt Rod Doyle, AEO; FltLt John Hartshorn, Accounting Officer, 1OSU; GrpCapt Ron McKimm, OC Vung Tau: Father John Grannall, Chaplain.

A group of officers at a farewell party for Flight Lieutenant (Flt Lt) Rod Doyle Air Electronics and Operations Officer, 1 Operational Support Unit (1OSU). Rod Doyle with the toilet seat around his neck, was about to return home to Australia.

Farewell parties or 1OSU staff were customarily held in the 1OSU Mess on Tuesday nights. the departing officer was presented with the toilet seat labelled with his name, the names of all those who had preceded him and the name of the next officer due to leave. The practice seems to have arisen from an alternative jocular interpretation of 1OSU as designating no. 10 Sewerage Unit.

Arriving Vung Tau.

Normally when RAAF bods were posted to Vung Tau, they arrived in Saigon via a very civilised Qantas B707, where they were greeted by RAAF Air Movements people with a bread roll, a drink and a piece of fruit. It was then a case of hanging around in the heat for quite a while until the USAF came up with the transport to get everyone from Saigon down to Vung Tau.

Although Vung Tau was just a short distance down the river, if no Caribou was available, the mode of transport was usually a Fairchild C-123 transporter which is a piston engine aircraft fitted with two jet pods, much like the Neptune. The C-123 would pull up to the RAAF compound and the troops would climb aboard only to find there were no seats, instead people were told to sit on a pallet and a tie-down strap was secured over their legs.

First thing you noticed about the USAF aircraft was its condition. RAAF bods were used to their aircraft being in tip-top condition whereas the USAF aircraft were very second hand. It wasn't uncommon to see water pouring into the aircraft when it flew through rain – but the engines kept turning, the wings never fell off and there was never a problem, bods were always delivered safely to their new home.

Early into the war, Vung Tau bods were bunked up in tents on the airfield, but that was completely unsuitable, so arrangements were made to move everyone into town, into rented accommodation, until substantial accommodation was made available on the airfield.

In the early days, servicing was done from portable workshops.

9 Squadron gunnies, Robert Rowe (left) and Ken Bennetts, fitting a gun mount to one of the choppers at Vung Tau, June 1966.

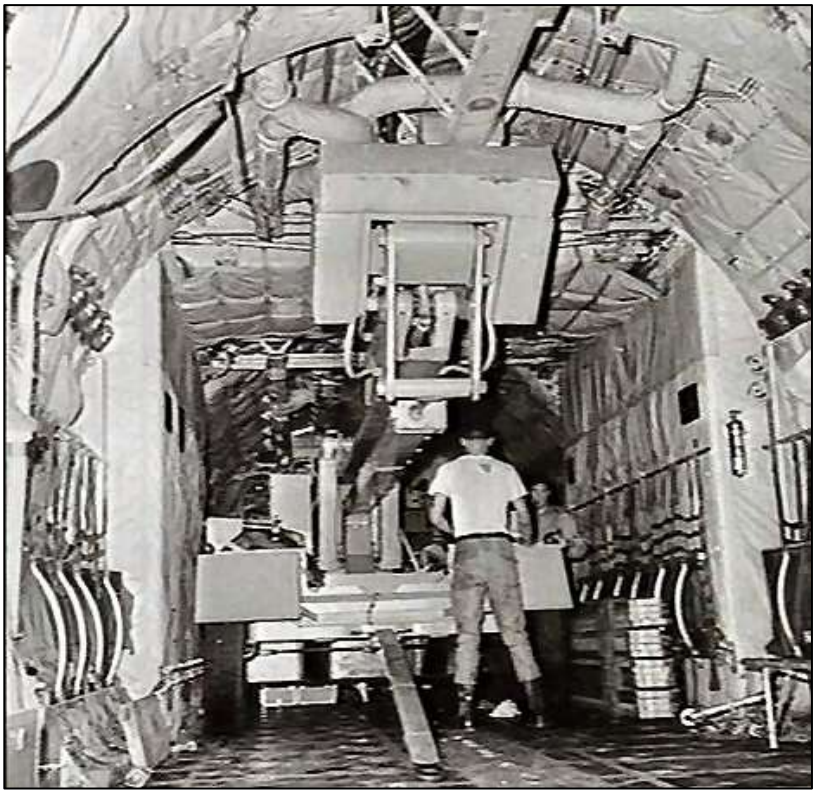
9 Sqn pilots having a breather in their temporary crew room before more permanent facilities were made available.

Hangar Site

In 1966, when the RAAF realised the war wasn't going to be sorted overnight, it was agreed that more permanent servicing facilities were going to be needed, besides, tents were designed solely for Army bods and people who drove Land Cruisers, so 5 Aircraft Construction Squadron was called on to erect a nice big hangar for 9 and 35 Sqns in which to play.

Bits and pieces were flown up from Australia by the Hercs from 36 Sqn and 37 Sqn, bits like the cherry picker below.

This cherry picker was delivered to Vung Tau by an A model Herc from 36 Sqn in August 1964



Brian Bucktin, 9Sqn Sumpy, refuelling one of the choppers in August 1966.

Why dogs are better than women

- Dogs understand that instincts are better than asking for directions.
- Dogs like beer.
- Dogs don't hate their bodies.
- Dogs don't criticize.
- Dogs agree that you have to raise your voice to get your point across.
- Dogs never expect gifts.
- Dogs don't want to know about every other dog you've ever had.
- Dogs don't let a magazine article guide their lives.
- You never have to wait for a dog, they're ready to go 24 hrs a day.
- Dogs don't cry.
- Dogs love it when your friends come over.
- A dog's time in the bathroom is confined to a quick drink.
- Dogs don't expect you to call when you're running late - the later you are, the more excited they are to see you.
- Anyone can get a good looking dog.
- Dogs enjoy heavy petting in public.
- Dogs find you amusing when you're drunk.
- Dogs don't mind if you give their offspring away.
- Dogs don't notice if you call them by another dog's name.
- If a dog is gorgeous, other dogs don't hate it.
- A dog's parents never visit.

Bring back the F-111 I say!

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Computers and stuff.

Sam Houliston.

Contents.

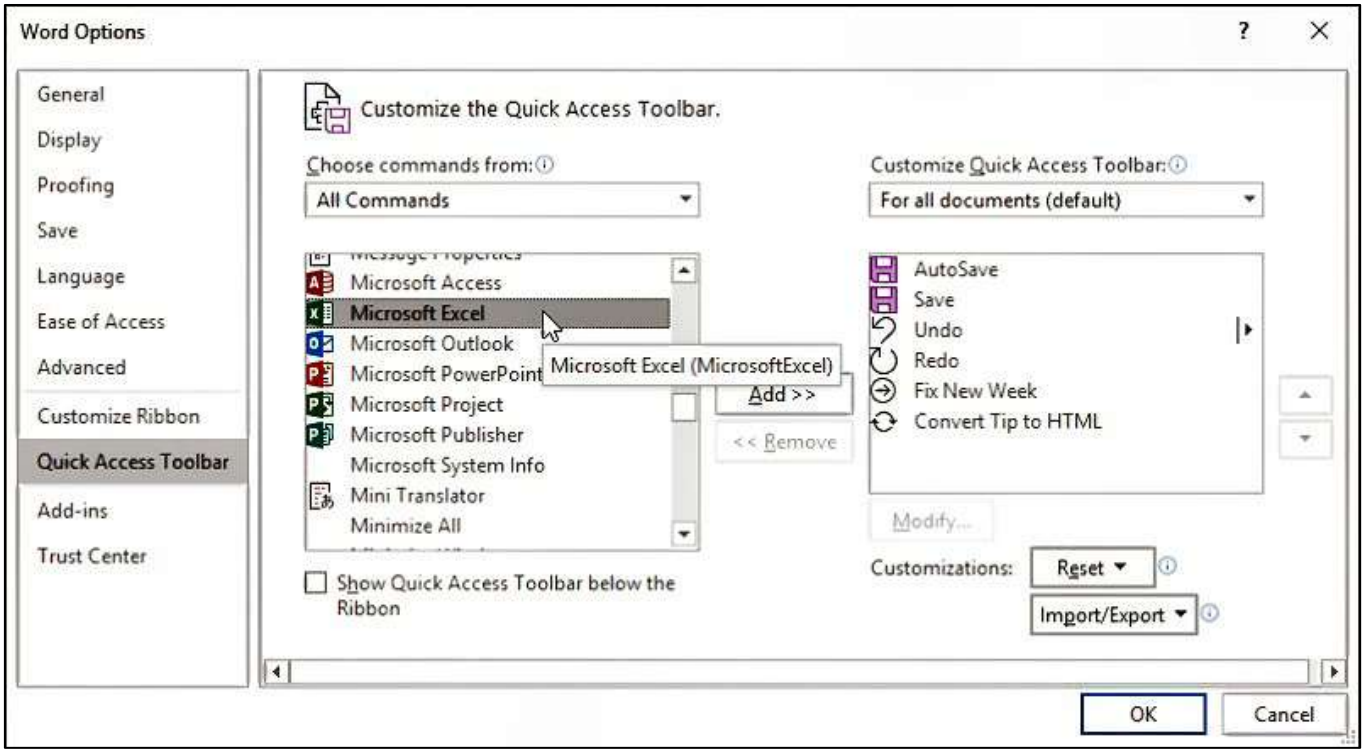
How to find your Private and Public IP addresses.
Internet speed tests.
What's the difference between a Modem and a Router.
Why re-boot your modem/Router.

Creating an Excel Workbook from within Word.

There are two ways you can do this, and the one you choose depends on what, exactly, you want to accomplish.

If you want to simply open Excel from within Word, you can follow these steps:

1. Open the Word ***Options*** dialog box. (In Word 2007 click the Office button and then click Word Options. In Word 2010 or a later version, click FILE then click OPTIONS.)
2. At the left side of the screen choose ***Quick Access Toolbar***.
3. Using the ***Choose Commands From*** drop-down list, choose ***All Commands***.
4. In the left-hand column, scroll down until you see the option that says Microsoft Excel; select it.



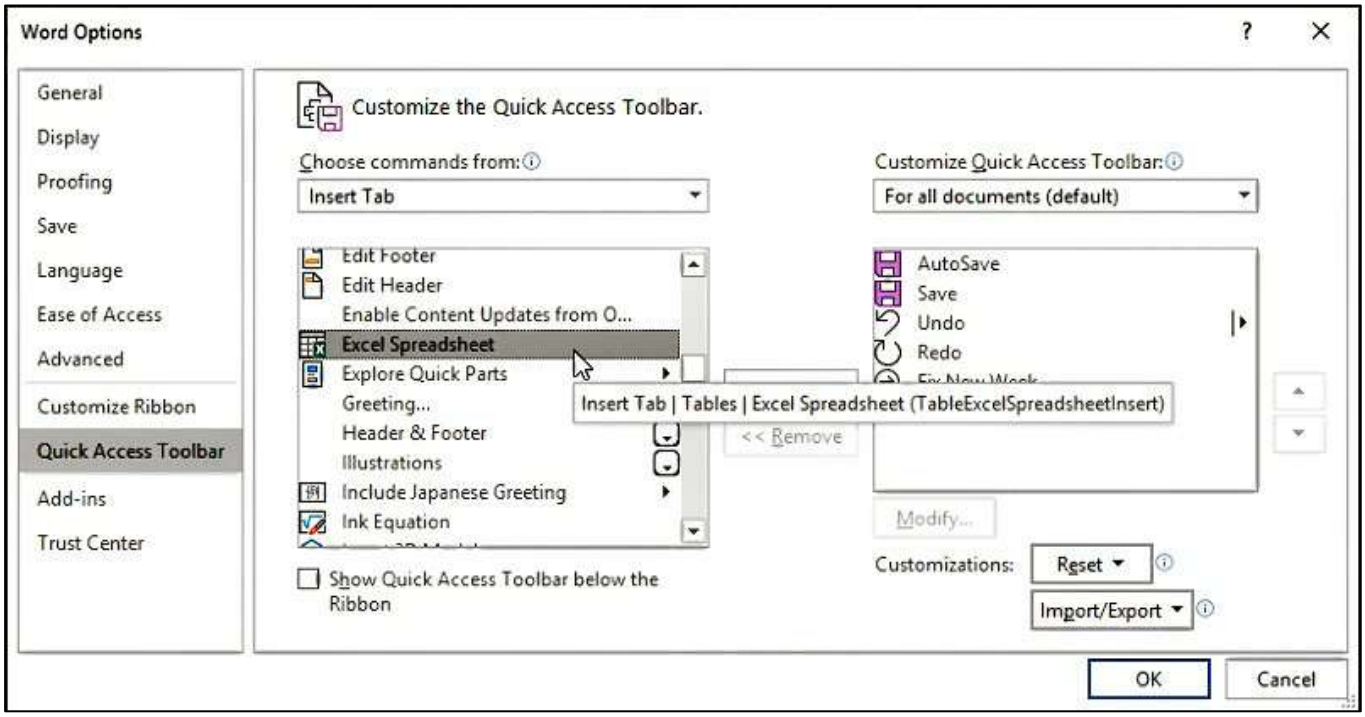
5. Click the ***Add*** button. The Microsoft Excel option is moved to the right-hand column.
6. Click on ***OK***.

Now you can click the Microsoft Excel tool on the Quick Access Toolbar and the Excel program is started. If, instead, you want the Microsoft Excel tool somewhere in the ribbon itself, you could

simply choose Customize Ribbon at step 2. (You cannot do this in Word 2007, as there is no such choice in that version of the program.)

If, instead of opening Excel, you want to insert an Excel worksheet into your current document, you can add the proper tool by following a variation on the foregoing steps:

1. Open the Word ***Options*** dialog box.
2. At the left side of the screen choose ***Quick Access Toolbar***.
3. Using the ***Choose Commands From*** drop-down list, choose ***Insert Tab***.
4. In the left-hand column, scroll down until you see the option that says ***Excel Spreadsheet***; select it.



5. Click the ***Add*** button. The Excel Spreadsheet option is moved to the right-hand column.
6. Click on ***OK***.

When you use this tool, Word embeds a blank worksheet at the insertion point and you can then enter information into that worksheet.

How do Internet Speed Tests work? (and how accurate are they?)

How-To Geek

Speed tests are a quick way to see just how fast your internet is. ISPs promise “up to” a certain speed in optimal conditions, but a speed test will confirm how fast—or slow—your connection is.

What is a Speed Test?

An internet speed test is the best way to get an idea of how fast your connection is right now. The service you connect to often limits your download and upload speeds based on the plan you chose, local congestion, any throttling rules it has, and so on.

The catch is the promises your Internet Service Provider (ISP) makes nearly always include the phrase, “up to.” This gives an ISP wriggle room, if it promised you “up to 30 Mbps,” and you consistently only get 28 Mbps, then the company can say it’s kept its promise. But if you see 10 Mbps, then you’re not getting what you pay for and it’s time to call your ISP.

A Speed test measures your ping and download and upload speeds. Measuring the latter two is essential because most ISPs make separate promises for download and upload speeds. Usually, the download speed features prominently, but if you dig into the details, the ISP typically specifies a slower upload speed for each level. For instance, your local ISP might offer a plan with a 50 Mbps download speed, but 25 Mbps upload speed.

How a Speed Test Works.

When you start a speed test, multiple things occur. First, the testing program determines your location and the closest test server to you, this part is important. Some versions, like Ookla’s Speedtest.net, have an option to change the server. With the test server in place, the Speed Test sends a simple signal (a ping) to the server, and it responds. The test measures that roundtrip in milliseconds so the smaller the number you receive, the better. Anything under 50 ms is pretty good.

After the ping is complete, the download test begins. The test program opens multiple connections to the server and attempts to download a small piece of data. At this point, two things are measured: how long it took to grab the fragment of data, and how much of your network resources it used. If the program detects you have room to spare, it opens more connections to the server and downloads more data. The general idea is to tax your internet connection and see how much it can do simultaneously.

Imagine your internet service as a highway with a speed limit. Opening additional connections is like adding more lanes to the highway. The speed limit hasn't changed, but more cars can pass through the same space at a faster rate; thus, the 50th car will arrive sooner using a four-lane highway than it would on a two-lane.

Once the the program determines it has the correct connections to test your internet service, it downloads additional chunks of data, measures the amount downloaded in the time allotted, and presents a download speed.

Next is the upload test. It's essentially the same process as the download test but in reverse. Instead of pulling data from the server to your PC, the program uploads data from your PC to the server.

If you want to get into the nuts and bolts of it you'll find info for Radtechs HERE

Are Speed Tests Accurate?

Speed tests sound simple, but it's much harder than it might seem to measure how fast your connection is accurately. Consider the first step of the process: choosing a test server. Often the closest server might be incredibly close, perhaps even in the same city. That proximity is an optimal situation, so the data doesn't have as far to travel. Businesses know that proximity makes a difference, and that's why some, like Netflix, use a content delivery network to bring the data closer to you.

But the entire internet isn't close to you. Much of it is on computers far away, sometimes across the world. So, while your speed test may show incredibly fast streams, you might find that downloading a program is very slow if the server hosting the data is far away. In that scenario, your results may reflect a faster performance than your real-world usage.

Paddy takes his new wife to bed on their wedding night. She undresses, lies on the bed spread-eagled and says "You know what I want, don't you? "Yeah," says Paddy. "The whole 'friggin' bed by the looks of it!"

The difference in server locations is why you will likely see different speed results when trying different tests, like Ookla's, Netflix's, or Google's (at right). Your ISP might also offer a speed test, like Comcast, Spectrum, or AT&T, however, you probably shouldn't rely on an ISP-generated speed test. Their tests are optimized for ideal conditions, using servers close to you that are often maintained on the same ISP network you're testing from. That means you'll get a faster result than you might with a Netflix or Google speed test. It's fine if you just want to brag about how great your ISP is (that's the idea), but it's bad for getting an idea of your real-world speeds.

In step two of the testing process, the program attempts to open additional connections and maximize your network usage. If you're already taxing your network, then the speed test can't take full advantage of your resources. If you test while streaming Netflix or downloading a large update, for instance, your results will likely be lower than testing without those running.

How you're connected and which devices you're testing on also affect the results. An ethernet-connected PC should have a faster speed result than a Wi-Fi-connected one because, generally, Wi-Fi is slower than ethernet. You might also find that results vary on different devices, even if they're using the same connection.

How to Get the Most Accurate Results.

Getting accurate test results depends on what you intend to measure. Do you want to see if your ISP is genuinely providing the speeds it promised? Then, go for optimal conditions. Use an ethernet-connected device, choose the test server closest to you and stop anything that might be taxing the internet connection (like a streaming service). You might even want to restart your router (see below) before running a speed test.

Ultimately, no matter which steps you take or how you measure, you won't get a perfectly accurate result, however, you can get a good enough result to either satisfy your curiosity or check in on the speeds promised by your ISP.

Why rebooting your Modem/Router fixes so many problems. (and why you have to wait 30 seconds)

The internet is down, but you know what to do, just unplug your modem or router, wait thirty seconds, then plug it back in. It's second nature at this point, but why does it actually work? And is there some magic to the thirty second number?

And the even bigger question: is there some way you can stop doing this?

Routers can feel mysterious, but they're not. And if you know what's going wrong, you can usually solve the problem.

Your Router is a Computer

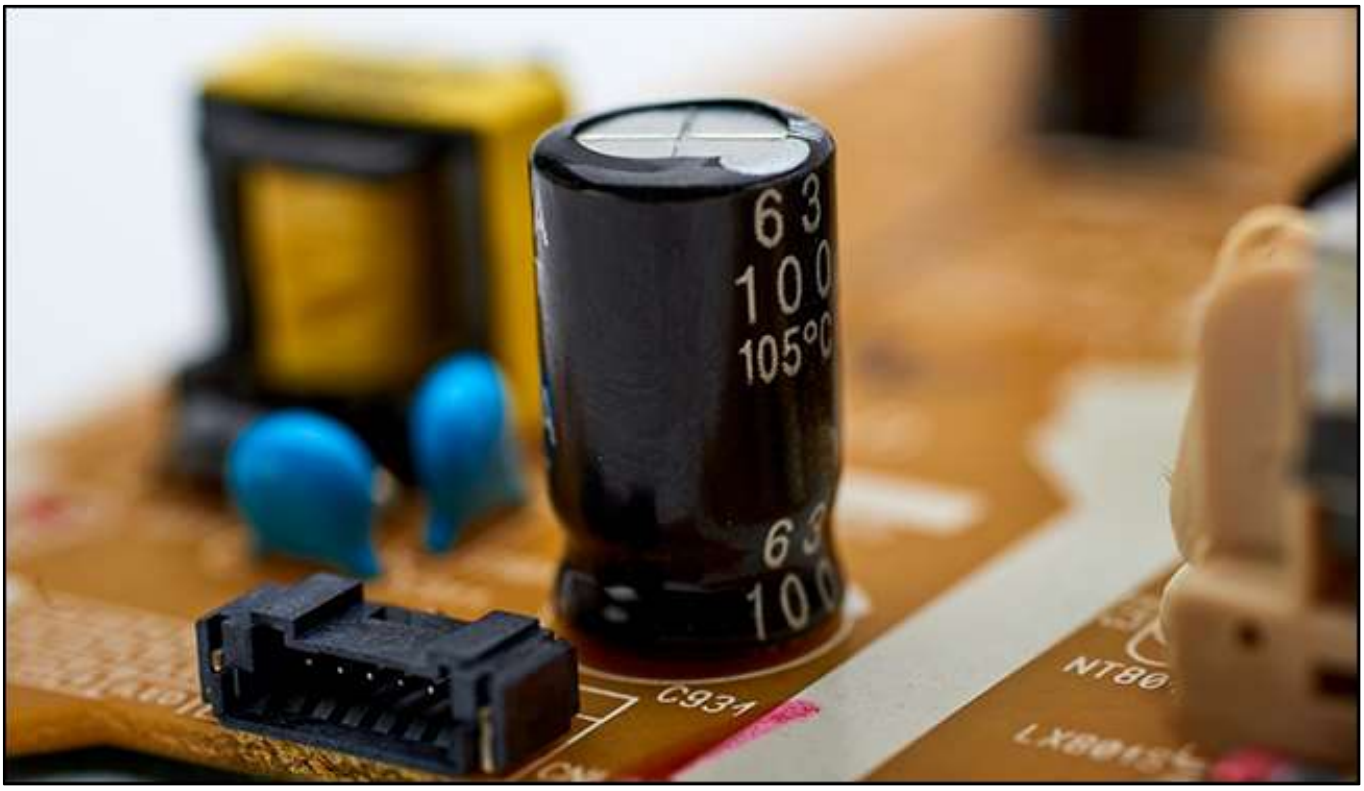
You might not think of it this way, but your router is a computer. Inside that plastic box is a CPU, memory and local storage, all running an operating system. And like a computer, things can go wrong from time to time. Maybe a bug is causing a memory leak, maybe the CPU is overheating, or maybe a full blown kernel panic has taken down the entire system.

What's the simplest fix for these sorts of computer problems? Turning it on and off again. Your modem/router is the same. Just like on your computer, you're not actually solving whatever is causing the modem to crash, but you are allowing it to run properly again. Sure, this doesn't fix systematic problems, but it generally solves things in the short term.

Do You Really Need to Wait 30 Seconds?

That answers why unplugging helps, but why do you need to unplug for 30 seconds? Have you ever unplugged a gadget only to see the power indicator light stay on for a few seconds? There's a reason that happens. Most electronics make liberal use of capacitors, which are basically tiny batteries. You've seen these before if you've ever taken apart a computer or gadget.

They don't store a lot of energy but can at times have just enough to keep a memory chip running for a few seconds. Waiting 30 seconds ensures that every capacitor is fully discharged and thus every bit of memory is cleared ensuring all the settings on your modem/router are actually reset, including anything that might have caused the crash in the first place.



There are multiple reasons your modem/router might need to be reset and not all of these problems will require a 30 second discharge, which is why some problems can be solved without the wait. If you're troubleshooting a new problem, however, the 30 second wait might be the difference between working and not working.

What causes Modem/Routers to Crash?

As with any piece of hardware, there are all sorts of potential reasons your modem/router might crash and require a restart. Here are a few potential reasons:

- **Run-of-the-mill crashes**. As a computer, your modem/router can crash because of bugs in the firmware eating up too much memory or causing a kernel[1] panic.
- **IP Address conflicts**. Your router manages both private and public IP address and sometimes it messes up. If two devices on your network have the same IP address, or if

[1] The **kernel** is a program that is the core of a computer's operating system with complete control over everything in the system. On most systems, it is one of the first programs loaded on start-up. A kernel panic (sometimes abbreviated as KP) is a safety measure taken by an operating system's kernel upon detecting an internal fatal error in which it either is unable to safely recover or cannot have the system continue to run without having a much higher risk of major data loss.

your router doesn't have an up-to-date public IP address, your connection might break. Restarting the router resets these IP assignments so things can start working again.

- **Overheating**. Like any computer, your router can overheat, especially if you keep it in an enclosed space to hide it from view, causing it to crash.

There are more potential reasons, but these are the most common. And there are a few relatively simple solutions for them.

One Solution: Update Your Firmware

When your computer has persistent bugs, a software solution is often the fix. The same goes for your router: it needs updates too. Every other device you own is shielded behind the router and isn't publicly addressable. Your router essentially functions as a firewall, shielding your other devices from inbound connections by keeping them all to itself. But, by design, your router is the one point in your home network that's exposed directly to the Internet. As any attacker could contact your router, it's crucial your router is secure.

Normally your modem/router will automatically update itself so you don't have to worry there, but overheating could be a problem

Computers crash when they overheat, and your router is the same way. If it feels hot when you unplug, consider trying to solve for heat. Your router likely has vents; ensure that they aren't covered up, just like you do for your computer. If your router is full of dust, consider cleaning it out with some compressed air.

It's also a good idea to make sure your router is out in the open, not in a small cabinet surrounded by other electronics. Try and keep your modem/router as far away as you can from those little power supplies that power everything from your modem, your mobile phone, laptop etc. Those little rectifier power supplies generate a small amount of RF and this can affect your modem. Modem/routers need to be out in the open, it'll help with heat management and give you better signal range, so it's really win-win.

Something else you could consider, if you're having the occasional drop out, is to reboot your modem/router every couple of weeks or so, if you turn your computer off at the end of the day, (say) at the end of each month, when you do, click the reset switch on the back of your modem. You'll find it in a small hole, you'll need one of those paper clips, straightened out and poke one end of it into the hole, you'll hear the switch click. Your modem will then reset itself, this will take a minute or so.

If all else fails, get a new modem/router.

If none of this helps, it may be time to bite the bullet and upgrade to a new modem/router. Just like a computer that won't stop having problems, sometimes it's just time to move on. You'll remove a piece of hardware that is constantly causing problems and you'll get access to all kinds

of new features. Wireless technology has come a long way in the past few years, so if you're using something a bit older, you'll definitely get your money's worth by upgrading to something more modern anyway.

And you won't need to do the unplug/reset-wait ritual anymore.

What's the difference between a Modem and a Router?

If you've been on the Internet for a while, you've no doubt heard the terms "modem" and "router" thrown around, but might not have taken the time to understand what they are. In short, your router creates a network between the computers in your home, while your modem connects that network and thus the computers on it to the internet. When you connect to Wi-Fi, you're really connecting to your router, which forwards traffic between the internet and your computer. Most internet providers offer a combined modem/router unit that performs both these functions in one device.

The router sits in between your Internet connection and your local network. It lets you connect multiple devices to the Internet through one physical Internet connection and also lets those devices communicate with one another over the local network. In addition, the router offers some protection to your devices over being exposed directly to the Internet. To the Internet, all the traffic coming from your house looks like it's coming from a single device. The router keeps track of what traffic goes to which actual device on your network.

But you can't connect directly to the Internet with just a router. Instead, your router must be plugged into a device that can transmit your digital traffic over whatever type of Internet connection you have. And that device is a modem.

Your modem serves as a bridge between your local network and the Internet. Historically, the term "modem" is shorthand for modulator-demodulator. Modems were used to modulate the signals down the line so that digital information could be encoded and transmitted over them and then demodulated and decoded on the other end.

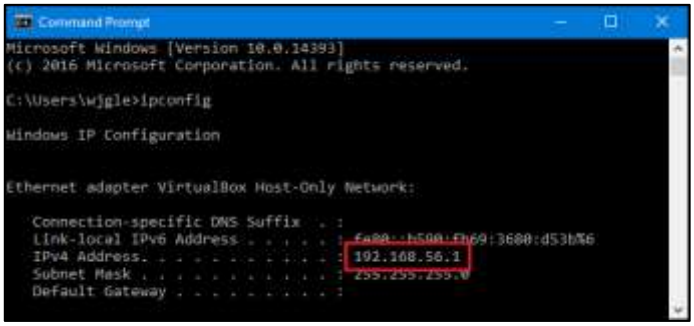
How a modem attaches to your network depends on the type of connection you have. The modem plugs into whatever type of infrastructure you have, cable, telephone, satellite or fibre and gives you a standard Ethernet cable output that you can plug into any router (or a single computer) and get an Internet connection.

Most ISPs offer a modem and router in a single device. That device has the electronics and software in it to provide both functions, acting as a modem that communicates with your ISP and functioning as a router to create a home network. Some ISPs also bundle a phone interface into the same box so you can use their VOIP offerings.

How to find your Private and Public IP addresses.

Each device on your network has a private IP address only seen by other devices on the local network. But your ISP assigns you a public IP address that other devices on the Internet can see. Here's how that works and how you can find those IP addresses.

An IP address (or Internet Protocol address) identifies each networked computer and device on a network. When you sign up for internet service and connect your modem, your ISP assigns you a public IP address. This address is how you communicate with all the other devices out there on the public internet, but, you've likely got multiple computers and other devices on your network, each of which needs its own IP address, so how does that all work and how can you find out what all those IP addresses are?



In a typical home network, a router has a public IP address on the Internet. The computers, smartphones, game consoles and other devices behind the router each have a unique private IP address on the home network. The router acts as an intermediary, forwarding traffic to the local IP addresses that request it. From an outside perspective, all devices on the home network are communicating with the Internet from a single public IP address.

It's not difficult to find a device's private IP address. On most full computing platforms, like Windows, MacOS, and Linux, you can often find the information quickly using the Command Prompt or Terminal. In Windows, open the Command Prompt, then type ***ipconfig*** in the Command Prompt and press Enter, you'll get to what you're looking for in no time.

The easiest way to find your public IP address is by logging onto ip4.me. It's quick, ad-free, and will show your IPv4 address, the four part address you're most likely looking for rather than the more complicated IPv6 address that your network is likely also configured to use. Just visit the site and it will show you your public IP address.

This page shows your IPv4 or IPv6 address

You are connecting with an IPv4 Address of:

106.70.166.27

IPv4 only Test | Normal Test | IPv6 only Test

If the IPv6 only test shows "Server not found" or similar error or search page then you do not have working IPv6 connectivity. "Normal Test" shows which protocol your browser preferrs when you have both IPv4 and IPv6 connectivity.

You can access this page with any of these easy to remember url's:

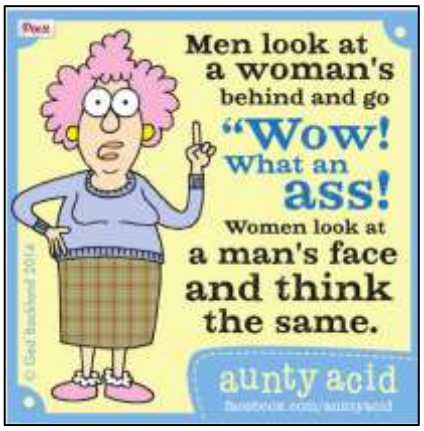
ip4.me - IPv4 only test
ip6.me - IPv6 test with IPv4 fallback
ip6only.me - IPv6 only test
whatismyv6.com - IPv6 test with IPv4 fallback

For automated queries use /api/ on any of the urls for a simple plain text csv result that will not be affected by future html changes on the main page. Recommended API urls (Don't forget the trailing slash to avoid unnessary 301 redirects):

ip4only.me/api/ - IPv4 only test
ip6.me/api/ - IPv6 test with IPv4 fallback
ip6only.me/api/ - IPv6 only test

Some day far in the future ip4.me may have a AAAA record so it is not recommended for "IPv4 only" automated queries. Use ip4only.me instead.

You should also know that unlike street addresses, IP addresses aren't necessarily fixed. Unless you've purchased a static address from them, your ISP may occasionally assign you a new public IP address and, unless you've configured static IP address assignments for your local devices, your router may occasionally assign your devices new IP addresses.



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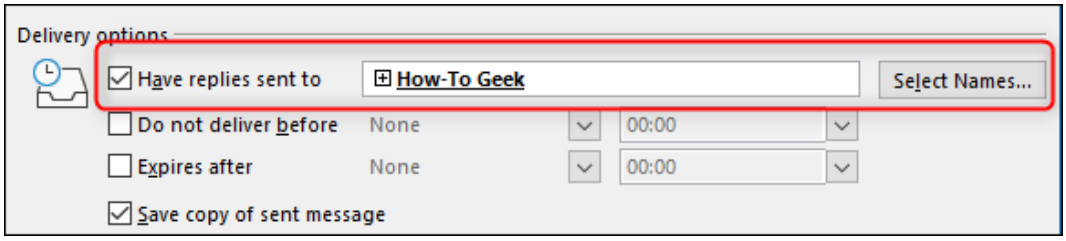
How to change the “Reply To” address in an Email you send from Outlook.

If you’re sending an email on behalf of someone else, you might want people to reply to that person instead of you. Microsoft Outlook gives you the option to choose a different default Reply address to cover this situation.

Once you’ve created your mail, switch to the “Options” tab and then click the “Direct Replies To” button. (Depending on your version of Outlook, you might need to click File > Properties instead.)

Once the Properties window opens, change the address in the “Have replies sent to” box from your address to the address (or addresses, if there is more than one) to which you want replies sent.



Click the “Close” button and then send the mail as usual.

When the recipient receives the mail and clicks “Reply” or “Reply All,” Outlook will automatically fill in the address you’ve chosen. This won’t stop them changing it back to your address (or anyone else’s), just like a normal email, but it will make it obvious to whom they are supposed to reply.

How to disable Bing in the Windows 10 Start Menu.

Windows 10, by default, sends everything you search for in the Start Menu to their servers to give you results from Bing search, so it’s a good idea not to type anything private into your own PC’s Start Menu - or, you could just disable the Bing integration in the Start Menu.

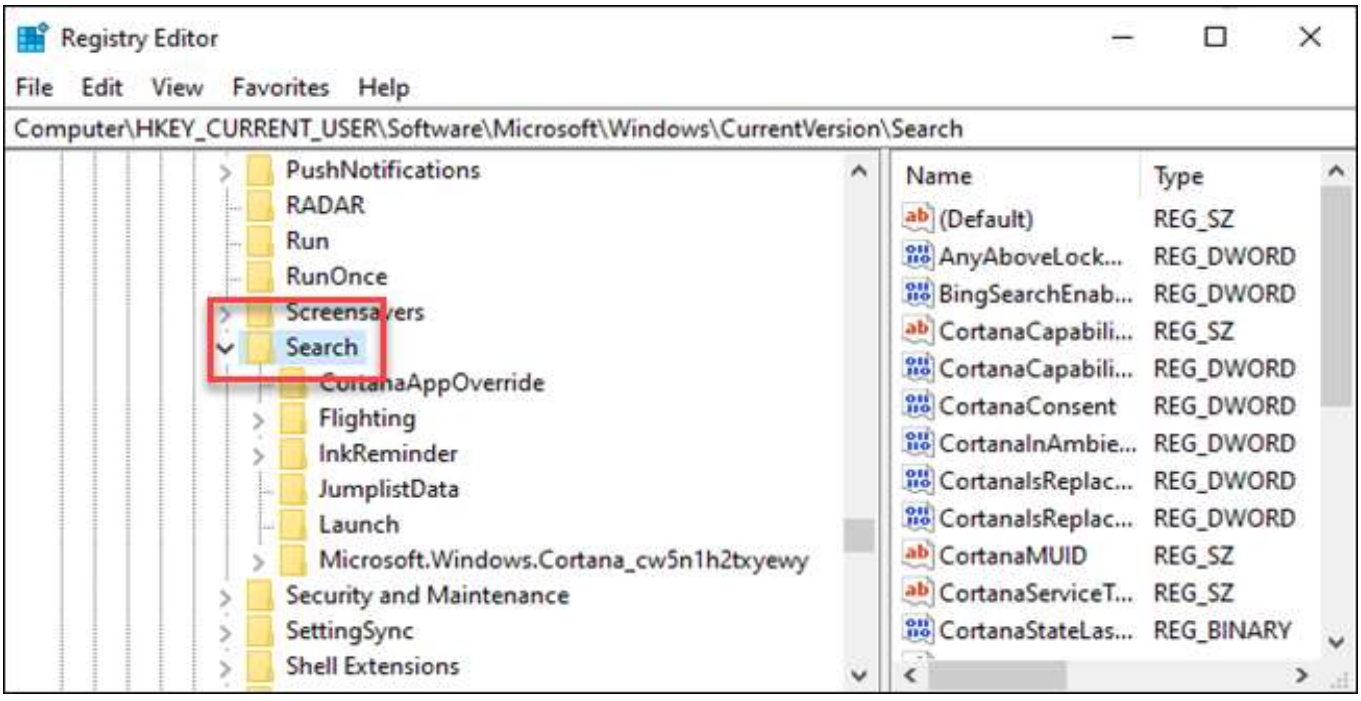
It's worth noting that Android's default search and even iOS will also send your search results to their servers to try and get more relevant results but somehow it seems different when you're on your personal computer in your house trying to search through your personal files.

Also, if you want to use Cortana to search for you, you don't have any choice in whether the Start Menu uses Bing, so you're going to have to disable Cortana to disable the web integration.

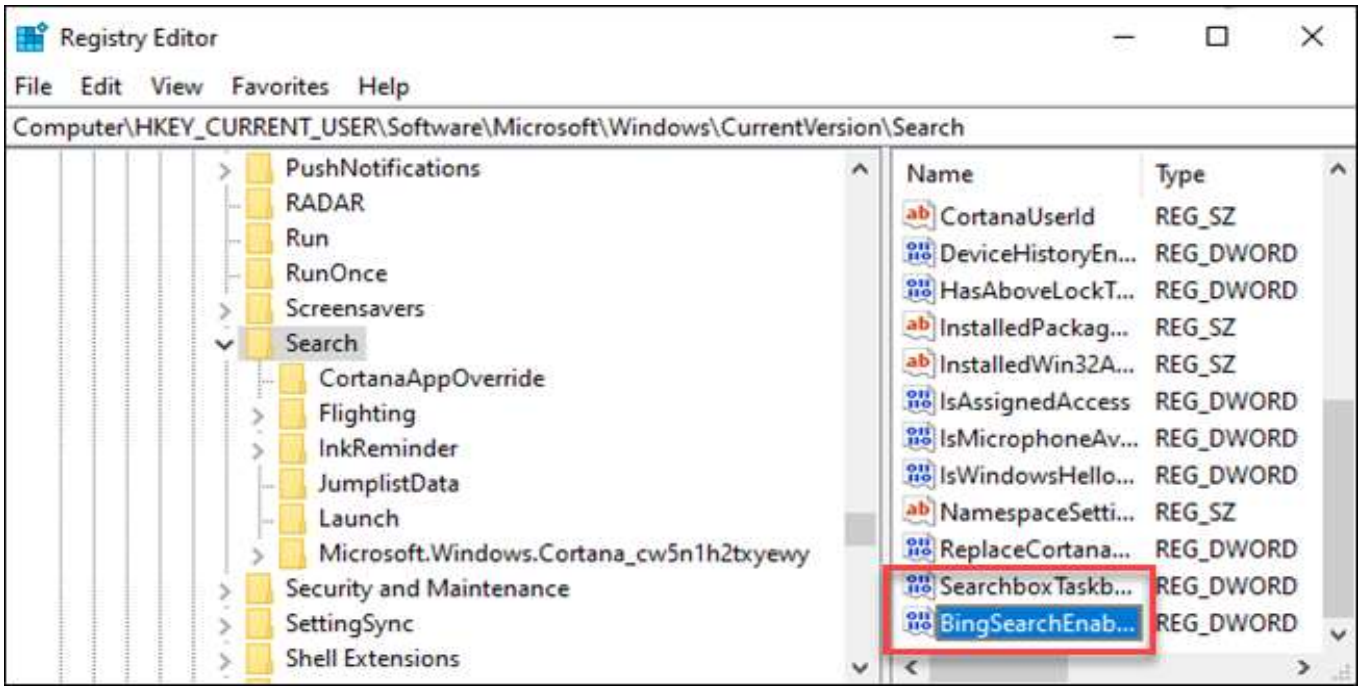
If you just want the Search Function to search your computer only and not do a web search (we'd rather use Google) you need to disable the web search capability. To disable web searches in the Start menu, you must edit the Windows registry. The Registry Editor is a powerful tool and making the wrong change can make your system unstable or even inoperable. So be careful – back up before you start to make sure you're safe – not sorry.

This is a straightforward change and if you follow the instructions, you should be fine. To start, open the Registry Editor by hitting Start and typing "regedit". Double-click the "Registry Editor" shortcut that appears (or press Enter) and click Yes to the UAC prompt.
In the Registry Editor use the left sidebar to navigate to the following key:

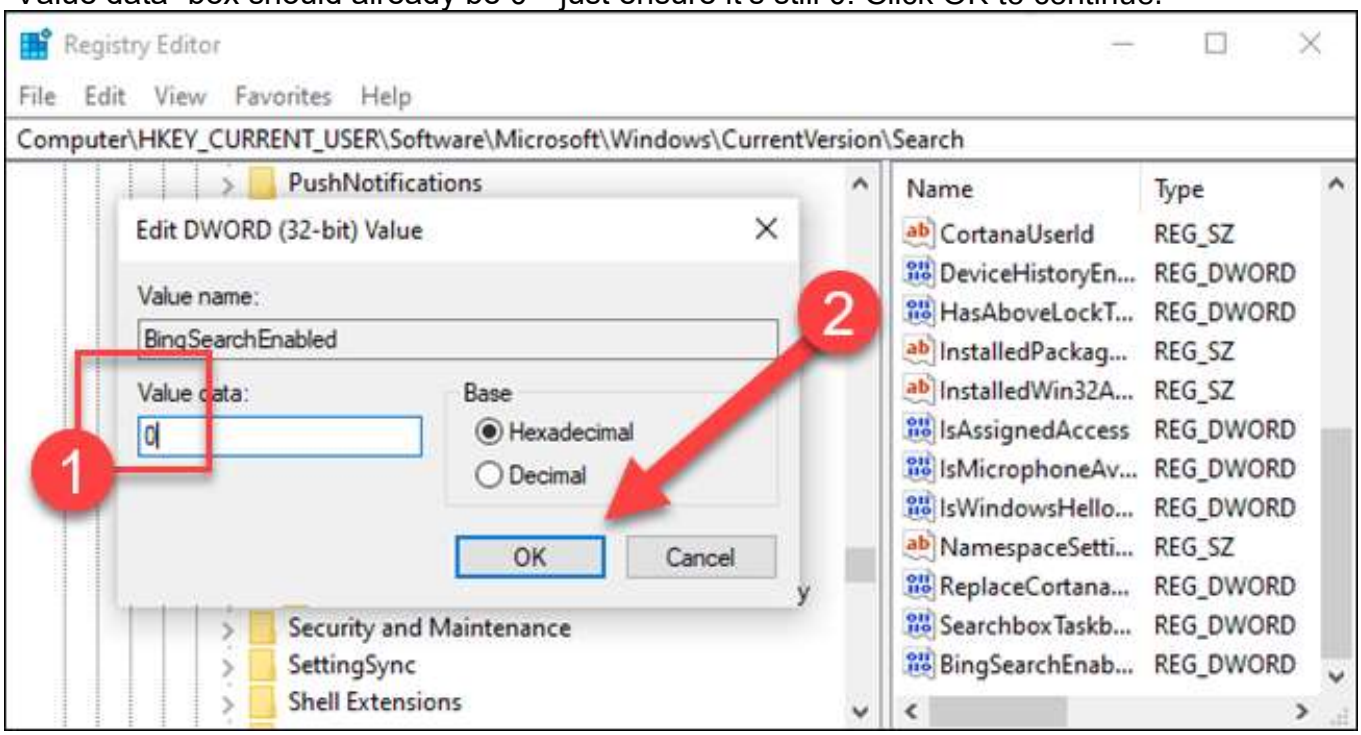
HKEY_CURRENT_USER\SOFTWARE\Microsoft\Windows\CurrentVersion\Search



Right-click Search and choose New > DWORD (32-bit) Value. Name the new value BingSearchEnabled.



Double-click the new BingSearchEnabled value to open its properties dialog. The number in the "Value data" box should already be 0—just ensure it's still 0. Click OK to continue.



Below BingSearchEnabled, you should see CortanaConsent. Double-click this value to open its properties dialog. Change its "Value Data" box to "0". If you don't see CortanaConsent, create it by following the same steps you used to create BingSearchEnabled.

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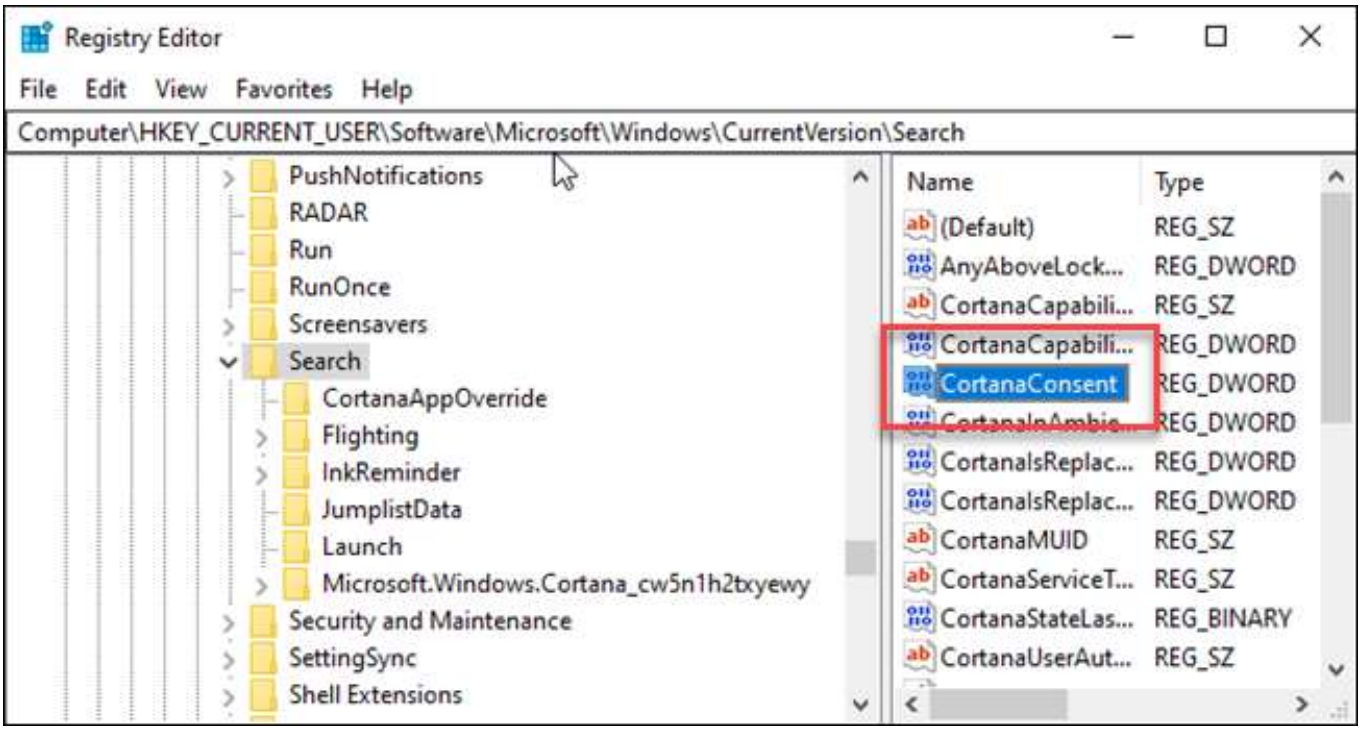
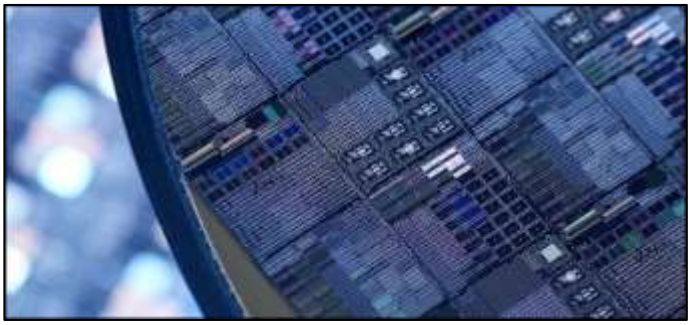


You can close the Registry Editor now. If you search from your start menu, you should now see only local results. If the change doesn't take effect immediately, restart your PC.

If you want web search results back, all you have to do is open the Registry Editor and change the BingSearchEnabled and CortanaConsent values back to 1.

How are CPUs actually made?

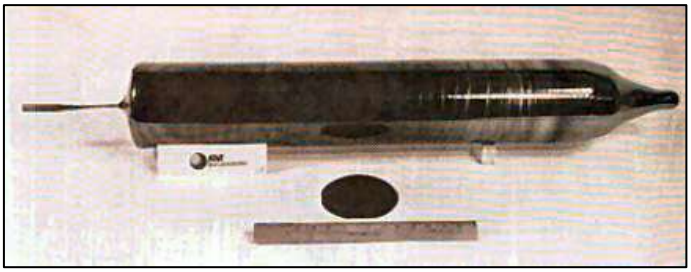


While the way CPUs work may seem like magic, it's the result of decades of clever engineering. As transistors, the building blocks of any microchip, shrink to microscopic scales, the way they are produced grows ever more complicated. They start from a chunk of silicon and result in a device with millions and millions of transistors that now run almost everything in your life. Silicon is rather common in earth's crust and is a semiconductor. This means that depending on what materials you add to it, it can conduct when a voltage is applied to it. It is the switch that makes a CPU work.

Transistors are now so impossibly small that manufacturers can't build them using normal methods. While precision lathes and even 3D printers can make incredibly intricate creations, they usually top out at micrometre levels of precision (that's about one thirty-thousandth of an inch – about 0.0008mm) and aren't suitable for the nanometre scales at which today's chips are built.

The first stage in making a CPU is to make the wafers that they are built on. This process begins with the melting of polysilicon, together with minute amounts of electrically active elements such as arsenic, boron, phosphorous or antimony in a quartz crucible (a container that won't melt at high temperatures).

Once the melt has reached the desired temperature, they lower a silicon seed crystal, or "seed" into the melt. The melt is slowly cooled to the required temperature and crystal growth begins around the seed. As the growth continues, the seed is slowly extracted or "pulled" from the melt. As the ingot is pulled it is slowly rotated. This is done to help normalize any temperature variations in the melt. The temperature of the melt and the speed of extraction govern the diameter of the ingot and the concentration of an electrically active element in the melt governs the electrical properties of the silicon wafers to be made from the ingot. This is a complex, proprietary process requiring many control features on the crystal-growing equipment. The crystals naturally tend to a circular shape due to the crystal structure itself, and the surface tension on the liquid. The result is an ingot like that above.



Next 1-2mm thin wafers are sliced from the ingot. The wafers are then ground and polished both chemically and mechanically to produce a very flat, mirror like surface.

Now you've got to etch the circuit into the wafer to make it a usable chip but as modern chips are so small, how do you do it?

Photolithography solves this issue by removing the need to move complicated machinery around very precisely. Instead, it uses light to etch an image onto the chip, like a vintage overhead projector you might have found in classrooms, but in reverse, scaling the stencil down to the desired precision.

The image is projected onto a silicon wafer, which is machined to very high precision in controlled laboratories, as any single speck of dust on the wafer could mean losing out on thousands of dollars. The wafer is coated with a material called a photoresist, which responds to the light and is washed away, leaving an etching of the CPU that can be filled in with copper or doped to form transistors. This process is then repeated many times, building up the CPU much like a 3D printer would build up layers of plastic.

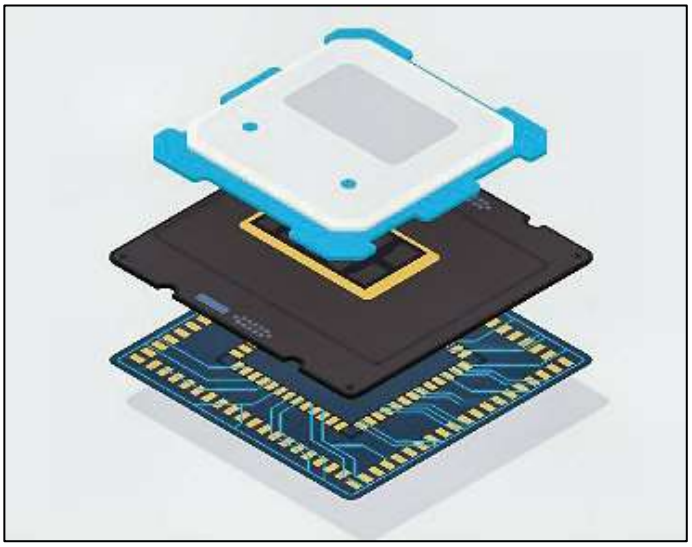
It doesn't matter if you can make the transistors smaller if they don't actually work and nano-scale tech runs into a lot of issues with physics. Transistors are supposed to stop the flow of electricity when they're off, but they're becoming so small that electrons can flow right through them. This is called quantum tunnelling and is a massive problem for silicon engineers.

Defects are another problem. Even photolithography has a cap on its precision. It's analogous to a blurry image from the projector; it's not quite as clear when blown up or shrunk down. Currently,

foundries are trying to mitigate this effect by using “extreme” ultraviolet light, a much higher wavelength than humans can perceive, using lasers in a vacuum chamber. But the problem will persist as the size gets smaller.

Defects can sometimes be mitigated with a process called binning, if the defect hits a CPU core, that core is disabled, and the chip is sold as a lower end part. In fact, most line-ups of CPUs are manufactured using the same blueprint, but have cores disabled and sold at a lower price. If the defect hits the cache or another essential component, that chip may have to be thrown out, resulting in a lower yield and more expensive prices. Newer process nodes, like 7nm and 10nm, will have higher defect rates and will be more expensive as a result.

Packaging it Up



Packaging the CPU for consumer use is more than just putting it in a box with some styrofoam. When a CPU is finished, it’s still useless unless it can connect to the rest of the system. The “packaging” process refers to the method where the delicate silicon die is attached to the PCB most people think of as the “CPU.”

This process requires a lot of precision, but not as much as the previous steps. The CPU die is mounted to a silicon board, and electrical connections are run to all of the pins that make contact with the motherboard. Modern CPUs can have thousands of pins, with the high-end AMD Threadripper having 4094 of them.

Since the CPU produces a lot of heat and should also be protected from the front, an “integrated heat spreader” is mounted to the top. This makes contact with the die and transfers heat to a cooler that is mounted on top. For some enthusiasts, the thermal paste used to make this connection isn’t good enough, which results in people delidding their processors to apply a more premium solution. (Once upon a time these things were called heat sinks).

Once it’s all put together, it can be packaged into actual boxes, ready to hit the shelves and be slotted into your future computer. With how complex the manufacturing is, it’s a wonder most CPUs are only a couple hundred bucks.

Ralph and Edna were both patients in a mental hospital. One day while they were walking past the hospital swimming pool, Ralph suddenly jumped into the deep end. He sank to the bottom of the pool and stayed there. Edna promptly jumped in to save him. She swam to the bottom and pulled him out. When the Head Nurse Director became aware of Edna's heroic act, she immediately ordered her to be discharged from the hospital, as she now considered her to be mentally stable. When she went to tell Edna the news she said, 'Edna, I have good news and bad news. The good news is you're being discharged, since you were able to rationally respond to a crisis by jumping in and saving the life of the person you love. I have concluded that your act displays sound mindedness. The bad news is, Ralph hung himself in the bathroom with his bathrobe belt right after you saved him. I am so sorry, but he's dead.' Edna replied, 'He didn't hang himself, I put him there to dry. How soon can I go home?'

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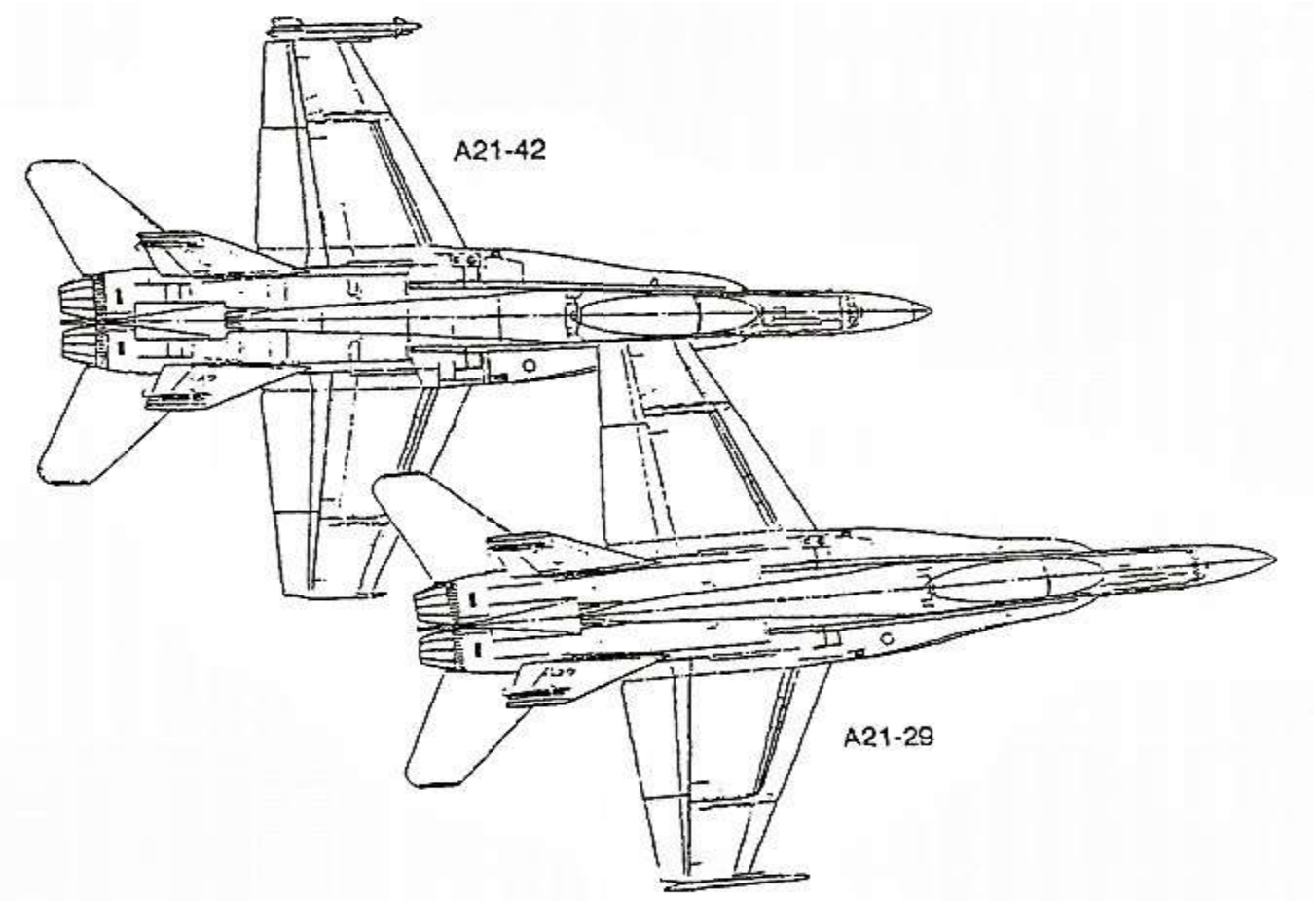
F/A-18 mid-air collision, Tindall, 02 Aug 1990.

Two F/A-18 aircraft from 75 Squadron (A21-29 and A21-42) were practising a simulated pairs intercept. In this exercise, two aircraft track an electronically generated radar return presented on their head-up displays. The aircraft manoeuvre until one achieves parameters which satisfy missile launch requirements. Missile launch is simulated and the launching aircraft continues to provide radar illumination of the simulated target throughout the computed missile flight time.

Aircraft manoeuvres are quite violent throughout the interception and a high degree of teamwork is required. Head-up displays are recorded on videotape during the exercise. An inspection of the tape from A21-29 showed that the aircraft was pulling about 3.3g in a 90' banked turn to starboard, Mach 0.86, altitude 32,000 ft, when it collided with A21-42. During the collision, A21-29 lost most of its port wing outboard of the wing fold and a 2 ft section of its port tailplane was removed. Control was retained and the aircraft landed successfully.

Sadly the pilot of A21-42, WGCDR Ross Fox (CO 75 Sqn), was killed in the accident; his aircraft crashed and was totally destroyed. His body was recovered on 3 August. The 39 year old was a popular commanding officer, ‘a very fine officer and a great bloke.’ On 10 August 1990, all the officers and airmen who had served with 75 Squadron for two years were flown by RAAF Boeing 707 to attend his funeral at St John’s Anglican Cathedral, Brisbane. A party of 82 officers and airmen escorted the colours and bore the casket through the streets to its final resting place.

An AIM-9 missile was mounted on the port wing tip launcher of A21-29 and an analysis of the wreckage showed that this missile had impacted and destroyed the canopy of A21-42. In the process, the dummy warhead of the missile broke up completely and, since the canopy bow was the only component in the area sufficiently stiff to generate the required impact forces, this enabled the exact collision geometry to be determined.



As shown in the Fig. above, this was essentially lateral with a magnitude of only 50-55 knots. Under the circumstances, it was not surprising that the pilot of A21-42 failed to see A21-29 nor that he failed to eject

It was able to postulate the collision sequence in detail as follows:

1. The forward section of the missile on the port wing of 29 impacted the windscreen of 42, The seeker head, fuze and warhead separated from the missile and the windscreen disintegrated.
2. The missile motor impacted the canopy which was destroyed. The motor separated from its launcher and struck the pilot's head and the ejection seat.
3. Simultaneously, the nose of the launcher on the starboard wing of 42 contacted the port jet orifice of 29 causing the launcher to separate.
4. The nose of 29's port launcher contacted the canopy frame just above the cockpit sill and the launcher failed approximately 2 ft aft of the nose.

5. The main body of the port launcher passed beneath the cockpit sill cutting through the pilot, destroying the ejection seat and forcing the control column hard left. The port tailplane of 29 was now in contact with the starboard wing of 42.
6. With 42 commencing to roll to port, the port wing of 29 moved progressively downwards to the leading edge extension, disintegrating as it entered the cockpit. Cockpit equipment was forced out of 42 through the port side of the fuselage.
7. The starboard leading edge flap separated from 42 while the port tailplane tip was removed from 29.
8. After 0.125 seconds, the two aircraft separated with 42 rolling and turning to port before falling into a spin. Reconstruction of the collision geometry enabled the relative velocity vector to be established.

The missing man formation.

There are few distinctive and common traditions which have proved constant or enduring in most air forces. Among those that the RAAF observes, none is more emotive than the use of the Missing Man Formation at a Service funeral. During a fly-over at the church or graveside, either the formation contains a gap where one aircraft is conspicuously missing or an aircraft in the formation abruptly pulls up during the flypast and climbs steeply away while the rest continue in level flight. The gesture is intended as more than a respectful farewell, for which a simple flypast would suffice; it is a personal tribute to the person who has passed away or fallen in combat – an expression that he/she will be sorely missed.

The Missing Man Formation is, first and foremost, a custom that is specific to airmen and air forces but when is the use of such a formation appropriate and what are the conventions associated with its conduct?

The historical origins of the practice are quite obscure. Claims are often made that it began during World War I, when units returning from an operation routinely formed up on arrival over their home airfield to allow observers on the ground to see at a glance what the day's losses had been. If this was a recognised and common practice, personal accounts by airmen of that war are strangely reticent about mentioning it. Another popular myth seems to be that the formation was first flown by the Royal Air Force as a mark of respect for the fallen German ace, Manfred von Richthofen – the famous "Red Baron". If true, Australian sources would have been ideally placed to record the fact, since the funeral of this enemy airman was conducted by No 3 Squadron of the Australian Flying Corps at Bertangles, France, on 22 April 1918. Remarkably, not a single account mentions the use of the Missing Man Formation, nor indeed any flypast at all.

What is certain is that, after World War I, flypasts and aerobatic displays by aircraft from the armed services became increasingly common during ceremonial occasions and prominent public events. Flypasts at funerals, however, largely remained an informal and private arrangement within the military air services. The first officially recorded Missing Man Formation was flown in Britain in January 1936, during the funeral service of King George V – an honour rendered appropriate by the monarch's rank as a Marshal of the RAF. In the United States, the first Missing Man Formation appears to have been flown at the funeral of Major General Oscar Westover, chief of the US Army Air Corps, in September 1938. When General Hoyt Vandenberg died in April 1954, he became the first senior officer of the USAF to be honoured with a Missing Man Formation flypast at Arlington National Cemetery, involving six B-47 Stratojets in a V-formation with the second position on the right vacant.

What these instances demonstrated is that, far from being reserved exclusively for airmen at unit level, the Missing Man Formation has been regularly accorded to senior ranking officers. Further blurring the picture is the fact that 'missing man' flights have taken on a wide appeal, so that they are no longer the sole preserve of air forces at all. Especially in the United States, private associations and groups also perform Missing Man Formations at funerals of prominent members of the community, not just veterans and during other commemorative occasions. Law enforcement agencies often conduct flypasts at the funerals of policemen killed in the line of duty, while commercial aviation companies also fly tributes at the funeral services of deceased pilots.

This widening of application has produced some further refinement of the standard Missing Man Formation, as in the variant where the flight approaches from the south, preferably near sundown, and one of the aircraft suddenly peels off to the west and flies into the sunset. The trend towards non-exclusivity with aerial salutes has also been evident in Australia, to the extent that when the pioneering female aviator Nancy Bird Walton died in January 2009, a Qantas A380 flew over St Andrews Cathedral at the commencement of her state funeral service in Sydney. Within the RAAF, practice of the Missing Man Formation has largely followed the traditions established by the RAF. A large-scale flypast marked the funeral in 1980 of Sir Richard Williams, regarded as the "Father of the RAAF", involving four separate groups of RAAF aircraft – without, so far as is known, there being any empty gaps in the formations. At the funeral just four years later of the RAAF's first four-star officer, Air Chief Marshal Sir Frederick Scherger, a 'missing man' was flown by five RAAF Macchis.

While the Air Force's most senior and distinguished officers have frequently been accorded the 'missing man' honour in Australia, the same tribute has also been paid by individual RAAF units, particularly fighter squadrons, to their past and present members. After Wing Commander Ross Fox, Commanding Officer of No 75 Squadron, was killed in an aircraft accident at Tindal in 1990, a Missing Man Formation was flown by the squadron at his funeral service in Brisbane and in

2006, Wing Commander ('Bobby') Gibbes and Wing Commander Richard ('Dick') Cresswell, two of Australia's most accomplished fighter pilots, were both accorded the honour on their passing away. Serving members of the units that these renowned airmen had once led in combat—No 3 and No 77 Squadron, respectively— flew the 'missing man' in F/A-18 Hornets.

Although the Missing Man Formation is an aerial salute that works best as an informal tribute by airmen to 'one of their own', history demonstrates that the custom has never been confined solely to airmen nor initiated only at unit level. While use at the close personal level of airmen farewelling a respected and cherished colleague is probably closest to the original intention of the gesture, certain historical precedents exist for the Missing Man Formation – in all its variants – to be used for departed senior and prominent figures, even without an Air Force background.

Regular naps prevent old age – especially if you take them while you're driving.

34 Squadron, repairing undercarriage brackets.

Bob Beresford, Rex Koerbin and Garth Simpson.

Windscreen replacement.

34 Squadron Mystere 20 VIP aircraft had a windscreen consisting of five laminations of glass, about 1.5 inches thick. The windscreens were secured by about 200 machine screws into the airframe and 'gooped' with fuel tank sealant for pressurisation sealing.

Replacement was usually conducted at the next D servicing, which occurred annually, also, windscreens were replaced when the de-icing/de-misting filament failed, or delamination bubbles appeared. Once the screws were removed, a sledge hammer had to be used to break the seal to remove the windscreen. (Note the impact points all the way around the edge, about 2 inches from the airframe.)

A windscreen replacement usually attracted a big crowd, as it was both rare and spectacular to watch a tradesman hit an aircraft with a 14lb sledge hammer, at full swing about 20 times per windscreen.

The 'framie' was under considerable pressure, given that the crowd, which usually comprised most of the unit, including the CO, and a RAAF photographer to record it.

Retirement – twice the husband on half the income.

WRAAF 263 Rookies Course

Click HERE for the names in alphabetical order – sorry, not in face order.

C-27 lands on the road.

A C-27J Spartan parked alongside a Royal Flying Doctor Service aircraft on the Eyre Highway at Chadwick Roadstrip in the Nullarbor, South Australia.

There are several emergency roadstrips in Australia, bur unlike other countries, those in Australia were not developed as alternate landing areas for the military. Instead these strengthened sections of roadway are for the Flying Doctor aircraft to use when responding to emergency calls.

Back in Oct 2017, delighted motorists witnessed a rare sight on the Nullarbor Plain as a C-27J Spartan and RFDS Pilatus PC-12 made practice emergency landings as part of an integrated emergency services training exercise on the Eyre Highway's Chadwick roadstrip around 100km from the SA/WA border, one of only two emergency road airstrips in South Australia.

Channel 7 News were invited along for the ride to help capture a ‘birds-eye’ view of the activity, the exact location from where the RFDS recently retrieved two motorists critically-injured after their car rolled on the highway.

Click HERE to see the video taken by Channel 7

You can live without sex - but not without glasses.

Audrey Webb, Linda Carter.

A hair on the head is worth two on the brush.

Trish Newman, Janet Gees, Lorraine Arnold, Leslie Theaker. 1969.

At right are the pilot members of "C" Flight No 77 Squadron in early 1971. "C" Flight, although part of No 77 Squadron acted in an independent capacity, within the command of the CO, providing Tactical Photographic Reconnaissance Support to the Army.

A couple, although possibly only one, Single Seat Mirages had been fitted with a KA-56 photo reccee camera. The camera replaced the Cyrano Radar in the aircraft nose cone. As well as five pilots they had an air portable photographic reccee interpretation facility manned by 3 Specialist Photographic Interpreters, and a second air portable cabin which housed a film processing "Versermat". This facility was maned by a number, of again, specially trained photographers.

They provided airborne photographic support to the ADF on a daily tasking basis. In addition, they were involved in all major ADF training exercises from then on. To get the arrangement underway they initially raced around the various operational Army units scattered around Australia giving then info on their capabilities and getting them on-side.

Standing: Nick Ford, Terry Body, Jim Treadwell (CO).
Kneeling: Ken Semmler, John Archer.

6 Squadron, 1987

Mel Hupfeld

Mel Hupfeld, Micka Gray

Mel was born in Sydney on the 7th March 1962 and joined the Air Force as an Officer Cadet in 1980. He finished his training in 1983, won the 'Flying Prize' and graduated with a Bachelor of Science degree. He completed a Master of Arts degree in Defence Studies at King's College London in 1997.

During his career he has flown the Dassault Mirage III and McDonnell Douglas F/A-18 Hornet flying mainly with No. 3 Squadron. He was awarded the Distinguished Service Cross on the 27th November 2003 for his command of No. 75 Squadron during Operation Falconer and the squadron was awarded the Meritorious Unit Citation.

Mel has commanded several RAAF units during his career, including 75 Squadron, 2 OCU, 81 Wing and Air Combat Group (ACG). He was promoted to Air Vice Marshal and appointed as Air Commander Australia on 3 February 2012. He moved to the Capability Development Group, as Head Capability Systems, in September 2014, before being appointed the acting and final Chief Capability Development Group in 2015 and then Head Force Design in the Vice Chief of the Defence Force Group from 2016.

As Commander ACG, Mel oversaw the phasing out of the F-111, introduction of the F/A-18F Super Hornet and the initial deployments of the Heron Remotely Piloted Aircraft System. He was also Combined Force Air Component Commander for Talisman Sabre 2011 and Joint Force Air Component Commander for domestic operations associated with then US President Barack Obama's visit and the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting.

He was promoted air marshal and appointed Chief of Joint Operations on 24 May 2018.

He succeeded Air Marshal Leo Davies as Chief of Air Force on the 3rd July 2019.

All aboard!

Participants of Exercise Shaken Fury, board a C-17 Globemaster from 36 Squadron before it departs Amberley for the United States. The Globemaster allowed an Australian Urban Search

and Rescue (USAR) Taskforce to exercise with international peers in the United States. The contingent of 60 personnel flew to Indiana for Exercise Shaken Fury over 2-9 June.

Air Movements personnel from 23 Squadron loaded 14 tonnes of specialist equipment on the Globemaster along with the Australian USAR Taskforce.

Full house.

Participants of Exercise Shaken Fury, onboard the Globemaster bound for the United States. The successful deployment of the Taskforce highlighted the efforts made by Defence and Australian USAR teams in the past decade to ensure they can be deployed at short-notice. The C-17A and C-130J crews have deployed Australian USAR teams for disaster relief operations in Indonesia, Japan, New Zealand, and Vanuatu.

Regular engagement between Defence and USAR teams – such as through training activities like Exercise Shaken Fury – ensure they can be deployed to save lives in future

Loading.

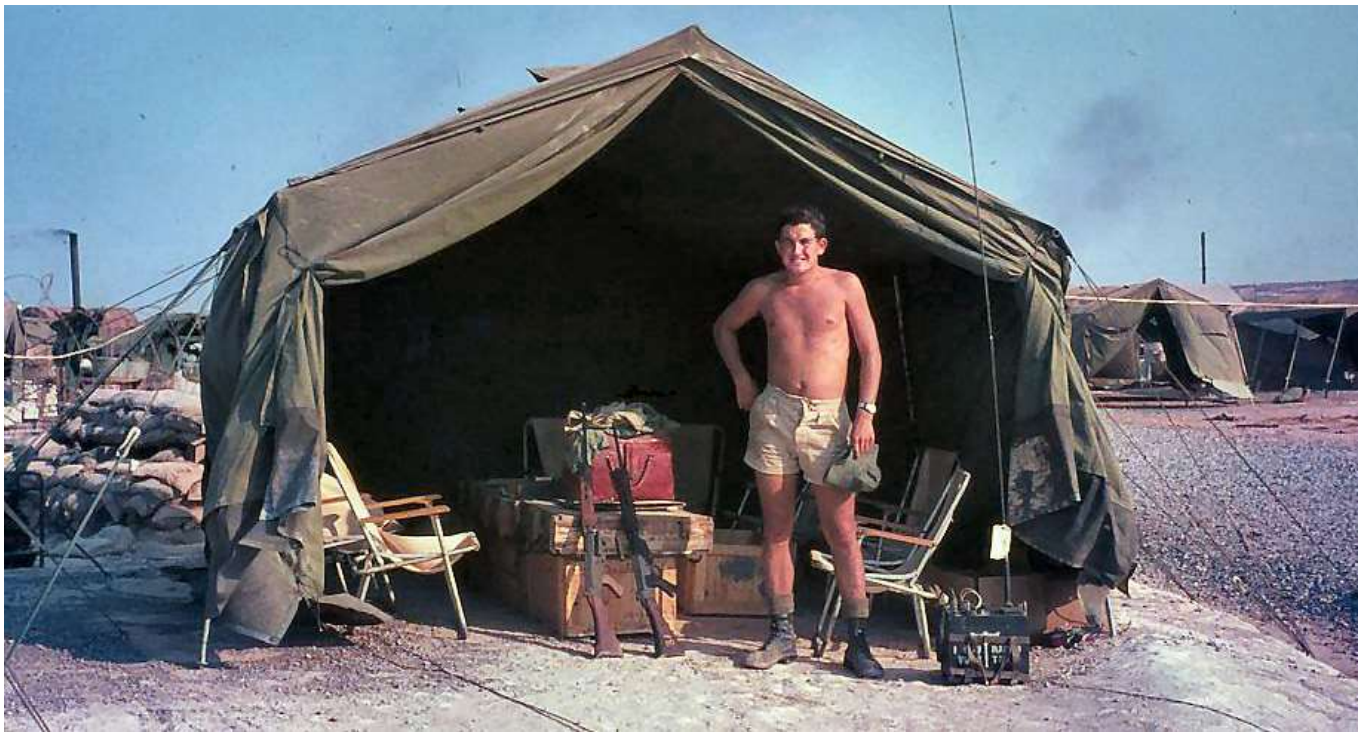
Below, 36 Squadron Loadmaster, Corporal Georgia Harper loads search and rescue equipment on to a Globemaster, prior to it departing for Exercise Shaken Fury. The deployment for Exercise

Shaken Fury signified how far the relationship has developed between Defence and USAR Teams, according to Squadron Leader Ben Barber.

Having previously worked as an Air Movements Officer at RAAF Base Richmond, he is now posted as the Movements Flight Commander at RAAF Base Amberley. “Both sides have come a long way since our interactions in 2011, when Air Force deployed USAR Teams following earthquakes in New Zealand and Japan,” Squadron Leader Barber said. “In slow time, we’ve brought USAR Teams to Air Movements Sections at Richmond and Amberley to go through what equipment is safe to fly, and plan how it is palletised to ensure minimal delays.”

Personnel who participated in the exercise.

Peter Beath



Peter was a Framie with 9 Sqn from April 1968 to March 1969, shown here at Ben Hoa Base, not long after the Coral Balmoral battle. 9Sqn sent aircraft and personnel in support of Army after the battle. Pete is shown here in front of the 9Sqn maintenance "hangar".

Star Cinema Wagga.

O

Sad days at RAAF Wagga, the Cinema is coming down, so many memories for so many people over so many years, unfortunately termites and other factors won the battle and the Star Cinema cannot be saved.

Wagga and Laverton were the only two RAAF Cinemas equipped to run 70mm.

You know you're old when the candles cost more than your birhday cake.

Caloundra RSL could lose its Memorial Garden.

The Courier Mail

04 Sept 2019

A decade of hard work establishing the Caloundra RSL memorial garden will soon be all for nothing. The Bob McInnes Memorial Garden was renamed earlier this year in honour of the late veteran and RSL sub-branch club president.

Paul Spackman, Bob McInnes (right)

It is home to many monuments including the restored RAAF Iroquois "Huey" helicopter AS-1022 and was soon to be home to a memorial for indigenous soldiers. All that now hangs in the balance awaiting a Sunshine Coast Council's decision to cut the main memorial garden by about one third to make way for a four-lane road, bike lane and footpath. RSL secretary Heather Christie said the council planned to take 7.5m from their fence line on Third Avenue for the project, hoped to alleviate congestion on the Caloundra Rd and Nicklin Way roundabout.

"They said they had eight options and they've chosen the one where they're destroying a memorial," Ms Christie said. "It makes me disappointed that they don't respect what we've done for our departed and living veterans." RSL sub-branch president George Harris said the flag-pole, grey masonry walls, six manicured garden beds and trees would be removed.

"It's a lack of respect for what it is — a memorial garden," he said.

Ms Christie said their plans to establish more pavilions, gardens and memorials would have to be put on hold until the council provided them a timeframe for the project. “If they don’t give us a deadline as to when it’s going to happen we’re still going to add to our garden, so we’re putting money into something that’s going to be stolen off us, destroyed, so virtually we have to put the brakes on and how long is that going to take?” Ms Christie said.

She said the resuming of the land was not only harmful to the garden, but Anzac Day and similar ceremonies might have to be cancelled. She said they were in the process of forming a “Save the Bob McInnes Memorial Garden” committee. Mr Harris had no doubt the 1400 sub branch members would be on their side.

“The biggest thing is that Bob had a huge part to play from the very beginning and Judy (his wife) felt so privileged when we changed the name that she felt comfortable to lay his ashes here.”

Sunshine Coast Council was approached for comment but did not respond. Groundsman Phillip Moore, a veteran himself, has been the caretaker of the gardens for the past four years. He spends up to 15 hours, four days a week maintaining the carefully manicured garden in its current form. He said he was “guttered” to hear of the council’s plans. “As I’m retired, it’s all I’ve got to do,” Mr Moore said. “I spend a lot of time here and every time I do, I reflect on what it means.”

WRAAF Dining in night.

First WRAAF dining in night. Held in the SGTS Mess at Laverton, 08 Feb 1972

38 Sqn, 1969

Mick Williams (Elec), Trev Benneworth (Radio), Barry Allwright (Elec)

The Kitchen

Kedron Wavell Services club.

After 6 years of service, the HQ café has been given a facelift and also a name change. It is now called ***The Kitchen***. Not named after the cooking centre of a house as you might expect but instead named after Sister Alice Elizabeth Kitchen, a nurse within the Australian Army.

At 27 years of age, Alice, who was from Victoria, entered the Army in October 1914, during the First World War. Her duties included transporting the wounded to and from the Dardanelles as well as service in Egypt, England, France and on the field until her return to Australia on the 28th August, 1919.

More than 3000 Australian women served during WW1 and were exposed to the physical and mental strain from the battles. They endured situations that ranged from difficult to near impossible due to the lack of staff and medical provisions, not to mention working through freezing condition, gale-force winds, lack of food, medical conditions themselves and exposure to gas and bomb attacks.

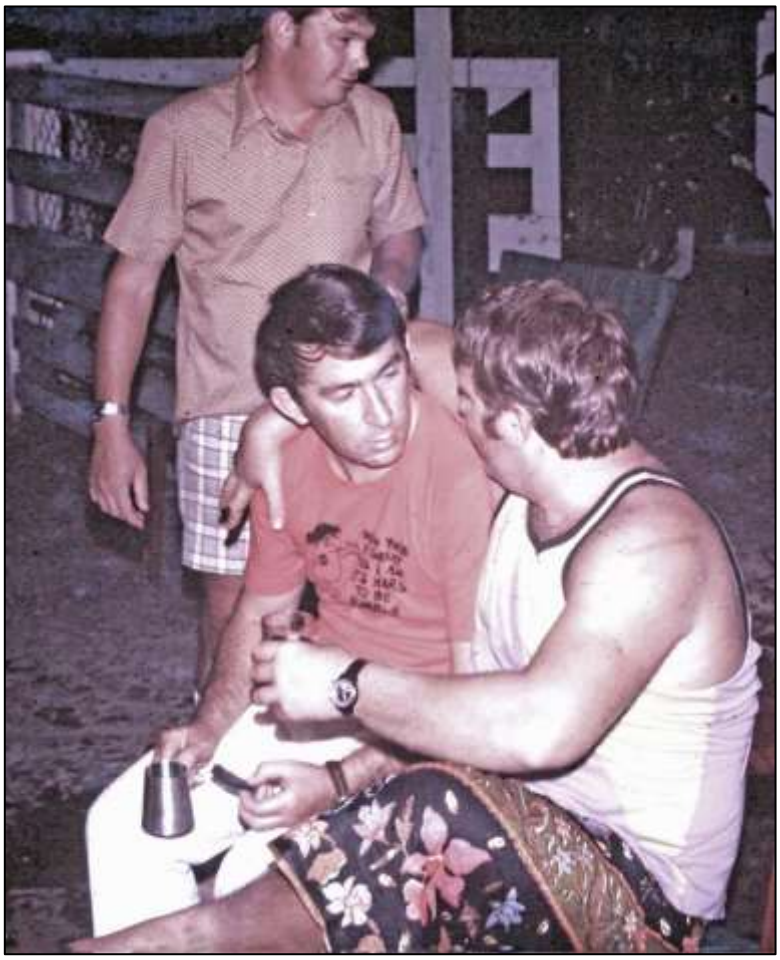
Alice died in June 1950, aged 77.

The new name for the Café was chosen to honour the women who have and are serving our country.

As well as a new fresh look KWSC chefs have revamped the Menu. You now have the perfect atmosphere to catch up with friends for coffee or dinner, before catching a first class show or meeting over lunch or dinner with business colleagues.

The Kitchen is open Monday to Saturday from 9.30am and Sundays from 7.30am.

Butterworth, 1974/75



LAC Bruce ("Slim") Hurrell explaining to Sergeant Ted McEvoy that you cannot tow a Mirage aircraft in the same manner he used to tow a C130A Hercules.

Slim, with a few shandies on board, gave me an extensive explanation of towing angles, torque limitations within climes of high humidity levels, Pythagoras theorem, the chemical composition of the "shear pin" which was designed by the French to fracture when the towing became "exceeding manufacture's aircraft relocation envelope" (got too hard).

In the rear of the pic, can be seen Brian "Burglar" Burgess keeping track of Slim's verbal advice.

You may also notice a subtle remuneration-difference between the senior NCOs and the troops – I can been seen imbibing from an up-market, exclusive product from Selangor whilst Slim is utilising a common-as-muck glass container.

A sweet love story.

A couple had only been married for two weeks and the husband, although very much in love, couldn't wait to go out on the town and party with his old buddies. So, he said to his new wife, "Honey, I'll be right back." "Where are you going, Coochy Coo?" asked the wife. "I'm going to the bar, Pretty Face," he answered. I'm going to have a beer with the boys." The wife said, "You want a beer, my love?" She opened the door to the refrigerator and showed him 25 different kinds of beer, brands from 12 different countries: Germany, Holland, Japan, India, etc. The husband didn't know what to do, and the only thing that he could think of saying was, "Yes, Lollipop ... but at the bar... You know ... they have frozen glasses... " He didn't get to finish the sentence, because the wife interrupted him by saying, "You want a frozen glass, Puppy Face?" She took a huge beer mug out of the freezer, so frozen that she was getting chills just holding it. The husband, looking a bit pale, said, "Yes, Tootsie Roll, but at the bar they have those hors d'oeuvres that are really delicious... I won't be long. I'll be! right back. I promise. OK?" "You want hors d'oeuvres, Poochie Pooh?" She opened the oven and took out 5 dishes of different hors d'oeuvres: chicken wings, pigs in blankets, mushroom caps, and little quiches. "But my sweet honey... at the bar. you know there's swearing, dirty words and all that..."

"You want dirty words, Cutie Pie? LISTEN UP CHICKEN SHIT! SIT YOUR ASS DOWN, SHUT THE HELL UP, DRINK YOUR BEER IN YOUR FROZEN MUG AND EAT YOUR HORS D'OEUVRES BECAUSE YOUR MARRIED ASS ISN'T GOING TO A DAMNED BAR! THAT SHIT IS OVER, GOT IT, JACKASS?"

and....they lived happily ever after. Isn't that a sweet story?

Hearing Services for Veterans.

Hearing loss and tinnitus are two of the most common conditions experienced by former Australian Defence Force personnel. Due to the nature of military training and service, veterans of all ages may experience one or both of these conditions.

TPI members have access to a comprehensive range of free hearing aids, devices and services through the Australian Government Hearing Services Program (HSP) and the Department of Veterans' Affairs (DVA).

Hearing Services Program

The Hearing Services Program (HSP) provides hearing services to all Australians, including veterans. The HSP offers more than 160 fully-subsidised, high quality hearing aids to meet the hearing needs of most veterans. Depending on your hearing needs, you may need to try a number of devices before finding the one that is right for you. Your hearing provider can access all devices from the HSP and will help you find the right option for you.

Hearing aids from the HSP are provided to you at no cost.

There are some hearing aids that are not provided through the HSP. These can be expensive and may not be necessary. The vast majority of veterans successfully manage their hearing with fully subsidised hearing aids and assistive listening devices. If your hearing provider recommends hearing aids to you that are not from the HSP, please ask them to contact DVA to discuss your circumstances. The best contact for DVA is health.approval@dva.gov.au. DVA does not provide reimbursement for hearing devices that are purchased without approval in advance.

DVA Services

Assistive listening devices

Assistive Listening Devices (ALDs) can help you hear better in specific situations and are provided at no cost to you, if you have a clinical need and are prescribed these by your GP or hearing provider. ALDs include:

- induction loops for providing hearing support in a specific area
- headsets for watching the television

- microphone/FM listening systems
- door bells and smoke alarms with lights
- telephone accessories
- streamers that transmit sound from a mobile phone, tablet or TV to a hearing aid

ALDs can be used in conjunction with your hearing aid supplied through the HSP. Experts advise that the combination of a radio frequency ALD worn in conjunction with hearing aids provide superior performance in noisy environments and over distances than is possible from any hearing device alone.

Your hearing provider should consider ALDs as part of your hearing rehabilitation. ALDs are provided through DVA at no cost to you. Your hearing provider can submit a request to DVA to fund the ALDs prescribed for you.

If they have any questions they should contact DVA via health.approval@dva.gov.au.

Tinnitus services.

Mild tinnitus and hearing loss can usually be managed with fully subsidised hearing aids from the HSP. If your tinnitus is severe, your GP can refer you to an audiologist or Ear, Nose and Throat (ENT) specialist who will assess you and, if required, recommend treatment for funding by DVA.

Treatment may include devices to help with sleep and/or hearing aids with tinnitus settings. Clinical information will need to be provided to DVA for prior approval before treatment commences. Your provider will be able to provide to DVA your:

- audiology reports
- other clinical reports that may need to be considered – for example a report from a psychologist if your mental health and wellbeing is affected by tinnitus
- evaluation of tinnitus severity
- proposed rehabilitation plan
- other expenses associated with your tinnitus treatment – this may include any extra appointment fees.

To request approval to fund your tinnitus treatment, your hearing provider will need to contact DVA via health.approval@dva.gov.au.

Exceptional circumstances – hearing aids

DVA can only fund hearing aids that are not covered by the HSP in exceptional circumstances when your hearing provider can show that your needs cannot be met by HSP hearing aids and/or ALDs. In these cases, your hearing provider must submit a request to DVA and have it approved before the device is provided. This is called prior approval.

To request prior approval, your hearing provider will need to contact DVA and provide:

- copies of your audiology and clinical hearing reports
- other clinical reports that may need to be considered
- any other information which may be relevant to the request
- details of the hearing aids they are recommending.

Your provider will deliver all necessary information to DVA. DVA will review this and liaise with your hearing provider to find the best outcome.

For prior approval requests, your provider should contact DVA via health.approval@dva.gov.au.

Click HERE for more information.

Specialist hearing services.

If you live in a remote area or have complex communication needs you may need to access specialist hearing services. If this applies to you, your GP or hearing provider will discuss your options with you.

Click HERE for more information.

Note: White Card holders with only tinnitus as an accepted condition are not eligible for HSP. Support is available through the DVA tinnitus program

Problems with your hearing aid?

If you are having problems with your hearing devices, you should always see your hearing provider in the first instance. Depending on your circumstances, your hearing aid or device may need to be adjusted. Your hearing provider is best placed to do this.

Alternatively, your hearing provider may recommend an assistive listening device and/or fit you with new hearing aids to better suit your needs.

If your hearing provider suggests you should pay for a hearing aid:

- Ask them about the fully subsidised aids through the HSP and DVA ALDs that might address your hearing concerns.
- If they say fully subsidised devices will not meet your needs, request they contact DVA.

- Do not pay for a device and then ask DVA to reimburse you – DVA cannot provide reimbursement for aids purchased without approval in advance.

If you need more information:

Hearing Service Program
Phone: 1800 500 726
Email: hearing@health.gov.au
Website: www.hearingservices.gov.au

DVA General Enquiries
Phone: 1800 555 254
Email: GeneralEnquiries@dva.gov.au
Website: www.dva.gov.au/health-and-wellbeing/health-services-and-conditions/hearing-loss

Hearing or speech impairment assistance
If you are deaf, or have a hearing impairment or speech impairment, contact us through the National Relay Service (NRS):

- TTY users phone 1800 555 677 then ask for 1800 555 254
- Speak and Listen users phone 1800 555 727 then ask for 1800 555 254
- Internet relay users connect to the NRS then ask for 1800 555 254

Can you picture these scenes??

TechTalk

You turn your PC/laptop on and you hear a horrible screeching sound!!!! That's the sound of a dead hard disk drive.

You lose your phone, it falls overboard on your next cruise, you drop it in carpark and truck runs over it, some mongrel steals it, etc, etc.

These events do happen.

What about all those hundreds of pictures you have, financial information, your many email contacts, etc, etc. How are you going to recover them?

You've lost the lot if you have not carried out a backup.

There are three ways to Backup your Data.

Device users previously opted to back up their files as a means to prepare for restoration in the event their hard drive crashed. Now, users are facing a different threat — ransomware. If a device

becomes corrupted by this form of malware, the only way to restore files is from backups. If these files are not current, the user faces the loss of any files that have yet to be backed up.

To prevent the loss of files users can backup their files in these three ways:

1. Within your computer you have the ability to back up your files. This method will save your files within your PC and is not highly recommended. The reason being, if your computer becomes infected with malware, or crashes, it is likely you will lose these your backup files as well, however, if you would like to use this method, you need to:
   - Access your Control Panel
   - Go to System and Security
   - Backup and Restore
   - Set up backup

Upon doing these things, you will likely get the following message: "You can save your files to your computer, but it is recommended you use an external device".

2. Saving your data to an external device. External devices include USB drives, Solid State Drives (SSDs), Compact Disks, etc. This method is highly recommended because if your PC becomes infected with malware, or crashes, you will have an external device to regain access to all of your files. This external device can be used to upload all of your data to another PC, or to your existing PC once it is fixed. When purchasing an external device, keep in mind how much storage you will need. You are able to purchase external storage devices at any electronics or office supply store, such as Harvey Normans, Officeworks, etc..

3. You can also back up your files using cloud storage. This includes Box.com, Google Drive, and Drop Box to name a few. These services are often free of charge. Unlike external drives, when you upload your data to these services, you're trusting a third-party to keep them safe. By choosing an external device, you keep your data in your possession hough I don't think you'll have to worry using devices provided by the big ones (Google etc).

Beyond the Backup

Ultimately the backup method users choose is theirs. Regardless of which option picked, backing up your data is critical. With the growing cyber threats, it no longer seems to be a question of if, but when. Users never know when a malware infection may hit, or when your trusty hard drive is going to crash. Once this happens, the data could be gone forever. The only real hope of restoring it is having backup files available. Once you start backing up your files, it is important you maintain them. This means keeping them updated and ensuring they are free from malware.

iPhone backup.

Mobile phones have become the bedrock upon which we build our digital lives but unfortunately by their nature phones are almost always in danger of getting lost, damaged, or stolen. Most iPhone users think their phones are automatically backed up to iCloud, however unless you pay

for an upgrade you are only backing up a maximum of 5GB of iPhone data. That means you will likely lose all of your precious photos, contacts and files unless you have a backup plan in place.

Having a good backup strategy means that you're protected no matter what happens. Fortunately backing up your iPhone isn't that difficult. Click the links below for the different options available

iCloud iTunes Online storage Layered backup

You will find the costs HERE

Android backup – depends on your model

Just a few years ago, mobile phones were basic devices that could send and receive voice calls but not do much else. These days, smartphones are about as significant as full-fledged desktop PCs and laptops, and are filled with valuable email messages, contacts, videos, photos, and documents. People depend on their smartphones every day and losing the data those devices contain can be as disastrous as suffering through a hard-drive crash on a proper PC. That's why it's important that you back up your phone as regularly and carefully as you do your other devices.

Most major smartphone platforms can back up their data to a computer or to the Internet. In the event of a crash—which, for phones, could literally mean crashing onto the floor and shattering, the data can be easily restored when the device is repaired. Here are a couple of resources you can use with popular Android smartphones to ensure that all of your data is properly backed up.

Let Google back up your settings

Google's Android offers the ability to seamlessly save certain settings like wireless network preferences, bookmarks, and custom dictionary words to their servers using your Google account. To enable it:

- Go to Settings, Personal, Backup and reset, and select both Backup my data and Automatic restore.
- Go to Settings, Personal, Accounts & Sync, and select your Google account.
- Select all of the option boxes listed, to ensure that all available data is synced.

Though the specific procedure may slightly vary between Android devices, the process is generally the same. The above example is for Google Nexus S devices.

Back up additional settings

For data that Google doesn't directly back up (such as SMS/MMS messages, playlists, and alarms), you can use third-party software. One popular choice is MyBackup Pro, which allows secure backups to remote servers or your own memory card, and automated scheduling. The software isn't free (it costs $4.99), but you can try it free for a trial period to see whether it meets your needs. To begin backing up, simply download the MyBackup Pro app from the Google Play store, and then launch the app from your phone.

Back up pictures and videos manually

For your other important data, you can back up your smartphone to your computer manually. Connect your phone to your computer via a USB cable, and it will show up as an external hard drive. (For Macs, you may need to first download a tool called Android File Transfer). Select the disk, and navigate to the DCIM folder. This folder contains your video and picture data. Select the data files that you want to back up, and drag them to an area on your computer, such as your desktop. The selected files will copy over to your computer.

Back up pictures, music, and videos automatically

If the manual process above is too cumbersome, you can use third-party software to automate copying your smartphone data to your computer. One popular method is to use AirSync from DoubleTwist, which will sync data between your computer (Mac or Windows) and your smartphone, similarly to the way iTunes works for iOS users. AirSync can also sync wirelessly over your network. Another notable piece of software is The Missing Sync for Android, an all-in-one sync and backup program that is easy to use (and again offers wireless syncing), but has a higher price tag than other choices.

If these options don't appeal to you, consider signing up for free services like Google Music and Picasa, which make backing up your music, photos, and videos to their Internet services easy.

A truism in the IT world is that there are two types of disk drives.

1. First are those disk drives which have failed and
2. Those disk drives which will fail.

Over to you.

My son wanted to borrow my cordless drill – sure I said, here it is.

Available in the new Kedron Wavell Services club ***The Kitchen*** café.

Optus Stadium, Perth.

Optus Stadium in Perth has been voted ***World's Best Looking Stadium***

K

Optus Stadium has just won an international award for architecture and design. Perth's extraordinary Optus Stadium is the best sports stadium in the world for 2019. Not only has Optus Stadium become a tourism boom for WA, but the stadium has now gained international acclaim after winning the Prix Versailles for Sports – for architecture and design. Which makes Perth's Optus Stadium the most beautiful sporting facility in the world.

The $1.6 billion stadium was able to beat out stadiums from China and New York making it a very impressive feat.

Not for me

People actually drive along THESE roads.

The future is rapidly becoming our reality.

Microsoft is all about enabling people to do things they never dreamed they could do. Microsoft's own Julia White never imagined she could stand on the stage at this week's Microsoft Inspire 2019 event in Las Vegas, whilst a life-size hologram of her could simultaneously stand on a stage in Tokyo and talk perfect Japanese.

Like any tech company, Microsoft loves its technology, words like Azure and HoloLens have become part of the lexicon on the company's Redmond campus, but to the rest of the world, we are still getting used to the potential of artificial intelligence and virtual reality.

Indeed, what's also important is how these capabilities work together … when you add Virtual Reality (VR) to the cloud and you combine AI with neural speech … maybe in the future adding in a bit of 3D printing and biorobotics too. The point is what they enable you to do, today and tomorrow.

Recently in Las Vegas, Julia White was certainly real and her Japanese speaking clone seemed pretty authentic too. The future is rapidly becoming our reality. The challenge is to bring these capabilities to life in useful, relevant and progressive ways – to make life better, to help us all achieve more.

As for how Microsoft pulled off this remarkable demo, the first step was creating White's seemingly identical, life-sized hologram. To do that, she visited one of the company's Mixed Reality capture studios, where she was recorded delivering her presentation in English. That would be enough to allow anyone wearing one of Microsoft's HoloLens devices to feel like White was standing in front of them, delivering her speech.
To then make it seem like White was speaking Japanese, Microsoft used its neural text-to-speech technology to create White's "personalized voice signature." Once it had that, it could have the hologram say anything, in any language, and the audio would sound like White's voice.

L

Of course, an international audience could still benefit from a presentation like White's even if Microsoft didn't turn her into a hologram or use AI to replicate her voice — they could watch her on their television or computer screen and listen along as a human translator repeated White's words in their native tongue. But this technology removes so many of those barriers between the speaker and the audience.

Imagine a world leader delivering a speech and every person across the globe feeling like the leader was in the room with them and speaking the local language. Or a world-class professor giving a lecture that anyone could attend and understand — without leaving their homes and without learning their teacher's language. And then there's the exciting possibility of what might come next. Mixed reality contact lenses that do away with the need for a headset altogether? AI that can translate speech in the native speaker's voice in real-time?

As White put it at the end of her demo, "All of these technologies exist today. The future is HERE

Holograms – what are they?

How many holograms have you got in your pocket? If you're carrying any money, the answer is probably "quite a few." Holograms are those shiny, metallic patterns with ghostly images floating inside them that help to defeat counterfeiters: they're very hard to reproduce so they help to stop people printing illicit copies of banknotes. Credit cards usually have holograms on them too and software packages also frequently have hologrammatic seals to prove their authenticity.

How can you store a beam of light?

Light is an amazing form of energy that zaps through our world at blistering speeds: 300,000 km (186,000 miles) per second—enough to whip from the Sun to Earth in just over 8 minutes. We see things because our eyes are sophisticated light detectors: they constantly capture the light rays bouncing off nearby objects so our brain can construct an ever-changing impression of the world around us. The only trouble is that our brain can't keep a permanent record of what our eyes see. We can recall what we thought we saw, and we can recognize images we've seen in the past, but we can't easily recreate images intact once they've disappeared from view.

Back in the 19th century, ingenious inventors helped to solve this problem by discovering how to capture and store images on chemically treated paper. Photography, as this became known, has revolutionized the way people see and engage with the world and it gave us fantastic forms of entertainment in the 20th century in the form of movies and TV. But no matter how realistic or artistic a photograph appears, there's no question of it being real. We look at a photo and instantly see that the image is dead history, the light that captured the objects in a photograph vanished long ago and can never be recaptured.

What is a hologram?

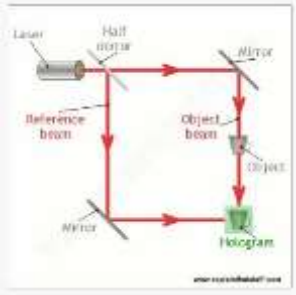
Holograms are a bit like photographs that never die. They're sort of "photographic ghosts": they look like three-dimensional photos that have somehow got trapped inside glass, plastic, or metal.

When you tilt a credit-card hologram, you see an image of something like a bird moving "inside" the card. How does it get there and what makes it seem to move? What makes it different from an ordinary photograph?

Suppose you want to take a photograph of an apple. You hold a camera in front of it and, when you press the shutter button to take your picture, the camera lens opens briefly and lets light through to hit the film (in an old-fashioned camera) or the light-sensitive image sensor chip (the CCD or CMOS chip in a digital camera). All the light traveling from the apple comes from a single direction and enters a single lens, so the camera can record only a two-dimensional pattern of light, dark, and colour.

If you look at an apple, something different happens. Light reflects off the surface of the apple into your two eyes and your brain merges their two pictures into a single stereoscopic (three-dimensional) image. If you move your head slightly, the rays of light reflected off the apple have to travel along slightly different paths to meet your eyes, and parts of the apple may now look lighter or darker or a different colour. Your brain instantly recalculates everything and you see a slightly different picture. This is why your eyes see a three-dimensional image.

A hologram is a cross between what happens when you take a photograph and what happens when you look at something for real. Like a photograph, a hologram is a permanent record of the light reflected off an object but a hologram also looks real and three-dimensional and moves as you look around it, just like a real object. That happens because of the unique way in which holograms are made.



You make a hologram by reflecting a laser beam off the object you want to capture. In fact, you split the laser beam into two separate halves by shining it through a half-mirror (a piece of glass coated with a thin layer of silver so half the laser light is reflected and half passes through (sometimes called a semi-silvered mirror). One half of the beam bounces off a mirror, hits the object, and reflects onto the photographic plate inside which the hologram will be created. This is called the object beam. The other half of the beam bounces off another mirror and hits the same photographic plate. This is called the reference beam. A hologram forms where the two beams meet up in the plate.

Laser light is much purer than the ordinary light in a flashlight (torch) beam. In a flashlight beam, all the light waves are random and jumbled up. Light in a flashlight beam runs along any old how, like schoolchildren racing down a corridor when the bell goes for home time. But in a laser, the light waves are coherent: they all travel precisely in step, like soldiers marching on parade.

When a laser beam is split up to make a hologram, the light waves in the two parts of the beam are traveling in identical ways. When they recombine in the photographic plate, the object beam has travelled via a slightly different path and its light rays have been disturbed by reflecting off the outer surface of the object. Since the beams were originally joined together and perfectly in step, recombining the beams shows how the light rays in the object beam have been changed compared to the reference beam. In other words, by joining the two beams back together and comparing them, you can see how the object changes light rays falling onto it and that's simply another way of saying "what the object looks like." This information is burned permanently into

the photographic plate by the laser beams. So a hologram is effectively a permanent record of what something looks like seen from any angle.

Now this is the clever part. Every point in a hologram catches light waves that travel from every point in the object. That means wherever you look at a hologram you see exactly how light would have arrived at that point if you'd been looking at the real object. So, as you move your head around, the holographic image appears to change just as the image of a real object changes. And that's why holograms appear to be three-dimensional. Also, and this is really neat, if you break a hologram into tiny pieces, you can still see the entire object in any of the pieces, smash a glass hologram of a cup into bits and you can still see the entire cup in any of the bits!

Trees.

As you may be aware, I'm not a big fan of FaceBook whereby some of my dear, well-meaning friends are so excited to display their latest cake creation, the first time the new puppy does his/her first doo-doo in the designated area, etc, etc. I therefore am delighted to share some of my recent memories via this email. If you consider it to be akin to a "slide-night", may I remind you that the button so marked "Delete" will give you the power of self-censorship.

Two years ago, I decided to undertake my "Lap Of Oz" to catch up with old friends and to experience this fantastic country of ours. Being from GodZone (ie Perth, WA), we don't have the pleasure of seeing those beautiful deciduous trees which display a riot of colour during the winter months. (In saying that and if you are a wildflower lover, the WA wildflower season needs to be seen and appreciated).

O

The previous pic was shot on 17th May 2017 at “Bob’s Camp” – approx. 15Km north of Bairnsdale, Vic. The campsite has “long-drop” dunnies and open-fired facilities. I was the ONLY person at this lovely spot until the morning when a mob of cattle moved in to enjoy their breakfast of sweet pasture.

The colours in the trees and on the ground are spectacular.

Go see it!!!

Anther delicacy from ***The Kitchen*** at the Kedron Wavell Services Club.

Private Health Insurance Reforms.

The Australian Government has introduced reforms that will make private health insurance simpler and will help people choose the cover that best suits their needs.
For the first time, private health Insurers will be required to classify their private hospital cover into four easy to understand tiers: Gold, Silver, Bronze or Basic. What is, and is not covered in these tiers will be based on new minimum standad clinical categories. Clinical categories are simply types of hospital treatments described in a standard way.

If a policy covers a certain clinical category, then it must cover everything described as part of the category, not only some things. For example, 'bone, joint and muscle' category or 'heart and vascular system' category. This makes policies easier to compare. Private health insurers will

place all policies into one of these tiers - Gold, Silver, Bronze or Basic, and will tell people where their policy has been placed. People can then check if the cover is right for their needs.

The tiers are intended to mandate minimum service coverage requirements generally reflecting the existing range of health insurance policies. Insurers will continue to be able to offer additional coverage above the minimum requirements in Basic Plus (+), Bronze Plus (+) and Silver Plus (+) product tiers.

Health insurers have until 1 April 2020 to introduce the tiers and clinical categories.

There is a lot more information HERE.

DVA's Changes to process for allied health referrals.

Following adjustments in the 2018–19 Budget, unless you're a TPI, the way that a General Practitioner (GP) refers DVA clients to allied health providers is set to change from October 2019. Currently, a GP may refer a client to allied health services for up to a year (except for dental and optical, for which no referral is required). For chronic conditions, the GP can make an ongoing referral.

Under the new DVA arrangements, which will commence on 1 October 2019 (extended from 1 July 2019), GPs will be able to make a referral to allied health services for up to 12 sessions or one year, whichever comes sooner. This new arrangement will also apply to those clients with a chronic condition. Dental and optical services still will not need a GP referral. If you're a TPI there will be no change, the existing conditions will continue.

As these changes stemmed from the recent Budget, it makes you wonder the reasoning behind all this. Is it just a money saving thing after all, is it that the Government doesn't really care about its Vets - even though whenever the opportunity arises Ministers are only too eager to get their photo taken at a Military event and "pretend" they really care.

The new arrangements are called the ‘treatment cycle’. The treatment cycle is, they say, designed to improve the quality of care for DVA cardholders, with more GP involvement in ongoing care. At the end of the treatment cycle, the allied health provider will report back to the GP who will assess whether further treatment is required. If it is needed, the GP may refer the client for a further treatment cycle of up to 12 sessions, or may refer them to another provider if that better suits the patient’s needs, or may consider another type of treatment. The treatment cycle will not impose any hard ‘cap’ or limit on the number of clinically required services. DVA clients will receive as many services as determined to be clinically necessary by their GP.

Australian Government
Department of Veterans' Affairs

The Government says DVA clients attend their GP on average 11 to 12 times per year. Seeking a referral for allied health services can be done as part of any GP visit. DVA is consulting with associations representing allied health providers and medical practitioners and ex-service

organisations on the treatment cycle changes in the lead-up to the October 2019 implementation. DVA will evaluate the impact of the treatment cycle after the first year.

The referral changes will allow GPs to ensure that veterans are receiving the best possible care. This is to make sure that veterans are benefiting from their treatment, and to examine whether there may be better treatment options available. Subject to the success of the new treatment cycle, from February 2021 DVA plans to update key parts of the allied health schedules to help meet future health needs. (Read: further cuts)

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We can't understand the reasoning behind this. A Vet who suffers from PTSD, has a bad back and is overweight will normally see a Exercise Physiologist (EP) for the PTSD, a Physio for the back problem and a Dietician for the weight problem. Currently the Vet will (probably) see the EP twice a week and the Physio and Dietician once a week. As things stand, the Vet only needed three referrals each year, one for each of the Allied Health providers. With this new proposal, depending on when he/she starts with each practitioner, that vet will need to see his/her GP 8 times a year for referrals to see the EP, another 4 to get a referral for the Physio and possibly another 4 to see the dietician. That's a possible total of 16 visits to the GP instead of the previous 3. Not all Vets will see 3 different Allied Health practitioners, but a lot will and if the Government thinks a Vet's problems can be cured in 12 sessions they are kidding themselves.

Isn't that an example of smart thinking from our Government.

There are two obvious things wrong with this, first is the extra cost to DVA for all those extra GP visits which means there will be less money for other services, and secondly old Vets and people with PTSD don't like change, being made to see a GP every couple of months for a referral will turn a lot off and they will just drop out. We'll end up with a lot of Vets a lot worse off - for what benefit??

It's just a lot more work for a lot more people for not a lot of benefit.

Once again, you can't blame the DVA, these changes have resulted from Budget changes imposed on DVA by the Government. You can read the reasoning behind all this HERE.

Pension rates.

20 Sept 2019 - 19 March 2020

Other changes:

- The Carers' allowance is unchanged, until 31 December 2019, the rate is $118.20 per fortnight.
- The Deeming Rates have changed - see HERE
- If you live outside of Australia permanently, the Government has changed the way they will pay you, see HERE

Pension	Old Fortnightly rate	New Fortnightly rate	Increase	
Special rate (TPI) Pension/MRCA Special Rate Disability Pension	$1,423.20	$1,434.70	$11.50	0.8%
Extreme Disablement Adjustment	$786.50	$792.80	$6.30	0.8%
100 per cent General Rate of Disability Pension	$506.10	$510.10	$4.00	0.8%
50 per cent General Rate of Disability Pension	$256.90	$258.90	$2.00	0.8%
Intermediate Rate Disability Pension	$966.50	$974.20	$7.70	0.8%
Service Pension - Single	$926.20	$933.40	$7.20	0.8%
Service Pension - Couples	$1,396.20	$1,407.00	$10.80	0.8%
War Widows/ers Pension	$941.60	$949.10	$7.50	0.8%
Income support Supplement	$278.50	$280.80	$2.30	0.8%

In Hansard, 18 Sept 2019. 14:30

Shayne Neumann

“My question is to the minister for veterans’ affairs. Can the minister confirm the government has a report in front of it which recommends scrapping the veterans’ gold card as we know it and will the minister be reducing the entitlements of veterans and their dependents, including veterans with a disability?”

Darren Chester:

“I assume by his question he is referring to the productivity commission report which was presented to the government six or eight weeks ago and released to the public six days later ... an extensive look at the department of veterans’ affairs which took over a year to do. The report of the government makes 61 recommendations, and as the shadow minister is aware, it is an extensive report, 938 pages and allowed a number of reforms proposed by the productivity commission.

The government has approved readily taking the time for further negotiation, further consultations ... with the ex-service community in relation to which of those recommendations it supports and which ones of those recommendations it doesn't support. It would be inappropriate for the government to rule things in and out at this stage ... This government is proud of its record in relation to looking after veterans and their families. We are committed to that first. It is an area which has enjoyed ... enormous bipartisan support.

It would be inappropriate to rule things out at this stage or ruling things in at this stage given the consultation occurring with the ex-service community around the nation.

Another shadow minister is agreeing with my comments and ... what I would say, Mr Speaker, in relation to the question more broadly, this is a government providing an excess of $11bn a year to support 280,000 veterans and their families. We are working to make sure the veterans benefit enormously in the future in terms of reforms we make; the productivity commission report to the government outlines a whole range of recommendations and there is no intention whatsoever for this government to do anything detrimental to our veterans and their families.

We are working with the community, as you expect the government would do, and encourage those opposite to also listen to the concerns of the veteran community, work with us as we continue to reform the department of veterans' affairs. The Australian people can be very proud of the fact that their taxes, taxpayers dollars, go to support men and women who put on the uniform, serve our nation, and when they transition to life, they are supported in a way the Australian people can be proud of."

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My Story

Catherine Wallis.

Continued from Part 1

My first 10years in Air Force (described in the last edition) were filled with amazing opportunities.

But in 2006 I posted to Canberra and was immediately struck down with depression. After several years of travelling constantly for work I came to believe I was the worst mother in the world. My four year old would follow me to take the bin out to the road on garbage day, just to make sure I was coming back. And unfortunately, this message, that I was a poor mother because my Air Force career took me away from home, was also passed to me by a number of “well-meaning” others outside of Air Force.

It was like I was at the crossroad of a generational expectation of mothers. I had been brought up to be told I could have it all – family and career - and was adjusting to the realisation that “all” was possible, but probably not at the same time. I was struggling with identity, with what it meant to be an Air Force Officer and a parent of two children. Despite my best intentions, I was jealous of male colleagues who could work long hours and go home to their wife who had organised everything; while I went home to help with homework, clean up and cook dinner. I found myself pregnant with my third and decided it was perhaps time to take stock and a year off to be away from work.

That year away was exactly what I needed. Time to be a mum all day, walk the kids to school and work out how this modern concept of the working mum would actually be achieved. At the end of the year I was selected for an exchange posting to Washington DC, in operations and international law at the Pentagon. And I was ready to be back.

Now the Pentagon is not as glamorous as it sounds; essentially it is a 1950s office building, but I was so appreciative of the opportunity to work with such a large Air Force – with 1500 lawyers compared to our 40. They had low expectations for my work and it was very satisfactory to show that we Australians could absolutely hold our own with our US colleagues. My most memorable work was on the closure of the Guantanamo Bay detention facility and on the legal ways to cut off the funding to terrorism via the opium trade.

I arrived back in Australia in 2010, when the military justice system was in crisis. The High Court had decided that the Australian Military Court was unconstitutional. I worked for 12mths on a proposal for a replacement criminal court that would be constitutional; but, as happens in Canberra, there was an election and it was not to be. Instead I moved on to work towards a set of national ethical rules for ADF lawyers as well as a new pay scale that recognised both generalist lawyers and those with specific expertise.

In 2012 I was selected to work in Air Force Headquarters as the legal advisor to the Chief and Deputy Chief of Air Force. This was a really interesting role. It was at this time that I became aware of the work of Pat Mildren (right) and the RAAF Firefighters Association and their fight for recognition of the conditions under which they worked in the 1950s - 1980s (see HERE). I spent a lot of hours researching veterans benefits and the difficulties associated with conducting health studies of small groups.

I travelled to Afghanistan for a month for some specialist work, ensuring that our detention centre was compliant with International Humanitarian Law and that workplace accidents were properly investigated. I travelled to Tarin Kowt, Khandahar and Kabul. There I worked with a local translator who had just become a father to a baby girl. He explained to me that his wife was illiterate, but his hope from all of this was that his daughter would be given the opportunity to go to school.

For me the years I spent in Air Force Headquarters were the best of my career to date. I worked with an amazing team of people who were absolutely focused on achieving the best for Air Force. And we had a lot of fun. One enduring memory was the bemused look of CAF, AIRMSHL Leo Davies, when we were contacted by a lady from an Eastern European country who was convinced she had been conversing with him on social media and was going to marry him?? Sure enough, on investigation, someone had stolen his image and set up a fake account to rip off this poor lady.

At the other extreme, during this period Defence was embarking on a restorative engagement program. This was an opportunity for senior Defence personnel to meet with victims of historical

abuse in the ADF, hear their experience and apologise on behalf of the Air Force. I took part in four restorative engagements with former Air Force members who were victims of terrible abuse, and they were each difficult and emotional experiences.

In 2017 I was appointed to Command, as the Commandant RAAF College at RAAF Base Wagga. While Command is a special experience for everyone, I was especially proud and grateful as I was the first legal officer ever given this opportunity. It is also not too common for the senior officer to be female and at my first few events with the Wagga Wagga RSL I was the source of some confusion. I was mortified when one wife turned to her elderly veteran husband with the comment: "*Look she has more medals than you!*"

To be completely honest I was a bit concerned about being accepted. But I shouldn't have been, the relationship between the RAAF and the Wagga community is strong. My most proud moment was when I was given the opportunity to review the Wagga 2017 ANZAC Day Parade, and standing on that podium, saluting all our veterans was humbling and something I will never forget.

I now work at the Inspector General Australian Defence Force as the Director of Inquiries and Investigations. We are the place people go when they feel no one else has been able to resolve their issue. I continue to love that I am given the responsibility to make a difference.

I do not know if there will be a part 3 to my story, such is the unknown aspect of senior Air Force postings. But I feel very privileged for the opportunities I have been given, the friends I have made and the culture that is the Air Force in 2019. We each have our own paths in this service, but I think the central pillar is the same for us all: that combination of comradery and task focus that makes us proud to serve.

I changed my iPod's name to Titanic. It's syncing now.

RAF pilot Frank Dell's story of survival in Nazi occupied Holland

As a teenager, Frank saw the Battle of Britain played out in the skies above his village in the south of England. He joined the RAF and piloted a De Havilland Mosquito on bombing raids into Germany.

Frank Dell's experience as a Second World War pilot with the Royal Air Force's Light Night Striking Force takes an even more dramatic turn when his Mosquito is shot down over Germany on the night of 14/15 October 1944. In 'Mosquito Down!' Frank recounts his escape from the disintegrating aircraft, his descent by parachute, and how, battered and bruised, he finds himself in a field adjacent to a German V2 rocket launch pad. Determined to avoid capture Frank crosses Nazi Germany and finds refuge in Holland with a Dutch Resistance group. A schoolboy when the conflict broke out, Frank Dell's extraordinary war takes him from a Home Guard unit defending the English coast against enemy invasion in 1940, to a tragic incident leading to the execution of Dutch civilians only weeks before the end of the hostilities.

Frank's observant eye gives insight into what it is like to train and fly operationally with the RAF, and then there are the even greater challenges he experiences as he narrowly escapes capture while on the run from the Germans. Through compelling narrative

He emerges from his traumatic experiences with heightened respect for the courageous Dutch families who risked death to shelter him and other Allied airmen. After the war he flew for BEA in Cyprus before returning to the UK in 1954, where he flew Viscounts, Vanguards and Tridents, retiring in 1976 as British Airway's Chief Pilot (Technical). After retirement Frank served as a

member of the Board of the Civil Aviation Authority and held the post of Master of the Guild of Air Pilots and Air Navigators in London. Frank and his wife now live in Sydney, Australia.

In November 2014 he was interviewed by Richard Fidler in one of this (Richard's) excellent "Conversations" program. You can hear that interview HERE.

Frank has now written a book of his war time experiences, the book is titled Mosquito Down. You can get a copy HERE

Did you hear about the fellow whose entire left side was cut off? He's all right now.

Concord - the real story?

The Royal Aeronautical Society (RAeS) lecture by Concorde pilot John Hutchinson late in September was fascinating and astonishing. He presented clear evidence that the French authorities, who conducted the crash investigation, covered up the true cause and tried to blame Continental airways engineers and design weaknesses in Concorde. The truth is that Air France was totally to blame. Firstly their maintenance procedures were extremely poor.

During an undercarriage service a spacer, that kept the wheels tracking straight, was not replaced. The spacer was later found on the shelf in the maintenance hangar. The aircraft had done four flights with this defect prior to the crash so it wasn't the prime cause, but as with all accidents there were a number of other errors that all added up.

This may have been another successful flight had the crew not of had such a cavalier attitude to flight safety. The first officer's licence had expired making the flight illegal. This wasn't a factor in the crash but demonstrates the unprofessional attitude in Air France.

The main fault lies with the Captain who overrode procedure and ordered the tanks to be filled to the brim instead of the normal 80%. He ordered more fuel than was required to be put in the aft tanks used for taxiing. He allowed 19 bags, that had not been weighed, to be loaded in the aft hold. All this made the aircraft over weight and the CofG out of limits.

Presumably due to the weight and balance being out of limits he requested to use the runway extension, even though it was officially out of use because it was being re-surfaced. He also elected to take off with an 8 kt tail wind. The French investigations verdict was that the crash was

caused by a metal strap falling off a Continental airways DC10 onto the runway which burst a tyre, punctured the Concordes fuel tank starting a fire.

What really happened was that as the aircraft accelerated over the unprepared part of the runway it hit a ledge as it crossed onto the prepared surface at about 100kt. This caused the wheels to track to the left as they had no spacer to constrain them.

The tyres overheated and burst starting the fire. The aircraft slewed off the runway to the left, hit a runway light and the metal strap which carved a piece of tyre off which was then thrown up into the wing tank setting up a shock wave. As the tank was full there was nowhere for it to go other than out through the top of the wing streaming fuel into the engine efflux. The engine overheated but wasn't on fire and was still producing power.

The flight engineer ignored normal procedure and shut the engine down. As the aircraft was past V2 he should have allowed the aircraft to gain height before doing that. All this contributed to the aircraft crashing into a hotel killing all 109 on board and 4 people in the hotel. The death toll could have been a lot worse. As the Concorde was careering off the runway it missed a fully loaded 747 waiting for permission to cross, by just 20 feet.

On board that aircraft was the President of France and his wife. In addition to that a British youth orchestra had planned to stay in the hotel. Had it not been for their ferry being delayed they would have checked in and certainly perished as well. What makes the French authorities actions even worse was that they obstructed the UKs AAIB investigation, not allowing full and timely access to the crash site and certain evidence.

The French prosecuted the Continental Airways engineers for manslaughter and they unfairly blamed design weaknesses in Concorde. The engineers were later acquitted on appeal, and this is where much of the hidden evidence came to light. After the trial the French barrister, who successfully defended the engineers, was mysteriously found dead but the French didn't hold an inquest into that.

A disgraceful chain of events that eventually led to Air France, who wanted to see Concorde grounded, putting pressure on Airbus, who were the design authority for Concorde, to increase their charges to British Airways. This was a deliberate act to make the aircraft too expensive to

operate and resulted in an unjustifiable slur on the reputation of one of the greatest aircraft ever to fly.

Thanks for John Hutchinson for revealing the truth and the shame on the French for allowing this to happen.

The People I meet.

The other week I unselfishly gave up a day and at great expense to myself, drove all the way up to the Sunshine Coast from Brisbane to be with the lads who were remembering their time spent in Vietnam. Most of the blokes were Army and consequently lesser heroes than my good self, but even so, I was sure they would welcome my presence in their midst. A RAAF presence always cheers up the Army bods, makes their day so to speak.

I went to great pains to mask the Radtechitis before leaving the house, I've found liberal splashes of Old Spice can at times hide the alluring attraction of that hypnotic enchantment so I applied half a bottle of Procter and Gamble's grooming product to my person before leaving and made sure I wore very conservative clothing so as not to attract undue attention..

The Safari suit was at the cleaners so I was forced to wear the purple corduroy trousers with my tan RM Williams calf length boots and upon admiring myself in the full-length mirror, was confident I would blend in and not stand out. Arriving at Maroochydore, the lads insisted I accompany them to a luncheon, which I got the feeling was being held in my honour. I was rightly embarrassed at all the attention so as soon as it was polite, I snuck away and sat in a dark corner of the room, away from the crowd giving them a chance to talk amongst themselves and not devote all their time admiring me.

I had masked the Radtechitis quite well, no one had noticed they had a Radtech in their midst, a RAAF person, yes, but up until now I had hidden the Radtechitis quite comfortably and had managed to elude the uncontrollable admiration that always follows the revelation. However, little did I know, there was a slip up.

Being a most sensible and law-abiding driver, I decided not to imbibe in alcoholic drinks so I stuck to enjoying one or two cold Pepsi Maxes. I'd finished one can and was onto my second when a steward cleared my milk crate, at which I was sitting, of the empty one and tossed it into the recycle bin. Some of that elusive Radtechitis must have been transferred to the can as unbeknown to me, a tiny whiff of it floated up and away on the sea breeze and headed for the shopping plaza.

At about this time, two lovely young ladies were shopping for rouge and vinyl hand-bags in one of the majors in the Plaza when they detected that minute amount of Radtechitis in the air. Immediately raw instinct took over, conscious thought was discarded, hand-bags were dropped and they began running full pelt on the spot, turning in circles with heads tilted back, knees lifted high and noses searching for the source.

Eventually they detected the source, traction was obtained and they fled from the Plaza scattering young and old in their wake and headed for the RSL Club. They sped across the busy highway, with legs flashing and hair streaming behind them, causing a major pile-up of 30 or so cars that had nose to tailed avoiding them and roared into the Club and bolted up the stairs to the convention centre. They found me in the corner blissfully unaware that some Radtechitis had escaped my person and immediately draped themselves upon my person in an attempt to obtain some.

I was forced to endure this intrusion for 40 minutes or so before I was able to free myself.

Such is the burden a Radtech must endure.

These two lovely, fun loving girls, Kim Dung on the left and Ngan Dai on the right are members of the Vietnamese community and live in Brisbane. They constantly and unselfishly give of their time to attend and brighten up Veterans' get togethers at events all over the place and for that we thank them very much.

We'll obviously, and hopefully, see them again soon.

Have you ever listened to someone for a while and wondered
"who ties your shoe-laces for you?"

Butterworth

Mike Gaham sent us the following.

WHAT WE WEREN'T TOLD ABOUT THE THREAT TO FAMILIES.

The response of the current Defence hierarchy to any suggestions Butterworth activities were ‘war like” in the mid 1970’s is that there is no evidence to that effect. Documents such as THIS one and the experiences some of us had in that period would suggest the Defence hierarchy can be typified by the attached graphic.

See THIS document too and THIS one.

These two paragraphs below have been cut from the 1975 Joint Intelligence Organisation's document 'The Security of Air Base Butterworth'.

Think about the implications of these. First, the report identified a 'distinct threat' to the Base, Australian Personnel and their families. Because of the risks associated with sabotage within the Base the Communists could choose targets off base - including married quarters.

The document also considers the possibility of the Communists murdering or kidnapping 'important foreign residents'. If this path was taken they had no way of knowing if Australian personnel and their families 'would be primary targets in preference to other foreigners in Malaysia ...'

How would they know if the communists had decided on this course of action until someone had been murdered or kidnapped?

Our families. Doesn't it make you feel good.

Pick the true statement:

- Those young troops going each night to set up a perimeter along the beach at Tan Sai Gin were training for somewhere else.
- The incoming rounds that ricocheted off the windows of the control tower during night flying were imaginary.
- The piano wire strung between trees in rubber plantations between the setting of a hash run and the actual run were put there by a demented piano tuner.
- The building of revetments for the jets was an exercise to keep the local labourers employed.
- Defence and DVA deny anything dangerous happened there to save money.

Para 1.

(d) Sabotage, by the planting of delayed-action explosives, booby-traps, and other similar devices designed to damage equipment and to injure personnel, by members of subversive groups or sympathetic locally-employed civilians or contract personnel. In this case targets outside the Base might be chosen, as there would not be as much danger of detection by security patrols. Minor acts of sabotage committed within the Base by such personnel would result in their detection and in a tightening of security with no significant gains for the Communist Terrorist Organisation (CTO) cause.

Nevertheless, the use of booby-traps and minor acts of sabotage by subversive groups are relatively common throughout Peninsular Malaysia and pose a distinct threat, both to the Base and to Australian personnel and their dependants.

(e) Acts of terrorism against RAAF married quarters adjacent to the Base (Tan Sai Gin and Rubina Park).

Para 2

26. The CTO could easily adopt tactics used by other terrorist organizations, notably those in South America, of murdering or kidnapping important foreign residents in order to embarrass the Government publicly and to obtain concessions, such as the release of political prisoners, as part of a wider campaign of urban terrorism. The Communist Party of Malaya (CPM) Central Committee faction is concerned mainly with controlling the rural areas in line with the orthodox Maoist doctrine of revolutionary warfare, and it is unlikely that the Moro National Liberation Front (MNLF) would be capable of conducting a widespread and sustained terror campaign against foreign interests in urban areas. There have been indications, however, that the Marxist—Leninist and Revolutionary factions differ from the Central Committee faction over this question and might seek to implement a campaign of urban guerrilla warfare.

The increase in the numbers of incidents in 1975 points in this direction, but it is doubtful whether the factions have the resources to conduct an extended urban campaign, although they have demonstrated a capability for coordinated action throughout Peninsular Malaysia. If this situation did arise, however, Australian personnel and their dependants stationed at Butterworth could be threatened. It is impossible to say whether they would be primary targets in preference to other foreigners in Malaysia, such as members of diplomatic missions.

We think there is a long fight ahead before any recognition of the confrontation being declared warlike. BUT – there's THIS.

Be careful when you follow the masses.
Sometimes the "M" is silent

The loss of Dakota A65-83.

On the 19th December 1945, 35 Squadron lost Dakota A65-83 (VH-CIZ) with the loss of 25 lives. It was an Aeromedical flight returning soldiers from Ambon to Darwin and the aircraft went missing in bad weather. It was the most tragic event in 35 Squadron's history

At the conclusion of WWII a RAAF aero- medical evacuation aircraft, Dakota A65-83 carrying 25 ADF personnel, disappeared whilst on route from Morotai in present day Indonesia to Darwin, Australia.

As the result of a request by the family of one of the missing soldiers, Uncovered War Casualties – Australia (UWC-A) looked into claims that the search for the missing Dakota may have missed vital areas between Ambon and Darwin where the plane may have crashed. All available information was re-examined, including evidence about radio messages which were attributed to the missing plane after the last known received message.

Extensive searches in December 1945, after the plane went missing, were made over 18 days and included no less than 52 individual search and rescue flights, a dedicated patrol of several naval vessels and every out-going aircraft from Darwin for the 10 days after the plane went missing was briefed to keep a look out for the missing plane and its crew.

The search was extensive, covering an area of 14,620 nautical miles and in line with what would have been done if the plane went missing today.

The flight departed Morotai for Darwin, via Ambon. It arrived at Ambon at 08:50 and the captain decided to await the arrival of another aircraft from Darwin to find out more about the weather conditions en route. Weather was poor but the plane departed from Ambon at 10:40. Approximately one hour into the flight Darwin Aeradio received a message from the flight stating that they wished to place a message. That was the last ever heard from the aircraft.

The UWC-A investigation determined that based on the planes last known location, the weather and its direction of travel, all possible search areas had been covered by the original search parties in 1945. It was considered unlikely, based on all the evidence to hand, that the plane attempted to return to Ambon or to divert to another land mass. The most likely conclusion is that the plane crashed at sea.

The case remains open.

UWC-A is asking that any one who may be related to the personnel listed on the manifest to contact UWC-A and register as next of kin.

The evidence suggests that the aircraft crash landed on an island or ditched in the Banda/Timor sea next to one. There were signals coming from the aircraft days after it went missing which seemed to indicate the passengers and crew knew where they were but the RAAF just couldn't find them. Bearings taken on one signal sent by CIZ were taken from Darwin (331-333 deg) and the subsequent search was based around that but to no avail. Newspaper reports from the time

insisted that the RAAF keep up the search until CIZ was found and in some cases were quite scathing of the Minister for Air for not doing enough.

Perhaps one day the secret of missing A65-83 will be revealed – perhaps!.

I was in a Coffee Club recently when I suddenly realized I desperately needed to fart. The music was really, really loud so I timed by farts with the beat of the music. After a couple of songs I started to feel better. I finished my coffee and noticed that everyone was staring at me, and suddenly I remembered I was listening to my iPod. Ooops!

The London Blitz.

The appearance of German bombers in the skies over London during the afternoon of the 7th September, 1940 heralded a tactical shift in Hitler's attempt to subdue Great Britain. During the previous two months, the Luftwaffe had targeted RAF airfields and radar stations for destruction in preparation for the German invasion of the island. With invasion plans put on hold and eventually scrapped, Hitler turned his attention to destroying London in an attempt to demoralize the population and force the British to come to terms. At around 4:00 PM on that September day, 348 German bombers escorted by 617 fighters blasted London until 6:00 PM. Two hours later, guided by the fires set by the first assault, a second group of raiders commenced another attack that lasted until 4:30 the following morning.

This was the beginning of the Blitz - a period of intense bombing of London and other cities that continued until the following May. For the next consecutive 57 days, London was bombed either during the day or night. Fires consumed many portions of the city. Residents sought shelter wherever they could find it - many fleeing to the Underground stations that sheltered as many as 177,000 people during the night. In the worst single incident, 450 were killed when a bomb destroyed a school being used as an air raid shelter. Londoners and the world were introduced to a new weapon of terror and destruction in the arsenal of twentieth century warfare. The Blitz ended on the 11th May, 1941 when Hitler called off the raids in order to move his bombers east in preparation for Germany's invasion of Russia.

Ernie Pyle, an American journalist, was one of World War Two's most popular correspondents. His journalism was characterized by a focus on the common soldier interspersed with sympathy, sensitivity and humour. He witnessed the war in Europe from the Battle of Britain through the invasion of France. In 1945 he accepted assignment to the Pacific Theatre and was killed during the battle for Okinawa. He describes a night raid on London in 1940:

"It was a night when London was ringed and stabbed with fire. They came just after dark, and somehow you could sense from the quick, bitter firing of the guns that there was to be no monkey business this night. Shortly after the sirens wailed you could hear the Germans grinding overhead. In my room, with its black

curtains drawn across the windows, you could feel the shake from the guns. You could hear the boom, crump, crump, crump, of heavy bombs at their work of tearing buildings apart. They were not too far away.

Half an hour after the firing started, I gathered a couple of friends and went to a high, darkened balcony that gave us a view of a third of the entire circle of London. As we stepped out onto the balcony a vast inner excitement came over all of us, an excitement that had neither fear nor horror in it, because it was too full of awe. You have all seen big fires, but I doubt if you have ever seen the whole horizon of a city lined with great fires - scores of them, perhaps hundreds.

There was something inspiring just in the awful savagery of it.

The closest fires were near enough for us to hear the crackling flames and the yells of firemen. Little fires grew into big ones even as we watched. Big ones died down under the firemen's valour, only to break out again later. About every two minutes a new wave of planes would be over. The motors seemed to grind rather than roar, and to have an angry pulsation, like a bee buzzing in blind fury.

The guns did not make a constant overwhelming din as in those terrible days of September. They were intermittent - sometimes a few seconds apart, sometimes a minute or more. Their sound was sharp, nearby and soft and muffled, far away. They were everywhere over London.

Into the dark shadowed spaces below us, while we watched, whole batches of incendiary bombs fell. We saw two dozen go off in two seconds. They flashed terrifically, then quickly simmered down to pin points of dazzling white, burning ferociously. These white pin points would go out one by one, as the unseen heroes of the moment smothered them with sand. But also, while we watched, other pin points would burn on, and soon a yellow flame would leap up from the white centre. They had done their work - another building was on fire.

The greatest of all the fires was directly in front of us. Flames seemed to whip hundreds of feet into the air. Pinkish-white smoke ballooned upward in a great cloud and out of this cloud there gradually took shape - so faintly at first that we weren't sure we saw correctly - the gigantic dome of St. Paul's Cathedral. St. Paul's was surrounded by fire, but it came through. It stood there in its enormous proportions - growing slowly clearer and clearer, the way objects take shape at dawn. It was like a picture of some miraculous figure that appears before peace-hungry soldiers on a battlefield.

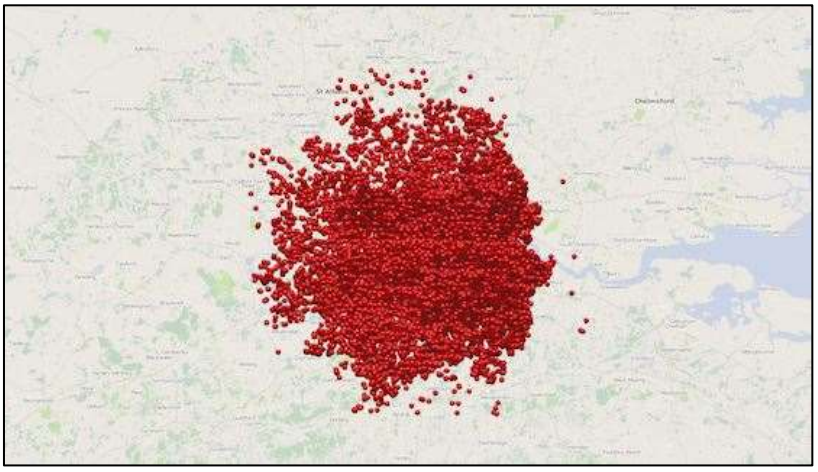
The streets below us were semi-illuminated from the glow. Immediately above the fires the sky was red and angry and overhead, making a ceiling in the vast heavens, there was a cloud of smoke all in pink. Up in that pink shrouding there were tiny, brilliant specks of flashing light- antiaircraft shells bursting. After the flash you could hear the sound.

Up there, too, the barrage balloons were standing out as clearly as if it were- daytime, but now they were pink instead of silver and now and then through a hole in that pink shroud there twinkled incongruously a permanent, genuine star - the old - fashioned kind that has always been there.

Below us the Thames grew lighter, and all around below were the shadows - the dark shadows of buildings and bridges that formed the base of this dreadful masterpiece.

Later on, I borrowed a tin hat and went out among the fires. That was exciting too; but the thing I shall always remember above all the other things in my life is the monstrous loveliness of that one single view of London on a holiday night - London stabbed with great fires, shaken by explosions, its dark regions along the Thames sparkling with the pin points of white-hot bombs, all of it roofed over with a ceiling of pink that held bursting shells, balloons, flares and the grind of vicious engines. And in yourself the excitement and anticipation and wonder in your soul that this could be happening at all.

These things all went together to make the most hateful, most beautiful single scene I have ever known."



One can only imagine the terror those people in London experienced during WW2. And it wasn't just London that copped it, most of the bigger cities in the UK were in for a pounding from the German bombs (see HERE) but London was on the receiving end of most of them.

The pic at right shows the cluster dropped on London – if you click it, it will open another map which you can expand by rolling your mouse wheel to see where they fell, just imagine that happening to Sydney, Brisbane or one of our major cities today. Could or would we cope??

It's just unthinkable, though today, it would need only 1 bomb to do all the damage done by the 100 tons dropped by Germany.

Too scary to even think about.

When you're dead you don't know you're dead, it's only difficult for others.
It's the same way when you're stupid.

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Kids and smart phones/tablets.

Keeping kids safe online is an issue almost all parents grapple with in an era when the average age of getting a smartphone or tablet is just over 10 years old. Chief among parents' concerns are bad apps for kids that could compromise their safety.

And the potential risks are more serious than ever.

Instead of concerns about accidental in-app purchases or too much screen time, the toddlers who grew up with tablets are becoming the kids facing risks like bullying and communicating with strangers when they use certain apps. Basically, kids are being turned free on the internet when they are handed a smartphone, they are going to misuse apps and most of the time it's just by ignorance. But warning your kids of the dangers and monitoring their phones isn't always enough to keep them safe.

A growing number of apps let kids communicate anonymously and leave no record behind for even the most diligent of parents to find. These apps are not designed to be malicious, however, because there's anonymity, people will do things with them.

Here's a look at some of the more risky apps currently being used by young people – but remember that new apps are released daily and trends change quickly. As soon as another bad app gets taken off the market, another app will take its place.

- **Ask.FM:** This app lets users ask anonymous questions and is known for cyberbullying.
- **Bumble:** Similar to Tinder but requires women to make the first contact. Lecherous people can create fake accounts and falsify their age.
- **Grindr:** A dating app geared toward the LGBTQ community based on user location.
- **Holla:** This self-proclaimed "addicting" video chat app lets users meet people in seconds. Users have seen racial slurs and explicit content.
- **Kik:** Kids can bypass traditional text messaging features using this app. Kik "gives users unlimited access to anyone, anywhere, anytime.
- **Live.Me:** A live-streaming app that uses geolocation to share videos. Users can earn "coins" to "pay" minors for photos.
- **MeetMe:** A dating social media app that connects people based on location. Users are encouraged to meet in person.
- **Skout:** A location-based dating app that is supposed to prohibit people under 17 from sharing private photos, however kids can easily create an account with a different age.
- **Snapchat:** One of the most popular social media apps in the world, Snapchat lets users take and share photos and videos. The app also lets people see your location.
- **TikTok:** A new app popular with kids lets users create and share short videos. This app has "very limited privacy controls" and users can be exposed to cyberbullying and explicit content.
- **WhatsApp:** A messaging app that allows texts, video calls, photo sharing and voicemails with users worldwide.
- **Whisper:** An anonymous social network that lets users share secrets with strangers. It also shows users' location so people can meet up.

Knowing which apps to keep off your child's phone or tablet is only a small part of keeping kids safe. With that in mind, here are some tips to help kids navigate the responsibility that comes with their phones.

1. Know there are always more bad apps for kids

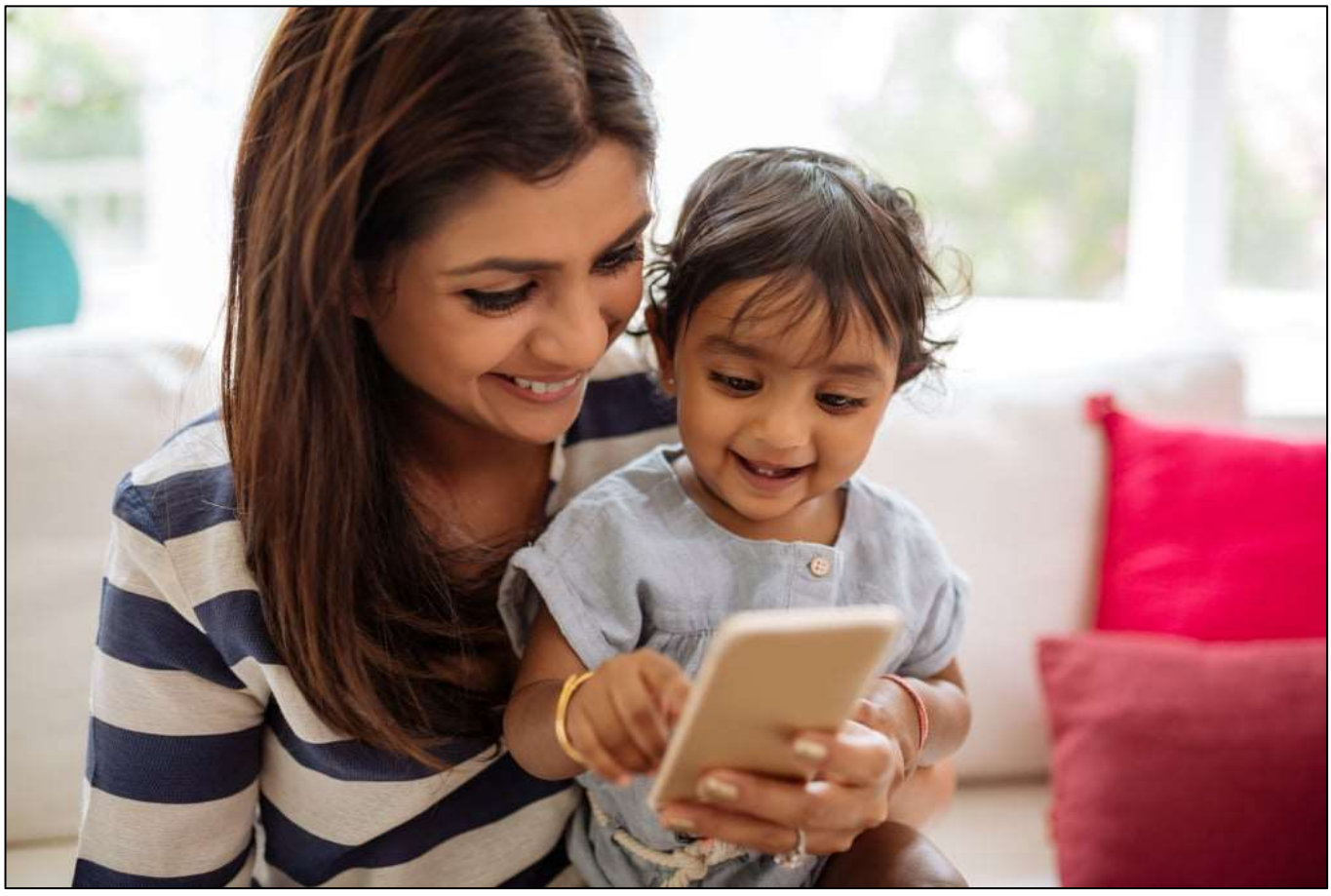
"There will always be the next bad app. Protect your child if she or he is being victimized, but don't waste your time playing whack-a-mole with apps. Educating is far greater than reacting and has long-term preventative benefits.

2. Educate yourself

You can't monitor social media if you are not on social media. Get on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram, and follow your kids. If your kids aren't old enough for an account, or if they stick with smartphone apps like Snapchat or Kik, you will still glean social parenting knowledge from participating on the major social media platforms. Being on social media allows you a glimpse into the world your kids are living in – and gives you the opportunity to guide them away from inappropriate people or behaviours.

3. Stay calm

You want to stay very calm when discussing social media with our teens, follow/friend your kids online, but never post on their platforms. Some will find that their kids actually don't mind your silent lurking … they recognize on some level that you've got their back.



4. Teach kids how to fix mistakes

We all make mistakes online; our kids think their social world is the entire world. They need our help to see past the immediate crisis. Part of fostering your social media apprentices is teaching them that their social media blunder is not going to doom their future. Teach them how to fix the situation, help them learn from their mistake and show them how to move forward.

5. Educate and mentor

Prevent mistakes by educating your teens and tweens, remember, our kids' brains and behaviours can be shaped and changed via practical experience. Parents and educators must take responsibility for guiding children and students, realizing that while social media can be destructive, when used knowledgeably, it has an even greater power to help kids succeed.

The Importance of walking

Walking can add minutes to your life. This enables you at 85 years old to spend an additional 5 months in a nursing home at $5,000 per month.

For the man who has everything.

With Christmas not far away, the ladies are once again in a pickle wondering what to get the man of the house. As we mature, most blokes have over the years, got just about everything they'll ever need. Apart from socks, underpants and licorice, there isn't much a man needs as he approaches his 70th year and beyond but there is something the lady of the house could get her man which would make him definitely stand out in the street. Provided she's a bit handy with her hands she could build him something he would really appreciate.

An atomic bomb!

Think about it, no longer would he be annoyed by that barking dog next door, no longer would that noisy Harley roar up the street while he was watching TV, no longer would he have to mow the lawn every week during the summer months.

He could just nuke the lot.

Now, with the ITness of the internet, she could build him one. The internet thinks of everything, now there are step by step instructions on how to build a bomb and provided she has access to a garage with a bench, a vice and a few tools, she could knock one up while he was at the pub and he'd be none the wiser until Christmas morning when he finds it under the tree.

You'll find the instructions HERE

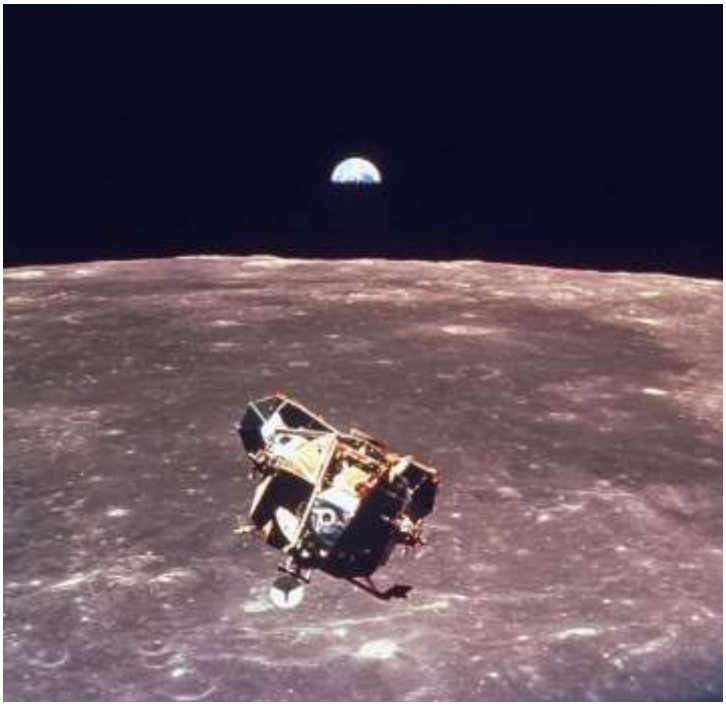
Words with 2 meanings.

Commitment.
Female: A desire to get married and raise a family.
Male: Trying to hit on other women while out with this one.

The Art of the Return Trip: How NASA got Apollo 11 Home

POPULAR MECHANICS

On the 24th July, 1969, the Columbia capsule splashed down 900 miles southwest of Hawaii, ending the historic Apollo 11 mission. This is how NASA got Neil Armstrong, Buzz Aldrin, and Michael Collins home.

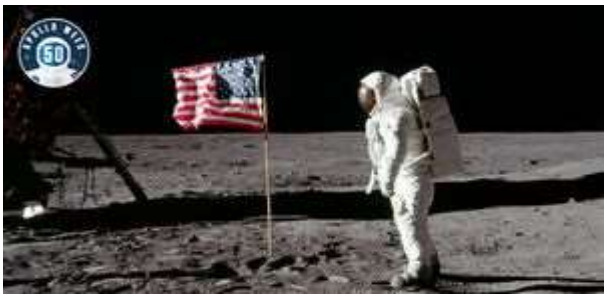


On the 20th July, 1969, the U.S. won the space race. After a series of embarrassing defeats at the hands of the Soviets, the engineering marvel that was the Saturn V had captured victory through brute force, taking three Americans to lunar orbit and successfully depositing two on the surface below. For many Americans, it was a day of celebration, but for the three men that had secured victory—Neil Armstrong, Buzz Aldrin, and Michael Collins—the challenges were far from over.

With history already made, all that was left was to make their way home, but the difficulties associated with launching a spacecraft off the lunar surface, docking with another craft in orbit, propelling the crew hundreds of thousands of miles and surviving the blazing heat of re-entry were daunting. A single failure of the launch apparatus would doom Armstrong and Aldrin to an icy grave in our night sky, and concerns that it might happen were so prevalent that President Richard Nixon had a speech prepared for the possibility.

As the countdown to the crew's second launch of the Apollo 11 mission crept toward zero, there was no fanfare and no adoring crowds in spectator stands. There were just two men, a barely tested spacecraft held together in some places with nothing more than tape and an astronaut carrying their ticket home some 70 miles above. It took the accumulated efforts of thousands of people, engineering miracles and the skill, grit, and determination of the three-man crew to get them to the moon, and it would take no less to get them back.

"In ancient days, men looked at stars and saw their heroes in the constellations," Nixon would say if they failed. "In modern times, we do much the same, but our heroes are epic men of flesh and blood."



Here's what it took to get three astronauts back home.

The Apollo 11 mission was a triumph for the Saturn V, which stands to this day as the most powerful rocket mankind has ever constructed, but Aldrin and Armstrong's second launch was in a much stranger looking ship. Today, the lander we called Eagle stands among America's most iconic imagery, but at the time, it bore little resemblance to what most Americans thought a spaceship should look like. To be specific, it was ugly. Its ragged edges, wrinkled metallic foil, and spider-like legs looked nothing like the streamlined spacecraft depicted in movies—and that was by design.

"We called it 'the Bug,'" Gene Cernan, the mission commander on Apollo 17, once said. "And to me it looked like some gigantic monster that was going to hop down New York City just gobbling up society."

While early plans for the lander may have included artist's renderings of large windows and a rounded craft, engineers quickly dismissed those ideas. Windows were heavy, as were aesthetically pleasing contoured bodies that would hide the mechanical workings of the ship beneath. Even with the most powerful rocket in history, every ounce mattered and as a result, some portions of the craft were famously only a few thin sheets of foil thick.

The Landing Module (LM) was carried in the Saturn's protective shroud and only operated in the vacuum of space, that allowed the engineers to design it from the inside out because they had no concerns for aerodynamics at all. This resulted in the distinctive look for the LM.

Necessity dictated that the Lunar Module had to be both a landing platform and a launch platform, forcing an unusual design that layered the ascent stage above the descent stage on the spacecraft. The crew used the engines on the descent stage to manage their landing, then they'd leave that stage behind, firing the ascent stage's lunar module ascent engine (LMAE) to propel them back up into orbit.

It may not have had much in common with the spaceships Americans had grown accustomed to seeing in the films of the 50s and 60s, but it was light, utilitarian, and functional. At least, it was designed to be. The real test had yet to come.

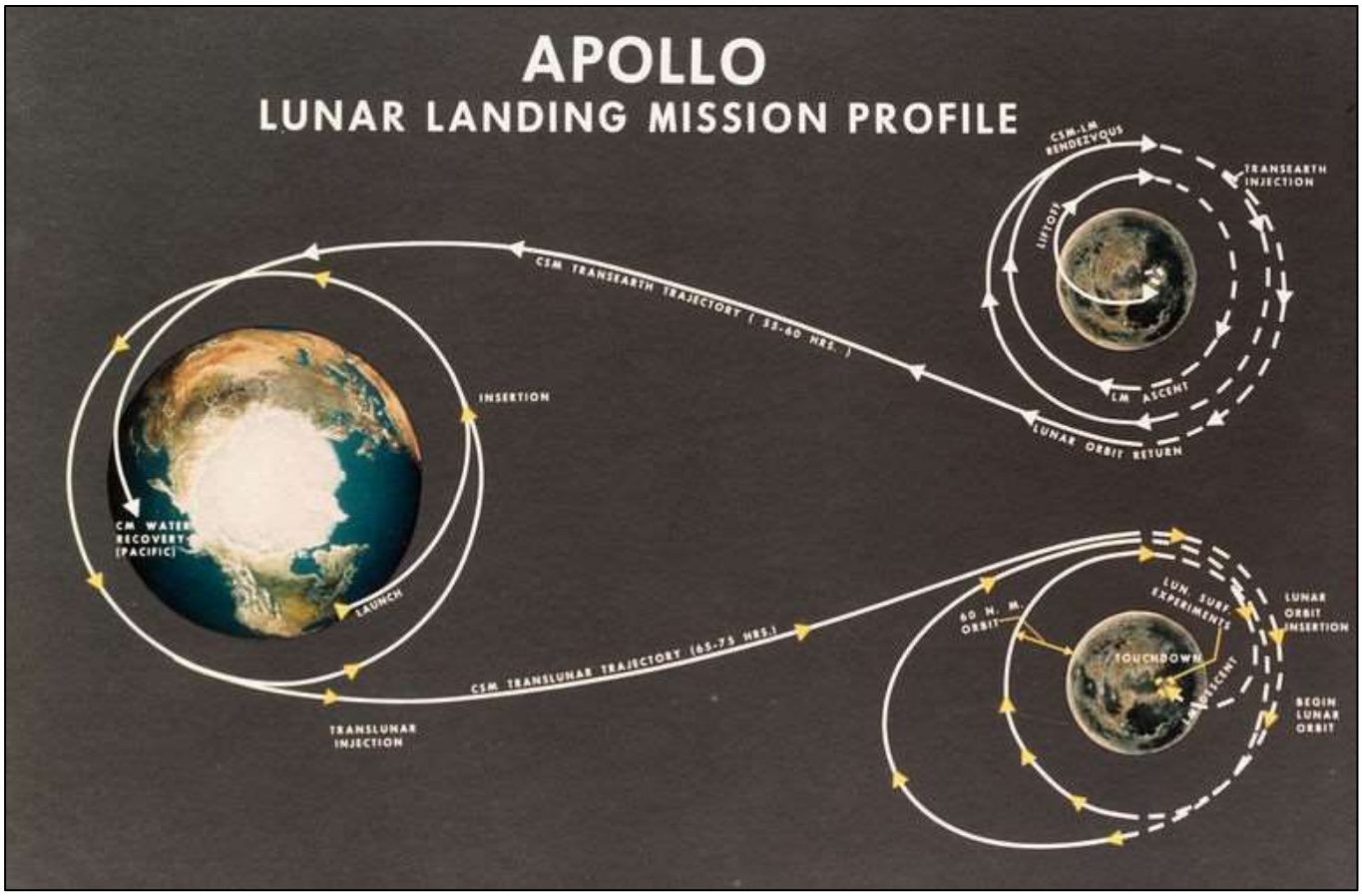
The ascent module may not have looked much like the massive Saturn V that delivered it, but the two had one thing in common:

A failure during launch would mean certain death for its occupants.

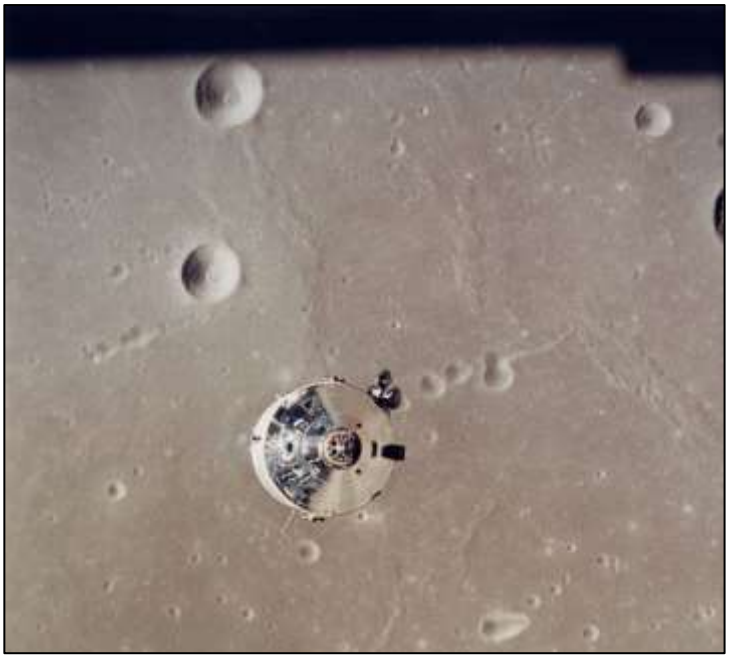
Grumman had subcontracted the ascent module's engine's development to Bell, who believed in the concept of reliability through simplicity. Unlike the Saturn V, which earned its name through its use of five massive F-1 engines, the ascent module utilized a single fixed-thrust hypergolic rocket engine that traded the F-1's kerosene and liquid oxygen fuel for a combination of Aerozine 50 and dinitrogen tetroxide.

When the two chemicals came into contact with one another, there was a spontaneous combustion reaction that would propel the ascent module off of the descent module and into lunar orbit. As a result, the ascent module's propulsion system was the least complex of any rocket in the Apollo program.

At 1:54 p.m., the 180-pound ascent module engine fired, producing about 3,500 pounds of thrust for 435 seconds. Thanks to the moon's reduced gravity, the 15,000kg (if on earth) spacecraft was soon accelerating to a velocity of 2,000 meters per second.



Quick as it was, the launch was a long and anxious journey—it would be four hours before the Eagle and its crew would meet up with the command module in orbit. For that stretch of time, Aldrin and Armstrong rode with no seating, limited control and no guarantee that they would be able to successfully dock with the Command Module.



The Ascent Module's Reaction Control System (RCS) fired as the Eagle elevated to about 13 miles below the Command Module's orbit, rounding out its orbit around the moon. A number of short course corrections accomplished through the same RCS system slowly elevated the craft up to the Command Module's altitude, and at 5:53 p.m., 128 hours and three minutes after lifting off from earth, Aldrin and Armstrong reunited with their orbiting companion Michael Collins in the Command and Service Module (CSM), or simply, Columbia.

The Lunar Lander known as Eagle had successfully carried mankind to the moon's surface, kept them alive, and taken off once again into the darkness of space. Monumental as the achievement was, it would be impossible to bring the history-making craft home. Four hours after Armstrong and Aldrin reached the CSM, they jettisoned their lunar lifeboat.

Now, with the Lunar Module gone and nothing left between the crew and their home but 240,000 miles of space, it was time to fire up Columbia's engines.

At 12:56 a.m. on July 22, the Command Module's Service Propulsion System (SPS) fired. A far more powerful engine than the one that had flown Aldrin and Armstrong up from the moon's surface, the SPS consisted of a helium pressurization system, a propellant feed system, a propellant gauging and utilization system (that included sensors for display inside the cabin of the spacecraft and back at mission control), and of course, the rocket engine itself. The system used helium as a pressurizing gas, inhibited nitrogen tetroxide for an oxidizer and a blended hydrazine fuel made up of a mixture of around 50 percent unsymmetrical dimethyl hydrazine and 50 percent anhydrous hydrazine. The result was a more complex platform than the ascent propulsion system with quite a bit more power. The SPS could produce 21,900 pounds of thrust at intervals ranging from less than half of a second all the way up to twelve-and-a-half minutes.

A controlled two-and-a-half minute burn from the SPS, initiated from behind the moon, placed the astronauts on a trajectory for home. Mission Control held their breath, unsure if the engine had fired until Columbia emerged from behind the moon and they re-acquired the signal conveying the spacecraft's telemetry data. It wasn't long before they were able to confirm: Apollo 11 was coming home.

The trip would be a cramped one. Columbia was a gumdrop shaped spacecraft reminiscent of the earlier Gemini designs. At 3.2 metres from the base to the apex and just under 4 metres around at the base, the entire spacecraft allotted just 6 cubic metres of living space inside. With

all of the instrumentation and equipment, it left less room for the astronauts than might be found in most luxury sedans and it would have to be home for the three men for about three more days.

After traveling hundreds of thousands of miles, beating the odds, and making it back to Earth, the three-man crew of Apollo 11 were not out of the woods yet.

As they approached their re-entry timetable, powerful thunderstorms were bearing down on Columbia's intended splashdown location. With limited fuel, waiting out the storm wasn't an option. The only choice was to use the bell shape of the spacecraft as a sort of wing, re-entering the atmosphere at just such an angle as to stretch out their landing zone by a few hundred miles.

Columbia was designed specifically for such a possibility and a number of pre-selected landing zones had already been established for just such a scenario, but like most elements of the Apollo 11 mission, there remained a great deal of uncertainty as to how well the spacecraft would perform. The Earth they had left behind was gone and in its place was a new one—one that knew man could reach the stars.

While the exterior of the ship was symmetrical, the interior was designed to position the majority of the weight near the crew's feet—giving the craft a specific orientation for re-entry. At supersonic speeds and the proper angle, that small lean created by the strategic weight placement resulted in some degree of lift, allowing the craft to fly, if ever so slightly, further than an uncontrolled descent would allow.

About 12 hours before the crew of Apollo 11 were to re-enter earth's atmosphere, they got the call: they were to fly with their lift vector in the up position for about 90 seconds as they re-entered. According to NASA's math, that should add about 215 miles to their anticipated flight path. It was a risky decision, but certainly a less risky one than coming down in a raging thunderstorm in the middle of the Pacific.

At 12:50 p.m. on July 24, Columbia splashed down in the Pacific Ocean just 1.94 miles from their intended landing point with the primary recovery carrier, the USSHornet, just 15 miles out. Within an hour of hitting the water, Armstrong, Aldrin, and Collins were taken aboard the Hornet where they were placed in isolation over concerns about "moon germs." Despite many scientists believing it to be an unnecessary precaution, the crew remained in quarantine for 21 more days after their return. The astronauts did as they were instructed, even if they didn't see it as very logical.

"Look at it this way," Mike Collins mused years later. "Suppose there were germs on the moon. There are germs on the moon, we come back, the command module is full of lunar germs. The command module lands in the Pacific Ocean, and what do they do? Open the hatch. You got to open the hatch! All the damn germs come out!"

NASA would eventually drop the quarantine requirement for Apollos 15, 16, and 17, but for Aldrin, Armstrong, and Collins, those three weeks may have been some of the most surreal of the entire journey. They had reached the unreachable, done what no-one had done before, and now, back on Earth, they were the only three human beings to have ever left this world and reached another one.

The Earth they had left behind was gone, and in its place was a new one—one that knew man could reach the stars. It was the start of a new era, and as they emerged from their 21 days of isolation, they found that the lives they led before were gone too.

They were no longer astronauts. They were heroes.

Flatulence
Female: An embarrassing by-product of indigestion.
Male: A source of entertainment, self-expression, male bonding.

Why we Knock on Wood (and other Common Superstitions)

Ever wondered why that hotel doesn't have a 13th floor, or why you're supposed to throw salt over your shoulder after you spill it? Here's the history behind some of the most common superstitions.

Some superstitions are so common that it's easy to forget they're kind of strange practices. If an alien were to visit Earth, not many people would be able to explain to them why we reflexively say "Bless you" when somebody sneezes, but whether you adhere to these traditions or not, it's certainly fun to find out where they come from. Each one has a story behind it.

Why we knock on wood.

The first recorded evidence of people saying "Touch wood" (the British version of "Knock on wood") comes from the 1800s. However, the practice is much older than that, and there are a few conflicting origin stories as to where it came from.

- Some believe it's a pagan tradition from the Celts, who thought trees were the homes of gods and spirits. They might have knocked on wood to thank the good spirits or to drive the evil spirits away.
- Others attribute the practice to Christianity since wood was also sacred in Christian cultures as the material of the cross, however, it's also possible that the superstition isn't that deep.
- Some old children's games involved knocking on or touching wood to become immune to losing.

Why we throw salt over our shoulder.

If you spill salt, you might suddenly feel the need to throw some over your shoulder and if you don't, someone might remind you to do it. They might even tell you that you need to throw it over your left shoulder, not your right.

A possible explanation for this comes from the fact that salt used to be super expensive. If you spilled it, that was surely the devil's work. Throwing a little bit over your left shoulder was thought to blind the devil that made you spill it (Christians once thought that the devil hung out behind the left shoulder). One of the most famous links to this superstition is in da Vinci's painting The Last Supper. Look closely, and you'll see that Judas (4th in from the left) – see HERE, has spilled the salt. Judas is the famous betrayer of Christian tradition, so this depiction connected spilled salt to lying, betrayal, and the devil.

Why we say "Bless You" when people sneeze

Saying "Bless you" (or "God bless you") when someone sneezes is now so common, it seems almost rude if you don't do it. However, few people think about where this tradition comes from.

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Long ago, some believed that a sneeze was an evil spirit leaving the body, or the body trying to make a spirit leave. Saying “God bless you” helped protect the sneezer from the spirit entering again. People also once believed that the heart briefly stopped during a sneeze, although this has long been proven to be false, however, the practice might also date from the days of the plague during the Middle Ages. Legend has it that Pope Gregory I made a decree that people should say “God bless you” for protection from the plague anytime someone sneezed.

Why we’re scared of breaking mirrors.

Have you heard that a broken mirror means seven years of bad luck? You may not believe it, but the thought probably still pops into your head anytime you crack a mirror. Since mirrors hold our reflections, people used to think they were linked to our souls. This idea might date back to ancient Greece, where people thought spirits could be found in the reflections of a still pool of water. When the mirror broke, it was believed, the soul became fragmented. Some legends held that this broken soul couldn’t protect its owner from bad luck. Others said that the broken soul would take revenge on its owner.

Why we don’t walk under ladders

The idea that it’s bad luck to walk under a ladder seems a little more common-sense, maybe the person working at the top of the ladder could drop a tool on your head, or even fall on you. But the actual superstition is more interesting. Some date this belief to ancient Egypt, where the triangle was held sacred (pyramids?). Passing through a triangle shape was a big faux pas and a ladder leaning against a wall does form a triangle.

Later, though, Christians adopted the same belief, linking it to the crucifixion of Christ. A ladder leaned against the cross at the time of Christ’s death, so they became unlucky symbols that would cause misfortune for anyone who walked beneath one.

Why we don’t open umbrellas indoors

Modern umbrellas that open and close haven’t been around for very long, so this is one superstition that might not be that old. The first umbrellas of the 1700s were a far cry from the ones we use today: they were heavy, difficult and used a system of springs and sharp metal rods to open.

Even today, opening an umbrella in a crowded room can result in a poke in the eye but imagine how it was with one of these earlier designs. From injuries to broken objects, it’s not hard to see where this superstition came from.

However, umbrella-type designs that didn't open and close were also found in many earlier cultures. In ancient Egypt, only royalty could use a parasol for protection from the sun and in ancient China, leather umbrellas were a mark of nobility. So, the superstition about opening an umbrella inside actually might have much older roots, linked to the umbrella as a sacred, royal object.

Why we think the number 13 is unlucky

People fear the number 13 so much that many hotels don't label their 13th floor, going instead straight from 12 to 14 - and Friday the 13th is considered an especially unlucky date.

This superstition dates back to the laws of ancient Mesopotamia, known as the Code of Hammurabi. This code skipped over the 13th law, although that's now believed to be a translation error, not an intentional avoidance. Still, some cultures later interpreted the omission as a sign to avoid 13. The number 12 has been widely regarded as an important number by many cultures: there's a reason why we have a 12-month calendar and count the hours of the day in sets of 12, so by contrast, some people thought 13 was as bad as 12 was good.

Not only that, but ancient Nordic legends held that Loki, the trickster god, brought evil to the world when he was the 13th guest at a party in Valhalla. Christianity also plays a part in this superstition. Judas didn't just knock over the salt at the Last Supper: he was also the 13th guest to arrive.

Why we hunt for four-leaf clovers

For some children, there's no greater joy than finding a four-leaf clover. But why are these such coveted symbols of good luck?

First, there's the simple fact that finding one is against the odds. Experts say your chances of finding one are 1 in 10,000, but even before scientists had calculated that number, people were carrying four-leaf clovers around. The ancient Celts sometimes carried them to keep evil spirits at bay and in medieval times, people thought four-leaf clovers could help them find and avoid dangerous fairies. Christian lore once claimed that Eve picked a four-leaf clover as she was forced out of Eden.

Why we hang up horseshoes.

Ever seen a "lucky horseshoe" hung above a door? This superstition is centuries old. The ancient Celts first started hanging horseshoes over their doors to ward off goblins, fairies, and elves. The fact that horseshoes looked like crescent moons was thought to scare off these supernatural beings.

Today, some people think horseshoes need to hang with the open ends up, so the luck stays inside and doesn't fall out. However, others believe a horseshoe should hang ends-down, so the luck spills out onto whoever walks through the door.

Why we wish on shooting stars

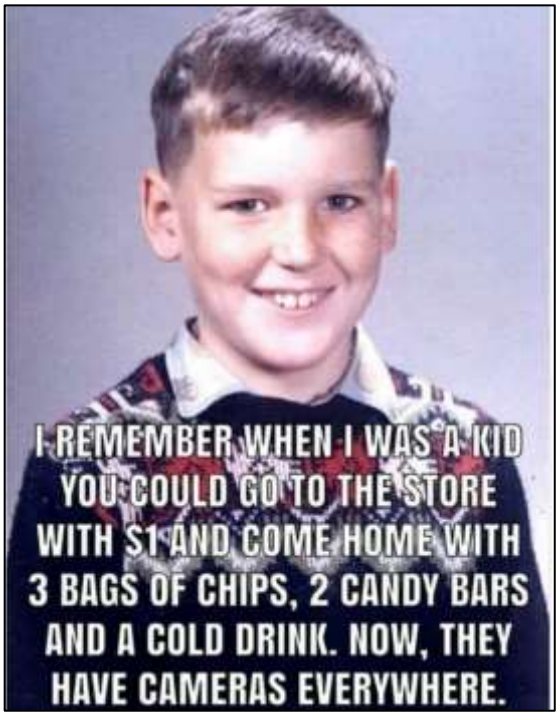
We now know that "shooting stars" aren't stars, they're meteors burning up as they enter the atmosphere, however, that doesn't stop people from making a wish when they see one.

This idea probably comes from Ptolemy, an astrologer of ancient Greece. He wrote that shooting stars were a sign that the gods were looking down on Earth. If you saw one, it was the perfect time to wish something from the deities. Some central European cultures also believed that each person had their own star and a shooting star marked someone's death. While they wouldn't make a wish for themselves, they might say a wish for the dying soul when they saw one, like a simple "Go with God."

Stockholm Express.

Secret WW2 British Airways Flights during WWII

British Airways ran a highly successful and secret courier service between the UK and Sweden during WW2, the Stockholm Express. Click HERE to watch a 5 minute video to see what it was used for and why De Havilland Mosquitos flew this dangerous route.



35 Sqn Association Day.

On Friday the 9th August, a bunch of old RTFV-35 Sqn blokes, with their ladies and friends, were guests of 35 Sqn at Amberley. A total of about 70 people met in the car park next to the F-111 at the 'new' front gate to the Base at 10.00am. Jarrod Phillips from 35 Sqn then checked everyone off on a roll, reminded everyone of the requirements for entering the Base and outlined the 'follow me' procedure for getting to 35 Sqn HQ.

Jarrod headed off onto the Base in the RAAF's Z car, followed by a convoy of everyone in their private cars and we all ended up in the new multi-story car park – with a lift. Can you believe that?? – different world.

From the car park, it was only a short walk to the Sqn HQ where we were ushered into the Sqn briefing room and met by the CO, Wng Cdr Ben Poxon who welcomed everyone to the Sqn and gave a 30 minute informative talk and PowerPoint presentation on what the Squadron has accomplished with its new aircraft and also where it was headed.

After the briefing and because of the large number of visitors, we were split into 4 groups, each with a minder and we then headed off to look through the hangars. First thing you notice, when compared to the facilities we had and used in years past, is the different mind-set taken by the RAAF. Today safety is most definitely top of mind, it always was but has been ratcheted up to the Nth degree, the once favoured tarmac uniform of shorts and T-boots has long gone, no more sun-burnt troops, today it's fully covered clothing with hi-vis vests, no longer do blokes and blokettes use vehicles or ladders or open-top stands to work on aircraft, today it's a far different ball-game. Today blokes and blokettes have safe and secure work platforms on which to work, hangars are well-lit with smooth and thoroughly clean floors. No trip hazards there. Move your mouse over the pic at right to see the in-hangar work platforms.

We also noticed that 35 Sqn do their own deep cycle maintenance – bit like the old E servicing a lot would be familiar with. We consider this a fabulous step in the right direction, for some time now the RAAF has been out-sourcing its heavy maintenance and it's good to see it coming back in-house. Blokes and

blokettes were becoming refuellers and marshallers and leaving the RAAF with not a lot of maintenance experience under their belt. The new 35 Sqn has decided to continue with the practice used by the old 35/38 Sqns which used to service their Caribous up to D. With aircraft that spend a lot of time away from Base, in a lot of instances, in the bush, it's imperative that its ground crew have the smarts to be able to fix the aircraft if and when it goes bung.

As well as that, it's nice to end the day with the knowledge that you've fixed something.

After a good look through the hangars it was time to hit the flight line and check out one of the aircraft.

Anne Peck, right, up close and personal with the Spartan.

Jeremy Spackman getting his first up close look at an Air Force squadron.

A lot of people had never been inside a RAAF aircraft and they were amazed at the frugality of the interior. No soft comfy seats, no overhead lockers, no carpet on the floors, no pretty hosties to direct you to your seat – just a great big padded tube with bits hanging off it everywhere.

Sorry we didn't get a name, but a big thank you to the RAAF bod who was super patient with everyone and who went out of his way to explain things.

He even showed how quickly you can open the door – see HERE

One of the aircraft was about to head off somewhere on a job – and while most people had been in an aircraft before (civvy) not a lot had stood on a tarmac and see one depart. (Click the pic to see it go.) The day was organised by John "Sambo" Sambrooks and WO Ralph Clifton, who was not well and couldn't front up on the day and although the old ex-35/38Sqn blokes didn't see anything to write home about, their friends were fascinated and got an insight into the way an airline works. They would have gone away with fond memories of the day and will tell all their friends what a great time they had - events like this can only be good PR for the RAAF.

After our tour of the hangars and tarmac area, it was into the brew room, once called the smoko room, for one of the RAAF's famous barbecues and to meet with some of the PAF blokes and blokettes.

Current 35 Sqn personnel hard at it on the barbecues.

The current 35 Sqn buildings – facilities these days are fabulous, run your mouse over the pic to see the building which housed 38 Sqn many years ago.

We must thank the CO, Ben Poxon for allowing the day to go ahead. A bunch of old buggers like us invading his domain always upsets the normal running of the squadron but Ben and his team were most accommodating, went out of their way to make us feel welcome and we thank them very much.

Brent Peck and Ben Poxon.

We did notice another change – the ADF is now the ADO – Australian Defence Organisation. Can't offend anyone, what next, plastic bullets??

Sneezing

Now that Spring has sprung, hopefully all the colds and runny noses are now a thing of the past and won't surface again until sometime next year. The flu epidemic hit pretty hard in 2019 and it wasn't uncommon to see heaps of people walking along with the tissue out having a good old sneeze, which got us wondering, what is a sneeze and what's the purpose and the use of it.

A sneeze, or sternutation, is a semi-autonomous, convulsive expulsion of air from the lungs through the nose and mouth, usually caused by foreign particles irritating the nasal mucosa membrane. A sneeze expels air forcibly from the mouth and nose in an explosive, spasmodic involuntary action which allows for mucus to escape through the nasal cavity. Sneezing is

possibly linked to sudden exposure to bright light, sudden change (fall) in temperature, breeze of cold air, a particularly full stomach, or viral infection and can lead to the spread of disease.

During a sneeze, the soft palate and palatine uvula depress while the back of the tongue elevates to partially close the passage to the mouth so that air ejected from the lungs may be expelled through the nose. Because the closing of the mouth is only partial, a considerable amount of this air is usually also expelled from the mouth. The force and extent of the expulsion of the air through the nose varies.

Sneezing cannot occur during sleep due to REM atonia – a bodily state where motor neurons are not stimulated and reflex signals are not relayed to the brain. Sufficient external stimulants, however, may cause a person to wake from sleep to sneeze, but any sneezing occurring afterwards would take place with a partially awake status at minimum.

Sneezing typically occurs when foreign particles or sufficient external stimulants pass through the nasal hairs to reach the nasal mucosa. This triggers the release of histamines, which irritate the nerve cells in the nose, resulting in signals being sent to the brain to initiate the sneeze through the trigeminal nerve network. The brain then relates this initial signal, activates the pharyngeal and tracheal muscles and creates a large opening of the nasal and oral cavities, resulting in a powerful release of air and bioparticles. The powerful nature of a sneeze is attributed to its involvement of numerous organs of the upper body – it is a reflexive response involving the face, throat, and chest muscles. Sneezing is also triggered by sinus nerve stimulation caused by nasal congestion and allergies.

The sneeze reflex involves contraction of a number of different muscles and muscle groups throughout the body, typically including the eyelids. The common suggestion that it is impossible to sneeze with one's eyes open is, however, inaccurate. Other than irritating foreign particles, allergies or possible illness, another stimulus is sudden exposure to bright light – a condition known as photic sneeze reflex (PSR). Walking out of a dark building into sunshine may trigger PSR, or the ACHOO (autosomal dominant compulsive helio-ophthalmic outbursts of sneezing) syndrome as it's also called. The tendency to sneeze upon exposure to bright light affects 18-35% of the human population. A rarer trigger, observed in some individuals, is the fullness of the stomach immediately after a large meal. This is known as snatiation and is regarded as a medical disorder passed along genetically as an autosomal dominant trait.
Epidemiology

While generally harmless in healthy individuals, sneezes spread disease through the infectious aerosol droplets, commonly ranging from 0.5 to 5.0µm (micrometre). A sneeze can produce 40,000 droplets. To reduce the possibility of thus spreading disease (such as the flu), one holds the forearm or the inside of the elbow in front of one's mouth and nose when sneezing. Using one's hand for that purpose has recently fallen into disuse as it is considered inappropriate, since it promotes spreading germs through human contact (such as handshaking) or by commonly touched objects (most notably doorknobs).

Examples of preventive techniques are:

- the deep exhalation of the air in the lungs that would otherwise be used in the act of sneezing,
- holding the breath in while counting to ten or gently pinching the bridge of the nose for several seconds.

Proven methods to reduce sneezing generally advocate reducing interaction with irritants, such as keeping pets out of the house to avoid animal dander; ensuring the timely and continuous removal of dirt and dust particles through proper housekeeping; replacing filters for furnaces and air-handling units; air filtration devices and humidifiers; and staying away from industrial and agricultural zones. Some people, however, find sneezes to be pleasurable and would not want to prevent them.

In English-speaking countries, one common verbal response to another person's sneeze is "God bless you". Another common verbal response to another's sneeze is "Gesundheit", which is a German word that means, appropriately, "good health". Several hypotheses exist for why the custom arose of saying "bless you" or "God bless you" in the context of sneezing:

- Some say it came into use during the plague pandemics of the 14th century. Blessing the individual after showing such a symptom was thought to prevent possible impending death due to the lethal disease.

- In Renaissance times, a superstition was formed claiming one's heart stopped for a very brief moment during the sneeze; saying bless you was a sign of prayer that the heart would not fail.
- It has also been stated that one says "(God) bless you" so that one does not catch the flu, cold, or any other forms of sickness.

Other cultures have similar traditions.

Some people may sneeze during the initial phases of sexual arousal. Doctors suspect that the phenomenon might arise from a case of crossed wires in the autonomic nervous system, which regulates a number of functions in the body, including "waking up" the genitals during sexual arousal. The nose, like the genitals, contains erectile tissue. This phenomenon may prepare the vomeronasal organ for increased detection of pheromones.

A sneeze has been compared to an orgasm, since both orgasms and sneeze reflexes involve tingling, bodily stretching, tension and release. On this subject, sexologist Vanessa Thompson from the University of Sydney states, “Sneezing and orgasms both produce feel-good chemicals called endorphins but the amount produced by a sneeze is far less than an orgasm.”

According to Dr. Holly Boyer from the University of Minnesota, there is a pleasurable effect during a sneeze, where she states, “the muscle tension that builds up in your chest causes pressure, and when you sneeze and the muscles relax, it releases pressure. Anytime you release pressure, it feels good...There’s also some evidence that endorphins are released, which causes your body to feel good”. Endorphins induce the brain’s reward system, and because sneezes occur in a quick burst, so does the pleasure

Sneezing while menstruating may result in a sudden vaginal menses emission.

Sneezing is not confined to humans or even mammals. Many animals including cats, dogs, chickens and iguanas sneeze. African wild dogs use sneezing as a form of communication, especially when considering a consensus in a pack on whether or not to hunt.

A long-standing estimate pins the velocity of a sneeze at roughly 100 meters per second, or 224 miles per hour, but that appears to be a gross exaggeration. The figure originates from a mid-century researcher named William Firth Wells, who analyzed the size of airborne droplets from a sneeze and then inferred the speed at which air must travel across a liquid surface to form them. Wells' figure has been repeated for

many years but never directly tested in the lab. "I think people have been waiting for someone to come along and debunk it," says Julian Tang, a medical virologist at the Alberta Provincial Laboratory for Public Health in Edmonton.

For a study published this year, Tang and his colleagues used high-speed cameras to take pictures of pepper-induced sneezes from six volunteers. The team captured each sneeze by positioning the volunteers in front of a concave mirror and then shining an LED beam toward it. The warm air from the sneeze has a different refractive index than the cooler ambient air, so the reflected LED bends differently. The camera records the changes, and scientists can map the sneeze.

The study found that a sneeze's maximum velocity is nowhere near 100 meters per second but instead reaches a high of 4.5 meters per second, or 10 miles per hour. That's comparable to the velocity of air expelled by coughing—and a violent cough can push up a larger volume of air, which requires even more force. "The sneeze is really coming from your upper respiratory tract," Tang explains.

Tang, who did his study in Singapore, acknowledges that his numbers might have come out differently if he'd chosen different subjects. "All my data is from these rather slim Asian students," he says. "If somebody did this in the North American setting, with the bigger body frames that they have here, they might find higher velocities."

Men are always whining about how we're suffocating them.

Personally, I think if you can hear them whining you're not pressing hard enough on the pillow!

Best sunscreen: Understand sunscreen options.

Now that the sun is on the way back it's time to recall the old "Slip, slop, slap" message. It's time to head off to the Chemist and stock up on sunscreen and to limit your time exposed in the sun.

What are the best ways to protect yourself from the sun? Focus on the big picture when it comes to sun safety. For example:

- Avoid the sun during peak hours. Generally, this is between 10 a.m. and 4 p.m. Water, sand and concrete reflect light and increase the risk of sunburn.
- Wear sun protective clothing. This includes pants, shirts with long sleeves, sunglasses and hats.
- Use sunscreen. Look for water-resistant, broad-spectrum coverage with an SPF of at least 30. Apply sunscreen generously and reapply every two hours — or more often if you're swimming or sweating.

What does a broad-spectrum sunscreen do?

There are two types of UV light that can harm your skin — UVA and UVB. A broad-spectrum sunscreen protects you from both. UVA rays can prematurely age your skin, causing wrinkling and age spots. UVB rays can burn your skin. Too much exposure to UVA or UVB rays can cause skin cancer. The best sunscreen offers protection from UV light.

What SPF do you need?

SPF stands for sun protection factor, a measure of how well sunscreen protects against UVB rays. (UVA protection isn't rated.) Manufacturers calculate SPF based on how long it takes to sunburn skin treated with the sunscreen as compared to skin with no sunscreen. Experts recommend using a sunscreen with an SPF of at least 30. Sunscreens with SPFs greater than 50 provide only a small increase in UV protection. High-number SPFs last the same amount of time as low-number SPFs.

Sunscreen is often not applied thoroughly or thickly enough and it can be washed off during swimming or sweating. As a result, sunscreen might be less effective than the SPF number suggests. The term water resistant means that the SPF is maintained for up to 40 minutes in water. Very water resistant means the SPF is maintained for 80 minutes in water.

What do I need to know about sunscreen ingredients?

Sunscreens contain filters that reflect or absorb UV rays. There are two main types of filters:

- **Organic**. Organic filters absorb UV radiation and convert it to a small amount of heat. Examples include cinnamates, salicylates and benzophenones.

- **Inorganic**. Inorganic filters reflect and scatter UV radiation. Examples include titanium dioxide and zinc oxide. Inorganic sunscreens are typically less irritating to skin.

Sunscreens might also contain or be combined with:

- **Insect repellent**. Experts recommend using separate sunscreen and insect repellent products. Sunscreen needs to be applied generously and often, while insect repellent should be used sparingly and less frequently.
- **Cosmetics**. Some moisturizers, makeup and after-shaves contain sunscreen. While convenient, these products need to be regularly reapplied to continue providing protection.

Should I use a spray sunscreen or a lotion? Consider the pros and cons for different applications, including:

- **Creams**. If you have dry skin, you might prefer a cream — especially for your face.
- **Lotions**. Lotions are often preferred for application on large areas. Lotions tend to be thinner and less greasy than creams.
- **Gel**. Gels work best in hairy areas, such as the scalp or chest.
- **Stick**. Sticks are useful when applying sunscreen around the eyes.
- **Spray**. Sprays are easy to apply on children. Because it's difficult to know how well you're applying it, spray a generous and even coating. To prevent inhalation of the product, don't spray near the face or mouth. Check the direction of the wind before spraying.

When you use sunscreen:

- Apply generous amounts of sunscreen to dry skin 15 minutes before you go outdoors.
- Use sunscreen on all skin surfaces that will be exposed to the sun, such as your neck, the tops of your feet, your ears and the top of your head. Apply a lip balm or lipstick with an SPF of least 30 to your lips.
- Since UV light can pass through clouds, use sunscreen even when it's cloudy.
- Check the sunscreen's expiration date. If it’s out of date, toss it, it has lost most of its usefulness.
- Avoid using sunscreen on children younger than age 6 months. Instead, try to limit sun exposure.

Use sunscreen year-round, but don't let any product lull you into a false sense of security about sun exposure. A combination of shade, clothing, sunscreen and common sense is your best bet.

High blood pressure dangers: Hypertension's effects on your body.

High blood pressure (hypertension) is a risk factor for more than heart disease.

It can quietly damage your body for years before symptoms develop. Left uncontrolled, you may wind up with a disability, a poor quality of life or even a fatal heart attack. Roughly half the people with untreated hypertension die of heart disease related to poor blood flow (ischemic heart disease) and another third die of stroke. Treatment and lifestyle changes can help control your high blood pressure to reduce your risk of life-threatening complications. This is what the complications high blood pressure can cause when it's not effectively controlled.

Damage to your arteries.

Healthy arteries are flexible, strong and elastic. Their inner lining is smooth so that blood flows freely, supplying vital organs and tissues with nutrients and oxygen. Hypertension gradually increases the pressure of blood flowing through your arteries, as a result, you might experience:

- **Damaged and narrowed arteries**. High blood pressure can damage the cells of your arteries' inner lining. When fats from your diet enter your bloodstream, they can collect in the damaged arteries. Eventually, your artery walls become less elastic, limiting blood flow throughout your body.
- **Aneurysm**. Over time, the constant pressure of blood moving through a weakened artery can cause a section of its wall to enlarge and form a bulge (aneurysm). An aneurysm can potentially rupture and cause life-threatening internal bleeding. Aneurysms can form in any artery throughout your body, but they're most common in your body's largest artery (aorta).

Damage to your heart.

Your heart pumps blood to your entire body. Uncontrolled high blood pressure can damage your heart in a number of ways, such as:

- **Coronary artery disease.** Coronary artery disease affects the arteries that supply blood to your heart muscle. Arteries narrowed by coronary artery disease don't allow blood to flow freely through your arteries. When blood can't flow freely to your heart, you can experience chest pain, a heart attack or irregular heart rhythms (arrhythmias).
- **Enlarged left heart.** High blood pressure forces your heart to work harder than necessary in order to pump blood to the rest of your body. This causes the left ventricle to thicken or

stiffen (left ventricular hypertrophy). These changes limit the ventricle's ability to pump blood to your body. This condition increases your risk of heart attack, heart failure and sudden cardiac death.

- **Heart failure.** Over time, the strain on your heart caused by high blood pressure can cause your heart muscle to weaken and work less efficiently. Eventually, your overwhelmed heart simply begins to wear out and fail. Damage from heart attacks adds to this problem.

Damage to your brain

Just like your heart, your brain depends on a nourishing blood supply to work properly and survive. But high blood pressure can cause several problems, including:

- **Transient ischemic attack (TIA).** Sometimes called a ministroke, a transient ischemic attack is a brief, temporary disruption of blood supply to your brain. It's often caused by atherosclerosis or a blood clot — both of which can arise from high blood pressure. A transient ischemic attack is often a warning that you're at risk of a full-blown stroke.
- **Stroke.** A stroke occurs when part of your brain is deprived of oxygen and nutrients, causing brain cells to die. Uncontrolled high blood pressure can lead to stroke by damaging and weakening your brain's blood vessels, causing them to narrow, rupture or leak. High blood pressure can also cause blood clots to form in the arteries leading to your brain, blocking blood flow and potentially causing a stroke.
- **Dementia.** Dementia is a brain disease resulting in problems with thinking, speaking, reasoning, memory, vision and movement. There are a number of causes of dementia. One cause, vascular dementia, can result from narrowing and blockage of the arteries that supply blood to the brain. It can also result from strokes caused by an interruption of blood flow to the brain. In either case, high blood pressure may be the culprit.
- **Mild cognitive impairment.** Mild cognitive impairment is a transition stage between the changes in understanding and memory that come with aging and the more-serious problems caused by Alzheimer's disease. Like dementia, it can result from blocked blood flow to the brain when high blood pressure damages arteries.

Damage to your kidneys.

Your kidneys filter excess fluid and waste from your blood — a process that depends on healthy blood vessels. High blood pressure can injure both the blood vessels in and leading to your kidneys, causing several types of kidney disease (nephropathy). Having diabetes in addition to high blood pressure can worsen the damage.

- **Kidney failure.** High blood pressure is one of the most common causes of kidney failure. That's because it can damage both the large arteries leading to your kidneys and the tiny blood vessels (glomeruli) within the kidneys. Damage to either makes it so your kidneys

can't effectively filter waste from your blood. As a result, dangerous levels of fluid and waste can accumulate. You might ultimately require dialysis or kidney transplantation.

- **Kidney scarring (glomerulosclerosis)**. Glomerulosclerosis is a type of kidney damage caused by scarring of the glomeruli. The glomeruli are tiny clusters of blood vessels within your kidneys that filter fluid and waste from your blood. Glomerulosclerosis can leave your kidneys unable to filter waste effectively, leading to kidney failure.
- **Kidney artery aneurysm.** An aneurysm is a bulge in the wall of a blood vessel. When it occurs in an artery leading to the kidney, it's known as a kidney (renal) artery aneurysm. One potential cause is atherosclerosis, which weakens and damages the artery wall. Over time, high blood pressure in a weakened artery can cause a section to enlarge and form a bulge — the aneurysm. Aneurysms can rupture and cause life-threatening internal bleeding.

Damage to your eyes.

Tiny, delicate blood vessels supply blood to your eyes. Like other vessels, they, too, can be damaged by high blood pressure:

Eye blood vessel damage (retinopathy). High blood pressure can damage the vessels supplying blood to your retina, causing retinopathy. This condition can lead to bleeding in the eye, blurred vision and complete loss of vision. If you also have both diabetes and high blood pressure, you're at an even greater risk.
Fluid buildup under the retina (choroidopathy). In this condition, fluid builds up under your retina because of a leaky blood vessel in a layer of blood vessels located under the retina. Choroidopathy can result in distorted vision or in some cases scarring that impairs vision.
Nerve damage (optic neuropathy). This is a condition in which blocked blood flow damages the optic nerve. It can kill nerve cells in your eyes, which may cause bleeding within your eye or vision loss.

Sexual dysfunction

Although the inability to have and maintain an erection (erectile dysfunction) becomes increasingly common in men as they reach age 50, it's even more likely to occur if they have high blood pressure, too. Over time, high blood pressure damages the lining of your blood vessels and causes your arteries to harden and narrow (atherosclerosis), limiting blood flow. This means less blood is able to flow to your penis. For some men, the decreased blood flow makes it difficult to achieve and maintain

erections — often referred to as erectile dysfunction. The problem is fairly common, especially among men who are not treating their high blood pressure.

Women may have sexual dysfunction as a side effect of high blood pressure, as well. High blood pressure can reduce blood flow to your vagina. For some women, this leads to a decrease in sexual desire or arousal, vaginal dryness, or difficulty achieving orgasm. Improving arousal and lubrication can help. Like men, women can experience anxiety and relationship issues due to sexual dysfunction.

Other possible dangers of high blood pressure.

High blood pressure can also affect other areas of the body, leading to such problems as:

- **Bone loss.** High blood pressure can increase the amount of calcium that's in your urine. That excessive elimination of calcium may lead to loss of bone density (osteoporosis), which in turn can lead to broken bones. The risk is especially increased in older women.
- **Trouble sleeping.** Obstructive sleep apnea — a condition in which your throat muscles relax causing you to snore loudly — occurs in more than half of those with high blood pressure. It's now thought that high blood pressure itself may help trigger sleep apnea, also, sleep deprivation resulting from sleep apnea can raise your blood pressure.

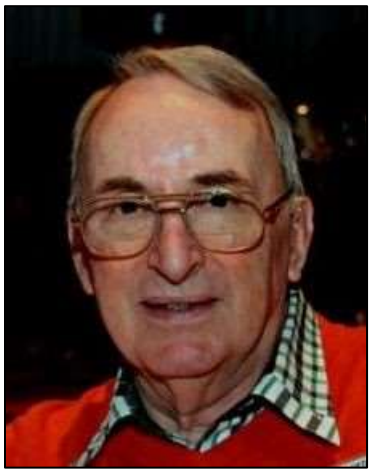
High blood pressure emergencies.

High blood pressure is usually a chronic condition that gradually causes damage over the years. But sometimes blood pressure rises so quickly and severely that it becomes a medical emergency requiring immediate treatment, often with hospitalization.

In these situations, high blood pressure can cause:

- Memory loss, personality changes, trouble concentrating, irritability or progressive loss of consciousness
- Stroke
- Severe damage to your body's main artery (aortic dissection)
- Chest pain
- Heart attack
- Sudden impaired pumping of the heart, leading to fluid backup in the lungs resulting in shortness of breath (pulmonary edema)
- Sudden loss of kidney function
- Complications in pregnant women (preeclampsia or eclampsia).

Pedro's Patter.



Excerpt from Jeff's book – Wallaby Airlines.

Epilogue Xinh Loi, Vietnam.

After 12 long months flying Caribous with Wallaby Airlines in Vietnam, I was on my way home. When I left Australia, I felt apprehensive about my reactions to war. Now, as our Qantas jet whispered on over the gigantic landmass of Australia, I wondered how I would handle peace. My wife and I had lived apart after a very short time together, she in normal circumstances and I in a totally military environment where everything, even one's free time, revolved around the flying program. Where dress was either a flying suit or second-best casuals. Where there were few rules except the requirement to get the job done. Where money had no value except for buying beer and toothpaste. Where Australia was as far away as Brazil.

I realised we would have to get to know one another again. I would have to learn to live like an ordinary person again. I felt like an impostor in the freshly dry-cleaned suit that I had not worn for 12 months, my suntan incongruous in the cold winter weather. Looking over the heads of the milling crowd, I saw Robyn waiting for me, fashionably elegant in a purple overcoat with a close-fitting muffler collar. The white poodle I had given her to keep her company while I was away lay contentedly and possessively across her crooked arm. What would I say to her that would truly show her how glad I was to be back, even though the turmoil of the last 12 months was still very much in my mind? We embraced, awkwardly at first, then more passionately. It was good to feel the security of belonging to a person instead of an organisation.

After customs and immigration formalities, we drove home saying little, she trying to read my thoughts, me looking for things to tell her outside the all consuming topic of life in Vietnam. Vietnam was thousands of miles distant, but in my mind it was only hours away, as it is even now. For a long time, I tried not to think about Vietnam. It was an experience shared with a group of colleagues, a few close friends, the rest merely working acquaintances, which bore absolutely no relationship to my real world. The trouble with Vietnam was that only a handful of people wanted to talk about it. None of my Air Force colleagues who had not been there were particularly interested. To civilian friends and acquaintances, Vietnam was an aberration, which had no

importance in their lives at all. They just did not want to know. Somehow we expected more from our neighbours.

After the indifference came outright opposition to any military involvement, especially the use of conscripts. There were street marches and anti-Vietnam rallies led by politicians. Even for permanent servicemen like me, expected to go anywhere at any time for any reason, the controversy was unsettling and demoralising. It must have been even more so for the conscripts.

Vietnam would not go away. The daily news, at first a trickle of reports on the Tet Offensive and its aftermath, broadened to a stream of garbage about the peace accords and the phoney politics of 'Vietnamisation'. It finally became a flood of gut-wrenching accounts of the collapse of the South and the ignominious departure of the last guarantors of so-called anti-Communist freedom. Then came the pitiful flight of the boat people, who braved cyclones, pirates and disease to deliver themselves to the countries that had promised them such freedom.

By 1976, the year after the end of the war, I was no longer in the Air Force. My family and I were living in the affluent eastern suburbs of Melbourne when the first waves of boat people reached Australia. Refugees were once again filling the migrant reception centres around the country, except now they were from Asia, not Europe. The churches began to encourage their congregations to help resettle refugee families. I broached the subject with Robyn and then persuaded our local church community to sponsor a family. Our parish priest was a humane and kindly man, and he and an embarrassingly small number of people offered tangible support to the project. Since it was my idea, I had to do all the legwork which, of course, I did not mind. The archdiocese supplied me with a contact number at the migrant hostel at Maribyrnong, and I was soon discussing with the management there how to go about helping a Vietnamese family.

A disarmingly simple process was used to select our family, as I found when I met them. Huyen Nha, the husband, had responded to a notice placed on a noticeboard, since he was one of the few residents of the hostel able to read English. In spite of a little apprehension about how we would relate to them, our family turned out to be easy people to like, though the introductions were a little awkward. Nha spoke halting English, his wife Hoa spoke none. They had three small daughters. I later met Nha's younger brother Huyen Ho, single and already settled in a flat and a good job with a computer company. He spoke excellent English, having served as a radar mechanic with a USAF unit at Tan Son Nhut. Ho helped out when communication became a little difficult and told me the family story.

Nha had been a PT boat captain in the Vietnamese Navy, and would not have lasted long under the Communists. The Huyens were living in Saigon when the North Vietnamese tanks smashed down the gates of the Presidential Palace. Nha knew that they had to get out. Over the next few months, though everyone with connections to the previous regime was under suspicion, he managed to accumulate funds by quietly selling family possessions. When the time was right, he moved his family down to Tra Vinh in the Delta. In this out-of-the-way place he could pay people to look the other way, buy a boat, and escape with Ho and the family. Good plan.

I made other visits to the hostel while we got the parish program organised. Nha told me they were well treated at the hostel but found the food very hard to take. Shepherd's pie and Irish stew were obviously not on the regular Vietnamese menu. They were not complaining but it was obvious that, for once, they would dearly love to cook their own food. At Robyn's suggestion we brought them over to our house for a visit. Ho came along too to help with the conversation. Hoa was thrilled when Robyn, who had judiciously purchased some ingredients from an Asian supermarket, let her cook a Vietnamese-style meal in our kitchen. We eventually settled the Huyen family into a humble but habitable house in an industrial suburb, paying the bond and the first month's rent, as recommended by the church, from parish funds. We also put together a houseful of furniture donated by parishioners willing to help. The school ran a program for the children to bring food items to make up a hamper, since Christmas was coming.

When I visited the Huyens to drop in the hamper, Nha invited Robyn and me to their house for, as he put it, 'Christmas Dinner'. Of course, I accepted, realising they wanted to repay us for their visit to our house and the actions of the parish. The dinner date was set a few days before Christmas. When we arrived, I noticed for the first time a crucifix on the wall of their family room. Since I knew they were Buddhists, I was touched by this gesture of friendship. Hoa excelled herself with the cooking, refusing to sit down until everyone else had eaten—the Vietnamese

way. When Robyn asked what a family in Vietnam would eat on a special occasion such as this, thinking, no doubt, of our tradition of turkey and ham, Ho replied simply: 'This is it'.

The Huyens were ecstatically happy in their rented house, except for one thing. Nha was a proud man and was unhappy about not having a job. Although our congregation probably contained more corporate executives than many parishes, appeals from our church pulpit failed to find a job for Huyen Nha. He finally gave up on us. After doorknocking businesses in nearby suburbs, he got a job for himself servicing machinery in a rope factory. This reinforced my opinion of the pride and resourcefulness of the Vietnamese people. He even enrolled in an evening Italian course so he could communicate better with his fellow workers. (He was then the only Vietnamese among a workforce of Italians and Yugoslavs in the factory.)

We saw the Huyens regularly for several years, finally losing touch when we moved from Melbourne and they moved house. I have since tried to analyse my motives for this project at a time when most of my friends and neighbours did not want to know about Vietnam and many people were spreading stories about refugees disguising their wealth and smuggling in gold. My feeling is that we somehow let these people down after promising them freedom, then abandoning their cause. I am not talking about corrupt politicians, but people like the Huyens.

What happened to you, Vietnam? Are your rice paddies and green hills peaceful now, or do men still ravage your timeless beauty and disturb your serenity? What happened to your cities and buildings, beautiful Dalat, fragile Hue, Nha Trang and its Buddha? And where are your people?

I left no loved ones in Vietnam, but I did care about the local people around us, Missy Lanh, Missy Kim and the other girls from the Villa, Xuan, our smiling self-conscious typist, Charlie from the hangar, the bargirls, coolies and peasants. Why did they not triumph? Was it our fault or theirs? Was our effort worth anything at all, or was the end inevitable as many people said?

What happened to me, Vietnam? In 12 months, I doubled my flying experience and flew the most interesting and challenging flights of my career, past and future. My professional competence was enhanced in a way not possible under peacetime conditions. I learnt a little more of life, more of organisations, more about people, more about myself. But I lost something too. I gave you a year of my life. You called and I responded, not because of any moral commitment to your cause, but because a professional military man would never do otherwise. Even knowing what I know now, I would have gone anyway. And like a jilted lover I still care and wonder what might have been had the end been different. The Vietnamese expression 'Xinh Loi' translated into English means something like 'sorry about that' or 'that's life'. But the translation is inadequate. The sad but knowing eyes, the half-smile, the slight shrug of the shoulders, the way Lanh would say it in her singsong voice; these are lost in the translation. 'Xinh Loi, Vietnam'.

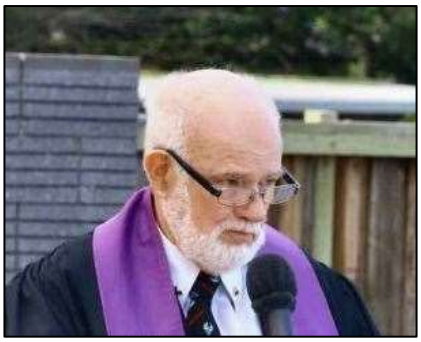
And then she asked "What's the best form of birth control after 50". I said "Nudity".

Wallaby Crew L-R: Blue Campbell, Ian Baldwin, Stew Bonett, Jeff Pedrina.

What do we learn from cows, buffalos and elephants??

It's impossible to reduce weight by eating green grass and salads and walking.

Arthur Fry



At the very outset of my ramblings, may I congratulate Jeff Pedrina for all the years he has written his column on Page 12. Since June 2015, Jeff has based his column on excerpts from his book 'Wallaby Airlines' and has taken us to many places and opened many doors in our memory that we either had forgotten or perhaps, never seen. So, thank you, Jeff, for your years of 'Pedro's Patter' which gave us a great inside to your incredulous career in the Royal Australian Air Force and other side issues pertaining to that great adventure.

I trust I can 'whet the whistle of those readers who turn to Page 12 in every edition and now find the column written by a different bloke, and for that reason, I had better explain who I am, for those who never knew me at Radio School, or those who had intentionally forgotten me, my welcome to you as your eyes view this column every three months, is still the same, although, I know, I know, I do have big boots to fill after reading what Jeff has offered you over these past five plus years.

I find it amusing that when Jeff first wrote for our Radio School Magazine before he began his column, in December 2014, he wrote under the topic, "How About a Cuppa". (That's it. I see you all turning up December 2014's issue to read "How about a Cuppa?") In this introductory edition written by me of RAM 'Page 12', I will be exposing the fact of who I am and how I came to Trevor Benneworth's notice, or rather, how I stuck my nose in his face to be offered this great opportunity to show my Shakespearean skills.

Trevor and I have met often in my role with the Vietnam Veterans of Australia Association, Sunshine Coast branch, where I have had a column in our monthly magazine, Ricochet', over these past several years. Trevor and I run into each other at many functions and he does do a great job on reporting not just Radio School events but all functions held by military and ex-military organizations, six of which I am proud to say that I am a member. You'll hear about my six ESO's as times goes on.

At the Vietnam Veterans' Day luncheon with Vietnam Veterans Association of Australia, Sunshine Coast branch luncheon, in Maroochydore RSL, Trevor was there covering our event; we talked, and the result was what you are reading now.

Like Jeff, who wrote "Wallaby Airlines', I have written about my life story in my autobiography, "Grandad, You're a Legend!" Please don't rush out to the bookstores to buy a copy as it is still in the final stages of being proof-read by my eldest granddaughter, a High School teacher on the Gold Coast, who is scanning the five hundred and thirty-two page odyssey, I mean 'book', currently only on CD, for grammatical and spelling errors, (I don't always trust 'Spell Check'). Most importantly, Bethany is scanning my book to avoid unwanted lawsuits for defamation about me. Let's face it, no one can complete almost twenty-six years in the Air Force and not ruffle a few feathers and whatever I've written, true or half-true, fact or fiction, or simply an 'Arthur-ism', any mention of a particular incident where maybe feathers were ruffled, and if Page 12 may bring

that episode back to life, the next thing I know, I will be facing the second defamation case in my career.

Where did I find such a non-self-aggrandising name for my autobiography? For the first few years of its life, my manuscript was called, “Sit Back and Be Bored”. I was sitting on the Queensland Civil and Administrative Tribunal in Maroochydore Court one day with my regular President of the Tribunal, Michael Francis, an esteemed accountant and lawyer whose father-in-law, Al Green, flew in Canberra, Phantoms and F-111’s during his Air Force career, when, in talking about my book, suggested that “Sit Back and Be Bored’ was too miniscule a title for a book that held ‘such treasures and pearls of wisdom’ that he suggested a new and more appropriate title. Over the past five years, we happen to while away our quiet hours between cases, (Minor Civil Disputes Under $5,000,) with every topic under the sun, but mainly Australian Defence Force yarns, in particular, the Air Force.

Christmas 2018 saw my wife and I share celebrations with our youngest daughter, Paula, and her family in Bridgman, some twenty kms east of Singleton. Her two sons, Max and Cooper, gave me a coffee cup as a symbol of their great respect for their grandfather, (I think all grandfathers in the district may have received similar mugs!) While sitting on my veranda sipping my coffee one morning from that mug, Michael’s words reverberated in my mind and I imagined that a change to the title of my book, should be “Grandad, You’re a Legend.” I told this thought to Michael on our next regular meeting up at the Maroochydore Court and he gave his nod of approval to the change.

No amount of guilt can solve the past and no amount of anxiety can change the future.

My book is laid out in the format of William Shakespeare’s ‘As You Like It’. In the play, Jacques quotes ‘The Ages of Man’ is in seven stages, at first ‘the babe’, then follows those seven stages through to ‘the School Boy ‘and then ‘The Solder’ (read, ‘Airman and Air Force Officer,) then ‘The Lover’, (in which I write, ‘This will be the shortest chapter in the book!”) Then “The Justice’, and as I’ve been a ‘Justice’ for thirty years, that part follows true.

I’ve been a Justice of the Peace, then by examination, I qualified as a Justice of the Peace (Qualified), then five years ago after further study, I was appointed as a Justice of the Peace, Queensland Civil and Administrative Tribunal (Non-Legally trained), (JP QCAT). Wow, if ever Jacques or William Shakespeare was homing in on a future living person, it was me! I’ll leave

his later personalities of ‘his Shrank Shrunk’ and ‘Mere Oblivion - sans teeth, sans eyes, sans taste, sans everything’’ to the reader’s imagination!

Over the oncoming months, I trust I can show the readers of RAM the bases and experiences of my life in the RAAF, firstly as a radio Mechanic Trainee then a Radio Mechanic in the field, then a student of languages for the remainder of my RAAF career, through the eyes of this (Legendary) Grandfather,(and great-grandfather to seven children,) if only in two of my four grandsons’ eyes, and in the picture portrait of Shakespeare’s Jacques.

Mt Course, 27 RMC

Back Row L-R: Bruce Warring, R King, ? Ball, G Stephens, Tim Gear, G Monteith.
Middle Row L-R: Bob Jordan, Arthur Fry, Keith Fletcher, Noel Fenton, Ian Simper, Don’t Know.
Front Row L-R: Joe Wilson, ? Watts, Don’t know.

In this my first episode on Page 12, allow me to quote from my book, and introduce the very first principle I learned in the Air Force, that of ‘’Great coats on; great coats off”.

My preliminaries appeared to have been all completed, so I’ll leave that section out of this story. I received a letter in the Australian Post mail advising me to report to the Recruiting Centre in Brisbane on Monday morning the 22nd August 1960. Bright eyed and bushy-tailed, I farewelled my mother and set off by tram into Brisbane, carrying my battered old cardboard suitcase with every item I considered I’d need notwithstanding the new uniforms that would be awaiting me. On arrival at the Recruiting Centre in Mary Street, I soon discovered two other young men, also carrying not so battered suitcases, who had obviously received a similar letter from the Department of Air as it was in those days. We three were brought quickly back to the present when we were queried why we had brought our suitcases. We found out that we were not going to be attested that day, but the letter should have stated that the Director of Air Force Health wanted to select a sample of the recruits coming in at that time, and the primary reason to be at the recruiting Centre on that date was to be transported to Amberley so that this medical assessment could be completed.

The three of us humped our worldly goods in an RAAF bus from the Recruiting Centre to Amberley; completed the required testing then we were taken to the Airmen’s Mess for lunch, and driven back to Mary Street Recruiting Centre from whence I dragged my battered cardboard suitcase home by tram, then up the front stairs to knock on my mother’s front door.

A most surprised mother let me in and enquired why I should be returning so soon after her goodbyes that morning and the assurance that she had seen the last of me for a while. It would take a little longer to learn about the phenomena, “Great coats on; great coats off”, but two days prior to my attestation, I had certainly come to understand the principle. Someone knew what the deal was that day. We three innocent young recruits all could not have misunderstood to come prepared for departure to Recruit Training Unit by bringing all our worldly chattels, when all that was required was a pre-enlistment medical check to monitor the health standards of current recruits.

Until next edition, when I’ll dive into my autobiography and take you on the journey with me, as I leave on a south-bound non-sleeper train for Awaba, as Mister Fry from the Royal Exchange Assurance and arrive at Rathmines as “Hey, you!”

First the Lord made man in the Garden of Eden.
Then said to himself, "There's something he's needin'"

After casting about for a suitable pearl,
He got to work and created a girl.

Two beautiful legs, so long and so slender,
Round and slim and ever so tender.

Two lovely hips to increase his desire,
And rounded and firm to bring out the fire,

Two lovely breasts, so full and so proud,
Commanding his eyes, as he whispers aloud.

Two lovely arms, just aching to bless you,
And two loving hands, to soothe and caress you.

Soft, cascading hair hung over her shoulder,
And two dreamy eyes, just to make him grow bolder.

Twas made for a man, and it made his heart sing,
Then he added a mouth and ruined the damn thing.

Vietnam Vets Day.

On Sunday the 18th August, 2019, Vietnam Vets Associations throughout Australia held well attended memorial services to commemorate the battle of Long Tan which took place not far from Nui Dat, the Australian Army's Vietnam Base, back on the 18th August 1966. The Sunshine Coast chapter of the Vietnam Vets Association held their memorial service at the Cotton Tree Cenotaph in Maroochydore on the Sunshine Coast.

About 120 Members gathered in a park about 200 metres east of the Cenotaph and marched off at 11.00am for the service at the Cenotaph. Click HERE. About a dozen lovely ladies from the Vietnam community in Brisbane, as well as several ex-South Vietnamese soldiers, made the hour and a half road trip from Brisbane to march with the Australian Vets.

This year marked the 53rd anniversary of the Battle of Long Tan, where 108 brave young men from D Company 6RAR resisted an attack of 1,500-2,500 North Vietnamese and Viet Cong troops. It would become one of the most extraordinary chapters in Australia's military history.

The attack occurred during the early hours of the 17th August 1966, with the VC using mortars and recoilless rifles. The Australians had only recently established the base at Nui Dat, from which they sought to operate and assert control of Phuoc Tuy, the province for which Australia had operational authority. While the attack caused only limited damage, it perturbed the

Australian Task Force Commander, Brigadier Oliver Jackson, as he recognised the base's potential vulnerability to a significant VC attack. In response to the attack, B Company, 6th Battalion, the Royal Australian Regiment (6RAR) was directed to patrol from the base to locate the VC's firing positions. B Company achieved this task, before being replaced by D Company, 6RAR at midday on the 18th August. D Company followed parallel cart tracks leading away from the firing positions into a rubber plantation towards the abandoned village of Long Tan.

It was in this rubber plantation, approximately 4 kilometres to the east of Nui Dat, that the battle took place. As D Company moved through the rubber plantation (with two platoons up and one platoon moving behind), 11 Platoon commanded by Lieutenant Gordon Sharp on the Australian right ran into a small group of VC. After a short exchange, the enemy fled eastwards with 11 Platoon in pursuit. Little did the Australians know that they were about to collide with a major concentration of enemy forces. Just after 4.00 pm during the chase, 11 Platoon was forced to the ground after coming under heavy fire. Lieutenant Geoff Kendall leading 10 Platoon (in the front left position) was ordered to move to 11 Platoon's assistance; however, his platoon was also stopped by equally intense fire before it could provide that help. Behind D Company's two forward platoons, the company commander, Major Harry Smith, with 12 Platoon and Company Headquarters, sent reports to Nui Dat requesting support for his beleaguered company.

From the battle's outset, the skies opened and an intense afternoon storm added to the cacophony of noise and terror in the rubber plantation. Adding to general chaos in the plantation was the rise of 'mud mist', which reduced visibility and made it difficult for both sides to visually identify targets. This phenomenon was common during the Vietnam War, when monsoonal rains fell with such force that the churned red earth below splashed up to 50 centimetres off the ground, staining all that it came into contact with. Further complicating the desperate situation was the loss of comms, with the radios for both 10 and 11 platoons damaged by gunfire.

With 10 Platoon unable to reach 11 Platoon, Lieutenant Kendall was ordered to withdraw his platoon and re-join Company Headquarters. At this point, Lieutenant David Sabben was ordered to swing two sections from his 12 Platoon in a southerly attempt to reach 11 Platoon from a different direction. Enroute, Sabben's group also encountered stiff resistance and could not reach their target.

Thus, D Company was now splintered into separate groups, each harassed by determined VC attacks. 11 Platoon's predicament was the most dire. Isolated from the remainder of the company for an hour and a half since first contact, more than half the platoon's strength of 28 men had been wounded within 20 minutes of the first exchange of fire. Back at Nui Dat, the Australian base buzzed as reports from Long Tan kept increasing the estimated number of VC opposing the Australians. Allied artillery was already firing on

the VC, with targets identified by Forward Observers embedded with D Company. US air support was requested with the Americans enthusiastically agreeing to help, however, when three F4 Phantom jets responded, they could not identify targets on the ground through the thick cloud and dropped their ordnance beyond the range of the enemy. Two daring RAAF pilots from 9 Squadron had more luck when they flew through atrocious weather to drop boxes of ammunition from treetop height down to D Company whose supply was alarmingly low.

9 Squadron started the day with normal squadron activities; two Iroquois moved from Vung Tau to Nui Dat on standby duties and to transport Australian entertainers, Col Joye and Little Pattie back to Vung Tau following their concert show for the troops.

Later in the afternoon, a relief force was arranged to move to D Company's aid. First, B Company (which was returning to Nui Dat after their earlier mission) was ordered to turn around and find D Company. Second, permission was granted for the Armoured Personnel Carriers (APC) of 3 APC Troop to move to support D Company. Subsequently ten APC's left Nui Dat carrying A Company, 6RAR. En route, the APCs had a minor encounter with a group of VC that were attempting to flank the Australians. After a small skirmish, the troops remounted and the APCs sped on towards Long Tan.

Just before 6.00 pm, the surviving 13 members of 11 Platoon were finally able to pull back from their position and make their way to 12 Platoon guided by a smoke grenade. Half an hour later, taking advantage of a temporary lull in the fighting, the combined 11 and 12 Platoon were able to regroup with the rest of the company, consolidating the strength of D Company for the first time in the battle.

The following half an hour saw relentless wave attacks on D Company. Fortunately for the Australians, the ground they occupied fell away slightly at their rear, which afforded some protection from the rifle and machine gun fire which mostly passed safely over their heads. The VC attacks were determined, with their courage proven by their willingness to continue the attack even as large numbers of their own troops fell. As darkness fell over the rubber plantation at 7pm, D Company's relief appeared with the simultaneous arrival of B Company and the APCs, their .50 calibre heavy machine guns blasting through the rubber, breaking up the attacking ranks of VC and sending them scattered into the darkness. The Battle of Long Tan was over.

With the battle's conclusion and despite the desire of some D Company members to immediately return to 11 Platoon's location, Lieutenant Colonel Colin Townsend, the (Commanding Officer of 6RAR whom arrived with the APCs), made the decision to pull the Australians back to the western edge of the rubber plantation, where priority of effort was devoted to the evacuation of wounded. The Australians were despondent, believing they had suffered a terrible defeat, however, over the following days, the outcome of the battle crystallised. In short, an Australian infantry company of 108 men had survived an unexpected encounter with two VC formations – later identified as 275 VC Main Force Regiment and D445 Battalion – from which as many as 1,000 probably came into contact with the Australians.

It is essential to note that despite the ten-to-one numerical superiority enjoyed by the VC, the Australians had a considerable advantage of their own – the fire support of three batteries of 1

Field Regiment sited at Nui Dat, complemented by a battery of American medium artillery from 2/35th Artillery Battalion. The Allied soldiers manning these guns worked tirelessly during the battle, firing almost 3,500 rounds. Townsend estimated that at least 50 percent of the VC dead were killed by artillery fire; however, ascertaining an accurate figure was almost impossible because the volume of shellfire devastated the battleground, making it impossible to determine the cause of death for many of the bodies. The arrival of B Company 6RAR and 3 APC Troop brought an armoured advantage not available to the VC. Combined with artillery support and aerial resupply, this superiority in mobility and firepower offset some of the numerical disadvantage that D Company faced.

Praise for D Company came from many quarters. Prime Minister Harold Holt congratulated the 'skill, effectiveness and high courage' of the combatants, which he noted was in the best Australian tradition. American General William Westmoreland congratulated the Australians, declaring they had won one of the most spectacular victories in Vietnam to date. For their part, the VC also claimed Long Tan as a victory and disputed Australian accounts of the battle. VC leaders who participated in the battle were reluctant to acknowledge the severe losses that befell their force. A crucial reason for this was the importance of propaganda in sustaining an insurgency. Some of the more remarkable claims made by the VC in the aftermath of the battle were exaggerations that more than 500 Australian troops had been wiped out and that a US Jet and three Australian APCs had been destroyed. Australia's actual casualties were 18 killed and 24 wounded. Although that number exceeded any other single day loss in the Vietnam War, the number could have been much higher given the disparity in troop numbers between the two sides.

On the third anniversary of Long Tan, 18th August 1969, a cross was raised on the site of the battle by the men of 6RAR. Veterans from the battle gathered at the cross to commemorate the fallen and the day was commemorated by them as Long Tan Day from then on. Over time, all Vietnam veterans adopted the day as one to commemorate those who served and died in Vietnam. In 1987, following the very successful Welcome Home parade for Vietnam veterans in Sydney, Prime Minister Bob Hawke announced that Long Tan Day would be known as Vietnam Veterans Day. Since then, it has been commemorated every year as the day on which the service of all those men and women who served in Vietnam is remembered.

Long Tan is now remembered as an exemplar of Australian soldiers channelling the same attributes of bravery, teamwork and endurance that their forbears displayed in earlier conflicts.

The Vets were joined by quite a number of people from the Maroochydore community who attended the ceremony to thank those that spent their youthful years doing their duty in Vietnam.

The Cenotaph is in the Cotton Tree Park, on the beautiful Maroochy River.

MC for day's event was Michael Sheahan, the advertising/marketing manager for the Sunshine Coast Vietnam Vets Association. Michael served with Army's 17th Construction Squadron in Vietnam from Feb 1969 to Feb 1970.

The Catafalque Party and the Flag party were marched on.

These young people stood at attention/at ease in the heat, in full uniform, for about an hour and did a magnificent job.

Padre for the day was Arthur Fry. Arthur served in Vietnam from Jan 1967 to Jan 1968 at Phan Rang, then was sent back again for a second tour in Feb 1971 to Jul 1971, this time at Vung Tau.

Laying of wreaths in recognition of those fallen.

Wendy Latham, on behalf of the DVA.

Harry Smith, on behalf of his colleagues who served with him all those years ago.

Bill Bunter, on behalf of 9 Squadron.

9 Squadron also paid a critical part in the battle of Long Tan. In the afternoon at about 1540, as D Company troops were conducting a search operation in the rubber plantation at Long Tan, they ran into an ambush by Viet Cong battalions. During the fierce battle that raged, Australian troops were running low on ammunition and were threatened with being overrun by the Viet Cong if they could not be re-supplied. Only helicopters could get the ammunition to the troops in time.

The two Iroquois on standby at Nui Dat were tasked to supply the ammunition to the troops. Flying conditions could not have been worse; the heavy rain reduced visibility and forced the crews to fly at tree-top height; navigation was extremely difficult. Following a smoke signal from the Australian troops, the supply helicopter, flown by Flt Lt Cliff Dohle and Flt Lt Bruce Lane, hovered at 10 metres, just above the tree tops and dropped the critical ammunition to the waiting troops. They were spot on and a relieved voice was heard over the radio, "You bloody beaut, that was smack on". The second helicopter crew, Flt Lt Frank Riley and Flt Lt Bob Grandin, was tasked to establish radio contact and locate the troops for the ammunition drop and to provide backup and support.

At about 2300 that night, seven Iroquois helicopters evacuated the wounded and recovered the dead from the battle area. The helicopters landed, in turn, on a landing zone about the size of a tennis court with the only lighting being provided by four torches, vertically positioned in the corners of the landing area. The re-supply sorties that day and the continued operations at night, showed the skill and dedication of the pilots and crewmen of 9 Squadron. There was no moon, crews flew at tree top height, in line astern with the small red tail light of the helicopter ahead as their only visual reference. It was definitely not an average day in 9 Squadron's history.

After the wreath laying ceremony, Bruce Fraser slow marched around the Cenotaph, playing the Lament on his pipes, as he does so well.

Mal Sayers, the Secretary of the Sunshine Coast Vietnam Vets Association, then spoke the Ode to the Fallen after which the Last Post was played, followed by one minute's silence, then the Rouse.

The playing of the Last Post.

Aart Schouten and Bev Gourley sang both the Australian and New Zealand National Anthems, accompanied by the Buderim Concert Band. The Band is a group of amateur, semi-professional and retired professional musicians coming from all walks of life including doctors, sales representatives, information industry personnel, school and university students, builders, engineers, teachers, and retirees. Their ages range from 14 to 84 and everything in between.

The Catafalque Party and the flag party were then marched off, Arthur Fry asked everyone to join him in Benediction then Michael Sheahan, the MC, gave his final address then declared the ceremony closed. The Vets were invited to attend the Maroochydore RSL for lunch.

Prior to lunch, people mingled and chatted and in some instances, rekinkled old friendships. Thai Dang, who along with his lovely wife Diamond, orgainises the Vietnamese Community at events such as this, and who drove up from the Gold Coast to be a part of the ceremony, met and had a long chat with John Wilson before heading to the Club.

So when is this “Old enough to know better” supposed to kick in?

People filed in, with 10 to a table, and settled in for a great afternoon. Some of those at the lunch were:

Crissie and Steve Wessels. Crissie is on the Vietnam Vets Association committee.

The fact that there's a highway to Hell and only a Stairway to Heaven says a lot about the anticipated traffic numbers.

Bev Gourley, Pam Weston, Rose Luttrell.

Heather and Bruce Fraser.

"It's been so long since I've had sex, I've forgotten who ties up whom.

O

“Johnno”, Nicky Carey, Meg Carey.

Laurie Drinkwater, who is the patron of the Association, was expecting his 80th birthday in two day’s time. Laurie served in Vietnam from June 1966 to June 1967 and was a Section Commander of 12 Platoon during the battle of Long Tan.

Mike Howe, (President of the VVAA Sunshine Coast), Thai and Diamond Dang.

Once again, the very generous Thai and Diamond Dang, along with the gorgeous Vietnamese girls (the sexy grand-mothers as Thai calls them) provided entertainment all afternoon. The girls performed a traditional hat-dance which was choreographed by Diamond.

Click the pic below to see it.

One of the lovely “Grand-mothers” Kim Dung, loaded up two baskets with mandarins and handed them out to the troops.

Bree McEvoy, “Johnno”, Crissie Wessels.

Leonie Hickey, Tara King, Denise Huxham.

Mal Sayers, Joan Blinco.

S

Bree McEvoy, George Harrison, Crissie Wessels. George was posted to RTFV-35 Sqn (RAAF) in Vung Tau from Jan 1965 to Jul 1965.

Maggie Anderson, Steve Wessels.

There's very little advice in men's magazines, because men think,
"'I know what I'm doing, just show me somebody naked".

George Harrison

Crissie Wessels

Michael Liddelow, Bree McEvoy, Michael Howe.

According to a new survey, women say they feel more comfortable undressing in front of men than they do undressing in front of other women. They say that women are too judgmental, where, of course, men are just grateful

Steve Wessels, George Harrison.

Thien Khuong, another of the beautiful grand-mothers.

Brisbane.

Brisbane also hosted a Vietnam Vets ceremony. John Lunn (above left) sent us these two pics.

Bigamy is having one wife too many. Monogamy is the same.

Don’t confuse my personality with my attitude.
My personality is who I am. My attitude depends on why you are.

X

3 Sqn Association.

Earlier this year, blokes and their ladies from the Queensland Branch of the 3 Sqn Association got together at the Redlands RSL Club at Cleveland.

The Association gets together twice a year, mid-year in Brisbane and towards the end of the year at the Caloundra RSL on the Sunshine Coast.

3 Squadron is one of the Air Force's oldest. It was formed at Point Cook during WW1 on the 19th September 1916 and was one of four operational squadrons of the Australian Flying Corps (AFC). Its personnel were members of the Australian Army. Shortly afterwards, in September 1917, the unit sailed to England for training before becoming the first AFC squadron deployed to France. It was equipped with the R.E.8 two-seat reconnaissance/general purpose aircraft. To avoid confusion with the British 3 Squadron RFC, it was known to the British military as "No. 69 Squadron RFC". This terminology

was never accepted by the squadron or the Australian Imperial Force who continued to use the AFC designation regardless and in early 1918, the British designation was dropped.

After moving to the Western Front, the squadron was initially based at Savy. In November 1917, it was assigned the role of a corps reconnaissance squadron and allocated to I Anzac Corps, which was based around Messines, and established itself at Bailleul. 3 Squadron would remain with I Anzac for the remainder of the war and participated in bombing, artillery spotting and reconnaissance missions supporting ANZAC and other British Empire ground forces. Its first air-to-air victory came on 6 December 1917; by the end of the war its aircrews had been credited with another 15 German aircraft and a total of 10,000 operational hours.

In early 1918, the collapse of Russia allowed the Germans to concentrate their strength on the Western Front and launched a major offensive. As the Allies were pushed back, the squadron's airfield at Baileul came into range of the German guns and it was moved first to Abeele and then, as the Allies were pushed back further, it moved again to Poulainville. During the offensive, the squadron operated mainly in the Somme Valley, providing artillery observation. In April 1918, the squadron became responsible for the remains of the "Red Baron", Manfred von Richthofen, after he was shot down in its sector. Shortly before the end of the war, the squadron began converting to the Bristol F.2 Fighter.

Following the end of hostilities, the squadron was engaged briefly in mail transport duties before being withdrawn to the United Kingdom in early 1919. It was disbanded in February and over the course of the next couple of months its personnel were repatriated back to Australia. Casualties amounted to 32 killed and 23 wounded, of which the majority were aircrew; the squadron lost 11 aircraft during the war.

In 1925, the squadron was re-formed as part of the fledgling independent Royal Australian Air Force. It was was based initially at Point Cook and then at Richmond, operating a variety of aircraft including S.E.5As, DH.9s, Westland Wapitis and Hawker Demons. Upon the outbreak of World War II, the squadron was one of 12 permanent RAAF squadrons and it was assigned to the 6th Division as an army co-operation squadron when it was deployed to the Middle East in mid-1940.

After deploying from Australia without its aircraft the unit sailed to Egypt. The squadron first saw action in late 1940, operating obsolete Gloster Gladiator biplane fighters against the Italian Regia Aeronautica which it encountered while conducting reconnaissance and ground attack sorties. It also operated some Westland Lysanders and Gloster Gauntlets, before briefly being converted to Hawker Hurricanes and then flew P-40 Tomahawks and Kittyhawks from 1941, often engaging in intense air battles with the German Luftwaffe, as well as Vichy French pilots during the Syria–Lebanon campaign.

3 Squadron's longest-serving commanding officer (CO) during the war was Squadron Leader Bobby Gibbes, whose tour lasted from February 1942 to April 1943. Gibbes was replaced by Squadron Leader Brian Eaton, who led the unit until February 1944. 3 Squadron took part in the Allied invasions of Sicily and Italy. It re-equipped with P-51 Mustangs in November 1944 and continued to operate in Italy and Yugoslavia until the end of the European war in May 1945.

3 Squadron's record of 25,663 operational flight hours and 217.5 enemy aircraft destroyed made it the highest-scoring RAAF fighter squadron.

At the end of the war, No. 3 Squadron returned to Australia and disbanded at Point Cook on 30 July 1946. It was re-formed at Fairbairn in Canberra in early 1948 when No. 4 Squadron RAAF was renumbered as No. 3 Squadron. Equipped with Mustangs, CAC Wirraways and Austers, the squadron served briefly as a tactical reconnaissance and close support squadron before disbanding again in 1953. The squadron re-formed on 1 March 1956 at Williamtown. It operated CA-27 Sabres out of Butterworth, from 1958 engaging in warlike operations associated with the Malayan Emergency and Konfrontasi.

As Australian involvement in the Vietnam War intensified, 3 Squadron returned to Australia and re-equipped with Mirage IIIO fighters at Williamtown in 1967. The CO, Wing Commander Vance Drummond (right), was killed during air combat manoeuvres at No. 2 Operational Conversion Unit in May. He was succeeded by Wing Commander Jake Newham (later Chief of the Air Staff). After training in air-to-air and air-to-ground roles, the squadron deployed to Butterworth in February 1969, detachments were also deployed to RAF Tengah and Paya Lebar Air Base. During this period, the aircraft became known as "lizards", in reference to their camouflage paint scheme and low altitude operations. The frill neck lizard was adopted as an informal squadron insignia.

After 15 years deployed to Malaysia, 3 Squadron returned to Williamtown and after transferring aircraft and personnel to No. 79 Squadron, on 29 August 1986 No. 3 Squadron became the first operational RAAF unit to receive F/A-18 Hornets.

In February 2002, during the Afghanistan War, elements of 3 Squadron were deployed to Diego Garcia, in the Indian Ocean, to relieve 77 Squadron, providing air defence for the Coalition base there. 3 Squadron personnel also participated in Operation Falconer. In April 2016, 3 Squadron deployed to the Middle East during Operation Okra as part of the military intervention against ISIL, taking over from 77 Squadron.

On 8 December 2017, 3 Squadron ceased F/A-18 flight operations, followed by the disbandment of the squadron on the 14th December 2017 and subsequent re-establishment of the squadron at Luke AFB in Arizona. All of its Hornets and most of its personnel were transferred to 77 Squadron. In February 2018, 3 Squadron began to be equipped with Lockheed Martin F-35 Lightning IIs.

3 Squadron has operated the following aircraft:

- Royal Aircraft Factory R.E.8 (1917–1918)
- Gloster Gauntlet, Gloster Gladiator, Westland Lysander (August 1940 – January 1941)
- Hawker Hurricane (January–May 1941)
- P-40 Tomahawk/Kittyhawk (May 1941 – November 1944)
- P-51D Mustang (November 1944 – July 1946)
- CAC Sabre (1956–1967)
- Mirage III (1967–1986)
- F/A-18 Hornet (August 1986 – December 2017)
- F-35A Lightning II (2018 – current)

The hardness of the butter is proportional to the softness of the bread.

Ex-members of 3 Squadron are proud of their involvement with the Squadron and regularly get together with their ladies to reminisce and chat about old times.

Those present at the recent get together, which was organised by Blue Farrell, were:

John Kane, Blue Farrell

Jan and Geoff Partridge

E

Blue “Breather” Ingles, Hap Prior, Barry Roberts, “Deefa” Millar, Blue Farrell.

Jim Hall, Janet Thompson.

F

Keith Beardsmore, Barry Roberts.

Lyn Inglis, Lisle Pryor.

G

Max Lollback, Roger Clarkson, Jim Hall.

Mick Terakes, Keith Beardsmore.

H

Ray Maher, Grant Small.

Scott and Leslie King.

Sheila Millar, Margaret Small, Barbara Kane

The ladies were smart – they got the comfy seats.

Later in the afternoon, everyone sat down and got a wonderful lunch.

The sooner you fall behind, the more time you'll have to catch up.

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Amberley Association Day
10 Sept 2019

On Tuesday the 10th September, 2019, 82 Wing at Amberley hosted the annual Association Day at the Memorial Garden, next to Canberra number 1 at the old front gate to the Base.

Each RAAF base has at least one former RAAF aircraft at its main gate to provide a symbolic display of 'guarding' the main entrance, as well as providing a link between the base and the aircraft that operated there. The former main gate (and memorial garden) at Amberley has the first Canberra built in Australia as Amberley was the home of the Canberra fleet until that aircraft was replaced by the F-111. On the 9th June 2016 Amberley's long and close association with the F-111 was recognised with the placement of a retired F-111 at the new entrance gate constructed as part of the base expansion program. The F-111 (A8-138) was chosen to be Amberley's 'Gate Guardian', as it was the aircraft used as the test bed for the Pave Tack targeting system that provided an all-weather, day-and-night laser designation for laser-guided weapons fitted to the F-111 fleet.

The annual No. 82 Wing Association's Day brought together more than 100 RAAF and Association members to reflect on the service of some of the Air Forces' oldest and most distinguished bomber squadrons. The Associations Day commenced with a memorial service and laying of wreaths at the Memorial Garden to remember the fallen, after which those present

were invited to morning tea which was served in the Officers' Mess. Some time after morning tea was finished and cleaned away, Paul Lineham called everyone to order for the presentation of trophies to members of No 82 Wing for their outstanding performance in the last twelve months.

Air Combat Group commands all the Air Force's fast-jet combat aircraft with three operational wings. Of these, No 82 Wing, located at Amberley is responsible for designated target strikes and reconnaissance, its units comprise No 1 and No 6 Squadrons (F/A-18F Super Hornets) at Amberley, while No 4 Squadron (Pilatus PC-9/A) operates from Williamtown.

Formed in August 1944 at Ballarat in Victoria, No. 82 Wing operated B-24 Liberator heavy bombers in the South West Pacific theatre of World War II. Initially comprising two flying units, Nos. 21 and 24 Squadrons, the wing was augmented by 23 Squadron in 1945.

Not long after being formed, the Wing was moved to Northern Territory and came under the control of the RAAF's North-Western Area Command. The wing's three flying squadrons identified themselves with black chevrons on the tail fins of their aircraft, No. 21's facing backwards, No. 23's downwards (right), and No. 24's forwards.

After the war its operational units became Nos. 1, 2 and 6 Squadrons. It re-equipped with Avro Lincolns in 1948 and, from 1953, the English Electric Canberra. Both types saw action in the Malayan Emergency during the 1950s; with the Canberras also deployed in Vietnam from 1967 to 1971.

Between 1970 and 1973, as a stop-gap pending delivery of the long-delayed F-111C, Nos. 1 and 6 Squadrons flew leased F-4E Phantoms. No. 2 Squadron continued to fly Canberras until it was disbanded in 1982. After taking delivery of their F-111Cs in 1973, Nos. 1 and 6 Squadrons operated the type for 37 years through numerous upgrades, augmented in the mid-1990s by ex-USAF G models. The forward air control unit joined No. 82 Wing in 2002. In 2010, the wing retired its F-111s and replaced them with Super Hornets as an interim force until the planned entry into Australian service of the F-35 Lightning II Joint Strike Fighter. Twelve Boeing EA-18G Growlers augmented the Super Hornet fleet in 2017.

Following the Japanese surrender in September 1945, No. 82 Wing's Liberators were converted to transports and used to repatriate RAAF personnel from the South West Pacific. Over the course of its wartime existence, the wing's personnel numbered between 3,000 and 5,000, of whom more than half were ground crew. Along with its flying squadrons, its complement included No. 24 Air Stores Park, No. 6 Repair and Servicing Unit, and No. 30 Medical Clearing Station.

82 Wing moved to its present location at Amberley in 1946, where it came under the control of the RAAF's Eastern Area Command. In May of that year, 482 (Maintenance) Squadron was formed from No. 4 Repair and Servicing Unit. Its flying complement now included Nos. 12, 21, and 23 Squadrons, but these were renumbered Nos. 1, 2 and 6 Squadrons respectively in

February 1948. At the same time, the wartime Liberators were replaced by Avro Lincolns. During 1949–50, some of the Lincolns were specially modified with advanced radar and other instrumentation to participate in Operation Cumulative, a joint program with the Royal Air Force gathering long-range navigation and bombing data for use in potential air campaigns against the Soviet Union.

Between 1950 and 1958 the Lincolns of No. 1 Squadron were deployed for service in the Malayan Emergency, tasked with the prime responsibility for the Commonwealth's bombing campaign against Communist insurgents. This arrangement meant that No. 82 Wing's flying units were reduced to Nos. 2 and 6 Squadrons. From 1952 to 1957, the wing flew observation flights in connection with British atomic tests in Australia. No protective clothing was issued to air or ground crews during these flights and, following the second such operation in October 1953, nine of the twelve Lincolns involved were found to be contaminated, four so heavily that they were parked in a remote corner at Amberley and never flown again. On 9 April 1953, the wing wrote off three Lincolns in two separate incidents that collectively became known as "Black Thursday"; one of the Lincolns crashed on landing at Amberley during the day and that night another Lincoln collided with one of its brethren at Cloncurry Aerodrome, Queensland.

In December 1953, 82 Wing took delivery of the RAAF's first Canberra Mk.20, 48 of which re-equipped the wing's three squadrons over the next five years. The new aircraft were acquired partly for their capacity to deliver nuclear weapons, an ordnance option the RAAF seriously investigated but never implemented. Following the re-equipping of Nos. 2 and 6 Squadrons with the Canberra, a Lincoln Conversion Flight was formed in July 1955 under No. 82 Wing to provide training on the older bomber for crews preparing to deploy to Malaya for service with No. 1 Squadron; it disbanded in March 1956. Canberras from No. 2 Squadron relieved the Lincolns of No. 1 Squadron in Malaya during 1958. In January 1959, No. 1 (Bomber) Operational Conversion Unit (No. 1 OCU) was established at Amberley under the control of No. 82 Wing. Its role was to convert pilots and navigators to the Canberra, and train them for operations with the three bomber squadrons.

In 1964, No. 82 Wing's Canberras were slated for possible bombing and reconnaissance tasks against Indonesian forces under Operation Handover, a little-publicised contingency plan put into effect during the Indonesia–Malaysia Konfrontasi, although no combat ensued. No. 2 Squadron Canberras saw extensive action in Vietnam from 1967 to 1971. The Canberras flew almost 12,000 sorties and delivered over 76,000 pounds of bombs, for the loss of two aircraft to enemy action, and gained a high reputation for their accuracy. Nos. 1 and 6 Squadrons effectively ceased operations in 1968, while their crews underwent conversion to the F-111C, which was expected to enter service soon afterwards. Between 1970 and 1973, as an interim measure pending the delayed delivery of the F-111, Nos. 1 and 6 Squadrons flew leased F-4E Phantoms; meanwhile No. 2 Squadron continued to operate the Canberra, mainly for aerial survey work in Australia and Indonesia, until disbanding in 1982.

C

The Air Force retained the option to purchase the Phantoms if the F-111C program was cancelled. Though not as sophisticated an aircraft as the F-111, the Phantom was a significant advance over the Canberra, and was highly regarded by its RAAF crews.

On 1 June 1973, the OC 82 Wing, Group Captain Jake Newham, led the first F-111Cs in to land at Amberley. The Sqn was ordered to operate the F-111 with great caution initially, well within limits, lest the controversial aircraft suffer greater damage to its reputation through early attrition. Over its 37-year career with No. 82 Wing, the F-111 underwent numerous upgrades, including the Pave Tack infra-red and laser-guided precision weapons targeting system, Harpoon anti-shipping missiles, and advanced digital avionics. Roles within the wing were demarcated such that No. 1 Squadron was the lead strike unit, while No. 6 Squadron was primarily tasked with crew conversion training; No. 6 Squadron was also responsible for reconnaissance missions using specially modified RF-111Cs until these aircraft were transferred to No. 1 Squadron in 1996, and flew leased Learjets for survey work in 1982–87.

During 1982–83, four F-111s from the RAAF's original order that had been lost through accidents were replaced by four F-111As upgraded to C models. In 1992 an order was placed to augment the F-111C force with fifteen ex-USAF G models, to be operated by No. 6 Squadron.

82 Wing was awarded the Duke of Gloucester Cup as most proficient RAAF unit of 1994, in part for its success in introducing the F-111G with minimal additional staff. No. 482 Squadron merged with 3AD to form No. 501 Wing in March 1992.

In February 2002, 82 Wing came under the control of the newly established Air Combat Group (ACG) and put the Wing in charge of the strike capability of No. 81 Wing's F/A-18 Hornet fighters, based at Williamtown and the Forward Air Control Development Unit (FACDU), flying Pilatus PC-9s, was added to its strength. In 2007, the Australian government decided to retire all of the F-111s by 2010 and acquire 24 F/A-18F Super Hornets as an interim replacement, pending the arrival of the F-35 Lightning II JSF then under development. The F-111 fleet was considered to be at risk owing to fatigue issues and too expensive to operate as each aircraft required 180 hours of maintenance for every hour of flying time. 82 Wing began re-equipping with the Super Hornet in 2010 and the last F-111s were retired on 3 December that year.

In May 2013, the Federal government announced plans to purchase twelve Boeing EA-18G Growlers to supplement the Super Hornet fleet and 6 Squadron began taking delivery of the Growlers in 2017, and its Super Hornets were transferred to No. 1 Squadron.

A policeman came to my house and asked me where I was between 4 and 5.
He wasn't impressed when I told him kindergarten

On the 10th September, people began to assemble at the Contractor's Pass Office car park, on Hansen Rd, from where they were bused to the Memorial Garden for the ceremony. A bunch of RAAF "Volunteers" (a pooly's job in days gone by) had erected a number of marquees and a heap of very welcome plastic chairs for visitors

Cpl Jesse Kane, RAAF Images

E

Chaplain Dan Bigg opened the ceremony shortly after 10.00am, offered prayers for those fallen then introduced the OC of 82 Wing, Group Captain Stephen Chappell, DSC, CSC, OAM.

Stephen Chappell joined the RAAF in January 1993. After graduating from the Australian Defence Force Academy, he completed pilot training and F/A-18 operational conversion and was posted to 75 Squadron. After qualifying as a Fighter Combat Instructor in 2001, he was posted

to No. 2 Operational Conversion Unit (OCU), which included an attachment to 75 Squadron for Operation Falconer. Later postings included:

- a flight commander at 3 Squadron;
- an exchange from mid-2005 to December 2007 with the US Air Force's 65th Aggressor Squadron;
- the Executive Officer at No. 2 OCU; and,
- staff officer at No. 81 Wing and Headquarters Air Combat Group.

In January 2014, he was appointed Commanding Officer No. 1 Squadron at Amberley, which included deployment on Operation OKRA in 2014.

Group Captain Chappell is a graduate of the Australian Command and Staff College. He has a Masters of Military and Strategic Studies.

What others see as baldness, I still see as wide parting.

Chaplain Dan Bigg then called on those who wished to lay a wreath at the memorial.

AVM (Ret'd) David Dunlop laid a wreath on behalf of the Aircrew Association, Sunshine Coast Branch.

Cpl Jesse Kane, RAAF Images

Gp Capt Stephen Chappell, in memory of all fallen.

H

The Last Post and Rouse were played by Flt Lt Steve Finch, OAM.

Stephen Chappell then invited everyone to the Officers' Mess for morning tea, for presentation of trophies then to enjoy lunch in the Mess.

FSgt Susan Mallett had organised the event in the Mess and as usual, everything ran smoothly and without a hitch. She's obviously done it before.

I

At first everyone enjoyed an expansive morning tea, some chatted with serving members, others amongst themselves, some just sat and enjoyed the atmosphere and after half an hour or so, Paul Lineham got the Award Ceremony underway.

Doug Pickering (left) the President of the 2 Sqn Association presented the 2 Sqn trophy to Flt Lt Sanjay Vinoharan

Sgt Matthew Mott (centre) was awarded the Path Finder Force Association (Qld) trophy by Sqn Ldr Jasper McCaldin and Gary Vial.

After the award ceremony, with a few minutes to spare before being called into lunch, we had a look at the base gym. What a magnificent facility, it has everything, including a 50 metre indoor pool. Whereas years ago, blokes (and blokettes) would hit the boozer, today they hit the gym. And it shows, today's Air Force is a lot fitter than ours.

The running track – attached to the gym

Says it all really.

L

Not long after midday, everyone filed into the serving area for a wonderful meal. Amberley is one of only 3 RAAF bases, Tindal and Darwin being the other two, which still employs RAAF cooks, all other Messes are tendered out. And it shows, Amberley people eat well, Amberley's cooks have pride of presentation top of mind, not cost of presentation. Not that other Bases don't eat well, they definitely do, but to other Mess staff it's a job, at Amberley it's being part of the team.

Click the pic above for the day's menu.

After lunch, those that wished were bused to the magnificent Amberley Aviation Heritage Centre.

Lockheed Electra.

M

This particular aircraft was built by Lockheed in 1937 and delivered to Ansett Airlines. It was registered as VH-UZO. During WW2, it was leased to the USAAF and flew mainly along the east cost of Australia. In Dec 1944 it was badly damaged in a forced landing near Tumut in NSW and was trucked down to Essendon for repairs. In Sept 1945, after repairs, it resumed operations with Ansett.

Ansett sold the aircraft in 1951, after which is had several owners until 2002 when it was struck off the register, restored and eventually ended up at Amberley in May 2019.

The museum has summary boards of all major wars and conflicts and crisis support missions. This board discusses the Middle East and East Timor RAAF involvements of the 1990's.

The veteran pictured is retired SGT Vannessa Patterson.

Sometimes I sit quietly and wonder why I'm not in a mental asylum.
Then I take a look around and realise maybe I already am.

John Laming.

Aeroplanes and other stuff.

Random memories of a Navigator.

Caught up in World War II

We lived at King's Farm, Little Shelford, four miles away was the RAF station at Duxford. My sisters were 19 and 17 and Canadian cousin Peggy, aged 18, was over on a long visit. Not surprisingly, the place soon became known as RAF King's Farm. My mother was extremely involved in her daughters' affairs of the heart. "Isn't your niece, Peggy, pretty?" asked one innocent young pilot. "Oh yes charming" enthused my mother. "Isn't it a pity she's got worms?"

However, eventually my sisters married pilots and war was declared. Both my sisters became pregnant, Peggy went back to Canada and the phoney war creaked along. Then came Dunkirk and for a spell seven or eight exhausted soldiers were billeted with us; and James and Bill were flying for hours every day. I well remember both of them at dinner (we still had a white damask tablecloth and a huge silver soup tureen and a three course evening meal), falling asleep on the table between courses. Then suddenly the Battle of Britain was upon us.

It was a little before 8 o'clock on a clear, dewy Sunday morning. Eighty German planes came winging over in tight formation, pretty high. Three Spitfires beamed in to attack. I could hear the gunfire and see the absurdly pretty cotton wool burst of the cannon shells. One of the Spitfires was hit (I was not to know it was James, Zoë my niece's father). He was pressing home an attack on a Dornier when a Messerschmitt from behind completely removed his foot with a cannon shell. Glycol from burst hydraulics was burning his face and hands and soon he realised the plane was out of control. He bailed out and with every heartbeat he could see a gush of blood from his severed foot and at that height and in that cold thin air, the blood spread out almost pink in curious shapes and spirals, rather like a long sinuous scarf. He decided not to pull the ripcord yet or he would have bled to death before he landed.

He fell a few thousand feet and then realised that he was in danger of losing consciousness, so he pulled the ripcord. As the chute appeared and he began to swing down, he took off his flying helmet and with the intercom cords, he tied a tourniquet just above his knee. This undoubtedly saved his life. He landed in a field near Whittlesford and a seventeen-year-old farm hand ran up with a pitchfork, thinking he was taking a German prisoner. Some years later, by sheer chance, James found himself teaching this man to fly.

I finished feeding the chickens and came in from the field. Cynthia, seven months pregnant, was standing very straight and very tense in the hall, listening to the RAF doctor. He had decided to "break it gently". He took an eternity, constantly urging her to be brave; and so, of course, she thought James was dead. He would have done better to say "your husband is alive and in no danger of dying; but he has been wounded" and take it from there. As the doctor finished talking, the baker's wife ran in from next door to tell our cook the news in detail. We were never able to unravel how the village grapevine had been so quick and so accurate. James was given a tin leg, went on to become Churchill's private plane spotter and then became a flying instructor. Bill was awarded the DFC for shooting down a number of German planes.

Of course, I would be a fighter pilot. Nothing else occurred to me as even a possibility and so I went to flying school. I took longer than the average to fly solo and on my first solo landing bounced so high, my instructor suggested that I should have switched on my oxygen again. At the end of the course I failed ignominiously. I was summoned to the selection committee "you will be a navigator" said the voice of authority. "I can't" I replied. "Why not?". "I can't do maths" I explained. "You have a trained mind. You can do maths" intoned authority. "I just happen not to be able to do maths" I said. The reply was uncompromising. "You can do maths; that is an order".

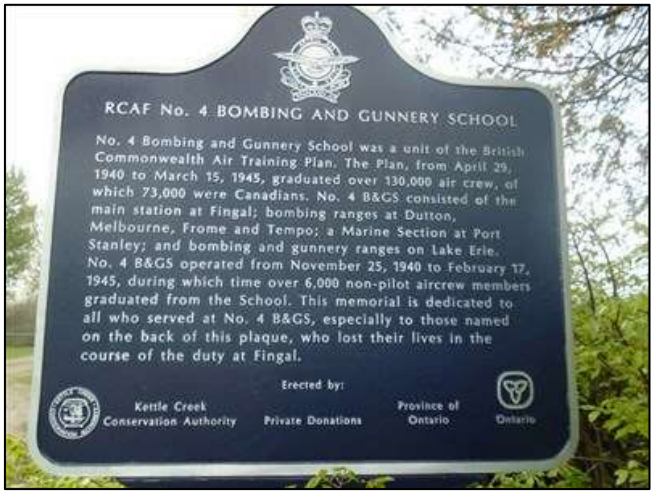
So, more tests. I couldn't really see the letters with one eye; luckily they tested my good eye first and I memorised the letters. We stayed in huge blocks of flats in St. John's Wood and heard the lions roaring at the night in the zoo. We went first to the Grand Hotel, then to the Hotel Metropole at Brighton. There a Messerschmitt came in low over the sea, machine guns blazing. We all dived for the floor. There was one casualty – a bloke was scalded as the tea urn was riddled with bullets.

We were in units of 44 blokes. One day, as we numbered off, it turned out that one guy, unfortunately named Belchamber, had got into the wrong unit; so there were 49 of us. "'ave we give berf?" asked the corporal witheringly. When we found Belchamber was to blame, his wrath knew no bounds. "Right there, dingdong pisspot" he bellowed. "Get fell out as you was".

We were sent up to Manchester. I was put to swilling out the cookhouse with a slightly effete musical scholar from King's College, Cambridge, John Sidgwick. Very politely he said to a brawny young WAAF from Birmingham "excuse me, have you a hose?" "Oo the fuckin' 'ell do yer fink I am? She demanded truculently "Errol fuckin' Flynn?" "Oh dear" said John "What an exceedingly coarse young woman".

From there we went to Canada and I began to learn to navigate. If your pilot asked where you were, you put your thumb firmly down on the map, covering perhaps 100 square miles and said confidently "just there". Then he felt secure and you could sweat it out in peace. I flew across Montreal and was told to photograph a bridge over the St. Lawrence but I pressed the wrong tit and dropped a bomb on it instead. I must have missed - I heard no more of it.

I went to bombing school; in Ontario and discovered that I was rather good at it. Quite a surprise. I went to Washington DC on a weekend's leave and emboldened by half a dozen Old Fashioneds, I chased a delectable girl round and round the Lincoln Memorial till I caught her and made a heavy date for the next night. I turned up, stone cold sober, in best blue and shaved to the bone – and focused on her. In the cold light of day she looked subtly different. Buck teeth, pebble lenses a body like an unmade bed, an advanced case of galloping acne; and I've seen better hair on a rat's back. This time she chased me round the Lincoln Memorial.



Back to camp. A twenty week course, 24 of us on it – well 25 but one was called Brian Murphy. Apart from the smelliest feet I have ever encountered, he was also as dim as can be and he not only slept through the lectures but did so stertorously. Yes, there were 24 of us on the course. I was petrified that I would pass out bottom of the course, so I never once went out of camp during those 20 weeks nor did I fail to work every evening. Eventually, I got my plane spotting, on unfamiliar photos, to the pitch that I got 100 planes right out of 100, an exposure of 1/100 of a second. When I think that now I don't know the difference between Ernie and the Cabstar, I admit, I am impressed.

I could read all the stars in the heavens, I could do Morse code and I even took longer steps to save leather "for the war effort" – I was a very earnest young man. The others looked on me with a kind of bemused affection. They decided that if we passed our navigation schooling, they would all stand me a drink. We did pass, and I passed out top. So off we tootled to the Yacht Club, very smart. I was shouted 23 drinks. I remember there were 4 or 5 Old Fashioneds, (*1½ oz Bourbon, 2 dashes Angostura bitters, 1 sugar cube, dash water*) certainly one Horse's Neck (*2 oz Bourbon, 3 oz ginger ale, 3 dashes Angostura bitters, lemon garnish*) , a Sidecar (*1½ oz cognac, 1 oz Cointreau, 1 oz lemon or lime juice, sugar on glass rim*) and a Lizard's Breath, some Manhattans (*2 oz Canadian Club, 1 oz sweet vermouth, dash Angostura bitters, garnish with Maraschino cherry*), an Alexandria and a Singapore – oh and a few others.

I began to feel unusually intelligent. I got to the top of the 20 step flight of stairs to the road, tripped on the top one and went A overt T straight down into the road. I sat down solemnly on a heap of snow. "You're smashed" they said. "Nonsense" I replied, "I am in full command of my faculties and I'll prove it. There is Orion, there is the North Star, there is Aldebaran, and Betelgeuse has just ducked behind a cloud". Horribly, later that night I was sick and next day I felt like death. I was a nasty bilious colour, and it was our passing out parade.

We all bulled ourselves up and lined up on parade. I could feel myself swaying. We had to march up to the Air Commodore, crash to attention and tear off a smart salute. He would then pin on our brevet; another salute, about turn and march back. I tottered up to the gold braided emissary of God Himself and crashed to attention. It was fatal. I closed my eyes and stood there swaying. Three times he aimed the brevet and missed. Then he committed and drove the pin firmly straight through my left nipple. "Ow" I said sharply. The whole parade was now suppressing laughter. I knew I had to retrieve the situation. "Sorry Sir" I mumbled "I meant 'Ow Sir'".

The rest of the course was sent to heavy bombers, to Coastal Command, to reconnaissance planes. I alone was sent to Mosquitoes, Pathfinders. The elite of bombing command. We were to be a brand new squadron, 3 Brits, one Canuck, the rest Aussies. For some reason, I was the only member of the flying crew on the whole unit who was not an officer. So, on the first evening, over drinks in the Mess, all the blokes teamed up. Next day we turned up for briefing and I was the only one without a pilot. I looked at the various pilots and thought "that's the one I'd like as my pilot". A tall raw bred blond Aussie called Douglas Hereward Swain from Toorak in Victoria. We all went along to the decompression chamber to test our ability to withstand low pressure. One navigator dipped out, Doug Swain's. He got agonising bends, so in actual fact did I – but I decided not to say so. So Doug and I were now a partnership.

Doug said "Right now my ambition is quite simple. I want us to be the best bloody aircrew in the RAF and that means in the world. As for you, you can make any bloody mistake you like ("that's good of him" I thought contentedly) – "ONCE" he added menacingly. We went on our first flight together and Doug decided to feather one engine. What he did not know was that you could not restart an engine in mid-air, so our first ever landing together was a single engine landing.

We were briefed and ready to take off for our first bombing trip. Cologne. Quite a short trip. As we got over the target, I was amazed how vivid the scene was. Lots of searchlights raking the sky and occasionally a plane would get caught in a cone of searchlights and glow like a moth. Vivid cascades of target indicators in fluorescent red, yellow or green and decoy German indicators subtly different in colour. Bomb bursts, flaming buildings, tracer bullets, flak bursts. It was all very stimulating.

I crawled down into the nose pf the plane, to lie on my belly and guide Doug in on the target. I got a kink in the oxygen pipe so I became a bit drunk from Anoxia. “Port, port, port” I said. I felt the plane slew slightly. “Port, port, port. Now starboard”. I gave a little giggle. “Now back a bit”. Doug didn’t panic. He realised what was happening and began to drag me out by my legs. I protested. “It’s pretty out there” I said. He hauled me back, took off my oxygen mask and put his mask over my face. I recovered. Doug was now slumped over the steering column and we were plummeting down. I took off his mask and put it back on his face. Well, if you survive the idiocies of your first ten or twelve operations, you may well survive them all.

About now, I decided that if radar was the key to success, I would master it. We used to have two nights of operations and then one night off. On my nights off, I would go along to the radar unit where a thin dark radar aircraftsman and his plump jolly girlfriend would teach me all they knew. I became an expert, accurate at finding my position anywhere on the airfield to within six feet, sight unseen. This was to save our lives later on. At this time, a pretty little blond WAAF called Rose (I never took her out and I don’t think I ever learnt her surname) began to feel she was my lucky mascot. If she kissed me goodbye on every trip, I’d never be killed. So, even if take-off was at 3 a.m., she would be there to kiss me. She’d come back from leave to see me off. She never once missed out. I wonder what happened to her. She had a malformed nail on a finger of her left hand.

Now I’d like to find my logbook but I can’t. Perhaps it’s just as well. Only the most important things will stick in my memory.

I suppose I might just describe a typical day if you are flying at night. In the morning you would contact your ground crew and when they gave the plane the OK, it was ready for a test flight. We had a magnificent ground crew, they really were our friends and would work any hours to get things right for us. We’d fly for perhaps half an hour testing and testing. Or we might fly for maybe two hours, including a trip to the practice bombing range on the Wash. You would sort out your hours to fit in your meals. It might be a 5 p.m. take-off or at any time up to 3 a.m. Whatever the time, the kitchen staff would be on duty and if you didn’t feel like a proper meal, there was a huge cauldron of soup always simmering on the stove, a kind of huntsman’s stew.

Aircrew were allowed fresh oranges with any meal, while the Weathermen, Air Controllers and so on, looked on slavering. I simply knew I must not give the precious things away, so I hardly ever ate mine; some of the aircrew delighted to gloat!

Perhaps an hour or two before take-off you'd go along to the Briefing Room, sitting in pairs, each with his crew member. You'd learn the target, the route and back (Doug and I always came back in a straight line – never mind the subtle route worked out by control), the weather and above all, the winds expected, what load you'd carry and what trouble spots you might expect. A great deal to work out. The pilot was the captain of the plane but in fact his job was often surprisingly boring, not quite that I suppose; perhaps the word is "undemanding". He would have three moments of high drama; take-off, with full bomb and petrol load; over the target; and landing when you were tired and although you might have heard the shrapnel hitting the plane, you had no real idea what damage had been done, what state the hydraulics might be in, whether the flaps would respond and so on. Of course, the target area was the high spot of the performance for both of you. But for the navigator, take-off and landing were comparatively relaxed. There wasn't a thing you could do. All you had to do was to be supportive, by showing your complete faith in your pilot and in Doug I had an outstanding flier. He had all the qualities.

Obviously, there were mini-crises crossing the coast of Europe, or if you went too close, to the islands of Heligoland, or if a night fighter picked you up. You had a device (called rather endearingly, 'Boozer') which told you by a dull red light when you were being tracked by German Wurzburg gun-laying Radar. Within a couple of minutes of take-off, this always came on. (On the first flight you think "My God – they know we're coming". It reminds me of the new air gunner who said excitedly to his battle worn pilot "Skip, Skip they're firing at us". "I know" came the weary reply, "they're allowed to).

Right, so Boozer glowed dull red. Then it would shine bright red. This meant they were training their guns on you. On you, not on the next plane. Here the navigator, however busy he was (and often you would work at an intensity to make you sweat) had to take over. If you merely swerved about like a headless chicken, the Germans marked down your track as perhaps half a mile wide and automatically cut down on your airspeed. Then up would come the box barrage and, I suppose, down you'd go. Though I did not mind the thought of death, I did hope I would not be burned to death.

No, what you had to do was turn a full 60^0 to port (the light would fade as they lost you); then as it glowed bright red again, give it 20 seconds for them to lay the guns and the flak to travel up, after all we were 5 miles up, and then turn 60^0 to starboard. It used to make Doug and me laugh delightedly to see the box barrage wasted where they hoped we'd be. Of course, over the target, the Boozer would be bright red almost continuously.

However, there was another little light on the Boozer which did not come on often. This was a little white light that meant an enemy night fighter was on your tail, tracking you with radar. If you had a cat's eye fighter, the first warning you'd get would be the tracers going past; but both of you had a seat back of heavy armour plate. If the white light went on, it was like being on a bucking bronco, or in a dinghy on a rough sea. Your pilot would go mad and chuck the plane all over the sky. It was all rather exhilarating.

The Aussie pilot with the Canuck navigator seemed to be particularly unlucky. Nearly every night he'd have a German on his tail. One night I prised the secret out of Canadian Mac (his pilot was also a Mac – they were known as Mac 'n Mac). He used to divert his pilot's attention and then surreptitiously lift the red cover off the left hand Boozer so that the light shone white. He said it was a ploy to stop his pilot from becoming bored and sleepy. Both the Macs were great bean eaters and as you climbed to altitude the pressure dropped in the plane. The result was inevitable. You used to sit on your parachute as a cushion – the parachute packers used to draw lots to escape from servicing Mac parachutes!

I digress; the operational flight. You go along to Briefing. In those days, I used to wear pyjamas and although of course you were meant to wear full uniform to fly as if you were captured you might be treated as a guerrilla and shot out of hand – I always wore my pyjamas under my uniform. When you got back at 5 o'clock in the morning you were tired and cold and the last thing you wanted was to clamber into cold pyjamas.

At Briefing, the pilots were almost spectators (bus drivers we'd call them). Doug was rather an exception. He wanted to know and understand everything that went on. The navigator would have to work fast, working out the flight plan, sorting out the charts, preparing the logs. Each in his individual style. Like preparing for a party, really rather fun. Then into the crew bus and out to the various dispersal points; each crew was dropped at their own plane, greeted by their ground crew (statutory kiss from Rose). We were then called out in order, taxied to the end of the runway, took off, set course followed by two or more solid hours of intensive work by the navigator (with your pilot telling you that your pinpoint of light to work by is a beacon for night fighters; and do you think you're Piccadilly Circus on Christmas Eve? You dim it down and furtively turn it up again). You take a radar fix, then another exactly 3 minutes later and then another 3 minutes after that. This gives you how far you have travelled over the ground in 6 minutes. Multiply by ten, compare air and ground position and you know what the wind is. Apply this to the predicted wind and you have a vague idea of how things will be. The normal wind at that height would be about 60mph – so if you ignored it, you'd be bombing about 120 miles from where you wanted to be.

When you were inexperienced, you did carry target indicators –but they might be yellow; and the main force was told to bomb as primary targets perhaps the red; as secondary targets the green; and if all else failed the yellows. What made your pilot smile was if you said "the first indicators should go down in about another fifty seconds" and then dead ahead, suddenly the indicators were there. What did not make him smile, was if they appeared behind us. We would then have to do a U turn (slightly like the same manoeuvre on the M1) and fly back through perhaps 600 planes. This sort of thing made pilots inexplicably tetchy – and for years cured me of being early for an appointment!

This is getting technical. Let's switch to individual flights.

On one flight, as we left target, my nose started to bleed. Nothing I could do with my oxygen mask on, so it contentedly bled on until I had lost between half a pint and a pint of blood; then it stopped of its own accord. When I got out of the plane, the front of my uniform was sodden red with blood. “Mike’s wounded – get the blood wagon” said one of the ground crew. I took off my oxygen mask to say that it was only a nose bleed. The blood had clotted and congealed. “Christ they’ve shot his face off” said the young fitter and fainted. Not a nice cushiony sort of stage faint with the legs buckling – no, he fell straight back like a board and I heard the crack of his skull on the concrete. The blood wagon tore up, he was put on a stretcher and away he went. This was the sort of thing that tended to upset Rose.

Obviously all the worst things occur in your tour of operations. Like young birds, if you can last the first few hazardous weeks, the odds lengthen. Churchill had decided that as a propaganda ploy, Germany should be bombed for 100 nights in a row. If the forecast was appalling – risk of ice at height, which would distort the wing shape so that you fell from the sky; or heavy fog on return; or towering cumulus clouds containing up and down draughts within feet of each other, of more than 100 mph, strong enough to toss a Lancaster round like a leaf – if there was this risk, four engine bombers must not be involved, with their crews of eight men. Send in the Mosquito boys – a plywood body to the plane and a crew of only two. Much more expendable.

We had no defences except our speed and manoeuvrability. Against an enemy fighter, we had to try to elude it. It did make one feel somewhat wimpish! One night of appalling weather, only three planes took off. Two Mosquitoes from another squadron, and Doug and I from Wyton. The idea was for us to do a Cook’s tour - come close to Hamburg, then veer off; the same for Bremen, Kiel, Hanover, Essen etc. etc. So as to alert the air raid wardens, fire-fighters, flak crews, searchlights, night fighters – the lot; and rob them of their sleep, I plotted a bad wind, then lost the radar picture under intense jamming by the Germans and a host of false signals – later I came to recognise the true from the false.

We came up to Hamburg and passed straight over the centre of the city. Every gun in the city opened up. Over 200 searchlights coned on us. The light was incredibly strong and sharp; I have seldom been more embarrassed in my life. It was like walking down Bond Street naked. Doug’s mouth was a grim line as we did our standard evasion tactics. Whatever we did, we must not lose our nerve and lose height – that was how many were killed. Sure, you gained speed – but you became an easier target by widening the angle of effective fire. We moved on to Bremen and all alone we sailed over the centre of the city. We reached Kiel naval guns here, first class gunners. I could hear the flak hitting us. One large piece went straight through our two ton bomb and out the other side. Another cut the steel struts for the bomb doors like scissors cutting a stick of macaroni – sheared through, shiny, clean, not snapped. This bar was thicker than my thumb. Our petrol tanks were pierced again and again, but they were self-sealing so that was all right. Doug always used them first for this reason. We jettisoned them to add an extra 5 knots to our speed.

As we were in the middle of Kiel I found my self thinking “I wonder if I’m frightened? How do I test it?” I held my hand out – it was brilliantly light and I could see that it was rock steady. I put my hand on my heart. It seemed to be beating slowly and strongly. My mouth was not dry, nor were my hands clammy. Then I noticed that I had a thin line of sweat on my upper lip. “ Perhaps this is what fear feels like” I thought. But I was certainly scared of Doug’s reaction and with reason. We landed in stony silence and after the debriefing he said “Go to bed now but I want you to get up early and I want a complete reconstruction of the whole flight, finding out where you went wrong before we flight test tomorrow”. That’s right “You can make any bloody silly mistake you like – once”.

The Mosquito boys had another chore which we did not much enjoy. We would set off on the same route and almost at the same height as the Lancasters and Halifaxes – the heavy boys; then they would swing off one way and we would swing off on our own route. BUT – we had to drop thousands and thousands of strips of tin foil to simulate a heavy stream of aircraft to the German radar. It was fiddly work splitting the packages and pushing them down the chute, cold too; and the slight pressurisation we had in the plane would dissipate. Worst of all, to entice the enemy fighters away from the soft target of the heavies, we had to fire off vivid flares and Verey lights every few hundred yards. It’s not very nice to feel that you don’t count, that you’re expendable!

But now we had done twenty or thirty trips; we were good and we knew we were good. By hours and hours of work in the radar shed, I had become an expert on radar – I, who can’t even mend a fus; and usually I put in the petrol and leave my companion to see if we need oil! Donald Bennett, the Australian I/C Pathfinders had me to dinner a couple of times with his Swedish wife, to see if I could explain exactly how I knew which were our signals on the radar screen, and which were the German ones. I couldn’t. I couldn’t draw it even, I just knew. I would sometimes be getting accurate radar fixes fifty miles further East than anyone else on the raid. It gave us a great edge and Doug was pleased.

If we were dropping a 4,000lb bomb – which we often were; its terminal velocity in falling was something like 460 feet per second (about 500 klm/hr). In other words, if we had got into a dive, we could easily have passed it. It was a great big clumsy thing, like a cylindrical hot water tank. So, you could release it and all of us had enough pride of performance to do a steady run up to the bombing, however the flak might rattle and the plane would give a great surge as the bomb left it. An anti aircraft shell bursting nearby could feel much like this actually. Then you had nearly a minute before the bomb burst.

Obviously, standard practice was to take evasive action directly the bomb left, with the navigator timing it to photograph the bomb burst. Doug decided he wanted the best photographs in Bomber Command. To this way of thinking, this involved straight and level flight not only for the minute of run up but also for the minute of bomb fall. It was rather exciting to work at this level of perfectionism.

We were now briefed to do a low level day light raid on railway tunnels. For days we practised, thrilling. I remember swooping over the brow of a Welsh hill and seeing the sheep scatter, then the raid was postponed and when it did take place, we were on leave. We were deeply disappointed. One pilot came back with blades of barley on his tail wheel. One saw a train accelerating into a tunnel. Just as it shot in like a rabbit into its hole, he dropped his bomb to collapse the entrance to the tunnel. What neither he nor the train driver knew was that the other end had been collapsed ten minutes earlier.

Doug and I had now worked out a way of always being first back. Sure, we did come back in a straight line but so did lots of others. Our secret was to climb to 32,000 feet or higher for the return journey when we weren't weighed down by bomb or petrol. On the indicator, the reading was very low for airspeed, owing to the thinness of the air; and the climb did take time, but at that height we went like a bullet. In fact, every time I suffered from bends; but it seemed ungenerous to mention it. Doug would stay at height until the last possible moment and then scream down to take first place in the circuit. Obviously, our ears could not cope with this change of pressure. Later, when I shared a room with Doug, whoever woke first would hold his nose and blow and the high pitched squeal as the pressure equalised would wake the other.

Oh yes, I was now an officer. The CO called me in and said I should be commissioned. I said I saw no necessity for it. I was perfectly satisfied with the pay and in any case the ground crew all treated me as an officer and I saw no point in going on a course to learn to behave like an officer. I said I hadn't time, I was busy. "All right" he said "You can skip everything. We'll bypass it by saying you were commissioned on the battlefield".

Then came the first thousand bomber raid; it was like a street party with gatecrashers. Everything that could fly was forced into the air. Ansons from training command, with untrained crews, carrying about a basketful of hand grenades. Shambolic, we felt, but good propaganda. Mike Solomon, from the next squadron, took off with a 4,000lb bomb aboard. One engine cut out at 10,000feet so he jettisoned his bomb, safe, not fused. The bomb did not care; it went off anyway and almost blew him out of the sky. That's at a range of 2 miles! Next day was very hot. Mick was wearing an overcoat, gloves and a scarf and was still cold. Shock, of course, but we thought it hilarious. He had to go, of course. They should have known earlier when he refused to join 571 squadron because it added up to 13!

We had very little time for indiscipline. I remember flying over Alconbury, an American base. If the Brits got back to base damaged or with wounded aboard, they'd contact control and take their place in the circuit in order of priority. The Yanks were back from a daylight raid. The airways were throbbing with their cries of May Day. Then they abandoned control altogether and came in huggermugger – down wind, cross wind, any old how. No less than five collided at about the junction of the runways and a great pall of smoke rose. It made me very angry.

Doug and I were on a raid on Wurzburg, a small town set among mountains. Curiously my father had been at university there. We had a 4000 lb bomb and were told by Met that it would be a clear night; so the markers were on the ground. We arrived over target and could just see the glow through the heavy cloud. "Let's go lower" said Doug. Well, once we were on that course, there was no stopping us. We suddenly came into clear air at just under 4000 feet. By now it was

really exciting. We were bucketing about, tossed around by the bomb bursts (we'd been told that at less than 5000 feet the explosion would rip our wings off), and we were right into the light flak. We'd never experienced that before. We were both laughing with sheer exhilaration and excitement. With the fires, the bomb bursts and the target indicators, it was vividly, luridly lit up. I'd never bombed visually before. I could see squares and streets and the university – I picked on the railway as my target, two tall towers like King's Cross. Then we were climbing and wheeling steeply to avoid the pine clad mountains.

We got back last. Rose had given us up as missing. We were last in the queue for debriefing. We were last in the queue for rum, hot water and sugar – better than any sleeping draught if you are cold and keyed up. One after another came to the table. "What did you bomb?" "Glow in the sky". Again and again and again. The Intelligence Officer was in the rhythm. Ronald Bennett was leaning negligently against the wall. A lot of the crews had gone to bed. Doug and I were smiling secret smiles even nudging each other like kids. We reached the table. "What did you bomb?" asked the bloke. I looked at Doug; he said "You saw it best. You say". I said "We bombed the railway station". The Intelligence Officer had already written "Glow in the sky" and switched off. Suddenly he shouted "WHAT?". Donald Bennett hurried over; as the news spread, all the other crews on the raid came back – some in pyjamas, some half undressed. Then the various blokes on night duty – cooks, electricians, firemen and so on – all flooded in. Ours was the only eyewitness account of how the raid had gone – where the bombs had dropped, how accurate the target indicators were. Doug was awarded the DFC, an immediate award; mine followed two or three weeks later.

Here an odd story follows. The boffins came up with Oboe, a highly sophisticated form of radar. based on radio transponder technology. The system consisted of a pair of radio transmitters on the ground which sent signals which were received and retransmitted by a transponder in the aircraft. By comparing the time each signal took to reach the aircraft and returned to the station, the distance between the aircraft and the station could be determined. The Oboe operators then sent radio signals to the aircraft to bring them onto their target and properly time the release of their bombs. But how accurate was it? A subtle plan was concocted which would require no time lapse, no risk to spies or undercover agents. A lull in the bombing was planned and only 3 planes were sent out, each bombing on Oboe. The target was a small German cemetery. The next day the German news was jubilant – "Ze British have Germany last night bombed. But – ha ha ha –zere were no casualties; bodies were attacked –ha ha ha –but zey were all dead bodies. Ze stupid British a cemetery have bombed".

The British scientists hugged each other – and the production go ahead was authorised.

Radar was our seeing dog – our white stick and so, one day soon after we took off, the radar blew a fuse. I put in another and again it blew. I put in a third – no joy. So I put in a penny – as I'd learnt in the radar shed. I got my three fixes and then the radar caught fire. I beat out the flames with my cap and my bare hands, we got to target and returned; Doug was furious. Then I was mentioned in despatches for outstanding intelligence, initiative and refusal to admit defeat. Even in those days the radar set cost £600 – it seemed to me that the whole world had gone mad. And sometimes perhaps it had. Yet we had our own rules of sanity which are hard to explain now. Our Art Mistress used to say to the first XV "How can you look forward to a match? You know it will be cold, wet, muddy; that you'll be hacked and trodden on and knocked about". "True" they said, "That's the point of it". They did not know, so could not say, that pride was the motivation and a kind of self-confidence the target.

I used to teach boys Latin. The intellectual loved it – the rugger buggers found it a sore trial. They'd ask me "Why do we do it?". "Because it's difficult" I'd say. "That's no reason" they'd reply scornfully. All right, what's the point of rugby?" "To score tries". "How?". All right, what's the point of rugby?" "To score tries". "How?". "You put the ball down beyond the line – under the posts if possible". "O.K." I said, "But why don't you wait until everyone has gone and then you can put it down as often as you like?". "Oh Sir – that's stupid". Then they'd think and then say "Wait a minute. No it's not. I see, it's the challenge that makes it exciting".

You'd think that bombing Germany was challenge enough; and so at first it was. But then we wanted to swagger a bit, to take an early bath, to field close to the bat. We knew that if we switched on our radios (which should only be switched on as you baled out to let the rest of the squadron know you were alive, or unwounded as you left the plane) the Germans could home in on us. Yet our squadron had a tuneless little ditty and, as we swung away after the photographic run, one harsh Aussie voice would come over the air and then another and another would join in the refrain. And we'd be laughing with the sheer risk of it.

Odd, unusual – and not very wholesome! One of the heavy boys used to get the whole squadron to use his Elsan (toilet), then he'd make one bombing run – then do a U turn against all the stream of bombers, make another bombing run to drop his Elsan, shouting obscenities in broken German as he did so. Of course, he did survive the war!

The backroom boys put much thought into bombing. How about high explosives first| to shatter the roofs and gas mains? This would make the incendiaries infinitely more lethal instead of their bouncing off roofs on to the pavement. How about incendiaries first? Then the ARP and fire-fighters would swarm out to deal with them and be killed by the H.E. How about a mixed grill? In fact, this was the usual pattern. I tried not to think of cities and people and treasured possessions and pets and children. I tried to concentrate on the essential if Germany won the whole world would be enslaved. Then one night the CO said "Berlin tonight. Again. A night on the Spree (Berlin is on the river Spree) and it will create chaos. The city is jam packed with refugees fleeing from the Russians on the Eastern

front". That night I had a nightmare. I dreamt that I saw, in the cold light of dawn, a great heap of bricks and rubble. Drifts of thin smoke wafted around. A woman, swathed in black, was clawing desperately at the rubble. I could see her breath rasping in her chest but everything was completely silent. I could see her nails tearing, her hands bleeding and the desperation in her. Suddenly she saw a child's thin, bony hand poking out of the rubble. She called out and clawed and scrabbled even more desperately; and as she cleared almost to the elbow, the hand just went limp and I awoke, sweating. I did not sleep for the rest of the night. I just walked around the airfield with my puzzled spaniel, Sheba. There was a full moon; it was very cold and I found a £5 note sodden in a ditch.

From then on, every night and long after the war was over I had that same dream. Yet, I was happy. I was doing something important, something that had to be done and I was doing it well. Another odd thing. We were strongly individualistic, unthinking obedience was anathema to us; yet we were disciplined, deeply disciplined and in spite of our casual dress, behaviour, cars and moustaches, we were surprisingly caring of our 'best blue', our new forage caps or gloves; like the Guards' Officers at waterloo, oddly dandified.


Life to the full
...by Sir Gus

An example. Gus Walker, fly half for the England team just before the war, was CO of a heavy bomber station (Click the pic at right). A Lancaster taxied to the start of the runway and some of the incendiaries broke loose and were rolling in the bomb bay. The crew ground to a halt and set off for the far blue horizon like jack rabbits. Gus, in the control tower, called his driver. "I'm not having a crater blown in my main runway" he said. Two or three hundred yards from the runway he told the driver to stop, and alone he ran towards the plane. He got within five or ten yards of it and the incendiaries, which had burnt straight through the duralumin bomb doors set off the H.E. bombs in one tremendous explosion. Gus, in fact, was saved by being exactly in the skip distance – otherwise the blast would have crushed his lungs. But his right arm was shorn straight off at the elbow. He came walking back to his little vehicle holding the stump of his arm tightly with his left hand." I may be going to lose consciousness" he said " I want you to be sure to send a signal to the group that I'll be back on duty in 6 weeks' time, still CO of this station. Oh, yes – and could you find that hand of mine? It had a brand new glove on it".

I had been the officer I/C the funeral of the two Macs. As we always did – as we were taught to do – if a friend were killed, we got very drunk that night. I was travelling back in the crew bus. The Macs had been popular and it was very crowded. On my knee I had a buxom red haired WAAF. Suddenly, revoltingly, she was sick down the front of my best blue. It felt like the last straw.

A few days earlier there was a big party in the Mess. Music, dancing, condoms blown up and stained with the red, blue, green or black marking ink we used for charts. I was no dancer – and I was tired so I went to have a bath. A friend wandered in and very slowly and meditatively poured a bottle of black ink over my head. A minute or two later he came back with an outsize bottle of red ink and began to pour it over my hair. With a roar of rage I leapt out of the bath and pursued him down the corridor. He was dressed, I was naked. As I ran I caught up a fire extinguisher and crashed it against a pillar. Foam shot out and although we were running fast, I kept it steady and was targeting him well. Down the main staircase we belted and suddenly I was in the middle of

the main dance floor, and the fire extinguisher was empty. I went back to my bath and locked the door. No mention, no disciplinary action. Odd things were bound to happen.

At Shepherd's Hotel in Cairo, at 3 o'clock in the morning, we were woken by shouts and screams. A naked ATS girl was making good headway down the hall and corridors, hotly pursued by an equally naked Squadron Leader. He was charged with "Conduct unbecoming an officer and gentleman". He got off because he made the court laugh. His defence was "An officer need not at all times wear full uniform, provided he wears clothes suitable for the sport in which he is engaged".

At Duxford a young sentry was on duty when a local village maiden tootled past on her bicycle. A/C 2 Dixon whipped out his old man and waved it at her. She complained to her mother, who brought the matter to the C/O's attention. Poor A/C 2 was now on a fizzer. He prepared his defence meticulously. Brought up before the C/O, he snapped to attention, and in a flat disciplined voice said his piece. "I wish to express my regret at the unfortunate incident that has occurred. Unhappily I was under a misapprehension. I was under the impression that I was acquainted with the young lady in question". Case dismissed – what other verdict was possible?

Our only daylight raid was rather dull but different – so it sticks in my mind. Our troops had reached the Rhine and were held by stubborn resistance at Wesel. By now we had virtual command of the air. I don't know how many planes – certainly around 200 bombers – were in the air. We took off, we made our rendezvous, we flew over the North Sea in tight formation while above and below us the fighters weaved and patrolled. We came North of Wesel and swung onto the target run. – no flak – no fighters. A feeling of unreality, like performing in an empty hall. No audience! Contrails were forming and we ran down them as though they were rails. The leader of our formation opened his bomb doors – we did the same. His bomb dropped and we also pressed the tit as his plane surged up under the release of its load. That was it. A non event. But I met an Army officer who was on our bank of the Rhine that day. He said that they themselves were almost in a state of shock, shattered, deafened, addled. Then they crossed the river and because of our mass bombing, the Germans were paralysed – incapable of speech, thought or movement.

London was in the grip of the blitz. If you went up you would sleep in the tube shelters all along the platforms. Not a restful night – babies might cry, trains start at 4.30 a.m., but a great feeling of camaraderie prevailed – no theft, no muggings. From Cambridge nightly you could see the glow in the sky, fifty miles away.

One night we set off, twelve planes from our squadron. A disastrous night, Doug and I had quarrelled, so we were split up for the night. I was to fly with Alan Heitman and Doug had Nat, Alan's navigator; a ratty little Pom. Briefing was over and we were all in the crew bus. Doug came over "I don't know whose fault the argument was and I don't care. You're the best navigator in the world and I don't trust anyone else. Will you fly with me tonight? I've fixed it up with Alan and Nat". So, I got out at our usual dispersal point.

We took off at about 10 p.m. An early dawn landing. The predicted winds were high that night, 130mph from the West. I plotted my first wind; 130mph from the East. I told Doug. He said "You must have made a mistake". I took my next wind. Same result. He said "Look, this is absurd. Try again. I'll concentrate like buggery on my height and airspeed". Third wind, same result. "We've got to believe it" I said. What had happened was that the anti-cyclone had gone through faster than predicted so that we were on the other side of the trough. We were meant to reach Berlin in about 2 hours – it took us 3½. All right, so we'd come back fast, but we'd been bucking a head wind for 3½ hours with full petrol and bomb load. We knew we'd be pinched tight for fuel on return.

We got back to base and the fuel tanks registered empty. Moreover, a warm blanket of air had slid over the cold air, trapping fog, which was forming on the ashes of burning London. Doug contacted base. "Why aren't the runway lights on?" "They are". "But we're right over base at only 10,000 feet". There's a bit of fog down here". The rest of that night is easily told. One plane aborted and came back early with radar trouble, once when we had radar trouble we just carried on. Pretty wet we thought of them. The planes limped in, exhausted, frustrated, short of fuel and no airfield visible. One diverted to Bassingbourn and landed safely. "Taxi in to the perimeter" radioed control. He couldn't – he had no fuel.

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The Macs tried to land by radar at Wyton (above). Canuck Mac was not quite accurate enough and they landed on a petrol bowser. Even this great sheet of flame was not visible through the clinging fog. Next day the Medical Officer went to search for their bodies. All he found was one thumb and he callously trod it into the ground with his heel.

John Smith, a good bloke and a bloody fine fly half at rugby, found base but could not land. “Gain height and bale out” ordered control. He tried – and ran out of fuel. His navigator baled out safely. Parachutes were designed to open within 400 – 600 feet. John got out at 180 feet and his parachute was still only half open when he hit the ground. He must have hit at well over 80 mph, but he was fit and relaxed. He rolled with the fall and wasn’t even bruised. When he got back he said “I’m going to look there tomorrow. Just before I jumped, I chucked out my forage cap – it was brand new”. The plane hit the ground at less than 200 yards from where it was found.

Half a dozen others gained height and baled out, leaving crewless planes to crash. Alan Heitman was less lucky. He got back over base, saw no runway, was told to gain height and bale out. Nat opened the escape hatch and froze with fear. A red haired WAAF was talking the planes in. In fact, she was engaged to Alan and they were due to marry on their next leave. She could hear Alan telling Nat to jump, then his urgency as he said “The engine’s overheating. Christ it’s on fire. Jump, jump”. Still Nat clung to the plane. And the flames were beginning to lick at the cockpit. He even struggled with Nat – and still Nat clung neurotically to the plane. Suddenly he jumped and landed safely. But by now it was too late for Alan. The plane was in a spin burning fiercely. The red haired WAAF could hear Alan screaming all the way down, and she even heard the plane hit the ground, though by now she was on her hands and knees under the desk, trying to blot out the sounds. She was on a week’s immediate compassionate leave. By 7 a.m. Nat was off the station, his room empty. He was called up for the Army the next day. The phrase used by the RAF was LMF –lack of moral fibre.

And Doug and I? Well, this was my chance to test the theory of blind landing I had worked out. Run down one radar line until you hit a cross line, do a steady 30º port turn and you’d be lined up with the centre of the runway. Accurate to 6 feet.

We tried it at 300 feet. No joy. We simply could not see the massive sodium lights. We went round again. 200 feet. Not a sausage. “We’ll just have to go lower” I said. “Well, I’ll go in at 30 feet” said Doug. “But you’d better be bloody accurate. The hangars are higher than that”. “Oh that’s OK” I replied. “It will work”. We came in at 30 feet. “Crossing perimeter” I said. Then “Start of runway”. Then “You’d better be quick, we’re halfway down the runway”. Doug gritted his teeth. “I hope you know what you’re doing” he said. “I’ll chuck her down”.

We hit the runway and seconds later we were off the runway on the grass verge. Then we tore through the concertina wire and barbed wire entanglements and perimeter fence as if they were cobwebs. We were still travelling at over 100 mph. Then we hit the hedge and the main road from Cambridge to Huntingdon – and still Doug was fighting to keep her straight. We hit the hedge and ditch the other side of the road and now were in a field of sugar beet, sodden soil. Suddenly the under cart collapsed and we slid along on the belly of the plane. Then we were still and after

the intense drama of the last half minute, it was amazingly silent – so silent that you felt you could gather great handfuls of it. I've never known a feeling like it. I broke it. "Thank you, Doug" I said "That was good". Still we sat; we knew we ought to get out in case the plane caught fire; but we felt curiously drained, as though we were waiting for all our innards to catch up with us again. Again, I was the one to break the silence. "I've got some chocolate in my navigation bag. Would you like some?" I said. It was another one of our perks, like oranges, that the aircrews got extra rations of, coarse rather bitter heavy chocolate. "Christ, yes" said Doug – and suddenly we both realised we were ravenously hungry. I broke the huge slab equally in two and both of us just stuffed the whole lot into our mouths barbarously. At that moment the C/O climbed onto the wing of the plane and battered on the Perspex of the cockpit. "Is anyone alive?" he shouted. He had come by van as far as the perimeter fence and then run through the gap left in the defences by our plane.

Our mouths were stuffed with half chewed chocolate. We were incapable of coherent speech. I tried to say "Don't worry, we're OK", but it was ring the stretchers – they're alive. I can hear them groaning", shouted the C/O. Doug and I collapsed. We were laughing until the tears came and doing the nose trick. It was all very silly really. Of course, next day, when it came round to seeing what had happened to the squadron that night, things were different. Doug said to me pretty solemnly "Look Mike, if you'd flown with Alan Heitman last night, he'd be alive now and I'd be dead".

I'll mention one other story about the heavy boys. A Lancaster was shot up and its hydraulic system was punctured. One of the air gunners botched up the fractures with first aid dressing and chewing gum – but a lot of oil had been lost. He topped up the system with coffee from the thermos flasks; then all the crew peed into the thermos and they added that. They had just enough pressure to work one gun turret and they managed to repel an enemy night fighter. Over base, they decided to try to land. They landed, rather soggily, with the under cart only half extended and locked, on a mixture of oil, urine and coffee.

I'd always wanted to bale out. Years later, I even wrote to Jimmy Saville asking Jim to fix it for me to bale out and be scooped up by a helicopter. I told my form at school that it was my secret ambition. One boy said "I've decided to write to him too and to say my secret ambition is to see a Latin Master bale out – and his parachute fail to open".

BUT why did we risk death to save our planes? Why did we join the most perilous and casualty ridden branch of the forces? Why did we refuse to turn back when instruments failed? Were we just conditioned lemmings? I don't think so. Some of it was competitiveness, a bit was bravado; but most of all, it was genuinely pride of performance; the Olympic ideal, the pursuit of excellence.

I can't believe that was bad. Personally, I am happy to have been part of it.

A tour of operations was 30 for the heavies who bombed at 15,000 to 18,000 feet; 50 for Mosquitoes who bombed at 25,000 feet that were much less vulnerable. When Doug and I had done 48 raids we transferred to another squadron, hoping to do 98 raids on the trot. In fact, when we had done 52 raids the war in Europe ended. We volunteered for Japan as a crew and while we were on embarkation leave, the atom bombs were dropped. Doug went back to Melbourne and seven months later, his son was born. 10 years later he was killed in a routine civil flying accident.

‘Well you see, Norm, it’s like this. . . A herd of buffalo can only move as fast as the slowest buffalo. And when the heard Is hunted, it Is the slowest and weakest ones at the back that are killed first. This natural selection Is good for the herd as a whole, because the general speed and health of the whole group keeps improving by the regular killing of the weakest members. In much the same way, the human brain can only operate as fast as the slowest brain cells. Now, as we know, excessive intake of alcohol kills brain cells. But naturally, it attacks the slowest and weakest brain cells first. In this way, regular consumption of beer eliminates the weaker brain cells. making the brain a laster and more efficient machine. And that, Norm, is why you always feel smarter after a few beers.’

Rockwell B-1 Lancer

The fantastic looking, but troubled, B1 bomber, which is operated by the USAF, is now 33 years old but certainly doesn't look it.

The B-1, which was built by Rockwell International (now part of Boeing) is a supersonic variable-sweep wing, heavy bomber. It is commonly called the "Bone" (from "B-One") and is one of three strategic bombers in the U.S. Air Force fleet, the other two being the B-2 Spirit and the B-52 Stratofortress.

The B-1 was first envisioned in the 1960s as a platform that would combine the Mach 2 speed of the Convair B-58 Hustler with the range and payload of the B-52 and was meant to ultimately replace both bombers. After a long series of studies, Rockwell International won the design contest for what emerged as the B-1A. This version had a top speed of Mach 2.2 at high altitude and the capability of flying for long distances at Mach 0.85 at very low altitudes. The combination of the high cost of the aircraft, the introduction of the AGM-86 cruise missile that flew the same basic profile and early work on the stealth bomber all significantly affected the need for the B-1. This led to the program being cancelled in 1977, after the B-1A prototypes had been built.

The program was restarted in 1981, largely as an interim measure due to delays in the B-2 program, with the B-2 eventually reaching initial operational capability in 1997. This led to a redesign as the B-1B, which differed from the B-1A by having a lower top speed at high altitude of Mach 1.25, but improved low-altitude performance of Mach 0.96. The electronics were also extensively improved during the redesign and the airframe was improved to allow take-off with the maximum possible fuel and weapons load. The B-1B began deliveries in 1986 and formally entered service with Strategic Air Command (SAC) as a nuclear bomber in that same year. By 1988, all 100 aircraft had been delivered.

In the early 1990s, following the Gulf War and concurrent with the disestablishment of SAC and its reassignment to the newly formed Air Combat Command, the B-1B was converted to

conventional bombing use. It first served in combat during Operation Desert Fox in 1998 and again during the NATO action in Kosovo the following year. The B-1B has supported U.S. and NATO military forces in Afghanistan and Iraq. The Air Force had 66 B-1Bs in service as of September 2012. The B-1B is expected to continue to serve into the 2030s along with the B-52s, with the Northrop Grumman B-21 Raider to begin replacing the B-1B after 2025. The B-1s in inventory are planned to be retired by 2036 and the B-52 will stay a bit longer.

Although never intended for the low-level role, the B-52's flexibility allowed it to outlast its intended successor as the nature of the air war environment changed. The B-52's huge fuel load allowed it to operate at lower altitudes for longer times and the large airframe allowed the addition of improved radar jamming and deception suites to deal with radars. During the Vietnam War, the concept that all future wars would be nuclear was turned on its head and the "big belly" modifications increased the B-52's total bomb load to 60,000 pounds (27,000kg), turning it into a powerful tactical aircraft which could be used against ground troops along with strategic targets from high altitudes.

Although effective, the B-52 was not ideal for the low-level role. This led to a number of aircraft designs known as penetrators, which were tuned specifically for long-range low-altitude flight. The first of these designs to see operation was the supersonic F-111 fighter-bomber, which used variable-sweep wings for tactical missions.

The USAF needed a replacement and proposals were submitted by Boeing, General Dynamics and North American Rockwell in January 1970. In June 1970, North American Rockwell's design was selected and was awarded a development contract. The original program called for two test airframes, five flyable aircraft, and 40 engines. This was cut in 1971 to one ground and three flight test aircraft. The company changed its name to Rockwell International and named its aircraft

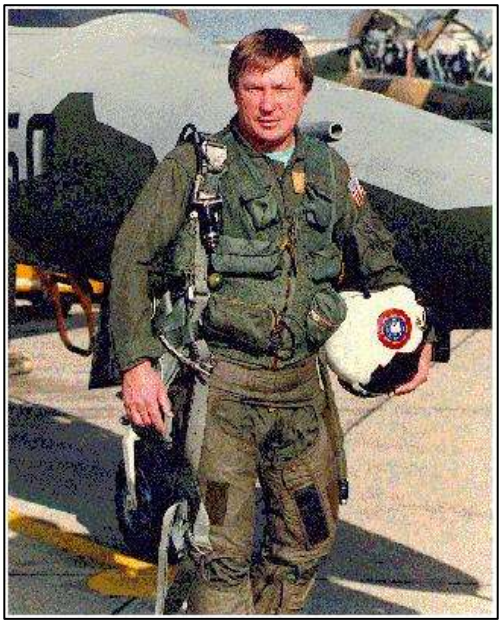
division North American Aircraft Operations in 1973. A fourth prototype, built to production standards, was ordered in the fiscal year 1976 budget. Plans called for 240 B-1As to be built, with initial operational capability set for 1979.

Rockwell's design featured a number of features common to 1960s U.S. designs. Like the F-111, among these was the use of a crew escape capsule that ejected as a unit during emergencies, to improve survivability in the case of an ejection at high speed. Additionally, the design featured large variable-sweep wings in order to provide both high lift during take-off and landing and low drag during a high-speed dash phase. With the wings set to their widest position the aircraft had considerably better lift and power than the B-52, allowing it to operate from a much wider variety of bases. Penetration of the Soviet Union's defences would take place at supersonic speed, crossing them as quickly as possible before entering into the less defended "heartland" where speeds could be reduced again. The large size and fuel capacity of the design would allow the "dash" portion of the flight to be relatively long.

In order to achieve the required Mach 2 performance at high altitudes the exhaust nozzles and air intake ramps were variable. Initially, it had been expected that a Mach 1.2 performance could be achieved at low altitude, which required that titanium be used in critical areas in the fuselage

and wing structure. The low altitude performance requirement was later lowered to Mach 0.85, reducing the amount of titanium and therefore cost. A pair of small vanes mounted near the nose are part of an active vibration damping system that smooths out the otherwise bumpy low-altitude ride. The first three B-1As featured the escape capsule that ejected the cockpit with all four crew members inside. The fourth B-1A was equipped with a conventional ejection seat for each crew member.

In 1970, the estimated unit cost was $40 million and by 1975, this figure had climbed to $70 million.



In 1976, Soviet pilot Viktor Belenko defected to Japan with his MiG-25 "Foxbat". During debriefing he described a new "super-Foxbat" (almost certainly referring to the MiG-31) that had look-down/shoot-down radar in order to attack cruise missiles. This would also make any low-level penetration aircraft "visible" and easy to attack. Given that the B-1's armament suite was similar to the B-52, and it now appeared no more likely to survive Soviet airspace than the B-52, the program was increasingly questioned. In particular, Senator William Proxmire continually derided the B-1 in public, arguing it was an outlandishly expensive dinosaur. During the 1976 federal election campaign, Jimmy Carter made it one of the Democratic Party's platforms, saying "The B-1 bomber is an example of a proposed system which should not be funded and would be wasteful of taxpayers' dollars."

When Carter took office in 1977 he ordered a review of the entire program. By this point the projected cost of the program had risen to over $100 million per aircraft, although this was lifetime cost over 20 years. He was informed of the relatively new work on stealth aircraft that had started in 1975 and he decided that this was a better avenue of approach than the B-1. Pentagon officials also stated that the AGM-86 Air Launched Cruise Missile (ALCM) launched from the existing B-52 fleet would give the USAF equal capability of penetrating Soviet airspace. With a range of 1,500 miles (2,400 km), the ALCM could be launched well outside the range of any Soviet defences and penetrate at low altitude like a bomber (with a much lower radar cross-section due to smaller size), and in much greater numbers at a lower cost. A small number of B-52s could launch hundreds of ALCMs, saturating the defence. A program to improve the B-52 and develop and deploy the ALCM would cost perhaps 20% of the price to deploy the planned 244 B-1As.

On 30 June 1977, Carter announced that the B-1A would be cancelled in favour of ICBMs, SLBMs, and a fleet of modernized B-52s armed with ALCMs. Carter called it "one of the most difficult decisions that I've made since I've been in office." No mention of the stealth work was made public with the program being top secret, but today it is known that in early 1978 he

authorized the Advanced Technology Bomber (ATB) project, which eventually led to the B-2 Spirit.

Domestically, the reaction to the cancellation was split along partisan lines. The US Department of Défense was surprised by the announcement; internal expectations were that the number of B-1s ordered would be reduced to around 150. Congressman Robert Dornan (R-CA) claimed, "They're breaking out the vodka and caviar in Moscow." In contrast, it appears the Soviets were more concerned by large numbers of ALCMs representing a much greater threat than a smaller number of B-1s. Soviet news agency TASS commented that "the implementation of these militaristic plans has seriously complicated efforts for the limitation of the strategic arms race." Western military leaders were generally happy with the decision. NATO commander Alexander Haig described the ALCM as an "attractive alternative" to the B-1. French General Georges Buis stated "The B-1 is a formidable weapon, but not terribly useful. For the price of one bomber, you can have 200 cruise missiles."

It was during this period that the Soviets started to assert themselves in several new theatres of action, in particular through Cuban proxies during the Angolan Civil War starting in 1975 and the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan in 1979. U.S. strategy to this point had been focused on containing Communism and preparation for war in Europe. The new Soviet actions revealed that the military lacked capability outside these narrow confines.

The U.S. Department of Défense responded by accelerating its Rapid Deployment Forces concept but suffered from major problems with airlift and sealift capability. In order to slow an enemy invasion of other countries, air power was critical; however the key Iran-Afghanistan border was outside the range of the U.S. Navy's carrier-based attack aircraft, leaving this role to the U.S. Air Force. Although the B-52 had the range to support on-demand global missions, its long runway requirements limited the forward basing possibilities. During the 1980 presidential campaign, Ronald Reagan campaigned heavily on the platform that Carter was weak on defence, citing the cancellation of the B-1 program as an example, a theme he continued using into the 1980s. During this time Carter's defence secretary, Harold Brown, announced the stealth bomber project, apparently implying that this was the reason for the B-1 cancellation.

On taking office, Reagan was faced with the same decision as Carter before, whether to continue with the B-1 for the short term, or to wait for the development of the ATB, a much more advanced aircraft. Studies suggested that the existing B-52 fleet with ALCM would remain a credible threat until 1985. It was predicted that 75% of the B-52 force would survive to attack its targets. After 1985, the introduction of the SA-10 missile, the MiG-31 interceptor and the first Soviet Airborne

Early Warning and Control (AWACS) systems would make the B-52 increasingly vulnerable. During 1981, funds were allocated to a new study for a bomber for the 1990s time-frame which led to developing the Long-Range Combat Aircraft (LRCA) project. The LRCA evaluated the B-1, F-111, and ATB as possible solutions; an emphasis was placed on multi-role capabilities, as opposed to purely strategic operations.

In 1981, it was believed the B-1 could be in operation before the ATB, covering the transitional period between the B-52's increasing vulnerability and the ATB's introduction. Reagan decided the best solution was to procure both the B-1 and ATB and on 2 October 1981 he announced that 100 B-1s were to be ordered to fill the LRCA role.

In January 1982, the U.S. Air Force awarded two contracts to Rockwell worth a combined $2.2 billion for the development and production of 100 new B-1 bombers. Numerous changes were made to the design to make it better suited to the now expected missions, resulting in the new B-1B. These changes included a reduction in maximum speed, which allowed the variable-aspect intake ramps to be replaced by simpler fixed geometry intake ramps in the newer design. This reduced the B-1B's radar signature or radar cross-section; this reduction was seen as a good trade off for the speed decrease. High subsonic speeds at low altitude became a focus area for the revised design and low-level speeds were increased from about Mach 0.85 to 0.92. The B-1B has a maximum speed of Mach 1.25 at higher altitudes.

The B-1B's maximum take-off weight was increased to 216,000 kg from the B-1A's 179,000 kg. The weight increase was to allow for take-off with a full internal fuel load and for external weapons to be carried. Rockwell engineers were able to reinforce critical areas and lighten non-critical areas of the airframe, so the increase in empty weight was minimal. To deal with the introduction of the MiG-31 equipped with the new Zaslon radar system, and other aircraft with look-down

capability (which reduced the B-1s low-flying advantage), the B-1B's electronic warfare suite was significantly upgraded.

Opposition to the plan was widespread within Congress. Critics pointed out that many of the original problems remained in both areas of performance and expense. In particular it seemed the B-52 fitted with electronics similar to the B-1B would be equally able to avoid interception, as the speed advantage of the B-1 was now minimal. It also appeared that the "interim" time frame served by the B-1B would be less than a decade, being rendered obsolete shortly after the introduction of a much more capable ATB design. The primary argument in favour of the B-1 was its large conventional weapon payload, and that its take-off performance allowed it to operate with a credible bomb load from a much wider variety of airfields. The USAF spread production subcontracts across many congressional districts, making the aircraft more popular on Capitol Hill.

B-1A #1 was disassembled and used for radar testing at the Rome Air Development Centre at the former Griffiss Air Force Base, New York. B-1As #2 and #4 were then modified to include B-1B systems. The first B-1B was completed and began flight testing in March 1983. The first production B-1B was rolled out on 4 September 1984 and first flew on 18 October 1984. The 100th and final B-1B was delivered on 2 May 1988; before the last B-1B was delivered, the USAF had determined that the aircraft was vulnerable to Soviet air defences.

The B-1 has a blended wing body configuration, with variable-sweep wing, four turbofan engines, triangular fin control surfaces and cruciform tail. The wings can sweep from 15 degrees to 67.5 degrees (full forward to full sweep). Forward-swept wing settings are used for take-off, landings and high-altitude maximum cruise. Aft-swept wing settings are used in high subsonic and supersonic flight. The B-1's variable-sweep wings and thrust-to-weight ratio provide it with improved take-off performance, allowing it to use shorter runways than previous bombers. The length of the aircraft presented a flexing problem due to air turbulence at low altitude. To alleviate this, Rockwell included small triangular fin control surfaces or vanes near the nose on the B-1. The B-1's Structural Mode Control System rotates the vanes automatically to counteract turbulence and smooth out the ride.

Unlike the B-1A, the B-1B cannot reach Mach 2+ speeds; its maximum speed is Mach 1.25 (about 1,530 km/h at altitude), but its low-level speed increased to Mach 0.92 (1,130 km/h). The speed of the current version of the aircraft is limited by the need to avoid damage to its structure and air intakes. To help lower its radar cross section (RCS), the B-1B uses serpentine air intake ducts and fixed intake ramps, which limit its speed compared to the B-1A. Vanes in the intake ducts serve to deflect and shield radar emissions from the highly reflective engine compressor blades. The B-1A's engine was modified slightly to produce the GE F101-102 for the B-1B, with an emphasis on durability, and increased efficiency. The nose gear cover door has controls for he

auxiliary power units (APUs), which allow for quick starts of the APUs upon order to scramble. That small shape hanging below the nose area is the Sniper XR pod.

In late 1990, engine fires in two Lancers led to a grounding of the fleet. The cause was traced back to problems in the first-stage fan and the aircraft were placed on "limited alert"; in other words, they were grounded unless a nuclear war broke out. Following inspections and repairs they were returned to duty beginning on 6 February 1991. By 1991, the B-1 had a fledgling conventional capability, forty of them able to drop the 500-pound (230 kg) Mk-82 General Purpose (GP) bomb, although mostly from low altitude. Despite being cleared for this role, the problems with the engines prevented their use in Operation Desert Storm during the Gulf War. B-1s were primarily reserved for strategic nuclear strike missions at this time, providing the role of airborne nuclear deterrent against the Soviet Union. The B-52 was more suited to the role of conventional warfare and it was used by coalition forces instead.

Originally designed strictly for nuclear war, the B-1's development as an effective conventional bomber was delayed. The collapse of the Soviet Union had brought the B-1's nuclear role into question, leading to President George H. W. Bush ordering a $3 billion conventional refit. After the inactivation of Strategic Air Command (SAC) and the establishment of the Air Combat Command (ACC) in 1992, the B-1 developed a greater conventional weapons capability. Part of this development was the start-up of the U.S. Air Force Weapons School B-1 Division. In 1994, two additional B-1 bomb wings were also created in the Air National Guard, with former fighter wings in the Kansas Air National Guard and the Georgia Air National Guard converting to the aircraft. By the mid-1990s, the B-1 could employ GP weapons as well as various CBUs. By the end of the 1990s, with the advent of the "Block D" upgrade, the B-1 boasted a full array of guided and unguided munitions.

The B-1B no longer carries nuclear weapons, its nuclear capability was disabled by 1995 with the removal of nuclear arming and fuzing hardware. Under provisions of the New START treaty with Russia, further conversions were performed. These included modification of aircraft hardpoints to prevent nuclear weapon pylons from being attached, removal of weapons bay wiring bundles for arming nuclear weapons, and destruction of nuclear weapon pylons. The conversion process was completed in 2011, and Russian officials inspect the aircraft every year to verify compliance.

The B-1 was first used in combat in support of operations in Iraq during Operation Desert Fox in December 1998, employing unguided GP weapons. B-1s have been subsequently used in Kosovo and, most notably, in Afghanistan and the 2003 invasion of Iraq. The B-1's role in Kosoco has been criticized as the aircraft was not used until after enemy defences had been suppressed by aircraft like the older B-52 it was intended to replace. At the height of the Iraq War, a B-1 was

continuously kept airborne to provide rapid precision bombardment upon important targets as intelligence identified them.

In November 1993, three B-1Bs set a long distance record for the aircraft, which demonstrated its ability to conduct extended mission lengths to strike anywhere in the world and return to base without any stops.

Of the 100 B-1Bs built, 93 remained in 2000 after losses in accidents.

With upgrades to keep the B-1 viable, the Air Force may keep it in service until approximately 2038 but despite upgrades, it has repair and cost issues, every flight hour needs 48.4 hours of maintenance. The fuel, repairs and other needs for a 12-hour mission cost $720,000 as of 2010. The $63,000 cost per flight hour is, however, less than the $72,000 for the B-52 and the $135,000 of the B-2.

A crusty old Army Sergeant Major found himself at a gala event hosted by a local liberal arts college. There was no shortage of extremely young idealistic ladies in attendance, one of whom approached the Sergeant Major for conversation. "Excuse me, Sergeant Major, but you seem to be a very serious man. Is something bothering you?" "Negative, ma'am. Just serious by nature." The young lady looked at his awards and decorations and said, "It looks like you have seen a lot of action" "Yes, ma'am, a lot of action." The young lady, tiring of trying to start up a conversation, said, "You know, you should lighten up. Relax and enjoy yourself." The Sergeant Major just stared at her in his serious manner. Finally the young lady said, "You know, I hope you don't take this the wrong way, but when is the last time you had sex? "1955, ma'am" "Well, there you are. No wonder you're so serious. You really need to chill out! I mean, no sex since 1955" She took his hand and led him to a private room where she proceeded to "relax" him. Afterwards, panting for breath, she leaned against his bare chest and said, "Wow, you sure didn't forget much since 1955." The Sergeant Major said, after glancing at his watch, "I hope not; it's only 2130 now."

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DVA Issues

New Veteran Card on the way.

Earlier this year, a new look Veteran Card was launched as a part of the Australian Defence Veterans' Covenant. The Covenant provides opportunities for people to show their recognition and support to veterans and their families and also encourages businesses, organisations and community groups across Australia to offer benefits to Veteran Card holders.

Eligible veterans who registered with DVA after February this year have already received their Veteran Card and by the end of 2019 all existing card holders will receive theirs too. The new card will be automatically issued to all current eligible veterans, war widows and dependants via mail. The new card will replace existing DVA health cards (White, Gold and Orange) and there will be no change to how Veteran Card holders access DVA-funded health services and benefits.

It is important that existing DVA health card holders (White, Gold and Orange) make sure their contact details are up to date with DVA. You are able to check these details online via MyService or by calling DVA on 1800 555 254.

You can see more information HERE.

Veteran Health Checks for all former ADF members.

Staying on top of your health can be a challenge, especially when schedules are jam-packed and it seems like there are a heap of other priorities to attend to. You might notice that you're not feeling as fit as you used to be, haven't been getting much sleep or have a lot on your mind.

Veteran Health Check

Sometimes we can get back on track on our own after a small set-back, while at other times we may need extra assistance from a health professional, starting with a general practitioner. To support you after you transition from the Australian Defence Force

(ADF) to civilian life, one-off Veteran Health Checks are available for all former members of both the permanent and reserve forces. They are accessible at any time.

You can access these even if you are not a DVA client, using your Medicare card (there is a Medicare rebate for this). Additionally, if you leave the ADF from 1 July 2019, you can gain access to fully-funded Veteran Health Checks each year for five years after transition. These are only accessible with a DVA Veteran Card.

Find out more about Veteran Health Check eligibility and see the frequently asked questions on the DVA web site HERE.

Changes to Partner Service Pension Eligibility.

A Service Pension provides regular income for people with limited means and is subject to the income and assets test. Partner Service Pension (PSP) is the payment made to eligible partners, former partners and widows/widowers of veterans.

Subject to the passage of legislation, from 20 September, 2019, changes to eligibility requirements removes the inequity between married and de-facto partners by extending the PSP for twelve months post-separation to all former partners, including former de-facto partners.

This change also allows former married and de-facto partners to remain on PSP after th e12 month period where there are special domestic circumstances, such as domestic violence. Former partners can continue to receive PSP until they enter into a new relationship.

Click HERE for further information.

Keeping a healthy heart.

It may be stating the obvious but doing all you can to keep your heart healthy should be one of your highest priorities. Generally, you'll only get one heart to keep you going. DVA's Heart Health program helps you to increase your physical health and wellbeing through practical exercise, nutrition and lifestyle management support.

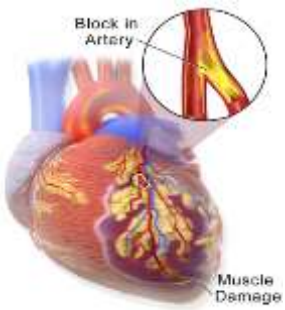
It runs for 52 weeks and includes two physical activity sessions each week, tailored to meet your needs. Twelve health educational seminars cover topics like setting healthy goals, nutrition and healthy eating, physical activity, chronic conditions, quitting smoking, responsible alcohol consumption, back care, stress management and maintaining a healthy heart.

The Heart Health program is delivered in small group formats. The group meets at a designated gym for weekly activity sessions and educational seminars. Experienced exercise and health professionals provide the participants with a structured and supervised fitness training schedule. An individual program is available via correspondence to those eligible veterans living in rural and remote areas.

The recent introduction of Medicare-funded GP heart health checks is a good reason to speak with your doctor about the risk factors, the current state of your heart health and the steps you can take to improve it. Acting on this will help you avoid becoming a statistic.

The statistics are alarming:

- 51 Australians die as a result of heart disease each day
- 57,000 Australians will have a heart attack each year
- Around 30 per cent of heart attacks are repeat events
- 1.4 million Australians aged 45–74 years are at high risk of having a heart attack or stroke
- 7 in 10 adult Australians have at least one risk factor for heart, stroke or blood vessel disease



Heart Attack

Heart disease has several risk factors. Some you can't do anything about, including growing older, being male (although female risks rise after menopause), ethnicity, and family history, however, you can influence a few changeable risk factors, even by making just the smallest effort:

- Smoking – if you smoke, you should stop for the sake of your heart and your health in general
- High cholesterol – the body needs cholesterol to be healthy, but an imbalance between the good (HDL) and bad (LDL) cholesterol can lead to heart attack or stroke
- Diabetes – can lead to a variety of health concerns including heart attack and stroke. So make sure you manage it properly, or in the case of Type 2 diabetes, avoid developing it in the first place.
- Inactivity – being inactive reduces your heart's strength
- Overweight – being overweight or obese can cause lots of stress on the body including your heart
- Unhealthy diet
- Depression and anxiety – isolating yourself from family and friends due to depression or anxiety increases the risk.

Most of the risk factors can be reduced by focusing on two simple things, be more active and eat healthy food! You don't need to start training for a marathon or swimming the English Channel. Simply looking for opportunities to increase your general activity at an appropriate level and by choosing healthy food options will go a long way to maintaining a healthy heart.

While many health professionals can assist with advice for you, the best place to start will be a conversation with your GP.

The DVA-funded Heart Health Program has been helping eligible veterans to improve their heart health and general fitness for 19 years. You can get more information from providers Corporate

Health Management on 1300 246 262, email hearthealth@chm.com.au or read about the DVA Heart Health Programme and Veterans Heart Health online.

Mental wellness for Veterans' Health Week.

Veterans' Health Week (VHW) 2019 will be held from 26 October to 3 November and planning is already underway. The purpose of VHW is to encourage current and former ADF personnel and their families to find out more about how to improve and maintain their health and wellbeing. This information includes ways to actively participate in veteran community programs and the resources available that promote good health and wellbeing.

Each year, VHW promotes one of four themes. Along with this year's theme of mental wellness, the themes are:

- social inclusion,
- physical activity and
- nutrition.

Australian Government
Department of Veterans' Affairs
VETERANS' HEALTH WEEK

DVA will once again support ex-service organisations and community groups across the country to deliver a range of VHW events to highlight the importance of improving and maintaining good mental health.

Events will help veterans and current serving Australian Defence Force members and their families to recognise the signs of mental illness – and to get involved, to take action and increase their knowledge of available services and programs to maintain good mental health. Mental wellness is essential for an individual's overall health and wellbeing, which in turn, strongly influences our physical health and social connectedness with family, friends and our community.

VHW 2018 was a great success with around 10,000 people attending 130 events across Australia. The theme for 2018 was nutrition and its importance to our health and wellbeing.

VHW 2018 was also enjoyed by families and friends across a variety of events. These included talks by dietitians and nutritionists, cooking classes, supermarket tours and visits to community gardens and farmers' markets. There was strong participation from Defence and ex-service organisation groups, and events were held on weekends to encourage family participation.
DVA encouraged event organisers to use the week as an opportunity to reach out to people who often miss out on the benefits of engaging with their local veteran and ex-service community groups.

Men's Health Peer Education and ex-service organisation volunteers were central to the planning and implementation of many events. Volunteers worked in partnership with DVA personnel throughout 2018 to engage with service providers, community organisations and former and current serving ADF personnel.

For more information on VHW, or to start planning your event for 2019, contact DVA on 1800 555 254 or visit the VHW page of the DVA website (dva.gov.au/vhw).

What is Veterans Supplement?

Following the pension reform changes made in September 2009, Veterans Supplement is a fortnightly amount paid to some veterans, some war widow/ers and orphans to reduce their out of pocket expenses when paying the maximum concessional pharmaceutical co-payment amount. It is payable to you if you do not receive an income support payment from DVA or Centrelink or if you are not eligible for pension supplement and you:

- receive a disability pension from DVA;
- are under qualifying age and receive war widows(er)'s pension;
- receive an orphans pension from DVA; or
- have a DVA Gold card, White Card or Orange Card.

If you are paid any type of income support from DVA or Centrelink, you are not eligible for Veterans Supplement, as you receive an equivalent payment with your income support payment. You are also not eligible for the supplement if you receive the Military Rehabilitation and Compensation Act 2004 (MRCA) supplement as this is also an equivalent payment.

For more information about pension supplement, refer to DVA Factsheet HERE.

How much is veterans supplement?

The fortnightly rate of Veterans Supplement is:

- $6.20 – Low rate
- $12.40 – High rate.

Which rate of Veterans Supplement will I receive?

Your situation	Veterans supplement rate
Gold Card holder receiving: special rate; extreme disablement adjustment; or disability pension increased by a Specific Disability Amount items 1–8 and do not receive an income support payment from DVA or Centrelink	Veterans supplement high rate if you are under qualifying age. Veterans supplement low rate if you have reached qualifying age.
War widow not receiving Income Support Supplement and under qualifying age	Veterans supplement low rate.

Your situation	Veterans supplement rate
Gold, White and Orange Card holders with no income support payment from either DVA or Centrelink	Veterans supplement low rate.
Receiving DVA Orphans Pension	Veterans supplement low rate.

What if I go overseas?

If you are travelling outside Australia temporarily, your usual rate of Veterans Supplement may be payable for 26 weeks after departure from Australia. If you remain outside Australia for longer than 26 weeks your veterans supplement is not payable.

How do I apply for Veterans Supplement?

Your veterans supplement is determined automatically. You do not need to apply for it separately.

Obligations

You will be required to tell us within 14 days (28 days if you live overseas or receive remote area allowance) of changes to your circumstances that might affect the rate of supplement you receive or your eligibility to receive that supplement. These obligations apply equally to trustees.

In relation to your travelling overseas, you would need to tell us within 14 days (28 days if you receive remote area allowance) of your departure, even if it's only for a short time.

I talked to a homeless man this morning and asked him how he ended up this way. He said, "Up until last week, I still had it all. I had plenty to eat, my clothes were washed and pressed, I had a roof over my head, I had TV and Internet, and I went to the gym, the pool, and the library. I was working on my MBA on-line. I had no bills and no debt. I even had full medical coverage." I felt sorry for him, so I asked, "What happened? Drugs? Alcohol? Divorce?" "Oh no, nothing like that," he said. "No, no.... I was paroled."

Living Independently

(With a little practical help)

Veterans' Home Care (VHC) is designed to assist eligible DVA clients who need a small amount of practical help to continue living independently in their own home. VHC services can be tailored and provided as short-term or as ongoing support. Services can also be increased for a short time after surgery or a stay in hospital to assist with your recovery. Services offered under VHC include:

- Domestic assistance
- Personal care
- Safety-related home and garden maintenance
- Respite care

PERSONAL CARE.
Personal care includes assistance with non-medical daily self-care tasks if the client can't do it themselves. Services may include assistance with:

- showering,
- bathing,
- toileting
- dressing,
- grooming
- eating
- application of non-medicated skin care creams and lotions
- putting on compression stockings, protective bandaging, splints and calipers
- getting in and out of bed
- moving about the house.

DOMESTIC ASSISTANCE.
Domestic assistance provides support with basic household tasks, such as:

- internal house cleaning like dishwashing, vacuuming and mopping
- bed making and linen changing
- clothes washing and/or ironing
- some assistance with meal preparation (but not total preparation of meals)
- bill paying
- unaccompanied shopping (the service provider goes shopping on your behalf).

Domestic assistance is not intended to replace tasks the client is capable of doing. That's because doing domestic activities yourself can have a beneficial health effect, even for the frail and very elderly.

SAFETY RELATED HOME AND GARDEN MAINTENANCE.
To keep a DVA client's home safe and habitable, VHC can provide minor maintenance or repair work, which may be carried out by a handyman, for example:

- replacing light bulbs
- changing batteries in smoke/security alarms
- cleaning of gutters
- internal and external window cleaning
- cleaning ceiling and exhaust fans, air-conditioning and split-system units.

Safety-related home and garden maintenance does not include major repairs or services requiring a qualified tradesperson, such as tree-lopping or tree felling/removal. Garden tasks such as lawn mowing and pruning can be done if a safety hazard exists. Routine, cosmetic gardening such as weeding, maintaining flower beds, regular lawn mowing, or pruning of roses are not available under this service.

RESPITE CARE
VHC also assists eligible carers with respite services, in recognition of the vital role they play in the veteran and defence community. These include:

- In-home respite care
- Residential respite care
- Emergency short-term home relief

DVA offers respite care to:

- carers of a Gold or White Card holder
- Gold or White Card holders who are carers
- Gold or White Card holders who are self-carers (for residential respite only).

IN-HOME RESPITE CARE.
In-home respite is available for eligible DVA clients who are:

- being cared for, and their carer needs a break from the caring role; or
- caring for someone, and they need a break from the caring role.

Self-carers are not eligible for in-home respite. In-home respite allows a carer to have a break while a substitute carer comes into the home to take over the caring role. In-home respite can be for regular visits or one-off situations. It gives the carer the opportunity to attend to everyday activities and supports carers who have other work/ education commitments, or are re entering the workforce.

RESIDENTIAL RESPITE CARE
Residential respite care provides short-term care, usually in an Australian Government funded aged-care facility. It can be used if a DVA client's carer needs a break, or if a client is a self-carer.

EMERGENCY SHORT TERM HOME RELIEF (ESTHR)
This service will help when an eligible DVA client's carer is unexpectedly unable to provide care, and general community services are not available. If the only alternatives are admission to hospital or being left without the necessary care, DVA can provide care in the client's home until general community services are arranged, or the usual carer is able to resume the caring role.

ACCESS AND ELIGIBILITY
To receive VHC services, you need to have a Gold Card or White Card and be assessed by a VHC Assessment Agency. VHC services are provided based on eligibility and need. There are

no age requirements for this program. The client can contact the VHC Assessment Agency directly themselves or another person can contact the Agency with the client's consent, such as a GP, hospital discharge planner, family members, carers and friends. VHC Assessment Agencies generally assess a client's needs over the phone in the first instance and approves services if appropriate. The VHC Assessment Agency, in consultation with the client, will develop a VHC Care Plan. Services will normally start within two weeks once the VHC Care Plan is approved but this does depend on the availability of service providers in your area, particularly if you live in a rural or remote area. To access VHC services call a VHC Assessment Agency via 1300 550 450.

FOR MORE INFORMATION
Visit the DVA website HERE or freecall DVA on 1800 555 254 for more information.

Question: Why are retirees so slow to clean out the basement, attic or garage?
Answer: They know that as soon as they do, one of their adult kids will want to store stuff there.

DVA.

For some time now DVA has been getting a flogging. This, in our opinion, is un-necessary and quite unfair. We've had considerable dealings with DVA over the years and found them very caring, very understanding and an organisation with the welfare of the Veteran top of mind. For reasons best known to themselves, the Press is always too eager to kick them whenever they can, they trot out some poor bloke who is doing it tough and blame his misfortune on DVA when a little bit of investigation would show that there are quite a number of factors involved in the poor bloke or blokette's predicament. We've said it many times before and it is as true as the day is long, DVA can only offer relief as per what is written in their charter and that is set by the Government.

DVA employees (there are 1,723 of them) don't wake up in the morning and say to themselves, I wonder who we can knock back today, if you've got a query or a problem and they have the authority to help - they will.

Here are some stats:

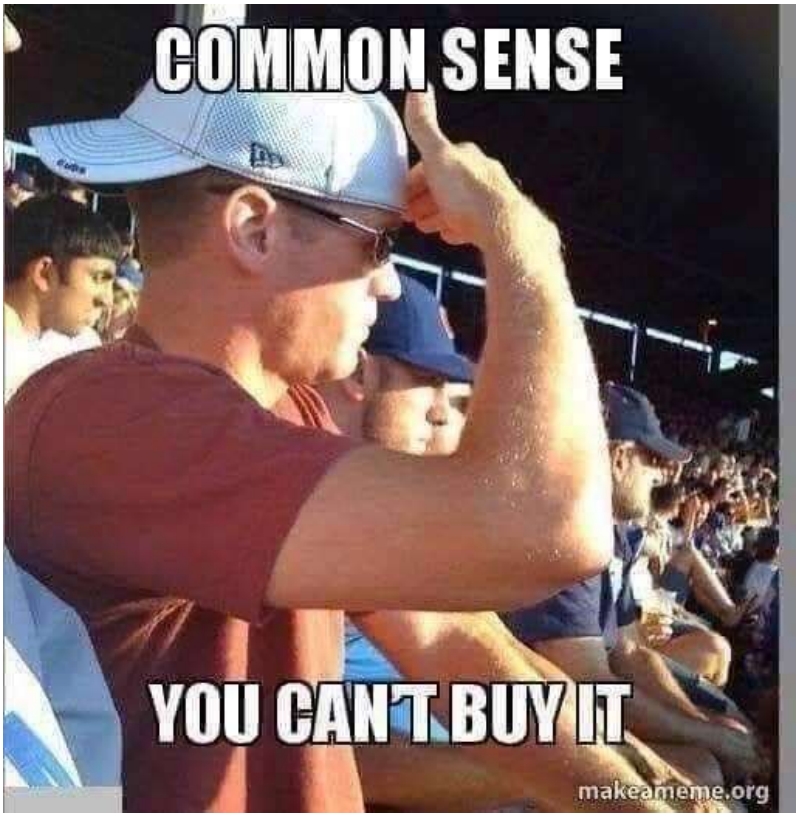
1. At the end of June 2019, DVA was looking after 207,160 people, that number is expected to rise to 250,000 by 2030. Of that 207,160, 139,720 were male and 67,440 were female.
2. The current number by age group is:

<60	60 - 69	70 - 79	80 - 89	90>
68,000	29,389	46,861	26,286	36,622

3. The number of Gold cards as at end of June 2019 was 122,536 (66,745 males, 55,791 females) and there were 84,624 (72,975 males, 11,649 females) on White cards.
4. DVA has an annual budget of $11,105,806,000.

In future, we've decided to devote a page in the RAM to DVA issues to show the services and assistance that are available. We're sure there are people out there who are really hurting but don't know where or how to ask for help, we're also sure there are people whose pride won't allow them to ask - we must change both of those facts.

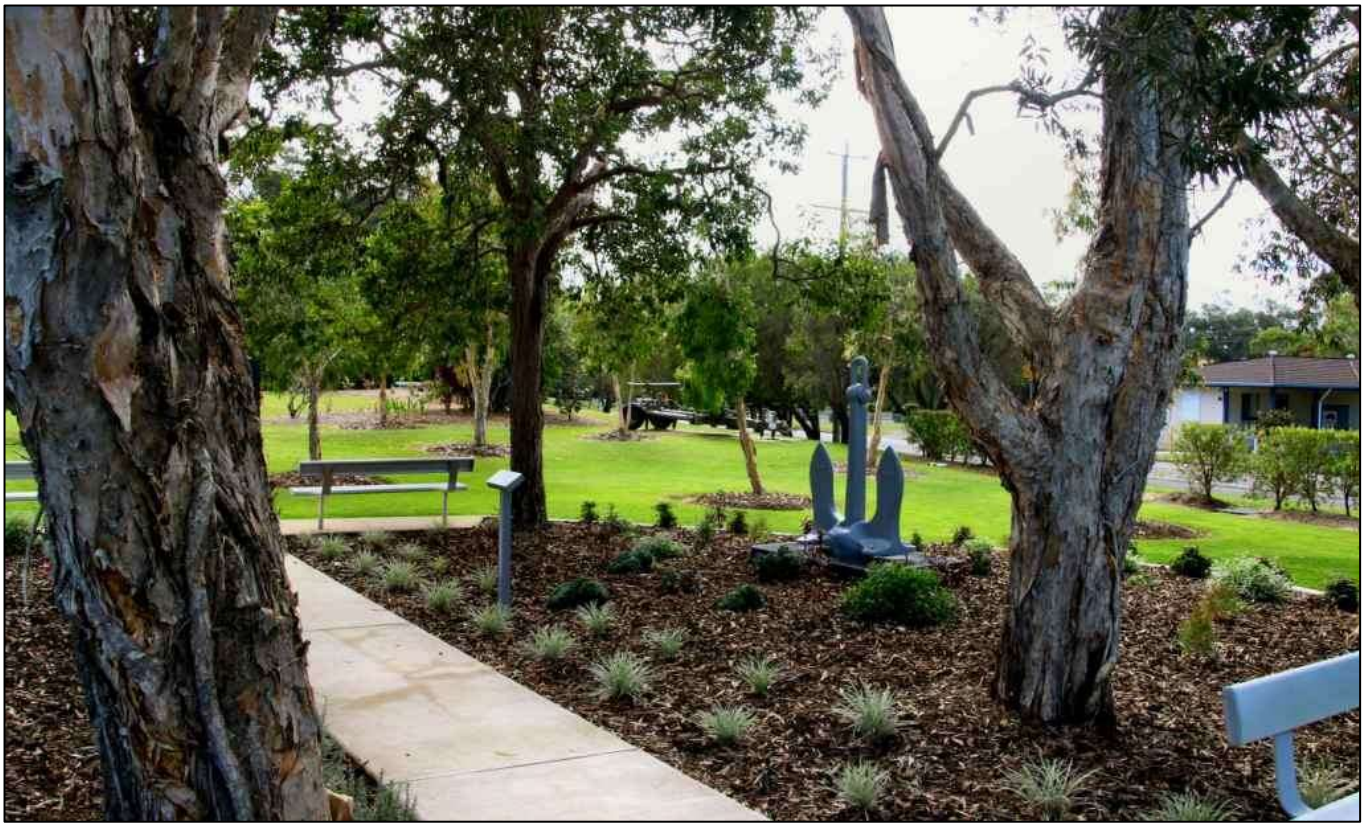
Let's hope we can!



While the Association does not necessarily agree or disagree with everything on this page, we do respect the right of everyone to have their say.

Caloundra RSL need our help!

A decade of hard work establishing the Caloundra RSL memorial garden will soon be all for nothing. The Bob Mclnnes Memorial Garden was renamed earlier this year in honour of the late veteran and RSL sub-branch club president. It is home to many monuments including the restored Iroquois A4-1022 and was soon to be home to a memorial for indigenous soldiers. But that all hangs in the balance of a Sunshine Coast Council decision to cut the main memorial garden by about one third to make way for a four-lane road, bike lane and footpath.



RSL secretary Heather Christie said the council planned to take 7.5rn from their fence line on Third Ave for the project, hoping to alleviate congestion on the Caloundra Rd and Nicklin Way roundabout. “They said they had eight options and they’ve chosen the one where they’re destroying a memorial,” Ms Christie said. “It makes me disappointed that they don’t respect what we’ve done for our departed and living veterans.” RSL sub-branch president George Harris said the flag pole, grey masonry walls, six manicured garden beds and trees would be removed. “It’s a lack of respect for what it is a memorial garden,’ he said. Sub- branch committee member Cathy

Stamp said the council didn't recognise what the garden meant to them. "I won't let them take it, even if I have to chain myself to a tree,"

Ms Christie said the RSL's plans to establish more pavilions, gardens and memorials would have to be put on hold until the council provided them a time frame for the project "If they don't give us a dead line as to when it's going to happen we're still going to add to our garden, so we're putting money into something that's going to be stolen off us, so virtually we have to put the brakes on, and how long is that going to take?" Ms Christie said. She said the resuming of the land was not only harmful to the garden. but Anzac Day and similar ceremonies might have to be cancelled. She said they were in the process off forming a "Save the Bob Mclnnes Memorial Garden" committee. Mr Harris had no doubt the 1400 sub-branch members would be on their side. "The biggest thing is that Bob had a huge part to play from the very beginning and Judy (his wife) felt so privileged when we changed the name that she felt comfortable to lay his ashes here."

We can't let that happen, the RSL has launched a petition in a bid to stop it, they need our support. If you would like to help, please go HERE and sign their petition.

Climate Change (again).

Recently Australia experienced a bunch of (mostly) young people who took a day off, marched through the streets protesting against climate change and made a complete nuisance of themselves... We just wonder how many really believed in what they were there for or was it just for "a bit of fun." We suggest in a majority of cases it was the latter.

Although it was a while ago now, we can remember our youth, it was a time of rebellion, it was a time to buck authority, a time to try new and dangerous things, we all did it, we're all hard-wired to do it and long may it be so.

We all did things without thinking of the consequences, we hung onto buses while riding our bikes, we piled a dozen people into a car and headed for the beach, we leapt off cliffs into deep water, we tossed rocks onto someone's roof, we blew up letter boxes with crackers, all silly things and all things that we wouldn't dare or even think of doing after we had a few years on. In nearly all instances it was a case of follow the leader, someone would suggest something then we all did it. It's called peer pressure. In the recent protest the leaders were the left leaning teachers egged on by the left leaning press, mainly the ABC. We reckon if we were their age, we'd probably be in it too.

We wouldn't mind betting though, that a vast majority of the kids that took part in the protest wouldn't give it a minute's thought after they had a few years under their belts. In a lot of cases the old NIMBY effect was very evident, I'm alright but I want you to change. My SUV, my phone, my air-conditioned house – they are alright, you've got to change yours.

Have a look at THIS.

We're also wondering what the thinking is behind all this as anything Australia does will not make the slightest difference to the way the world is changing. It's a bit like King Canute, he couldn't stop the tide, neither can we affect the change in climate. Like the tide, the climate has been changing since time immemorial and until God calls time, it will continue to so do.

Have a look at THIS and THIS too.

And don't believe all that you hear about CO_2 being the cause of it all – see HERE

Denis (Ned) Kelly.

David Graham advises that Ned Kelly passed away recently. He grew up in Australia and joined the Air Force aged 19. He flew operations as a wireless operator/air gunner with 467 Squadron during WW2.

Returning from his 30th and final bombing mission over France in July 1944, a German night fighter attacked, the rear gunner was killed, the pilot also died. Dennis Kelly and the others had to bail out or die. His is a remarkable story of survival and evaded capture with assistance of the French resistance. He was the recipient of the French Legion of Honour.

Click HERE to read an interview taken with Denis some years ago and click the pic below to watch a video done by the ABC showing Denis on return to France to visit some of the places in which he spent time during WW2 and to say "Thank you!"..

Electric cars are simply a carbon con.

The carbon efficiency of electric vehicles has been greatly exaggerated and Labor's pre-election pitch of radical energy reforms can finally be exposed as a flurry of multi-billion-dollar bullets narrowly missing the arteries of Australian industries.

Bill Shorten was quick to blame his election defeat on the public being too stupid. Too easily manipulated by the "corporate leviathans," as he put it. This writer would pose that Australians were far smarter than Mr Shorten gave them credit for. And those voters abandoned him after he failed repeatedly to give coherent economic projections on his policies. "This issue about 'give us one number' … I don't think that's possible to do," he said during the first leaders' debate.

We now know that it was indeed possible to provide those numbers. It is more likely Labor knew the numbers and simply lied to avoid the deathblow their existence would have provided. Engineering firm ABMARC released a report which analysed the cost of Mr Shorten's bid to artificially influence motoring industries to ensure half of all new car sales would be electric by 2030 and despite Labor insisting the cost could not be calculated, ABMARC did the maths. The policy would have cost Australians up to $7 billion in infrastructure alone, including "switchboards, transformers and poles and wires".

In Norway, which was sold as a case study for the policy, the cost of cars has exploded due to the totalitarian tax measures getting people to use electric vehicles. They have reached Mr Shorten's target but the Norwegian budget loses around $500 million a year due to subsidies.

Taxes, which are being used to make up the difference and artificially reduce the cost of electric vehicles, have also played a role in fuel costing $3 a litre and, as The Australian's Geoff Chambers pointed out last week, the cost of a "Hyundai i30 in the Scandinavian country is $54,204 compared with about $20,000 in Australia".

Welcome to the future. No combustion engine vehicles are being sold simply because they are now too expensive. I expect Norwegians will be doing plenty of walking. It should also be noted that the transition was only possible because Norway amassed a $1.4 trillion sovereign wealth fund - the largest in the world - by exporting oil and gas to countries all over the world. So green. So brave. Granted, Australia should have done the same thing with its coal money, but only a fool would argue Norway is a comparable economy to hold up as a utopia. The country barely has more people than Sydney.

The cost of electric vehicles would not be as bad if Australians were getting what they paid for, a new mode of transport which produces less carbon emissions than their combustion-engine counterparts. Unfortunately, the ABMARC report found that in Australia's case, electric vehicles may end up producing more CO2 than traditional vehicles. So why would these vehicles of the future produce more C02 than their makers and Labor, originally told us? Well, it depends which country the vehicles were tested in. Take the great German company Volkswagen. It claims their

new e-Golf only creates 119g CO2/km. Now that is slightly better than an entry-level Hyundai Getz which produces 130 g/km, albeit at a significantly greater cost. But even those figures are deceitful. In Germany, 38 per cent of the energy grid is derived from the burning of coal and it is bolstered by nuclear. Most of what remains is the country's 35 per cent renewable energy split.

In Australia, 84 per cent of our energy comes from fossil fuels and roughly 15.7 from renewable sources. Plugging the e-Golf into an Australian socket would mean the disappearance of that 11 g/km advantage. Turns out drivers of the mighty Getz are far more awake than you first thought. It should be illegal for companies like Volkswagen to use universal CO2 per kilometre figures that ignore the carbon footprint reality. It is simply lying and those lies are being used by leftists to push for policy reforms. This is evidenced by the claim on VW's website: "If electricity for driving during the use phase is obtained exclusively from renewable sources" the average CO2/km "will drop to just 2 g". If indeed.

A pity that economy does not exist. And can you imagine the strain on the energy grid if everyone drove these planet-saving cars? In a country like Australia, which is already struggling with baseload power shortages, I imagine it would mean burning more coal to meet the new demand. Think about that every time an activist on Twitter uses electricity to fire off a Tweet about shutting down coal-fired power plants. Blissfully unaware they create the very demand they despise. Consumers also have no way of knowing whether Volkswagen is directly lying about carbon capabilities of vehicles, as the company did in 2015. One former executive is currently rotting in jail over the scam to evade pollution limits on nearly 600,000 diesel vehicles. So green. So woke.

What most well-intentioned advocates of EVs fail to grasp is that their prized vehicles are better at signalling the virtue of their owners than saving the planet. I think I'll stick to my old Hyundai Getz for now.

If you want renewable energy, get ready to dig.

THE WALL STREET JOURNAL.

Trevor Rigby sent us this.

People dream of powering society entirely with wind and solar farms combined with massive batteries. Realizing this dream would require the biggest expansion in mining the world has seen and would produce huge quantities of waste.

"Renewable energy" is a misnomer. Wind and solar machines and batteries are built from non-renewable materials. And

they wear out. Old equipment must be decommissioned, generating millions of tons of waste. The International Renewable Energy Agency calculates that solar goals for 2050 consistent with the Paris Accords will result in old-panel disposal constituting more than double the tonnage of all today's global plastic waste. Consider some other sobering numbers:

- A single electric-car battery weighs about 500 kg. Fabricating one requires digging up, moving and processing more than 250,000 kg of raw materials somewhere on the planet. The alternative? Use gasoline and extract one-tenth as much total tonnage to deliver the same number of vehicle-miles over the battery's seven-year life.
- When electricity comes from wind or solar machines, every unit of energy produced, or mile travelled, requires far more materials and land than fossil fuels. That physical reality is literally visible: A wind or solar farm stretching to the horizon can be replaced by a handful of gas-fired turbines, each no bigger than a tractor-trailer.
- Building one wind turbine requires 900 tons of steel, 2,500 tons of concrete and 45 tons of nonrecyclable plastic. Solar power requires even more cement, steel and glass-not to mention other metals. Global silver and indium mining will jump 250% and 1,200% respectively over the next couple of decades to provide the materials necessary to build the number of solar panels, the International Energy Agency forecasts.
- World demand for rare-earth elements-which aren't rare but are rarely mined in America-will rise 300% to 1,000% by 2050 to meet the Paris green goals. If electric vehicles replace conventional cars, demand for cobalt and lithium, will rise more than 20-fold. That doesn't count batteries to back up wind and solar grids.

Last year a Dutch government-sponsored study concluded that the Netherlands' green ambitions alone would consume a major share of global minerals. "Exponential growth in [global] renewable energy production capacity is not possible with present-day technologies and annual metal production," it concluded.

The demand for minerals likely won't be met by mines in Europe or the U.S. Instead, much of the mining will take place in nations with oppressive labour practices. The Democratic Republic of the Congo produces 70% of the world's raw cobalt, and China controls 90% of cobalt refining. The Sydney-based Institute for a Sustainable Future cautions that a global "gold" rush for minerals could take miners into "some remote wilderness areas [that] have maintained high biodiversity because they haven't yet been disturbed."

What's more, mining and fabrication require the consumption of hydrocarbons. Building enough wind turbines to supply half the world's electricity would require nearly two billion tons of coal to produce the concrete and steel, along with two billion barrels of oil to make the composite blades. More than 90% of the world's solar panels are built in Asia on coal-heavy electric grids.

Engineers joke about discovering "unobtanium," a magical energy-producing element that appears out of nowhere, requires no land, weighs nothing, and emits nothing.

Absent the realization of that impossible dream, hydrocarbons remain a far better alternative than today's green dreams.

If an airplane is bung but is still in one piece, don't leave it; ride the damn thing down.

Tony Smith writes:

I've been thinking about RADTECHITIS and decided that it was time that there was some sort of equaliser. So Here goes.

Telegraphasis Magnificus

The good lord in his wisdom,
To create peace upon this earth.
Made a list of occupations,
Their relevance and worth.

From the lowest to the highest,
From the meanest to the best.
A straight ascending order,
That has stood the acid test.

The wily politician,
Was bottom of that list.
The used car salesman followed,
He won't be sorely missed.

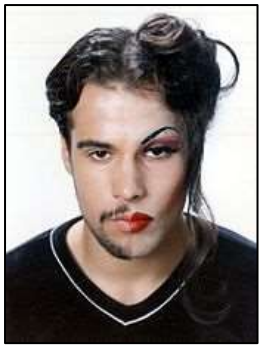
Air force people generally,
Were well up on that tree.
Though some musterings were higher,
Let's have a look and see.

The Radtechs and the Telstechs,
Were ALMOST at the top.
Followed closely by Telephonists,
And stalwart teleprinter ops.

But I'm sorry Lads and Lasses,
The name right up at the crest.
Was the single name TELEGRAPHIST,
Adjudged the very best.

Sexual Identity.

One of life's little conundrums these days is determining what sex you are. Seems it's just a matter of choice. Once upon a time it was very straight forward, people with long hair were girls, people with short hair were boys. Simple. Now, if you want, you can be a male on Monday, Wednesday, Friday and Sunday and a female on the other days. Damn handy if you're on a sinking ship, I'd be a female straight away, women and children first, get a spot on that life-boat. If you're a female at the footy and the girl's toilets are full, just change and pop into the men's. It's a shame this



selective sex identity didn't come in years ago, I can remember sharing a room at Richmond with 3 other blokes, one of whom snored terribly. I could have just tossed the overalls, bunged on a dress and popped down to the WRAAFery and moved in with the girl girls.

I can see lots of benefits here, if you're a bloke just change and you'll get a seat on a crowded bus, if you're a blokette and would like to have a beer with the boys after work, just pop on the RM Williams and you're in.

Wonder what's next?

Kel Davy.

We have quite a few ex-Raafies here in Rockhampton Qld. Mary Scully, ex-dental assistant is the Rockhampton and CQ Legacy admin officer where I've been volunteering for the past 2 years assisting veterans' families in this area, south to just past Gladstone, north halfway to Mackay and west as far as Sapphire west of Emerald. Since December 1016 I have been retired after 57 years working, 16 of that in RAAF as RAdtechA followed by 12 years as a contractor on the F-111 mods from 1992 until 2004 with HdH and Boeing and then 2 years as a Techwriter with Boeing on Wedgetail project.

In retirement I am also collecting unwanted mobility aids and restoring them for the needy here. My pet project is to develop a hybrid drive 4 wheel mobility scooter/quad bike style scooter for indoor use with electric motor and a 125cc motor and go cart wheels for on the beach and outdoors. To fund this, I have to sell off unwanted tools and goods as the pension is insufficient and the government won't assist with any grants for this project and advised me to find sponsors. No matter I intend to go ahead and it may eventually help other vets who need outdoor access without worries of flat batteries as I have a system to recharge them when outdoors. I hope to get some vets to assist as a means to help them cope with PDST and other problems by focusing on restoring mobility aids.

Maybe you could send out a message in RAM for any vets in Rockhampton area.

If you can help Kel, let us know and we'll put you in touch with Kel.

Globalisation

Ten or so years ago, Australia had five car manufacturers, Ford, GMH, Toyota, Nissan and Mitsubishi. Now we have none. All gone overseas and the reason given? Costs were too high. Funny in that the cars we are now importing (Malaysia etc) are no cheaper.

I remember back in 1968 living in Brisbane, when the 3 major cities back then were Sydney, Melbourne and Adelaide and Adelaide was the Industrial City. Adelaide - South Australia, was where you went to work in the Iron Ore Industry, or where you could get a job making railway tracks for B.H.P. You could get a job building ships, submarines, cars, washing machines, fridges, TV's, Hills hoists, Victa Lawn Mowers or make tyres at Bridgestone tyres.

The Lightburn Washing Machine Company even made a car called a Zeta. It was not much of a car, but at least it was Australian and we built it. I worked at Stanvac where we made our own Petrol, Diesel, Kerosene and Oil. We had Oil Rigs in Bass Straight, North West Shelf and the Timor Sea. We even had Australian owned Service Stations like (H.C. Sleigh) Golden Fleece and many of us young wanna-be mechanics back then worked as a driveway attendant. (Just like Stanley).

I remember catching a train from the city to Gawler and then on to Freeling, Hamley Bridge, Stockport, Riverton, up to Clare, Gladstone, Laura etc. And all these towns were bustling with activity, and on the weekends they were all open for business. Our shops were filled on every shelf with food and products all proudly made or grown, in Australia. Our fridge was full of Lamb Chops and Steaks because it was cheap as we were a huge Lamb and Beef growing Nation, and once a month Mum would make us all a delicacy! It was called a Sunday Roast Chicken.

I remember when we all had trade skills and high-quality tools that would last and last. But most of all we had Mates. We as Australians watched each other's backs even if we had not met yet, and we all said g'day to everyone with a smile. Our kids could go anywhere they liked on their bikes, just as long as they were home before dark. Australia was pretty safe back then. Yes, Australia was once a self-supporting nation that had it all. It had Farms that produced our dairy, fruit & vegies and meats etc, and Politicians back then were known as Statesmen and they were voted by the people, for the people, on behalf of the people and did what the people wanted. We had public utilities owned by us the people, that guaranteed our Electricity, Water and Sewage forever.

No one knew how much the Snowy Mountain Scheme cost, we just built it.
No one knew how much the Sydney Harbour Bridge or the Indian-Pacific railway cost, we just built it!

Then came corporate greed.

- Now everything above has gone.
- Now we don't watch each other's backs anymore but watch each other through security bars, burglar alarms, and security screens.
- Now we dob each other in.
- Now we import poor quality processed food.
- Now we import cheap tools that break just taking them out of the packet they come in.
- Now we rely on ships to bring in our fuels.

- Now we can't afford our own Lamb or Beef anymore.
- Now we eat steroid pumped chicken just about every day.
- Now we import trade skill workers on 457 Visa's.
- Now we have high unemployment as nearly all of our Industry and Manufacturing has gone offshore.
- Now we have that many Laws that we have just about outlawed ourselves.
- But I guess we need even more laws, so now we will have Sharia Law as well. We now pay for water that falls out of the sky at $3.80 a litre.
- Now we have taxes for everything, taxes for carbon, taxes for sake of having taxes, (They call them Levy's).
- And don't forget the newest tax is the ISLAMIC TAX (Halal Certification)
- Now here in South Australia in our towns we have Railway Stations and railway tracks, but no trains.
- We have Public Bus Stops in our Towns but no buses. We have Hospitals and Clinics but very few Doctors or Nurses.
- We all have Mobile Phones and have little to no reception.
- We have Digital TV's with Bugger all Signal in the country.
- And the worst of all, is our once great nation is being sold off, piece by piece to every other country on earth, except us.

Tis very sad but very true! Enjoy what's left while you can? The Australia we knew when growing up is now STUFFED!!!

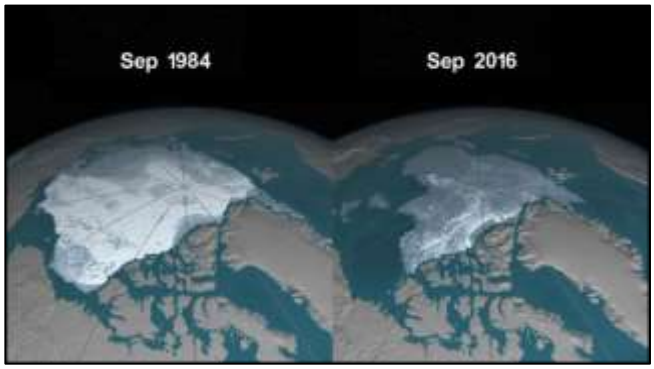
Planet is getting hotter, oceans rising quicker and glaciers melting faster: UN

THE NEWDAILY

Global warming is already eroding Earth's ecosystem in ways that will release misery on a global scale if it is not mitigated soon, a landmark UN report has revealed. The past five years were the hottest since global temperature records began, the report, compiled by the world's leading scientists for the United Nations Climate Action Summit, revealed.

It comes as Australia's Energy Minister Angus Taylor has shrugged off climate rally concerns, saying the country is on track to deliver its 2020 target.

The report stressed the need for immediate action to rein in out-of-control emissions, noting that the average global surface temperature for the past five years has been 1.1 degrees Celsius above pre-industrial baseline levels. For context, the Paris Agreement's goal is to limit the increase to 1.5 degrees Celsius above pre-industrial levels. Not only are we experiencing unprecedented levels of warming, but our oceans have risen at an accelerated pace and the world's glaciers have melted more quickly in the same period than any time on record.



"Overall, the amount of ice lost annually from the Antarctic ice sheet increased at least six-fold between 1979 and 2017," it reads. "The observed rate of global mean sea-level rise accelerated from 3.04 millimetres per year during the period 1997 to 2006 to approximately 4 millimetres per year during the period 2007 to 2016." The report concluded that across the globe, countries and communities must overhaul how they produce, distribute and consume almost everything to avoid the worsening environmental and economic disaster. It called on governments to urgently heed these warnings and act to significantly reduce their countries emissions.

Dr Pep Canadell, the executive director of the Global Carbon Project and a contributing author of the report, called the findings "sobering". "This new assessment is another sobering reminder of the critical state of the climate crisis and a call on governments, businesses and civic society to act more determinedly and aggressively in reducing greenhouse gases emissions," he said. "How many climate records does it take to accept the unprecedented nature of what we are living and to act upon it?"

The report names and shames Australia as being one of the world's highest emitters per capita. "The highest-per-capita emissions are found in the USA, Australia and top oil producers such as Saudi Arabia," it reads. "Despite extraordinary growth in renewable energy over the past decade, the global energy system is still dominated by fossil fuel sources. "The annual increase in global energy use is greater than the increase in renewable energy, meaning fossil fuel use and CO^2 emissions continue to grow."

Australia plays a large part in the global fossil fuel industry, being the world's third-largest exporter and the largest among the OCED countries. Despite this, the minister for reducing Australia's pollution levels has shrugged off calls for stronger climate action. Speaking to Insiders on Sunday, Mr Taylor said the nation was on track to reduce greenhouse emissions in line with the Paris target, which is a 26 to 28 per cent reduction on 2005 levels by 2030. "We entered into a commitment under Kyoto for 2020, which we will beat by 367 million tonnes," he said.

But many have disputed this claim, saying Australia is not on track to meet the target, which, they argue, is insufficient anyway. "The Paris targets are themselves hopelessly inadequate," said Dr Jon Symons, senior lecturer in politics and international relations at Macquarie University. "Even if fully implemented, global emissions would actually be higher in 2030 than today. "Australia's political debate seems entirely disconnected from the scientific realities captured in the report.

"It is not only that the Morrison government lacks effective mitigation policies, it is failing to honour even some of its key promises."

News and Reunions

3 Sqn Association (Qld) End of Year get-together.

If you're wrong and you shut up, you're wise.
If you're right and you shut up, you're married.

Upcoming "FIGHTER SQUADRONS" Luncheons

Members, Family and Friends all welcome

Pay on the day, but *ADVANCE REGISTRATION* is REQUIRED. For venue details and registration forms, see https://fsb.raafansw.org.au/events.php

Newcastle - Friday, 11 October 2019

Hornsby - PRE-XMAS LUNCH - Friday, 08 November 2019

Newcastle - XMAS LUNCH - Friday, 06 December 2019

RAAF Edinburgh Airshow,

9, 10 November 2019

RAAF Base Edinburgh will open its gates to the public for an exhilarating, action packed Air Show in November.
The two-day event will showcase advances in aviation technology during the 100 years since Sir Ross and Sir Keith Smith made their epic flight from England to Australia. (See HERE). The public will have a rare opportunity to see some of the Australian Defence Force's most advanced military aircraft including the latest fifth generation fighter aircraft, the F-35A Lightning II, and Defence technologies in addition to historic and vintage aircraft.

Crowds can expect to see more than four hours of flying displays on each day with the full range of ADF fast jets, transport and rotary wing aircraft taking part in the Air Show.

The theme of the Edinburgh Air Show is 'Vimy to Fifth Generation in 100 years'.

Tickets for the Edinburgh Air Show are now available.

Info:

- To see further info on ticket sales click HERE.
- To see the conditions of entry, click HERE
- To see the flying program, click HERE
- To see who is flying into the show click HERE (There is a HELP button if you get lost)
- To see how to get there, click HERE

Friends of the Caribou.

If you've ever flown, flown in, fixed, serviced or just seen a Caribou, the RTFV-35Sqn Association is holding an event just for you.

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The spectacular get together will be held in the Ipswich area, near Amberley, in August 2020.

If you'd like further information, click HERE.

Productivity Commission report into DVA.

The recently released Productivity Commission's Report into the DVA has raised the ire of many an ESO, (and rightly so), least of which is the Partners of Veterans of Australia.

The Partners of Veterans Association of Australia Inc

We think the Commission is in for a bit of a fight here, taking on a bunch of determined ladies is something only a mad-man would contemplate but that is what has occurred.

They recently wrote to the commission and you can read their letter HERE. And there's THIS.

More strength to their arm we say!

Telstechs and Partners, Reunion.

Penrith RSL

A reunion of Telstechs and their partners will be held at the Penrith RSL on Thursday 28th November and Friday 29th November

Due to the venue, numbers are limited to 120 people, so first in best dressed. If you can make it, register now. Cut-off date is 22 November.

Thursday.

There will be a casual 'Meet and Greet' on the Thursday night at the RSL, from 7:30pm.

Friday.

We'll hold a sit-down dinner on the Friday with a guest speaker, informal meeting from 6.15pm for being seated at 7.00pm. Dress for the dinner - Smart Casual, no shorts, thongs or other unsuitable attire.

The dinner will be a 3 course meal, plus hot finger food from 6:15 to 7:00pm. Please advise any special dietary needs to Neil Hunter (neilh1808@optusnet.com.au)

The cost for Friday's dinner is $60 per head. The Thursday "Meet and Greet" is on a *Pay as you go* basis.

Payment: (Cheques, money orders or electronic funds transfer)

By Post

Mr N.F. Miller
RAAF Telstechs Association
P.O. Box 4329
Hawker ACT 2614

By EFT

BSB No.	803205
Acct No.	2060 9660
Acct Name:	RAAF Telstechs Association
Bank	Defence Bank

Please include your name with payment, plus your partner's name as appropriate, so we can make name badges.

Arrangements are still ongoing for a visit to RAAF Glenbrook on the Friday morning - more details will be advised at a later date.

ACCOMODATION (For those that want it)

Quest Hotel (adjacent to Penrith railway station) - also a short walk to the RSL (10 minutes or so)

Phone:	(02)9136 1100
Room:	$155.00 - if booking here, please mention that you are attending a reunion at Penrith RSL for a discount.

Any questions, please contact Neil Hunter at neilh1808@optusnet.com.au, or by phone at 03 9369 3575 or 0438 351 536

Ho Chow calls into work and says "Hey, I no come to work today, I really sick. Got headache, stomach ache and legs hurt, I no come work". The boss says, "You know something Ho Chow, I really need you today. When I feel sick like you do I go to my wife and ask her for sex. That makes everything better and I go to work. You try that." Two hours later Ho Chow calls again, "I do what you say and I feel great, I be at work soon……You got nice house!"

Australian Defence Force Retirees Association.

DFRDB Update, July 2019

Most of you will aware that the Commonwealth Ombudsman's investigation into the administration of the DFRDB scheme with respect to commutation is in progress. But we are not waiting idly for the outcome.

We have continued to pursue the Minister on the narrow terms of reference of the Ombudsman's investigation and received this Response from the Minister's Chief of Staff. The key statement in which is:

> *"There are currently no plans for further investigation into the overall design of the DFRDB Scheme."*

In an Article - The Albury Border Mail - 20 July 2019, there is this quote from a spokeswoman from the Minister's office: (And there's THIS and THIS.)

> *"The government consulted with the Ex-Service Organizations Roundtable to develop the terms of reference for the ombudsman's inquiry. The public had the opportunity to provide input, this has now closed and the Ombudsman will consider this information as part of the investigation."*

A blatant cop-out.

On a separate front, Christian Bennett had been investigating and established from the Commonwealth Superannuation Corporation (CSC) that the DFRDB scheme is in fact a Trust with the following trustee structure:

- A Commonwealth entity created by legislation in 2011.
- Corporate Governance is provided by CSC Board.
- Directors are nominated by stakeholders, i.e.;
  - The Minister of Finance, who nominates the Chair person and 5 Directors,
- The President of Australian Council of Trade Unions, who nominates 3 Directors and
- The Chief of Deference Force who nominates 2 Directors. Directors can serve multiple terms and tenure is limited to 9 years.

This is a matter of serious concern, because making the CSC and the Department of Finance responsible for protecting DFRDB members' interests is akin to putting Dracula in charge of the blood bank.

This and the Terms of Reference for a wider reaching inquiry will be raised by Kel Ryan, National President, Defence Force Welfare Association, at an upcoming meeting with the Hon Darren Chester, Minister for Veterans and Defence Personnel.

We intend to keep you informed of developments on the DFRDB front. You will realise there is a level of confusion within Minister Chester's department and we don't know who to believe. Three different opinions of what is going on, I will leave it up to each of you to draw your own conclusions. I have asked the Minister for a retraction of the misleading comments in the Border Mail article, should I ever receive one it will be distributed.

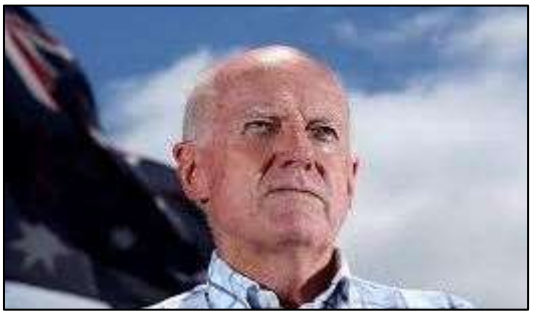
The National President of DFWA, Kel Ryan will be meeting with Minister Chester within the next couple of weeks and hopefully we will circulate another Update then. Let there be no doubt we are being heard.

We will be circulating to ESO's a very well researched document on some legal aspects of our claims, should any individual require a copy please contact me. The paper is 15 pages of very interesting research.

More details when we have mapped out our strategy.

DFRDB Update - September 2019

Our apologies for not issuing an Update last month. We were waiting for an Update from the Commonwealth Ombudsman which did not emerge. However, as some of you may already be aware, the Ombudsman has now posted an Update on his web site.



On 25 July 2019, the President of the Defence Force Welfare Association issued a Report of Meeting with Minister for Veterans Affairs and Ombudsman, (click HERE to read it). In his report, Kel Ryan (right) intimates that an incorporated ADSO should be the single point of contact between ex-service organizations and the Minister on all ex-service concerns.

Click HERE to read our reply to this.

As is apparent from our reply, we are not happy with the position we have been placed in by ADSO's collaboration on DFRDB with the Minister at the Ex-Service Organisation Round Table (ESORT) and we will make those views known to our representatives in the Parliament. The charter for ESORT does not include Military Superannuation and, in fact, it is more akin to workers compensation and war graves, both being very worthy objectives. We believe there must be a dedicated representative group to take Military Superannuation issues to the Minister.

Recently Herb and I attended Christian Bennett's funeral in Canberra. Christian who became involved with our cause only within the past year, was a champion of the underdog. His insight into both DFRDB and DVA concerns, his passion and sheer effort on behalf of his fellow ex-service men and women should not be underestimated or forgotten.

Throughout Chris's life he lived by two guiding principles;

- "Maintain the Passion" and
- "When you're right you've got to fight".

We will keep these principles firmly in our minds.

At the funeral, we were fortunate to meet Christian's legal mentor, Alan Anforth, (right) a leading Barrister who has already advocated on behalf of a number of ex-service members. Alan expressed a willingness to help us with our cause. He warned us to not expect too much from the Ombudsman's 'own motion' inquiry. His advice is that we should mount a test case through the Administrative Appeals Tribunal, however, the grounds for a challenge must be clearly thought through and we must avoid the grounds on which past challenges have failed.

While we could initiate an action on relatively short notice, we are obliged to await the outcome of the Ombudsman's investigation.

So, at this point it is 'hurry up and wait'.

Finally, we are considering incorporating the ADFRA to ensure our personal assets are not exposed as a result of any legal action. With the exception of web site development, Herb and I have so far met all costs associated with the conduct of this campaign. We are not seeking any reimbursement, however, if we find the need to incorporate we may have to seek a small donation of say $2 from each registered member to cover the cost of incorporation and the photocopying, travel etc. that will be required to mount an AAT case.

Please continue to distribute our Updates as far and wide as possible because we are still only reaching a relatively small proportion of all DFRDB members.

Remember Chris Bennett's motto.

Regards,
Jim and Herb

Wagga Apprentice Reunion.

Friday. 23 April 2021 to Monday. 26 April 2021

The 100th Anniversary of the formation of the Royal Australian Air Force is on the 31 Match 2021, therefore the Wagga Reunion committee has decided to hold an Apprentice Reunion in Wagga on the above dates in April 2021.

Proposed Program

Friday 23 April, 2021	Informal gathering at The Range Function Centre, 306 Copland St. Wagga
Saturday 24 April 2021	Temora Aviation Museum, Temora Airport (being ANZAC weekend and the 100th Anniversary, the Saturday should be a flying day), to be confirmed)
Saturday 24 April 2021	Evening for individual Intakes to hold private gatherings
Sunday 25 April 2021-	Dawn Services at RAAF Wagga, Kapooka and Victory Memorial Gardens
Sunday 25 April 2021	ANZAC Day March through Wagga, step off at 10.30am followed by service in the Victory Memorial Gardens.
Monday. 26 April 2021	Sit down evening function at The Range Function Centre. 306 Copland St, Wagga.

As the Budget has not been finalised a costing cannot be prepared at this time.

Registrations will be sought closer to the events. Please pass on to any other former RAAF Apprentice who may be interested

Appie Reunion – Brisbane

The 2020 Reunion of RAAF Ex-Apprentices will be held at the Transcontinental Hotel, on the corner of George and Roma Sts, Brisbane, on Saturday the 22nd February.

37 Sqn's Hercs turn 20.

In September 1999, the first of 12 C-130J Hercules aircraft, flown by 37 Squadron at Richmond, was delivered to Australia. The fleet has since amassed 137,000 flying hours. The J model replaced the E model which flew with 37 Sqn for 37 years until the last one, A97-160 landed at Point Cook in September 2000 and is now on permanent display.

The J model is the fourth Hercules model flown by the Air Force.

Back in December, 1958, the first of 12 A model Hercs arrived at 36 Squadron at Richmond, the last delivered in March 1959. They replaced the ageing Dakotas operated by the Squadron until that time and the RAAF was the first Air Force in the world to fly the C-130 outside of the USA. In 1965, 12 more Hercules, this time the C-130E model, were ordered to increase the RAAF's lifting capacity, commensurate with its operations in the Vietnam War. These C-130Es were delivered to the re-formed 37 Squadron at Richmond, between August 1966 and January 1967.

36 Squadron's C-130As were replaced by C-130H aircraft in 1978. These aircraft arrived in Australia between July and October 1978. They were, at the time, amongst the most capable tactical transport aircraft in the world due to a series of upgrades and modifications. The 'H' provided a valuable combination of medium to long-range transport with an excellent short dirt runway capability. Its primary role was the movement of personnel and equipment within a combat zone, known as tactical transport. This included special forces insertion, parachuting (both static-line and free-fall) and the airdrop of equipment. A variety of equipment could be airdropped, ranging from 4WD vehicles to inflatable boats and artillery pieces.

In 2006, 36Sqn handed its C130H aircraft to 37Sqn, moved to Amberley and began receiving its Boeing C-17 jet aircraft. The last C-130H model was discharged on the 30th November, 2012.

The J model delivered to the RAAF is 15 feet longer than the E model it replaces and is the most comprehensive update of the Hercules aircraft to date with a new two-crew flight compartment and turbo-prop engines that drive six-blade propellers. The 'J' is highly automated and contains state-of-the-art avionics technology. The flight-deck features two head-up displays (HUDs), four large multi-function displays, five monochrome displays and fighter-style controls on the control columns. The glass-cockpit technology also includes an automatic flight control system, auto-throttle, head-down display, traffic collision avoidance system, ground-collision-avoidance system and a stick-pusher to prevent inadvertent aircraft stall. Integrated navigation equipment

provides the pilots with an automatic navigation solution from the inertial navigation system and global positioning system, as well as regular ground-based navigation aids. All automation has multiple levels of redundancy for the tactical environment. The aircraft is night-vision goggle compatible and is fitted for, but not with, electronic counter-measure equipment. At least one aircraft has been continuously deployed to the Middle East region since June 2008.

This increase in automated control has allowed the minimum crew to be reduced from five in the C-130H to just three (two pilots and a loadmaster) in the C-130J, removing the requirement for a Flight Engineer and Navigator. It can seat 120 passengers, or 92 ground troops, or 64 paratroopers, or 74 stretcher patients and two medical attendants. It can also carry two extra cargo pallets – an increase of nearly 30% in cargo carrying capability. Chains and tie-downs for cargo, and passenger seating platforms, are stowed integral to the cargo compartment to allow last-minute changes to tasking and loads

To celebrate 20 years of service with the Air Force (RAAF), a formation of C-130J aircraft flew over Sydney and the Western Suburbs on Friday, 6 September 2019. They were joined by a United States Air Force MC-130J capturing video of the flight.

The crews of five No 37 Squadron C-130J Hercules which flew in formation to celebrate 20 years of C-130J operations in Australia.

In recent years, the fleet has been upgraded with satellite communications, self-protection systems, and battlespace awareness. The capability of the C-130J fleet has grown significantly, with future upgrades to include high-bandwidth satellite communications being installed on six aircraft.

Click HERE to see video of the aircraft in formation.

K

RAAF Vietnam Lunching

Spotted at the Jade Buddha in the city (Brisbane) were a bunch of people who get together regularly on the second Thursday of each month to enjoy each other's company, to enjoy the wonderful position on the Brisbane River, to enjoy a great lunch together and to talk of other times.

If you would like to join this impromptu group, email John "Sambo" Sambrooks and he'll send you an email reminder. It's free to join and you pay as you go.

L-R: Sue Trimmer, Tuyet Van, Trev Benneworth, John "Sambo" Sambrooks, "Rotus" Adams, Thien Khuong, John McDougall (standing), Rob Stirling, Diamond Dang, Thai Dang, Peter Johnson.

I remember when sex was safe and flying was dangerous.

Caribou A4-199.

Caribou A4-199 has been repainted and is back on display at the entrance to the base in Townsville.

It has been painted in a scheme reflecting the DHS delivery scheme with the addition of an orange Wallaby on the tail to reflect 35 Squadron's long service at Townsville. A4-199 did not serve in Vietnam but was allocated to 35 SQN at Richmond from 1972 till 1975 and then from the late 80's onwards was allocated to 35 SQN at different times as aircraft went back to 38 Sqn for major servicings. A4-199 was painted white in 1975 for UN duties and was allocated to UNMOGIP in India and Pakistan on 3 occasions.

You don't stop laughing because you grow old, you grow old because you stop laughing

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