

# THE RAM

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



Vol 71

Page 6



  
**Kedron-Wavell**  
SERVICES CLUB

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Welcome to Kedron-Wavell Services Club. Located in the vibrant Chermiside precinct, only 15 minutes north of Brisbane's CBD, the Club is Brisbane's award winning, premier function, entertainment and leisure destination

With a cosmopolitan atmosphere and elegant features, Kedron-Wavell Services Club is the perfect place to meet your family and friends... or meet new friends! We're easy to find and offer free off-street parking for members and guests.

## Pensions.

The Department of Social Services has confirmed Australia's pensioners did not receive an automatic indexation increase last September, because inflation had gone backwards. This was the first time since 1997 the pension hadn't risen with indexation.

Labor quickly criticised the news the pension will be put "on hold". As its Social Services spokeswoman Linda Burney argues, "this is the worst possible time to be putting the squeeze on the household budgets of seniors and the most vulnerable".



Prime Minister Scott Morrison has also been quick to point out his government was not expecting this to happen and “will work through” the issues.

So, why haven't pensions gone up in the middle of the pandemic? And what options does the government have to try to address this?

How is the pension indexed?

Under current legislation, pensions are indexed twice a year, in March and September. This is done according to the higher of the Consumer Price Index or Pensioner and Beneficiary Living Cost Index (a cost of living measure designed specifically for households that rely on pensions) over the previous six months.

As the Department of Social Services explains, when wages grow more quickly than prices, the pension is increased to a wages benchmark. The wages benchmark sets the combined couple rate of pension at 41.76% of male average weekly earnings. The single rate of pension is roughly two thirds of the couple rate, which works out at 27.7% of average male earnings.

So, in normal times, indexation sees pensions maintain their real value or improve if real wages are increasing in the community. In March 2020, the single base rate of the pension increased by about \$10 a fortnight.

But these are not normal times.

According to the Australian Bureau of Statistics, the Consumer Price Index and pensioner index fell by 1.9% and 1.4% respectively between March and June 2020 and benchmarking to male earnings did not help in September, because the current maximum basic pension rate of \$860.60 per fortnight is 28% of average weekly earnings, which was \$1537.70 in May 2020. So, this is slightly above the benchmark.



Thank Kevin Rudd for the current system.

Australia's indexation provisions were introduced in the Labor government's 2009-10 Budget, following the Harmer pension review. At the same time, then Prime Minister Kevin Rudd increased the single rate of pensions by \$65 per fortnight, the largest single real amount since the age pension was first paid in 1909. These new indexation provisions were generous compared to previous arrangements, given they take whichever is higher of the Consumer Price Index and the pensioner index, and also maintain higher benchmarks against wages. It is worth noting the Abbott government's first budget in 2014 tried to change indexation of pensions so that they only increased in line with inflation. But this never got past the Senate.



So, under the current provisions, introduced by Labor, the system is working the way it is intended. It is just that in these unusual times, none of these measures will result in a pension increase.

What is really going on with the cost of living?

One important question is: does the fall in the Consumer Price Index and pensioner index between March and June this year really reflect what has happened to the prices faced by pensioners?

The Bureau of Statistics has published a special analysis of changes in prices due to COVID-19, as well as the effect of the pandemic on average earnings. This analysis shows a large part of the fall in the overall Consumer Price Index was due to temporary free childcare, subtracting approximately 1.1 percentage points from the headline figure, however, because the weight of childcare in the pensioner index is lower, it is likely to have a smaller effect on that figure.

However, pensioners were not left hanging, they received a \$750 payment in March/April and another \$750 payment in July. A further \$250 payment is planned for November this year and a further \$250 payment will be made in March 2021.

You know you're in a brainwashed society  
when white people are protesting against white people for being white people.

## Puff the magic dragon.

The Douglas AC-47 (DC3) Spooky (also nicknamed "Puff, the Magic Dragon") was the first in a series of fixed-wing gunships developed by the United States Air Force during the Vietnam War. It was designed to provide more firepower than light and medium ground-attack aircraft in certain situations when ground forces called for close air support.

The aircraft was modified by mounting three 7.62 mm General Electric miniguns to fire through two rear window openings and the side cargo door, all on the left (pilot's) side of the aircraft, to provide close air support for ground troops. Other armament configurations could also be found on similar C-47-based aircraft around the world. The guns were actuated by a control on the pilot's yoke whereby he could control the guns either individually or together, although gunners were also among the crew to assist with gun failures and similar issues. It could orbit the target for hours, providing suppressing fire over an elliptical area about 47.5 m in diameter, placing a round every





2.2 m during a three-second burst. The aircraft also carried flares it could drop to illuminate the battleground.

The AC-47 had no previous design to gauge how successful it would be, because it was the first of its kind. The USAF found itself in a precarious situation when requests for additional gunships began to come in because it simply lacked miniguns to fit additional aircraft after the first two conversions. The next four aircraft were equipped with ten .30 caliber AN/M2 machine guns. These weapons, using World War II and Korean War ammunition stocks, were they quickly discovered would jam easily, produce large amounts of gases from firing, and, even in ten-gun groups, only provide the density of fire of a single minigun. All four of these aircraft were retrofitted to the standard armament configuration when additional miniguns arrived.

The AC-47 initially used SUU-11/A gun pods that were installed on locally fabricated mounts for the gunship application. Emerson Electric eventually developed the MXU-470/A to replace the gun pods, which were also used on later gunships.

Click [HERE](#) to see an interesting video on the aircraft

Two young boys walked into a pharmacy one day, picked out a box of tampons and proceeded to the checkout counter. The pharmacist at the counter asked the older boy, 'Son, how old are you?' 'Eight', the boy replied. The man continued, 'Do you know what these are used for?' The boy replied, 'Not exactly, but they aren't for me. They're for him. He's my brother. He's four.' "Oh, really?" the pharmacist replied with a grin. "Yes." the boy said. "We saw on TV that if you use these, you would be able to swim, play tennis and ride a bike. Right now, he can't do none of those."

## Hawker Hurricane.

Said to be the most historic fighter aircraft to have survived the war, Hawker Hurricane Mk1 R4118 was delivered new to 605 (County of Warwick) Squadron at Drem on 17 August 1940. During the Battle of Britain, it flew 49 sorties from Croydon and shot down five enemy aircraft.

After being battle damaged on 22 October 1940, the aircraft was rebuilt and taken on charge by 111 Squadron at Dyce on 18 January 1941. There it was flown on patrol over the North Sea and was again in combat. Over the following two years it was used primarily as a training aircraft with 59 and 56 OTUs, and was rebuilt a further three times following major accidents, including hitting a lorry on the runway and being stuffed into a snowbank!





In December 1943, R4118 was crated at Cardiff and shipped to India as a training aircraft, however it was never needed and remained in its packing case in Bombay until 1947 when it was struck off charge and donated to a university for engineering instruction. The fuselage remained outside in a compound with the propeller, wings and tailplane laid on the ground. There it remained, exposed to the elements and ignored by the world until 1996, when retired businessman and restoration enthusiast Peter Vacher began his remarkable quest to bring R4118 home.

Negotiations to bring R4118 back to the UK for restoration began in 1996, but the story begins 14 years earlier in March 1982.



Peter Vacher was travelling in India with a friend who was researching the fate of old Rolls-Royce and Bentley cars. Many years before, John recalled seeing two exceptional Rolls-Royce motorcars in the engineering department of Banaras Hindu University. After discovering the cars, Peter stepped outside and into an adjacent compound where he saw the remains of two aeroplanes, One was clearly a fighter – a Rolls-Royce Merlin engine was visible through the cowling – and they presumed it was a Spitfire. John took a photograph of Peter in the cockpit and thought no more about it.

Years later, Peter showed the photograph to a friend, who immediately recognised the aircraft as not a Spitfire, but a much rarer Hurricane. Peter began to read up about the Hawker Hurricane and its place in the Battle of Britain and so began his obsession to rebuild and restore the plane.



In June 2001, after six years of lengthy negotiations with the University and the Indian Air Force, the remains of R4118 were crated and shipped back to the UK for restoration.

Among the brilliant pilots who flew R4118 during its operational lifetime were two RAF aces, Christopher "Bunny" Currant and Bob Foster. Both are now sadly deceased.

You can see video of it [HERE](#).



Here bloody here!!

## Corona Virus

If you're confused about this virus thing and don't know what to do so you don't catch it, well, worry no more, we've found a very clear set of instructions. Click [HERE](#)



### **The Kitchen at Kedron Wavell Services Club..**

This classy restaurant features a modern cuisine menu and covered al fresco dining deck, creating the perfect atmosphere to catch up with friends for coffee, dinner, or meeting over lunch or dinner with business colleagues.

Click [HERE](#) to see the wonderful menu.



## **Car Headlights**

### **High Intensity Discharge lamps**

HID headlamps are popular as original equipment on many of the more "upmarket" new cars. They are a gas discharge lamp that produces light by means of an electric arc between two electrodes housed inside a transparent quartz envelope. They produce a higher light output compared to conventional incandescent lights because a greater proportion of their radiation is visible light as opposed to heat. The light they emit may appear to have a blue tinge, particularly around the peripheries of the beam. This is acceptable.

Due to their higher light output, HID lamps must comply with a specific set of Design Rules. These include light colour, proportions of specified light wavelengths (including blue wavelengths) and ultra violet (UV) emissions. Self-levelling systems and headlight washers are also mandatory for any headlamps producing over 2,000 lumens (a measure of light output).

### **Aftermarket HID conversions**

Aftermarket HID conversions are available however their on-road use will generally contravene the relevant federal legislation. HID headlight conversions are not permitted in Australia, nor do these simple retro conversions provide the necessary self-levelling system and headlight washers.

If the vehicle manufacturer offered optional HID lights on a particular model, then retrofitting the complete system, including the self-levelling system and headlight washers, to a similar model would be acceptable, but fitting a system to a different make or model is unlikely to be viable due to necessary certification requirements.



### Aftermarket lamp globes

A common question relates to the maximum wattage headlight that can be legally fitted. Simply, there is no maximum wattage for headlights defined in legislation. A 'Watt' is a measure of electrical power, but the ADRs specify headlight output in Lumens or Candela. While conversions can be found on the internet, they are not primarily intended for automotive applications and we don't know how accurate they are in this application.

Care should be exercised when choosing aftermarket bulbs that claim increased light output, as they may have a higher current draw than the vehicle's electrical system is designed for. In some cases, the increased current draw is disproportionate to the actual increase in light output, with much of the additional power consumption merely generating extra heat in the headlight.



Another thing to consider is that light colour is defined in the design rules in terms of chromaticity co-ordinates, while bulb manufacturers typically specify colour in terms of the Kelvin scale (there is no direct comparison that we are aware of). This becomes important when trying to determine if a particular bulb from the 'bluer' range of aftermarket bulbs is legal. Many have mild blue colouring of the glass envelope, are marked as ADR compliant and are legal for road use, however, others emit significantly more blue spectrum light and are not ADR compliant. These are usually marked for off-road use only.

Ultimately, given the complexity of the subject, it is recommended that you either stick with what the vehicle manufacturer specified as original equipment or be guided by the bulb manufacturer. A bulb that isn't branded as suitable for on-road use probably isn't.

### LED headlights

A small but increasing number of new vehicles are appearing with Light Emitting Diode headlights as original equipment. Their claimed benefits include reduced power consumption that translates into fuel savings (though minute) and emission reductions. However, there are also aftermarket LED conversions. We are not aware of any of these having been tested and certified as meeting Australian legal requirements. Without this certification they are not acceptable for on-road use.

### Headlight protectors

Headlight protectors are a popular accessory, however their value in protecting headlights from damage is questionable. Most modern cars now use polycarbonate plastic for headlamp lenses. Polycarbonate is very strong and offers much greater shatter resistance than glass lenses or the acrylic used in lamp protectors. Lamp protectors may offer some protection against scratching of the lens though.

### Hazy/discoloured headlights

Polycarbonate lenses on older car's headlights can go dull and cloudy due to naturally occurring UV radiation. This can affect the vehicle's roadworthiness as it reduces the light's output. Replacement with new or good second-hand lamps are options, however auto accessory/parts shops can provide special lens polishing kits to restore the lamp to an acceptable condition. These kits are not suitable for removing discolouration from the inside of lenses caused by incorrect lamp globes. Reduced UV or 'UV cut' bulbs are specially designed to reduce this affect and should always be used with polycarbonate lenses.



### Headlight alignment

Incorrect headlight alignment is a prime cause of dazzle for drivers and is a common source of complaint. A quick test of headlight alignment can be made by parking the car on a level surface (a driveway will do) at right angles to a wall or garage door. Reverse back approximately 4 metres from the wall and with the lights switched to high beam the spread of the two beams should be at about equal heights and roughly straight in front of the vehicle. When low beam is selected the light beams should drop and move slightly to the left.

If the beams are wildly out of alignment it may be necessary to temporarily cover each light in turn to determine in which direction they need to be adjusted. Owner's handbooks usually provide instructions on the desired beam pattern and the adjustment process. Alternatively, you may wish to have your local repairer do it for you.



## History of women in the Air Force

Wings

The need to engage women in new avenues of employment became apparent during the early years of World War 2 when wireless telegraphists were urgently needed to fill a temporary shortage of men.



In February 1941, the Women's Auxiliary Australian Air Force (WAAAF) was created and a training depot was established at Malvern in Melbourne. Recruitment was intentionally slow until Japan entered the war and it was decided that more women were needed to release men for operational duties. Airwomen were accepted into 73 different musterings: armament workers, electricians, fitters, flight mechanics, fabric workers, instrument makers and meteorological assistants, besides using skills in many clerical, medical, transport, catering, equipment, signals and radar fields of employment.



By October 1944, the number of women in the WAAAF had increased to a peak strength of 18,667 officers and airwomen serving in all states of Australia. More than 700 women held commissioned rank and, like airwomen, worked in a great variety of administrative, technical and professional roles. Some commanded units in operation rooms.

Wherever women were needed, they served. However, airwomen were paid two-thirds of RAAF male pay for equivalent positions and female officers were paid a good deal less than male officers of equal rank.

The 27,000 women who served in the WAAAF between March 1941 and July 1947 paved the way for gender equality today by proving women could fulfil tasks and roles previously undertaken solely by men. The success of the WAAAF allowed for the formation of a permanent, non-auxiliary Women's Royal Australian Air Force (WRAAF) in November 1950, which functioned until 1977 when female personnel were absorbed into the mainstream RAAF.



The National Wage Case of 1969 established the principle of the gradual introduction of equal pay for identical work. WRAAF officers prior to 1970 received 66-68% of male officer rates. That was increased to 76-78% later that year. Women of the RAAF today are paid equally to men, across all mustering and categories.

Gender restrictions from ADF combat roles were removed for serving female members during 2013 and 2016 for new female recruits.

### **6 October 1968 - 38SQN Caribou crashed in PNG**



On this day, 38 Squadron Detachment A (PNG) Caribou A4-147, flown by Flight Lieutenant Alan Field and Flying Officer Pete Judges, crashed whilst on approach at Tapini, PNG. The loadmaster and some passengers sustained injuries; the aircraft was written off and aircraft remnants were used as spares and to construct a field training simulator/training aid at RAAF Richmond-based No 38 Squadron.

### **Caribous supported Op LAGOON**

On the 7<sup>th</sup> October, 1994, Caribous A4-140 and A4-275 from Townsville-based No 35 Squadron arrived at Buka Island for Operation LAGOON, aimed at facilitating a peace conference to end a five-year conflict between the government of Papua New Guinea and the Bougainville Revolutionary Army (BRA).



In addition to the Caribous, the RAAF also sent personnel to establish a forward operating base at Buka, and a surgical team. Australia was leading a joint and combined effort to provide security during the conference and the Caribous were to move elements of a South Pacific Peacekeeping Force (SPPKF) between Buka and the conference venue at Arawa, in central Bougainville. RAAF and RNZAF C-130 Hercules transports began moving the SPPKF on 6 October, but in the event the BRA decided not to attend the conference and the initiative collapsed.

By the 21<sup>st</sup> October the 35 members of the RAAF contingent were on their way back to Australia. You can read more about the operation [HERE](#).

It turns out that when asked who your favorite child is, you're supposed to pick one of your own. I know that now.



## Taking the knee.

Taking the knee has been the idiotic protest symbol adopted by millions of people demonstrating over the death of George Floyd. Crowds of campaigners have kneeled across the US and the UK demonstrating in the name of Black Lives Matter, (white lives don't?) while last night's return of the Premier League began with players and referees kneeling. (Surely ALL lives matter!)

The gesture has proven immensely powerful in carrying messages of anger about racial violence, but it has also been polarising, taken by some as "unpatriotic" or an affront to American troops.



"I am not going to get up to show pride in a country that oppresses black people and people of colour," the athlete said.

Kaepernick later took the knee instead of the bench, intending to show more respect for military veterans. This stance would prove to be far more iconic. The incident triggered backlash from critics who dubbed the action "unpatriotic" and "disrespectful", or resented the alleged politicisation of sporting events. Nike - which hired the quarterback as the face of its 30th campaign faced a boycott from angry consumers, while NFL announced it would fine teams if their players participated in the protest.



But a wave of players mirrored Kaepernick's kneel, solidifying the stance's staple significance as a peaceful objection to oppression. "We chose to kneel because it's a respectful gesture," said Kaepernick's teammate Eric Reid. "I remember thinking our posture was like a flag flown at half-mast to mark a tragedy."

In 2017, President Donald Trump weighed in on the issue, calling for players taking the knee to be fired. "Wouldn't you love to see one of these NFL owners, when somebody disrespects our flag, to say, 'Get that son of a b\*\*\*\* off the field right now, out, he's fired. He's fired,'" said Mr Trump during a campaign rally in Alabama. In response, some football teams refused to enter the field completely. This speech - in the eyes of many - morphed the gesture into an act of direct resistance against Mr Trump's presidency who labelled the protest as a statement against the American flag and US servicemen and women, disassociating it from racial oppression.

In 2019, NFL owners unanimously approved a policy requiring all players and employers of a team to stand if they are on the field during the anthem. Those who object can remain in the locker room, else the team will incur a fine.

During the 1968 Olympics, African-American runners Tommie Smith and John Carlos were stripped of their medals after raising their fists in a Black Power salute during the awards ceremony. A year before that, boxer Muhammed Ali was forced to surrender his heavyweight title for conscientiously objecting to the Vietnam War.

What happened to Kaepernick?

After the season, Kaepernick became a free agent but went unsigned, later taking legal action against the NFL for allegedly colluding to keep him out of the league. A confidential settlement was reached in February 2019. While Kaepernick remains absent from the NFL player's list, many supporters argue he remains one of the best quarterbacks alive. He announced last year he was ready to play on any team willing to hire him. In the meantime, he has set up a Legal Defence Initiative to cover legal bills for the "freedom fighters" on the ground in Minnesota, protesting in the name of George Floyd.