Vol 71 **Oct 2020**

New Menu

We've made some changes to the menu system, now you can find a topic, click it and it will open the info for which you're looking. Hopefully, this will make it a lot easier to read. After you've finished one topic and you want to return here, just click the "close tab" button (**X)** on the tab at the top of your page.

You can still read the whole Magazine the old way, see at the bottom of the page.

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Scootaville.

In June next year, 40 of us will ride 20 of the fantastic Peugeot 2-stroke 50cc motor scooters from Brisbane to the RAAF Base in Townsville. That trip will take us 13 days, we'll have two nights in Emerald, two nights in Longreach and two nights in Charters Towers. Peugeot have made the scooters available to us for the trip, we've made arrangements to pay for them after the event. So - you get to use them for free. You don't need a motor bike licence to ride these, a car licence is all you need.

Councils along the way have been more than generous and allowed us to use pavilions in their showgrounds to overnight, IGA and Woolworths have graciously agreed to provide us with food for breakfasts and in some cases lunches and Kedron Wavell RSL Sub-branch has agreed to provide a ute and small bus to carry our gear and also their "chuck wagon" on which we'll cook our breakfasts, some lunches and also refreshment stops along the way.

We'll have a lot of fun along the way and the RAAF at Townsville has agreed to greet us warmly. More on that later.

We've got a few starters already but there are still many spots available, so if you want to be a part of this great adventure, spend a few weeks with a bunch of like minded fun people, have the most fun you can have standing up, get your name in now. You'll find more info HERE, there are 3 pages, please read them all and the form to fill in to come along is HERE.

Please let us know now. This is not binding but we need to know numbers.

Costco Offer.

Costco was founded in an old hangar in San Diego in the USA in 1976. It started life as the "Price Club" and offered items to small businesses at a reduced price. It soon found by including non-business customers, its clientele increased greatly which meant it could buy more and buying more meant buying for less which meant it could sell for less which made it more attractive to buyers who bought more which meant buying more etc etc.

Its operating philosophy has been simple. Keep costs down and pass the savings on to its members. Since becoming Costco in 1997, the company has grown worldwide with total sales in recent fiscal years exceeding $64 billion.

Its warehouses carry about 4,000 SKUs (stock keeping units) compared to the 30,000 found at most supermarkets. By carefully choosing products based on quality, price, brand and features, the company can offer the best value to members.

Costco opened its first Australian store in Melbourne in 2009 and now has 12 stores through all states of Australia, except for Tasmania and the NT.

Costco is very conscious of the hardship and dedication of the Australian service men and women and recently put a deal together for the benefit of members of the Radschool Association.

Go to page 20 for the deal.

Charity Classification.

Early last year our Association was classified as a Charitable Organisation - see HERE. This doesn't mean that donations to the Association are Tax deductible, yet, but we've applied for that and will advise if and when it occurs. We're going to incorporate the Association too.

We are registered with the Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission (ACNC) which is the national regulator of charities. Their web-site is HERE. Being a Charitable Organisation, we don't pay tax.

We have to submit a report to the ACNC each year, ours is due 31 December 2020.

100th Anniversary of the RAAF celebration.

We had to cancel our plans for the big get together in Melbourne next year but that doesn't mean we're cancelling all together. We've decided to hold our celebration next year in the ACT and to hold it over the ANZAC Day period and if you went through Radschool, whether Ballarat or Laverton, no matter what course, male or female, this event is for you. It also includes your husband, wife, boy friend, girl friend etc, who can join in with us in all events except the ANZAC Day March itself unless they have served. We're all getting on a bit and this could be our last hurrah - let's make it a good one. ANZAC Day in 2021 falls on a Sunday and we're planning to hold several events prior to that culminating in joining in the ceremonies planned around the War Memorial on ANZAC Day, including the Dawn Service, breakfast and the March itself. We're suggesting you spend 5 nights in Canberra, commencing Wednesday night the 21st April, and leaving the ACT on Monday the 26th.

Here's what's planned.

Wednesday 21st April.

An informal get together at the Ainslie Football Club that night. We hope to have a handout for everyone, setting out what's planned, etc.

Thursday 22 April

We've arranged with the Army for a conducted tour of Duntroon. This is a marvellous base, full of tradition and wonderful old buildings and is definitely worth a visit. This will start at 10.00am and should finish about 12.00midday. After Duntroon, we're planning we get together for lunch, unfortunately, the Corona problem has meant we haven't been able to get to Canberra to organise this, but once things return to normal we will and we'll let everyone know.

Friday 23 April.

We've arranged a conducted tour of the AWM after which we can all lunch at Poppy's Cafe at the AWM. After lunch we'll try for a conducted tour of Parliament House - but we can't confirm that until we can get to Canberra.

Saturday 24 April.

We've also been in touch with the ACT branch of the Air Force Association and have got approval to dedicate a plaque, remembering Radschool, in the RAAF Grove which is on the Federal Highway just inside the ACT boundary - see HERE. We submitted a claim to DVA for funds to cover costs, but it was refused (see HERE). We're pursuing other sources of funds and if we can't do any good, we might be forced to ask for donations. More later.

As there's limited parking on the highway, we'll arrange a car pool system which will operate from the Ainslie Football Club car park to get everyone out there. Refreshments will be served after the dedication after which we plan returning to the Club for lunch. The rest of the afternoon is free until about 4.00pm when we can meet up again at the AWM for the "Changing of the Guard" at the tomb of the Unknown Australian Soldier, followed by the Last Post ceremony where we will lay a wreath. If the WRAAF ladies wish to join us, we will lay two. After that the day is yours as it will be an early start tomorrow.

Sunday 25 April

Being ANZAC Day we propose attending the Dawn Service followed by the ANZAC Day March. The Dawn Service starts at 5.30am, but they suggest you get there at least 30 minutes prior to that - so no sleep-in that morning. After the Service, breakfast is served in ANZAC Hall at the War memorial, see HERE. The Dawn Service and the following breakfast are wonderful and very moving events.

The breakfast costs $45 per head and tables are arranged for 10 people. Click HERE for a sample menu. We'll have more on this after our trip to Canberra in August.

We've been in touch with the ACT Sub-branch of the RSL and have approval for us to march under the Radschool Banner. The March starts at 10.30am and will finish overall at the War Memorial at 12.30pm - that doesn't mean you're marching for 2 hours. The route for the March is along Anzac Parade, see HERE, we don't know the length of the march but we'll know more after our trip down to Canberra in August. If you are not able to march, but would still like to attend, we can possibly arrange to have you carried in a vehicle, let us know in the form below. Sorry, but we can only arrange a vehicle for those with active service.

We'll have more info on when and where to form up etc later.

The Dawn Service and the ANZAC Day March at the AWM are two huge events and should be on everyone's bucket list.

After the March, in the tradition of ANZAC Days everywhere, we can all get together at a club for a "debrief". We're talking with the RSL for a suitable venue, more on that later too.

So we can get an idea of numbers, we know it's still a fair way off, but if you think you can make it, please fill in the form below. It's important that we get an indication of numbers before we talk to venues in Canberra in August (we hope restrictions are lifted by then). If your name is not on the list you could miss out as numbers could be important. Remember, you can always cancel later on, but mightn't be able to add your name once we've confirmed things.

Unfortunately, due to the Virus, I haven't been able to get to Canberra to firm things up, hopefully I can get there prior to Christmas.

Put your name in now

First Name:

Surname:

Phone:

Email address:

Will you be partnered? Select One

Will you need a vehicle for the March? Select one

Comments:

Submit Reset

Click HERE to see who has indicated they will be going.

RAM thought for the day.

When you talk, you are only repeating what you already know. But if you listen, you may learn something new.

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.

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:

Phone:

Email address:

Membership type: Select one

Your State: Select one

Sum transferred:

Comments:

Submit Reset

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 or know of a firm that would be kind and generous enough to sponsor the Radschool Association, please get in touch.

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, not a lot escapes him I can tell you!

Thanks Ken.

You can download the full magazine in PDF format HERE.
It is a very large file, contains 278 pages and will take a while to download.

The margins have been set so you can print on both sides of the page.

hit counter

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IN MEMORY OF

Ivan Hoggard.

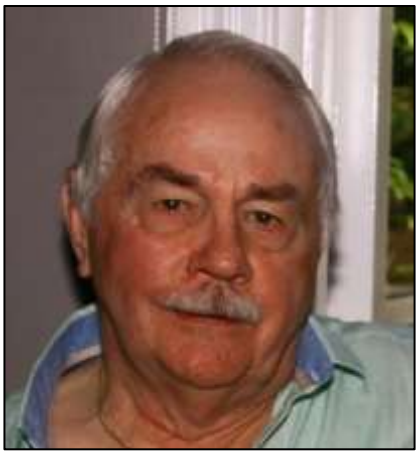
Peter Edwards advises the passing of Ivan “Herc” Hoggard. Ivan was a RadTech G, Ballarat 1958-60 vintage. He served at 1CARU, 2CARU and Woomera. He was a resident of Gympie (Qld) and a widower for past 5 years. “Herc” decided to forgo invasive and intensive surgery and passed away peacefully at the Sunshine Coast University Hospital on 3rd July aged 79 years.

Brianna McEvoy.

It is with sadness that we have to announce the death of Brianna “Bree” McEvoy, youngest daughter of Margaret and Ted McEvoy. Bree died on the evening of 23 July 2020 at the Sunshine Coast University Hospital. She was only 47 years old.

Bree had been suffering for some time but was now at peace. Sadly, Margaret and Ted had lost their eldest daughter Fiona from cancer back in Jan 2019, very sad, our thoughts go to them both!!

John McAllister.



The Djinnang Association has the sad news that John passed away at 6am Friday 24th July after succumbing to MND.

John’s funeral was held at the Norwood Crematorium in Mitchell ACT on Tuesday 4th August 2020, unfortunately due to the Corona Virus, seating was limited to 75 within the crematorium. A wake celebrating John’s life was held at the Statesman Hotel/Motel, Cnr. Strangways and Theodore Streets, Curtain.

There are literally hundreds out there who would have known and worked with/for John over the years. He was a staunch supporter of Djinnang and seldom missed a reunion. He was a great teller of jokes, a wonderful bloke and a good mate. He will be missed by all who knew him.

Our sympathies go out to his family.

Bill McCreadie

John McDougall advises the passing of Bill McCreadie. Bill was an Engine Fitter, was on 14 Appy and did a tour of Vietnam with 9 Sqn. from July '67 to July '68. He spent some time in hospital and was expected to go home when he suddenly passed away on the 20th July 2020.

Bill's funeral was held in Mackay (Qld) on the 24 July 2020. He was 76 years old.

Barry Keith Rolfe

Garry King, acting Secretary of the Vietnam Vets Assoc, Sunshine Coast, advises that Barry Rolfe passed away on the 17 July 2020. Barry was a framie and served with 9 Sqn from 28 May 1969 to 30 April 1970 and again from 23 June 1971 to 08 Oct 1971.

Barry was born in Goulburn NSW in 1945. His funeral was held at the Shoalhaven Chapel (near Nowra) on the 23rd July 2020

Robert "Bob" Irvine

Ted McEvoy advises the sad news of the passing of Bob Irvine. Bob, who was a framie on the Mirages, passed away on the night of Monday 27th July 2020. He had been fighting a huge battle with multiple cancers for quite a while, – he had fought a very hard and noble battle before eventually succumbing to "the mongrel".

Bob was a fantastic guy and great friend to many - his loss will no doubt be felt by many. There was no intention to have a funeral in this current pandemic and there was a scattering of his ashes at Lilydale Airport (VIC) at some point in the future when things settle.

Bob served in numerous locations during his RAAF career. One of his earlier postings was to ARDU at Laverton where he was introduced to the Mirage. He also served at Butterworth with 75SQN in the early '70s and later with 3SQN in the late '70's – early '80's. Whilst in Malaysia he was one of the RAAF Radio Butterworth announcers - he also learnt to fly in Penang and achieved his Pilot's Licence there.

On a reflective note, Bob went to F-111's later – whilst at 3AD he was working in and managing the guys with Deseal / Reseal - then a FSGT he attempted to raise/escalate his concerns about that environment and the health of his people. As a result, he was (to put it bluntly) badly treated - this became his driver to leave the RAAF.

Sadly, Bob was due to retire a few years ago but the loss of his wife Jeanie to cancer kept him working for a while longer. He started flying again and was an Instructor with Lilydale Flying School. He eventually found a new lady in his life (Linda) a couple of years ago and he finally retired last year. They went away for their first retirement holiday whereupon he fell ill with cancer. He did receive DVA support for his cancer treatment – particularly appropriate in light of his service at Deseal / Reseal.

Brett Cheetham.

Peter Smith advises the passing of fellow Radtech Brett Cheetham on the 16th June, 2019 at Greenslopes Hospital in Qld, after a 2 year battle with pancreatic cancer. Brett was farewelled on Wednesday 19th June 2019 at the St Mary's Cathedral, Elizabeth Street, Ipswich, QLD.

Brett was on 28/89 Rookies and on same Radtech course as myself, 7/89 graduating in Dec 1990. He spent his time after graduation I believe at 482 SQN at Amberley working on secret bits of our beloved PIGs. After that he was in charge of the audio/visual dept at UQ Ipswich campus for many years.

Brett really was a nice bloke and had many mates. I had not seen him for many years and it came as shock to see people commenting about his passing on his FB page.

Selwyn David Evans.

Carl Schiller advises us of the passing of Air Marshall David Evans. David had been in poor health during the last few years having suffered several strokes. He passed away peacefully on the evening of Wednesday the 2nd September. He had been his late wife's carer for many years and remained very active in Air Force circles. He had a stellar and exciting career that would make him the envy of many. He was a hard task master but a diligent commander and very well respected.

You can read his story HERE.

David McNaught.

Malcolm Hemsley advises that David “Zero” passed away on Friday 21 August, 2020, after suffering a massive heart attack. He was only 58 years old. David was an armourer and worked on the Mirage and the Hornet. His funeral was held in Caloundra on the 4th September.

David was a brat on 32 Appy. His RAAF career was pretty well centred around the “Fighter Weapons System Stream” although he did do a stint at 1CAMD at Kingswood. He served on Mirage with 481(M)SQN and 75SQN in both Butterworth and Darwin and was one of the “earlier gunnies on Hornet” at 2OCU. He is remembered by many as a very intelligent man, a great worker and “one funny, funny bugger”.

Michael Fletcher.

Michael “Fletch” Fletcher passed away a few weeks ago. He had been diagnosed with Multiple System Atrophy (MSA) for quite some time and with the support of his wife Dori, he had put up a very courageous battle. Sadly, it took him in the end. A Private Service was held recently and a scattering of his ashes will occur when COVID-19 lockdowns are over. He and Dori were living near Ingham in Far North QLD.

Mick was on 22 Appy and his RAAF career was pretty well centred in the Richmond area. Nonetheless, the Mirage World was lucky enough to have him within their ranks when he served at 3SQN in Butterworth circa late 1975 to 1977. He was an extremely popular and well respected “Good Mate to Many”. Our deepest condolences are extended to Dori & Family.

Sorry, no further details.

Des Blagg

John McDougall advises us of the sad passing of Des Blagg. Des was an Instrument Fitter on No. 14 Appy Course and passed away on the 10th August 2020. His funeral service was held on Wednesday, 16th Sep at 2.00pm, at Morleys Funerals in Townsville. A Streaming Link was set up for those who could not attend and also due to COVID distancing and numbers.

Additionally, Des's wife Val has not been well. She returned home from hospital recently. We wish her all the best and a hasty recovery.

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1 AD radar.

We don't know when and we don't know all the names, only a few, if you can help, please do.

Middle Row 2nd from left. Ray Thomas, 8th from left, Jim Thatcher.
Front row 1st left Phil Baldock.

Late one afternoon, the Air Force folks out at Tindal were very surprised to see a Cessna 182 landing at their "secret" base. They immediately impounded the aircraft and hauled the pilot into an interrogation room. The pilot's story was that he took off from Darwin, got lost, and spotted the Base just as he was about to run out of fuel. The Air Force started a full ASIO background check on the pilot and held him overnight during the investigation. By the next day, they were finally convinced that the pilot really was lost and wasn't a spy. They fuelled up his aircraft, gave him a terrifying "you-did-not-see-a-base" briefing, complete with threats of spending the rest of his life in prison, told him Darwin was up that-a-way on such-and-such a heading, and sent him on his way. The day after that though, to the total disbelief of the Air Force, the same Cessna showed up again. Once again, the SP's surrounded the plane... Only this time there were two people in the plane. The same pilot jumped out and said, "Do anything you want to me, but my wife is in the plane and you have to tell her where I was last night!"

1AD Quad Squad, 1973 - 1974

From left Ken Honeysett, Colin Muir, Alan Arthur, Max Pola, Don't know, Don't know.

The guys were setting up the Quad Radar after a total electronic and mechanical overhaul; in readiness for installation at another RAAF or Navy airfield.

John Corcoran, Vietnam, 1967

John Cureton, a RAAF Radio Technician, points out his room in a new quarters building to two Vietnamese housemaids. Before the new buildings were constructed by No. 5 Airfield Construction Squadron, the men had been living in cramped civilian buildings.

Now - I know what you're all thinking…….

Bob May.

Flying Officer, Robert “Bob” May, spent a lot of his Air Force time flying Caribous. Known fondly as “Father” to people who knew him, (we were about 25 at the time, he was a REAL old bloke at 45) he was very popular and always had time to talk to the troops. Bob stayed a Flying Officer for many years, seems he wasn’t interested in rank, just wanted to fly aeroplanes.

Here Bob looks on while Special Forces soldier Private Eddie Bennett, of Arizona, USA, secures a load of cows for Manh Buk into their crates at Pleiku Airport. 1966

Bob looks on while loady Keith Bosley, of Casino, NSW, tries a dress against this very old, pipe smoking Montagnard tribeswoman, at Pleiku Airport, Vietnam. The dress, along with toys and other clothing was a gift from the Support Command Headquarters in Victoria,

Sadly, Bob May left us some time ago and Keith Bosley left us in August 2014.

Montagnard people gather around a RAAF Caribou pilot and crew, when their aircraft called in at Plei Mrong (Vietnam) in 1967 and distributed toys and clothing, gifts from the staff of Support Command Headquarters in Victoria. Identified left to right: Bob May, Keith Bosley, Gordon Nicholls and Michael Lewino.

Notice the dress of the Montagnard males and the large baskets carried on their backs. Not long after the pic above was taken, the aircraft ran into a ditch on landing and was extensively damaged. It was returned to Australia on board the Navy's Carrier, HMAS Sydney and then carried to De Havilland's for repairs. It was returned to 38 Sqn but for quite a while refused to fly

like a good aircraft should and after being tagged with hundreds of cotton tell-tales, it was found bits had been put back together incorrectly. This was fixed and it returned to fly normally.

It was finally retired from RAAF service in 2009 and stored in the open at the Army's base at Oakey. It was bought by HARS of Shellharbour Airport, near Wollongong, in 2011 and it is hoped HARS will continue to look after and fly the aircraft for many years to come.

2 AD Instruments, 1978.

Don't know any of the faces. Can anyone help?

"Chook Henry and "Simmo" at Kuantan, 1978.

Airman's Ball, Laverton, 1988

Dwayne O'Connor sent us this pic.

Dwayne says: "*A fine group of men at The Airmen's Ball, Laverton Airmen's Mess, maybe '88. You might be forgiven for thinking this lot were trained killers from the SAS, but no, they were far more dangerous: Radtechs and Lineys from 1AD and Point Cook. That's Mick Windsor in white, Mark Jobson to his right and my good self behind him. 3rd from left – Mick Windsor? I'm tapping-*

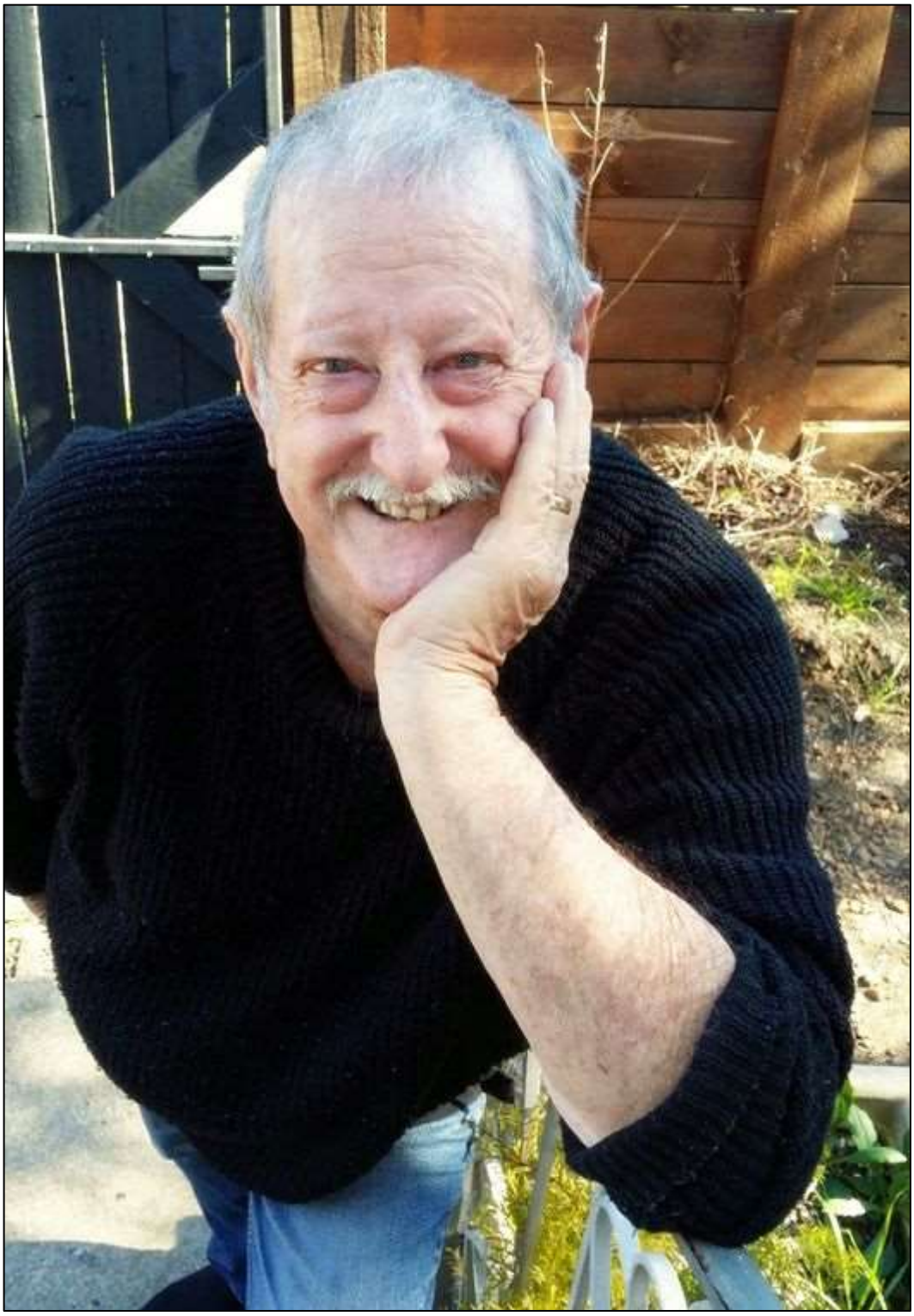
out on the other names, but you'd reckon the guy in front "adjusting" himself would have to be a Liney – Stan Cutler?. Note the plastic jug of something and Coke - pretty much one standard drink back in those days. Anyone else there that night? I can't really remember it, so I must have had a good time!"

481 Instruments 1973

Once again, no names, help please!

I can say that – I'm a Tigers supporter!

Wayne Smith.



Gardens a go-go.

Butterworth, 1993.

Standing L-R: Heather Paton, Brett Mulcahy, Paul Gillan, Shane Murphy,
Seated L-R: Chris Hudson, Dinger Bell Don Hope, ET.

Meaningful Misconceptions

Esplanade--v., to attempt an explanation while drunk.

3 Squadron Officers – 1986

Seated L-R: Mel Hupfeld, John Herbertson, Ross Fox, Bruce Mouatt, Wayne Schultz, Jenny Fantini.
Standing L-R: J.P. Conlan, Mark Pearsall, Pat Barfield, Doug Nutt, Fred Hayes, don't know, Rod Equid.

Globemaster Crew.

Defence News

For the first time in 12 years, an all-female crew from No. 36 Squadron has taken to the skies in a C-17A Globemaster III. The mission in July 2020 was captained by Flight Lieutenant Caitlin Rytenskild and supported by co-pilot Flying Officer Gemma Dorn and loadmaster Corporal Charlotte Roe.

Flight Lieutenant Rytenskild said the image of the inaugural 2008 all-female mission was her inspiration growing up in Eltham, Victoria. “Throughout high school I was interested in aviation and started flying lessons with a friend,” Flight Lieutenant Rytenskild said.

"As it was such a male-dominated industry at the time, my mum was on the lookout for news that included a female pilot. She came across an article about RAAF women who flew the C-17A and cut it out of the paper to give to me. "I didn't understand why women flying was any different to men flying, but this was the first picture I found with female pilots in uniform so I put it up on my wall."

Flight Lieutenant Rytenskild said she would look at the picture while studying. I never thought I would end up flying with the second all-female crew on the same aircraft over a decade later. "I would often look at these impressive women and wonder how they got to where they were," she said.

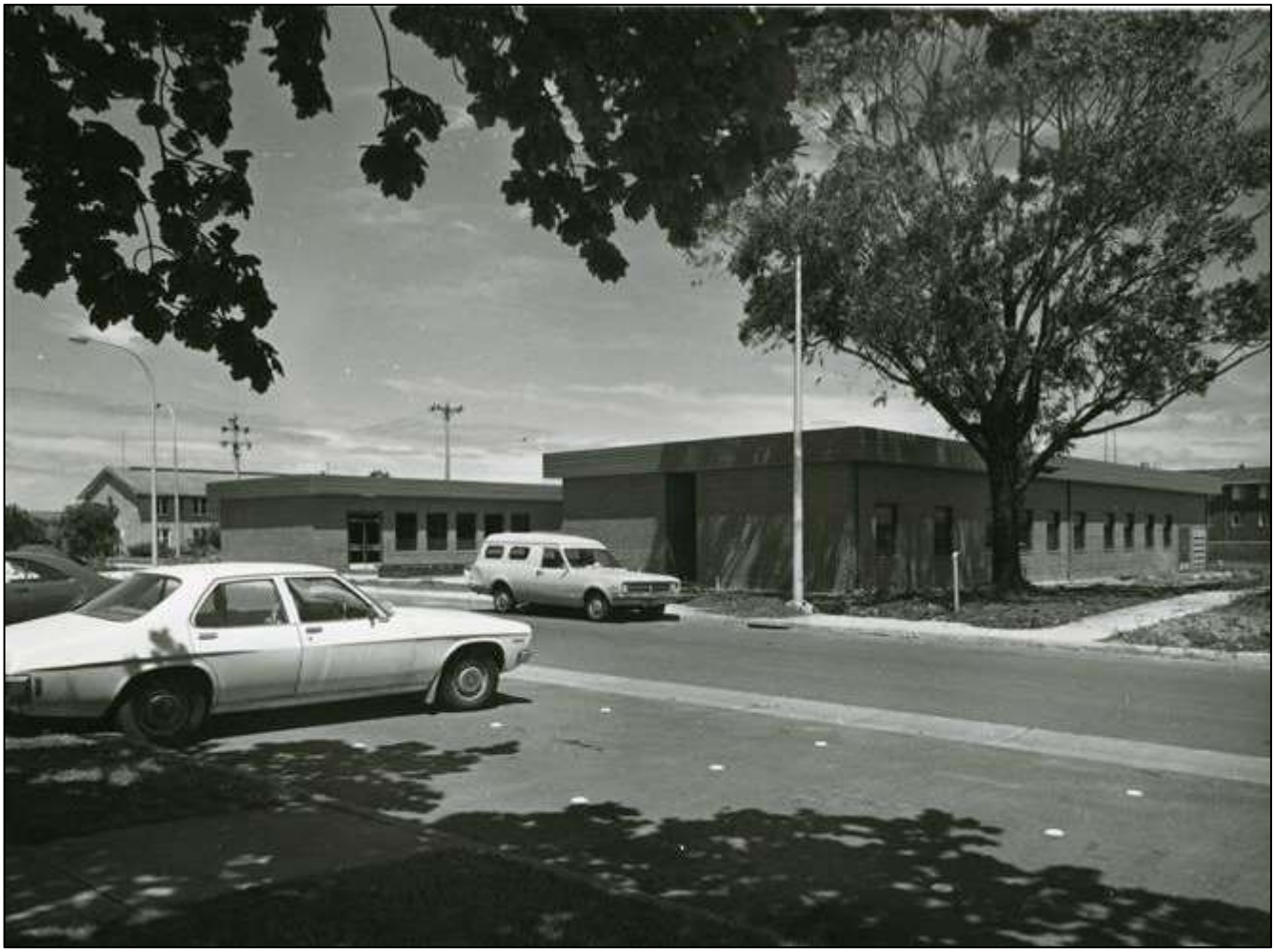
L-R: Gemma Dorn, Caitlin Rytenskild, Charlotte Roe.

Flight Lieutenant Rytenskild has been a member of the Australian Women Pilots Association (AWPA) for five years, since being introduced to the organisation by her mentor. "I was blown away at my first AWPA Conference in 2015. I had never seen so many female pilots in one location," Flight Lieutenant Rytenskild said. "There I met young women who wanted to join the RAAF, as well as older women who told me they wished they could have joined when they were my age but it was never an option for them."

Over the years at No. 36 Squadron, Flight Lieutenant Rytenskild received support from her supervisors and colleagues. "They have been kind and understanding – they have been there to support me and talk things through when I needed it," she said. "I absolutely love what I do and try to ignore the fact that I'm the only female C-17A captain at No. 36 Squadron.

“I’ve grown to be confident and comfortable and have been lucky enough to know other reassuring female pilots at Amberley squadrons. “I focus on the fact I am one of the squadron’s many C-17A captains and work to be the best one I can be, while also mentoring the captains of the future.”

Tottenham, 1973



Negligent--adj., describes a condition in which you absentmindedly answer the door in your nightie.

Officers Mess

Sgt's Mess.

o

Airman's Mess.

Another rubbish story.

His name was Fleming, and he was a poor Scottish farmer. One day, while trying to make a living for his family, he heard a cry for help coming from a nearby bog. He dropped his tools and ran to the bog. There, mired to his waist in black muck, was a terrified boy, screaming and struggling to free himself. Farmer Fleming saved the lad from what could have been a slow and terrifying death.

The next day, a fancy carriage pulled up to the Scotsman's sparse surroundings. An elegantly dressed nobleman stepped out and introduced himself as the father of the boy Farmer Fleming had saved. "I want to repay you," said the nobleman. "You saved my son's life." "No, I can't accept payment for what I did," the Scottish farmer replied, waving off the offer. At that moment, the farmer's own son came to the door of the family hovel. "Is that your son?" the nobleman asked. "Yes," the farmer replied proudly. "I'll make you a deal. Let me take him and give him a good education. "If the lad is anything like his father, he'll grow to a man you can be proud of." And that he did. In time, Farmer Fleming's son graduated from St Mary's Hospital Medical School in London and went on to become known throughout the world as the noted Sir Alexander Fleming, the discoverer of Penicillin. Years afterward, the nobleman's son was stricken with pneumonia. What saved him? - Penicillin.

The name of the nobleman? Lord Randolph Churchill. His son's name? Sir Winston Churchill.

Most of us are familiar with the basic penicillin legend, a London bacteriologist notices something unusual about the mould growing in an uncleaned Petri dish and ends up making one of the greatest medical discoveries of all time. What if the only reason this medical pioneer, the son of a poor farmer, had been able to receive the education that allowed him to make this monumental scientific breakthrough was his father's chance encounter years earlier with another (future) giant of 20th century history? And, in a delicious conclusion, the scientist later used his discovery to save his benefactor's life? Wouldn't that be an astounding and inspiring coincidence?

It would. If only it were true.

The first clue that should make us sceptical of this too-good-to-be-true tale is that, like a lot of these stories, it exists in multiple forms.

The facts of none of these versions jibe with what we know of these people's lives. No Churchill biography mentions young Winston's chance encounter with a Fleming, father or son. Alexander Fleming was born in a remote, rural part of Scotland and lived on an 800-acre farm that was a mile from the nearest house — not the sort of place where a vacationing Winston would have been likely to wander, or to be discovered by anyone if he had. As well, Winston was seven years older than Alexander, so young Alexander would probably have been too small to physically rescue the older and larger Winston from drowning.

Also, Alexander Fleming did not leave the farm to rush off to medical school to become the doctor he had supposedly always longed to be. In fact, young Alec (as he was then known) departed for London when he was 14, where his older brother Tom had studied medicine and opened a practice. Alec attended the Polytechnic School in Regent Street; after graduating, he entered the business world at the urging of his brother, worked as a clerk for a shipping firm for a few years, then joined a Scottish regiment when the Boer War broke out. It was not until after all of this that Alec decided to try his hand at medical school, and even then it was the encouragement of his older brother that was the deciding factor, not a lifelong yearning on Alec's part to become a doctor. Additionally, Alec's medical school education was financed with a £250 inheritance from a recently-deceased uncle, not an endowment from a grateful Randolph Churchill.

Nor is the other end of this tale true. Winston Churchill did come down with a sore throat and a high fever while in Tunis (on the way home from his December 1943 meeting with Franklin Roosevelt and Josef Stalin in Tehran) and the diagnosis of the medical team called in from Cairo

by his personal physician (Charles Wilson, later Lord Moran) was pneumonia. According to Wilson's biography, Churchill was treated with sulphonamide (an antimicrobial, but one unrelated to penicillin) and digitalis (for his heart) and sent to bed to rest. By the time a specialist, Professor John Scadding, was flown in from London, Churchill was already well on his way to recovery. In short, Alexander Fleming was neither present nor consulted when Churchill was diagnosed with pneumonia, nor was penicillin used to treat the British prime minister.

And - according to the Churchill Archives Centre in Cambridge, Churchill publicly denied the Fleming story in 1946.

As an aside: Alexander Fleming's life has already been the subject of considerable mythologizing. His discovery of penicillin was not the instant boon to medicine that we now assume it was. In fact, Fleming himself did not realize the significance of his findings, thinking he had developed a mere antiseptic that was too slow-acting and too difficult to produce in large quantities. Fleming failed to test his penicillin thoroughly and wrote a tepidly-received paper about it, and moved on to other work. That ended his real involvement with the "greatest medical advance of the 20th (or any other) century." In 1935, two specialists, Howard Florey, head of Oxford's William Dunn School of Pathology, and Ernst Chain, a Cambridge biochemistry PhD, took up where Fleming's paper left off and spent several years at the arduous laboratory work of refining and testing penicillin to produce the world's first effective antibiotic.

Fleming visited the two men at the Dunn School after they published their first paper on penicillin in 1940 (by which time Chain thought Fleming was dead) and didn't reappear on the scene until after penicillin had proved itself invaluable during World War II. The press lauded the newly-emerged Fleming as the lone genius responsible for the miracle of penicillin and he was awarded numerous honours, including a knighthood and the 1945 Nobel Prize for medicine.

(The Nobel Prize committee, at least, was on the ball and named Florey and Chain as co-recipients of the honour.)

Flabbergasted--adj., appalled over how much weight you have gained.

Computers and stuff.

Sam Houliston.

Welcome again to **Jaycar** as the sponsor of Sam's "Computers and Stuff" page. As they are prepared to support us, please show your appreciation and support them. There's always a store near you, click HERE to find the closest.

What's the difference between digital and optical zoom?

How-To Geek

Zoom, like a lot of camera specs, is a bit more complicated than advertising campaigns would have you believe. Smartphone manufacturers like Samsung are now boasting 10x, 50x, or even 100x zoom. But is this even possible? Let's look at the differences between optical and digital zoom.

What Does Zoom Actually Mean?

What is zoom, and what does it mean to have a 5x or 10x? In terms of optical physics, not a lot because there's no such thing as zoom.

Lens magnification (how much a lens magnifies distant objects) is a function of its focal length and the resulting field of view. A lens with a longer focal length (relative to the size of the image sensor) has a smaller field of view. This makes distant objects appear closer than they would through a lens with a shorter focal length.

There are enough factors at play that lenses aren't sold based on how much they magnify objects; rather, they're sold based on their focal length.

Zoom, as we use it now, is basically a marketing concept popularized by compact cameras. Originally, it was the ratio between the shortest and longest focal lengths of a lens. So, a 10mm-

100mm lens had 10x zoom, while a 25mm-100mm lens had a 4x zoom. This meant a lens with 10x zoom didn't necessarily make things look 10 times bigger.

Smartphone manufacturers, however, use zoom slightly differently. A 1x zoom is broadly accepted as the field of view of the main camera. Smartphones like the iPhone 11 Pro add an even wider lens and call it a 0.5x zoom, rather than resetting 1x to the new widest angle.

Unlike with compact cameras, this means you can expect mostly the same rough magnification with different 10x-zoom smartphones.

If you want to know more, you can check out this piece on how zoom specs are calculated. All you really need to know, though, is zoom depends on the underlying focal length of a lens and the size of the sensor—and that it's a bit disconnected from reality.

But what's the difference between optical and real zoom (I'll keep using this word for the sake of convenience, but what I really mean is "apparent magnification" or "narrower relative field of view")?

How Optical Zoom Works

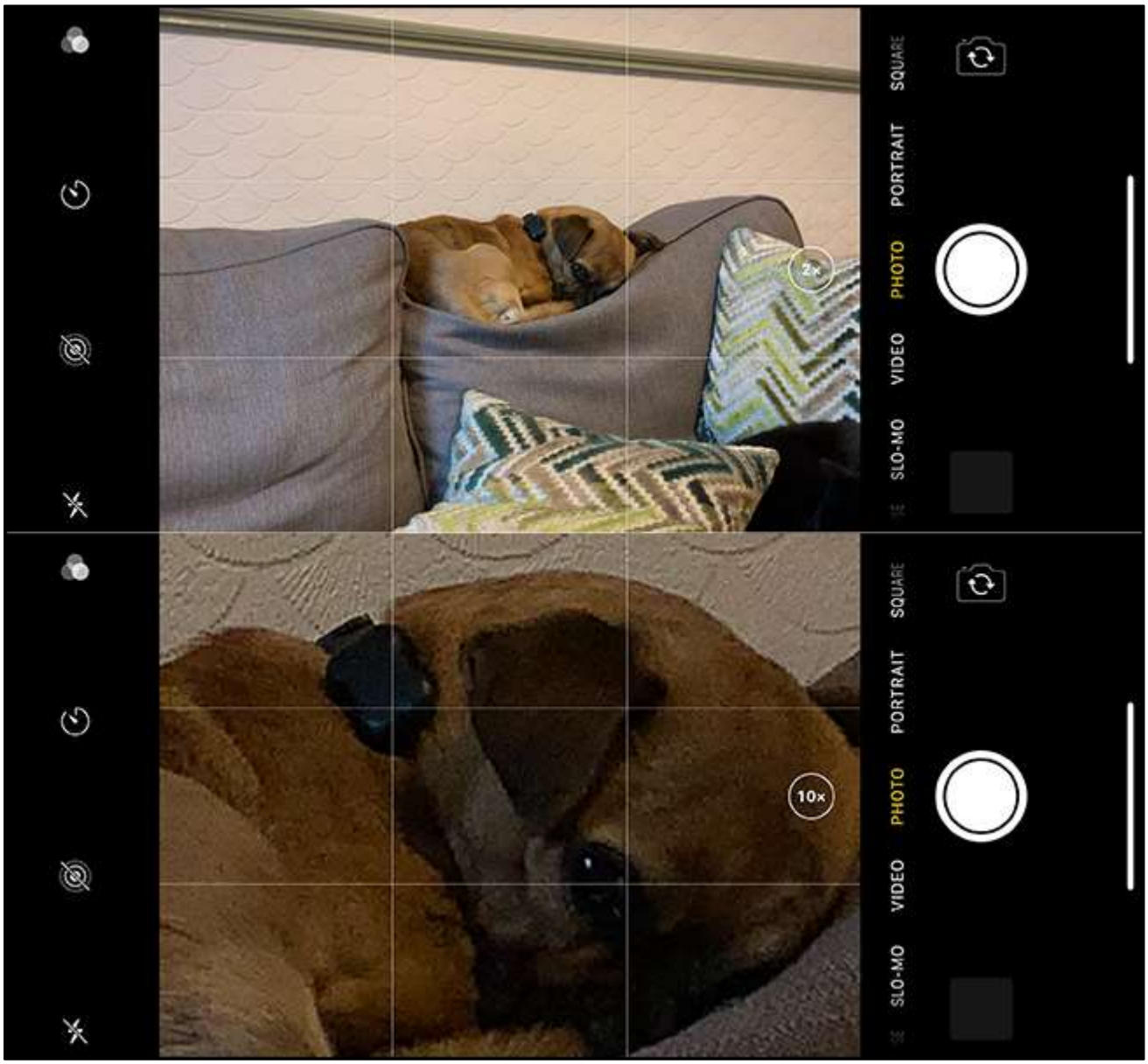
Optical zoom is when the physical properties of a lens genuinely magnify distant objects. For example, a telescope is all optical zoom. If you view the moon through one, it looks bigger. There's no loss in quality—objects just appear closer.

The optical zoom comes from lenses with long focal lengths that are at least relative to the camera's sensor size. A long telephoto lens for a DSLR, like those you see sports photographers using at games, has a focal length of between 500-1,000mm. That's why they're so hefty. On smaller cameras, the focal length can be shorter. Compact cameras can get great optical zoom with 100mm lenses. They're still pretty big, but far smaller than the telescope types used at football games.

In smartphones, manufacturers have started using periscope lenses for better optical zoom. They've been able to put 5x zoom lenses (roughly equivalent to the magnification of a 100mm lens on a DSLR, so pretty good) in their flagship phones without making them any thicker. This a genuinely exciting development. However, 5x is still a long way from 100x, so, how are manufacturers getting there with their claims?

How Digital Zoom Works

As mentioned previously, zoom is a hazy concept. Digital zoom takes full advantage of that vagueness. In essence, digital zoom is just cropping a photo so the objects in it appear larger. no additional image information is captured. Take the shot below from an iPhone Xs, for example. This phone has a 2x optical zoom, but a 10x digital zoom. The zoomed shot has a noticeably lower resolution.



That's the problem with digital zoom. While optical zoom magnifies without losing image quality, digital zoom reduces it. And the more you zoom in, the worse the image quality gets. Digital zoom, however, is having a bit of a moment. Optical zoom is expensive, both in terms of production cost and the trade-offs necessary to add it to a smartphone. Periscope lenses are a relatively new development (at least in smartphones), so there's still some figuring out to do. Thus, smartphone manufacturers are using the following tricks to make digital zoom better and minimize quality loss:

- Using incredibly high-resolution sensors: Samsung's Galaxy S20 has a 64 MP telephoto camera. Such a high-resolution sensor means there's more image to crop and, therefore, more digital zoom to be had.
- Pixel binning: Combining multiple pixels into a single super-pixel offers better quality on digitally zoomed-in images, rather than just cropping afterward.

- AI and machine learning: These are showing a lot of promise in the area photography. Camera manufacturers have been able to use it to automatically increase the quality of digitally zoomed-in images.
- High levels of digital zoom, though, aren't possible without optical zoom. These crazy 50x and 100x zooms are only possible because they're a hybrid of optical and digital zoom. A real optical lens does some of the heavy lifting, while the digital techniques provide more apparent zoom.
- Samsung might be pumping up its zoom numbers, but there are genuine enhancements in lens technology underlying some of the hype.
- Making the Most of Zoom
- The current focus on camera zoom in smartphones is interesting. At a certain point, though, it just gets silly.

A 5x or even a 10x optical zoom lens opens up a lot of interesting shooting options for people. It also makes dedicated cameras even more of a niche indulgence. With that kind of zoom, you can photograph your kids playing sports, wildlife in your back garden and anything else you can't physically get closer to.

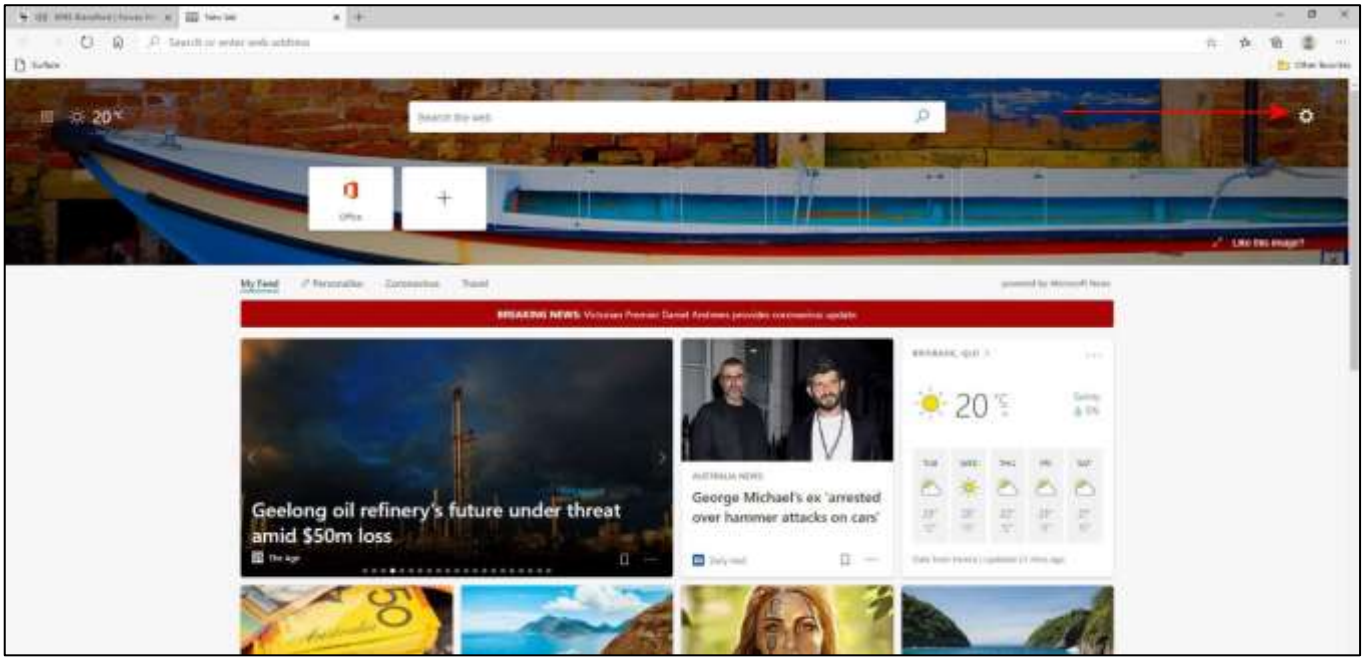
While digital zoom isn't automatically a bad thing (especially when it's not overused), there are some downsides to zooming in too much. There's the loss in image quality, of course, but also, photos just get harder to take. At 20x or 30x zoom (which is roughly equivalent to a 1,000mm on a DSLR), you have to hold your phone incredibly still to get a good shot. The slightest twitch will result in a blurry photo, and whatever you're trying to photograph moving out of frame. That's also assuming you're shooting in good lighting. In low light, you'll need a tripod for your smartphone to get anything resembling a sharp photo.

Graves with a sense of humour!

How to hide the article feed on Microsoft Edge's new tab page.

When you open a new tab in Microsoft Edge, you might be greeted with an "Informational" page full of tabloid-style news, local weather, and plenty of advertisements. If you'd rather not see this feed, it's easy to disable. Here's how.

First, open Edge and create a new tab by clicking the plus sign (+) to the right of the current tab or you can press Ctrl+T (or Command+T on Mac). On the "New Tab" page, locate the "gear" icon to the right of the page (see arrow) and click it.

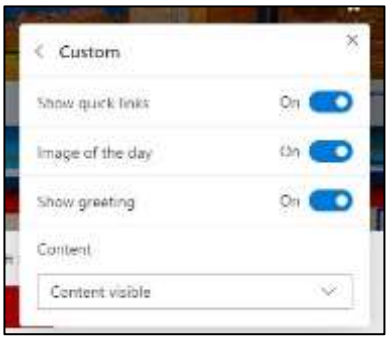


In the menu that pops up, you have several options. First, you will see that the "Page Layout" is probably currently set to "Informational".

If you'd like to quickly choose a different style with a less intrusive news feed, click "Inspirational" (which is a search bar with quick links and a fancy photograph background), or "Focused" (a search bar with quick links and no photo background).

However, both of those options will still include a "My Feed" section if you scroll down below. To completely turn off the feed, choose "Custom" from the list.

When the “Custom” menu appears, click the drop-down menu below “Content” and select “Content off.” This will turn off the “My Feed” section of the New Tab page.



Also, if you want to further simplify the New Tab page, turn off the switches beside “Show Quick Links” and “Image Of The Day.”

After that, if you turned all the custom options off, you’ll be left with a plain Microsoft logo and a simple search bar.

Much less cluttered—now your mind can breathe again. Happy browsing!

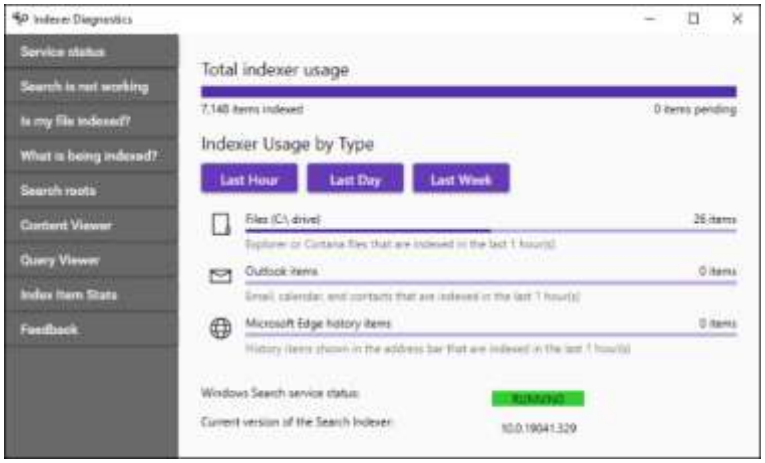
How to troubleshoot the Windows search indexer on Windows 10

Do you have a problem with the search function in Windows 10’s Start menu or File Explorer? Whether Windows can’t find your files, indexing is using too much CPU or search isn’t working, Microsoft’s Indexer Diagnostics tool can help fix your problem.

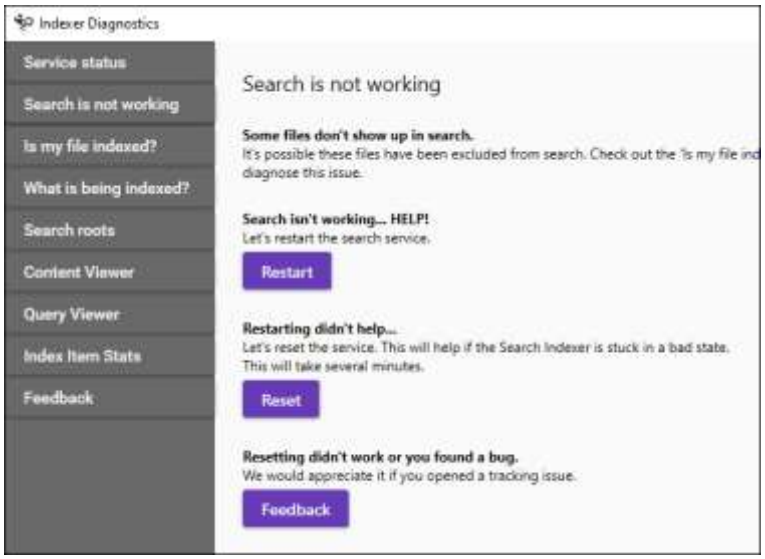
This tool provides insight into the inner workings of the Windows Search indexer service and it can help you identify problems and fixes. It’s similar to the Diagnostic Data Viewer—a power user tool that provides extra information you can’t normally see about Windows 10’s internals.

To get started, download Microsoft’s Indexer Diagnostics tool from the Microsoft Store. Launch it and give it administrator access—it needs those permissions to access and updated the Windows search indexer.

Click between the tabs in the left pane to view information about the indexing service, its status, which files it's indexing, and what it's searching. There are also various troubleshooting tools on this pane. The main pane is "Service Status," which will show you how many items the indexer has in its database, and how many files it's indexed in the last hour, day, and week.



If Windows search isn't working at all, click "Search Is Not Working" in the left pane. Use the "Restart" button to quickly restart the search service to fix problems. If that doesn't help, click the "Reset" button to reset the state of the indexing service. This will take several minutes. As the interface points out, a reset "will help if the Search Indexer is stuck in a bad state."



If search can't find a file, click "Is my file being indexed?", browse to the file you want Windows to find, and click "Verify." Windows will tell you whether the file is found in the search index and, if not, will explain why the search indexer is ignoring it so you can address any problems.

Other tools available in Indexer Diagnostics include:

- What is being indexed? – Displays the paths being indexed and any excluded paths that aren't being indexed. You can add and remove included and excluded paths here.
- Search roots – Shows you where Windows will begin searching—for example, in the root of the C:\ directory.
- Content Viewer – View the files the indexer is indexing, and the precise time it indexed them. For example, if the search indexer was using a lot of CPU at a specific time, you can see what files it was indexing at that time and consider excluding them from "What is being indexed?".
- Query Viewer – Monitor what search queries are being sent to the Windows search indexer. You can click "Start Listening," perform searches and see exactly what's going on in the background.

- Index Item Stats – View how many items are indexed per each app on your system. You can also export details about the index to a CSV file.
- Feedback – This tab lets you collect traces and logs that will monitor the indexer's resource usage and functions. There's a "File Bug" button here that will let you file reports about problems with the indexer with Microsoft.

Many of these functions are only useful for developers working on the search indexer or people sending bug reports to those developers, but it's still great to have such insight into the inner workings of Windows 10.

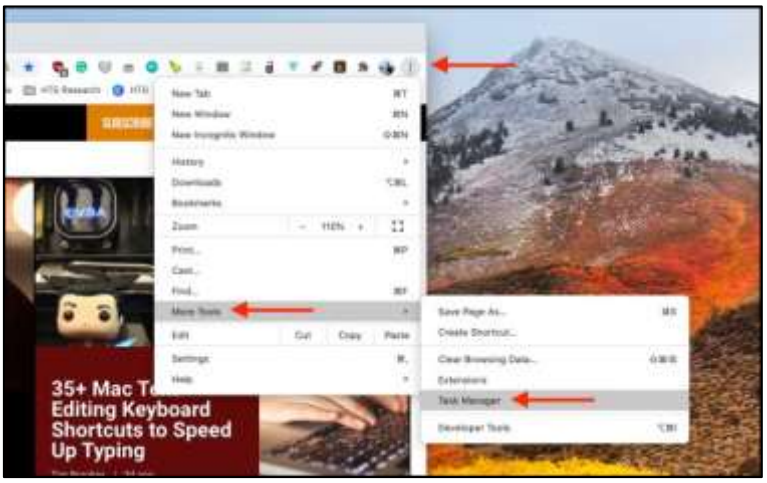
How to find and disable resource-hungry Chrome extensions.

How-To Geek

Google Chrome is a resource-intensive browser. You might be used to closing tabs to free up RAM, but extensions run constantly in the background and take a lot of resources. Here's how to find and disable resource-hungry Chrome extensions.

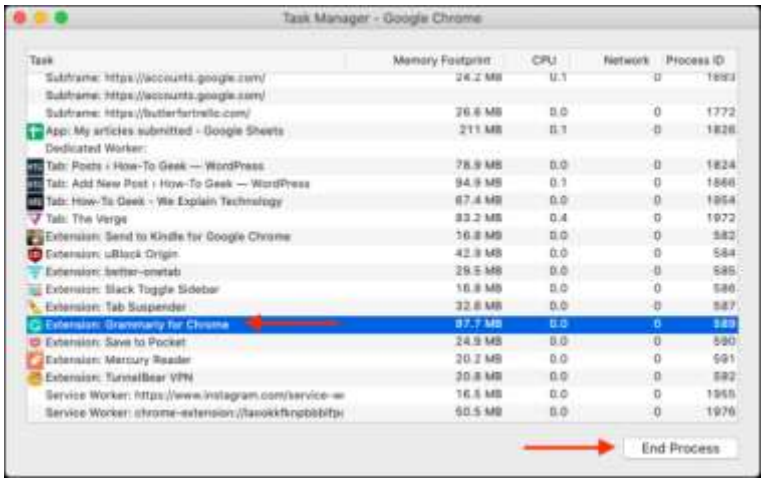
Just like your Windows or Mac computer, Chrome has its own task manager built-in. From here, you can see how many resources a tab, app, or extension is taking up. To get here, click the "Menu" button (3 dots) found in the top-right corner of the Chrome toolbar and go to More Tools > Task Manager.

Here, you'll find all active extensions at the bottom of the list. You can also click the "Memory Footprint" tab to sort all processes based on the RAM usage.



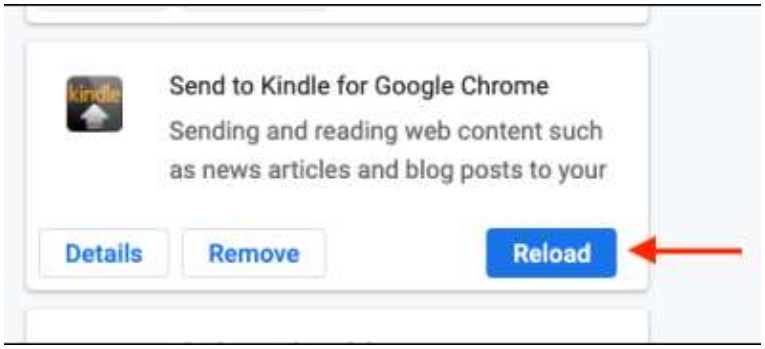
Now, go through this list and identify memory-hungry extensions. There could be extensions that are taking up well over 500 MB RAM. It's not unusual for small extensions to use 50-100 MB RAM.

You can't disable or delete extensions from here (more on that later), but you can temporarily disable the extensions. If an extension has gone rogue and is using a lot more memory than it should, you can select it and then click the "End Process" button to stop it from running.



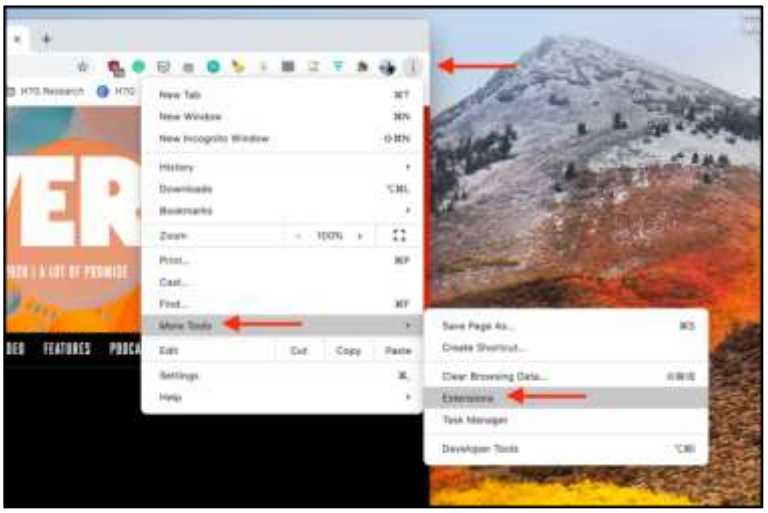
The extension will now crash, and you won't find it in the Chrome toolbar. When you restart the Chrome browser, the extension will work again. To reload a crashed extension, go to Menu > More Tools > Extensions and click the "Reload" button.

During the process of finding resource-hungry Chrome extensions, you might come across some extensions that you have no use for. You might also come across extensions that you will need to delete because they are using too much RAM. To disable or delete an extension, click the Menu button (top right) and then go to More Tools > Extensions.

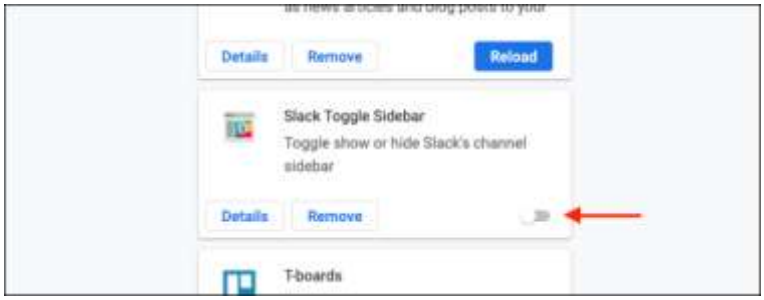


Here, you'll see all your installed extensions in a grid. From the top, you can search for a particular extension. To disable a Chrome extension, click the corresponding toggle button. The extension will disappear from the Chrome toolbar, and you won't be able to access it.

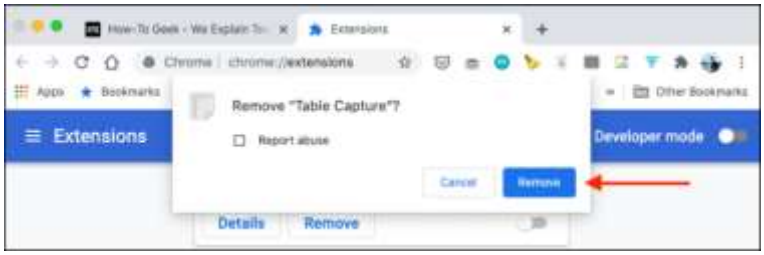
Although disabled, the extension is still installed. If you want to delete it from Chrome for good, click the “Remove” button.



Then, from the popup, confirm your decision by clicking the “Remove” button.



The Chrome extension will now be removed and it won’t hog up your computer’s RAM anymore.



Free Software.

One of the most amazing things about the Internet age is how we can download useful programs and apps to complete most any task we can imagine at absolutely no cost whatsoever. But, free downloads can often have a dark side. Most websites offering free software downloads seem to

be plastered with misleading ads, often in the form of fake “Download” buttons. These misleading ads attempt to trick users into visiting completely irrelevant websites by placing a honking fake “Download” button on the ad itself. Folks then click on the fake Download button thinking that’s the button they need to click in order to download the program they came for.

These unethical free download sites also use another trick to earn money while offering free downloads: They attach add-on programs to the program the user came to retrieve. These add-on programs are usually completely unrelated to the program listed on the download page. They are “added on” to the requested program because the company behind them paid the download site’s owner a fee for doing it. In addition to the irritation of finding out you just downloaded a program that you neither need or want, these add-on programs are often malware that hijack your web browser and/or refuse to be uninstalled from your system.

The vast majority of these add-on programs can be removed from the download procedure by unchecking a box on the download page, but that box is often placed in a location where it’s easy to miss by a casual observer. Even worse, it’s sometimes placed on a different page and hidden behind an obscure link.

But the news about free downloads isn’t all bad…

There are a handful of reputable free download sites that offer clean, no add-on downloads on pages that don’t have misleading ads on them. One of these is OlderGeeks.com and it’s a great spot to look whenever you need to download a free program to solve whatever problem happens to pop up. The owners of OlderGeeks developed the site from the ground up with the intention of offering clean free software downloads without all the negatives that come with using other similar websites.

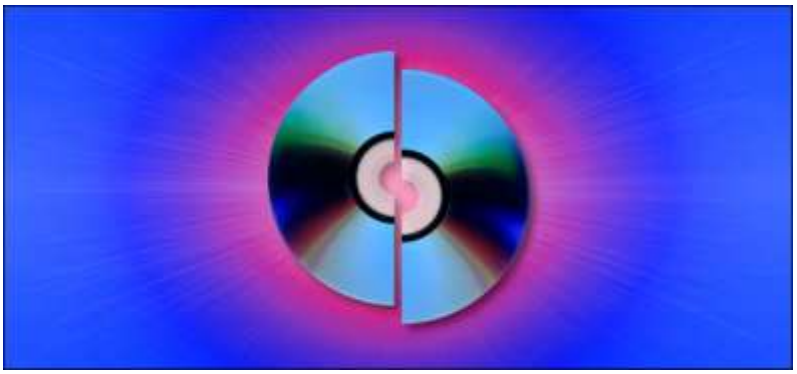
You won’t find any ads on the OlderGeeks website and you definitely won’t find any unwanted programs being attached to the programs you download from the site. The site is funded from donations. Everyone is welcome to take advantage of the no-ads and no add-on download experience at OlderGeeks at no charge whatsoever.

You can find the site HERE

M

The CDs you burned are going bad, here's what you need to do.

If you used a computer between 1997 and 2005, you probably burned valuable data or music to at least one recordable CD (CD-R) or DVD-R. Unfortunately, these have a limited lifespan and many have already become unreadable. That's why it's important to back up your recordable discs before it's too late—here's how to do it.



CD-Rs and DVD-Rs store data on a layer of dye that is melted by the laser when the data is written. This dye layer isn't completely stable and can chemically break down over time, causing data loss. Also, the reflective layer on the top of the disc can oxidize, making the data difficult to read. As a result, many CD-R and DVD-Rs burned in the late '90s and early '00s are now unreadable in modern optical disc drives. And for those that remain, the clock is ticking.

Estimates on the lifespan of CD-R and DVD-Rs vary wildly, from between two and 100 years. In 2004, the U.S. Library of Congress sponsored a study that estimated the shelf life of recordable discs available at that time. It simulated the aging of CD-R and DVD-Rs stored in perfect environmental conditions (that is, a room temperature of 50 percent humidity with no sunlight, and no rough handling). The study concluded that most recordable discs stored in ideal conditions would last at least 30 years, but the results varied wildly by brand. However, it also stated that "discs exposed to more severe conditions of temperature and humidity would be expected to experience a shorter life."

So, if you store your CD-R or DVD-Rs in a hot attic, you might find a higher portion of them have gone bad. If you have a batch of 30 vintage consumer-grade CD-Rs, you might expect a few of them to be unreadable, however, it depends on the quality of the disc, the type of dye used, the speed at which they were recorded, and how they were stored.

In 2010, the Canadian Conservation Institute published a detailed analysis of CD-R and DVD-R longevity that broke down estimated lifespans based on the dye and reflective layer composition. Like the Library of Congress report, the estimates varied wildly, from between five and 100 years, depending on disc composition. Unfortunately, the 100-year-minimum lifespan estimate only applies to expensive, high-end gold-backed CD-Rs that very few people used.

Even under ideal conditions, there's still cause for alarm. Even if a consumer-quality recordable disc has been stored in the perfect place, it might last (on average) about 30 years. Many recordable discs are already 15-25 years old, which means it's time to back them up now.

To back up your old CD-Rs or DVD-Rs, you'll need a computer and a compatible CD or DVD optical drive to read the discs. Some people have had more success using older drives, claiming they tend to read older discs better than modern ones. This is anecdotal evidence, though as older drives can be hard to get, unless you find one on eBay. If you decide to look for an older model, focus on the big-name brands. Sony, for example, was known for making high-quality drives. Of course, whether a vintage drive will work with a modern computer is another issue, entirely.

If you'd like to try a newer drive to read your discs, you can easily purchase one online. Most new optical drives should work just fine, as long as a CD-R or DVD-R hasn't begun to degrade.

There are several ways in which you can copy the data from your CD-R and DVD-Rs.

Option 1: Copy the Data Directly

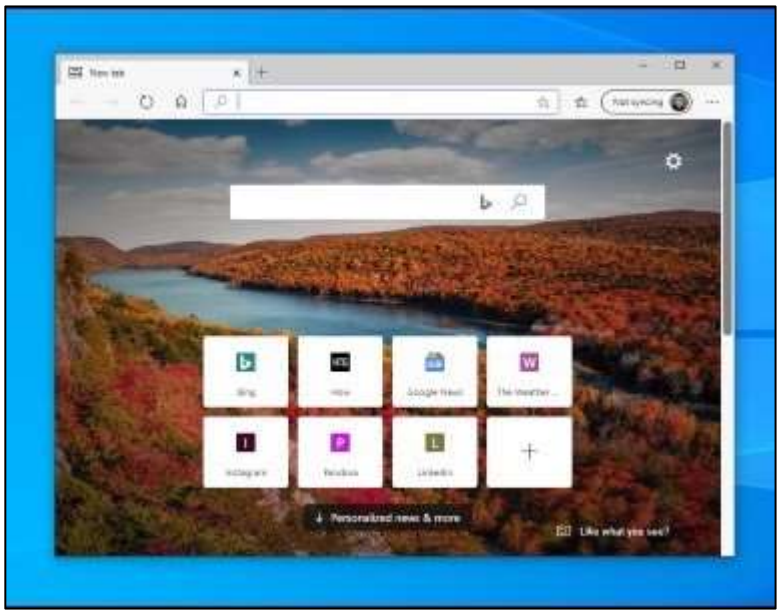
If your PC or Mac recognizes the data on your CD-R and DVD-Rs, the easiest way to back it up is to just manually copy the files over to your hard drive or SSD. To do this, just place the CD-R or DVD-R in the optical media drive, and then open it on your computer. It's best to do this with some kind of organizational structure if you're backing up a lot of discs. For example, you could create a separate folder for the contents of each disc. Name the folder something that will identify its contents, such as "CD-R: Photos from Tom's 2002 Wedding."

Option 2: Create Disk Images

Sometimes, a CD-R or DVD-R might be from a platform you don't use anymore and you might not be able to read it properly. For example, say you burned a CD-R for a game console development kit, but Windows can't read it. In cases like those, consider making a disk image of the disc, instead. A disk image captures the entire structure of an optical disc, including all the file data and the file system (if there is one), in a way that can be replicated later on another disc, if necessary. Good utilities for making disk images include WinImage for Windows and MacOS's built-in Disk Utility app.

What you need to know about the new Microsoft Edge browser.

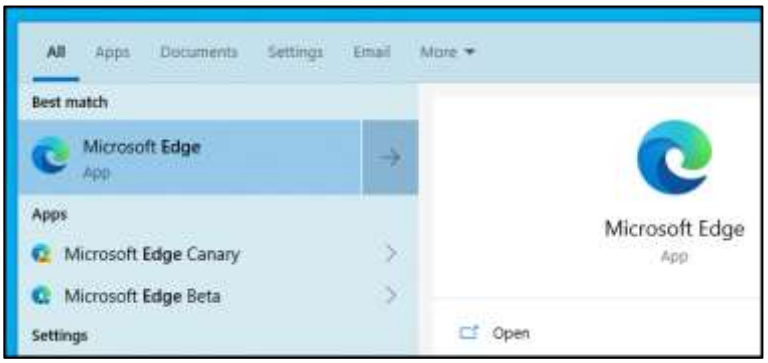
O



Are you using Windows 10? If so, Microsoft is installing a new browser on your PC via Windows Update. The new browser is still called Microsoft Edge, but it's based on the same code as Google Chrome. Chromium forms the basis of Google Chrome, so the new Edge feels very similar to Google Chrome. It includes features found in Chrome, supports Chrome browser extensions and has the same rendering engine as Google Chrome.

If a website was designed for Google Chrome and didn't work properly in the old Edge, it'll now work properly in the new Edge. Like Google Chrome, the new version of Microsoft Edge will be updated every six weeks. You won't have to wait for major versions of Windows 10 released every six months just for browser updates, as you did with the Legacy Edge browser.

When Will You Get the New Edge?

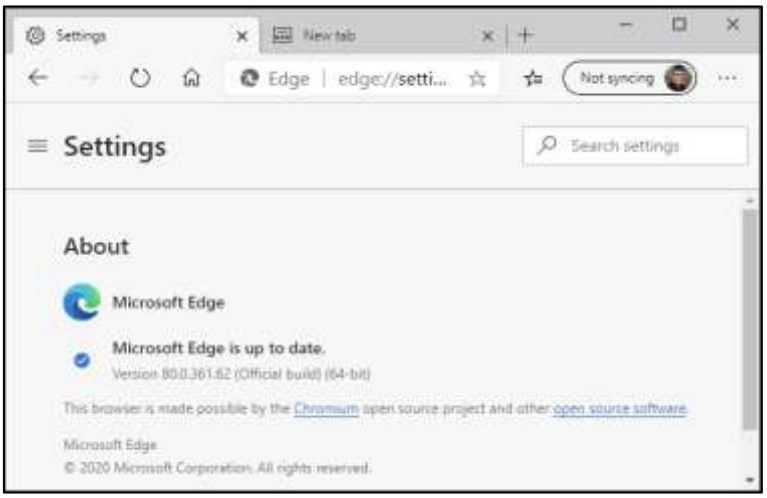


Microsoft released the stable version of its new Edge browser on Jan. 15, 2020. On June 3, 2020, Microsoft began rolling it out to all Windows 10 users via Windows Update. You can still download the new Edge from Microsoft's website (HERE) if you don't want to wait for Windows Update to install it. After installation, it will replace the old Edge browser with the new version. The original version of Edge is now officially called the "Legacy" version of Edge. Technically, the old Edge will remain installed for compatibility reasons, but Windows will hide it. You can tell you're using the new Edge because it has a new logo. It's a blue-and-green swirl rather than simply a blue "e", as the old Edge was.

Can You Stop Microsoft From Installing It?

You can stop Windows Update from installing the new Edge if you like, but we don't recommend it. Windows Update will just replace the old Edge browser on your Windows 10 PC with a new, more modern one that works better. If you ignored the old Edge, you're free to ignore the new Edge. However, Microsoft understands that some businesses will want to block their PCs from installing the new Edge. Microsoft offers a Chromium Edge update blocker toolkit (HERE) that will set a "DoNotUpdateToEdgeWithChromium" registry value, ensuring PCs don't automatically download and install the new Edge.

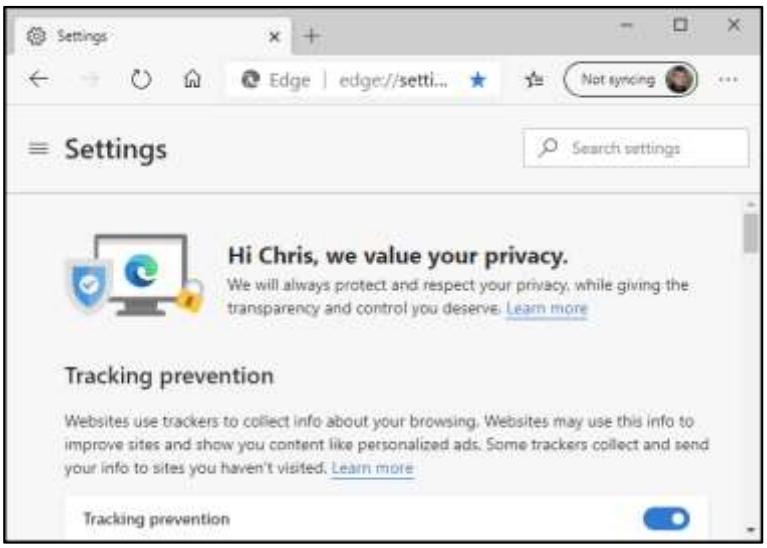
Microsoft announced it would replace Edge's EdgeHTML rendering engine with the Chromium rendering engine in December 2018. That announcement was shocking at the time, after all, Microsoft had always gone its own way with web browsers. Even EdgeHTML was originally based on the Microsoft Trident rendering engine used by Internet Explorer. Microsoft explained this decision was made "to create better web compatibility for its customers and less fragmentation of the web for all web developers.



Even if you use Google Chrome, Microsoft's work on the Edge browser will improve Chromium.

While Edge and Chrome are now pretty similar under the hood, they're still different. Edge strips out Google's services and, in many cases, replaces them with Microsoft ones. For example, Edge syncs your browser data with your Microsoft account rather than a Google one.

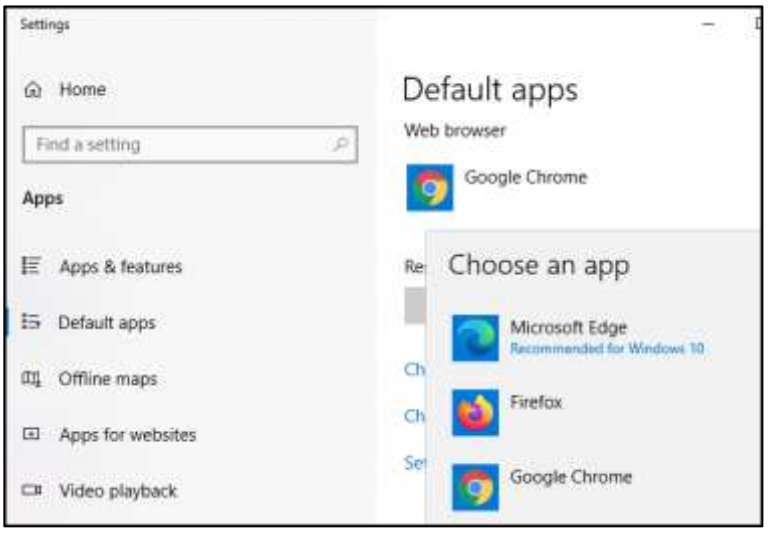
The new Edge offers some features Chrome doesn't. For example, Edge has a built-in tracking prevention feature and a potentially unwanted program (PUP) blocker. In keeping with the old Edge's interface, there's a favourites button to the right of the address bar on Edge's browser toolbar. Microsoft is also porting other features from the old Edge over, including "collections" for capturing snippets of web pages and storing them in the same place. You might prefer the new Edge if you trust Microsoft more than Google—or if you just want a browser with built-in tracking protection features and Chrome's rendering engine.



Either way, Windows 10 users who stick with the included browser will now have a more modern, capable browser with an open-source rendering engine that's updated more frequently and better supported by websites. That's a win for everyone.

Microsoft's new Chromium-based Edge browser is available for Windows 10, Windows 8.1, Windows 8, Windows 7, macOS, iPhone, iPad, and Android. Microsoft will even release a version of it for Linux in the future. Chrome already supports all these platforms, so that makes porting the new Edge much simpler for Microsoft.

While Microsoft and Google engineers are clearly cooperating, there's no truce in the browser wars. However similar their browsers now are, Google still wants you to use Chrome and Microsoft wants you to use Edge. For example, you can install extensions from the Chrome Web Store in the new Edge, but, when you do so, Microsoft will warn you that extensions from the Chrome Web Store "are unverified and may affect browser performance." After you agree to that, Google will warn you that it "recommends switching to Chrome to use extensions securely."



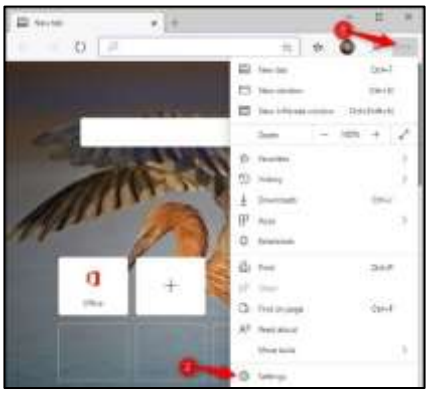
Even though Edge is based on the same underlying code as Google Chrome, many Google websites will still show popups recommending you switch to Chrome. For example, when you visit Google News in Microsoft Edge, you'll see a message saying Google recommends Chrome, encouraging you to "try a fast, secure browser with updates built in." Microsoft is recommending Chrome users switch to Edge, too, for example, Bing encourages Chrome users to download Edge. Windows 10's Settings app says the new Edge is "recommended for Windows 10" when you're choosing your default web browser, too.

Mozilla is in the line of fire, too. Microsoft is already showing "suggestion" ads in Windows 10's Start menu recommending Edge over Firefox. "Still using Firefox? Microsoft Edge is here," reads the ad.

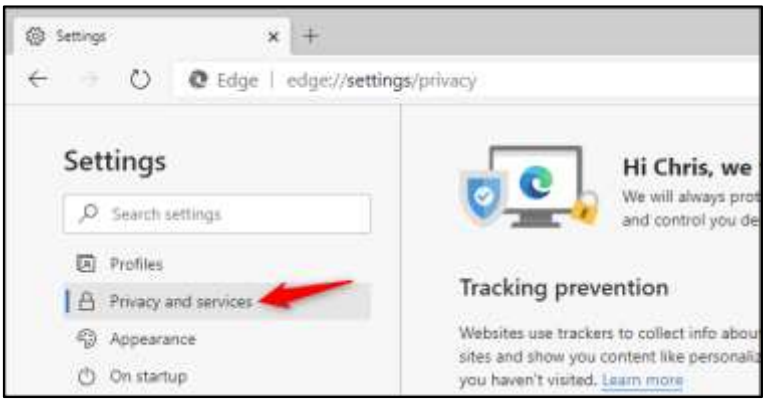
The more things change, the more they stay the same.

How to enable Microsoft Edge's new crapware blocker

To enable the crapware blocker in the new Microsoft Edge, click Menu > Settings.

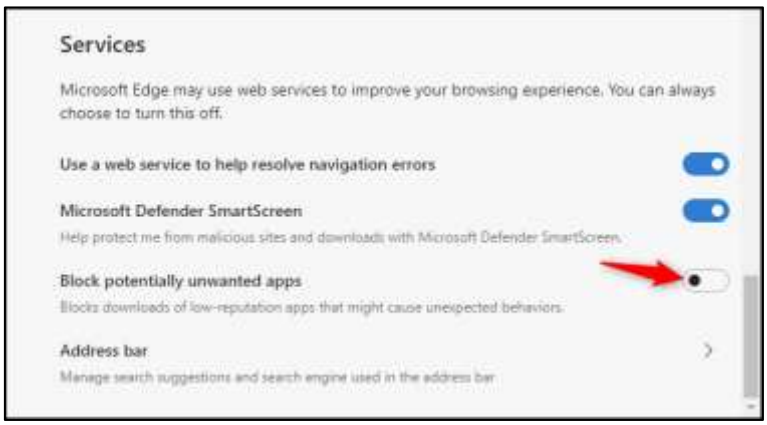


Click the “Privacy and services” option in the left pane.



Scroll down to the bottom of the list here. Under Services, enable the “Block potentially unwanted apps” option.

(If you don’t see this option, you haven’t upgraded to Microsoft Edge 80 yet. To see which version of the new Microsoft Edge you have, click menu > Help & feedback > About Microsoft Edge.)



You can now close the Settings page. Microsoft Edge will be more aggressive about blocking downloads that contain potentially obnoxious software.

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WRAAF

Unlike most British Commonwealth countries, Australia decided at the end of the 1939-45 war, to disband all its women's forces except the nursing services, but less than three years after the last of the WAAAF were demobilized in 1947, an announcement was made to Parliament by the Governor-General in February 1950, intimating the Government's intention to re-introduce a Women's Auxiliary Air Force.

In July 1950, Cabinet approved the re-establishment of a women's air force in principle and in August came recognition that women were essential components of the armed forces, in peace and war. No longer an Auxiliary, the proposed new Service was regarded as a Branch of the PAF and was known as the Woman's Australian Air Force (WAAF). In November 1950, the Minister for Air announced that a further honour had been paid to Australian servicewomen by His Majesty, King George VI, who had approved the adoption of the title ' Women's Royal Australian Air Force'.

The first recruits began training on 30 January 1951, with Wing Officer Doris Carter (right) as the service's director. She retired from the post in 1960 and was succeeded by Group Officer Lois Pitman followed by Group Officer Dawn Parsloe in 1972.

Doris Jessie Carter OBE (5 January 1912 – 28 July 1999) was prominent with the Women's Auxiliary Australian Air Force during the Second World War. She was an athlete who specialised in the high jump and was the first Australian female track and field athlete to make an Olympic Games final. She was placed 6th in the 1936 Olympics in Berlin and also competed in the 1938 British Empire Games in Sydney. She won five National Championships at high jump (1933, 1935, 1936, 1938, 1940) and two at discus throw (1936, 1940) in her career. After her competitive career, she became involved in the administration of women's athletics both at State and National levels. In 1956 she was the Assistant Manager to the Australian Olympic Team during the Melbourne Olympic Games.

Carter co-lead the Anzac Day Parade at Melbourne in the mid 1990s.

The initial size of the WRAAF (pronounced WAF) was limited to an establishment of 30 officers and 832 airwomen who were to form a well-trained nucleus which could be quickly and efficiently expanded in an emergency. From the very beginning, members were to engage in productive duties to ease acute shortages of staff in certain trades (eg, clerical and signals musterings) and release members of the RAAF for other work.

In 1951, it was decided to grant officers short service commissions only, which might be extended for a period not exceeding three years, while airwomen were to be enlisted for four years with an opportunity to re-engage for further similar periods. In 1956, airwomen were permitted to re-engage for a shorter period of 2 years, if desired.

In 1965 the WRAAF ceiling establishment was raised to 1050.

It had been an early intention to let the Service grow slowly and limit initial recruiting mainly to ex-Servicewomen already trained in skilled musterings. Enlistments were delayed while Treasury sorted out problems involving relations between the three women's services, but there was no lack of interest. Scores of enquiries had been received by July 1950 and by October, more than 2000 women had applied to join the WRAAF.

The first group of applicants were x-rayed and aptitude tested at Laverton on 12 December 1950. On 30 January 1951 (the date accepted as the WRAAF Birthday) 16 trainees from Victoria and seven from South Australian commenced No. 1 Recruit Course at Laverton. On the same day 27 recruits from NSW began No. 2 Course at Richmond. Other recruit courses followed in quick succession and training was also conducted at Point Cook and Pearce.

Courses were later confined to Richmond and Laverton. Training ceased at Richmond and Laverton in 1952 and 1953 respectively and under the new Command structure WRAAF Recruit Training was transferred to Point Cook. In 1965 the WRAAF Recruit Training Section became a squadron of 1 RTU at RAAF Edinburgh.

Courses for recruits were increased from 4½ weeks to 5 weeks in 1970.

In 1950 uniforms were designed for the WRAAF by the Commonwealth Government Clothing Factory in consultation with Miss Rita Findlay, a Director of Georges' Ltd Melbourne, and despite a certain amount of criticism, these uniforms were a big advance on wartime WAAAF issue. The summer dress, a blue grey rayon long sleeved frock was quite a change from the old khaki drill shirt and skirt. A blue forage cap with light blue piping replaced the peaked cap of the WRAAF winter uniform, the new jacket was fitted to be worn without a belt, and a box pleat was added to the navy skirt. Minor but popular additions to the uniform comprised a black leather sling shoulder bag, black (instead of tan) gloves and nylons. Permission to fold handbag strap and carry the handbag over the wrist was given in 1960.

Despite the attention given to equipment all difficulties were not foreseen, eg, the size rolls for uniforms were originally copies from those used for the manufacture of women's garments by a large city firm. Needless to say, such a firm catered for an age range extending far beyond that at which women were likely to be serving in the forces, but this was not taken into account when WRAAF uniforms were ordered.

The arrival of raincoats from the United Kingdom caused further consternation. These had been made to wartime specifications and it was forgotten that post-war fashion had decreed a lengthened hemline. Nevertheless, at least the essential minimum of clothing was ready in time and the new style, an initial clothing allowance of £10 (now $42) and the expectation of WRAAF attache and suitcases, made prospects reasonably bright.

A new type of dual-purpose coat, a double breasted gaberdine with a detachable inner half-lining, was received early in 1954 and about the same time, the WRAAF, together with the RAAF, changed their black buttons. The blue-grey long sleeved summer uniform was replaced in 1956 by a blue-white short sleeved frock. WRAAF were permitted to purchase nylon raincoats on repayment in 1962, but raincoats were not brought onto the Scale of Issue.

The uniform was revised again in 1962 and major changes suggested. Recommendations were made for new styled hats, overalls as a two-piece garment, alterations to Dress 1A and permission to carry umbrellas and to wear high heeled shoes off the unit and on certain informal occasions. These recommendations were approved in 1963, and issues were made progressively as old stocks were used up. A major revision and updating of uniform was approved in December 1972.

Conditions of service for WRAAF are similar to those for airmen but an airwoman's pay was considerably less than the male rate in the early days. The Allison committee in 1958 determined WRAAF rates of pay as:

(a) 75% basic wage,
(b) 66⅔% male margin for rank,
(c) 100% male margin for skill,
(d) plus a special service loading and uniform allowance minus a clothing saving deduction and value of rations and quarters.

The National Wage Case of 1969 established the principle of the gradual introduction of equal pay for identical work. In 1970 this principle was applied to airwomen who, in step with female civilians, gradually achieved 100% of the basic wage by 1972. NCOs, however, received only 66 2/3 of the male margin granted for rank, which increased to 80% in 1971.

WRAAF officers prior to 1970 received between 66⅔% and 68% of male officer rates. This percentage was increased to 76-78% from December 1970.

A change in policy in 1969 permitted a member of the WRAAF to continue serving after marriage if she:

(a) elected before marriage, to do so;
(b) undertook to meet in full the normal service requirements expected of unmarried members; and
(c) continued to meet in full those requirements.

In 1972, the service achieved a pay scale equal to the male service and in 1977, the WRAAF was absorbed into the RAAF.

The Definition of:
A Committee. A body that keeps minutes and wastes hours,

Mirage to Townsville.

Mike Downs, who is with the History and Heritage Branch at Amberley, says the Air Force, Static Display Aircraft Support Section (SDASS) has moved Mirage A3-55 from RAAF Amberley to RAAF Townsville. The journey began on Friday (31 Jul) at mid-night. The trip took 3 days, arriving at Townsville at 2.00pm on Sunday (02 Aug). The Mirage arrival was planned to coincide with the arrival of Winjeel A85-403 which travelled as an independent package from Amberley.

Planned route for the Mirage was:

Fri:
Amberley, Toowoomba Bypass, Dalby, Miles, Wandoan, Taroom, Banana (o'nite stop)
Sat:
Banana, Dululu, Dingo, Moranbah (o'nite stop)
Sun:
Moranbah, Belyando Xing, Charters Towers, Townsville.

The package was 8.2 metres wide so it was hard to avoid. Channel 10 showed it on their nightly news, if you missed it you can see it HERE.

Lady F-111 ers

In 2000, The Minister Assisting the Minister for Defence, Bruce Scott, advised that two women had completed an intensive training course to become the first female officers in the Air Force to graduate to fast jets.

Flying Officer Brooke Chivers (left) and Pilot Officer Aroha Fifield had earned their brevets as navigators in the RAAF's frontline F 111 squadrons at Amberley.

Mr Scott said the women's graduation as F111 navigators signalled a major milestone for the RAAF and the opportunities now available to females in today's modern Defence Force. He said

the two women should be very proud of their status within the RAAF's aircrews as fast Jet training was the most difficult in military aviation.

"Flying Officer Chivers, Pilot Officer Fifield and their four male colleagues from this latest F 111 conversion course face a major responsibility flying the F 111 strike aircraft and join a dedicated and professional team at Amberley which fly, maintain and support these high-tech aircraft, he said.

Brooke Chivers and Aroha Fifield, the first female F-111 aircrew are pictured in the hot seat of their F-111 aircraft on the flight line at Amberley.

This milestone illustrates the many opportunities available to women in the Australian Defence Force and their increasingly important contribution to the Servrces. In fact, only a few months ago another woman, Air Commodore Julie Hammer, became the first female officer to be promoted to an air' rank in the history of the RAAF and a one star general in the ADF.

Mr Scott said although the ADE had had female pilots and navigators for several years, this was the first time women had joined what is termed the 'fast jet' stream of military aviation in the ADF. He said more women were showing interest in a flying career with the Defence Force and there were now about 25 female pilots and navigators in the ADF with another dozen in training.

Flying the F111.

The RAAF aircrew call the F-111 “The Pig”, not because of any adverse handling characteristics, but because it has a long snout which spends a lot of its time snuffling along close to the ground. The first thing I note on climbing into the F-111 is the view over the long nose, which sticks out way ahead of a very deep instrument coaming. The bottom edge of the curved windshield is about two yards ahead of me, so the view down and ahead is cut off. As F-111 instructor Flt Lt “Boomer” Taylor explains, “That’s no problem with the Pave Tack, the nav can look ahead on that, but with this [an RF-111B] we have a closed-circuit TV camera just aft of the nose-gear so we can line up on the target. At high level the nose blocks the view of the ground ahead for about 20 n.m.”

As we taxi out, I put our target co-ordinates into the archaic INS, which is a real pain to use. Boomer reads out the lats and longs. “OK, that’s North 48 …, “I say. “No, mate, *South.* We don’t have that much fuel,” says Boomer. Red-faced, I crank in the numbers. You twist a spring-loaded knob, and the co-ordinate numerals click around on their drums. The harder you twist, the faster they go. Twist one way to increase, the other way to decrease. The system can store three destinations, to use as way-points. It is time consuming and laborious enough to do while taxying; later I’ll find what a pain it can be.

We pull up into a max angle climb from the runway at 9 alpha and 190 kt. Boomer eases the wings back to 26 degrees as we swing east to overfly Brisbane at 15,000 ft, checking out the automatic terrain following (ATF) systems. We obtain clearance into the supersonic low-level corridor as we complete the checks with 200 ft on the Set Clearance Plane and select “Hard” on the “Soft/Medium/Hard” ride selector. The last check is to see that the fail-safe auto-pull-up works. Any faults in the ATF chain and the aircraft will pull up at 3*g*.

Terrain following

“OK, all ready? Let’s go down,” says Boomer, engaging the ATF and pulling the wings back. The nose pitches down, hesitates, and pitches down again, Boomer is sitting with his hands on his knees as we descend rapidly. At 1,000ft the nose starts pitching up, giving us 2*g* until we are straight and level at 200 ft. “Now watch this.” The noise levers go forward and the wing sweeps even further back as the afterburners kick in. The sea rushes past, and as we go supersonic there is just the slightest tremor. Boomer hand flies us down to 100 ft and Mach 1.2. The sensation of speed is fantastic.

I look in the mirror: behind us a ball of spray erupts from the sea where our shock wave hits. But what really sticks in my mind are the fuel flow gauges. In full afterburner the left engine drinks 52,500 lb/hr and the right 62,500 lb/hr, with the turbine inlet temperatures hovering around 1,100 degrees C. Taking a glove off, I note that the canopy getting hot to the touch. We maintain this dash for a minute or so before pulling up and slowing to a pedestrian 200ft/540kt.

Auto-toss

We carry out a laydown attack on Snapper Point range, then swing around south for a 270 degree turn to head north for a Pave Tack auto-toss profile demonstration. After the 3*g* pull-up and release Boomer racks it around in a 4*g* manoeuvre designed to allow the Pave Tack to continue

lazing the target as we escape at low level back to the south. “Now let’s update the nav kit," he says, reeling off a string of numbers for me to tweak into the “Present Position” number cruncher.

This is not so easy, because Boomer is pulling us hard round to cross over the centre target on the range, whose co-ordinates I am desperately trying to feed while fighting the *g*, avoiding the stick, and trying to keep my head up. It really is a pain compared with the modern systems I have used before. I get the numbers in and press the “Fix” button as we cross the target. The kit declines to accept it, so we turn hard and overfly again. This time it goes in, and the INS is updated.

We head inland towards the Great Dividing Range for some low flying. The terrain-following radar has a narrow beam width, so in Auto TF the aircraft often passes extremely close to high terrain on either side. Auto TF is usually a night/bad weather option. In daylight the pilots prefer to fly the TF, following pitch demand bars on the AHI and keeping an eye out ahead. Using the AHI will give the lowest terrain clearance (set in multiples of 200 ft) for the ride quality selected: soft, medium, or hard. We select 200 ft, hard ride, and bat along at Mach 0.9.

There are problems with that, so we decide to do Auto TF. The system takes over, and Boomer sits back with his hands on his knees. “Pretty good, eh?” I am watching a hill dead ahead. “What? Oh … er… yes.” The Auto TF pulls us up and, as we start to clear the ridge, pushes us down again. In hard ride it is a -*g* push which lasts for several seconds and is absolutely delightful.

Approaching the next ridge Boomer removes a glove. As we unload to 0*g* again he tosses it into the air, where it floats gently backwards until the *g* comes back on to position us in a valley. “In hard ride the system leaves it later for the pull-up, to keep our exposure time down as we cross the ridge. At night I would monitor the E-Scope TF presentation and the nav looks at his attack radar display for terrain avoidance in azimuth. Look how close we are to this feature ahead and you will see what I mean about the narrow TF beamwidth”. A small mountain slides past *very* close. “Good thing about night flying; you don’t see them,” laughs Boomer, “but we would like a moving map display so we can better plan our terrain avoidance, I doubt if we will get it, though.”

Reducing the workload

After ten minutes, I am totally confident in the Auto TF and feel at ease. We are chatting unconcernedly about what we are going to do next, and we are free to keep an excellent lookout all round. In short, the Auto TF leaves the crew free to think tactics and keep ahead of the game.

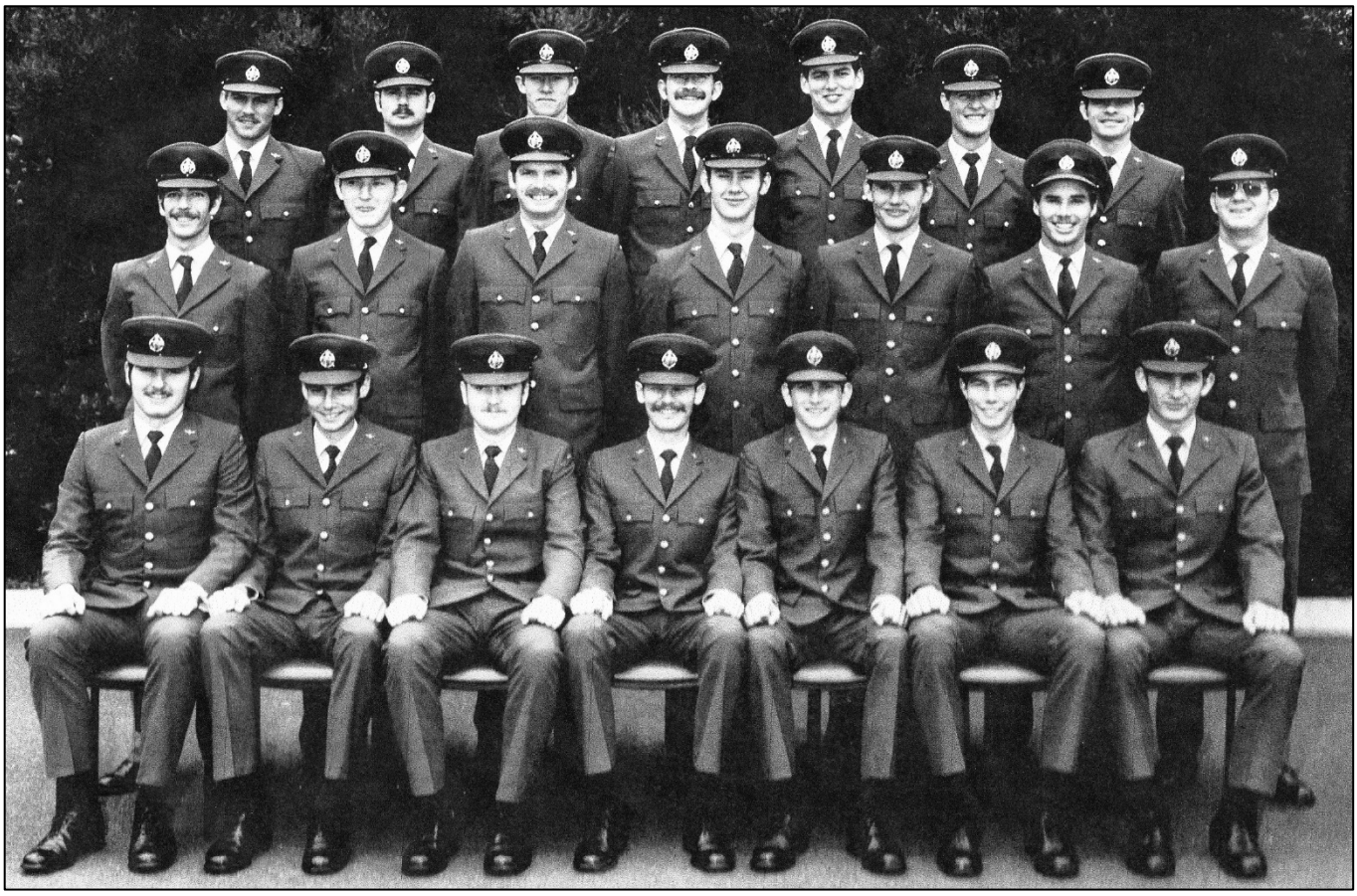
With a digital nav attack system the workload in the right-hand seat will be much lower, and the overall system accuracy will be much improved. Old the F-111 may be, but the digital update will rejuvenate it.

Inflation. Cutting money in half without damaging the paper.

110 RTC

15 August 1977 – 15 December 1978

Allan Threadgate sent us this.



Back Row L-R: Allan Rowley, Guy Hickey, Phil van Dyke, Unknown, Rory O'Conner, Wolfgang Wynd , Mick Fawcett.
Middle Row L-R: "Gumby" Morris, Michael Corliss, Allan Threadgate, Chris Ollsen, Dan Andersen, Scott Coyne, Greg Lakeman.
Front Row L-R: Michael Cowell, Des Boorman, Russel Marriot, Graham Wood, Greg Abbott, Bill Rowland, Michael Tracey.

Skeleton A bunch of bones with the person scraped off.

Hitchhiking snake.

Back in 1970, the blokes at 9 Sqn in Vung Tau got quite a shock when they discovered a large snake in their aircraft. Not being the bravest of blokes, no-one volunteered to hop into the aircraft to get it out so they came up with a "weird" way of getting rid of the it. They gaffer taped up the aircraft, backed up the CO's jeep, hooked up a hose from the Jeep's exhaust to the inside of the aircraft, started the jeep and pumped CO into the Aircraft – in an attempt to kill the snake.

Much to the amusement of the local Vietnamese people.

The snake, being a lot smarter than the average 9 Sqn bod, just crawled up into the tail boom and settled in.

Of course, this “scientific” method didn’t work, and while the 9 Squadroners retreated to the hangar to contemplate their next intelligent move, one of the local Vietnamese hangars worker just crawled into the aircraft, grabbed the snake and got rid of it.

Yawn An honest opinion openly expressed.

9 Squadron “People Sniffer”.

9 Squadron chopper being prepared for a "People Sniffer" mission at Kanga Pad at Nui Dat. The "People Sniffer" or Airborne Personnel Detector Mk3 was a device for detecting by scent the presence of humans on the ground beneath the aircraft, as it flew at treetop level.

AWM Photo

Warrant Officer 2 Trent Keary, Air Intelligence Section, Detachment 1 Division Intelligence Unit, 1ATF, is attaching the air sample probe for the "People Sniffer" to the skid of the helicopter. The major components of the device consisting of a large metal box with smaller boxes on top of it are visible in the doorway of the aircraft.

Wrinkles Something other people have.

A2-1022 being rebuilt.

AWM Photos

On the 11 May 1967, 9 Sqn B model helicopter A2-1022 had an engine failure shortly after take-off, crashed and was extensively damaged. The engine failure, due to grass being ingested through the engine's air inlets, was one of a spate that occurred around this time. A second helicopter (A2-1019, now in the AWM's collection) crashed in similar circumstances on the 13th April 1967 at Vung Tau.

Earlier, A2-1022 been involved in an heroic supply drop of ammunition to the besieged D Company, 6th Battalion at Long Tan. It was, at that time, flown by F/L Cliff Dohle.

After the 1967 crash, the airframe was carried back to Vung Tau and deposited in the ammunition dump at Vung Tau. It was then moved into the hangar where 9 Sqn bods got stuck in and rebuilt it.

We tend to do that, whereas the US would just scrap it and grab another one from the manufacturer, we spend countless hours and parts (and dollars) rebuilding broken aircraft.

Good training for all the blokes, but it means the flight line is down one aircraft for months.

But people far smarter than me make these decisions – so that's the way it is.

On the 8th December, 1971 the Iroquois and personnel of 9 Squadron were loaded onto HMAS Sydney for the trip home. Rarely numbering more than 16 airframes the Sqn flew a total of 58,768 hours on 237,806 sorties over the course of their five year deployment with an average serviceability rate of 84.05 per cent. It carried 414,818 passengers, 12,207 tonnes in freight and dusted off 4,357 personnel. It fired off 15,512,361 7.62mm rounds and 29,285 rockets.

An outstanding effort by both air and ground crew demonstrating the RAAF's ability to mount and sustain its rotary wing capability in the most extreme of operational environments. During the war, the Squadron lost 6 of its members with a further 8 being injured. It also lost 7 aircraft and a further 23 suffered battle damage.

After returning to Australia, A2-1022 had another accident, crashing with destructive engine failure over Hornsby (NSW) and crash landed onto a football oval in the late 70's (possibly 1977). The Pilot was F/L Kevin Barrington and the aircraft was carrying VIP pax at the time. There were no injuries and 2AD at Richmond eventually rebuilt the airframe. It then went to Pearce where it crashed again on the 29th May 1984. The airframe was returned to Laverton where it was rebuilt as a training aid, then gifted to Nyngan in NSW in recognition of the RAAF's work in support of the community during the Nyngan Floods. In 2011 it was transported by road to Caloundra for restoration at the Queensland Air Museum then put on display at the local RSL. (See HERE).

It was removed from the pole at the RSL in 2018 to play itself in a movie about the Battle of Long Tan, given a spruce up and returned to the pole.

Post-Vietnam, from 1976 to 1986, personnel and aircraft were provided for United Nations and other multi-national peacekeeping operations in the Middle East. The Squadron began re-equipping with Blackhawk helicopters in 1988 preceding transfer of aircraft assets to Australian Army Aviation and disbandment of the Squadron in February 1989.

April Fools day was cancelled this year as no made up prank
could match the unbelievable crap happening in the real world right now.

Breakfasting 18 July 2020.

Spotted out in Brisbane, enjoying a hearty breakfast were a bunch of lads with their ladies.

Clockwise from the left: David Muir-McCarey, John Broughton, John McDougall, Sue Muir-McCarey, Sheryl Benneworth, Sue McDougall, Ted (RAAF's 2nd best Radtech) McEvoy, Trev Benneworth.

Pave Tack

We've all seen that "thing" that hangs out the bottom of the F-111, that "thing" that looks like a hung-up bomb. At first look it looks like it's something that's broken, but it's not, it's actually a great bit of gear, but not a lot of people know what it is and what it does?

It is of course the Pave Tack and is a device that was designed and built by Ford in the US of A, but, apart from being a bit of Radtech magic, what is it and what does it do.

Click the pic below to see.

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 700women 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 ail musterings 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 7th 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 21st 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.

L

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.

M

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.

My Story

Neil Handsley

Just Cruisin'

The girl (her name was June Smith) across the City Pharmacy counter in Rockhampton, in April 1959, was very attractive and had a nice voice to boot. She had spotted me from her office (I had popped in to buy a film). She believed I was Allan – my identical twin brother.

"No' I responded, "Allan is my brother, my name is Neil. I'm in the RAAF and home on leave from my Wings in Malaya. June and Allan knew each other from the old School of Arts dances held in Rocky.

A day or two later I was admitted to Tanarchy hospital for an appendix removal. I asked Allan to get June to visit as I definitely wanted to know her better. On release from hospital we enjoyed some time together and it wasn't long before we became very fond of each other. On my return to Malaya (now Malaysia) we started to regularly correspond over the next two years or so.

"Why am I telling you all this…..?" Upon reflection it occurs to me that meeting June and hoping that something bigger might come of it, I came to realise that I should try to get my wanderlust satisfied before I settled down (married), So, on return to Butterworth, I started to look at ways and means of doing some serious adventure travel. I must tell my readers that my situation was ideal to enjoy the travel opportunities afforded by the joint air forces "indulgence flights" system. Airmen from several friendly forces could travel internationally for just token costs on inter-service aircraft.

So…I saved a little money, pored over maps, talked to people who knew about such things and delved deeper into "indulgence" flights. I gradually formed the idea that I might be

able to get as far as New York, where my brother Don lived and worked. It was just a bit scary to have the Atlas show me that New York was about half-way around the World – an awful long way – especially to hitchhike! I had not seen Don for seven years.

I figured on needing about 12 weeks to do such a trip, given that I would almost certainly have to wait for space (a seat) on some flights during the trip and, of course, time to absorb the delights of each stopover location.

I had a fortunate relief from the time-required problem. On return to Wing in April 1959 the RAAF credited my leave back with an extra week, of hospital time and ten days for "post-operative" leave. I had elected to go straight back to work on return to Base but by saving up 18 month's worth of recreation leave and adding the afore-mentioned lots, I could just manage the leave I needed to write to Don and Olwyn in New York and tell them "Here I come!" Later, they told me they thought it "quite mad" that I should attempt such craziness! Most of my RAAF mates agreed with that opinion but I was encouraged by other less inhibited friends.

Developing some sort of a rough plan took some time, but detailed planning was impossible because my travel must be opportunistic, after all, I wasn't going to be able to afford airline tickets.

There was some money in my Rockhampton Bank account, so I arranged to be able to draw on this at the Chartered Bank, Wall St, New York. I changed my Malayan "Straits" dollars into traveller's cheques and cash in the form of US dollars and Pounds Sterling.

My recreation leave application showed Hong Kong as my destination, this small contrivance was required to avoid having to deposit a huge amount of money to cover the RAAF's cost in case I had to be repatriated all the way from New York. Clearly a return from Hong Kong would cost much less. I also got a letter from my Wing Commander "The Black Prince" stating that I was on approved travel leave – and words to the effect that assistance from friendly Air Forces would be appreciated. My RAAF identity card and passport completed my meagre paperwork pack.

You know the travel dictum…. "Take half the luggage and twice the money" I packed light, just one small suitcase and a money belt for my humble loot, also my 35mm Pentax SLR camera and spare films.

Malaysia, Singapore, Vietnam – Hong Kong.

I caught the weekly "Butt-PF" flight to Changi Singapore. Flights were provided by RAAF, RAF and RZAF aircraft. Overnight accommodation was at the Union Jack Club, just off Singapore's famous Orchard Road. It was interesting to eat (cheaply) from the street Makan (food)

carts and to see the amazing proliferation of exotic goods in the shops. Closing time was, officially, 9PM, but many stayed open until midnight, a 14 hour trading day.

Next morning the RAF had a big 4-engined Handley Page “Hastings” lined up for the flight to Saigon (Vietnam) and Kai Tak (Hong Kong). The only cost to me was GB£1.6.3 for my in-flight meals. In today’s dollars this equates to about $2.65. The travel component was free. By the way, the flight meals were surprisingly quite good. I still have the RAF account for the charge!

In Saigon there was only time for a quick look around the city while our RAF “Hastings” was being readied for the next leg to Hong Kong. Lasting impressions are of wide streets and big roundabouts, left hand drive cars with much honking to clear all the small-cart traffic, very French I thought.

Back on the plane and off to Kai Tak airport, feeling relieved that things have gone well, thus far. Although I was generally optimistic, I must admit to having, at the time, a few fears of things going “belly-up” later in the trip.

How exciting it was to get my first sight of exotic Hong Kong, then a vigorous British Colony. As we approached Kai Tak airport we did the infamous “slip” down to squeeze our aircraft between rows of apartment buildings, all with long bamboo poles poking out of every window, supporting their washing and between the rows of taller buildings were thousands of tiny dwellings, densely packed. Of course, the famous harbour looked magnificent as we flew over, with thousands of ships, moored and moving, from giant white cruise liners to humble bumboats and sampans. I could hardly wait to breathe it all in from a sea level perspective.

The local RAF Transport Unit kindly provided road transport to “town” where I found a cheapie, but clean, boarding house called “May Lodge’. It was near the big shops in Kowloon, which is the

China mainland ("New Territories") part of the Colony. The other main area is Victoria Island, with its distinctive big-business skyscrapers.

Before I left Kai Tak airport for the City I put in a request for a seat on any RAF aircraft "heading north" as I very much wanted to visit Japan, partly because of my considerable interest in the martial art of Ju-Jitsu, however, I realised that the RAF did not have much traffic out of Hong Kong to Japan to I would need to try my luck with the USAF instead. I left my "May Lodge" contact details with their transport office, they said they'd "let me know". It didn't fill me with great confidence.

Anyway, here I was in exciting Hong Kong, with so many wondrous things to see and do, of course, I had to stay mindful that I'd need to watch my spending as I had not even completed a tenth of the total distance and not yet one-twentieth of the time allowed.

One good break was to meet up with two young taxi owners from Mt Isa who were cashed up enough to be travelling on full Qantas round-the-world tickets. They were also staying at May Lodge. We hit it off really well and visited many of the Colony's most interesting places and events, one being a memorable train trip up through the New Territories to the last station before the Chinese border. We were rudely put off the train and I was questioned about "taking pictures of China." (We could see the border villages from the train.)

A bit nonplussed to find that there were no trains, or other public transport, heading homeward, "you must wait long time" they said, so we hiked off in the general direction of Kowloon, hot and sweaty on a sultry June day. This area was the real old-world Chinese environment, the only concession to us "barbarians" being the Coco-Cola and beer that were readily available and cheap.

Hiking closer to our destination we found a rattletrap old bus going our way. A slow, bumpy, but hugely interesting ride followed, my camera was working overtime. I had never seen such sights and the smells were even more remarkable. I was wallowing in it!

The "taxi-twins" and I kept up a relentless day and night effort to see and do as much as possible in the time available. They had allowed a week in Hong Kong on the Qantas itinerary.

Impressions of Hong Kong – June 1960.

Teeming people, 95% Chinese, industrious (sometimes frenetic), an intense free-enterprise society. And! – the pungent odours, exotic shapes and colours everywhere. Almost everything imported, every imaginable kind of food, the cheap street food vendors, the wonderful floating restaurants of Aberdeen, specialising in live fish and crustaceans. Frequent trips on the "Star Ferries" across Hong Kong harbour between Kowloon and Victoria Island. The endless shopping and the sport of bargaining with stallholders on prices. Taking the cable railway to the top of "The Peak" on Victoria Island and glorious views to be had from there, in all directions. The busy harbour, junks, bumboats, tugs, ferries, freighters, cruise liners…..you name it.

D

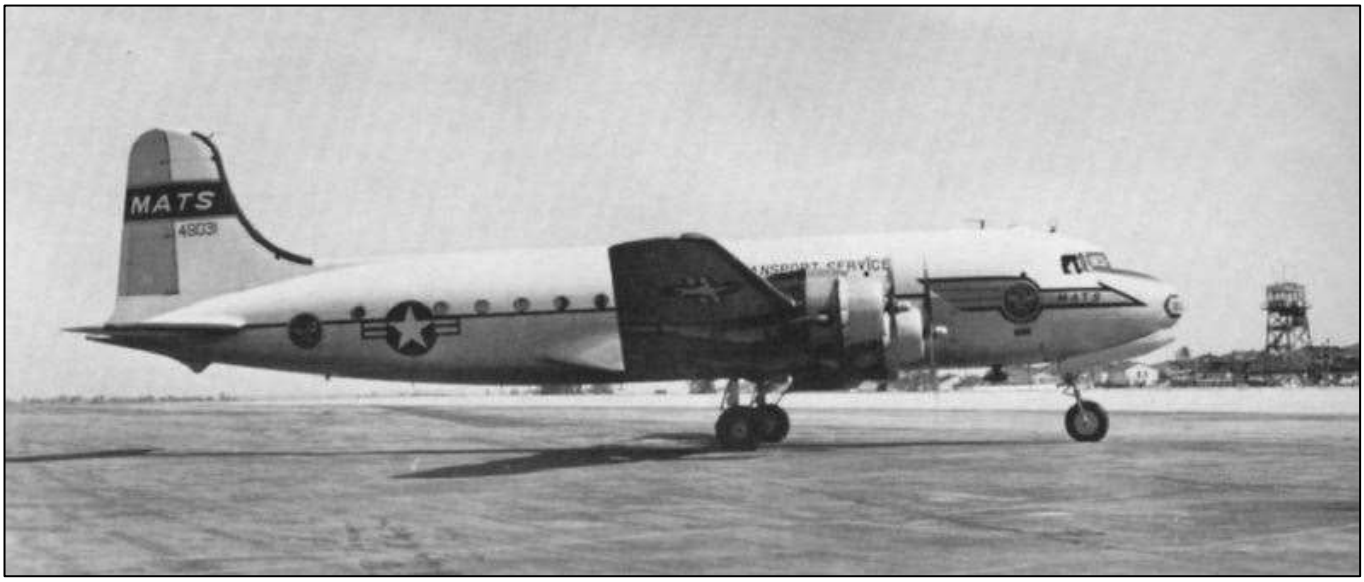
Very few negatives…..glimpsing the killing of dogs, a delicacy for well-heeled Chinese, a general lack of hygiene (pure filth on some places) and apparently, little compassion for extreme unfortunates.

Yes, overall, Hong Kong (Fragrant Harbour) was quite an adventure.

Adventuring in Hong Kong deserves its own discrete booklet so I shall not go on endlessly, suffice to say that after nine or ten day in Honkers, I wanted to continue enjoying more of the same, but I was starting to feel a bit anxious about finding a service to Japan.

Japan

So I took myself out to the USAF Air Transport office to see if I could sweet talk them into a freebee to Japan and soon, please. The Yanks were intrigued at my travel plans and we hit it off pretty good, so much so that only two days later I got a call to say “Get yer cotton pikker out here, quick smart and I can get you on a MATS DC4 leaving later today”.



I was out there in a flash, good thing I travelled light. At the airport I had to personally ask the aircraft commander, a USAF Captain with an unusual American Indian name, if I could get the lift. He proved to be a very decent bloke but was careful to first check my documents, including a passport visa for Japan, before putting my name on the PAX (passenger) manifest. Boy, was I greatly relieved to be on my way again, not wanting to get “behind the 8-ball” time wise.

Our destination was Tachikawa Air Base near Tokyo, but we would have a refuelling stop at Kadena AFB on Okinawa. From my martial arts interest I knew that Okinawa was the birthplace of Karate (meaning “open hands”) the inference being “not holding a weapon” and originating from centuries ago when the mainland Japanese cruelly dominated the Okinawans and took all weapons from them. The locals responded by raining their hands and feet (mainly) to become weapons.

Mid 1960 was a mere 15 years from the end of WW2. It seemed to me that the Japanese had not yet fully recovered. The old culture predominated but it seemed ready to meld with all the modern changes coming in. It was so interesting to be literally rubbing shoulders with both cultures, simultaneously.

There were so many things I wanted to experience. I walked miles around Tokyo absorbing the sights and sounds. Even then the pace of life was hectic, at least when compared to sleepy Malaya. I used excellent trains to explore the country, but once outside Tokyo I found almost no English spoken and I had only a handful of Japanese words and phrases. A cheap hotel in Tokyo was pretty exxy, so I stayed at the YMCA with mainly mature American students, many of whom were learning Japanese and taking degrees in Tokyo Universities.

It was interesting to lean about their views on events in Japan. One day I was accidentally caught-up in a huge anti-US demonstration on the Ginza – but the ten thousand noisy students showed no animosity towards little ole me! The YMCA crew said that the students were mainly “rent-a-crowd” and just having a fun day away from the oppression of their strict study regime. The demonstration was against the USAF for sending the anti-Russian Lockheed U2 “spy-flights”. The Japanese feared Russian missile retaliation against their cities. Seemed reasonable to me!

I very much wanted to experience the “old” Japan, so I jumped on a train to Kyoto, Japan’s ancient capital and absolutely reeking with antiquity. My readers need to realise that, in the 50’s and 60’s travel costs to other countries, out of Australia, were hugely expensive. It was so different from the present day where practically every Aussie you speak to has travelled overseas. In Japan in 1960, I continually looked about to find myself the only Westerner in the crowd. That did not bother me, probably because it added to the sensation of being a part of the culture. I had to continue pinching myself to really believe that all these wonderful things were actually happening to me.

Coming as I did from a county with only about 200 years of Western culture, it was fascinating, even a bit spooky, to be surrounded by revered shrines and temples of (say) thirty generations ago occupying these same places. I felt very privileged to be able to look, touch and smell these treasured things.

In Tokyo I had enjoyed my visit to the “Budokan” – world headquarters of Judo. Kyoto was the home of Ju-Jitsu and I hunted the “Do-Jo” but I was not able to arrange some time on the mats. In old Japan it was not the done thing to just walk-in and participate.

A major delight in Kyoto was to stay for a week or so in a genuine old-world Japanese Inn. I was the only foreigner there and the staff seemed delighted to have me. I was deliciously spoiled with a maid giving me, daily, a wonderful “bucket” bath, then into a fire-heated hot tub for a relaxing soak after each day’s sight-seeing. Initially I was a bit uncertain about the nudity bit, but I came to realise that the Japanese had no Western type hang-ups about nudity. Communal bathing was normal and public toilets (Benjo’s) were genderless all over the country.

Meals were served in my room, everything immaculate yet simple. In Japan, “less is better”. Meals were small but tasty and exquisitely served. The final account was more than I could really afford, but it was such a wonderful experience that I would not have missed it for anything.

USA

Back on the train to Tokyo and the YMCA, then a keen enquiry to the USAF transport office about flights to the West Coast of the USA. The news was not good. Serious violence had erupted in Africa’s Congo. As several western countries had strong presences there, their Air Forces were busily engaged in repatriating their citizens. I was told that USAF and RAF transport aircraft had a big priority for Congo operations – so “I’d better find another way of getting to the US” they said.

The airfare was unaffordable so I checked out the ship rate with “American President Lines”, it was OK, but I had to take a bunk in the men’ dormitory, right by the big noisy propeller shaft. The voyage was to take12 days to San Francisco, with a 12 hour stop over in Honolulu en-route. For the record, I boarded the big USS President Wilson (built 1948, length = 609ft, speed = 20kt) on the 8th July, 1960. The fare was US$315 (I still have the ticket.) Of course, the expense was un-welcome but it was inevitable, and a must if I was to progress my round-the-world adventure.

My shipboard bunkmates were mostly American students, ex Asian Universities. I palled up with a John Gregory, a zoologist and definitely a “hippee”. One of the new sixties’ “flower power” generation. Such was his liberation from old conservative habits that he delighted in telling me that his father, a leading doctor, was travelling first class, whilst his poor son was in “steerage.”

Even so, John Gregory was very friendly and introduced me to several of his mates. There followed many good times, on board, shared with interesting friends in a lively fun atmosphere.

Luckily, the seas were dead calm, the sailors calling it “a millpond”. The eight days to Honolulu went quickly enough, with plenty of facilities to have some fun, after all, this was a holiday for me, as well as transport to a destination. On board a cruise ship is a u-beaut way to vacation.

Approaching Honolulu, it was all picture-postcard stuff, quite beautiful. The ship’s plan was for a 7am to 7pm stopover, so my mates and I hired a car (split 4 ways) and toured most of Hawaii’s “Big Island”, Ohahu. The surf on the back beaches was huge, I had never seen such gigantic waves. I was a keen swimmer but there was no way I was taking on that lot. We settled for a quiet restaurant pool and seafood lunch – huge and delicious.

Back on board at 6pm, castoff and heading east for San Francisco. Much excitement in me about all this, of course I didn’t have a clue about how I was going to get to New York, but I supposed something would turn up.

Abruptly, the weather turned very bad, big seas and lots of wind and rain. So many were seasick (not me) that all the dining halls were almost empty. About all one could do, for three days, or so, was to hole-up in the dorm and read/sleep. Fair weather again on the last day and the ship received a group of US Customs’ agents to clear our documents before entering the port of San Francisco later that day. A Customs Patrol boat followed us all the way into the berth in case passengers dropped waterproof packages of drugs overboard for later recovery. In 1960, the USA was suspicious about all traffic from Asia. Imports from China, in particular, were banned. Such was the paranoia of the period.

My American friends had been warning me about what a pack of B’s the immigration and Customs Officers were and I noticed several disgruntled passengers in front of me having their suitcases turned over and messed up.

What saved me was I wore my RAAF Uniform and the Customs Officer immediately spotted the "Australia" flash on my shoulders. Straight away he was very friendly to me, wanting to know where I was travelling to, where I come from, why was I here. Then he told me that his brother was in Australia during WW2 and that he always said how friendly the Aussies were toward him. I was obviously in good hands! Addressing my humble suitcase he queried, "Haven't got anything in there that you shouldn't have, have you son?" I replied that "I am just a poor Aussie airman who could not afford to buy anything worth trying to smuggle in". That seemed to hit his funny-bone. I slipped him a small presentation pack of Australian stamps "for his nephew who saves stamps" – you understand? He put a big chalked tick on my case and I was outa-there!

Outside Customs I met up with my American friends, two of whom were a bit peeved that I had "sweet talked" the Customs Officer into an easy processing. It really was a combo of good luck and managing the situation well. I reflected later that one skill I was learning was "human relations" – and I was to exercise it more and more in the weeks ahead.

Luckily, John Gregory invited me to stay with him in Sausalito, near San Francisco and it was really good to meet his family and friends who received me warmly. I quickly found that Aussies were "flavour of the month" with Americans. They all seemed to know about Australia's brilliant performances in the Melbourne Olympics (1956), four years previously and Australians were, at the time, world champions in a dozen or so sports other than the Olympic ones. When one of the local Sausalito lot beat me at darts, (a game I did not play) they were cock-a-hoop about it. "Gee whiz, beating an Aussie, that's cool man". They were nearly all hippies, more commonly called beatniks at that time. Sweet serene people though.

The San Francisco weather was great (mid-summer) and we cruised all over, seeing the sights in John's ragtop VW, about the most popular car for young people in that area. I had to spend some time checking-out the several travel options to New York. Chances by USAF air transport were not good, as the Congo revolt was still occupying a lot of their fleet. Quite a disappointment for me.

A bus (coach) trip was the cheapest but would take 4 days and I reckoned I'd be a zombie on arrival in New York. I found an air charter operator using Douglas DC-4s who charged a fair price, so I went with them. The airplane looked a bit beat-up as I boarded early evening and took an awful long time to get to O'Hare airfield in Chicago. It was good fund flirting with the Stewardesses, they were fascinated with my "Aussie accent".

My suspicions about the DC-4 proved about right as it went unserviceable on arrival into Chicago and the charter operator needed several hours to get us pax into onward flights. Around the airport were travelling groups of Republican Party supporters attending their Chicago convention. I had never seen (in the flesh) such ballyhoo and extravagance. Boy, the Yanks really take their elections (due in November) very seriously, not laid back like us Aussies. Subsequently, it was very interesting to follow the political process in the print and TV media. As brother Don was a sub-editor with AAP he was able to explain all these strange goings on.

Back at the airline office, I was relieved that they had found me a seat on a regular North West Airlines DC-6 service direct to New York, but not to Kennedy Airport as originally intended by the charter, instead we were to land at Idlewild Airport. At Chicago I had to make a hurried call to Don as he was originally to have met me at Kennedy. *Note: The New York airport had its name changed after President John Kennedy was elected later on Nov 1960*.

Quite a nice flight with North West Airlines and what a relief it was to see Don heading towards me at Idlewild. Smiles all around as I exuberantly shouted to Don…"Good on you Aussie – I'm right here. I've made it."

I was almost exactly half-way around this big old world of ours and feeling elated that I had made it this far. Lots of adventures to recount and subsequently hopeful of more to come. Looking back….a special time in a long and eventful life.

It was great to give my elder brother Don a big hug, I had not seen him for seven years as he and Olwyn had been living in the UK and America for most of that time. They had two children, Jennifer about six and Sarah about eighteen months. They were later to have two more lovely daughters, Elizabeth and Emily, both born in Australia.

Don and family lived in New York's "Queens" district. Don worked in downtown Manhattan Island, not far from its heartland, Times Square.

Again, I "put my name down" for a USAF (or other service) flight to the UK, or Western Europe, but they told me, "It don't look good son". Anyway, not to worry, here I was in the "Big Apple" one of the World's most exciting cities. Don kindly gave me a press pass which eased my way into all sorts of interesting places and events. Also, my usual civvy dress of light blue shirt and slacks was usually as "Air Force" and often gave me free or discounted entry to places of interest and entertainment. It was all a bit overwhelming, gazing up at so many ninety-story skyscrapers. My trusty Pentax camera was running hot, chewing up endless rolls of 35mm colour slide film, which were all the go at the time. Prints were out, slides were in.

Money was running down so I hit the Chartered Bank in Wall Street to see if those "dopey" bank clerks in Rockhampton had sent my US$250 draft over. I showed the Chartered Bank clerk my passport and (without much confidence) asked him "Do you have any US dollars for me?" He filed through a box of record cards, then glanced up and said, "Yep, it's here son – how would you like it?" It was a big relief, I can tell you and I later wrote to the Rocky Commonwealth Bank to thank them for their good work. I didn't have the guts to tell them about my ill-considered "dopey" epithet.

Olwyn and Don were very good to me, I hoped that I wasn't being too much of a bother since I was out adventuring pretty much all day, every day. So much did I see and do that my New York experiences would take a booklet of their own to make a full record. Suffice to say that forty-three years later, when I see or hear New York images, I usually find myself responding with "hey – I've been there" or "I've experienced that." Such recollections are very sweet and nostalgic, are they not?

J

Recollections of New York City – August 1960

Phew!...the Big Apple…it was almost overwhelming. Great energy all about, everyone busy and going somewhere. I noted the typical big city complex in that the locals largely avoid eye contact and are a bit suspicious of strangers yet wonderfully friendly and generous after introductions. Again, Aussies seemed to be flavour of the month.

On the streets, a huge yet orderly traffic flow, almost all of it Yellow Cabs. I heard that the company orders them in batches of at least 10,000 per time and the auto factory even puts on a special line for them.

The tallest skyscrapers anywhere, I took photos from the highest, the Empire State building – 92 floors I think. The gorgeous display of flashing neon signs at Times Square and the incredible masterpiece of the huge Central Park. This is not your typical city park, no Sir! New York's is a big as a small town, over 100 city blocks square. Every kind of relaxing facility is there. It sounds like an American boast but they really do have two lakes, "big enough to launch a ship on."

A sightseeing boat ride around Manhattan Island, on board people from all the lands on earth, I was, perhaps the only Aussie there.

Don's press pass got me into the fabled Yankee Stadium in the Bronx to see a baseball twilight double header. The combatants were top teams, the New York Yankees and the Kansas City Indians. I got some great telephoto shots of the game which I greatly enjoyed and at last found

out what a Hershey Bar and Babe ruth tasked like. (Famous American candy bars.) Also, the hot dogs were huge, cheap and delicious.

Around town, cheap fast-food everywhere, thus conserving my precious cache of dollars. New Yorkers, I noted, were hearty eaters. Don and Olwyn's kind hospitality helped enormously and I do thank them for that. Their outrageous journo friends were a delight to talk to, they sure were having a great time in the USA.

Really, I can scarcely scratch the surface here. As the Americans say, "the Big Apple is something else."

United Kingdom.

After three weeks or so I figured I'd better be on my way further eastwards. There had been no offers of service flights so I thought it a good idea to make a personal visit to the big air transport centre at Fort Dix Air Force base in New Jersey to check out possibilities. I took a Trailways coach as the Base was en-route to Washington DC.

At the Base I spoke to the USAF Master Sergeant who was friendly but amazed that I had got "this far with skimpy paperwork." I told him that we did these types of things in a pretty laid-back sort of way in Australia. He'd never heard of Malaya and didn't know "where the heck it is." Trying to be helpful he said he'd see what he could do, so I joined about a hundred others in a big waiting lounge for about three hours. At the end of it, the best they could offer was a ride on a US Navy Neptune sub-hunter/patrol aircraft going to Casablanca, Morocco. A look at the wall map showed me that this was not much closer to the UK than my present Fort Dix location, so I said, thanks, but no thanks. With my tail between my legs I took the bus back to New York.

This was the first time, during the trip, that I felt ill-at-ease about my situation. I was facing more expense with the failure to get free service transport and crossing the Atlantic by ship was going to hack further into my time reserves. Actually, I didn't have any reserves for I counted that it had taken just over six of my twelve weeks to travel only half the distance required.

So it was back to Don and Olwyn's place for a few days to find a reasonable travel alternative. At their place we had a lot of Don's journalist friends dropping in for a yarn and a drink. Journalists are pretty good at both! One wanted me to go on a local TV game-show called "To Tell the Truth" where I was to pretend that I was a kangaroo shooter form Australia. That did not happen because I booked on the "Queen Mary," then the biggest of all passenger liners, for the four-day voyage to Southampton.

Would you believe it, two days before sailing date a crew strike cancelled the trip. The best option then, since time was getting on, was a BOAC (now British Airways) ticket to Prestwick, Scotland. The drama was still not finished as, whilst waiting in the pre-departure lounge, BOAC cancelled the "Britannia" flight due to a serious fuel leak in the aircraft. It was off to the bar and free afternoon

tea whilst they sorted 108 of us on to other flights. As it turned out I got an upgrade to a Boeing 707, faster than the turbo-prop Britannia.

Then there was the 6½ hour flight across the Atlantic, far below. Prestwick, Scotland was windy and very cold, despite it being mid-summer. I still have a copy of the ticket, dated 6 August 1960, but it does not show the fare paid. I'd guess about US$250. Being a jet engine specialist, I was interested to note that our BOAC Boeing 707 was fitted with the Rolls Royce Conway turbo fans, most 707s carried the American P&W JT3-D engines.

Since my grandfather on my mother's side was Scottish (Dundee)) I definitely wanted to spend some time in Scotland, yet I needed to be mindful that I was a wee bit short of time. So, it was off to Scottish Omnibuses to book a ticket to London but first I was to enjoy three or four sightseeing days in and around Edinburgh. Oh, I could feel my Scottish genes pulsing away. The weather was fine and the locals very friendly, more so than the conservative English, me thinks.

On hearing my accent and noting my colonial manner, it was dead easy to strike up conversations, a fine way to learn about the country. It was not unusual for friendly Scots to ask if they could share a café table. Interestingly, some thought that my accent was not "exactly Australian" and I explained that I did not speak "Strine" – the rough dialect, such as "Ow yer goin' mate – orright?" Yuk!

The all-day bus trip (a worn old Bedford) took all day to do the approximate 400 miles to London. There was lots of time on secondary roads and I found it interesting to see, up close, some of the Scottish and English lifestyles as we slowly trundled through village byways. There it was, what initially looked to be a rough and boring trip turned out to be a pleasant and interesting something else. Another nice bit of philosophy for me to tuck away, "Things are not always what they seem."

At this point in my story I must tell my readers about my little plan to post local stamped envelopes, from each place I visited, back to myself at RAAF Base Butterworth, PW, Malaya. The idea was to have, at the trip's end, a chronological record (per envelope franking stamp) of all the countries I had visited during my round-the-world hitchhike.

Back at Butterworth the plan was for my room-mate, Noel (Bruiser) E to intercept this mail at our hangar pigeon-hole mailbox and take it to my room locker for security. Later in this story I shall tell of how this plan was thwarted, but with no blame on Bruiser. I can add here that my little lurk was necessary to avoid others knowing that I had progressed well beyond my “nominal” destination of Hong Kong. What a big surprise I was in for.

In London a friendly cabbie (are they all Cockneys) found me a cheap boarding house in Westminster. This location was very handy to lots of places that one must visit. The landlady, also a Cockney, observed that “we don’t get too many colonial gentlemen” and seemed preoccupied about “what night would you like the bath sir?” Shock horror when I told her that Aussies showered every day. She replied “Cor, sir, you can’t do that, too much washin ain’t good for ya, dries out your skin, it does”. I soon ascertained that a tanner (six pence) fed into the bath heater would give me some warm water each time.

In general, affordable café meals were rather small and bland but I soon got so busy “seeing the sights” that I often clean forget my evening meal, especially as the sun did not set until after 9.30pm. With very early sunrises to boot, the days were the longest I’d ever experienced. I figured that I could allow myself two weeks or so in England and most of it would have to be around London so as to stay in ready contact with the UK Air Ministry. I had found that it would not be helpful to hang about RAF Transport bases in the hope of informally catching a ride toward Malaya.

My visit to the RAAF office at Australia House on Fleet St, home of the London Print Media barons, was almost a disaster. Whilst asking about what documents I would need for an indulgence flight to Singapore I was accosted by a rude and pompous RAAF Wing Commander who was very unimpressed that “I appeared to be in London illegally and that I could be in big trouble”. I sidestepped that confrontation pretty smartly. Ouch!

Looking around for someone a bit more helpful, I met a nice English assistant lady who, at my earnest request, typed up an MC-8 travel authority and better still, got someone to sign it. That did not completely meet all the formal document requirements, but it was (I hoped) going to be a big help. Yet again, I was learning how to wangle things.

In New York Don had given me a London contact who “could be helpful”, a senior chappie in the media business. Our meeting was very friendly and he was keen to know about my “hitchhiking adventures” thus far. Keen as mustard, he wanted to print the story, with a photo. I was flattered but dare not accept as it would not be helpful to advertise what I was doing. My contact expressed disappointment but understood my situation.

There was another media opportunity (a TV commercial where they wanted a young Aussie male) an offer made directly to me in Australia House. I had to refuse it of course, for the same reason. Also, it might have been a 'con' job.

Again, I was told that Congo demand was restricting RAF Transport Command flights to Asia. I decided it was no good sweating about that and surely better to just enjoy myself in one of the greatest cities in the world.

My funds were fast retreating, but I found ways to do all the touristy things yet stay afloat. My RAAF identity card got me discounted entry to interesting places and much fun could be had just walking around that great city. Visits to casual corner pubs were always likely to produce lively repartee as this Aussie took it up to the POMS. It was always good fund an one could make an English pint of ale last a fair time.

All those wonderful sights I had wondered at, as a boy, from far-off Australia to SEE them. I wanted to touch and smell too, all my sense excited! Of course, the City and its environs were just too vast to do it all – but by golly, I gave it a good shake.

During my second week in London I started to hope that the Air Ministry might call but they did not, leaving me on the edge of a bit of anxiety going into my third. As I was really enjoying London life I maintained the pace doing my touristy things every day and night.

By mid-week I was REALLY hoping for the phone to ring, I even called the Air Ministry to remind them that I badly needed some action – and soon, please.

After three weeks in London, I was definitely behind my time plan and with little hope of RAF transport to (or towards) Singapore, I reluctantly booked on the BOAC jet (DH Comet) service departing on the coming Thursday. This would get me back to work at RAAF Base Butterworth just in time to avoid the heavy drama of becoming "ACH-Willie" – absent without leave, serious stuff.

The Big problem was that I didn't have enough money left to pay the hefty airfare. I cabled Don in New York for help and he paid for my air ticket at the New York Office of BOAC. I greatly appreciated Don's assistance as I would otherwise have been in quite a pickle.

So, it was back into RAAF uniform (the best way to travel) and I jumped aboard the airline bus to London Heathrow Airport. My humble and rather more battered suitcase, checked in, through departure checks and into the big waiting lounge.

Shortly before boarding I was startled to hear on the PA system that there was a call for me. Oh Lord, what now? I didn't really want a setback at this late stage. It was this toffee gent from the Air Ministry calling….and "did I want a seat on a RAF Britannia transport going from Lyneham RAF base to Changi in Singapore on Monday morning?

O

Whammmy! My poor brain went straight into fifth-stage afterburner. The Air Ministry chappie wanted an answer now, so I had to decide very smartly. The easy option would be to politely decline the Air Ministry offer and take the BOAC Comet flight - heaps more expensive but it would at least get me back to work on time. The RAF flight would certainly consign me to the dreaded "AWOL" category.

Being basically an optimist, I had a personal rule that, when facing a dilemma, always choose the more difficult option. There is great personnel satisfaction in, after the event, having "given it a go." Of course, there is always a price to pay if one makes the wrong choice. So I thought….to heck with it, I must take the RAF flight, I will be AWOL but I will also save the very expensive BOAC airfare. The Air Ministry bloke told me what I needed to go to get on the RAF flight.

Looking back on these events I tell myself that I was a proper dill for not choosing eh easy option. Showing you a list of problems I immediately faced will serve to help make my point.

- Can BOAC get my suitcase off the Comet straight away?
- How much will the flight cancellation fee be?
- What's the best (cheapest) way to get to London's Victoria Station?
- Where will I overnight in Swindon, on my way to RAF Lyneham.
- At Lyneham will my dicey paperwork pass muster with them? Will they know that I should be at either Hong Kong or RAAF Butterworth. What are the consequences?
- As I'm travelling "indulgence status" will I be bumped from my seat by a higher status person
- How long will the RAF flight take to get to Singapore? What if it's late. PROBLEMS…..PROBLEMS.

Oh well, nothing for it now but to try and solve these issues, one by one. That Friday night at Swindon I had the worst headache of my life. The stress build-up had just peaked, so I thought - bugger it, I'll just do my best and take what comes.

At this point, and getting ahead of myself, I already had the first four of my listed issues resolved:-

- Yes, they got my bag of the Comet, albeit incurring a delayed departure
- I sweet talked the BOAC customer relations clerk into treating me as an RAF member, which allowed a full fare refund. I knew that Don would be happy. I also inferred that the Air Ministry had "ordered" me to RAF Lyneham. Sure it was sneaky, but it didn't hurt anybody.
- I got a freebie ride in a BOAC crew bus to the train station at Victoria.
- At Swindon I watched a Second division soccer game in heavy fog on cold concrete seats and found an OK cheapie local Bed and Breakfast.

Things were looking up by breakfast, but I feared that I would be "found out" during the RAF's stringent PAX pre-departure checks at Lyneham. On awakening the next morning I was immediately aware that it was make-or-break day and that, as from 8.00am this day I was, indeed AWOL and I had yet to travel about 8,000 miles to my final destination. An even more jolting shock then hit me, I was serving in an active service location and the military can court martial, even execute, idiots like me who go AWOL. Of course, I reasoned that surely they would go that far, would they? It wasn't DESERTION, was it?

At the flight processing centre I looked around for a possible ally who might help me get around my paperwork (mainly) deficiencies. As good fortune would have it, again I found (a jolly little

Corporal) in the office who was very friendly and said that he “liked the Aussies”. I took a punt and confessed my deficient paperwork situation and the fact that I was on the wrong side of the world. The RAF Corporal’s response…”Gees mate, potentially, you could be right in it”,,,,but he’d see if he could help out a bit.

I then got caught up in the safety checks, dinghy drills and such like. In those days the RAF was notorious for such formalities. Very pukkah! My little Corporal mate (Tich) wangled another signed document for me which, he assured me, would ‘grease’ my way through the pre-flight formalities.

It was with tremendous relief that I was finally listed on the passenger manifest. I bade a grateful goodbye to Tich and gave him most of the few English pounds I had left, in appreciation for his invaluable help. I must record that he didn’t ask for any reward.

Homeward Bound

The Britannia is a big 4 engined (Bristol Proteous turboprops) cargo and troop transport. Today the load was 29 PAX and the rest cargo. Although I was hugely relieved to be on my way, and it was the last big flight leg, I was shocked to learn that this was NOT a direct flight (ie: fuel stops only) to Changi, Singapore. Instead it was a crew training flight, “When do we get there” I queried, “on Thursday or Friday:” they said. My God, it was only noon Monday, I was already half-a-day AWOL, four more to go.

On a positive note, the weather was excellent and the flight smooth. Once across Western France and at our cruising altitude of 21,000 feet, we could see five countries at the one moment, each so small by our Australian standards. Later in the flight we passed directly over Rome, with the 1960 Summer Olympic games in full swing, down there. One could clearly make out the Olympic Stadium as there was no cloud and little ground haze.

Then a course change to take us out over a very blue Mediterranean Sea, towards our first flight destination, El Addem RAF Base in Libya. We over nighted there, on the RAF base. All around us were poor Arab encampments with rough tents seemingly made of patchwork fabrics of many colours, It was scorchingly hot and dry as a drover’s throat. Nearly all the Arabs I saw looked in poor health, many with fly-borne diseases such as trachoma.

Tuesday’s leg was to be to the big port city of Aden, another RAF base, on the shores of the Red Sea. At that time Aden was a British Protectorate and capital of Yemen. We were billeted into a RAF run hotel in Central Aden, right next to a very smelly goat slaughterhouse. Close-by were Arab shops selling the usual dodgey cameras, binoculars etc. I had some fun, verbally jousting with the cheeky Arab shopkeepers, business was slow. They called me “Ned Kelly”. Who said Arabs were not with it? They picked me for an Aussie even before I spoke. There was also time for a quick visit to the Med for a swim in the incredibly salty water, I floated like a cork.

In typical British military fashion, there was the Airman's beach, the Senior NCO's beach and the Officer's beach. I thought we all looked about the same in our swim togs! We passed across deserts still littered with the debris from WW2, burned out tanks and trucks, rusting fuel drums and walls still showing shell holes. The only signs of modernity were the British inputs, but the brits told us that most of their efforts were frustrated by local religious (Muslim) beliefs and historical mistrust of Western motives.

The nest morning, Wednesday, we were off on the long leg to Gan Island, a tiny spot due south of Bombay and stuck remotely out in the Indian Ocean. Arrival was around 1.00am Thursday. It was one square mile of practically nothing. This was just about the worst moment of my trip, when the loadmaster told me that I was "off here at Gan", bumped on the last major leg. Announced the loadmaster "four duty PAX for Changi and only three seats available. Sorry LAC Handsley, but your indulgence status means you have to give up your seat to essential duty personnel." This was a crushing blow, but "rules is rules" as they say. When I enquired about the next plane to Singapore, I was told it could be two weeks or more, the bloody Congo problem again. Wot a bastard! Anyway, the loadmaster said I should get a snack at the Base NAAFI (canteen) and 'something might turn up." Short of kidnapping a passenger and tucking him up a coconut tree, I could not imagine what such a "something" might be.

But I wasn't going to just throw up my arms and give in, after all, right through this long trip I had managed to wangle good outcomes from dramas, so I got myself, plus suitcase, back to the aircraft well before scheduled boarding time, to see what magic one might weave. I saw the co-pilot doing his pre-flight checks and approached him for a friendly chat. Would you believe it, he

was a RAAF flight Lieutenant on loan to the RAF and was quite surprised to meet another RAAF member at such a godforsaken place – and time.

The only thing to do now, I decided, was to confess my AWOL situation honestly and perhaps my desperate flight might encourage someone to bend the rules, somehow, to find me a seat, any seat! The flight Lewie understood my problem, said that he had not heard my "confession" and told me to hang about in case he could do something for me. Later with my heart racing, I waited near the cabin boarding steps so as to hear the Loadmaster read out the names on the PAX manifest.

With great delight and surprise my name was last on the list and I scrambled, happy and relieved, into the last seat. I was so afraid of the possibility of an error that I just shut-up and put my seat belt on. Just let anybody try and get me out, now!

During the flight, the Aussie Co-Pilot came by for a chat and of course I thanked him warmly for being able to find me a seat. He confided that he had moved his spare navigator forward to the crew rest bunk from the seat I was now occupying. God bless him for his thoughtfulness. It really saved my bacon. I had never considered myself a generally "lucky" person, but by golly I had certainly received my share on this adventure.

It was still dark as we took-off, a long non-stop flight to Changi Singapore. I was very relieved and happy to be finishing on a good note, of course, I still had to major problem of being AWOL to overcome, but there had been so many times, this trip, that I had solved problems I decided to just be completely philosophical about the final outcome. The main things was that I was nearly home and I had almost achieved my ambition to, alone, hitchhike around the world. Also, I was in good health, albeit almost broke (moneywise).

Tired, but elated, I was back at Changi Airfield. I called Malayan Airlines for a DC-3 ride to Penang Malaya. This was a "milk run" with half a dozen stops between the two major ports. Interestingly, the only "ticket" I had purchased before the trip started, was the one I was using now. I arrived at Penang airport about noon on the Friday, now four and a half days AWOL.

AWOL and Facing the Music

Hastily changing into fresh uniform "dress of the day", I headed to my squadron hangar. I hoped to duck-in quietly and find my Warrant Officer Engineer, "Happy" H and spill my confession. Happy was one tough old cookie, but he was also fair.

However, this neat plan was thwarted by the Squadron painter, Jack P spotted me entering the hangar and bellowed to all and sundry…"Handsley's back, Handsley's back". Then he looked wistfully down at me and said, "Gees mete, are you in the shit".

At that moment I really feared the worst but decided to stick to my plan to tell the truth and hope for the best. Jack's outburst brought Happy hurrying out waving a sheet of paper and really gave me an earful. The sheet proved to be the original of my travel leave application and he ranted about "You were supposed to remain in Honkers, what were you doing in Japan, America, UK and the Middle East etc etc, he really gave me a serve.

My first shocked thought was, “how the heck did he know where I’ve been” but first he demanded an explanation. I will explain this first matter shortly. I gave “Happy” a short and painfully honest description of where I’d been, why I went there and emphasized that I really had tried very hard to overcome my service-transport problems, especially the unexpected four-day duration of the RAF Lyneham-Singapore flight.

He seemed only slightly mollified and then told me he’d have to parade me to the Engineering Officer and also to put me in front of the big Chief, Wing Commander KC (affectionately known as Black Prince). Going on, Happy said “I’ve a bloody good mind to put you on the Duty Crew this weekend” Seeing my chance to impress, I jumped right in with “I volunteer Warrant and I’ll volunteer for the next weekend as well. I owe you 4½m days”. He thought about it for a moment and knocked my sox off by saying, “No you won’t”. Me “Oh won’t I? what then will I do?” Him “You’ll have the weekend off and go over to visit your friends on Penang Island and tell them about your trip.”

Well, needless to say I was shocked, fearing the worst! Gosh, my good old Warrant Officer Engineer had shown his softer side and by so doing really impressed me. What a surprise.

A Duty Crew is a small team of ground engineers, one from each mustering group (airframe, Engine, Electrical, Instruments, Armament and Radio) whose job it was to look after all aircraft visiting Butterworth from other bases. Owing to the unusual range of aircraft types handled, it was always quite an interesting job. So, my WOE paraded me to my EngO who wanted an expanded report from me, further to what I’d given to Happy. Thankfully my EngO didn’t seem terribly unhappy with me but said the matter would have to “go higher” for a decision on what punishment would be appropriate. In the meantime. I could resume normal duties.

This I did and each day I waited for the dreaded axe to fall. Occasionally I unofficially heard little snippets of gossip about what was going to happen. Unknown to me at the time, there was fireworks going on behind the scenes, more later.

All my squadron mates and the mob living on Penang Island (the married members, commonly called the “brown baggers” and their expatriate families) wanted to know about my trip, so I became quite adept at telling the story. I could now understand how it became common knowledge that I was in this country or that. To prevent this, I had arranged for my roommate “Bruiser” to grab my inward mail as it arrived into the hangar pigeon holes. Sure, this worked fine for the early part of my trip at which time Noel (Bruiser) and half the Squadron flew off on temporary duty to Singapore for defence exercises with friendly Air Forces of the Region. Thus my adventuring was there for all to see. I learned later that the story went around the whole Wing. When I got back, just about everybody seemed to know where I’d been.

In any case, that plan had worked in the one desired way, I had a full set of stamped and franked envelopes, one of those big, garish, lacquered Chinese-style albums. With them is a motley collection of air, sea and bus tickets plus picture postcards, luggage tags and such like. Whoever inherits, please look after them – as I have.

Well – on the base, life returned pretty well back to normal, and I waited, still to be told my fate. I figured that if they were going to court martial me, they would have done so already. Still, I was

certain to face a formal charge. The normal expectation would be something like…21 days CB and 28 days loss of pay! I would just have to cop it sweet and resigned myself to it.

A little while later we had a big “Wing” BBQ. No 78 (F) Wing comprised of No 3 (F), No 77 (F) and 478 (M) Squadrons. I was surprised to be grabbed by the Black Prince and formally introduced to the most senior officers there (I knew them already) but I was pleased at the courtesy. I was introduced as “the young airman who’d just returned from a solo round-the-world hitchhike.” The rankers seemed amused about the whole thing and I was made to feel more like some kind of minor hero, rather than a naughty boy who had bucked the system.

The only explanation for such benign treatment that I could think of, was that I knew I had earned a good reputation for my work and had been in the Wing for more than five years (RAAF Williamtown and Butterworth). Also, I had become one of their top guns for troubleshooting problems on our Sabres. To boot, I loved service life and always looked to an excellent standard of dress and bearing. Such were our traditional values of the time, that this behaviour was well respected. To be honest, I think it still counts today.

At one stage I was interviewed about the “return airfare deposit” that was a must for inter-service indulgence flights. Although I was not aware of its significance at the time, I happened to mention that, on my England-Singapore RAF flight (the Britannia), I sat next to a RAAF Flight Lieutenant who was a Stores Officer from Richmond. He was returning from recreation leave in London. When I remarked to him that “it must have cost you a packet to put up the money for a return airfare” the officer replied that “if you know the system there are ways around such things” and that he “didn’t have to put up a cracker”. It didn’t occur to me then, but that bugger should have had to give up his seat for me at Gan Island, where I had been nearly stranded. This is because the indulgence flights rule is that “lower ranks get priority over higher ranks.” The principle rests on the idea that officers are more able to afford commercial rates, than airman ranks are.

Anyway, time went on and nothing was ever said about any action being taken against me. I can tell you that it was a huge relief, but I could scarcely believe it. On the positive side I had many a slap on the back with a “good on you mate” and I’d heard that my trip was inspiring others to have-a-go themselves. All my colour slides of the trip were really good and squadron slide-nights went on for months. There was no TV in Malaya at that time.

I continued with my intense interest in Ju-Jitsu and earned my black belt ni-dan (second dan) from my Master, Kam Hoe (fifth dan). This gave me a tremendous lift in self-confidence supplementing the feel-good feeling that had come out of my travel adventure.

Post mortem.

You will be relieved to know that my tale is almost told, only one significant post-mortem item that needs to be added, as it sheds light on what went on behind the scenes at Butterworth, but was unknown to me at the time.

In April 1961 I was posted to the RAAF School of Technical Training, at Wagga, as a Corporal instructor in the Engine Section. Shortly after arriving there I was approached by a corporal who said he “knew who I was, the one who’d nearly been court martialled in Malaya”. So I asked him about his own knowledge of events. It turned out that he had been an administrative NCO with RAAF Butterworth Base Squadron – at the time.

His story was that his Commander, a Squadron Leader by rank, wanted to seriously discipline me, but was vigorously opposed by the “Black Prince” who outranked him. However, it looked like I was in for the chopping block until like manna from heaven, the situation was saved by my previous report to the “Prince” about the aberrant Australian Flight Lieutenant who paid no “return form London” fare deposit – and I did (from Hong Kong). According to my new-found corporal contact in Wagga, the Prince was able to argue that it would be incredibly embarrassing to the Air Force should it become known that they had crucified a poor airman (who had at least TRIED to do the right thing) whilst letting an officer get away with it. He posed the question, “Do you want to see a Commissioned Officer Court-martialled too?”

As one can imagine, this must have been a compelling argument and the vindictive squaddie had to back-off. They also must have known that, had they just charged me I was bound to offer the same potentially embarrassing information as a defence. So, there is was, I had fallen on my feet, yet again.

And there endeth the tale of my big adventure out of Malaya, around the world in thirteen weeks. I hope you have enjoyed coming on that trip with me and that, if you are young enough, it might fire your imagination and encourage you to live your own dreams. My creed has always been, “Live your life in full colour.”

After too many beers, my mate asked if he could crash out on my sofa.
I had to explain to him that I'm married now, so that's where I sleep

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The people I meet.

As most people would know, I like to keep the body beautiful by spending many hours each day hard at work at the gym, I try to keep a low profile so as not to discourage the hundred or so other users of the facility who, try as they might, are not able to match my magnificence.

Normally I now try and use the equipment that is situated in a corner or in a darkened area so as not to distract those lesser souls and I've found that this seems to work as those requesting autographs from my wonderful self have since dropped from two to three hundred a day to about 50.

Of course, while readying my perfect personage ready for the gym, I have to pay particular attention to masking the Radtechitis that emanates from the body. I start the day by rising at 3.00am, spend an hour or so under a piping hot shower, lathering up with a cake of Lifebuoy soap, (I use a fresh one each day) then fill the bath with ice cubes and spend 40 minutes immersed in the cubes to close the pores. With pores all closed, I apply a layer of Vaseline all over which traps the Radtechitis inside. Only then am I safe to exit the house without attracting the masses.

Once suitably prepared, my day then starts. As it is usually still only a bit after 5.00am, with the gym not opening until 6.00am, I don the Dunlop Volleys and hooking up the hound, pound the footpaths around the block, covering the 10km circuit in 30 mins. I then return the exhausted dawg to the home, hop into the trusty 62 VW Beetle and proceed to the gym, arriving a few minutes after opening.

Normally I'm the only one there at that time, 6.00am being a bit early for Mr and Mrs Average, so I can use any of the machines I like but normal persons start to arrive around 7.00am and as I usually spend at least 10 hours a day working away vigorously in the Gym, as the people arrive I usually slip away un-noticed to a quiet corner to continue.

Normally I'm very careful when moving around the gym as I wouldn't want to rub off any of the protective Vaseline. If any Radtechitis did escape it would affect the gentle sex more so than their male counterpart as it seems it contains a hidden ingredient that, for reasons so far unknown, tends to arouse their primitive matronly instinct. Unfortunately, on this day while soaking up the copious perspiration from one's flawless body, I inadvertently removed a minute portion of the protective armour and allowed a tiny whiff of Radtechitis to escape and be whisked outside via the air conditioning ducts.

Some miles away, the lovely Vanessa Niemand was at her kitchen sink, peeling onions with a sharp knife, while preparing the evening's salad, when that minute amount of Radtechitis wafted into her home vie an open window. The effect was immediate.

Dropping both onion and knife into the sink and tossing the apron and dish cloth onto the kitchen table, she was up on one foot and spinning around in numerous 360s in a clockwise direction with head held high trying to determine the source of that Radtechitis. Eventually, realising it was coming from a north westerly direction, it was on with the UG boots then she dashed outside, grabbed the small scooter from the startled young bloke next door and heading off at a million miles an hour, headed for the gym.

Arriving at the gym, she dashed inside, disregarded the signing in as per Covid requirements and sought me out. Luckily, Ryan Short, the resident PTI torturer, who, as he normally does, was working on several lovely young ladies and saw what was about to take part. He grabbed an orange barrier and rushed to my rescue but even though Ryan, who is normally described by all female gym goers as the irresistible hunk, was no match for Vanessa who brushed him aside as though he was a 10 stone weakling and wrapped herself upon my person in order to soak up some of that Radtechitis.

Under sufferance, I allowed this to continue for 57 minutes before extracting myself from her clutches.

Such is the torment a Radtech must endure.

An Irish woman of advanced age visited her physician to ask his advice on reviving her husband's libido. 'What about trying Viagra?' asked the doctor. 'Not a chance', she said... 'He won't even take an aspirin.' 'Not a problem,' replied the doctor. 'Give him an 'Irish Viagra'. 'What is Irish Viagra?', she asked. It's when you drop the Viagra tablet into his coffee. He won't even taste it. Give it a try and call me in a week to let me know how things went.' It was a week later when she called the doctor, who directly inquired as to her progress. The poor dear exclaimed, 'Oh, faith, bejJeezus and begorrah! T'was horrid! Just terrible, doctor!' 'Really? What happened?' asked the doctor. 'Well, I did as you advised and slipped it in his coffee and the effect was almost immediate. He jumped straight up, with a smile on his face, a twinkle in his eye and with his pants a-bulging fiercely! With one swoop of his arms, he sent me cups and saucers flying, ripped me clothes to tatters and took me then and there passionately on the tabletop! T'was a nightmare, I tell you, an absolute nightmare!' 'Why so terrible?' asked the doctor, 'Do you mean the sex your husband provided wasn't good?' 'Freakin' Jaysus, it was the best sex I've had in 25 years! But sure as I'm sittin' here, I'll never be able to show me face in Starbucks again.

Caribou A4-208

The following is an update for the article printed in the Magazine, Volume 8, Page 3.

Following the preparation of the aircraft by members of the Ipswich Amberley Aviation Museum (now known as Amberley Aviation Heritage Centre) and the RAAF Amberley Scuba Club, the airframe was given the tick of approval by the Queensland Department of Environment to be transported to Curtin Artificial Reef in Moreton Bay..

Trial carriage by 5 AVN Chinook helicopter was conducted in October 2000 and route selection undertaken. The transfer in November was cancelled due to poor weather and an impending cyclone. The transfer was deferred until around 5 Jan 2001 but later cancelled.

After numerous attempts to get the activity finalised, the Underwater Research Group QLD formerly advised Defence in June 2015 that they no longer wished to have the airframe relocated from Oakey to the Curtin Artificial Reef in Moreton Bay. Since then the airframe has remained at Oakey and has become a candidate for disposal.

PS David bell got in touch, he says: “Whilst the airframe is still at Oakey and being used on occasions for training by fire section, there is a rumour to have the airframe used for another type of training ---- watch this space !

Meanwhile, a number of panels gave been removed ---- for watch faces to be sold as part of the 2021 celebrations !!”

Below, 208 in happier times.

No Comment.

Frognall

Robin Belford ex-Frognall March 1955 intake 9 RAPP/7 FDC, got in touch, he said: .

In a recent RAM edition there was a brief summary by Graham Darley concerning Frognall Fellowship Diploma Course graduates. This brief summary had a couple of errors and prompted me to try and present a more detailed and hopefully more accurate summary, which is below. My

summary does contain some uncertainties and correction is invited. It may be of interest to publish the Belford summary and invite comment as it is certainly more detailed and complete than that published Vol 64 Dec 2018 and accessible in the current Vol 70 Jun 2020 issue (from Jim Treadwell's story}, and it may be a useful exercise in order to arrive at an authoritative and accurate historical record.

A brief summary on my post-Frognall years follows. I graduated from No7 FDC Jan 1960, and was posted to ARDU. Then I was selected as one of the original Mirage III training group and was posted to the School of Languages (LANGSCL) early 1962 to pick up some French before departure. Delays in the program enabled me to complete the language training syllabus and I then became a French instructor at LANGSCL and subsequently a LANGSCL graduate as Interpreter/Translator (French). I finally reached France end 1962, and after two years returned to Australia in January 1965. I spent most of my time on the Mirage project at Williamtown, HQSC and Butterworth before resigning as a SqnLdr and joining Thomson-CSF (now Thales) to open the first company office in Canberra in 1971. Thales is now the second largest defence company in Australia; it has certainly expanded in the last 50 years. I then migrated to France in 1978 and after four years was subsequently based in Singapore as the SEA representative (Singapore, Thailand, Burma, Brunei. Hong Kong, Philippines) for seven years. Back in Australia after 11 years in 1989 I joined TRAC (Thomson Radar Australia Corporation) which won TAAATS early 1990s; Thales has the contract for the TAAATS successor. I now reside in the USA, in North Carolina, living in interesting political and medical times indeed.

My summary would serve as a good base to develop a sound history of the early FDC Frognall years , and I forward it in the hope that you may be able to use it. As it stands it is much more detailed than the brief summary already published in RAM. Also attached for your records is a 1948-1972 listing of RAAF radio apprentice intakes. Again this listing is not complete and I therefore suspect that it shows only those who graduated as engineers or technicians. For instance, on my course alone (9 RAPP) there are at least seven names missing, those who did not make it to graduation, and Boyldew, Elliot and Gillette who I believe to be FDC graduates are not listed, hence the (?) beside their names - faulty memory?.

Fellowship Diploma Communication Engineering Courses at Frognall

The Radio Apprentice School was set up in 1948 at Frognall as the lodger unit with students attending the Royal Melbourne Technical College. All started on the engineering stream and those students who did not remain on that stream were trained as radio technicians. As I remember the complete FDC course progress as initially set up was as follows:

- After three years the Associate Diploma of Radio Engineering was awarded to successful students. For the fourth year the students were lodged at Radschool Ballarat for combined technical/engineering studies at the end of which the Associate Diploma of Communication Engineering was awarded and graduates became aircraftsmen at the rank of AC. The fifth and sixth year were completed at Frognall/RMTC, the fifth as ACs and the sixth as Officer Cadets graduating as Pilot Officers with the Fellowship Diploma (Communication Engineering).
- This process lasted until 1958 when the final segment at RMTC became one year by increasing subject loads through the duration of the course structure. No.5 FDC and No.6 FDC therefore graduated together. The No.6 FDC did the first six months as ACs and then Cadet Officers for the final six months. The members of No.7 FDC followed this revised policy.

- The policy was again changed during 1959 effective Jan 1960 with Associate Diploma graduates from Radschool Ballarat being commissioned as POs to complete the final No.8 FDC year at that rank. No.7 FDC was therefore the last of the Cadet Officer Frognall graduates until the Diploma Cadet Squadron was established in 1962; from 1960 FDC students did the final year as POs.

Apologies are made for any inadvertent omissions and errors. Uncertainty is indicated by (?).

No.1 FDC 1953-1954
Don Johnson, Frank Pederick, Don Gray, Viv Norrish, Bob Bell, Ron Clark, Bob Fretwell, Bernie Pollett, Wal Pearson (?). These students were from Radio Apprentice Courses 1, 2 and 3 having graduated from these courses with an Associate Diploma lasting four years.

No.2 FDC 1954-1955 (RAPP No.4 1950-1953)
Ian Grant, Ron Hodson, Col Casey, Laurie Hull (3 RAPP) (?).

No.3 FDC 1955-1956 (RAPP No.5 1951-1954)
John Ryan, Peter Coutts.

No.4 FDC 1956-1957 (RAPP No.6 1952-1955)
Graeme Farthing, Geoff Jensen, Graham Darley, Dave Haber, Peter Coleman.

No.5 FDC 1957-1958 (RAPP No.7 1953-1956)
Jim Tanzer, Noel Hadfield, Ross Elliot (?),Dave Gillett (?). This was the last of the two-year FDC stream at Frognall.

No.6 FDC 1958 (RAPP No.8 1954-1957)
Bob Dannatt, Geoff Tucker, Graham Boyldew (?).

No.7 FDC 1959 (RAPP No.9 1955-1958)
Ron Noble, Rod Harris, Robin Belford, Tim James (8 RAPP), Ken Frith (8 RAPP – did not complete). These students were commissioned as POs wef 1 Jan 1960. These students were

the last RAAF FRMTC graduates as the College became Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology RMIT in 1960. They were also the last Frognall Cadet Officers until the inception of DCS in 1962.

The author (Robin Belford) believes that following No.7 FDC the following sequence occurred until the DCS was established, however the Vol 69 edition of RAM in the Frognall history section states that No 8 FDC was the last FDC course; correction may be required concerning these listings.

No.8 FDC 1960 (RAPP No.10 1956-1959)
Brian Harris, Jim Noble, Richard Orr, John Allan, Neville Hassen, John Schmidt (8 RAPP), Derek Trushell (8 RAPP). These students were commissioned as POs wef 1 Jan 1960 and subsequent course students completed the FDC year as POs until DCS in 1962.

No.9 FDC 1961 (RAPP No.11 1957-1960)
Graeme Rickert, Max Brennan, Neville Middleton, Ron Potter (?), Denis Street(?).
These students are thought to be the last FDC graduates from the radio training plan set up in 1948 ie the last FDC graduates before DCS was established. The last Associate Diploma graduates originally from RAPP Frognall before creation of the DCS are listed below – again, apologies for omissions/errors. These members were commissioned as POs upon graduation and are thought to have completed the FDC from DCS. Correction is invited.

RAPP No.12 1958-1961
Rex Bean, John Townsend.

RAPP No.13 1959-1962
Graham Giles, David Hains, Doug Roser, Peter Silcock, Kev Leslie.

Footnote
In 1959 there was a number of RAAF ex-apprentices from Frognall and Wagga plus airman entry who completed diplomas at RMTC through selection as post-graduate students. John Harper and Col Ely were two ex-Frognall from RAPP No.3 course, and all the 1959 graduates attended OTS as POs at Rathmines early 1960.

So let's get this straight.
There's no cure for a virus that can be killed by sanitizer and hand soap?

WWII veteran Lance Cook on 75 years since war's end

The Canberra Times
TO SERVE THE NATIONAL CITY

The Beaufighter wasn't the World War II veteran's first choice but the 95-year-old fell in love with it which is why you'll find pictures and models of it around his home. "I wanted to be a mechanic on the mighty spitfire," Mr Cooke said. "But I got posted into a squadron and it happened to be the Beaufighter squadron, the old spits could go but they weren't near as good as the Beaufighters."

Lance still remembers the murmurs of Japan's surrender on August 15, 1945. He was stationed at Labuan as a 20-year-old when gossip started through the latrines of soldiers, colloquially known as the latrine wireless. Mr Cooke has the day documented in a diary. "I have in the diary I got called out of bed at 9pm at night to go down and service the planes, they were going out the next morning," he said.

"They had me up at 5am the next morning to go and see the planes out."

Lance Cooke's Beaufighter squadron with the mighty aircraft.

Mr Cooke had heard through the latrine wireless the reasons for the flights were to send a message to the Commander in Chief of the Japanese Army in Borneo Masao Baba, who had wanted to negotiate terms of the surrender. "As far as the Allies were concerned unconditional meant unconditional and they wanted to talk terms ... but as far as the surrender was it was unconditional and I think they had the planes up for the express purpose, they weren't bluffng," he said.

Mr Cooke joined the Air Force in January 1943. He went through a series of training courses in Tocumwal, Ultimo, Melbourne and Tamworth before he was deployed to Borneo as an aircraft mechanic. He left for Borneo on Mother's Day 1945.

When the war ended, the job of the soldiers continued. However, Mr Cooke soon heard news that would bring him home but it wasn't easy to get leave. "My dad had bowel cancer and he had never mentioned he wanted to see me while the war was on but then he expressed a wish he wanted to see me," he said. "I was his shadow when I was little so I applied for a posing out." When he took it to the orderly officer, Mr Cooke was told to tear up the application and put it in the bin as the chances were so low, but thanks to a loyal squadron leader he was able to get leave.

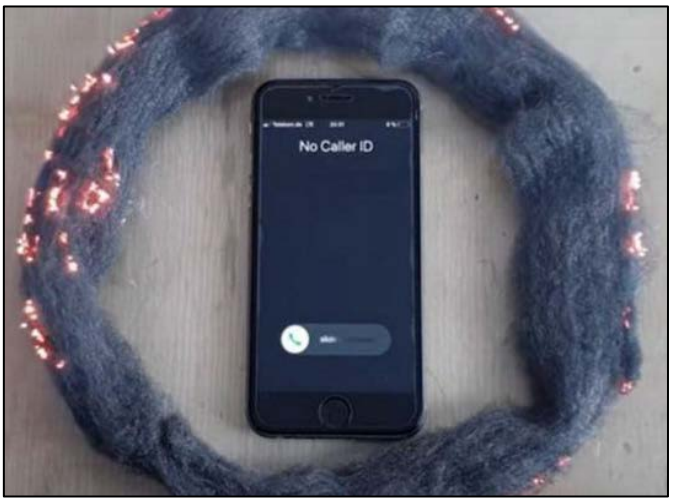
In fact, his leave was given the highest priority possible and Mr Cooke returned to Australia on November 19, 1945. He was able to spend time with his father in his final weeks - he died on January 1, 1946. Mr Cooke's love of airplanes has remained steadfast and was even passed down to his son who is a pilot.

People are scared of getting fined for congregating in crowds.
As is catching a deadly disease and dying a horrible death wasn't enough of a deterrent.

Incoming call on iPhone can set steel wool on fire.

Chances are, if you're connected to the interweb and you've got an email address, you've seen this video, a 5G iPhone is placed inside a ring of steel wool, the phone is rung and before long the steel wool starts to glow red and small flames appear. Click the pic to see the video.

Of course it's all rubbish.



The video was first shared on 27 December 2019. The caption that goes with the clip reads: "Please share the video before it gets deleted! I don't know the reason why the incoming call caused the steel wool to ignite. If you have deeper knowledge in physics, maybe you can write an explanation in the comments…"

It also goes on to say: "We used an iPhone 6 for this experiment. The 'power save' option was set off. We used steel wool grade 12. The wood table plate (is about 2 inches thick). There was no coil under / within the table".

The video was subsequently shared on Facebook and other social media platforms, liked and retweeted by users thousands of times.

One Facebook share (read idiot) says: “Every smartphone has to produce heavy radiation. Don’t keep it near your head. This is good awareness (for) everyone.” The post has been shared by as many as 15,000 people (once again idiots).

A Twitter post sharing the clip has been similarly retweeted 10,000 times. The post also blames 5G for this phenomenon.

Anyone with a modicum of brain power can see it’s garbage, but the ignorant masses believe it and try and insist we believe it too.

Here’s why it’s garbage.

- iPhone 6s are not 5G capable, they weren’t capable until iPhne12.

- 4G and 5G radio waves fall into the non-ionizing part of the electromagnetic spectrum. That means that they don’t carry sufficient energy to add or remove electrons from an atom or molecule. Non-ionizing radiation can apply a force to electrons and attempt to move electrons into a higher energy state, but that’s it. In other words, non-ionizing radio waves are incapable of starting chemical reactions or cancerous mutations, by stripping electrons. However, moving electrons can result in extra heat, especially in metals but mobile phones do not transmit enough energy to so do.

Play the video back at a slower speed, you can see the fire fade into view. This indicates that the fire is actually a digital effect — it comes on all at once throughout the ring, rather than gradually growing from a single spot:

Rocket engine design.

Ever wondered why rocket engines are bell shaped, the reason is very interesting – see the video HERE

If you believe all this will end and we will get back to normal once we reopen everything…..
Raise your right hand. Now slap yourself with it.

Tuggeranong, ACT - Bombing Range Clearance.

From the book “Service Tales and other War Stories – John Clarkson

Preparation for the Team

Prior to proceeding to Fairbairn in the ACT, I was attached to No 1 Central Ammunition Depot, the Ordnance Depot at Kingswood, west of Sydney. In late May 1973, a small band of Armourers,

including FLTLT Bill (the ferret) Mayne, WOFF Reg Manners, SGTs Bill Altman and Brian Dalziel, CPLs Peter (the Colonel) McGuiness and myself, six trusty Armament LACs and two Plant Operators met at the Explosive Ordnance Disposal (EOD) section of the unit for training in the use of Ordnance locating equipment and some elementary Ordnance Disposal safety procedures.

Bill Mayne and Reg Manners were already members of the EOD section of Kingswood and the rest of us were attached in for the course. This attachment preceded a formal posting to No 1 Central Ammunition depot, Detachment “A”, RAAF Base Fairbairn, to work on the Tuggeranong Bombing Range. I was to learn that the unit had recently searched the high explosive range at Morna point, just north of Williamtown for unexploded ordnance. However, it was revealed that the personnel involved with that exercise were supplied from nearby units for brief attachments and it was difficult to maintain some continuity of personnel, therefore, when work was to commence on the next bombing range, Tuggeranong, it was decided to formally post all the required personnel to the unit. This policy was to prove far more successful as the small unit became a most enviable group of men.

Camp Site A – Tuggeranong, July 1973

When the week’s training was completed, we were all to meet at RAAF Base Fairbairn the following Monday, (4th June 1973), to pick up vehicles, tents, domestic equipment, ordnance locating and digging equipment and a myriad of other support equipment. Transport licences

were arranged, rosters were set up for drivers and basically, a small unit was commenced, literally, from the ground up.

A New Unit at Tuggeranong

On arrival at the camp site, the huge marquee was raised, toilets and ablutions constructed, telephone and a landline installed. For the phone, the then Telecom commented they couldn't install a phone at our camp site, as there was no line from the main road, a distance of about 2½ km. With the help of our Plant Operators and their equipment, we dug a foot deep trench from the main road to our camp site, about 2½ km in length. The Telecom people then came out and installed the phone.

Initially, as the area of the original bombing range had been explained and laid out for us, we then commenced to use the locating equipment, (basically, a sensitive and accurate metal detector), to attempt to locate unexploded ordnance. Some of the team had previous experience of these procedures at the Morna Point range, however, we were to learn that locating a large 500 or 1000 pound steel bomb in beach sand dunes was far different from location small practice bomb tails or heads in a heavy clay and rocky countryside, which already contained all sorts of scrap metal, including old farming equipment, fence parts, etc. Over a period of several months, we leaned a lot about the area, using our equipment to its best advantage and we became much more efficient at locating old practice bombs. The unit became affectionately known as the "Tuggeranong Tent Club".

Dining Area, Tuggeranong, July 1973

In the summer months, when the temperatures out in the field reached the high 30's and often into the low 40's, it was difficult to maintain a full day's work of hard manual labour, so a new system of working hours was introduced. Considering the ACT was by then into daylight saving, we were required to arrive at the site no later than 5.40am and to be prepared to actually start work right on 6.00am. We would work right up to 12.00 noon, including a half hour break for morning tea and smoko, etc. Then we'd break for three hours during the hottest part of the day to have lunch and a swim in the nearby Murrumbidgee River. Sometimes we'd drive the RAAF vehicles down to the "Pine Island Reserve" on the river, but it was often crowded with picnickers and tourists, so, instead we'd drive over the paddocks to another very attractive swimming location and beach site somewhat downstream from the reserve.

Tuggeranong Range from Campsite – July 1973

Then at 3.00pm, we'd resume our work on the bombing range and work through until 6.00pm. These new working hours actually resulted in far greater productivity as well as keeping the men fit and in good spirits. Over the next 22 months, we dug up nearly 25,000 practice bomb heads. Some of these were the old 11 ½ lb practice bombs and the majority were the old 25 lb ones. Of all these bomb heads, about 30 still had the detonator fitted, so, we had a small demolition from time to time. Although we hoped to find an old 500 pounder, which would have escalated the priority of the project, we never did.

In June 1974, the tent was replaced with 3 ATCO buildings, which provided some well needed facilities, but I think some of the charm of the tent was lost.

Political Climate at Fairbairn

In late 1973, the newly elected ALP government was still stretching its tentacles into all sorts of policy changes from 23 years of conservative government. This was all the more evident as the

Australia's involvement in Vietnam had ceased less than two years previous. On one occasion late in 1973, the Prime Minister, Mr Gough Whitlam, announced that he would invite the North Vietnamese Trade delegation to Canberra for furthering discussions with the North Vietnamese and Chinese people. To this end, he formally requested that RAAF Base Fairbairn provide a formal Guard of Honour for the North Vietnamese Trade Delegates on their arrival. The Base Warrant Officer Disciplinary (WOD) was requested to recruit the necessary personnel for the Guard of Honour and arrange for a few practice parades prior to the actual arrival of the delegates. The men were recruited, but not informed of the recipient of the guard. (It should be emphasised that Guards of Honour were common at Fairbairn and therefore, the men simply thought, yet another VIP visitor).

The practice parades were held without incident and a polished performance was expected. It also needs to be emphasised that a large number of personnel at Fairbairn were wearing their Active Service ribbons from Vietnam and some from other theatres of active service as well as from Vietnam. Therefore, when the men finally discovered just who this Guard of Honour was for, they were totally disgusted. Then on the very day of the delegates arrival, the Prime Minister and all his associates were at the tarmac waiting for their guests. However, there were no RAAF men there for the Guard. Not a single soul had turned up for the parade. The PM was furious and wanted the men charged with all sorts of disciplinary action but no one was charged. It all just blew over and settled down.

Many a lesson was leaned from that little exercise about the values Australian servicemen hold dearly.

The Social Side of the Tuggeranong Tent Club.

When hundreds of these old 25 pound practice bomb heads were being found, the discussion became centred around what to do with all these heads. An instruction came from our Commanding Officer that no bomb heads were to be taken to any scrap metal dealer unless they were broken up beyond recognition, so began the ritual of bomb head breaking. The bomb head was made of cast iron, but contained an 18 pound lead weight in the nose of the bomb head. the firing pin and its associated mechanism were all of brass, so almost overnight, a small industry sprang up.

We all took turns of swinging the large sledge hammer to break up the hundreds of cast iron bomb heads. Once broken, the pieces were separated into their various metal types. We therefore had piles of pieces of cast iron, piles of lead weights and piles of brass firing pins. Prior to submitting any of this material to a scrap metal dealer, we had to further de-identify the components, so, at the unit bar-be-que site, a small forge was set up. An old Holden hubcap was found and used as a mould for molten lead. Another old iron container was found and used as a mould for molten brass. Finally, we had our first load for the scrap metal dealer.

As our site was a short drive from Canberra, we often received visitors from the Department of Air office. Some were from the Armament or Engineering branch, but some were simply Administration or Finance people wanting to sticky beak at our little establishment. Many of these visitors asked what happened to the thousands of cast iron practice bomb heads we uncovered, as they would not have approved the idea of sending thousands of complete practice bomb heads into a scrap metal yard.

Barbecue and smelting site – Sept 1973

They were most impressed on visiting our small unit to see several airmen working very hard swinging a large sledgehammer breaking these bomb heads up into small pieces. Little did they realise that these small pieces were then melted into cast iron ingots the shape of an old Holden Hub Cap. Then the sale of these ingots over the period of the unit's life proved to be great benefit to the social structure of the unit. The people at Sims Metal had no idea where the metal was coming from.

As I had the largest and strongest frame motor car, (an old 1963 model Mercedes Benz 220S sedan), I was the bunny to take the first load into the scrap dealer. He thought we were dismantling old Navy Communications equipment, so we decided he could believe whatever he liked. He was intrigued by all these lead weights which were the shape of a Holden hub cap! However, the net proceeds of our first sale were quite handsome indeed.

Our Warrant Officer reminded us that a separate bank account needed to be opened, with three signatories, and that the funds were only to be used for unit social functions or comfort items for the unit. It was emphasised that no person would personally profit from any of these takings, so, over the next 22 months, the Tuggeranong Tent Club had a very active social calendar, with dance functions, bar-be-ques, even a couple of theatre evenings.

Colourful Identities.

This was to be Peter McGuiness' last posting, as he elected discharge from here. It was during this posting that I, as a single man again, had socialized with Peter a bit and I lost count of the

occasions he got me into some strife or other. One evening, Peter decided to attend an Officer's Dining In night, just for the challenge. He turned up in a fine dinner suit, complete with miniature medals and chatted with the gentlemen during the pre-dinner drinks. It wasn't until just before entering the dining room that a Wing Commander accidentally trod on Peter's foot and apologized, but Peter didn't notice. It turned out that Peter was still wearing “T”boots! So Peter announced to all present that he was none other than Corporal Peter McGuiness, Armourer extraordinaire, and thanked them all for their hospitality.

Bruce Richardson and Peter (The Colonel) McGuiness

Peter’s family had established a Jeans Shop in the Canberra suburbs. Peter on occasions would help out at the shop, or perhaps help by fastening price tags to garments prior to them being displayed for sale. On more than one occasion, Peter would commence this tedious task after first consuming the odd beer or two or three. The end result was often a whole batch of garments which were incorrectly priced or catalogued. Peter, helped by other family members, would then work well into the night rectifying all these price tags.

Social Life in Canberra

I found Canberra to be a strange place for a single man. Initially, it was difficult to find just where one may find mature social gatherings, without the need to simply gather at a pub. I was to find that in Canberra of those days, there were only about three or four hotels in the whole city, but there were simply numerous licenced clubs. Eventually, I was to become a member of a social gathering called “Club 25”. The name was to imply the approximate average age of its members,

but the club met twice weekly at good venues for dances and other functions, however, there was a strange atmosphere with the social life in Canberra. This is mentioned in more detail in a later chapter, but it seemed like a city without a soul. There were numerous parties, the social life became a whirl, yet I could not explain why I was still lonely. I still believe that much of the social activities of the day reflected on having a wonderful time, without ever looking at searching for any commitment after that. So, life always seemed to be full without ever seemingly achieving much. I believe it was very different for families living in Canberra. Their suburbs were still a close distance from the city or their work places, especially compared with other capital cities and there were good suburban facilities available for family entertainment.

Trips to Brisbane.

During this time, my mother was suffering from yet another stroke, although she was still living in her own home, so, I tried to get to Brisbane as often as I could to see her and encourage her. In late 1974 she decoded to sell her house and move to a retirement village near Cleveland. Once again, I drove to Brisbane to help her move. Sometimes, I would use the inland Newell Highway though Goondiwindi and Warwick and other times, I would go via Sydney. I found it was about a 15hour drive or so. At least Mum enjoyed my visits.

Culture Change - Helicopter Ground Crews.

From our conversations with some of the 5 Squadron helicopter ground crews at Fairbairn, we heard that a culture of “Us and Them” had grown into the helicopter crews. It seemed that a culture had crept into the helicopter family of those who had experienced Active Service and those who had not. Even though the ones who had seen active service were willing to share their expertise with others, the culture of “Us and Them” still grew. The RAAF in their wisdom found a cure. Over a period of about two years or so, an enormous number of airmens’ postings came out for 5 Squadron crews with helicopter experience, posting them to all sorts of different areas, replacing them, gradually, with other airmen without active service. The aim was to split the “Us and Them” culture and over a period of time, it worked.

The Windup and Closure of the Unit.

Toward the end of 1974, it was evident that we had covered a greater part of the bombing range area. The main target area, a square of about 200 metres each side, had been extensively dug out to a depth of several feet. This was the area, logically, where most of the ordnance had been found. Outer areas had also been covered and searched thoroughly and as quoted before, some 25,000 practice bombs had been recovered. The unit commanders were requested to certify the area as “Clear of Explosive Ordnance”. The end decision was to certify the target area clear of explosive ordnance up to a depth of about eight feet, and the remaining area as “clear”. So, in

February 1975, the unit was dismantled and we were all given our respective postings to other units.

Whilst the social life at Tuggeranong and Canberra became quite full, I thought Canberra was an unusual place for a single person; as the party life was hectic, yet one could still be very lonely in the city, however, after a most satisfying posting, all good things have to end, and we were all posted to other units. So in February1975, the site was dismantled and I was posted to No 1 Central Ammunition Depot (1CAMD) at Kingswood, west of Sydney. During the next year or so, one or two of the NCO's were recalled to the site for a particular question or clarification of the clearance details, but I believe construction commenced soon after on the new suburb of Tuggeranong.

Just a few years later, on a visit to Canberra, I drove out to the area trying to find our old camp site. The suburban construction had progressed so far that I had great difficulty in locating just where previously well-known land-marks were. At least we had the satisfaction that our work permitted the construction of a totally new suburb.

The spread of COVID-19 is based on two factors:

1. How dense the population is
2. How dense the population is

Allan George's Gems

Can Sugar destroy a Car's Engine?

POPULAR MECHANICS

It's a longstanding legend stretching nearly 70 years. Let's do some mythbusting.

It's a car culture legend, passed down from generation to generation, that an angry person with a bag of sugar can leave your car dead on its axles. Add sugar to the fuel tank, turn its fuel into a sugary petroleum mess and wait for the owner to start the car and blow the engine.

It's also a myth.

Sugar doesn't dissolve in petrol. If you add it to petrol, it just stays in granular form.

"We have not seen an engine damaged or destroyed by sugar in a fuel tank, nor heard of any truly plausible or established cases of this happening," says Mohammad Fatouraie, manager of engineering at Bosch, one of the auto industry's main suppliers of fuel system components.

A sugar crystal is about 200 microns. Filters in a car's fuel system capture particles much smaller than that, so suspended sugar granules in the fuel would be caught by any one of several filters before they ever made it into the engine. There's a fabric, sock-like filter surrounding the fuel pump pickup in the tank, an in-line fuel filter at the tank pump inlet, a filter on the high-pressure fuel pump in the engine bay and filters at the inlet of each fuel injector.

Even in a carbureted engine, which doesn't have fuel injectors or their individual filters, there's a low chance that sugar would ever make it that far into the engine after all the other filters in the system.

Sugar is roughly twice as dense as petrol so some granules wouldn't even make it all the way to the filters. Particles denser than fuel settle in pockets and corners of low-velocity flow and there are many low-velocity pockets between the fuel tank and the engine. If someone dumped sugar in your tank and you removed the tank to clean it out, you'd see a lot of the sugar granules collected on the bottom. It could clog the in-tank filters and prevent fuel from flowing properly, and while it's possible that prolonged running of a car with clogged filters could burn out the fuel pump, it's unlikely to reach that point.

If you knew someone dumped a lot of sugar in your tank, you'd just have to drop the tank to clean it out and replace the sock filter. You may as well test the fuel pump, to be safe and if its flow rate doesn't match the factory specifications, you'd replace it.

Your engine would be fine – so there you are, but we don't suggest you try it.

If you shouldn't be worried about sugar, what should you worry about being added to your tank? Some people say that dumping water into a gas tank would cause the kind of damage that sugar can't, because engines need their fuel to combust and water prevents that. They're right, but it'd take much larger quantities of water to do serious damage than an angry car vandal with a bucket could carry.

After all, ever since E10 was mandated, there's been water in every gallon of fuel you put in your tank. E10 means that 10 percent of every gallon you put in your car is ethanol, a corn-based alcohol fuel that appeared on the market in 2003. Alcohol is very hygroscopic, meaning it absorbs water easily. Moisture-laden air inside the gas tank will pass water into the fuel's ethanol and so most cars you see on the road today already has some water coursing through their fuel lines. It's just not enough to cause damage. Even adding water outright to a fuel tank—cue our angry bucket-toting vandal, would cause no harm as long as it doesn't dilute the fuel so much that there isn't enough fuel left to combust and power the engine.

It'd just displace some of the liquid fuel in the air/fuel mixture in the engine's combustion chambers, but oxygen sensors and on-board computers would automatically compensate for the leaner mixture and the engine would run fine without injuring itself.

If the piston can't complete its stroke in the chamber because there's so much non-combustible water, the engine becomes hydro-locked. That would cause considerable damage, but under normal situations, the engine would stop operating before failure is catastrophic. Like the sugar myth that inspired it, this myth is also based more on urban-legend.

People often say every myth starts with a grain of truth, but there's nothing concrete to this one. Early mentions of sugaring someone's fuel tank to get even with them date from the 1950s. Physics haven't changed. All it adds up to is a big waste of sugar.

Working from home – but missing the train trips.

What happens if you put the wrong type of petrol in your car?

If you drive a lot of different vehicles you have to be careful when it's time to fill them up. Will something happen if you use E10 or 91 instead of 95, or vice versa?

Long story short; there's little to worry about, at least, not when it comes to types of octane. (Putting unleaded into diesel vehicles or vice versa is a different story, of course. This may necessitate you emptying the tank.)

If your car is designed to run on 91 and you accidentally put high-octane in your tank, ultimately, it's nothing serious to worry about. Higher octane fuel does not burn as easily as a lower octane fuel. Higher octane fuels are specified where higher compression ratios are present in an engine, or where forced induction (such as turbo charging) is used. By using higher octane fuel where lower is specified, you will not create a problem with your engine. It does not (by popular belief) add any power to your engine, but will not harm it at all. Worst case scenario is you've just wasted some money by buying the more expensive fuel.

Different fuels burn at different rates, so the spark plug needs to fire at just the right time during the ignition stroke, otherwise you don't burn all the fuel before the valves open, which could cause a backfire (if you're lucky) or could cause your engine to try to turn in the wrong direction (if you're not) because the explosion happens before the crank shaft is in the right position (called pinging), forcing it back instead of over the crest of the revolution. Or it burns too hot and melts a piston. In either case, this will eventually lead to the engine blowing a nice paper currency-sized hole in your wallet.

The spark plug is fired before the piston reaches top dead centre (TDC - upper most position in the cylinder). This allows for the air/fuel explosion time to reach its maximum force by the time the piston is ready to move back down in the cylinder. This may seem weird in the sense that the explosion takes place so quickly, but not if you think about how fast the piston is moving (at 3000 rpm, the ignition fires 25 times per second). As fuel is harder to burn as the octane goes up, it becomes more stable and less likely to burn before it’s supposed to. If lower octane fuel is introduced into an engine that requires 95 or 98, the air/fuel will most likely try to burn before it's supposed to and causing the preignition otherwise known as "ping" or "knock".

In a modern engine, if you put the lower octane fuel in an engine which specifies high octane fuel, this will not cause you any major issues on an electronic fuel injected engine because it has a device known as a "knock sensor" which will adjust the engine timing. The main effect this has is to reduce the power output of the engine.

Diesel on the other hand should theoretically not ignite in a petrol/gasoline engine because diesel doesn't vaporise very well which is why diesel is ignited by the compression of hot air under extreme pressure. Diesel fuel in a petrol engine can cause flooding of the cylinders and a stall, but in the event that the diesel actually ignites, the most likely scenario is that the engine will run

rather rough and sputter a lot before finally dying and flooding, possibly bending or snapping one or more connection rods.

The missus said she's leaving me because I invade her privacy too often.
At least that's what it says in her diary.

What Is a Knock Sensor?

Have you ever floored the accelerator in your car and heard a slight "knock" or "ping," along with engine noise and the exhaust note? What you're hearing is pre-ignition, which occurs when there's a pocket of fuel/air mixture that's igniting ahead of the flame front from the spark plug. When this happens, there's a tiny shockwave tha occurs around that explosion (along with the normal detonation from the spark plug), which greatly increases the pressure in the cylinder. In extreme cases, knocking can result in catastrophic damage to the engine, including cavitation or even perforation of a piston crown.

On an older engine where the ignition timing could be adjusted, knocking could be addressed by retarding the timing a little. Water injection was also a solution at one time and of course, beginning in the 1920s, tetraethyl lead was added to fuel as an anti-knock compound that also protected valve seats.

Leaded gas was outlawed in the mid-'70s, and ignition timing on modern engines is dictated by the engine control computer. Older engines advanced or retarded timing via vacuum and would adjust it according to engine load. On a modern engine, the computer receives information from several sensors, but many engines still feature a knock sensor, usually mounted on the intake manifold or cylinder head.

The knock sensor detects vibrations that come from a knock or an irregularity in combustion and send a signal to the engine control computer, which then adjusts timing to correct the knock. Symptoms of a failed knock sensor include:

- A trouble code will be registered in the car’s computer and the Check Engine lamp (CEL) will come on, although some engines will require multiple failure cycles before storing a code.
- The engine will misfire
- Engine vibration, especially at highway speed
- Thumping or knocking noise from the engine
- Poor fuel economy and acceleration

Knock sensors don't fail often, but if you suspect this problem, it's one you need to move on quickly to head off engine damage.

Two guys in a health club, one is putting on a pair of women’s lace knickers.
1st guy: "Since when do you wear women's underwear?"
2nd guy: "Since the missus found ‘em in the glove box."

Motor car glut.

If you’ve got a computer and you’ve been on the internet in the past 6 months or so, you’ve more than likely seen this worrying story.

The world’s unsold car stockpile.

Nobody is buying brand new cars anymore!

Well they are, but not on the scale they once were. Millions of brand new unsold cars are just sitting redundant on runways and car parks around the world. There, they stay, slowly deteriorating without being maintained. Below is an image of a massive car park at Swindon, United Kingdom, with thousands upon thousands of unsold cars just sitting there with not a buyer in sight. The car manufacturers have to buy more and more land just to park their cars as they perpetually roll off the production line.

There is proof that the world's recession is still biting and won't let go. All around the world there are huge stockpiles of unsold cars and they are being added to every day. They have run out of space to park all of these brand new unsold cars and are having to buy acres and acres of land to store them. It would be fair to say that it is becoming a mechanical epidemic of epic proportions.

If anybody from outer space is reading this webpage, we here on Earth have too many cars, why not come and buy a few hundred thousand of them for your own planet!

The car industry would never sell these cars at massive reductions in their prices to get rid of them, no they still want every buck. If they were to price these cars for a couple of thousand they would sell them, however, nobody would then buy any expensive cars and then they would end up being unsold. Its quite a pickle we have gotten ourselves into. The pic above shows the Nissan test track. Only it is no longer being used, reason...there are too many unsold cars parked up on it! The number of cars keeps on piling up on it until its overflowing. Nissan then acquires more land to park the cars, as they continue to come off the production line.

The car industry cannot stop making new cars because they would have to close their factories and lay off tens of thousands of employees. This would further add to the recession. Also the domino effect would be catastrophic as steel manufactures would not sell their steel. All the tens of thousands of places where car components are made would also be effected, indeed the world could come to a grinding halt.

Below is shown just a small area of a gigantic car park in Spain where tens of thousands of cars just sit and sunbathe all day.

Tens of thousands of cars are still being made every week but hardly any of them are being sold. Nearly every household in developed countries already has a car or even two or three cars parked up on their driveway as it is.

The cycle of buying, using, buying using has been broken, it is now just a case of "using" with no buying.

It is a sorry state of affairs and there is no answer to it, solutions don't exist. the cars just keep on being manufactured and keep on adding to the millions of unsold cars already sitting redundant around the world. As it is, there are more cars than there are people on the planet with an estimated 10 billion roadworthy cars in the world today. We literally cannot make enough of them.

Below are seen just a few of the thousands of Citroen's parked up at Corby in England.

They are being added to daily, imported from France but with nowhere else to go once they arrive. There they sit, brand spanking new cars, all with a couple of miles on the clock that was consummate with them being driven to their car parks. Manufacturing more cars than can be sold is against all logic, logistics and economics but it continues day after day, week after week, month after month, year in year out.

All around the world these cars just keep on piling up, there is no end in sight. The economy shouts out quite loud that nobody has the money anymore to spend on a new car. The reason being that they are making their "old" cars go on a lot longer, but we cannot stop making them, soon we will run out of space to park them. We are nearly running out of space to drive them that's for sure!

Gone are the days when the family would have a new car every year, they are now keeping what they have got. It may be fair to say that some families still get a new car every year but it’s the majority that now do not. The results are in these images, hundreds of thousands if not millions of cars around the world are driven from their factories, parked up and left.

Could we say that these cars have been left to rot! Maybe, as these cars will certainly rot if they are not bought, driven and cared for. It does not look like they will be sold any day soon, many of them have been standing for over 12 months or even longer and this is detrimental to the car. Do you think they will ever start giving them away, that may be the only radical solution. Who knows, you could soon be getting a free car with every packet of cornflakes!.

When a car is left standing idle, all the oil sinks to the bottom of the sump and then corrosion begins to set in on all the internal engine parts where the oil has drained away. Cold corrosion is when condensation builds up in the cylinders and rust forms in the bores. The engines would then start to seize and would need to be professionally freed before they could be started.

Also the tyres start to lose air and the batteries start to go flat, indeed the detrimental list goes on and on.

So the longer they sit there the worse it slowly becomes for them.
What is the answer to this? Well they need to be sold and that just isn't happening.

The epidemic is not improving, it is getting worse. Car manufactures are constantly coming out with new models with the latest technology in them. Hence prospective buyers of, for example, a new Citroen Xsara Picasso want the latest model, not last year's model.

It's a great story – but, as usual, it's all garbage!!

This story started back in May 2014 and photographs referenced above supposedly depict millions of brand new unsold cars, vehicles that are continuously churned out by automobile manufacturers around the world even though there is no demand for them and they end up sitting in car parks "slowly deteriorating without being maintained," forcing manufacturers to "buy more and more land just to park their cars as they perpetually roll off the production line." Although the displayed photographs are real, they are several years old (reflecting conditions that existed back in 2009), and do not depict what is claimed in the accompanying text.

One of those photos was taken from a May 2009 article about an Atlanta car dealer noting that in the first four months of that year, 60% of his retail sales profits had come from vehicles that sold for $4500 or less (rather than from new or near-new cars). Another from a January 2009 article about slumping new car sales in the UK and captured a view of some of the thousands of unsold cars that were then being stored at Avonmouth Docks England, while sales of new cars in the UK had slumped to a 12-year-low. Another appears (without additional comment) in a March 2009 Boston.com collection of images reflecting "Scenes from the recession."

Many of those photographs originated with a January 2009 Getty Images collection titled "Cars Sit Unsold in Avonmouth Docks As Car Sales Stutter" and were also part of a January 2009 Jalopnik article about "Where Are Automakers Stashing Unsold Cars?" and a February 2009 Business Insider article collecting images of "unsold cars around the world," that latter of which noted that:

> *Sales of new cars in the UK have slumped to a 12-year-low … the EU's Industry Commissioner Guenter Verheugen warned the outlook for the European car industry was 'brutal' and predicted not all European manufacturers would survive the crisis.*

These photographs do for the most part, show unsold automobile inventory in various parts of the world, which hit rather high levels when new car sales badly slumped during the global recession of 2009, but even back then automobile manufacturers weren't churning out product willy-nilly, regardless of demand — the captions to some of those 2009 photographs in their original contexts noted that, for example, "production of cars at Honda in Swindon has been

halted for a unprecedented four-month period because of the collapse in global sales and represents the longest continuous halt in production at any UK car plant."

Additionally, it isn't 2009 any more. Although these pictures captured some large overstocks of new cars that were produced just before a huge unanticipated drop in demand, that was a temporary phenomenon from several years ago. British automobile production, for example, rebounded to hit a record high in 2013 (with a car being produced every 20 seconds that year) because UK car sales also reached their highest level in the past several years in 2013, with consumers purchasing a total of 2.26 million vehicles:

UK car sales in 2013 recorded their best year since 2007, industry figures have shown, helped by cheap credit deals and stronger consumer confidence. The Society of Motor Manufacturers and Traders (SMMT) said that 2.26 million vehicles were registered in 2013 which was a 10.8% rise on 2012, although the figure is 6% lower than 2007's 2.4 million figure. The 2013 total was boosted by a 23.76% rise in sales in December, marking the 22nd successive month of increases.

The Bloomberg news service similarly reported that U.S. auto sales also sharply increased after 2009. If you look for factual data, and you can hunt down a lot of truth with a little bit of effort, beyond the simple tidbit that these photos are more than five years old. For example, we can find how many cars are being sold in the U.S. now, along with plenty of historical data. In 2009, when these photos were taken, U.S. auto sales were running at barely a 9 million annual rate. Fast-forward to today and, as we learned at the beginning of this month, we are running at an annual rate of more than 16 million autos. That is an improvement of 78 percent.

Newly manufactured automobiles are produced according to a schedule based on anticipated demand, and they have to be stored somewhere while awaiting transport to and from ports via truck, ship, or train to dealerships (both within the country of production and abroad). Just because vehicles are temporarily parked en masse for storage purposes doesn't mean they're doomed to remain forever unpurchased and sit outside until they deteriorate and are scrapped while manufacturers continue to churn out more and more new cars:

The Avonmouth and Royal Portbury Docks (also known as Bristol Port), a facility shown in many of these photos, handles over 700,000 motor vehicles per year for import, export, and finishing. Given that volume, at any particular time there are likely to be thousands of cars parked there waiting to be loaded (or just having been unloaded) and transported to their final points of sale. Even the text in the "Unsold Cars" article is misleading: According to The Truth About Cars, "Sheerness is one of the leading ports for the importation of cars to the United Kingdom." The updated photos showing all those cars in the U.K. aren't unsold inventory waiting to be shipped; they are the precise opposite — these are cars in the pipeline that dealers have ordered, not a vast graveyard of autos waiting to rust.

My mate is thinking about asking his ex-missus to re-marry him,
but he's worried she'll think he is just after her for his money.

Mirage spy-plane.

On the 7th April, 1983, No 77 Squadron Mirage IIIO A3-57 was flown from Williamtown to undertake a photo reconnaissance mission over the Franklin River in western Tasmania. The distance involved required the pilot to land at Avalon, outside Melbourne, to refuel both before and after crossing Bass Strait to carry out the mission. Within days, the episode became a cause célèbre, after it became public knowledge that the mission had been ordered by Gareth Evans, the Attorney-General in the newly-elected Hawke Labor Government in Canberra.

State Government plans to dam the Franklin for hydro-electricity generation had attracted widespread and vocal opposition across Australia. The new Federal Government directed a cessation of work at the site, and A3-57's sortie was to ensure that Tasmanian authorities were complying. The affair was a key moment in the history of constitutional relations and environmental protection in Australia.

Gareth Evans was subsequently grilled at the National Press Club in Canberra about this 'operation' and the ensuing Mirage mission in April. His response: "I can best summarise all of this complicated saga by uttering what is known in the profession - or if it isn't known in the profession it ought to be - as the 'streaker's defence'. And it goes something like this: "It seemed, your worship, like a good idea at the time." This phrase entered the political lexicon for some years. Senator Evans also attracted the less-than-flattering nick-name of 'Biggles'.

Woman to husband: "Let's go out and have some fun tonight!"
Husband: "Okay, but if you get home before I do, leave the hall light on."

TOOLS explained.

Aircraft ejection seats.

In aircraft, an ejection seat or ejector seat is a system designed to rescue the pilot or other crew of an aircraft (usually military) in an emergency. In most designs, the seat is propelled out of the aircraft by an explosive charge or rocket motor, carrying the pilot with it. The concept of an ejectable escape crew capsule has also been tried. Once clear of the aircraft, the ejection seat deploys a parachute. Ejection seats are common on certain types of military aircraft.

A bungee-assisted escape from an aircraft took place in 1910. In 1916 Everard Calthrop, an early inventor of parachutes, patented an ejector seat using compressed air. The modern layout for an ejection seat was first proposed by Romanian inventor Anastase Dragomir in the late 1920s. The design featured a parachuted cell (a dischargeable chair from an aircraft or other vehicle). It was successfully tested on 25 August 1929 at the Paris-Orly Airport near Paris and in October 1929 at Băneasa, near Bucharest. Dragomir patented his "catapult-able cockpit" at the French Patent Office.

The design was perfected during World War II. Prior to this, the only means of escape from an incapacitated aircraft was to jump clear ("bail out"), and in many cases this was difficult due to injury, the difficulty of egress from a confined space, g forces, the airflow past the aircraft, and other factors.

The first ejection seats were developed independently during World War II by Heinkel and SAAB. Early models were powered by compressed air and the first aircraft to be fitted with such a system was the Heinkel He 280 prototype jet-engined fighter in 1940. One of the He 280 test pilots, Helmut Schenk, became the first person to escape from a stricken aircraft with an ejection seat on 13 January 1942 after his control surfaces iced up and became inoperative. At 2,400m (7,875ft), Schenk found he had no control, jettisoned his towline, and ejected. The He 280 was never put into production status. The first operational aircraft built anywhere to provide ejection seats for the crew was the Heinkel He 219 Uhu night fighter in 1942.

The Hungarian RMI-8 experimental interceptor fighter had two engines in a push-pull configuration in order to achieve 800 km/h top speed. To save pilots a spring-driven catapult seat was developed but the prototype was destroyed in 1944 during an air raid, shortly before the aircraft's maiden flight. Another prototype was not finished before the fall of Budapest.

In Sweden, a version using compressed air was tested in 1941. A gunpowder ejection seat was developed by Bofors and tested in 1943 for the Saab 21. The first test in the air was on a Saab 17 on 27 February 1944 and the first real use occurred by Lt. Bengt Johansson on 29 July 1946 after a mid-air collision.

As the first operational military jet in late 1944 to ever feature one, the lightweight Heinkel He 162A Spatz, featured a new type of ejection seat, this time fired by an explosive cartridge. In this system, the seat rode on wheels set between two pipes running up the back of the cockpit. When lowered into position, caps at the top of the seat fitted over the pipes to close them. Cartridges, basically identical to shotgun shells, were placed in the bottom of the pipes, facing upward. When fired, the gases would fill the pipes, "popping" the caps off the end and thereby forcing the seat to ride up the pipes on its wheels and out of the aircraft. By the end of the war, the Dornier Do 335 Pfeil — primarily from it having a rear-mounted engine (of the twin engines powering the

design) powering a pusher propeller located at the aft end of the fuselage presenting a hazard to a normal "bailout" escape — and a few late-war prototype aircraft were also fitted with ejection seats.
After World War II, the need for such systems became pressing, as aircraft speeds were getting ever higher and it was not long before the sound barrier was broken. Manual escape at such speeds would be impossible. The United States Army Air Forces experimented with downward-ejecting systems operated by a spring, but it was the work of James Martin and his company Martin-Baker that proved crucial.

Sir James Martin, an Irish immigrant and innovative engineer, began producing aircraft in 1929. He had always had a great desire to invent and make things with his own hands and, by lots of hard work and continuous study, was an accomplished engineer even in his teens.

It was whilst producing the MB1 aircraft (right) that Sir James' friendship with Capt Valentine Baker was established, giving birth to Martin-Baker Aircraft Company Ltd. Capt Baker's years of flying experience and incomparable skill was of great importance in the development and flight-testing of the company's prototypes.

In 1942, during a test flight of the Martin-Baker MB3 prototype, Capt Baker was tragically killed. The engine seized and he was forced to make an emergency landing – the wing tip struck a tree stump, causing the aircraft to cartwheel. His death greatly affected Sir James, who dedicated the rest of his life, and the future of their company, towards pilot safety.

The first live flight test of a Martin-Baker system took place on 24 July 1946, when fitter Bernard Lynch ejected from a Gloster Meteor Mk III at the Daily Express Air Pageant in 1948. Martin-Baker ejector seats were fitted to prototype and production aircraft from the late 1940s, and the first emergency use of such a seat occurred in 1949 during testing of the jet-powered Armstrong Whitworth A.W.52 experimental flying wing.

Early seats used a solid propellant charge to eject the pilot and seat by igniting the charge inside a telescoping tube attached to the seat. As aircraft speeds increased still further, this method proved inadequate to get the pilot sufficiently clear of the airframe. Increasing the amount of propellant risked damaging the occupant's spine, so experiments with rocket propulsion began. In 1958, the Convair F-102 Delta Dagger was the first aircraft to be fitted with a rocket-propelled seat. Martin-Baker developed a similar design, using multiple rocket units feeding a single nozzle. The greater thrust from this configuration had the advantage of being able to eject the pilot to a safe height even if the aircraft was on or very near the ground.

In the early 1960s, deployment of rocket-powered ejection seats designed for use at supersonic speeds began in such aircraft as the Convair F-106 Delta Dart. Six pilots have ejected at speeds exceeding 700 knots (1,300 km/h). The highest altitude at which a Martin-Baker seat was

deployed was 57,000 ft (17,400 m), from a Canberra in 1958. Following an accident on 30 July 1966 in the attempted launch of a D-21 drone, two Lockheed M-21 crew members ejected at Mach 3.25 at an altitude of 80,000 ft (24,000 m). The pilot was recovered successfully, but the launch control officer drowned after a water landing. Despite these records, most ejections occur at fairly low speeds and altitudes, when the pilot can see that there is no hope of regaining aircraft control before impact with the ground.

Late in the Vietnam War, the U.S. Air Force and U.S. Navy became concerned about its pilots ejecting over hostile territory and those pilots either being captured or killed and the losses in men and aircraft in attempts to rescue them. Both services began a program titled Air Crew Escape/Rescue Capability or Aerial Escape and Rescue Capability (AERCAB) ejection seats (both terms have been used by the US military and defence industry), where after the pilot ejected, the ejection seat would fly him to a location far enough away from where he ejected to where he could safely be picked up. A Request for Proposals for concepts for AERCAB ejection seats were issued in the late 1960s. Three companies submitted papers for further development: A Rogallo wing design by Bell Systems; a gyrocopter design by Kaman Aircraft; and a mini-conventional fixed wing aircraft employing a Princeton Wing (i.e. a wing made of flexible material that rolls out and then becomes rigid by means of internal struts or supports etc. deploying) by Fairchild Hiller. All three, after ejection, would be propelled by small turbojet engine developed for target drones. With the exception of the Kaman design, the pilot would still be required to parachute to the ground after reaching a safety-point for rescue. The AERCAB project was terminated in the 1970s with the end of the Vietnam War. The Kaman design, in early 1972, was the only one which was to reach the hardware stage. It came close to being tested with a special landing-gear platform attached to the AERCAB ejection seat for first-stage ground take offs and landings with a test pilot.

With a history spanning over 80 years, Martin-Baker is still run by the late Sir James Martin's descendants to this day. From that day until now, Martin-Baker has saved the lives of more than 7,500 aircrew members.

See the timeline HERE

My missus left me for another bloke. All that lies ahead now is a miserable, pointless life, with suicide seemingly the only way out. And while the poor bugger's going through all that, I'll be down at the pub with my mates every night!

Formation of the RAAF

On the 31st march 1921, the Australian Air Corps (AAC) –a temporary Army unit raised 15 months earlier – was disbanded and replaced by the Australian Air Force (AAF) as a separate service. Although the Australian Flying Corps (AFC) was disbanded after WW I ended in 1918, Australia was committed to retaining a military air service. Britain had gifted 128 surplus aircraft to Australia to establish an air force, and some of these planes - along with training machines already at Point Cook - were operated by an interim army unit, the Australian Air Corps, during 1920-21.

The AAF immediately took possession of existing aircraft and equipment at Point Cook, Victoria, but not all the AAC's personnel were transferred across. At its formation the new Service had 21 officers and 128 other ranks, and even six months later this strength had barely doubled. The 153 aircraft which initially came into the AAF's possession were mainly war surplus machines received under an 'Imperial Gift' arrangement.

Most stayed in storage, and for several years only 50–60 aircraft were actually in use. Economies imposed in 1922 forced the RAAF to cut back on development plans, so that even after five years in existence it had less than 700 personnel.

The Commonwealth Gazette of 31 March 1921 announced the formation of the Australian Air Force. The prefix Royal was granted soon after and promulgated on 31 August 1921. Financial restrictions held back the formation of the Reserve elements for some time, even after approval was granted in November 1921. By sheer hard work and determination, the reserve elements of the permanent squadrons came into being and in April 1936 several autonomous Citizen Air Force Units were raised in the major cities of the east coast and in Perth.

The RAAF was the second independent air force in the world, established three years after the Royal Air Force in Britain.

Intelesting - but stoopid!!

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The F-16's replacement won't have a Pilot at all.

POPULAR MECHANICS

Somehow, Skyborg will be an operational weapon system in just three years.

The U.S. Air Force plans to have an operational combat drone by 2023. The service plans to build out a family of unmanned aircraft, known as Skyborg, capable of carrying weapons and actively participating in combat. Skyborg will be reusable but could be sacrificed in combat if necessary. The Air Force's goal is to build up a large fleet of armed, sort-of disposable jets that don't need conventional runways to take off and land.

The Air Force expects to have the first operational Skyborg aircraft ready by 2023. It will be available with both subsonic and supersonic engines, indicating both attack and fighter jet versions. The basic design (or designs) will likely be stealthy, carrying guided bombs, air defence suppression missiles, and air-to-air missiles inside internal weapons bays. Interesting the Air Force is considering Skyborg as a replacement not only for the MQ-9 Reaper attack drone but early versions of the F-16 manned fighter.

HERE is a video produced by Boeing of their Loyal Wingman UAV, which is expected to join the Skyborg competition.

Skyborg was originally described as an artificial intelligence capable of being fielded two ways. The first would be as the software equivalent of R2D2 in the rear of an X-Wing fighter, a flying co-pilot designed to assist the human pilot by taking on minor, but still important tasks. This would free up a human fighter to concentrate on flying the jet fighting the enemy.

Skyborg AI was also supposed to act as the brain for the Air Force's first combat drones, drones that could fly alongside fighter jets and act as a "loyal wingman" to a crewed fighter. Such a jet could act as the bait in an ambush, carry extra weapons, or perform any number of roles. Skyborgs could also fly high risk combat missions, such as hunting enemy air defence systems and attacking heavily defended ground targets, without risking a human pilot. Other missions might include escorting unarmed aircraft such as tankers, transports, and AWACs planes, and aerial reconnaissance. Of the two Skyborg concepts, the AI-powered drone seems to have priority right now.

Skyborg is designed to be an "attritable" (one use only) airplane designed to fly a mere handful of miles compared to fully loaded jets like the F-35A. This keeps costs down, allowing the Air Force to buy large numbers of the plane. Keeping Skyborg cheap also makes the jets expendable under certain circumstances. A Skyborg pilot might fly a mission against ground targets and expend all of the drone's weapons--only to see a ballistic missile launcher armed with chemical warheads lumber out of a tree line below. Rather than wait for armed reinforcements to arrive on the scene the pilot would have the option of using his drone as a kamikaze weapon to destroy the launcher.

HERE is another candidate for Skyborg, the Kratos Defense XQ-58 Valkyrie.

Unmanned, a Skyborg could take many more risks than a manned aircraft, including acting as a decoy to divert enemy missiles away from the AWACS and its fifteen person crew. Meanwhile, the manned jets that might have performed the escort mission are free to go on and fly other missions more suitable for crewed aircraft.

Another major feature of Skyborg will be the ability to operate independently of traditional air bases. Air base runways are typically two miles long or longer and are vulnerable to enemy attack. Skyborg will likely be launched from rails, lofted into the air by small booster rockets. Once airborne the drone's turbine engine would kick in, allowing for powered flight. Its mission complete, a Skyborg drone would fly to a designated area, cut its engine, pop a parachute and float to the ground. Air Force teams would recover the drones and prepare them for the next mission.

Skyborg first went public in 2019 but the Air Force believes it can have operational jets by 2023. Such a short development schedule was common in the 1950s but unheard of by today's standards. The F-35 Joint Strike Fighter, on the other hand, took two decades to go from the

drawing board to the runway, during which time the strategic environment changed dramatically. By the time the F-35 was fielded in large numbers some decisions, such as the jet's relatively short range, went from being acceptable trade-offs to definite shortcomings. A shorter development time means the Air Force could quickly develop new drones capable of addressing new threats and strategic realities.

Unmanned jets like Skyborg promise to remake the U.S. Air Force and other air forces. Manned aircraft have become increasingly large, difficult to develop, and expensive. This in turn means the Pentagon can afford fewer jets, ultimately leading to a smaller Air Force. Unmanned jets, on the other hand, are smaller, easier to develop, and cheap--allowing the Air Force to buy lots of them.

There's a lot to like about Skyborg. The drone will grow the fighting arm of the U.S. Air Force, move air power away from airfields, fly alongside fighter jets and escort traditionally undefended assets like the E-3 Sentry and it promises to do it all affordably.

If the Air Force really can get Skyborg into the game by 2023 it will dramatically change the shape of aerial warfare.

Guys – I need your help. I'm in the middle of an argument with my wife
and she just told me that I'm right.
What the hell do I do next?

Smart thinking.

In 1941 and the Japanese suddenly attacked Dutch East Indies, as well as other colonies in southeast Asia. The Dutch minesweeper HNLMS Abraham Crijnssen found itself suddenly in danger of the sophisticated Japanese aircraft and patrolling ships.

The remaining Dutch Navy was ordered to link up with the Australian navy, but the Abraham Crijnssen was stuck all alone in Indonesia, armed with a single 76mm gun turret and two

20mm auto cannons. It had no chance to fight off really anything, so the crew decided to camouflage the entire ship as an island. They cut down a bunch of jungle foliage and painted what they couldn't cover as sand or rock.

They only sailed at night, because during the day, the water ripples would have been visible from the air. During the day they simply anchored close to shore appearing as a small island - one of many along the Indonesian shore.

She arrived in Australia in March 1942, without being detected by the Japanese.

Growing old should have taken longer.

Operation Fortitude.

Operation Fortitude was the code name for a World War II military deception employed by the Allied nations as part of an overall deception strategy (code named *Bodyguard*) during the build-up to the 1944 Normandy landings. Fortitude was divided into two sub-plans, North and South, with the aim of misleading the German High Command as to the location of the invasion.

The Allies needed to land in Europe. The obvious place was the Pas-de-Calais. It was the shortest route (great for logistics) and had ports in abundance. It was the route Hitler would have used had Sea Lion ever been seriously considered. However, the Allies knew two things:

- The short route would hit the most fortified coastline in the world. The Allies had attacked fortified ports before and it had been devastating. Normandy was attractive and they would figure out the logistics (floating, makeshift ports and more!).
- Hitler expected the Pas-de-Calais, but without a troop build-up and with the presence of one aimed at Normandy, Hitler would have been able to concentrate his forces in the right place.

After the 6 June 1944 invasion, the plan was to delay movement of German reserves to the Normandy beachhead and to prevent a potentially disastrous counterattack. Fortitude's objectives were to promote alternative targets of Norway and Calais. The planning of Operation Fortitude came under the auspices of the London Controlling Section (LCS), a secret body that was set up to manage Allied deception strategy during the war, however, the execution of each plan fell to the various theatre commanders; in the case of Fortitude, it was Supreme Headquarters Allied Expeditionary Force (SHAEF) under General Dwight Eisenhower. A special section, Ops (B), was established at SHAEF to handle the operation and all of the theatre's deception warfare. The LCS retained responsibility for what was called "special means", the use of diplomatic channels and double agents.

The idea was to put a fake army there in the two “pretend” areas, balloon tanks and so forth. Initially, many thought the idea was absurd. Even if they fooled the Germans for a time, surely some spy would discover the truth? Why waste time and resources on such an absurd ruse?

But they went ahead with the idea.

The deception was brilliant. They faked it all. They made inflatable fake aircraft and tanks and fake tank tracks, covered and camouflaged fake artillery and installations and moved it all around to fake mobilization and drilling. They even sent real and fake units on marching drills and made sure their concentrated presence was known.

They even sent Pattern there so the Germans would be doubly convinced, as they all thought Patton would be the fighting general to lead the invasion.

The Allies developed a number of methodologies which were referred to as "special means". They included combinations of physical deception, fake wireless activity, leaks through diplomatic channels and double agents. Fortitude used all of those techniques to various extents. For example, Fortitude North relied heavily on wireless transmission (the Allies thought that Scotland was too far for German reconnaissance aircraft to reach) and Fortitude South used the Allies' network of double agents, as well as:

- **Physical deception:** to mislead the enemy with non-existent units by fake infrastructure and equipment, such as dummy landing craft, dummy airfields and decoy lighting.
- **Controlled leaks:** information would pass through diplomatic channels, which might be passed on via neutral countries to the Germans.

- **Wireless traffic:** wireless traffic was created to simulate actual units to mislead the enemy.
- Using German agents controlled by the Allies through the Double Cross System to send false information to the German intelligence services.
- Public presence of notable staff associated with phantom groups such as FUSAG, most notably the well-known US General George Patton.

Double agents

One of the main deception channels for the Allies was the use of double agents. B1A, the Counter-Intelligence Division of MI5, had done a good job in intercepting all of the German agents in Britain. Many of them were recruited as double agents under the Double Cross System. These were the three most important double agents during the Fortitude operation:

- Juan Pujol García (Garbo), a Spanish citizen who managed to get recruited by German intelligence, sent them abundant but convincing disinformation from Lisbon until the Allies accepted his offer and he was employed by the British. He had created a network of 27 imaginary sub-agents by the time of Fortitude and the Germans unwittingly paid the British Exchequer large amounts of money regularly, thinking they were funding a network that was loyal to themselves. He was awarded both the Iron Cross by the Germans and an MBE by the British after D-Day.
- Roman Czerniawski (Brutus), a Polish officer who ran an intelligence network for the Allies in occupied France. Captured by the Germans, he was offered a chance to work for them as a spy. On his arrival in Britain, he turned himself in to British intelligence.
- Dušan Popov (Tricycle), a Yugoslav lawyer, whose flamboyant lifestyle covered his intelligence activities.

The operation was so convincing that, even after the initial attacks in Normandy and hours after Hitler learned of them (his staff didn't wake him till late), Hitler was convinced Normandy was a feint. It made no sense. The pass was much closer and removed the thousand and one pitfalls associated with further sea deployment. There was not sufficient infrastructure for logistics in Normandy (he didn't count on the Allies building it in real time).

Once Hitler realized Normandy was the real invasion, it was far too late. Troops who might have made a difference were too far North and the tanks were too far North and East.

The secret of happiness is a good sense of humour
and a bad memory

Are they out there?

The Pentagon's new UFO Task Force shows UFOs are being taken seriously. The US's plans to set up a unit to look at UFOs shows it is "clear" that the US military is now taking unknown sightings seriously. The ridicule factor has gone and the US wants to know what it is that is in their airspace.

Is it China, is it Russia, is it New Zealand ?? or is it something else?

Recently the Pentagon announced it was setting up the Unidentified Aerial Phenomena Task Force (UAPTF).

Concentrating on investigating incursions into military training ranges and airspace, the Pentagon said the aim of the unit is "to improve its understanding of, and gain insight into, the nature and origins of UAPs". "The mission of the task force is to detect, analyse and catalogue UAPs that could potentially pose a threat to US national security," the Pentagon said.

It comes after the Pentagon's official release of footage (Click the pic above) in April that appeared to show two unidentified flying objects. Filmed from military jets, the US Navy videos, dated November 2004 and two from January 2015, had already been leaked years earlier. Observers said credibility was added to the footage after the US Government officially published it, while the Pentagon has gone further with the formation of the new unit.

Sceptics of the new task force say it is not new at all, but instead the renaming of a unit that has been operating since 2012.

Porn is catching on.

POPULAR MECHANICS

In the early 1980s, when I was barely a teenager, a friend invited me over to his house to take a peek at his dad's secret stash of porn. At the time, it felt like striking oil. Porn was still a finite resource, something you only had if you were lucky or knew where to dig.

It's the same emotion I had while reading Pornhub's year in review for 2018. It's a statistical smorgasbord of data that the hugely popular website, ranked seventh in the world, beating out Instagram, Wikipedia, and Reddit.

Over the years, we've learned fascinating details about how people consume dirty videos, from the 1424 percent increase in porn watched on mobile devices since 2010 to "fidget spinner porn" becoming inexplicably popular a few years ago. But the most gobsmacking revelation was this: In 2018, Pornhub transferred 4,403 petabytes of data.

Let's repeat that number, just so we're all clear it isn't a misprint or typo: 4,403 petabytes. Not megabytes or gigabytes or terabytes. Pet-a-bytes. A Petabyte is 1,000,000,000,000,000 bytes. That's on helluva lot of bytes.

The human brain can store around 2.5 petabytes of memory data. So that means Pornhub has the brain capacity of nearly 1,800 people. That volume of petabytes is either staggering or just about right, depending on who you ask.

The co-author of A Billion Wicked Thoughts, a 2012 study of internet porn habits, points out that it isn't such a preposterous amount when you consider that all those petabytes are really the data that's being transferred. "If a one gigabyte file was viewed in its entirety by a million people, that is a petabyte of transfer, or if 100 million users were consuming content on Pornhub, that's 34 gigabytes worth of content per person, or 44 hours of high quality content per person per year

That's about 50 minutes per person per week.

Seems plausible??

At the store there was a big X on the floor near the register for me to stand on.
I've seen too many Road Runner cartoons to fall for that crap.

2 Squadron's last combat flight in Malaysia.

On the 17th August 1959, 2 Squadron's Canberras flew their last bombing mission in Malaysia.

The target, located on the northern slopes of Bukit Tapah in Perak, was attacked by four aircraft. This was the last offensive air support provided by the RAAF in the Malayan Emergency, even though the campaign continued for a further 11 months. The Canberra missions, like those flown by 1 Squadron's Lincolns between 1950 and 1958, had produced few worthwhile results, yet were valued for having incalculable effects on enemy morale and providing one of the few ways of maintaining pressure on the Communist terrorists in their remote jungle hideouts.

RAAF Air Shows.

Back in 1971, when our world was a peaceful and healthy place in which to live, the Air Force used to run lots of air shows. People would stream onto Bases all over the country and get up close and personnel to different types of aircraft, would watch them perform, drink a Coke and/or eat a pie and happily go home afterwards having spent a very enjoyable day. To get onto a Base it wasn't necessary to fill in a million forms, get bused from the gate to where-ever, be herded from here to there like sheep or be watched over by a multitude of uniforms. People would come, bringing their rugs and umbrellas, sit on the grass and be asked not to wander and they wouldn't. People were trusted and they obeyed.

Sadly – that's all gone. The nasties have taken control of our country and everything has changed.

Just to show you what it used to be like, here are some videos of an air show that was held at Richmond back in 1971. Unfortunately there's no sound, but the vision is ok and if you were ever posted to Richmond, these will surely bring back some fond memories. It used to be a great vibrant Base, not any more, everyone's left!!

See HERE and HERE and HERE

Double Consecration Ceremony at Townsville.

On the 22nd August, 2010, a rare double consecration ceremony was performed at RAAF Townsville. Her Excellency the Governor-General, Ms Quentin Bryce AC, was the Reviewing Officer for the ceremonial parade at which No 1 Airfield Operations Support Squadron (1AOSS) Standard and No 27 (City of Townsville) Squadron Governor General's Banner were consecrated by the Principal Air Chaplains.

One hundred and five 1AOSS members were on parade, with 35 having travelled from detachments at Pearce, Edinburgh, Richmond, Williamtown and Darwin, as well as Orchard Hills. A number of previous 1AOSS and 1CLS, 1ATS and 1OSU (the pre-ceding units of 1AOSS) members were present, including Ken Feather who was one of the 1OSU members who deployed to Vung Tau as a cook during the Vietnam War (May 1970 – Dec 1971). Sadly, Ken passed away at the Mater Hospital, Townsville, on the 18 July 2012. He was only 64 years old.

Following the parade, the Governor-General, all personnel and guests were invited to a morning tea at the Wirraway Club on base. 27SQN personnel and their families followed this with an informal gathering in the Sergeants' Mess, while 1AOSS members, along with families and past unit members, enjoyed a barbecue at the 1AOSS pre-deployment area.

A Squadron Standard is awarded to operational squadrons of the RAAF with more than 25 years of service or combat distinction, while the Governor General's Banner is awarded to a non-operational unit in recognition of more than 25 years of distinguished service.

Never buy a cocker spaniel when you're drunk.

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Veterans and Veterans Families Counselling Service (VVCS) can be reached 24 hours a day across Australia for crisis support and free and confidential counseling. Phone 1800 011 046.
VVCS is a service founded by Vietnam Veterans.

Health and Life-Style

Goosebumps – why do we get them?

THE NEWDAILY

Goosebumps may help protect animals in the cold, but Harvard University researchers found there's a different reason humans evolved this reaction.

Stop it, you're giving me Goosebumps. Sometimes a compliment, sometimes a warning signal. Always a mystery.

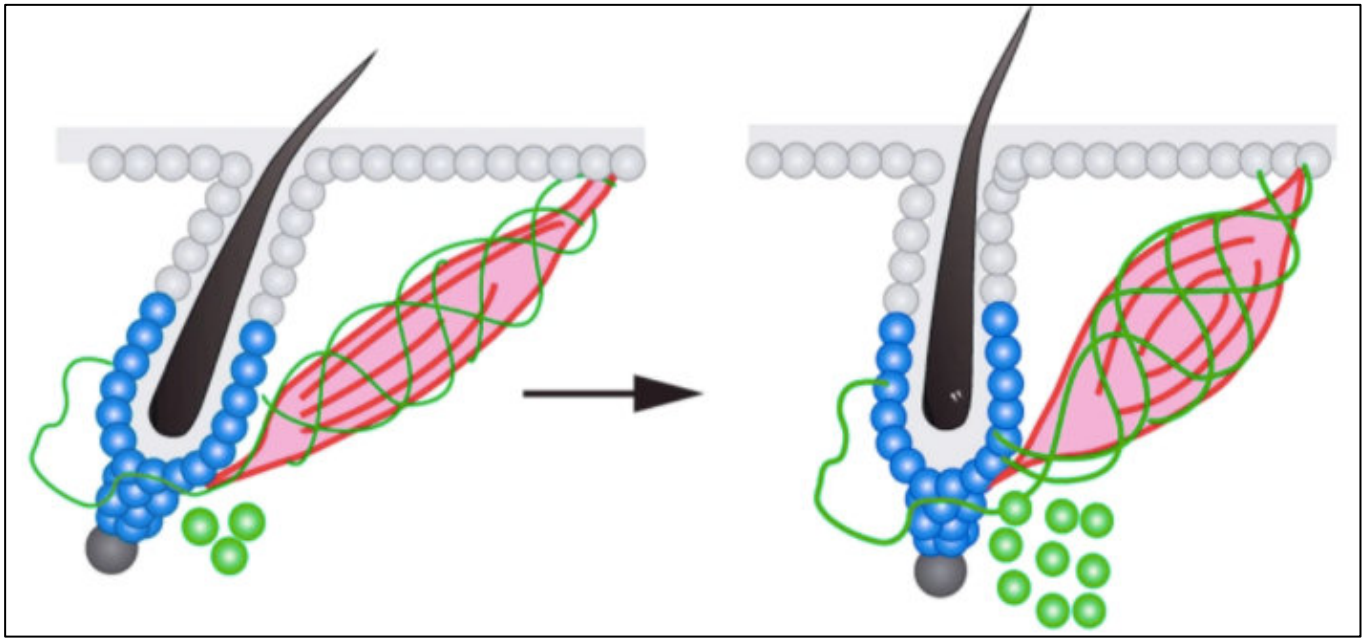
Well, until now.

Science has had its day and finally uncovered just why it is we get Goosebumps. Sure, we know when they appear, when we're cold, we're in a heightened emotional state and for some people, when they're on the toilet. It's known that Goosebumps are a throwback to our hairier days, when cold temperatures would signal our body to bristle our human-coats to keep us warm.

In scientific terms, the sympathetic nerve in our skin contracts in the cold, pulling a wee muscle that's connected to the bottom of a hair follicle. This makes the hair stand up on end, while simultaneously bringing the skin around its base inwards, creating a little bump.

The skin is a fascinating system: It has multiple stem cells surrounded by diverse cell types, and is located at the interface between our body and the outside world, therefore, its stem cells could potentially respond to a diverse array of stimuli – from the niche, the whole body, or even the outside environment.

When it's cold the muscle in the hair follicle contracts, creating Goosebumps. The sympathetic nerve also releases neurotransmitters to stem cells in the hair follicle.



Harvard Uni used electron microscopy to examine the skin, focusing on the sympathetic nerve. They found that nerve also connect to the stem cells of the hair follicle, so when it does its cold contract-dance, the stem cells are pushing into gear to grow a new hair.

What does that mean? It means Goosebumps act to not only spring into action the hair that we do have (or had) to keep us warm, but tell our body to grow more hair, to keep us even warmer. This particular reaction is helpful for coupling tissue regeneration with changes in the outside world, such as temperature. It's a two-layer response, Goosebumps are a quick way to provide some sort of relief in the short term, but when the cold lasts, this becomes a nice mechanism for the stem cells to know it's maybe time to regenerate new hair coat.

Oh - and why are they called Goosebumps?

Because they look like the feather-less skin of a goose, or similar poultry.

First time in history – we can save the human race by laying in front of the TV and doing nothing.
Let's not screw this up!

Simple steps for cutting sugar from your diet.

MAYO CLINIC

Eating too many sweets can lead to a variety of health problems. To curb your consumption, start by getting smarter about the sources of sugar in your diet.

Craving sweets from time to time is natural. Too much sugar in your diet, however, increases the risk of weight gain, elevated triglycerides, poor nutrition and tooth decay. The World Health Organization recommends that both adults and children keep their intake of added sugars to less than 10 percent of daily calories (about 12 teaspoons of sugar). To get a handle on your sugar intake, it's important to become aware of the sources of sugar in your diet.

Start by reading food labels. Sugar goes by many aliases, including corn syrup, molasses, honey, high-fructose corn syrup, malt sugar and dextrose. Understand that natural sugar occurs in foods such as fruit, milk and plain yogurt. Added sugar is added to foods or beverages, either in processing (as in soda and flavoured yogurt) or in preparation (as when you add sugar to coffee). Recommendations about sugar consumption don't include foods with naturally occurring sugars because those foods usually contain other beneficial nutrients, such as vitamins, minerals, fibre and protein.

Other helpful tips for cutting sugar consumption in your diet include:

- Investigate the sugar content of your favourite food. Minimize the amount of added sugar in your food selections and be on the lookout for sweeteners.
- Buy and eat fewer processed foods. Purchase more whole foods, including fruits, vegetables and whole grains, and experiment with new recipes.
- Change your environment. Exchange the candy bowl at work or at home with a fruit bowl.

Sexual Health - Do natural aphrodisiacs actually work?

There's little evidence to support the effectiveness of most substances thought of as natural aphrodisiacs, natural substances that may enhance sexual function. Some foods and supplements are sometimes claimed to affect libido, these include chocolate, spicy food and saw palmetto, but research has found that they usually don't work to produce a sexual response in men or women.

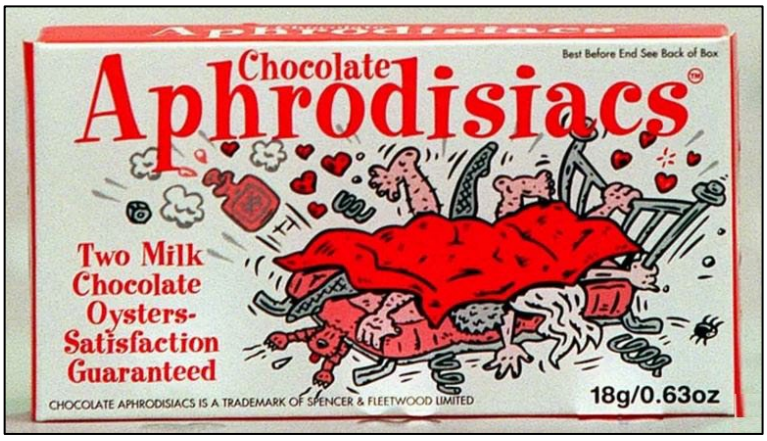
The pursuit of remedies or substances that enhance sexual pleasure has been a human obsession for millennia. The 18th-century cad Casanova reportedly consumed a few-dozen oysters daily for breakfast to increase his libido, while Cleopatra favoured saffron to lure her lovers. The ancient Indian sex guide the *Kama Sutra* encouraged lovers to anoint their private parts with honey and black pepper (ouch).

Some modern (early) evidence is a little more encouraging for a few natural supplements, but more research is needed. These include ginkgo, ginseng, maca and tribulus.

There's no harm in trying most foods to see if they're effective natural aphrodisiacs, but be aware that some supplements that have insect or plant extracts in them can be poisonous (toxic). For example, Spanish fly, a commonly advertised natural aphrodisiac, can cause kidney damage and bleeding in the digestive system.

Certain products sold as natural aphrodisiacs have also been found to include prescription drug ingredients that aren't listed on the label. For example, sildenafil, the active ingredient in Viagra, has been found in some products. These ingredients can be dangerous if you have certain medical conditions or take certain drugs.

Aphrodisiacs – the phrase originates from the Greek goddess of love and sexuality, Aphrodite, are thought to work in one of two ways: by arousing the mind or by stimulating other parts of the body such as increasing blood flow in the sex organs.



If you're looking for a way to increase your sexual desire that can work, talk to your doctor. He or she may suggest proven strategies for enhancing sexual health. These may include communicating with your partner, making healthy lifestyle choices and treating any other medical conditions you have. You may also find it helpful to talk to a counsellor or therapist trained in sexual concerns and relationship issues.

Antidepressants – and their side effects.

Sexual side effects are common with antidepressants in both men and women, these effects can include:

- A change in your desire for sex
- Erectile problems
- Orgasm problems
- Problems with arousal, comfort and satisfaction

The severity of sexual side effects depends on the individual and the specific type and dose of antidepressant. For some people, sexual side effects are minor or may ease up as their bodies adjust to the medication. For others, sexual side effects continue to be a problem.
Antidepressants with the lowest rate of sexual side effects include:

- Bupropion (Wellbutrin XL, Wellbutrin SR)
- Mirtazapine (Remeron)
- Vilazodone (Viibryd)
- Vortioxetine (Trintellix)

Antidepressants most likely to cause sexual side effects include:

- **Selective serotonin reuptake inhibitors (SSRIs)**, which include citalopram (Celexa), escitalopram (Lexapro), fluoxetine (Prozac), paroxetine (Paxil, Pexeva) and sertraline (Zoloft).
- **Serotonin and norepinephrine reuptake inhibitors (SNRIs)**, which include venlafaxine (Effexor XR), desvenlafaxine (Pristiq) and duloxetine (Cymbalta).
- **Tricyclic and tetracyclic antidepressants**, such as amitriptyline, nortriptyline (Pamelor) and clomipramine (Anafranil).
- **Monoamine oxidase inhibitors (MAOIs)**, such as isocarboxazid (Marplan), phenelzine (Nardil) and tranylcypromine (Parnate). However, selegiline (Emsam), an MAOI that you stick on your skin as a patch, has a low risk of sexual side effects.

If you're taking an antidepressant that causes sexual side effects, your doctor may recommend one or more of these strategies:

- **Waiting several weeks** to see whether sexual side effects get better.
- **Adjusting the dose of your antidepressant** to reduce the risk of sexual side effects. But always talk with your doctor before changing your dose.
- **Switching to another antidepressant** that may be less likely to cause sexual side effects.
- **Adding a second antidepressant** or another type of medication to counter sexual side effects. For example, the addition of the antidepressant bupropion may ease sexual side effects caused by another antidepressant.
- **Adding a medication to improve sexual function**, such as sildenafil (Viagra), tadalafil (Cialis) or vardenafil (Levitra, Staxyn). These medications are approved by the Food and Drug Administration *only* to treat sexual problems in men. Limited research suggests that sildenafil may improve sexual problems caused by antidepressants in some women, but more information is needed on its effectiveness and safety in women.

Stopping medication because of sexual side effects is a common problem, and for most people this means depression returns. Work with your doctor to find an effective antidepressant or combination of medications that will reduce your sexual side effects and keep your depression under control.

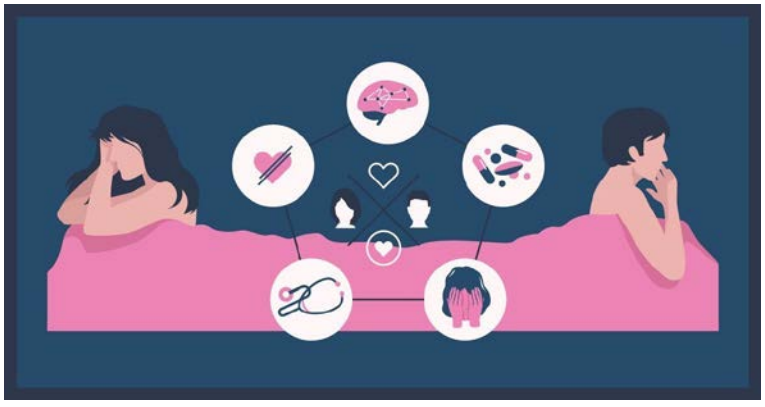
If you're pregnant or trying to become pregnant, tell your doctor, as this may affect the type of antidepressant that's appropriate.

Be patient. Everyone reacts differently to antidepressants, so it may take some trial and error to identify what works best for you.

High blood pressure and sex: Overcome the challenges

High blood pressure often has no signs or symptoms, but the impact on your sex life may be obvious. Although sexual activity is unlikely to pose an immediate threat to your health, such as a heart attack, high blood pressure can affect your overall satisfaction with sex.

A link between high blood pressure and sexual problems is proved in men. For women who have decreased sexual satisfaction, it's not yet proved that high blood pressure is to blame.

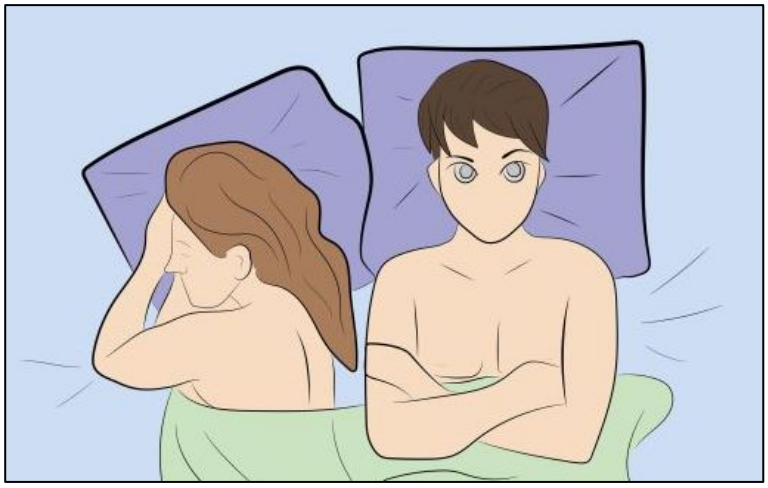


Challenges for men.

Over time, high blood pressure damages the lining of blood vessels and causes arteries to harden and narrow (atherosclerosis), limiting blood flow. This means less blood is able to flow to the 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. High blood pressure can also interfere with ejaculation and reduce sexual desire. Sometimes the medications used to treat high blood pressure have similar effects.

Even a single episode of erectile dysfunction can cause anxiety. Fears that it will happen again might lead men to avoid sex and affect the relationship with their sexual partner.

Men should discuss any concerns with their doctor.



Challenges for women.

High blood pressure's effect on sexual problems in women isn't well-understood. But it's possible that high blood pressure could affect a woman's sex life. High blood pressure can reduce blood flow to the 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. Women should talk to their doctor if they experience these difficulties.

High blood pressure medications that can cause sexual dysfunction as a side effect include:

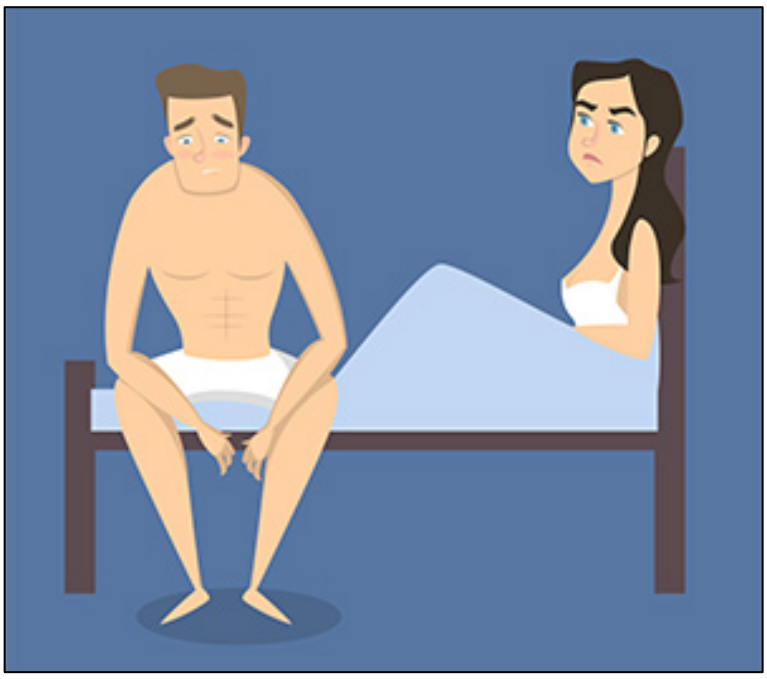
- Water pills (diuretics). Diuretics can decrease forceful blood flow to the penis, making it difficult to achieve an erection. They can also deplete the body of zinc, which is necessary to make the sex hormone testosterone.
- Beta blockers. These medications, especially older generation beta blockers such as propranolol (Inderal, Innopran XL), are commonly associated with sexual dysfunction.

To reduce the risk of side effects from these medications, including sexual problems, take medications exactly as prescribed. If you still have side effects, talk to your doctor about other possible medications that may have fewer side effects.

If sexual side effects persist, ask your doctor about other medication options. Some high blood pressure medications are less likely to cause sexual side effects, such as:

- Angiotensin-converting enzyme (ACE) inhibitors
- Calcium channel blockers
- Angiotensin II receptor blockers

To help your doctor select the most appropriate medication for you, tell him or her all the other medications you're taking now, including herbal supplements and over-the-counter drugs. Sometimes a particular combination of medications or supplements contributes to sexual problems.



If your doctor says it's OK, you may be able to stop taking blood pressure medications temporarily to see if your sex life improves. To make sure your blood pressure remains within a safe range, you may need frequent blood pressure readings while you're not taking the blood pressure lowering medication that may be causing your sexual difficulties. This can be done with a home blood pressure monitoring device for convenience.

Erectile dysfunction drugs and high blood pressure.

Men considering medications for erectile dysfunction should check with their doctor first. It's usually safe to combine the erectile dysfunction drugs sildenafil (Revatio, Viagra), vardenafil (Levitra, Staxyn) and tadalafil (Adcirca, Cialis) with high blood pressure medications.

Taking these drugs with nitrates, taken either regularly for chest pain or in an emergency setting, can cause a dangerous drop in blood pressure. If you have high blood pressure, you usually don't have to live with a loss of sexual satisfaction. The more your doctor knows about you, the better he or she can treat your high blood pressure and help you maintain a satisfying sex life. Be prepared to answer questions your doctor may ask, such as:

- What medications are you taking?
- Has your relationship with your sexual partner changed recently?
- Have you been feeling depressed?
- Are you facing more stress than usual?

By making healthy lifestyle choices, you can lower your blood pressure and potentially improve your sex life. Healthy lifestyle choices include:

- Not smoking or using tobacco
- Eating healthy foods
- Limiting alcohol consumption
- Reducing the amount of salt in your diet
- Losing extra pounds
- Exercising regularly

Of course, a leaner body can boost your confidence and help you feel more attractive, which could also improve your sex life.

Your sexual response may vary with feelings about your partner and the setting in which sex occurs. To encourage satisfying sex, initiate sex when you and your partner are feeling relaxed. Explore various ways to be physically intimate, such as massage or warm soaks in the tub. Share with each other the types of sexual activity you enjoy most. You may find that open communication is the best way to achieve sexual satisfaction.

Diet changes women over 50 should make right now

Your body changes as you age, so your diet needs to change, too. These tips from a Mayo Clinic wellness dietitian can help ensure you're getting the nutrients you need.

You are what you eat, right? For women over 50, eating the right foods becomes even more important to avoid health problems. It is suggested that women over 50 target three important nutrients to combat the most common changes caused by aging.

1. Calcium for bone health
Osteoporosis gets a fair amount of attention and most older women understand that the risk of developing this bone disease increases with age. In fact, 1 in 3 women over 50 is at risk of a bone break caused by osteoporosis. Osteoporosis affects men, too, but not at such high rates.

Women absorb less calcium as they age, and some women's ability to tolerate dairy, the best sources of calcium, also decreases as they get older. Dark leafy greens and calcium-fortified orange juice are other good sources.
Women over 50 need 1,200 milligrams of calcium daily. Use the Nutrition Facts label on food products to keep track of your intake.

2. Protein for healthy muscle mass

Older women tend to sit more, exercise less. That compounds a natural aging process called sarcopenia, which is the loss of muscle mass. By the time women near 80 years, they may have lost as much as half of their skeletal muscle mass. Eating enough protein reduces the impact of that muscle wasting. Healthy plant-based diets that don't include meat, a major source of protein, can still provide plenty of protein if you make savvy choices, choose more soy, quinoa, eggs, dairy, nuts, seeds and beans. Your protein needs depend on how much you weigh. For women over 50, experts recommend 1 to 1.5 grams of protein per kilogram of weight. If you weigh 75kg, for instance, you would need at least 115 grams of protein a day.

3. Vitamin B-12 for brain function

As women age, they absorb fewer nutrients from their food. One key nutrient they may not be absorbing enough of is vitamin B-12, which is essential for maintaining both healthy red blood cells and brain function. The best sources of vitamin B-12 are eggs, milk, lean meats, fish and fortified foods like cereals and grains. Vegans, in particular, will need to choose more fortified foods, but even elderly people who eat all foods may have difficulty absorbing enough vitamin B-12.

While the recommended daily intake of vitamin B-12 for women over 50 is 2.4 micrograms a day, you should talk with your doctor to see if you also need a supplement. The three tips to help women over 50 get the nutrition they need are:

- Make whole foods the foundation of your diet. Focusing on whole grains, fruits and veggies will help avoid a lot of common problems that come with age.
- Drink before you're thirsty. The way your body detects thirst changes as you age, make sure to drink plenty of water, even if you don't feel thirsty. Carry a water bottle and drink a glass with every meal.
- Make an appointment with food. (And keep it.) Create concrete plans that lay out exactly how you'll get key nutrients. Write the plan on a calendar. By simply making an 'appointment' with that apple, you're more likely to eat it.

Losing weight doesn't seem to be working for me
so I'm going to concentrate on getting taller.

Thin skin.

Fragile or thin skin that tears easily is a common problem in older adults. Aging, sun exposure and genetics all play a role in thinning skin. Certain medications, such as long-term use of oral or topical corticosteroids (used to treat a wide variety of disorders, including asthma, arthritis, skin conditions and autoimmune diseases), also can weaken the skin and blood vessels in the skin. Thin skin isn't necessarily a sign of a serious underlying medical condition. But you might want to see a doctor, who can evaluate your skin.

To protect thin skin and prevent tears and cuts:

- Wear long-sleeved shirts, long pants and wide-brimmed hats. Consider wearing two layers to protect your forearms when doing yard-work or gardening, common areas for minor injury to the skin. You might also try wearing tubular or rolled gauze bandages.
- Avoid prolonged sun exposure.
- If you must be outside in the sun, use a water-resistant, broad-spectrum sunscreen with an SPF of at least 30. Apply sunscreen generously and reapply every two hours — or more often if you're swimming or sweating.
- Keep skin well-moisturized and protected by using a good moisturizing cream.
- Talk to your doctor about treating skin with vitamin A (retinol), which might improve your skin's ability to tolerate injuries.

A new and easy self-test for the horror of Covid 19 is doing the rounds and it's simple, quick and positive (or negative if you see what I mean). Take a glass and pour a decent dram of your favourite whisky into it (it may also work with other spirits but I am yet to try them); then see if you can smell it. If you can, then you are halfway there.

Then drink it. If you can taste it then it is reasonable to assume you are currently free of the virus because the loss of the sense of smell and taste is a common symptom.

I tested myself 7 times last night and was virus free every time thank goodness. I will have to test myself again today because I have developed a throbbing headache which can also be one of the symptoms.

I'll report my results later.

THEY live amongst us.

COVID-19 (coronavirus): Possible Long-term effects

COVID-19 symptoms can sometimes persist for months. The virus can damage the lungs, heart and brain, which increases the risk of long-term health problems.

Most people who have coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) recover completely within a few weeks, but some people — even those who had mild versions of the disease — continue to experience symptoms after their initial recovery.

Older people and people with many serious medical conditions are the most likely to experience lingering COVID-19 symptoms. The most common signs and symptoms that linger over time include:

- Fatigue
- Cough
- Shortness of breath
- Headache
- Joint pain

Although COVID-19 is seen as a disease that primarily affects the lungs, it can damage many other organs as well. This organ damage may increase the risk of long-term health problems.

See the video HERE.

Organ damage caused by COVID-19

Organs that may be affected by COVID-19 include:

- **Heart.** Imaging tests taken months after recovery from COVID-19 have shown lasting damage to the heart muscle, even in people who experienced only mild COVID-19 symptoms. This may increase the risk of heart failure or other heart complications in the future.
- **Lungs.** The type of pneumonia often associated with COVID-19 can cause long-standing damage to the tiny air sacs (alveoli) in the lungs. The resulting scar tissue can lead to long-term breathing problems.
- **Brain.** Even in young people, COVID-19 can cause strokes, seizures and Guillain-Barre syndrome — a condition that causes temporary paralysis. COVID-19 may also increase the risk of developing Parkinson's disease and Alzheimer's disease.

Blood clots and blood vessel problems

COVID-19 can make blood cells more likely to clump up and form clots. While large clots can cause heart attacks and strokes, much of the heart damage caused by COVID-19 is believed to stem from very small clots that block tiny blood vessels (capillaries) in the heart muscle.

Other organs affected by blood clots include the lungs, legs, liver and kidneys. COVID-19 can also weaken blood vessels, which contributes to potentially long-lasting problems with the liver and kidneys.

Problems with mood and fatigue.

People who have severe symptoms of COVID-19 often have to be treated in a hospital's intensive care unit, with mechanical assistance such as ventilators to breathe. Simply surviving this experience can make a person more likely to later develop post-traumatic stress syndrome, depression and anxiety.

Because it's difficult to predict long-term outcomes from the new COVID-19 virus, scientists are looking at the long-term effects seen in related viruses, such as severe acute respiratory syndrome (SARS).

Many people who have recovered from SARS have gone on to develop chronic fatigue syndrome, a complex disorder characterized by extreme fatigue that worsens with physical or mental activity, but doesn't improve with rest. The same may be true for people who have had COVID-19.

Many long-term COVID-19 effects still unknown

Much is still unknown about how COVID-19 will affect people over time. However, researchers recommend that doctors closely monitor people who have had COVID-19 to see how their organs are functioning after recovery.

It's important to remember that most people who have COVID-19 recover quickly. But the potentially long-lasting problems from COVID-19 make it even more important to reduce the spread of the disease by following precautions such as wearing masks, avoiding crowds and keeping hands clean.

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Arthur's Articles.

In the previous edition, 27 Radio Mechanics Course had paused their studies to prepare the Base at Ballarat for handover to the Government as the entire School of Radio was to move, holus bolus, to RAAF Base, Laverton. I pick up the story as recorded in my memoires.

'Grandad, You're a Legend', a title inspired by two of my grandsons who gave me a coffee mug inscribed with these words, several years ago. Very few people, other than my grandsons, may believe that quote. All I can do is try to live up to their reason for purchasing that coffee mug for me. (Oh, you have one too?)

The other advantage of quoting from my book is that I commenced writing this manuscript almost twenty years ago when facts about the School of Radio era were closer to the surface of my hippocampus for matters about those days in the middle years of the 20th Century than they are now in the 21st Century!.

We drove our private cars in convoy from the gates of RAAF Base Ballarat one April morning of 1961 and arrived at RAAF Base Laverton just off the main Melbourne to Geelong Highway about noon. Given no time to relax, we were soon in the classroom that afternoon to continue our radio theory studies where we had left off in Ballarat.

Eight of us were allocated to a Nissen hut, that is, looking sideways at it, it looked like a 44-gallon drum cut in half and turned on its side. That hut was called '230' and I wrote a poem about it during our stay there from the April until we graduated in the following June. (With apologies to those I may have identified as one of my eight roommates.)

A Nissen Hut similar to Hut 230

Hut 230

When all the camp is wide awake
And strolling to be fed
Two thirty is serene and calm
For they are still in bed.

A violent ringing fills the room
That would cause the dead to rise.
But not our hut, we lay quite still,
Except one blinks his eyes.

This chap is usually Bob McKee,
Who thinks it quite a sin,
For him to wake at seven fifteen,
While everyone else sleeps in.

Fry, after he counts from ten to nought,
Jumps out to the floor.
And after a quick glance at his watch,
Wishes he'd done so before.

Slowly the rest crawls out of bed;
Seven, but not them all.
Who stays in bed till quarter to eight?
Nobody but John Ball.

Unshaven, sleep ridden and hungry,
He's a picture most forlorn.
But that's his way to start the day
And his greeting to the morn.

But one day it will happen,
And will surely be a crime.
To wreck his great tradition
By waking up on time!

In retrospect, I should have included the other five fellow's names in that poem. Some sixty years later, it is a much harder call. Apart from Bob McKee, in a transferee from one of the fitter trades, and John Ball, another direct entry like me, we had 'Fletch', from 544 Recruit Course and originally from Claremont, a young fellow, Bruce, from Violet Town in northern Victoria, John, (Monty), from Kalinga in Brisbane, Mike who later became a fighter pilot, and Ted, from Cowra, who later re-mustered to become a Physical Training Instructor, (PTI).

After my retirement from the RAAF in 1986, John Ball phoned me and we still had a giggle about that poem, so I am sure John, wherever you are, will not mind me quoting that ignominious recollection of your late waking while we were on course!

Our studies progressed during the day, and our nights were not spent pouring over books but in the dry canteen, where our course mates 'fraternised' with the young ladies (WRAAFs) who were undergoing several courses at Laverton from the WRAAF recruit courses to trainee Stewardesses plus the many WRAAFs who were at Radio School undergoing telephonists' courses as well as other telegraphy courses.

Romances blossomed then faded as the two groups were mixing their out-of-school study time with socializing in this new experience for most of them – a new life in uniform, meeting persons with similar hopes, dreams, aspirations and ambitions for their long-term future with the RAAF, both in Australia and overseas. I was amazed at the number of nicknames that this group used.

I recall that one night I had given two WRAAFs, a lift home from the dance at RAAF Base Point Cook, a base where I was to serve many postings in the coming years. One young lady introduced herself only by her nickname. We had just met the girls and agreed to provide a lift back to Laverton. We dropped the girls off at the 'Wraffery', the colloquial term for their residence.

My fellow hut-mate and I returned to Hut 230 not knowing that the cigarette vending machine outside the dry canteen had malfunctioned and was not only spewing out cigarettes but also coins, without any need for an input of any money.

Word quickly spread around the barracks and soon a huge crowd had gathered at the malfunctioning cigarette machine. Before long, the vending machine was empty – of both cigarettes and cash.

The next day, the RAAF Service Police were hot on the trail, investigating the theft of the ASCO, (Australian Services Canteen Organization,) property. Our class members were spoken to by the RAAF Service Police, one by one. When my turn came to be interviewed, the Police asked me to explain my movements on the previous night. I told them I had been at the Point Cook dance and had brought two WRAAFs back to Laverton. Questioned as to who the two WRAAFs were, I said I only knew one of them by her nickname. "Oh," said the cop, "you must be 'Oliver'?"

The Police never found the culprit or culprits they were looking for. They suspected one or two persons who had nicked 300 packets of cigarettes. What they should have been looking for was possibly 300 persons who had nicked one packet of cigarettes.

On the topic of nicknames, most students received one either from another school friend or from someone in their class. These nicknames usually lasted for many years. A guy from a class after ours gave me my nickname. 'Oliver' as in 'Oliver Cool' was a nickname that stuck with me for a few years. His was 'Mumbles' which highlighted his manner of speaking, although, to this date, I could not tell you his real name. (If you read this, 'Mumbles', please tell me your real name?)

Talking of nicknames. In an earlier edition, I spoke about the way 'Jumbo' Jordan assisted my wife when I was in Heidelberg Hospital. 'Jumbo' was also a former Radio Technician and later a Radio Officer. I have since been told his given name. Thank you, Barry Jordan.

One Friday night, the usual group were gathered in the dry canteen when one of the WRAAF's who had just broken up with her boyfriend, announced that she wanted to go home. She had arranged with the former boyfriend to take her home which was in a bayside suburb of Melbourne. She had missed public transport, so 'hero' Arthur came to the rescue and offered to take her home.

We had no sooner left Laverton when the typical early winter Melbourne fog set in. By the time we reached her home, the fog was a 'pea-souper'. Her mother said I should not try to attempt to drive back to Laverton and invited me to stay the night. I respectfully declined her offer. I slowly drove back to Laverton, through dense fog, to the welcoming warmth of my own bed in Hut 230.

At Radio School, Laverton, we had what we students considered a harsh disciplinarian, a Warrant Officer Disciplinary, who had a gruff voice and obtained a distinct pleasure out of making life for the student as miserable as possible, if one dared offend him. On morning parades, and at bedside inspections, if he could nit-pick one small infraction, he would pass immediate punishment to meet him after school finished on Fridays, when our weekend leave had begun,

at a Defaulter's Parade on Radio School's parade ground which became known as 'this WOD's Half Hour'.

A WOD's Defaulters Parade?

In those days, a British comedian had a comedy show on the radio by that name (Hancock's half hour). The radio show was a fun time, unlike the Warrant Officer Disciplinary's Half Hour', which was anything but fun! I trust I have not been too hard on him because under his tilted cap to the side and rear of his head, he probably was a pleasant man, and a jolly good WOD.

The members of Hut 230 spent a good deal of time debating issues when we were supposed to be studying. One night we were debating an issue which should have come under the 'taboo' subject of no 'Politics, Sex, or Religion'. The discussion went on until well after midnight.

At lunch time next day, the other seven returned to Hut 230 ahead of me for some unknown reason. As I caught up with them, they had cornered the Padre and sought his verdict on the matter that we had debated long into the night. The Padre's wisdom bolstered the other seven's conclusion. As I approached, the seven chorused, 'Hey, Padre, you tell him!", for as the Chaplain had resolved the issue in the majority favour. I was left keep my views to myself as I was then the 'odd man out' in that friendly debate. Possibly for settling a Hut 230 dispute, that Padre was rewarded by his earthly masters to become a Principal Air Chaplain in later years.

I always remember how Hut 230 occupants were forever exercising their mental waves on any topic or incident. How we ever studied enough to pass our course is beyond me, but how the eight of us never finished up in the hallowed halls of Parliament further escapes belief.

In Laverton, we spent time in the workshops, which were manned by a Warrant Officer Wishart and a Sergeant Cross. I will admit to being hopeless with my hands, a fact my dear mother and later, my wife discovered. Many a motor mower, vacuum cleaner or other electrical item sat in my mother's, my mother-in-law's and later in our home, waiting for me to put all the spare parts back into the machine from which I had taken them!

My salvation in the Air Force was when I underwent a twelve-month course in the Vietnamese language and re-mustered from Radio Mechanic to Linguist in December 1965. I am sure the Air Force also found a good deal of relief when I was no longer free to attack their valuable radio equipment as a Mechanic!

I tell this story because I met up with Sergeant Cross after my discharge in 1986 when I held a two-year contract with the Lutheran Church of Australia, (Queensland District), as Head of their Welfare Department. Not being a member of an LCAQD church gave the Church officials some grief, not to mention I could not use their normal title of 'Director of Welfare' as a 'Non-Lutheran' (in fact, they referred to me in good humour as a 'Loose-eran'.) The Lutheran Hierarchy chose to give me an exclusive title for those two years, 'Administrator to the Welfare Council'. ("What's in a name…?" C.J. Dennis wrote in 'A Sentimental Bloke'.)

In LCAQD I had several departments under my control, Aged Care Facilities being but one department which fell into 'Welfare'. Former Sergeant Cross was the Chairman of one of the Aged Care committees under my supervision. He said he remembered me from among all the Radio School students that passed through his workshop. He said he had never seen a 'kid' try as hard as me but everything I touched, I would 'stuff up'. (I thought, "Join the queue of those who assessed my handiwork in that fashion!")

In those days, we would have to file a piece of metal flat. I would spend hours in making that piece of metal perfectly flat, but on the last stoke, I would slide off the edge, consequently ruining my project. Likewise, we would have to solder twelve pieces of copper tubing into a cube. When we were finished, the instructor would stand on it and if our cube did not collapse, we passed. I was fortunate that WOFF Wishart or SGT Cross did not sue me for possibly breaking their ankle when my cube collapsed, as it did on almost every occasion!

The adage of 'The course that plays together, stays together,' was most apt for our course. We had a course member who left the course in the early stages, who lived in Drysdale, not far from Geelong. Coincidentally, two Equipment Assistants who were on my course at Rathmines, and then posted to 1 Stores Depot at Tottenham, came from Drysdale. These two returned to Drysdale of a weekend and joined me in our course's social activities. This former course member invited our course to his home, where several of us returned regularly to spend the weekend in Drysdale.

On another occasion, I was invited to the Engagement Party of one of the members of my course at Rathmines. He was also posted to 1 Stores Depot at Tottenham as an Equipment Assistant and had met a lovely girl from West Essendon, with whom my wife and I are still in contact these days. As I opened the invitation to their Engagement Party in class, my classmates were anxious

to know how I had managed to contact the local population of the opposite sex! Their curiosity led me to reveal that the party was at the girlfriend of my Rathmines course member's home at Emerald Street.

That night, I arrived at the engagement party at West Essendon, which was the first occasion I had been in that part of Melbourne. During the evening, who should appear at the front door but my Hut 230 friends! They had remembered that it was a street with the name of a precious stone. They arrived at Ruby Street then noticed a party going on in the next street, Emerald Street. Unbeknown to me, but discovered by the Hut 230 crowd, all streets in that area were named after precious stones.

The invited party goers thought it wonderful that the newly engaged Air Force member in whose honour the engagement party was called, was so popular in the Air Force that several of his mates turned up as gate crashers. A good night turned out to be a great night, all thanks to the plotters in Hut 230 to gate crash the engagement party or was it to simply to stir me up? I put it down to 'Course bonding', and bond we certainly did.

Tim Gear had joined our course for the Equipment phase, having been a PMG Technician and was granted 'prior learning' status for the theory part of our course. Tim met, courted then married a local Drysdale girl, Mary.

But we had two tragedies on our course. Five of us received our initial postings to Amberley, including Tim. Tim left Mary behind in Drysdale until he found a Married Quarter for them around the Amberley area. Sadly, Tim drove through the night to Amberley and in the early hours of the morning was involved in a single vehicle accident at Gladfield, just out of Warwick. Tim was killed instantly.

The first tragedy also involved a former PMG Technician who came from Sydney and like Tim, was excluded from the theory phase but joined our course for the Equipment phase. He had a black Buick straight eight sedan, a powerful machine, of which he was most proud. He took three airmen and one WRAAF as passengers to Sydney, leaving immediately after 'stand down' one Friday afternoon.

Our group was, as always, gathered in the dry canteen when we saw on the News that a serious car accident had occurred at Holbrook in New South Wales when four people were killed. We reasoned that the Buick, super powerful though it was, could not have possibly taken them to Holbrook in that short time. Sadly, it was the Buick which crashed head on into a truck. Only one passenger survived. After a lengthy period in hospital, he came back to Radio School and was back coursed to complete his Radio Mechanic training.

Our final exams were soon upon us and our days at Radio School (Mark One,) would soon be over. Our class made history by having the largest percentage of students ever to fail at the first attempt at the final test, so it was back to the study books. Lazy nights at the ASCO dry canteen were banned, and surprise, surprise, a week later, the remainder of the class passed the final exams at the second attempt. Then it was a week of returning books and obtaining final clearances until our postings were announced.

Five of us were posted to RAAF Base, Amberley. Two had been posted to No. 82 Wing, to work on Canberra bombers as Radio Mechanics (Air); two were posted to Base Squadron, Amberley as a Radio Mechanic (Ground, although Tim Gear never made it,) and I was posted to No. 3 Aircraft Depot as a Radio Mechanic (Air) and worked on Canberra bombers and Sabre fighters doing major servicings as well as the odd service on the Unit's Dakota (DC-3, or 'Gooney Bird',) and the unit's twin-boomed Vampire. (Does that date me?)

After joining the Air Force in the previous August, I was finally 'let loose' to work on our nation's major defence assets. All those months of training were about to pay a dividend. I was a tradesman! A Radio Mechanic! The 'Recruit' had been dropped from my title. Aircraftsman Arthur Fry – the world is at your feet! But not for long!

People Who Impressed Me in My Service Career

SATCO (Senior Air Traffic Control Officer,) Base Squadron Point Cook, circa 1975, Squadron Leader Jack Haynes, was one jovial giant that I will never forget.

Sadly, Jack is no longer with us. On his retirement, Jack and Doreen left on a road trip hoping to call on Annette and me in Ipswich, but he took sick and never crossed the Victorian border, the first time they set out to drive north.

When Jack recovered, they started out again and made it to Ipswich where we enjoyed several days with them. There is one yarn about Jack, but I am sure others could add to the great man he was, both with his jocularity and his love of playing practical jokes.

The Commanding Officer of our unit decided that a form of bonding for a non-flying unit would be to have unit cuff links. Cuff links with the unit crest for the men; pendants with the unit crest for the ladies.

The C.O. made a habit of calling a 'Commander's Call' in the Officers' Mess, (after hours, of course,) to check if his officers in the unit obeyed his direction to wear the squadron cuff links at all times. He appointed me as his 'Sheriff' to check if all officers were wearing their squadron cuff links for after all, I had the designation as Officer-in-Charge of the Base Police, as one of the several 'hats' I wore at that time.

As I approached Jack Haynes who was wearing his 'drabs', therefore he had no long-sleeved shirt to wear his cuff links. As he obviously was about to suffer the 'penalty' , (usually a bottle of some variety of the fruit of the vine that the Officers' Ness bar sold,) and which was at the CO's discretion for not wearing the said Squadron cuff links, Jack put his hand in his pocket and pulled out a very long chain which he clutched in his massive hand then flung the chain across the floor of the Mess past the Commanding Officer.

He said to me, "Follow that to its end!" I did and at the end of this long chain, was a ladies' Base Squadron, Point Cook Unit pendant.

Jack brought the roof down with laughter. Even the CO remarked that he thought he had caught Jack that time! No doubt other readers could fill pages on yarns concerning Jack Haynes. What a great bloke was Jack!

H

SCOOTAVILLE
BRISBANE TO TOWNSVILLE
13 DAYS | 2021

On the 14th June a bunch of adventurous men and women will leave Brisbane on 20 of the great little Peugeot Kisbee 50cc scooters and head north via the outback roads for the main gate at the RAAF Base at Townsville.

The journey, which will cover 2,100 kms, will take 13 days and those who dare to be a part will have a helluva lot of fun and a holiday to remember for a long long time.

The journey will take us through Kingaroy, Mundubbera, Biloela, Emerald, Barcaldine, Longeach, Winton, Hughenden, Charters Towers and finally into Townsville. We're recently driven the route, checking accommodation, meal supplies, toilet/showers, breaks in the journey etc and found the generosity from people and firms along the way to be outstanding. I approached IGA and Woolworths in the towns in which we'll overnight to ask for assistance in obtaining food for breakfasts and on-road "snacks" and their responses were outstanding. IGA stores are owned by individuals and Woolies have store managers in each store and on all occasions I found them most generous – all offered to provide sufficient food for our trusty cook(s) to provide breakfast for all of us and also enough "snacks" for our long hauls up the road.

Many of the RSL Sub-Branches along the way have, where practicable, agreed to provide facilities and morning and afternoon teas, likewise, the various Councils and Show-ground managers have also been generous and very considerate and have offered to waive the hire costs of their Show-ground pavilions and allow us to overnight in their facilities FOC.

The reason for the trip?

As we all know, next year is the 100th anniversary of the formation of the Air Force and as many will remember, we did plan on holding an event in Melbourne but for various reasons we had to cancel those plans – good thing in hindsight as the Virus would have put paid to them anyway. As there were many people who wanted to party on and take part in those Melbourne plans, we thought we should look for another way to celebrate the occasion. Some years previously, "Jake" Jacobsen organised a similar event where a number of people rode these little 50cc scooters across the Nullarbor. We approached Jake to get his knowledge of that event and after he'd passed on all he knew, we knew it could be done again so we went ahead and planned it.

Reason 1 – to celebrate the 100th Anniversary of the RAAF.

As the Radschool Association, which is now a registered Charity, has expenses helping many people obtain the help for which they are due, has many costs associated with attending reunions all across the country, has to maintain the web site and produce this magazine and cover normal day to day expenses, we need to raise funds. To date, our only source of funds has been membership fees but they don't go anywhere near covering costs. We have organised two Bunnings sausage sizzles which raised much needed funds, but not enough. There are many people who need help but we're not financially secure enough to help. That has to change.

Reason 2 – to raise funds.

Most of us are now approaching 4 score years, some of us are already there, yet for most of us, that is only on the outside. On the inside we're much younger and we still know how to and can still enjoy having a good time with a bunch of other great people. Some of us only served the minimum period while others stayed in for many years, yet all remember those years in uniform as some of the greatest years of their lives. For most people, their oldest (long time) friends are people they met while serving. Some of us have had friends for 50 or so years – it happens, these are people you lived with, worked with, borrowed from and in some cases fought with. That's why there are hundreds of squadron/unit/base reunions held every year – for people to get together again and to continue old friendships – and to feel good.

Reason 3 – to get together and enjoy each other's company.

Kedron Wavell RSL Sub-Branch have agreed to also join us and a couple of them will bung on the helmet, hop on a bike and be a part of the event. They have also generously agreed to provide a small bus, a ute and also a mobile kitchen as well as a cook who will look after our breakfasts

and smokos along the way. Two of the days will be long, unfortunately there is no way we can avoid that, but the kitchen will head off ahead and set up along the way to provide a bit of relief.

This is what's planned.

Day 1.

We leave Brisbane early on the morning of the 14th June 2021 and will travel north up Old Gympie Road to Caboolture, then head west to Woodford where we'll enjoy the hospitality of the Woodford RSL Sub-Branch who has offered to provide morning tea. After Woodford it's onto Kilcoy where we'll stop for a while, meet the people from Kilcoy and where the Sub-Branch has offered to provide lunch at our cost. Then it's up the hill to Yarraman where we'll meet Leigh Norgaard, who is ex-2Sqn and with the RSL. It's then onto Nanango for afternoon tea at the RSL, once again provided by the Sub-Branch.

From there it's onto Kingaroy to stay at the Showgrounds. Craig Lucas, the boss of the showgrounds has offered us the two pavilions below on the left in which to stay. Showers and toilets are just a short walk across the grass. Run your mouse over the overnight pavilions to see the interiors. Our support people will have gone ahead and made everything ready for our arrival.

Dinner and a bar that night have yet to be arranged (we're talking with a couple of providers) but it will be at our cost in one of the pavilions that we will be allowed to use as our Mess (below). The idea is it will be catered for, you pay for what you want and we'll invite the other campers (there are lots) at the showground to meet and to get to know us – as we'll do each night. Run your mouse over the pic below to see the ablution block.

Day 2
The IGA at Kingaroy has agreed to provide us with food for our breakfasts and also a few snack items for our trip north. Breakfast will be served here (above), prepared by our bait-layer (BL).

From Kingaroy we head to Wondai. Shaz Birkett, the lovely drive-time announcer from Crow FM will meet us a few km out of Wondai and will ride one of the scooters into town. The BL will have gone ahead and set up a brief smoko in the car park at the information centre coming into town. Then it's onto Murgon for more smoko at the Services club (right) – provided by the Sub-Branch.

We've offered the Police at Murgon the opportunity to meet us a few Km out of town and ride one of the scooters into town.

After Murgon it's a brief stop at the Grand Hotel in Goomeri to say hello to the people and to buy a cold drink.

After Goomeri, the BL will go ahead and set up a refreshment stop 58km from Goomeri in a gravel area on the left side of the highway, 500m after the Welcome sign below.

From there it's onto Gayndah for lunch at the RSL Club, once again, provided by the Sub-Branch.

After Gayndah it's onto Mundubbera for the night where we'll stay at one of the pavilions in the show-ground. (right).

Dinner that night will be provided by the sub-branch, (at our cost) who will provide a meal and bar facilities at their club rooms, (wave your mouse over the pic at right to see the RSL Club), once again inviting the public to come along and meet us.

Day 3

Breakfast will be prepared by our BL with food provided by the Mundubbera IGA which has also offered to provided snacks for the trip north.

Morning Tea will be provided (at cost) at the Eidsvold Cafe, owned and run by Andrew Roth – ex Army.

Andrew is also the local RSL Sub-Branch president.

From Eidsvold it's onto Monto where the BL can pick up supplies for lunch and the trip further up from once again the very generous IGA store (below right).

Lunch can be set up in the Lions Park, on the right entering town.

From Monto it's 96 km to Biloela so the BL will scout ahead and set up a rest stop on the highway, after which it's onto Biloela for an overnight stop at the Biloela showgrounds.

Dinner for the night will be at the Biloela Anzac Memorial Club (below), at cost – you order what you want.

Day 4

The Woolworths Store at Biloela has offered us enough food to cover our Breakfasts and for the long day tomorrow.

The BL has only to see the store manager to pick up a gift card and can then select the food as required.

Breakfast will be served in the Mess area of the showground pavilion below. This is a long day so breakfast will need to be served early.

The BL would have gone ahead and set up morning tea at Dululu, food supplied by Woolworths at Biloela. There are no toilets for the next 80kms.

Being a long leg, the BL will set up a brief stop at Dunphy Park – no toilet.

Lunch will be served in front of the Duaringa Police Station, the BL will have gone on ahead and set up – an invitation has been delivered to the station for the police to join us for lunch. There is the possibility that the local school kids will also join us and could be given rides up and down the street on the scooters.

Next break is at the Blackwater Country Club, below – at cost, after which it is a long ride until Emerald..

There is the possibility that Ken O'Dowd, the federal member for the area (Flynn) could join us a few kms out of town and ride one of the bikes into Emerald.

Following the long ride from Biloela, we stay 2 nights in Emerald, with overnight accommodation provided by the Council at the Emerald showgrounds (below).

Ablution block – Emerald.

Dinner first night to be held at the Emerald Bowls and RSL Club below (at cost).

Breakfasts to be prepared and served in the Mess area at the Showgrounds, (below) by the BL, with food supplied by the Emerald Woolworths.

We are discussing with the Emerald Lions Club for them to cater for dinner on the Friday night which would be provided in the building above – at cost. Lions would run a bar as well as a kitchen and the townspeople would be invited to join us.

Day 6

After an early breakfast held in the building above, and prepared by our BL, from food supplied by Woolworths at Emerald, it will be off for another long day to Barcaldine.

After breakfast, the BL will head off ahead and wait for us at Bogantungan where we will stop for morning tea and rider change. Bogantungan is just off the highway, to the left.

Kerri Johnson, ex-Army lady, will meet us and tell us some of the history of the area

Lunch will be held in Alpha, which is just off the highway to the right. The BL will set up for lunch next to the railway station below, opposite the hotel.

From Alpha we continue north until Jericho where we'll stop for afternoon tea. The BL will set up on the northern side of town, beside the Jericho monument.

L

Jericho afternoon site.

From Jericho, it's onto Barcaldine where we've been allowed the use one of the pavilions in the showground (below).

Dinner that night will be provided by an elderly citizens group – at the showgrounds, at cost.

Barcaldine ablutions block.

While in Barcaldine we can look at the “Tree of Knowledge” monument.

Breakfast will be prepared and served up by the BL. We’ve asked the Barcaldine IGA whether they would sponsor us sufficient food for breakfast and for the trip to Longreach.

After breakfast, we'll have a look over the Barcaldine Workers Heritage centre – where we'll be treated to an early brunch before heading off to Longreach.

O

Longreach sleeping donga - run your mouse over the pic to see the interior.

Continued next page.

Continued from Page 13

Day 8

Longreach has a lot going for it, it has a major airport and two major tourist attractions, the Qantas Museum and the Stockman's hall of Fame - it is well worth an extra overnight stay. While we have a free day there and you can visit any of those attractions you wish, the Council and the RSL Sub-Branch have a lot planned for us and we're sure you'll enjoy your stay in Longreach.

We're talking with Peter Coombes from Kingaroy Lions for them to provide dinner on the night of our arrival (at our cost) which will be provided on the show-ground, near our donga (below).

Click the pic to see the ablution block.

We've invited MP David Littleproud to join us a few kilometres out of Longreach and to lead us into town by riding one of our scooters and to then join us for dinner and one or two coldies. Depending on Parliament sitting dates/times, he has agreed to join us

As we've found all along the route, people have been refreshingly generous and Cornetts IGA store in Longreach is no exception, they have agreed to provide us with sufficient food for our BL to prepare breakfasts for us during our two night stay. The other meals are being organised by the RSL Sub-Branch.

The Council and the Longreach RSL are working on several events which will include the townsfolk and once we get their ideas we'll submit an application to the Air Force to try and get the Roulettes to Longreach, the birthplace of Qantas, for one of their amazing demonstrations. This could be a double celebration as Qantas also turns 100 on the 16th November 2020.

Could be a good time to be in Longreach.

There are some amazing people to meet and some amazing sights to see in Longreach, while there last month we spotted this bloke astride his rather large but gentle white bull. This large bovine was being led down the main street by the owner's trusty black and white dog which had the reins in its mouth. Locals just looked on as though it was the norm.

It certainly got our attention.

And of course, the local radio station has a unique way of decorating its front fence.

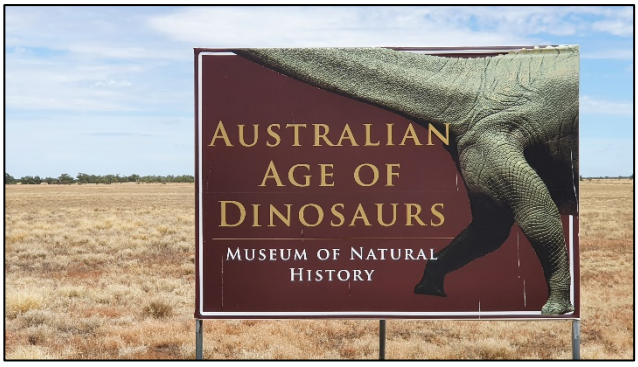
We just wonder who has the enviable task of uninstalling these appendages then affixing them to the fence – any vacancies?

After breakfast on the Monday, it is off to Winton.

There is not a lot to see on this section of the trip, apart from a lot of dead straight flat road. Like most roads out here there are many stopping bays and our BL will go on ahead and every 40 kms or so, will set up a refreshment stop. These times will also be a good opportunity to change riders. Dead straight roads can be boring and boredom can lead to inattention which could lead to an accident. We're trying to avoid that – the paperwork is a killer.

C

Lunch will also be taken on the road, our BL will select a safe spot at which to stop and will have lunch ready for us when we arrive.



About 14km before Winton, we'll turn left off the highway to visit the Australian Age of Dinosaurs exhibition which is about 12 kms down the road from the highway.

The Exhibition was incorporated as a not-for-profit organisation in October 2002 and originally was based at Belmont, a sheep station owned by David and Judy Elliott. In 2006 a rugged mesa and wilderness area 24km south-west of Winton known as "The Jump-Up" was donated by the Britton Family and the Museum relocated there in 2009. Today the Museum houses the world's largest collection of Australian dinosaur fossils and comprises a Fossil Preparation Laboratory, Reception Centre and Dinosaur Canyon. Future plans include construction of Australia's premier natural history museum at Dinosaur Canyon.

This is an interesting site and we've arranged a group tour of the exhibition as well as afternoon tea. Once again, a good time to change riders.

From the museum, it's a straight run into Winton where we'll stay in these pavilions at the showground. Click the pic to see the interior.

D

Ablution Block. This is a new block and will be finished and ready for use next year.

Once again, the Winton Shire Council has been most helpful and Jessica Greenaway, the Council's Director of Economic and Community Development has offered to organise dinner for us the night of our arrival. Jessica will also invite the people to Winton to come and join us, most of whom will want to try to work out why a bunch of silly old men and women would want to ride those funny little scooters all the way up from Brisbane when an air-conditioned car would be far more comfortable.

Winton has the Waltzing Matilda Centre and the Royal Open-air Theatre though whether we get time to visit either is debatable as the day before and the day after Winton are long ones.

The Royal Open-Air Theatre is one of the few remaining open air picture theatres in Australia still in operation.

Originally established in 1918, and purchased by the Evert family in 1938, the historic Royal Theatre offers a rare opportunity to enjoy the movies the old-fashioned way – laid back in canvas seats under the stars.

You can drop in during the day to wander through the Museum (via the Gift and Gem and the Opal Walk), or come on a Nostalgia Night, held every Wednesday from April through September.

The Open Air Theatre is now also home to the World's Largest Deck Chair.

E

John Broughton beside the chair.

Breakfast next morning will be prepared by our BL from food obtained from the local Spar supermarket. Garry Player, the President of the north Qld RSL, has kindly offered to provide breakfast for us at Winton and at Hughenden.

From Winton it's onto the Kennedy Development road for the boring 215kms flat and straight run up to Hughenden. The only exciting things to see are mile long road trains and the odd emu.

We'll have numerous refreshment stops along the way with the BL out the front selecting appropriate areas.

Hughenden council have also been most generous with the mayor Jane McNamara offering us the use of the Stamford race course building as a shady area for a late lunch. Stamford is about 155km north of Winton and about 65kms from Hughenden. Stamford Races and Community fun day (horse racing) offers the best of country racing set in an outback rural setting and with 115 years experience under their belt, the Stamford races and Community Fun Day is a special event for the whole family.

The day includes a Stockman's Challenge, Fashions on the field, Foot Races, Family Entertainment, fun for the kids and of course the races.

The event attracts crowds of around 500 or more racegoers.

After lunch there is still a further 65kms of straight road to cover and the BL will once again set up a refreshment stop about 30-40km up the road where we can get a cool drink and exchange riders. We've asked Jane, who strikes us as a lady who will have a go at anything, if she'd like to meet us a few Km out of town and lead us in by riding one of the bikes.

That could well be on.

The Flinders Council at Hughenden has arranged or us to use a pavilion at the showgrounds in which to overnight. This pavilion is normally used as a sporting area and the floor is covered by thick foam rubber.

This is sure to be one comfortable night.

The Hughenden showground pavilion – click the pic to see the inside.

The toilet/shower block is situated on the northern (right) end of the building.

The day we arrive, after we settle into our digs, Mayor Jane McNamara has invited us all down to the lake, of which she is rightly proud, for an evening meal and to meet some of the

townspeople. This will be a “pay as you go affair” and we’re in talks with a Service Club to cater for the night.

After breakfast, prepared by our BL, it’s an early start for Charters Towers which is 250 kms east. First stop for the day will be at Prairie, a small settlement about 45km from Hughenden. The BL will have prepared refreshments but the hotel is an option should you chose.

Lunch will also be prepared “on the road” by the BL, and this will be taken at Torrens Creek, a rest area a further 65km from Prairie. BL will have had a refreshment stop 30 or so km back.

I

Afternoon tea will be taken at Baffles Creek, at which there is not a lot of life. Perhaps once an important stop over between Hughenden and Charters Towers, these days even the spotted dog has left. There is plenty of room for the BL to pull off the highway and set up ready for the armada.

After Baffles Creek it's onto Charters Towers for another two-night stop-over.

Originally planned as a one night stop, we were encouraged by Eileen Vogele to stay an extra night as she says there is an awful lot to see in Charters Towers and we definitely couldn't see it all if we only overnighted.

So we will

Eileen says: "In late 1942 Townsville was the principle port for the Allied troops serving in the New Guinea campaign and Cleveland Bay between Magnetic Island and Townsville was an important assembly point for shipping. The RAAF had established a Base at Garbutt (Townsville airport) and a number of bases used by Australian and US were established between Townsville and Charters Towers. Between 1942 and 1945 the Townsville and Charters Towers regions became one of the largest concentrations of airfields, stores, ammunition depots and port operations in the South West Pacific Theatre.

Charters Towers was the closest inland centre that could provide strategic support and aircraft dispersal facilities for Garbutt, which was considered vulnerable to Japanese attack. The RAAF started work on a base at the Charters Towers town airport during January 1942. The airfield became operational during March 1942 with arrival of the first of four bombardment squadrons equipped with A-24 Dauntless dive bombers which had been intended for the Philippines. The group, which became part of the 5th Airforce, was later equipped with A-20 Havoc (or Boston) medium bombers. These aircraft were followed by the arrival of B-25 Mitchell bombers that had been intended for use by the Dutch in the Netherlands East Indies but were taken over by the Americans.

In July 1942 the northeast-southwest runway was sealed and the north-south runway was metalled. The Main Roads Commission used local mine tailings for the runways prompting a US

press report that they were 'paved with gold'. Charters Towers airfield served through most of 1943 as a US Fighter and Bomber Command Replacement Training Centre.

During mid-February 1943 the Department of Public Works received a requisition from the US Army for construction of a gun firing range, or bore sight range, platform at Charters Towers airfield to test the accuracy of aircraft fixed armament. The concrete gun firing platform was designed with an adjustable metal plate set in front of the concrete block to take the nose wheel of aircraft with tricycle undercarriages. A steel gantry frame with a sling was positioned on the platform to lift the tail of fighter aircraft with tail wheels. The bore sight range extended about 360 metres to an earth mound, or butt, in front of which a target was set. The bore sight range is the only known example of its type in Queensland with an adjustable nose wheel platform.

The compass swinging platform also existed by November 1944. Aircraft were pushed onto the platform and aligned with each of the 16 main cardinal points of the compass, starting with north. Variations in aircraft compass bearings were noted and compass magnets were adjusted. The RAAF resumed responsibility for the maintenance of the airfield in May 1944. It was classified as a 'reserve aerodrome' in June 1944 and most of the US facilities at the airfield were turned over to the RAAF in December 1944.

A hill to the south of the town still contains numerous bunkers left over after the war as well as offering an excellent view of the town and surroundings (See HERE).

Charters Towers, was also well known for its gold, being first discovered in 1871. A rush of ‘fortune seeking’ men quickly followed and by the end of 1872 some 3000 people inhabited the new field. The alluvial men left early on for the Palmer River discoveries, but the hard rock miners remained, seeking the gold in the deep veins underground. Literally 100s of shafts were sunk during the lifetime of the field and the ore raised was processed through many large treatment batteries. Many of the shafts can still be seen.

K

During the period 1872-1899 the place changed from a rough settlement with bark and calico buildings to a thriving City of some 25,000 inhabitants. The City, by that time, had properly formed streets, some wonderful houses and many grand public buildings lining the two main streets.

A plentiful supply of water for domestic and other purposes was pumped to the town from a Weir in the Burdekin River about 9 miles to the north. Underground electricity was also supplied to parts of the main town area.

It is estimated that 6,000,000 ounces of gold was won in the first 40 to 50 years of the life of the Towers. All religions were strongly represented on the field and in 1890 the miners could quench their thirst in no less than 65 hotels registered on the field. Sports, music and the arts all had fantastic followings. It was said that everything you might desire could be had in the Towers. There was no reason to travel elsewhere for anything. This is why the town became known affectionately as ‘The World’.

The decline of mining following World War 1 also saw a decline in the population. The town then became the supply centre or hub of the then Dalrymple Shire as well as the educational centre for students from all over North Queensland.”

Our accommodation in Charters Towers will be, as usual, at the showgrounds. We haven't been able to get in to check out the facilities just yet but will do so in February. We've been assured they will definitely suit our purposes

We also invited Robbie Katter MP, the State member for Traeger, to meet us a few miles out and to ride one of the scooters into town, then to join us for dinner that night and perhaps a quiet one or two.

Eileen and Ken Hey, an old RAAF metal basher, are working on our meal requirements and trying to line up a bus and driver which will give us the royal tour of Charters Towers, we'll let you know the result as soon as we hear.

We can be assured things are in good hands.

After breakfast, served at the showground and prepared by the BL, it's an easy run down to Townsville. We'll stop at Mingela for morning tea. 48km from Charters Towers we take the turn to the right and about 1km down the road is the Mingela Hotel.

Morning tea will be served at the hotel.

After Mingela, its a further 36km to the Reid River rest stop where the BL will prepare lunch. Food for lunch would be provided as a result of the generosity of the Charters Towers Woolworths store.

After Reid River, it's non stop to Townsville where we'll end the epic journey at the RAAF Base. We've asked Phillip Thompson MP, the Federal Member for Herbert, to meet us a few km out and to lead us into Townsville by riding one of the scooters. We've also asked the RAAF if a number of serving men and women could also meet us out of town and help us celebrate the 100th anniversary by riding our scooters to the base.

We reckon after 2,100kms, everyone will be more than happy to surrender their transports and enjoy the relative comfort of the air condition bus and allow the uniforms to complete the trip.

We haven't heard back from Phillip Thompson yet but the RAAF has agreed to ask for volunteers - shouldn't be too much of a problem getting them we reckon.

N

We've had a meeting with the RAAF at Townsville and they are keen to join and help us celebrate the anniversary. They will organise a barbecue welcome for us on arrival and we're talking with them about accommodation, this looks exciting and we'll have more on that later.

O

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Continued from Page 14

The Nuts and Bolts of it.

If you're a 5 star motel type of person, this event is probably not for you. If you're the type of person who likes an adventure, likes to meet interesting people, see interesting places, do wild and exciting things and bunk down in the rough, then this could be just what you're looking for.

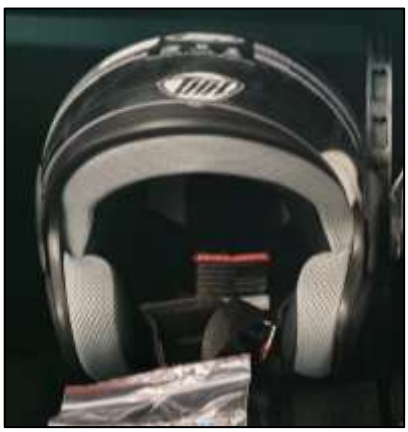
This ride is open to both men and women – so girls, get involved, we want you to come.

Peugeot have been gracious enough to allow us 20 of their fantastic little Kisbee scooters so we can celebrate the 100th anniversary of the Air Force, to raise funds for our organisation and to have one helluva good time by riding these great little machines from Brisbane to Townsville.

Provided that rotten COVID-19 virus has faded into the past and we're allowed out, provided there's no cat 5 cyclones hanging around off the coast of Moreton Island and provided we're not into world war 3, then early on Monday the 14th June 2021 we'll leave Brisbane and head north. We're not exactly sure from where we'll actually leave, it could depend on sponsorship, but there is plenty of time to firm that up and we will let you know.

Most of us have never ridden a scooter, they are a little different to riding a motor bike, for starters there's no gears, no foot brake, no foot rests and the wheels are a lot smaller. So that we all make it to Townsville in one piece, we'll all need to be in Brisbane by Friday the 11th June so we can spend the weekend being instructed on how to ride the scooters and to be confident on what does what.

All bikes will be the same, all white and everyone will wear the same jackets and helmets. We want to look like we're all together, part of a team, not just a bunch of old blokes and blokettes out for a good time.



B

Accommodation for the 12 nights on the road will be provided by local Councils who have all graciously allowed us the use of their showgrounds. Although this is very commendable of them, conditions are a bit sparce so you will need to bring along some niceties. In all occasions all you will be given is a piece of floor space on which to make your bed.

You'll need to bring something on which to sleep, a blow up bed, sleeping bag, doona etc. We'll provide everyone with a carry bag in which to carry everything, your bedding, pillow, clothes, wash gear, towels etc but try and keep everything to a minimum. All this equipment has to be carried and although we'll have a few utes to carry everything, space will be limited. You can't carry anything on the scooters. We don't want you to bring along a suit-case (port if you're from NSW) as they don't stack as well as a soft bag.

If you've got a ute and/or a bus and you'd like to come, we want you.

Cost

We haven't finalised costs yet but it will be in the region of $750 per person. That will include your jacket, helmet, gloves, a peaked cap, all breakfasts and lunches (you will need to buy your evening meals and drinks but they will be modest) and will include entry into several attractions. If you come along as a supporter, your cost will be a lot less but we'll know more in a month or so.

We suggest you get out there and get sponsors to help pay for your entry. You're doing something a lot of people could only dream of doing - get them to sponsor you, it's all for a good cause, raising funds for the Association which is a registered charity – funds that are need to allow the organisation to continue with its work. There will be media involved in this so your sponsor could benefit. We've had several radio interviews already and many more are promised, as are newspaper stories.

You can hear the radio interviews by clicking the links below.

a. CrowFM
b. Radio 4LG
c. Radio 4SB

We are limited to 20 bikes and each bike will have two riders, each rider taking it in turns. When not riding that idle rider will follow on in a bus. Our numbers are limited by sleeping facilities and we know there will be a lot of interest in this so we might have to have a lottery to determine who comes.

As we are having two to a scooter, if you're interested, get a bike buddy, talk to a mate and get them to partner you, that way both of you will be allocated a scooter and that will be your ride for the duration.

We've included a form which you will find HERE – if you want the holiday of a lifetime, please fill it in and get it back to us.

We'll have another form for those coming to fill in late in November, early December when you'll have to pay your entrance and provide sizes so we can order your jackets, helmet, caps etc.

Accommodation in Townsville will be excellent and we'll probably stay for a couple of days, do some cruising on the bikes, meet some people. Getting home from Townsville is everyone's responsibility.

We intend to do the trip again in February to confirm everything – then it's on!

John Laming.

Aeroplanes and other stuff.

Pacific Picasso and other stories.

On the 30th November 1961, a Viscount 700 of Ansett-ANA departed from Sydney for Canberra. It was not equipped with airborne weather avoidance radar. During the climb the aircraft penetrated a large thunderstorm and after experiencing extreme turbulence, disintegrated in mid air. All on board were killed.

A previous accident occurred in 1955 near Derby WA, when an Avro Anson broke up after penetrating a line of thunderstorms at night. In the Phillipines two F27 aircraft crashed after thunderstorm encounters.

Shortly after the Viscount accident, the Australian Department of Civil Aviation initiated legislation requiring that aircraft capable of carrying more than 20 passengers be equipped with weather avoidance radar. Military aircraft were not affected by this legislation and it was not until the BAC One-Eleven, HS 748 and Mystere 30 were introduced into the RAAF VIP fleet in 1967, that

modern weather radar was available for all aircraft of this squadron. Previously one out of the two Convair 440 Metropolitans of the VIP squadron had radar, as did the two Viscounts of the fleet. This were early technology radar and often unreliable.

My early years of service flying was on Lincoln four engine bombers. These aircraft were equipped with archaic radar from the war era which was designed for shipping detection and basic ground mapping. The frequency band used was not suitable for detection of storms and it was considered part of the job if we inadvertently flew into embedded thunderstorms that were a daily part of the weather scene in the northern Australian wet season.

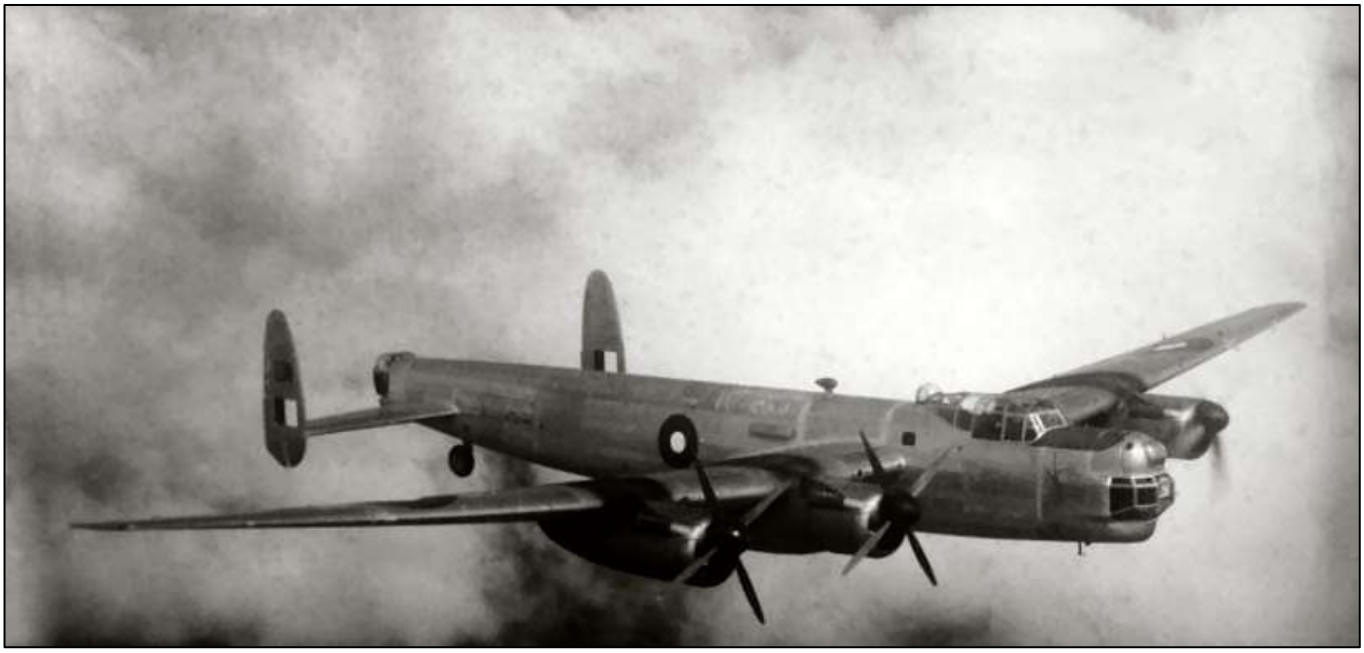
The instrument flying training we received on pilots' course was excellent and served us in good stead when it came to the inevitable thunderstorm penetrations. Naturally, good airmanship dictated that one avoided storms for obvious reasons, but often we flew blind in thick cloud and it was inevitable that occasional storms just happened to be on our track.

I had occasional frights from flying into unseen storms and I was none too happy one day to be tasked from Darwin to locate the eye of a cyclone that was thought to be located somewhere in the Gulf of Carpentaria. Satellites were yet to be invented, so the weather experts could only guess where the centre of any cyclone was situated. That day we flew for eight hours in torrential rain and sometimes violent turbulence, but were unable to find that elusive eye of the cyclone, where the skies were blue and the sea calm. The crew were entirely dependent on the skill of the navigator who tried to steer us towards the centre of the cyclone by means of a technique known as the three course wind. This involved holding a steady heading while the rear gunner would estimate the drift as we flew away from a smoke float dropped seconds earlier. The smoke float would soon disappear in mountainous seas and then after changing course by sixty degrees, another float would be dropped and the new drift angle measured. Three drift angles would enable the navigator to calculate the surface wind and eventually the direction of the centre of the maelstrom could be calculated. After that it was a case of batten down the hatches and bash through the 70 knot winds. The problem was that at 500 feet above huge waves, it was impossible to get an astro navigational fix because we couldn't see the sun. Most cyclones are surrounded by thunderstorms and in our attempts to climb out of cloud to get a sun shot, we were blindly wandering into lines of really nasty cumulo-nimbus.

Inside the Lincoln we were soaked to the skin, as rain leaked into the cockpit and the navigator finally gave up when his plotting chart began to disintegrate under his pencil. We climbed to 15,000 feet and went on to oxygen on the return track to Darwin. The signaller managed to get a couple of high frequency direction finding radio bearings (HF/DF) and we finally came within range of Darwin VHF direction finder. We broke out at 500 feet above the runway and landed. From this eight hour trip, I logged six hours on instruments. The sortie had been a complete waste of time as we had been unable to locate the storm centre.

Many years later, when I was flying Pacific routes with Air Nauru, I was to see the eye of typhoons on the aircraft weather radar. More impressive was the circular pattern of huge towering cumulo-nimbus surrounding the eye and I realized only then what unwarranted risks we were expected to take in those obsolete old aeroplanes - and all for King and Country. But it was all good experience I suppose!

When I began to fly jet transports in 1976, it was obvious that skill was vital in the interpretation of storm returns on the aircraft radar and I set out to master that skill. I read manufacture's handbooks, professional aviation magazines and talked to radio technicians. I always carried a camera in the cockpit and if avoiding a thunderstorm visually, would photo the storm through the window, then snap its radar picture. At high altitudes, the top of some storms is not visible on radar because the beam reflects from heavy moisture, but not dry ice crystals and the top of a big storm consists of these ice crystals. The problem is that severe turbulence still occurs well above storm tops. The clue is in the use of the variable gain control with which all modern radars are equipped. A knowledgeable pilot will adjust the gain switch to maximum power at high altitude and this will give a tiny echo on the radar screen - enough to alert the pilot that big trouble could lie ahead unless he alters course.



While flying blindly into a storm in a Lincoln could be an interesting experience to say the least, it was usually at a relatively low altitude. DC-3 aircraft have been doing it for sixty years which always made me feel better whenever I hit bad weather in those aircraft. The clean lines of a jet transport and its Mach Number characteristics meant that a high altitude thunderstorm penetration could lead to considerable height loss in turbulence. In addition, very heavy rain and hail inside big storms have been known to flame out jet engines, sometimes causing catastrophic internal damage to the engine.

It was for these reasons I soon realized that serviceable weather radar for jet transports was vital to the safety of all on board. Inevitably radar sets go unserviceable, or operate ineffectively. It was always worrying to experience a radar breakdown en route, especially if the aircraft is in

cloud or at night when thunderstorms are forecast. The few times in my life when I have been seriously alarmed have been as a passenger on an aircraft with an unserviceable radar. This has happened several times where I have dead-headed as off- duty crew and the whisper is that the radar is dead. I have travelled in aircraft where despite forecast storms, the captain has deliberately accepted an unserviceable radar in order not to make waves with Management. This is the height of poor airmanship.

A route I often flew was from Hong Kong to Manila, Guam which in the Mariana Islands, Ponape in the Carolines, Nauru and Fiji. Others were from Noumea to Tonga, or to Wallis Island and Samoa. Despite tourist brochures of the blue skies of the Pacific, there were many occasions when the weather was bad news with thunderstorms and thick turbulent cloud for a thousand miles. At night the lightning was spectacular and we were totally relying on our radar to circumvent extensive storm areas. These would show up at the outer extremity of the radar display, usually 180 miles and as the cloud mass drew closer, we would switch to the close in scale to assess which way to avoid danger. I have diverted 120 miles off track to miss bad storm masses and at these times have crossed my fingers and hoped that the radar keeps working.

Radar spares for Air Nauru were kept in Hong Kong, Melbourne and New Zealand. It could take several days to get spares if the radar packed up at any port of call between say Samoa and Hong Kong. In those days there was official apathy when it came to stationing spares at critical mid ocean islands such as Guam and Nauru. Various reasons were given such as lack of suitable air conditioned storage for radar components or simply the cost of multiple spares. It was left to the aircraft captain to decide whether or not to depart with an unserviceable radar and in many cases there were strong commercial pressures. Rationalization became an art form. Many was the time that aircraft were despatched with an inoperative weather radar when the forecast was for thunderstorms en-route. A short series of daylight flights in sunny weather posed no real problem and few crews would object to this. However, there were occasions where radar spares were simply unavailable or a technician had to be flown up from Melbourne or Auckland to fix the problem.

At one stage, Air Nauru owned three Boeing 727 tri-jets. Often these aircraft were under utilized and it was a common sight to see two 727's parked for several days near the runway on Nauru. Ansett Airlines of Australia provided engineers for their servicing and the normal crew complement was two pilots, a flight engineer, four air hostesses and an Ansett ground engineer.

For two weeks, there was only one serviceable radar set between the three aircraft. As each aircraft was scheduled to fly, the Ansett engineer would swop the good radar from one aircraft to the next departing aircraft. This 727 would then head off to Guam and Okinawa and the crew would overnight at Kagoshima in southern Japan. The following day the 727 would return to Nauru via several ports and immediately after landing at Nauru, its radar would be hurriedly installed on the next waiting 727 which may be going to Manila and Hong Kong.

The Ansett engineers attached to Air Nauru were wonderfully dedicated men, who worked long hours often in heatwave conditions to keep the aircraft flying. Union restrictive working practices which were so prevalent in Melbourne were not part of their ethos when overseas and these engineers were quietly proud that their efforts meant so much to the people of Nauru who were greatly fond of their airline.

However, they were not qualified radio technicians, although it was no great deal to simply undo a few screws and slide in a radar black box. Back in Melbourne 3000 miles away, the radio technicians union heard that the Ansett engineers from another union were daring to change radar black boxes from one 727 to another. The union demanded that Ansett should immediately castigate the engineers and insisted that Ansett send two radio technicians to Nauru for what was really a week's paid holiday on Nauru for literally one hour's work.

The technicians union threatened industrial action if the Ansett engineer continued to help Air Nauru keep the airline running until radar spares were available. Arrangements were then made to fly the radio technicians to Nauru. When they left Melbourne for Nauru, via Sydney and Noumea, the one and only serviceable radar was on their aircraft. Another 727 scheduled to depart from Nauru back to Japan was fuelled and waiting to go as the radio technicians touched down on Nauru. This aircraft needed the radar transplant before it could leave!

A night landing curfew was in force at Japan and the schedule would be severely disrupted unless this 727 service left Nauru on time. While the radio technicians were being processed through Nauruan immigration and customs formalities, the resident Ansett engineer swiftly removed the serviceable radar set from the recently arrived 727 from Melbourne and slid it neatly into the Kagoshima bound aircraft. A couple of turns with a screw driver and the radar was ready to operate. The Ansett engineer then settled himself comfortably in the first class cabin and completed the bookwork on the way to Japan.

Back on Nauru, the two members of the Radio Technicians Union emerged from Customs in time to see the Kagoshima bound jet climbing towards the north-west on schedule. What they could not see, of course, was Jack Bean the redoubtable Ansett engineer being poured a cold Foster's Bitter Ale by a very beautiful Air Nauru hostess.

Air Nauru was indeed fortunate to have the services of many such fine engineers from Ansett Airlines of Australia and also from Air New Zealand who specialized on the twin engine Boeing 737.

The worst abuse of the system that I saw was when a Boeing 737 suffered a radar failure at Guam en-route to Koror, Manila and Hong Kong. That is about 2500 miles over three sectors. The captain was advised spares were available at Hong Kong and he continued without incident in daylight. The radar could not be fixed at Hong Kong and plans were made for spares to be sent by air to Nauru from Melbourne in time for the aircraft's arrival in Nauru in the next 24 hours. Commercial pressures were applied as the President of Nauru wished to travel to Melbourne from Nauru and the aircraft was needed for this purpose.

The captain took a deep breath and succumbed to pressure from Flight Operations. The aircraft flew to Nauru via stops at Manila, Guam, Ponape and landed at Nauru one hour before its scheduled departure with passengers and the President for stops at Noumea, Sydney and Melbourne. There were several thunderstorm encounters between Ponape and Nauru and passengers were shaken up badly. The spares had not arrived in Nauru and the next captain, being known as a company man, accepted the aircraft still with no radar. The forecast revealed that a typhoon was brewing 300 miles north of New Caledonia with the centre near the Santa Cruz islands. Severe thunderstorms with tops to 45,000 feet were forecast, but the captain elected to give it a go.

I was a passenger on that flight and one hour into the cruise at 33,000 feet we entered heavy cloud. The seat belts sign was switched on, but the local flight attendants continued to walk around. It got quite turbulent and I was horrified to see several toddlers playing in the aisle. I told the senior flight attendant to get them strapped in and her cabin crew as well. She was an arrogant young woman and virtually advised me to get nicked as I was only dead-heading with no authority over her. Many of the local cabin crew were relatives of politicians and as such were confident that they were untouchable as far as discipline was concerned.

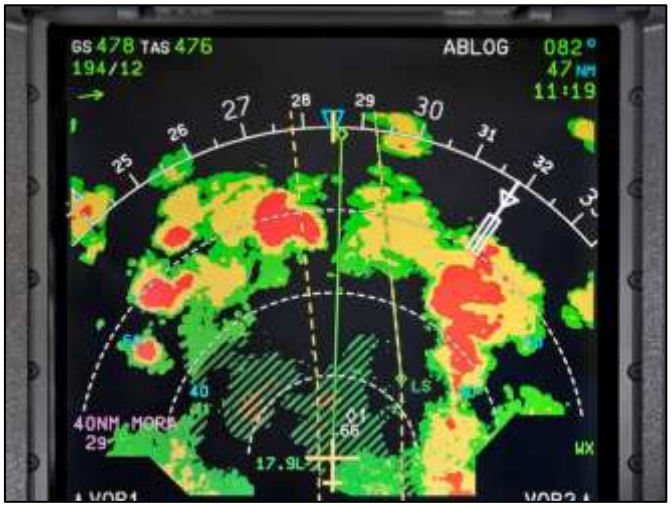
Shortly afterwards the aircraft flew blindly into the tops of some cumulo-nimbus clouds which were part of the cyclone system. The captain was flying on instruments in thick cloud and I wondered at his crass stupidity in accepting the flight with an inoperative radar. On talking in measured tones to the senior flight attendant who could easily put the skids under my career with this airline due to her political connections, I discovered that she was unaware of the inoperative radar and that at any minute we could blunder into extreme and dangerous turbulence. There had been no pre-flight briefing by the pilots up front.

After a series of lightning strikes and severe turbulence on the last sector at night into Melbourne, we landed in one piece, no thanks to the captain. The long awaited radar spares did not arrive in Melbourne and the aircraft was refuelled and despatched back up through the cyclone area flown by another management pilot. This was a night flight and approaching the Solomon Islands on descent, passengers were again subjected to thunderstorm penetration. Still no spares at Nauru, so another captain reluctantly took the aircraft from Nauru to Fiji and return, a total of seven hours

flying time. The flight was in thick cloud on both sectors and continuous turbulence experienced. On landing back at Nauru, the captain, an outspoken New Zealander, said it was the worst turbulence he had experienced in his career. Passenger comments were not recorded. The elusive radar spares arrived on Nauru two days after this trip.

As a child, I loved to draw and in my teens seriously considered a career as a commercial artist. However I learnt to fly at the age of seventeen and it was many years later en-route from Nauru to Suva in Fiji and return, that the opportunity arose to practice both artistry and flying skills in a serious fashion.

A typical depression was gathering momentum several hundred miles to the north east of the New Hebrides with its centre laying astride of the direct track Nauru to Fiji. The weather forecast was typical of such extensive weather systems which means thick cloud from 1000 feet above the sea up to 35,000 feet of higher. There is usually heavy rain from the base of the cloud and visibility quite poor. In cloud the aircraft has no forward visibility. There are large cumulo-nimbus or storm clouds embedded inside the general cloud mass, but their actual position are unknown without the use of weather radar. On the radar screen these storm clouds will show up as large echoes with red centres indicating the most turbulent areas. The pilot's job is to fly the aircraft well clear of these turbulent areas by watching their presence on the radar screen.



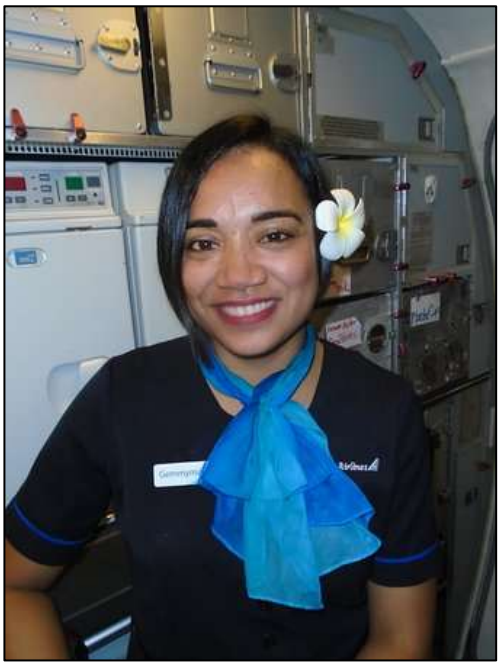
We were at 31,000 feet and 800 miles to go to Suva. The radar showed numerous storm cells, but it had been easy to divert around them. I was watching the radar picture closely and gauging the height of the storms by use of the tilt control. One could barely see the wingtips the cloud was that thick. Ahead on our track lay several closely grouped storm cells about 80 miles away, or 12 minutes flying time. A flight attendant opened the cockpit door to bring coffee and I turned around to collect the tray. One sip later and I noticed that the storms had miraculously vanished from the radar screen. Heavy seas below us had shown on the radar as hundreds of tiny green specks and even these had gone. We had obviously had a failure of the radar and it was apparent that we were now up the proverbial creek without a serviceable paddle.

The cabin staff were warned to expect turbulence and dishes were hurriedly collected and passengers told to strap in. I am very mechanically minded and used that skill to bash the radar scope with my fist, but to no avail. Circuit breakers were pushed and pulled and I may have whimpered in fear. I decided to turn the radar switch off and wait for a few minutes for the set to cool down. Meanwhile the storm cells we had seen ahead were coming closer and I couldn't recall if there were navigable gaps on either side. The second hand of the aircraft clock eventually hit 3 minutes and the radar switched on. After a short warm up period the screen came to life and sure enough the storms were now five minutes away, but with a slight gap between if we turned a few degrees left. I had just altered heading to the left when the radar went blank again. We had

barely got two sweeps of the radar beam prior to this latest failure and again I tried to fix my mind on the last image I had seen.

Again I switched the radar set off and started the stop watch. Shortly afterwards we hit heavy turbulence as we clipped the side of an unseen storm cell. Both the first officer and I had our faces pressed against the windshield hoping to spot a visual gap in the clouds. This meant loosening our lap-straps to strain closer to the window and a couple of times we were momentarily lifted off our seats with jolts of turbulence. We compromised - I would look outside, while the F/O kept his harness tight and watched the instruments.

As the radar problem was obviously in its cooling system, we guessed that the radar was turning itself off automatically when the sensor reached its cut-off temperature. It then needed at least five minutes to cool down and reset itself. Once turned on, it would fail after two sweeps, enough to give us a fleeting two second picture of the weather ahead. Flying at seven miles a minute meant the next 35 miles flying blind.



I was ready for the bugger this time. I got a notepad and with pencil poised asked the F/O to switch the radar on. Sure enough we got a two second sweep revealing new storm cells encroaching on our flight path and as the picture faded again I sketched from memory what I had seen. This process was repeated every five minutes and to make sure the sketch was accurate the F/O would also sketch what he saw and we would compare pictures. At one stage the senior cabin attendant who was a beautiful Samoan girl, rang the cockpit call chimes to take our coffee order. We had thirty seconds to countdown before switching on the radar for the sweep of the beam and with storm cells in the area we couldn't afford to fly blind for too long. We ignored the chimes and the Samoan beauty got impatient and opened the cockpit door in time to see two pilots furiously drawing ragged circles on bits of paper. She got quite annoyed at our ignoring her request for coffee orders and slamming the door to the cockpit, hightailed it with luxurious black hair flowing, back to her domain.

We must have done a pretty good job of interpreting from our pieces of paper, because apart from a few hefty bounts of turbulence on the final descent, we had successfully steered around the nasty clouds. On the ground at Suva, I apologized to our Samoan wench and explained to her what had happened. My apology earned a kiss which made my knees tremble, whereupon the F/O went on his knees in hopeful supplication and was rewarded with shrieks of delighted laughter from the rest of the cabin crew, stunningly attractive girls from Fiji, the Solomon Islands and two from the Philippines.

Fortunately Air Pacific at Suva arranged for a radio technician to look at our radar. He re-racked various components (the radio equivalent of wiping the oil off the engine cowls, sometimes known as the Ansett spanner) and after loading a hundred kilos of Twisties which the Nauruans love to

eat with their Foster's beer, we took off for Nandi and Nauru. The radar operated perfectly on the way home.

Once in the cruise I decided to visit the passengers in the cabin. The weather looked good ahead for the next hundred miles, although I had stated on the public address system that we may experience occasional turbulence. Before I could leave my seat, a young Fijian flight attendant rushed into the cockpit and told us that a turbaned guru character was making money down the back telling fortunes. His knowledge of past events in her life was amazingly accurate it seemed and she had happily forked out a few dollars.

This certainly aroused my curiosity and with one more quick glance at the radar picture ahead, I left the first officer in charge and entered the passenger cabin. Small children were running up and down the aisle and I could hear the quiet strumming of a guitar along with the lovely sound of islanders singing in harmony. It was a typical peaceful Air Nauru scene with flight attendants chatting happily to relatives on board and an utterly friendly atmosphere. Leaving the first class are, I soon encountered the bearded turbaned fortune teller. He gave me a warm and gentle smile and clasped my hand asking me to sit down beside him. I declined politely with the excuse that I must return to the flight deck.

I was astonished when he said "Do not worry Captain, the weather is good ahead, you have time to talk". He then asked me to write down the year I was born, the names of my first wife (we were divorced), name of my second wife and finally the date of my first marriage. He wanted this information on two separate pieces of paper. It would have been churlish of me to refuse him, so I did as requested. He could not see what I wrote. Having done that, he told me to screw up both pieces of paper and he held one piece in his hand while I held the other piece.

Looking at me directly, he then said that my birth year was 1932, initially married to Loretto then to April and first married in June 1954. He was right on all counts and with a beatific smile suggested I could reward him with a free bottle of whiskey from the bar. When I admitted that his homework was accurate, all the passengers clapped in delight. I couldn't slip him the booze without tampering with the bar accounts, but he was happy with twenty dollars. I still have my crumpled piece of paper with my mementoes of Air Nauru.

Returning to the cockpit I could see that the weather was still good and suggested to the first officer that he get his fortune told. Apparently being a religious type, the F/O demurred, saying he did not believe in such nonsense. I was equally determined to see if I had somehow been fooled and gave the F/O ten dollars as a bribe. It worked and he returned from his "consultation", white faced.

He had been asked to write down the name of his wife and two children. The bearded one thought long and hard, before saying that the wife's name was hard to visualize, but thought it was something to do with the tropical seas. In fact her name was Coral! What absolutely staggered

the F/O, however was a whispered sentence into his ear from the guru. As the F/O later explained to me, he and his wife had once had a serious argument in which he said something which he later deeply regretted. He had told no one about this, yet the bearded guru repeated the actual sentence word for word.

We later found out that the guru had been brought from India to Fiji on the request of the then Prime Minister of Fiji and that he was returning home on our flight. Good luck to him as far as I was concerned - I hope he made lots of money, because he was a remarkable character.

Faces in the crowd

On long over water flights where there was little to do except monitor the inertial navigation or Omega systems, I would visit the people down the back. The Air Nauru first officers were all experienced ex-military or general aviation pilots and I had no hesitation in leaving them in charge of the flight deck. In any case I was never more than 15 seconds from the cockpit door if needed.

Some of the passengers were business people travelling between remote atolls and others were islanders of various nationalities going on holidays usually to islands where their relatives lived. From Hong Kong, the airline picked up British travellers heading for Nauru or the Republic of Kiribati. Readers will recall that Tarawa was the capital of Kiribati and many times have I talked to British school children travelling solo to Tarawa for the school holidays from Britain. Their parents might have been part of the old colonial empire in Kiribati, working as administrators, school teachers, or at the Seamen's Training School on Betio atoll. Others from Hong Kong included Chinese visiting relatives in the Pacific region and perhaps Kiribati seamen returning home from months away on cargo ships. From Guam in the Mariana Islands, we would occasionally pick up old war veterans from America and Japan who were making a last sad pilgrimage to the once bloody beaches of Betio and Makin, or perhaps to the dark rotting jungles of Guadacanal in the Solomon Islands.

I would walk through the cabin and after chatting to the island air hostesses on cabin and catering matters, would sit down and talk for a few minutes with those passengers alone and often quietly, looking out through the window into the gentle evening sunset. Over many years of flying the Pacific I met so many people with fascinating stories to tell.

William Cleary was one of those who I shall never forget. He was a tall dignified man with a military bearing who was sitting quietly towards the rear of the cabin. After being served with coffee, I introduced myself to him and asked his destination. It turned out that Cleary was a former United States Marine returning on a visit to Guadacanal. He had retired from the Marines after the war and was now the President of the U.S. Marine Raider's Association. He had been a Lieutenant

Colonel during the Guadacanal Campaign in 1942.

Since joining Air Nauru in 1976, my travels had taken me to many of the Pacific battle zones such as Guadacanal, Guam, Saipan, Palau, Truk, Ponape, the Marshalls and Okinawa. I was familiar with their geography and details of many of the battles. I had also explored the battlefield of Bloody Ridge one mile from Henderson airfield on Guadacanal. Henderson Field is the airport for the capital Honiara in the Solomons, where Air Nauru visited twice weekly on the way to Noumea, Port Vila and Auckland.

The Guadacanal Campaign was undertaken by the United States Navy and Marine Corps in August 1942, just eight months after the Japanese had struck their initial blow at Pearl Harbour, Honolulu. The Japanese were constructing a runway on the east coastal plain of Guadacanal near the Lunga river when the U.S. marines landed on nearby beaches. The American forces quickly captured the airfield and set up a perimeter around the area while their engineers hastily completed the runway. Despite desperate counter attacks by the Japanese aided by shelling of the airfield by warships of the Japanese Navy, the perimeter held. The Battle for Guadacanal was to last until February 1943. Over 27,500 Japanese were killed or wounded, while the American casualties totalled 6,111.

Overlooking and just south of the airfield was a ridge one thousand yards in length and running northwest and southeast. It dominated the airfield with which it was connected by a dirt road. Deep ravines heavily wooded, bordered the hill on all sides. Some 800 U.S. Marines of the Raider and Parachute Battalions, were established on the ridge in fox holes and bunkers which were surrounded by barbed wire. Several thousand Japanese troops held the jungle surrounding the base of the ridge.

On the nights of 12-13 September 1942 the Japanese forces attempted to storm this hill now known as "Edson's Ridge" after the Marine commander in charge of its defence. The fighting was desperate, because if the Raiders were defeated, the Japanese could fire down from the ridge at the airfield defenders and stop American fighter aircraft from operating from the strip. It was said that if the Raiders had lost Edson's Ridge on the last night, then Guadacanal would have fallen to the Japanese. The strip had been named Henderson Field after a highly decorated American marine pilot shot down while defending Midway Island.

Many of the Raider Battalion were killed defending Edsons Ridge, but the Japanese also suffered terrible losses and were finally defeated in a last attack, with hundreds decimated by artillery fire. Bill Cleary had been a marine commander on Edson's Ridge, also known as Bloody Ridge. Now 40 years later he was returning there.

One of the heroes of the early Guadacanal Campaign was Sergeant Major Jacob Vouza of the British Solomon Islands Constabulary. Vouza had offered his services to the Marines as a scout. One night he spotted a large concentration of Japanese troops moving towards the airport

perimeter. As he attempted to slip past the enemy group to warn the defenders, Vouza was captured by the Japanese, tortured and repeatedly bayonetted, but refused to divulge information. Despite serious wounds, he escaped and managed to reach friendly lines in time to warn the marines defenders of the Japanese presence. He survived the war not only to conduct many patrols against the Japanese, but to receive United States and British decorations for bravery.

Cleary seemed pleasantly surprised that I was well versed in the history of the Pacific war campaigns and in particular that I was familiar with the Battle for Bloody Ridge. It was when I mentioned knowledge of the bravery of the native policeman Vouza, that Cleary told me why he was returning to visit Guadacanal.

Vouza was now an old man and had not long to live. After the end of the war in 1945, a grateful United States government had invited him to America to receive a hero's welcome. Vouza later returned to his village near Honiara where over the years he would sometimes receive visits from visiting ex Marines. In 1982 his health began to fade and word got back to American ex- service organizations that Vouza was a sick man with not long to live. Bill Cleary as representative of Edson's Raider Battalion Association, was asked to make a last visit to Sergeant Major Vouza on behalf of the United States government.

While we talked Cleary remarked that he had forgotten to pack his camera. He gratefully accepted the loan of my own camera and said he would leave it with the Air Nauru agent on his return through Nauru a few days hence.

I invited him to the flight deck for the landing at Nauru, where we parted as he boarded the waiting Boeing to Guadacanal. We shook hands and I felt humble in the presence of this quiet man who had fought in such terrible battles against the enemy in 1942. In the aviation industry I would be forced to associate with loud mouth braggarts wearing four gold bars as airline captains. Despite their inflated salaries and perceived status amongst the civilian community, they could never hold a candle to the likes of Lieutenant Colonel Bill Cleary USMC..

A week later, the agent on Nauru handed me a parcel. It was my camera and a letter from Bill Cleary in which he said that old Vouza was very pleased to see him again, even though he knew it would for the last time. They had talked of this and that and of those terrible war years. The old man wept when Cleary handed over a last tribute from the President of the United States of America. A last handshake, then Sergeant Major Jacob Vouza returned to his home in the hills outside Honiara.

Cleary was told that an American marine had returned to Guadacanal several years after the war ended and had become a church missionary. On meeting the man, he realized that they had both fought the Japanese on Bloody Ridge. It was a reunion of old comrades that day.

Cleary had one more task before leaving Guadacanal perhaps for good - as he too was in the twilight of his life. As he explained to me in his letter, he had some ghosts to lay.

Before the Battle of Bloody Ridge, Cleary had encountered a Japanese patrol in a coconut plantation one mile from the perimeter defences of Henderson airfield. It had been a dark wet night and Cleary with his own patrol had quietly crossed the 50 yard wide Alligator Creek on the way back to the perimeter. They detected movement and heard someone talking in Japanese. Worming forward through the reeds bordering the banks of the creek, Cleary set up an ambush.

The Japanese patrol was decimated by machine gun fire and grenades, although some managed to escape. Now 40 years later Cleary visited the scene of that personal firefight. He waterproofed the camera that I had given to him and swum across Alligator Creek to climb the bank into the plantation. He rested awhile until the inevitable swarms of mosquitoes forced him to continue his short journey to the ambush site a few yards from the creek.

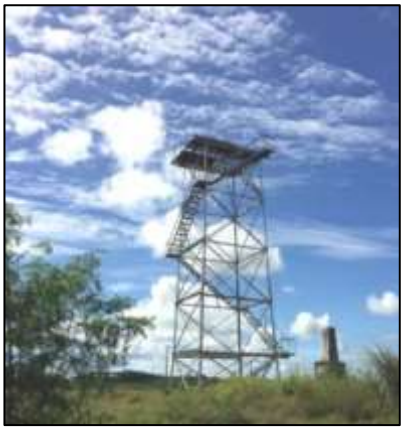
He was about to take photographs of the area when he was stunned to see three figures apparently praying over what appeared to be a small Shinto shrine amongst the trees. The figures were oblivious of his presence as he watched them from amongst the reeds. Cleary then heard Japanese being spoken and one man turned around to look in the direction of the creek. He looked old and frail. Cleary felt certain that these were the survivors of the ambush and who, like himself, had returned for one last journey exactly 40 years to the day that their comrades were killed by Cleary's fire.

Cleary said he still "hated the bastards", but decided to leave the scene by way he came - quietly and across the Alligator Creek, just like 40 years ago....

There were others that I flew into the battle grounds of the Pacific. Half way between Nauru and Guadacanal I was sipping coffee, when an air hostess asked if a couple of Americans could visit the flight deck. On introduction, the passengers said that they were ex- Marine pilots who had flown F4F Hellcat fighters from Henderson in 1942. I invited them to sit up front for the landing.

Now just 20 miles north east of Henderson and on our route, was the Florida group of islands. In 1942, the small village of Tulagi on the Floridas was the initial invasion point by the US Marines. I banked low over Tulagi as both airmen looked over my shoulder at the beaches below. One wept quietly and his colleague explained that the last time they had seen the Floridas, the skies had been full of anti-aircraft fire from Navy ships below, as his squadron had tried to shoot down attacking Japanese fighters and torpedo bombers.

Our crew farewelled the two former fighter pilots on the tarmac at Henderson, where the original wartime control tower can be seen as a monument. As we refuelled for the return 600 mile return to Nauru, a small flag raising ceremony was taking place a few yards from the aircraft. About 10 elderly Japanese tourists were gathered around the flag and there were many farewells being



between this group and Solomon Islands government officials. The tourists were to board our Boeing to return to Japan by way of Nauru, Ponape and Guam.

As I signed the load sheet, our airline agent explained that the tourists were in fact old Japanese Zero fighter pilots who had fought over the Guadacanal skies in 1942. The tour leader spoke halting English, so I invited him to the flight deck for take off. He had flown the float-plane version of the Mitsubishi Zero fighter. He was fascinated at the complexity of the Boeing cockpit. During the flight to Nauru, he brought each member of his squadron to the cockpit and acted as an interpreter as the first officer explained the controls and inertial navigation systems. On arrival at Nauru, they all bowed courteously to our crew and air hostesses before being ushered gently to the waiting northbound Boeing 727.

Some weeks later, we were on the way to Tarawa when I was introduced by the senior air hostess to another American ex- serviceman. This chap looked like a well known American screen comedian called Jimmy Durante. Durante always appeared in a trademark baseball hat and with a cigar clamped between his teeth. Our passenger was a real fast talking wisecracking type complete with cigar and hat and had fought at Tarawa.

Barry Tate who was the first officer, had a wonderful wit and soon was chatting away to the old marine. We descended a few miles earlier than usual, with the intention of bringing the Boeing down to 500 feet over the invasion beaches of Betio, some 10 miles from the main airport of Bonriki. The tide was out, revealing the remains of landing barges and other debris of the war. The Battle for Betio was initially fought on the beaches and the Japanese defenders were well protected behind sea walls of logs. I had read that every few yards of beach held 44 gallon drums dug deep into the ground. In each drum was hidden a Japanese sniper. The sniper would pop up, fire his rifle at the nearest marine and disappear until the next target came past.

As we banked over Betio, our veteran became quite excited and pointed at Red Beach One, a strip of sand 500 yards long and leading to a jetty. "That's where we hit the beaches" he said. "The Japs were everywhere hiding in 44 gallon gasoline drums and the bastards killed most of my platoon. The only way we could get them was to toss a hand grenade into the drum". Barry Tate looked very thoughtful for a moment, then remarked in a serious tone, "Jesus - I bet that made their ears ring!".

His marvellous wit was quite lost on the old marine and I was still laughing, when two minutes later, I banged the Boeing on to the runway in the worst landing I have done in months - and in perfect weather conditions! So much for laughter being the best medicine...

Sick Parade

A few weeks ago, John "Sambo" Sambrooks hopped into St Vincent's Hospital, Brisbane and two days later, after being constantly warned by the morality police to stop harassing the pretty nurses, skipped out of the hospital like a 10 year old girl. While he was in there, they did a D service on him and found his left main undercarriage needed replacement so he emerged with a new knee.

He reckons he's having trouble kicking a ball any more than 200 metres at the moment but he thinks in a few weeks he'll get one over the black dot from 300 metres out.

Stuff

Bill Hancock.

Warwick Reading

Who would have thought that an RAAF Apprentice Engine Fitter, who joined the RAAF in 1959, had multiple postings including 2Sqn Vietnam from Apr 1967 to Mar 1968, left the RAAF a SGT in 1979, would then rise through the artistic world to have a very serious entry into the 2020 Archibald's? That was Bill (Shorty) Hancock of Sarina QLD.

Luckily for Bill, his father was an artist with watercolours so the genes played a vital part. The guy who got Bill interested in 'Oils' in Townsville in 1972/3 was one 'Jeff Waterson', a rad tech who lived in the married quarters behind him. Some 27 years later he supplied him with his first basic set of 72 pastels at a very reasonable 'mates-rates' price. Jeff passed away some 14 days later which makes it all rather like it was meant to be.

Bill started a series of 'Legends & Larrikins' portraits with moderate success, about 10 years back, featuring people who have made a difference in society through their own endeavours. Two of these portraits," Fred Hollows" which now sits in the Fred Hollows Foundation and "Dick Smith" which is now in Dick Smith's personal collection speaks volumes about Bill's ability. Late 2019, he was convinced by a friend, to look at an artist's blog run by a lady named Anne Newman. There was an article on the blog about John Pickup, a local artist who is the lone survivor of "The Brushmen of the Bush".

For further details and the connection with Pro Hart click HERE.

A meeting was arranged with John and he asked to see some of Bills portraits after which he said he would be honoured to have his portrait painted by him, on the proviso he entered it into the Archibald prize for 2020.!!

Bill got to work and painted John but also, in the background of the portrait, is one of Johns paintings on the wall. Perfect.

At right is Bill at work followed by the finished article. With COVID this year there were many more entries

than usual and, sadly, Bill did not get a look in. To see the winner and the 55 finalists for this year's Archibald click HERE then scroll down.

Now compare Bills work to the winner and the finalists. In my opinion a gross injustice has occurred.

The Canberra Times
TO SERVE THE NATIONAL CITY

Thousands of veterans still sleeping rough.

A UNSW study, funded by the Department of Veterans' Affairs, says 5800 ex-servicemen and women were found to be sleeping rough over 12 months.

The research reiterates the findings of a slew of recent studies which have found the homelessness rate among veterans is significantly higher than among other Ausralians. As well as estimating the number of veterans sleeping rough, the research also examined their pathways into homelessness.

The reasons are difficult to isolate, but the risk factors are often similar to the general population, including mental illness, substance abuse and poverty. "However, our research also identified a number of unique factors that increase the risk of becoming homeless for veterans," report co-author Fiona Hilferty said
.
"These risks include relationship breakdown, being medically discharged from the Australian Defence Force, and being unemployed for more than three months following the transition from military service."

The UNSW researchers believe more work is needed to track homelessness rates among veterans. "We do not know whether veteran homelessness is increasing or decreasing. Homeless people are amongst the hardest population group from whom to collect data," report co-author Ilan Katz said. "Additionally, our research has revealed that older Australian veterans go to great efforts to isolate themselves from family, and live in a manner that avoids authorities and attention."

The co-authors also want further research into the geography of veteran homelessness, the effectiveness of services and the extent of the issue among older ex-servicemen and women. A recent report from the Australian Housing and Urban Research Institute found the homeless rate among veterans, at 5.3 per cent, was significantly higher than the national average of 1.9 per cent. Some 21.7 per cent of veterans also reported being homeless at some point, compared with 13 per cent of the general population. The problem was also underscored in an Australian

Institute of Health and Welfare report released late las year, which looked at former ADF members who had served since the start of 2001.

About 1215 of that population accessed specialist homelessness services between 2011 and 2017, with women and younger people more likely to be clients. That accounted for 1.1 per cent of contemporary ex-serving ADF members, which was far lower than the 3.4 per cent of other Australians who accessed homelessness support in the same period.

Tokyo Olympic fireworks display

The Tokyo Olympics may have been postponed due to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, but at least we got one heck of a fireworks show, right?

Social media has been oohing and ahhing this month at this incredible fireworks presentation caught on video courtesy of Tokyo, Japan, which had this remarkable show planned for the opening ceremony of the 2020 Summer Olympics but had to scrap it due to the pandemic. But while the show could not be held until next year, apparently the firecrackers themselves couldn't, threatening to spoil in storage. As a result, we got this blindingly beautiful, dazzlingly intricate taste of the Olympics a year early.

It's an Olympics-sized show that's fittingly higher, faster, stronger. And completely fictional.

It’s a HOAX.

Not to splash water all over your fireworks festivities, but according to the essential internet detectives at Snopes, this is not really the 2020 Tokyo Summer Olympics fireworks show, taking off early as a break from our pandemic-invaded lives. It's not even from 2020; according to Snopes, this particular fireworks show first launched in 2015.

Hell, they're not even real fireworks.

As Snopes reports, this is an explosion of pixels as opposed to gunpowder: the product of a computer program called FWsim that designs and simulates fireworks shows that are mesmerizing, complex, colourful ... and fake. In fact, this isn't even the first time the internet's been duped by FWsim's spectacular shows; Snopes already rained on social media's fireworks parade back in 2015, when a different digital display was also falsely attributed to China – in that case, an alleged New Year's celebration. As it turns out, people really think highly of Chinese fireworks shows – and after you watch one of their REAL ones, fair enough.

As for any actual fireworks at the Tokyo Olympics, you'll have to tune in next year when they're scheduled for July 23 through Aug. 8.

See HERE.

Caribou A4-173 accident at Ba To – 16 August 1966

Ian “Jake” Jacobsen

At 1200 on Tuesday 16 August 1966, RAAF Caribou A4-173, of No 35 Squadron Vietnam, crashed at Ba To. Ba To was a small US Special Forces Camp, designated A-106, located in Quang Ngai Province, about 82 nm south of Danang and 22nm south of Quang Ngai.

Location of Ba To airfield

Looking north east towards Ba To airfield

The airfield at Ba To was typical of most US Special Force camps in the highlands to the south of Da Nang. They were dirt or gravel based, narrow, short and often constructed on the top of elevated ground where the top of a hill had been bulldozed off. Those challenges, coupled with the vagaries of tropical weather, often meant the pilots had to fly to their own and the aircraft’s limits. In his book “Wallaby Airlines”, Jeff Pedrina describes the airfield located at Ba To:

> *“Ba To lies ten miles inland in a thin wedge of jungle sandwiched between rising terrain and the coast. The dirt runway is 1400 feet long from end to end with, as the Aerodrome Directory warned, a fifty foot drop-off both ends. The drop-offs were sheer cliffs, making a guaranteed touchdown after the threshold much more important than other strips with tapered overruns.”*

The pilots of the aircraft were Pilot Officer Dick Cooper and Pilot Officer Stew Spinks. Down the back was the loadmaster Corporal Barry Ingate and assistant loadmaster Corporal Fred Robinson. On Monday, the previous day, they departed home base at Vung Tau early for a week-long detachment to Da Nang. They landed at Saigon enroute to onload freight. On arrival at Da Nang, they were tasked to deliver 4,820lb of freight and eight passengers to the Special Forces camp at Ba To, then return to Da Nang for the night. Early next morning, the day of the accident, they did a second uneventful flight to Ba To with 5,000lb of freight and again returned to Da Nang

for another load. They departed Da Nang on the third flight at 1110, with 5,000lb of building supplies and two passengers.

Ba To Airfield at bottom of image

The crash site at entrance of Special Forces Camp

Unfortunately, the landing at Ba To did not go as planned. For Barry Ingate, the loadmaster, this was to be the second similar accident he had experienced in the same aircraft. He was the loadmaster 15 months earlier when A4-173 landed short at Hai Yen down in the Delta. Barry's recollections of the Ba To accident follow:

> *"We were flying pax and freight into Ba To, an "A" camp about an hour south-west (I think) from Da Nang. This area was very hilly and the strip (short and gravel) was cut into the side of one of the hills - only one way in and the opposite way out. The approach was along a deep valley and a starboard turn to line up. It was an "aircraft carrier" type of strip too, with the end of the runway dropping off steeply into the valley. No landing short there either, but again, unfortunately, that's what happened, this time knocking the port undercarriage back and bending the wing and prop on that side. This time we came to a halt near the entrance to the camp and in a mine field (luckily, they were Claymores which don't explode on impact). Again, no-one was hurt and I got the aircraft unloaded and secured while the pilots arranged transport."*

Fred Robinson, the assistant loadmaster, had this to say about the event: "There were 2 passengers 1 US and 1 SVN. There were no injuries which is a tribute to the old 'green gravel truck'. The accident was caused by a small drop of the port wing as we came in to land, the port wheels impacted the edge of the runway (such as it was) about 12-18 inches below the flat of the runway and tore the undercarriage retraction mechanism apart. As we bounced along the strip the port wing struck an engine from a previous US Caribou crash which caused all the damage to the wing structure and flaps. I recall exiting the aircraft smartly and going around to check the damage, seeing that there was fuel leaking I returned to let the rest of the crew know." Communications were so poor throughout Vietnam at that time, it was not until early evening, six

hours after the crash, that the Squadron's Commanding Officer, Wing Commander Charles Melchert, knew anything of the accident. The report stated: "Wallaby 03, nosewheel collapsed while landing Ba To, no casualties" and no other information was available.

By first light on next day, Wednesday, a Caribou flown by Wing Commander Melchert departed Vung Tau on its way to Ba To. On board was 35 Squadron's Engineering Officer, Flight Lieutenant Wally Solomons, and ten of his maintenance staff:

Sgt Wally Hill	Airframe Fitter
LAC Peter Mansfield	Airframe Fitter
LAC John McDougall	Engine Fitter
LAC Laurie Rappo	Engine Fitter
Cpl Bill Coyer	Radtech
LAC Graham Johnson	Electrical Fitter
LAC John Davies	Electrical Fitter
LAC Graham Bushell	Instrument Fitter
Unknown	
Unknown	

They took along tools and spares to repair the nosewheel however, when they arrived overhead Ba To nearly three hours later, it looked as though there was far greater damage than just the nosewheel. Unable to land due to the tail of the stricken aircraft obstructing the runway, they diverted to Quang Ngai where the US Army provided an Iroquois helicopter to shuttle the recovery team and spares to Ba To.

On the ground, Flt Lt Solomons who had only been in country for a month, set to work and listed the things that needed to be done before the crashed Caribou could be flown out. As well as the nosewheel, in order make A4-173 flyable it would be necessary for the team to repair or change the port wing, flaps, ailerons, engine, propeller and undercarriage. The essential spares for this work were not available through normal logistic channels so, the big scrounge began. Sergeant

Eric Allen (Right), an equipment assistant back at Vung Tau, managed to ensure the replacement parts were obtained. The resourcefulness and initiative shown by this airman were to earn him a mention in despatches. The first priority was to clear A4-173 from the runway so that normal air operations into and out of Ba To could resume. The team got to work that afternoon. They jacked up the nose and cut lengths of timber to shore up the nosewheel assembly. They then used the jack on the port wing extending it until full extension then, supporting the wing with sand-bags from the camp bunkers, they relocated the jack on a wooden platform so the wing could be raised further. When sufficient height had been reached, they used timber to brace the damaged undercarriage. Using a US Special Forces truck and lots of manpower, the aircraft was dragged back across the runway on to the aircraft parking ramp.

It had been a mammoth day for the team and were rewarded that night with a new experience, camping rough in a US Special Forces camp near an unfriendly jungle. With the runway open, spares and equipment could be flown in by squadron aircraft as they became available. The tyres, brakes and undercarriage were available through RAAF spares. The flaps and propeller came from Qui Nhon and the engine, without accessories, was provided by the US Army. A replacement wing was obtained from a burnt-out US Army Caribou at Vung Tau. It was too big to fit in a squadron Caribou so it was flown to Quang Ngai by C130 Hercules and then by Chinook helicopter to Ba To on the Sunday.

Whilst waiting for spares to arrive, the team spent Thursday and Friday morning stripping damaged components. When the main undercarriage jacks arrived at lunch time Friday, they began the slow physical task of raising the aircraft using drums and sand-bags until the jacks could be put in position. By nightfall on Friday, the aircraft was securely tied down with the replacement port main undercarriage fitted and securely locked down with chains.

Working conditions were far from ideal. The humidity was high and, without the benefit of a hangar, they had to work in the sun with temperatures, at times, reaching 50 degrees C inside the wing and engine compartments. There was a lot of creativeness, making it up as they went along; making do with what they could get their hands on. When it came to installing replacement parts, particularly those that were second hand, integration of cables and linkages often wasted valuable time. Some parts of the aircraft control surfaces had to be held by chains. The securing

points for the flaps had been driven up into the wing by the impact of the crash and a chain had to be passed through them and lashed to the undercarriage to draw them into alignment.

L-R: Cpl Barry Ingate, 35 Sqn EngO FltLt Wally Solomons and FO Dick Cooper, the captain of the crashed aircraft, inspecting the damage.

As if these troubles were not enough, Ba To was under direct threat from Vietcong in the surrounding jungle outside the camp perimeter. On Thursday night, a machine gun sprayed the area around the Special Forces Camp and the maintenance men were ordered to the concrete ‘last stand’ bunker. On another night an infiltrator tried to breach the barbed wire perimeter and tripped a signal flare and once more the RAAF ground crew were ordered to the bunkers by the US Officer in Charge. Around the spot where the flare had been ignited, the Marines let loose with their grenade launchers and peppered the area with 30 rounds.

There is no doubt that the novelty of being at Ba To was wearing thin for the recovery team. By late afternoon on Wednesday 24 August, eight days after the accident, Wally Solomons deemed the aircraft to be sufficiently airworthy for the recovery flight back to Vung Tau. The Squadron's Commanding Officer, Wing Commander Charles Melchert, would only allow himself, his Flight Commander Flt Lt John “Blue” McDonnell and loadmaster Corporal Mal "Bugsy" Rose on board the Caribou for the take-off. To the relief of everyone, the take-off at 1600 went without a hitch with the undercarriage locked down with chains.

Not wanting to fly after dark, they did a short flight to Qui Nhon where they spent the night. It was fortuitous that they did not depart Ba To the next day as an attack on the airfield that night would have seen the certain destruction of the aircraft from enemy attack. Next morning, they continued on to Vung Tau, arriving safely at 1040. The perils of this flight were to win Wg Cdr Melchert the Distinguished Flying Cross.

Jubilant recovery team on arrival back at Vung Tau.

A4-173 undergoing maintenance at Vung Tau.

The return of 173 to Vung Tau marked the beginning of over six months of hard work to get the Caribou fully serviceable again. On 5 September it was accepted by the 330th Transport Liaison Company to carry out some of the major repair work. It later returned to 35 Squadron for the engineering staff to finish the job. Overall, the work included significant repairs to most sections of the airframe, two new mainplanes, new leading edges and control surfaces and two new engines. Delays in obtaining spares was often frustrating.

On Monday 2 March 1967, six and a half months after the Ba To accident, A4-173 was ready for a test flight. Appropriately, Wing Commander Melchert took the controls and it was to be his last flight in Vietnam before handing over command to Squadron Leader Tony Fookes. Full credit to the engineering staff, defects found during the flight including trim adjustments, were minor.

As an aside, Caribou A4-173 probably had more major repair work and wing changes than any other Caribou in the Squadron. It was involved in a similar accident at Hai Yen during May 1965 which required significant repair work including starboard wing replacement. During July 1966, only a month before the Ba To accident, 173 underwent a major “E” servicing with Air Vietnam. During that servicing, an early model wing was removed and replaced the latest modified wing. Records do not indicate which wing but it would be interesting to know if it was the port wing damaged in the Ba To accident. If it was, that wing had a very short life.

Planning ahead.

The following information has been provided by Brigadier Paul Nothard, AM, CSC, CSM, Director, Office Of War Graves (OAWG) that may be of interest. It is in all members' best interest to have clear instructions left with their next of kin (NOK). DVA can provide a Planning Ahead booklet to assist in this regard. Please also ensure your NOK information is recorded correctly at State Office. Below is a precis of the information received from the Office of War Graves.

Eligibility for Official Commemoration: A veteran **must** have "qualifying service" to be eligible for an official commemoration. It's important to note that the Office of Australian War graves and the Commonwealth War Graves Commission (OAWG/CWGC) only commemorates war service. They are not able to recognize all types of service through official commemoration.

Qualifying service includes "war" service or "non-warlike" service (ie: peacekeeping, truce monitoring etc). Information on their web page identifies that the following service is **not** viewed as qualifying service:

- Peacetime Defence Service (MRCA and Part VI VEA)
- Defence Hazardous Service (Part IV VEA)
- British Nuclear Test Defence Service (Part IV VEA)
- Peacekeeping service by a person other than a member of the ADF (Part IV VEA)
- Service with other nations' forces other than as a member of the ADF (regardless of any eligibility for Australian Repatriation Benefits)

For those that meet the eligibility criteria (for example a TPI recipient who has the requisite qualifying service), then regardless of the cause or date of death, they will be eligible for an official commemoration.

Use of Service Badges. Defence have only provided the OAWG with authority to provide permission to use the three service badges on private commemorations. Use of all others must be applied for through the respective Brand Manager (for Army, Navy or Air Force) or to the ADF Brand Manager for those seeking permission to use the ADF logo.

Planning Ahead. Speaking to our families and leaving behind clear instructions on the veteran's wishes regarding burial and official commemoration wording is important.

Unfortunately, the current system requires the process for acceptance of an official commemoration to be triggered by the DVA Bereavement Team following the passing of the veteran. Sending out blank forms has caused problems in the past, where veterans who are not eligible for official commemoration have filled them out and provided them to their families, who are then subsequently devastated to find out that the veterans wishes can't be met.


The Wine Buffs
by Mike Payne
A REAL MAN IS A WOMAN'S BEST FRIEND. HE WILL REASSURE HER AND COMFORT HER. HE WILL INSPIRE HER TO DO NEW THINGS AND TO LIVE WITHOUT FEAR. MAKE HER FEEL SHE IS THE MOST BEAUTIFUL WOMAN IN THE ROOM AND ENABLE HER TO BE CONFIDENT, SEXY AND INVINCIBLE!
NO WAIT! SORRY! I'M THINKING OF WINE. IT'S WINE THAT DOES ALL THAT - NEVER MIND!

M

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DVA Issues

DVA Card Entitlements.

If you are holding a DVA Card, do you know your entitlements. See below:

Australian Government
Department of Veterans' Affairs

Allied Veterans.
Australian Veterans residing overseas.
Compensation following death.
Defence Service Homes Insurance Scheme.
Former Serving Personnel.
Health care.
Housing and Loans Assistance.
Incapacity Benefits.
Mental Health.
My Account.
My Service.
Non-liability Health Care.
Other Services and Support.
Payments – Veteran Payment.
Pensions – Disability Compensation.
Pensions – Income support.
Pensions – War widows and widowers.
Permanent Impairment Payments.
Rehabilitation.
Transport.
Veteran Gold Card.
Veteran Support Officers.
Veteran White card.

Health Care.

A broad range of health care and support services are available to meet the clinical needs of eligible veterans and eligible dependants. Health care and support services include:

- general practitioner services
- medical specialist services including pathology and radiology
- allied health services, e.g. podiatry, physiotherapy and other allied health services
- dental care
- community nursing
- spectacles and hearing aids
- care in public and private hospitals including day procedure centres
- home support services

- Subsidised pharmaceuticals under the Repatriation Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme (RPBS).
- Medical aids and appliances (Rehabilitation Aids and Appliance Program RAP)
- For further information see Health Services Available to the Veteran Community

Veteran Gold Card.

Holders of a Veteran Gold Card (the DVA Health Card - All Conditions within Australia) are entitled to the full range of health care services at DVA's expense, including medical, dental, optical care and subsidised pharmaceuticals. They are also entitled to medical aids and appliances to assist them to manage their health conditions.

Veteran White Card.

Holders of a Veteran White Card (the DVA Health Card - Specific Conditions) are entitled to be treated at DVA's expense, including subsidised pharmaceuticals, for their accepted disabilities or illnesses only. Holders of White Cards issued under Non-Liability Health Care (NLHC) treatment arrangements may be entitled to treatment of malignant neoplasm (cancer), pulmonary tuberculosis, or any mental health condition, subject to meeting eligibility conditions. These conditions do not need to be linked to service.

Veteran Orange Card.

Holders of an Veteran Orange Card (DVA Health Card –Pharmaceutical Only) are entitled to subsidised pharmaceuticals only.

Former Serving Personnel.

All former serving personnel, of either the permanent or reserve forces, can access a health assessment from their general practitioner (GP). This is a comprehensive health assessment which can help your GP identify and diagnose the early onset of any mental or physical health conditions you may be experiencing.

You need to tell your GP that you have served in the Australian Defence Force (ADF). You will also need to ask your GP about this health assessment who will then be able to treat you or refer you to other services, as necessary.

Allied Veterans.

Allied veterans of certain countries are eligible for health care treatment and access to subsidised pharmaceuticals for service related disabilities or illnesses accepted by the entitled person's country of enlistment. For further information please see Commonwealth and Other Allied Veterans Living in Australia.

Australian Veterans residing overseas.

Australian veterans travelling or residing overseas, whether permanently or temporarily are entitled to treatment for their accepted disability/ies (ADs) only, regardless of the card they hold. For further information please see Medical Treatment while overseas.

Non-Liability Heath Care.

All current and former members of the ADF with at least one day of continuous full-time service (CFTS) are eligible for treatment of any mental health condition. This includes Reservists who have rendered any period of CFTS and national servicemen. Reservists without CFTS may be eligible for mental health treatment if they rendered Reserve Service Days with: Disaster Relief Service (e.g. Operation Vic Fire Assist), Border Protection Service (e.g. Operation RESOLUTE) or involvement in a serious service-related training incident.

Members and former members with certain service are also eligible to receive treatment for cancer (malignant neoplasm) and pulmonary tuberculosis.

Individuals diagnosed with these conditions should contact DVA and they may be issued with a White Card to access treatment.

A White Card for NLHC mental health treatment is issued to eligible transitioning members of the ADF. The White Card allows these clients to access mental health treatment without needing to make a claim.

For further information please see cover for mental health care and cover for cancer and tuberculosis care.

Transport.

The Repatriation Transport Scheme (RTS) allows DVA to provide a pre-booked taxi or hire car service, under the Booked Car Scheme (BCS) for travel to approved treatment locations from your permanent residence. If you are travelling away from home and require medical treatment, DVA can also provide this service to and from your temporary residence.

The Booked Car Scheme is an additional service provided under the RTS that assists more aged and frail entitled persons with assistance to travel to their treatment.

To be eligible for any transport assistance under the RTS you must be a:

- Veteran Gold Card holder - you are entitled to assistance with transport for the treatment of all health conditions; or
- Veteran White Card holder - you are entitled to assistance with transport for treatment.

For further information please see Claiming Travelling Expenses Under the Repatriation Transport Scheme.

Rehabilitation.

Rehabilitation support and services provided by DVA are designed to help former ADF members, cadets and declared members to adapt, manage and recover following their service related injury or disease. The aim is to wherever possible, get you back to the same physical and psychological state, and the same social, vocational and educational status as you had before being injured or becoming ill. The program is administered under the Military Rehabilitation and Compensation Act 2004 (MRCA) and Safety, Rehabilitation and Compensation (Defence-related Claims) Act 1988 (DRCA).

To aid recovery and wellbeing rehabilitation support and services are provided through:

- medical management rehabilitation - this can include assistance to help you understand medical information, co-ordinate treatment appointments, follow treatment programs and track your progress to improve the outcome of your medical treatment;
- psychosocial rehabilitation - this can help you to manage and live a better quality of life which can also assist you to accomplish your goals. Services available may help you to better manage issues that arise day-to-day and to get more from your life – be that family, friends or the wider community.
- vocational rehabilitation - provides targeted assistance, based on your needs, to help you achieve meaningful and sustainable employment.

The Veterans' Vocational Rehabilitation Scheme (VVRS) provided under the Veterans' Entitlements Act 1986 (VEA) is a voluntary vocational rehabilitation scheme to help eligible veterans who:

- need special assistance to return to paid work,
- need to increase their work hours,
- are at risk of losing their job,
- are finding it increasingly difficult to maintain their employment; or
- require help with job seeking activities.

The scheme can provide assistance for those who need to upgrade their skills or undergo short term retraining to gain employment.
For further information please see Rehabilitation or Veterans' Vocational Rehabilitation Scheme (VVRS).

Mental Health

If you are worried about how you are feeling or coping, then take action by seeking support or treatment. You can start by talking to your GP, or you can visit the At Ease website to access videos, self-help tools, mobile apps and advice about how to seek professional help. For more information please see Mental Health Support.

You can also call Open Arms - Veterans & Families Counselling on 1800 011 046. Open Arms is a nationally accredited, military-aware, mental health service. Open Arms provides free, confidential, nationwide counselling and support to current and former Australian Defence Force personnel and their families.

Through its integrated, 24-hour service delivery system, Open Arms:

- counselling for individuals, couples and families, and support for those with more complex needs;
- group programs to develop skills and enhance support;
- after-hours telephone counselling - ensuring support is accessible 24/7;
- information, education and self-help resources; and
- referrals to other services or specialist treatment programs as appropriate.

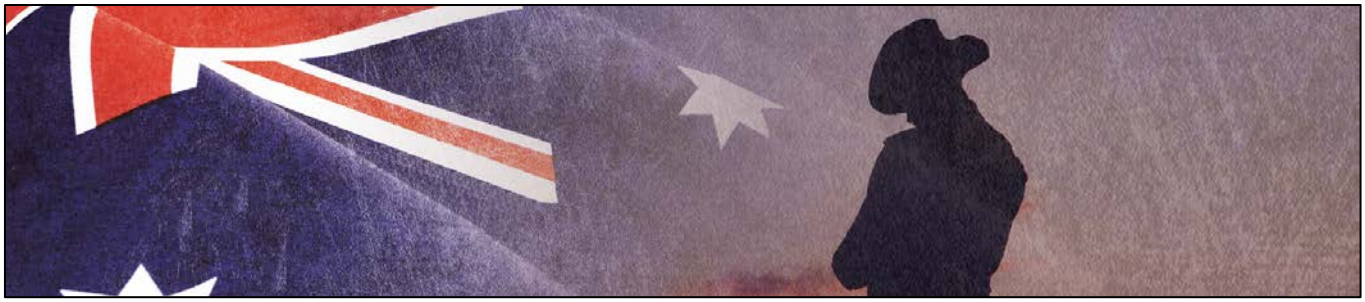
For support, please call Open Arms on 1800 011 046. More information is available at: http://www.openarms.gov.au/

If you have a Veteran Gold Card or a Veteran White Card for a mental health condition, then a wide range of mental health treatments are available to you. This includes treatment from GPs, psychologists, social workers (mental health), occupational therapists (mental health), psychiatrists, or hospital services for those who need it (including trauma recovery – PTSD programmes)

Incapacity Benefits.

Incapacity benefits are payments for economic loss due to the inability (or reduced ability) to work because of injury or disease that has been accepted as service related. Incapacity benefits can be made to current and former ADF members including permanent and Reserve force members, Cadets, Cadet Officers and Instructors and declared members who are incapacitated for service or work as a result of an injury or disease that has been accepted under the DRCA or the MRCA. For further information please see Incapacity for Work.

Permanent Impairment payments.



Current and former ADF members who have an injury or disease as a result of their ADF service, and that injury or disease has left them with some permanent impairment, may be entitled to receive compensation for that impairment from DVA. This compensation is called permanent impairment (PI) payment.

PI payments are paid as compensation for any permanent physical and/or mental impairment in combination with any lifestyle restrictions which the person may be suffering as a result of injuries or diseases which have been accepted by DVA, under the DRCA or the MRCA, as being related to their ADF service. For further information please see Permanent Impairment or You were injured after 30 June 2004.

Payments – Veteran Payment.

Veteran payment provides interim financial support to current and former members of the Australian Defence Force (ADF) who have an undetermined claim for a mental health condition under either the DRCA or the MRCA and are incapable of working for more than eight hours per week. Veteran payment can also be paid to partners. The veteran payment is subject to an income and assets test.

For further information please see DVA Veteran Payment Overview and How to access the Veteran Payment.

Pensions - Income Support.

Service pension provides a regular income for people with limited means. A service pension can be paid to veterans on the grounds of age or invalidity, and to eligible partners, widows and widowers. It is subject to an income and assets test.

The age service pension is paid to veterans earlier than the age pension paid by Services Australia, recognising that the effects of war service may be intangible and result in premature ageing and/or loss of earning power. However, the invalidity service pension may be granted at any age before the person turns age pension age.

Service pension is paid under the VEA to Australian veterans and mariners, Commonwealth veterans, and allied veterans and allied mariners who have qualifying service. Commonwealth

veterans, allied veterans and allied mariners must also have been an Australian resident for a certain period. In certain circumstances, Partner Service Pension can be paid under the VEA to eligible partners and former partners of veterans, as well as to eligible widows and widowers who are not receiving a war widow/er's pension.

Income support supplement (ISS) provides a regular income additional to the war widow's/widower's pension for Australian war widows and widowers (including wholly dependent partners) with limited means. It is also subject to an income and assets test. Supplements and allowances which may be payable in association with service pension and ISS include pension supplement, rent assistance, and remote area allowance.

For further information please see Service Pension Overview, Partner Service Pension, Income Support Supplement Overview, IS58 Qualifying Service in Post-Second World War Conflicts.

Pensions - Disability Compensation.

Disability pension is paid under the VEA to compensate veterans for injuries or diseases caused or aggravated by war service or certain defence service rendered on behalf of Australia before 1 July 2004. The amount of disability pension paid depends on the level of incapacity suffered as a result of war-caused or defence-caused injuries and diseases.

Higher rates of pension, such as Special and Intermediate Rates, are known as Above General Rate (AGR) pensions and are payable when the veteran is severely incapacitated and unable to earn a normal wage because of the effects of their accepted condition/s on their capacity to work. The Extreme Disablement Adjustment rate may be considered for veterans who have reached 65 years of age and are not eligible to receive a Special or Intermediate Rate of pension.

Supplements and allowances may be paid in association with disability pension. These include: attendant allowance, loss of earnings allowances, vehicle assistance scheme, clothing allowance, decoration allowance, and recreational transport allowance.

For further information please see Overview of Disability Pensions and Allowances.

Pensions - War widows and widowers.

War widow/er's pension is paid under the VEA to compensate widowed partners of veterans who have died as a result of war service or eligible defence service. The pension will be granted automatically if the deceased veteran was an ex-prisoner of war, had been receiving disability pension at the Extreme Disablement Adjustment, Special Rate, Intermediate Rate, Temporary Special Rate, or at an increased rate for a condition specified in any of items 1 to 8 of subsection 27(1) of the VEA - these items relate to double amputees who may also be blind in one eye. In

all other cases a claim needs to be lodged with the Department and the pension may then be granted if the veteran's death is determined to have been caused by war or eligible defence service.

Orphan's pension may also be payable to dependent children of deceased veterans. War widow's/widower's and orphan's pensions are not affected by other income except from other compensation payments.

For further information please see War Widow's/Widower's and Orphan's Pensions.

Compensation following death.

Compensation may be provided under the MRCA to the dependants of deceased members and former members of the Australian Defence Force (ADF) who die or were severely injured as a result of their service on or after 1 July 2004. For further information please see Compensation for Dependants under the Military Rehabilitation and Compensation Act 2004. Similar compensation coverage may be available under the DRCA, if the ADF member's death relates to injuries and diseases suffered as a result of peacetime and peacekeeping service up to 30 June 2004 and operational service between 7 April 1994 and 30 June 2004. For further information please see How to Claim Benefits under the DRCA.

Housing and Loans Assistance.

Subsidised loan assistance and insurance benefits are available to eligible current and former ADF personnel. The Defence Service Homes (DSH) Scheme provides a subsidised loan of up to $25,000 repayable over 25 years to qualifying ex-service men and women (and certain dependents). A Home Support Loan of up to $10,000 is also available to assist with the cost of home maintenance and modifications and other housing-related purposes. For further information, please see Defence Service Home Loans or visit the DHOAS website at www.dhoas.gov.au.

DVA administers the Defence Home Ownership Assistance Scheme (DHOAS) on behalf of the Department of Defence. DHOAS is available to current and former ADF personnel, and their surviving partners, who have served in the ADF after 1 July 2008, completed a qualifying period and accrued a Service Credit. If you served between 15 May 1985 and 30 June 2008, you may have been eligible for the Defence Home Owner Scheme (DHOS), which closed on 30 June 2010. In some very limited circumstances, if you were eligible but unable to apply for your benefits before the scheme closed, you may be able to access benefits under the DHOAS scheme.

For more information phone DHOAS on 1300 434 627 or visit the Previous subsidy schemes – DHOS/DSH page of the DHOAS website at https://www.dhoas.gov.au/previous-schemes-dsh-and-dhos.html.

Defence Service Homes Insurance Scheme.

Defence Service Homes Insurance Scheme (DSHIS) provides attractive home, contents and other personal insurance to all persons who are eligible under the Veterans' Entitlement Act 1986 and/or the above Loan Schemes, regardless of whether they have a DSH or DHOAS loan. For further information please see Defence Service Homes Insurance Scheme.

Other services and support.

DVA provides a range of services and support to assist veterans to manage their service injuries or diseases. This includes assistance with managing domestic tasks such as house cleaning, lawn-mowing, laundry and shopping; assistance with managing your personal care needs; provision of respite services; assistance with modifications to vehicles; and aids and appliances to help you to maintain independence, remain in your home, return to work safely, and improve your quality of life.

For further information please see

- Household Services
- Attendant Care
- Veterans' Home Care
- Respite Care and Carer Support
- Rehabilitation Appliances Program
- Vehicle Assistance Scheme
- Motor Vehicle Compensation Scheme (MVCS)
- Rehabilitation
- Family Support Package for Veterans and their Families

MyAccount.

DVA clients can request to have their own personalised MyAccount. MyAccount allows DVA clients to access many DVA services online such as;

- Online claims including travel expenses
- View personal information and update contact details
- Travel bookings
- Call back service
- Update Income & Assets
- Request a Lump Sum Advance
- Request official letters
- View your payments
- Nominate a representative
- Qualifying Service check

MyAccount can be accessed at MyAccount - Your DVA Services Online.

MyService.

MyService is on online tool that provide access to free mental health treatment, support for service related conditions, tracks the status of the claim, access to a digital DVA health card and information about accepted conditions. MyService is available to current and former serving ADF members and their families. To register for Myservice visit dva.gov.au/myservice.

I'm giving up drinking for a month!
Sorry – bad punctuation.
I'm giving up. Drinking for a month!.

Veteran Support Officers.

DVA Veteran Support Officers are located on over 40 serving bases throughout Australia. These bases are routinely visited by DVA staff to conduct entitlement briefings and assist individuals with information on support available from DVA as well as assisting in the preparation and submission of claims.

For more information visit Veteran Support Officer.

DVA Gold Card for eligible Veterans over 70 years old

Members and readers are reminded that veterans aged 70 years or more who have qualifying service are eligible to receive a DVA Gold card for medical treatment.

To lodge a claim go to the DVA web site and search firstly for Gold card and then "How to get your Gold Card". This will bring up the form "Application for a Gold card for Veterans of Australia's Defence Force" DVA form D3057.

When completing the form you can ignore Question 16. We believe that this question is irrelevant and inappropriate and we have requested the department to remove it.

Veterans Affairs

Vetaffairs is DVA's official newspaper for Australia's veteran community and which is distributed quarterly. If you would like to receive the newspaper, go HERE.

Veterans can access personal monitoring technology through DVA.

DVA has a range of personal monitoring technologies available to eligible veterans and widow/ers.

Accessing and installing a personal monitoring system may be suitable for older veterans and widow/ers if they are self-isolating to protect themselves from exposure to COVID-19. DVA veterans and widow/ers can access fully-monitored 24-hours a day, seven days a week personal response systems in their home or as mobile pendant personal response devices that are designed to keep them safe at home and when out and about. The initial and ongoing costs are covered by DVA if these devices are arranged through DVA.

Personal response devices can be tailored to an individual's needs, giving the person being monitored the comfort that assistance is never far away and reassuring family and friends that their loved one is able to access help easily, if it is needed.

Technology has greatly improved these devices. Some have additional features like built-in fall detector capabilities and GPS tracking that works where there is a mobile signal. When a device is activated, these systems are supported by an emergency response centre, with someone who will talk directly with the person, if they can. As the emergency response centre is given the person's location, they can arrange for the appropriate emergency service to attend. The emergency response centre can also notify a user's nominated family or friends to inform them of the situation.

Personal response systems can be prescribed by an occupational therapist, physiotherapist or a registered nurse following an in-home fall and cognitive assessment. The prescribing health provider will organise the supply and installation through a DVA-contracted supplier and will provide all training in the use of the device and equipment.

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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.

Your Say

Ernie Gimm

No one has been able to explain to me why young men and women serve in the Australian Armed Forces for up to 20 years, risking their lives and limbs, protecting our freedom and only get a small percentage of their pay on retirement; while Politicians hold their political positions in the safe confines of the Nation's Capital, protected by these same men and women and receive a good pension .... after serving only two terms.

It just does not make any sense!!

Radschool History

David Marr wrote: "Seems to be a bit of confusion about RMC and RMT training at Ballarat. I did my RMC at Ballarat in 1960 and was on the last course, (23RMC) to Pass-out there at the end of the year. We had home leave over Christmas and returned to pool at Ballarat until I was posted to Butterworth. RTC courses were being conducted at Ballarat in 1960, as well as Radio Apprentices and Signallers.

I returned from Butterworth to Laverton in October 1962 and joined 17RTC. On completion I was posted to 11 Sqn. at Richmond."

Chinese Scientists warn of imminent Global Cooling

ELECTROVERSE

Climate change is real, the climate changes — this fact is never disputed. A new study, led by prominent Chinese scientists, has found that winters in northern China have been warming for the past 6,000 years – unrelated to human activity – but now the prospect of a sudden and severe bout of global cooling is on the horizon and poses a serious danger.

The paper, which has been accepted for publication by the online Journal of Geophysical Research, found that winds from Arctic Siberia have been growing weaker for thousands of years, the conifer tree line has been retreating north and there has been a steady rise in biodiversity in a general warming trend that continues today. And that's another thing AGW alarmists fail to address — increasing temperatures ALWAYS result in increased biodiversity. Life loves warmth and, furthermore, it loves carbon.

This weakening of the Siberian wind, according to the researchers, appears to have nothing to do with the increase in greenhouse gases which began with the industrial revolution. Lead scientist Dr Wu Jing, from the Chinese Academy of Sciences, said the study had found no evidence of human influence on northern China's warming winters.

Rail-workers braving the cold in central China in 2008 (during solar minimum of weak solar cycle 24), when the nation was hit by devastating winter storms.

"Driving forces include the sun, the atmosphere and its interaction with the ocean," Wu explained. "We have detected no evidence of human influence but that doesn't mean we can just relax and do nothing."

Wu and her colleagues are worried that, as societies become further indoctrinated by the concept of global warming, people will develop a misplaced confidence in our ability to control the climate, which we cannot. Nature, they warned, will likely trick us and catch us totally unprepared, potentially causing chaos, panic, famine and even wars.

Wu and her colleagues have found that winter warming over the past 6,000 years has been anything but linear, with violent ups and downs occurring roughly every 500 years. After more than 13 years of dedicated research across volcanic lakes in the wilderness of the Greater

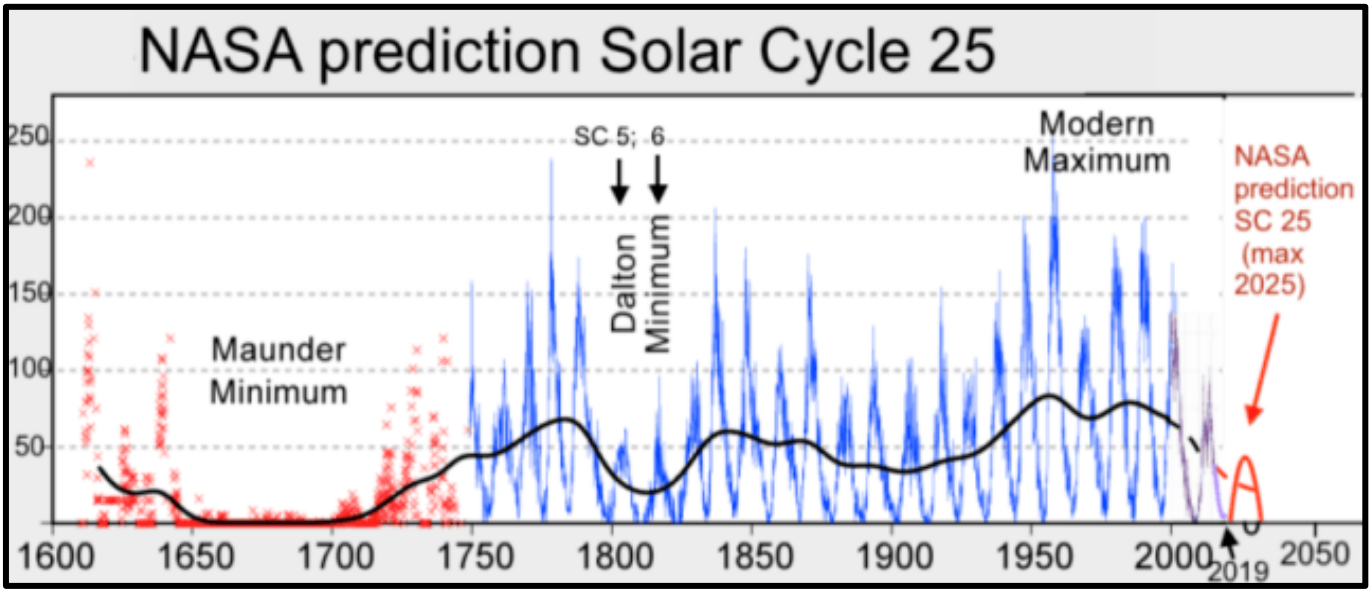
Khingan Mountain Range in Inner Mongolia, the scientists collected and crunched climate data spanning as far back as 10,000 years.

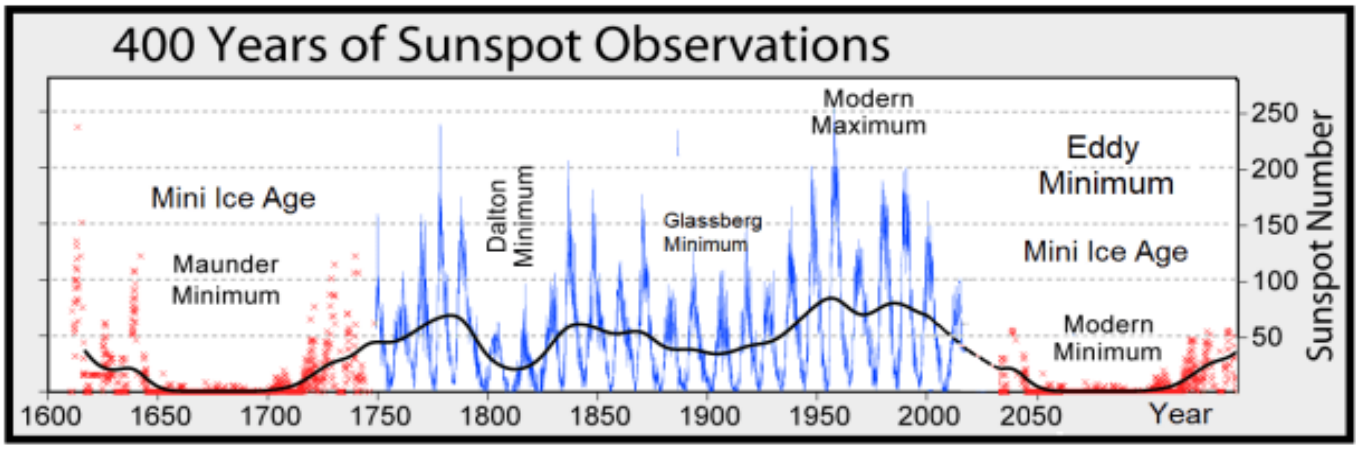
Their findings confirmed an earlier study by a separate team of Chinese scientists, published in 2014, which first detected the 500-year cyclical pattern of China's summer monsoons and linked it to solar activity. The 2014 paper, which drew on 5,000 years' worth of proxy data, suggested the current warm phase would end within the next several decades, ushering in a brutal 250 year cooling phase.

Wu said her latest study not only helped to flesh-out the 500-year cycle, but also revealed a previously unknown mechanism behind the phenomenon, which suggested the impact of the sun on the Earth's climate is much greater than previously thought. According to Wu, the variation in solar activity alone was not normally strong enough to induce the rapid changes in vegetation the research team observed within the sediment cores of the volcanic lakes. Instead, the scientists found the warming impact was amplified by a massive interaction between surface seawater and the atmosphere in the Pacific Ocean known as the 'El Nino-Southern Oscillation'.

As a result of the research findings, Wu said she was now much more worried about global cooling than global warming. "A sharp drop in temperature will benefit nobody," she said. "The biggest problem is that we know it will come, but we don't know exactly when."

The cold times are returning in line with historically low solar activity and a growing number of scientists from all corners of the world are coming out with this warning. Even NASA agrees, in part at least, with their SC25 forecast revealing it will be "the weakest [solar cycle] of the past 200 years" (www.nasa.gov), with the agency correlating previous solar shutdowns to prolonged periods of global cooling.





People need to prepare for the cold, but unfortunately the message stuck on loop across the MSM is one of impending catastrophic warmth, which is illogical and misguided at best and unfortunately we don't have long.

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VEA vs MRCA

Recently we wrote to the Minister, Darren Chester, asking if and when the Department would administer changers to the funeral benefits under VEA to bring it in line with MRCA. You can read that letter HERE.

His Chief of Staff, Robert Curtin wrote back, unfortunately, not saying much. You can see his reply HERE

The Productivity Commission released its report – *A better way to support Veterans,* on the 4th July 2019, a full 14 months ago, you can read the report's Overview and Recommendations HERE. On Page 39 of that report you will find the following sentence:

The funeral allowance available under the VEA should be aligned with the MRCA funeral allowance for veterans whose dependants would receive a funeral allowance under the MRCA

Don't hold your breath.

ADF Inquiry

Peter Condon

The Inspector-General of the Australian Defence Force (IGADF) is conducting an Inquiry into rumours of possible breaches of the Laws of Armed Conflict by members of the Australian Defence Force (ADF) in Afghanistan, between 2005 and 2016.

To do this inquiry, the IGADF has placed notices in local Afghani newspapers seeking evidence of possible breaches of the laws of armed conflict by Australian servicemen while on operations in a war zone. What an incredible ask. What kind of un-Australian legal professional suggested this approach. Basically, they are asking the enemy to list their complaints into Aussie behaviour while on patrols—no doubt the Afghanis are expecting some monetary compensation. I find the IGADF approach positively appalling.

Being a retired serviceman who served as a Forward Air Controller in Vietnam, where I heard of Viet Cong atrocities against local village leaders and others, I know that usual standards deteriorate when on the battlefield. One cannot suppress the emotion of hate for an enemy combatant when one sees the enemy soldier cut a mate's throat. Do you kill that enemy soldier or take him as a prisoner during the hectic battle in progress? If arresting him may cause you to be killed, you kill him. All readers will have experienced the hate that I'm trying to describe when they viewed videos of recent Islamic State atrocities such as the cutting off of a defenceless prisoner's head with a knife and the burning alive of captives in a cage—and that was not while under extreme pressure on the battlefield.

The current enemies who we are fighting have no rules. Changes were made to the Military Justice System in 1985 where the purpose of the Defence Force Discipline Act (DFDA) is to maintain and enforce military discipline. It applies to all Australian Defence Force members in times of peace and war and includes offences that are uniquely military and other offences that occur in a military environment. However, having legal professionals, or anybody else without battlefield experience making decisions on a soldier's behaviour on the battlefield is just not appropriate. They don't understand the complex emotions involved in battle. I often heard the fear in the voices of the infantrymen under attack when they asked me for help.

Prior to 1985, Commanding Officers in a combat zone heard charges against their subordinates, and understanding the environment in which the offence occurred, made a decision to punish the offender or not. More serious charges were heard by a Courts Martial panel comprised of senior war experienced officers. The decision was not handed to higher headquarters in Australia years later where the legal teams have no clues other than what is written in a book of law. Peacetime experiences cannot be compared.

Some time ago I researched Charles Bean's writing on the Gallipoli landing in 1915 and I thought I should include a couple of quotes here for the members of the IGADF team. When the Aussie soldiers were rushing up the side of Ari Burnu Knoll only minutes after landing in their small boats, an Australian soldier captured a Turk soldier with his bayonet because his rifle was still full of sand. "Prisoner here" he shouted. "Shoot the bastard" was all he heard from his mates scrambling up the hill. The men had been constantly warned that Turks mutilated men whom they captured or found wounded; but in this case the Turk soldier was escorted down to the beach. War is a dirty business.

Soon after the Turk was spared, some Turks who had caused havoc on one of the landing boats at close range below the Knoll ran from their trench hoping to escape along Shrapnel Gully, but they were chased and caught. "As the Australians got among them, the Turks threw down their rifles; but they were too many to capture, and they were consequently shot." These two incidents happened in the first 60 minutes after landing so any reader should get an appreciation of what probably went on for the remainder of the first day—let alone the whole war. Hate in war is normal. In fact, if you want to win the war, hate is expected.

The Afghanistan Inquiry called by the Inspector General of the Australian Defence Force is a most un-Australian move. May I suggest that the Australian Government steps in and stops this extraordinary hearing. To me it is downright disgusting for the Australian Defence Force to be investigating battlefield actions of our soldiers years after the events supposedly took place. Are they going to go back and examine all of the WWI, WWII, Korea and Vietnam actions too?

Yes, there were more. Remember, besides hate on the battlefield there is plenty of fear there too; combine the two and you get some pretty unpredictable soldiers. Unfortunately, the inquiry lawyers would not have experienced those battlefield emotions. Let's hope the judges have front

line experience, or at least can suggest to the government that the inquiry be abandoned because their task involves more than the written law; and they are not qualified to judge.

A shameful episode in the governance of the Australian Defence Force.

Peter Condon, Southport QLD 4215
(Retired RAAF Officer)
Peter Condon

Wallaby Airlines hops in to help evacuate endangered wildlife from ACT fires and hot weather

Back in February, when the fires raged through the bottom half of Australia, 35 Sqn a tAmberley was called on to do a different sort of job.

With a heatwave and high winds forecast, the call was made to evacuate the Tidbinbilla Nature Reserve, near Canberra.

It was a last resort decision, made necessary by the Orroral Valley bushfire that continued to burn in Namadgi National Park. "We had this threshold of when it got to a place called Corin Dam, regardless of where it went from there, we decided we'd evacuate the animals," said Peter Cotsell, director of the Namadgi National Park, Tidbinbilla Nature Reserve, and the Murrumbidgee River Corridor. "It was a good time to evacuate and I believe we did the right thing."

Moving the evacuees, critically endangered brush-tailed rock wallabies and eastern bettongs, across state lines during a bushfire crisis was not going to be easy. It was not just a matter of booking an aircraft large enough to carry so many animals; like any flight, it was important to keep the 'passengers' calm.

Emma Nearmy loading the wallabies.

"You're facing the challenges of them getting really stressed and just dying from stress," biodiversity director Annette Rypalski from the Mt Rothwell Biodiversity Interpretation Centre said. "We had to make sure we kept them as calm as possible."

She estimated there were fewer than 150 brush-tailed rock wallabies left. Mt Rothwell conservation and Research Reserve at Little River, near Geelong, was chosen as the home away from home for the evacuees because of its fire safety, good infrastructure, and the staff's animal-handling skills. Wallabies needing medical treatment were sent to Taronga Zoo in Sydney while four others were sent to Healesville Sanctuary, near Melbourne. Mt Rothwell, a 453-hectare reserve, already home to a colony of southern brush-tailed wallabies, is surrounded by fencing to keep foxes and cats out.

The wallabies had been housed in smaller yards while the bushfire threat was imminent, so the team at Tidbinbilla Nature Reserve could move quickly when the need arose but there was still the matter of how to fly the animals under incredible time constraints.

"This fire really roared over this mountain top and grew quite quickly, so we had to act really fast," Ms Rypalski said. "We were quite lucky the military stepped in and offered up their services." Two Spartans from Amberley were used to transport the wallabies and the eastern bettongs from Canberra to Avalon airport, near Geelong. Corporal Antonia Guterres with 35 Squadron said special care was taken during the loading process. "We tried to keep the temperature of the cabin down because it was a very hot day," she said. "We placed bags of ice next to the cages so it was more comfortable for them. "As we were loading the wallabies on the aircraft, we had to be extremely quiet and do everything as quietly and in slow time so that we didn't disturb them."

Carrying wallabies was a first for squadron members.

"We've been carrying dogs, cats, and koalas — but obviously we were pretty stoked to take the wallabies," Corporal Guterres said.

"This is the first time we've carried wallabies on Wallaby Airlines, so it was pretty special for us."

No 35 Squadron has been nicknamed Wallaby Airlines since the Vietnam War because of its callsign — Wallaby.

Antonia Guterres (left) and Jenny Pierson from Parks and Conservation Services load a rock wallaby.

Meanwhile, 26 eastern bettongs were trapped using chunks of pineapple to lure them. The small marsupials then flew in style on a C-130J Hercules with crew taking extra care in handling the animals that had joeys in their pouches.

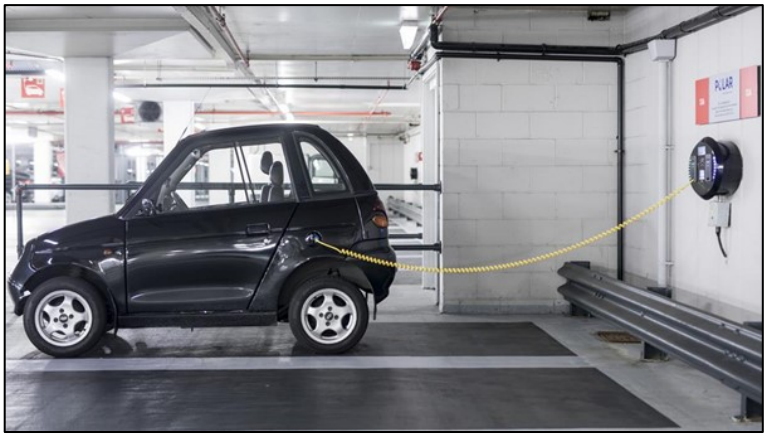
Eastern bettongs are extinct in the wild on mainland Australia due to predation; Tasmania is the only place where the population remains secure.

At Avalon airport, a team of dedicated volunteers and wildlife staff waited to greet the precious cargo, thought to be the first in Victoria for 100 years. They were released just after dusk, the day before the wallabies arrived. The wallabies, although initially held back from being released due to high temperatures, eventually went off without a hitch, aided by the day's rain. Mr Cotsell continued to keep an eye on the marsupials from his office in Canberra. "They all bounced into their new quarters and were feeding the next day, which is a really good indication that they were happy," he said.

Electric Cars.

Mike Gahan sent us this article which appeared in Forbes magazine in August 2020.

The widespread view that fossil fuels are “dirty” and renewables such as wind and solar energy and electric vehicles are “clean” has become a fixture of mainstream media and policy assumptions across the political spectrum in developed countries, perhaps with the exception of the Trump-led US administration. Indeed, the ultimate question we are led to believe is how quickly can enlightened Western governments, led by an alleged scientific consensus, “decarbonize” with clean energy in a race to save the world from impending climate catastrophe.



The ‘net zero by 2050’ mantra, calling for carbon emissions to be completely mitigated within three decades, is now the clarion call by governments and intergovernmental agencies around the developed world, ranging from several EU member states and the UK, to the International Energy Agency and the International Monetary Fund.

Mining out of sight, out of mind.

Let’s start with Elon Musk’s Tesla. In an astonishing achievement for a company that has now posted four consecutive quarters of profits, Tesla is now the world’s most valuable automotive company. Demand for EVs is set to soar, as government policies subsidize the purchase of EVs to replace the internal combustion engine of gasoline and diesel-driven cars and as owning a “clean” and “green” car becomes a moral testament to many a virtue-signalling customer.

Yet, if one looks under the bonnet of “clean energy” battery-driven EVs, the dirt found would surprise most. The most important component in the EV is the lithium-ion rechargeable battery which relies on critical mineral commodities such as cobalt, graphite, lithium, and manganese. Tracing the source of these minerals, in what is called “full-cycle economics”, it becomes apparent that EVs create a trail of dirt from the mining and processing of minerals upstream.

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A recent United Nations report warns that the raw materials used in electric car batteries are highly concentrated in a small number of countries where environmental and labour regulations are weak or non-existent. Thus, battery production for EVs is driving a boom in small-scale or “artisanal” cobalt production in the Democratic Republic of Congo which supplies two thirds of global output of the mineral. These artisanal mines, which account for up to a quarter of the country’s production, have been found to be dangerous and employ child labour.

Mindful of what the image of children scrabbling for hand-dug minerals in Africa can do to high tech’s clean and green image, most tech and auto companies using cobalt and other toxic heavy metals avoid direct sourcing from mines. Tesla Inc. struck a deal recently with Swiss-based Glencore Plc to buy as much as 6,000 tons of cobalt annually from the latter’s Congolese mines. While Tesla has said it aims to remove reputational risks associated with sourcing minerals from countries such as the DRC where corruption is rampant, Glencore assures buyers that no hand-dug cobalt is treated at its mechanized mines.

There are 7.2 million battery EVs or about 1% of the world’s total vehicle fleet today. To get an idea of the scale of mining for raw materials involved in replacing the world’s petrol and diesel-fueled cars with EVs, we can take the example of the UK as provided by Michael Kelly, the Emeritus Prince Philip Professor of Technology at the University of Cambridge. According to Professor Kelly, if we replace all of the UK vehicle fleet with EVs, assuming they use the most resource-frugal next-generation batteries, we would need the following materials:

- about twice the annual global production of cobalt;
- three quarters of the world’s production lithium carbonate;
- nearly the entire world production of neodymium;
- and more than half the world’s production of copper in 2018.

And this is just for the UK. Professor Kelly estimates that if we want the whole world to be transported by electric vehicles, the vast increases in the supply of the raw materials listed above would go far beyond known reserves. The environmental and social impact of vastly-expanded mining for these materials — some of which are highly toxic when mined, transported and processed – in countries afflicted by corruption and poor human rights records can only be imagined. The clean and green image of EVs stands in stark contrast to the realities of manufacturing batteries.

Zero Emissions and All That

Proponents of EVs might counter by saying that despite these evident environmental and social problems associated with mining in many third world countries, the case remains that EVs help reduce carbon dioxide emissions associated with the internal combustion engines run on petrol and diesel fuels. According to the reigning climate change narrative, it is after all carbon dioxide emissions that are threatening environmental catastrophe on a global scale. For the sake of saving the world, the climate crusaders of the richer nations might be willing to ignore the local

pollution and human rights violations involved in mining for minerals and rare earths in Africa, China, Latin America and elsewhere.

While one might question the inherent inequity in imposing such a trade-off, the supposed advantages of EVs in emitting lower carbon emissions are overstated according to a peer-reviewed life-cycle study comparing conventional and electric vehicles. To begin with, about half the lifetime carbon-dioxide emissions from an electric car come from the energy used to produce the car, especially in the mining and processing of raw materials needed for the battery. This compares unfavourably with the manufacture of a petrol powered car which accounts for 17% of the car's lifetime carbon-dioxide emissions. When a new EV appears in the show-room, it has already caused 30,000 pounds of carbon-dioxide emission. The equivalent amount for manufacturing a conventional car is 14,000 pounds.

Once on the road, the carbon dioxide emissions of EVs depends on the power-generation fuel used to recharge its battery. If it comes mostly from coal-fired power plants, it will lead to about 15 ounces of carbon-dioxide for every mile it is driven—three ounces more than a similar petrol powered car. Even without reference to the source of electricity used for battery charging, if an EV is driven 50,000 miles over its lifetime, the huge initial emissions from its manufacture means the EV will actually have put more carbon-dioxide in the atmosphere than a similar-size petrol powered car driven the same number of miles. Even if the EV is driven for 90,000 miles and the battery is charged by cleaner natural-gas fuelled power stations, it will cause just 24% less carbon-dioxide emission than a petrol powered car. As the sceptical environmentalist Bjorn Lomborg puts it, "This is a far cry from 'zero emissions'".

As most ordinary people mindful of keeping within modest budgets choose affordable petrol or diesel-powered cars, experts and policy advisors the world over have felt compelled to tilt the playing field in favour of EVs. EV subsidies are regressive: given their high upfront cost, EVs are only affordable for high-income households. It is egregious that EV subsides are funded by the average tax-payer so that the rich can buy their EVs at subsidized prices.

The determination not to know or to look away when the facts assail our beliefs is an enduring frailty of human nature. The tendency towards group think and confirmation bias and the will to affirm the "scientific consensus" and marginalize sceptics, are rife in considerations by the so-called experts committed to advocating their favorite cause. In the case of EVs, the dirty secrets of "clean energy" should seem apparent to all but, alas, there are none so blind as those who will not see.

Where are they now?

Otto Cossalter.

Wayne Howard is trying to contact Otto Cossalter who Wayne thinks would be about 70 now. If you can help, let us know and we'll pass on the info to Wayne.

RAAF Telstech Association

It's that time again, to remind you that the RAAF Telstech Association was formed to keep all ex-Telstechs in touch with one another and to advise anything which may be of interest. To successfully keep the association going, it costs money and therefore, I respectfully request your help in this respect. $10 per year will get you all the information I can gather and access to the Telstech's web site (If you are connected to the Internet). Your $10 will help us to pay for our own domain name - www.raaftelstechs.org.au and for postage to those who aren't connected to the Internet. If your name in the Telstech list shows a + or a ++, you are a financial member, (+ for one or more years, and ++ for Life Member). Don't forget, that if you are a bit flush with money, $100 will get you Life Membership of the Association.

Please send your contributions to:

BY POST

Mr. N. F. Miller
RAAF Telstechs Association
P.O. Box 4329
HAWKER ACT 2614

BY Electronic Funds Transfer

BSB No. 833 205
Acct No. 2060 9660
Acct Name: RAAF Telstechs Association
Acct held at: Defence Bank

Please make cheques and money orders out to the 'RAAF Telstechs Association'. If you are making an electronic funds transfer, don't forget to include your name, so we can keep the records straight.

Don't forget to let me know of any changes in your details, so I can keep the Telstech list up to date. As time moves on, we get a little older and some of our friends move on to the next life. Unfortunately, we lost several of our members in the past 6 months,

Ron Fryer (1TTC 1953), Henry Szumlanski (8TMT), Norvile (Norm) Simpson (1TTC 61/62), Eddie Collas (2TTC 54/55) and Bob MacDougall (9TMT).

Functions.
Due to the ongoing Covid 19 virus, there are no functions planned in the near future..

Getting Older

Unfortunately, after my plea to consider taking over the reins from me in managing the correspondence and records of the RAAF Telstech Association, I have received only one 'nibble'. Please give this very important request your 'undivided' attention. The database is MS Access, and the web site is simple - web site is hosted by Host Papa and domain name registry is Netregistry.

That's about it till next time.
Neil Hunter

WRAAF Qld reunion.

Lyn Mitchell

Hello All,

Many of you will have already heard that the WRAAF reunion organised by the Queensland Branch has been cancelled, however, not everyone has a Facebook account so I thought I would try and communicate to those who have missed out. Janet Noak advised this week, that due to Covid-19, the committee reluctantly decided to cancel. Though I did have accommodation booked, I was feeling decidedly uncomfortable about the trip up given my failing health. I think many of us would be in the same predicament. Until a vaccine is found, we all have to be cautious.

For those unaware, the reunion was to be held on 14/15/16th January 2021. However, not all is lost as Trevor Benneworth is organising an event over the Anzac weekend of 2021 for Radschool people, but really anyone can go. I am hoping to be able to go. More details of accommodation in the coming weeks. Also, Trev has organised another event for June 2021. A wonderful opportunity to feel young again, or perhaps look on - through the outback of Queensland.

I have added a few RAAF to my list in the hope that this gets through the grapevine. Many of you have not heard from me for some time. Life does get in the way a bit for all of us. But many of you have made my time on this globe quite wonderful. But the best thing is that we all have a common vein through our bodies; one that just oozes Service Life. The sticky glue that keeps all of us family, even if it's through a keyboard and screen in this digital age. At least we have lived to embrace the wonders of technology.

Keep well everyone.

36RAC.

Neil Snudden writes, he says: Hi, I was on 36RAC and am trying to arrange a reunion in 2022 to celebrate 40 yrs since joining. Do you know of any plan for RADS reunions in 2022 that 36RAC old boys may be able to join?

If anyone can help, let us know and we'll pass on the info to Neil.

DFRDB Commutation Update

Ken Stone

Hi Superannuants

I do hope you are avoiding the dreaded virus and also not getting tired of just your own company.

Although I haven't been in touch in recent times there has been quite a lot of outgoings from my office but not too many incomings through the email system. However, following some excellent representations by Llew O'Brien, after four months we finally elicited a response, ostensibly from the Prime Minister. This was simply the party line as espoused by Minister Chester and no doubt prepared for signature by SCOMO by one of his staff.

I have also written to the Ombudsman, but now hear that he has gone to ground and will not respond to anyone regarding his Report, that I understand may be up for a literary award as a work of fiction. Similarly, no response from, Minister Reynolds, Minister Chester et al, all of whom have been recipients of correspondence submitted on your behalf. Additionally, received a call from Senator Molan advising that he can see no way of providing any additional support. I also wrote to all the ESOs that have Minister Chester's ear, to no avail except from just none of the addressees responded. So, the saga continues. I also wrote to the new CEO of COMSUPER to which I received a response from one of his minions, who seems to have circumvented the delivery system before he received my correspondence. It is now on a rerun. I have also been in touch with ING Bank and requested a full investigation of their handling of the Pledge scam. If you have not had your donation to the hacker refunded please advise me of details including your bank and the amount of your loss.

I have recently enlisted the support of a preeminent Australian who will provide advice on our issue after he researches the matter further. Lastly the following was directed to the CEO of the Sydney Ethics Centre together with the attachment. If he returns a positive response to this matter, we may well be able to use it to sway a positive decision from Government or use it for media attention to our issue:

Dr Simon Longstaff AO
The Ethics Centre
Sydney NSW

22 July 2020

Dear Dr Longstaff,

After three years in representing some 55,000 long-serving Defence Force Veterans, which resulted in an Independent Inquiry by the Commonwealth Ombudsman, I bring to your attention the issue of Life-Term reduction to the Superannuation Pay of these Veterans by the Commonwealth Government.

Since the release of the Ombudsman's Report last December I have been faced with nothing but the closed doors of Government in trying to obtain justice for these ageing Veterans. This is because the Ombudsman, who found no mal-administration by the DFRDB Authority of the now Commonwealth Superannuation Fund, that I contend was guilty of deception through Exclusionary Detailing, from the outset of the Scheme. Although the Ombudsman found the Department of Defence guilty of mal-administration and deceit, he determined that just a written apology was necessary, and no reparations were due to these Veterans and their families. This was duly accepted by Minister Chester as a just solution who declared there would be no change to the operation of the Scheme.

I have prepared the attached paper on the bare facts of the matter, which is an issue complicated by 50-years of ducking and weaving by the Authority and the succession of Ministers who have held the Veterans Affairs portfolio, despite the thousands of flags raised by Veterans regarding the assault on their Superannuation benefits well beyond their expectations.

I would greatly appreciate your response regarding the ethics of our case, as perhaps the final means of appeal, before considering legal action far beyond our financial means.

Yours sincerely,

See attachment HERE

Lastly, I had an enquiry from one of our Superannuants as to whether it was appropriate for him to approach his local member regarding the material distributed by this Campaign and about our issues with DFRDB Commutation. My advice to him was the sooner the better and to take along a bunch of his mates to the Local Member's Office and to let the local media know of your meeting with him, protesting the ongoing sacrifice of your Superannuation Pay.

I seem to be a single voice on this matter. I suggest we should all go to choir lessons and sing from the same hymn book about our grievance. We need to be rattling political cages in the flesh and any other appropriate means – send letters, make phone calls, badger the Minister and the DFRDB at COMSUPER. Ask the question : How much is my Superannuation Pay being reduced annually, over and above if I HAD NOT OPTED FOR A COMMUTATION?????

Meanwhile, stay safe, stay well and wear your mask!

100th Anniversary of RAAF Reunion

Wagga April 23rd to 26th 2021

Bob Gnezdiloff (Treasurer of Aircare Wagga Wagga) has confirmed that (subject to Covid19 restrictions) the Anniversary of RAAF Reunion event will be proceeding. However due to the significant uncertainty posed by Covid19, Bookings for the event will not open until the 1st of January 2021.

From that date bookings will open on the RAAF Apprentices website.

Tickets will be limited so ensure you book early.

TIMELINE OF EVENTS (Note date change of the celebration dinner)

Friday 23rd April 2021 Time TBA
Meet and Greet at the Range Centre 308 Copland Street Wagga - cost TBA

Saturday 24th April 2021 Day
Time TBA
Bus trip to Temora Aviation Museum (and hopefully a flying day at the museum) - cost TBA

Saturday 24th April 2021 Evening
Time TBA
Celebration dinner at The Range Centre - cost TBA

Sunday 25th April 2021 ANZAC Day Dawn Service
Dawn Service for those wishing to attend at either Kapooka, RAAF Wagga or the main Wagga Cenotaph which is located in Baylis Street next to the lagoon.

ANZAC Day Main Service and march. 1000 Hours - Main Anzac Day March from location TBA to the Wagga Cenotaph

Monday 26th April 2021 Time TBA - Tour of RAAF Base Wagga and Heritage Museum (subject to approval)

More information will be emailed to you as soon as it becomes available. There is plenty of free time during this event for individual intakes to make their own arrangements to gather for more intimate reunions.

Ticketing for the event will be via the RAAF Apprentices website. We will email you when Registration opens on the 1st January 2021. Be advised that tickets to this event will be limited.

As a side note you will need to be logged into the website to purchase tickets. So, if you haven't already done so sign up now! If you have any questions or queries you can give me a call or text me on 0499 229911 at any time.

Dutchy Holland
President
RAAF Apprentices Association

Council rejects Caloundra RSL's Memorial Garden petition

Thank you for signing the petition to save the Caloundra RSL Memorial Garden from virtual destruction by proposed roadworks. Cr Terry Landsberg tabled the petition at the Sunshine Coast Council meeting on June 25 but the response from the Transport and Infrastructure Planning department was negative.

It said the Council had determined that the Third Avenue "upgrade" was the best option because the Arthur Street option would still require upgrades to Third Avenue and Oval Avenue, however it was short on details and did not explain WHY such upgrades would be needed.

We will continue seeking this information.

The Sub Branch owes a huge “thank you” to local State MP Mark McArdle for his terrific support and guidance with this process, to Cr Landsberg for supporting the petition and to every person who signed the petition – this support is invaluable.

Read the full letter HERE and respond to Council if you feel strongly enough.

The fight is not over! Lest We Forget

Phil Tracey took this pic when he was at East sale – must have been in the late 60s as I can remember the old Globemaster coming into Richmond at about the same time. They always looked as if they were so underpowered that they wouldn't or couldn't fly – but they did – sort of!

The amazing Saturn 5 rocket.

The Saturn 5 was the largest rocket ever built by the United States. A true monster of a launch vehicle, it generated over 33 million newtons of thrust at liftoff and carried 2.5 million kilograms of fuel and oxidizer. If the Saturn 5 exploded, it could do so with the force of a small atomic bomb, the equivalent of half a kiloton, or about 1/26 the size of the bomb that destroyed Hiroshima. Naturally, this was a significant concern for Apollo program officials.

During the course of the Apollo program, NASA officials conducted several studies to evaluate the effects of the ultimate worst-case scenario, a launch pad explosion of a Saturn 5 rocket. This was the worst possible accident for several reasons. The Saturn was most loaded with fuel at that point and posed the greatest danger to people on the ground. It also presented the fewest abort options, requiring the firing of the Launch Escape System (LES) rockets that would blast the Command Module away at high acceleration.

Early in the Saturn development phase, NASA officials had carefully selected a launch site that was sparsely populated and where the actual launch pad could be isolated from other necessary facilities such as the Launch Control Centre. They selected sites on the Atlantic coast of Merritt Island, surrounded by swampland and beaches. In 1961 and 1962 NASA planners decided the locations of physical structures for the two Saturn 5 launch pads and designated the pads Launch Complexes 39A and 39B. Because of the pads' isolation, after 1962 Saturn designers were less concerned about the damage that a launch pad explosion could do to the surrounding area than

they were about the damage that an explosion could do to the astronauts who were trying to escape it.

In September 1963, NASA conducted a short study of Saturn 5 booster explosion hazards and how they affected the survivability of the Apollo spacecraft. Titled “Saturn 5 Booster Explosion Hazards and Apollo Survivability Analyses,” the study focused on an on-pad explosion and its authors calculated the propellant weights in each of the three stages and determined their equivalent weight in terms of TNT, a common means of establishing a benchmark for explosive yields. The study’s authors concluded that there was the equivalent of 222,000 kilograms of TNT in the S-IC first stage, 253,000 kilograms of TNT in the S-II second stage and 68,000 kilograms of TNT in the S-IVB third stage. Although the propellant weight of the first stage was considerably higher than the second stage, the second stage’s explosive yield was greater because it utilized more explosive liquid hydrogen and liquid oxygen. The S-IC first stage was fuelled with liquid oxygen and kerosene. The third stage, although also powered by liquid hydrogen, had far less fuel than the S-II stage.

Together, the three stages had a theoretical maximum explosive yield of 543,000 kilograms of TNT, or a little over half a kiloton, to use the terminology common to nuclear weapons. Based on existing data, the study’s authors felt that it was unlikely that all of the fuel in the Saturn 5 would be consumed in an explosion, however in previous on-pad explosions of other liquid-fuelled rockets such as the Atlas and Titan, significant amounts of fuel fell to the ground and burned long after the initial explosion. In the case of the Saturn 5, this was most likely to occur for the heavy kerosene in the S-IC first stage. The figure of 599 tons of TNT is therefore an absolute limit and the study’s authors suggested that the likely yield was probably only 60% of this, or around 400 tons. Rocco Petrone, the Saturn launch director, estimated that the real figure was more likely to be 300–400 tons.

Even this lower yield explosion would have completely destroyed the launch tower, the Mobile Transporter and significant parts of the launch pad itself. The detonation of the hydrogen and oxygen in the S-II second stage would have created a tremendous blast wave close to the launch tower, knocking it down. The fuels would have caused fires in the surrounding vegetation and killed animal life for miles around.

Some sense of the possible devastation can be surmised based on the results of the July 3, 1969 launch pad explosion of the Soviet N-1 rocket, which detonated with an estimated force of 250 tons of TNT. The explosion completely destroyed one of the launch pads and shattered windows nearly 30 miles away.

The September 1963 explosion hazards study divided the hazards from a Saturn 5 explosion into six categories: overpressure, dynamic pressure, fire, acoustic intensity, shrapnel and impulse.

Overpressure is the blast wave that is formed when the atmosphere surrounding the explosion is forcibly pushed back. The study's authors considered overpressure to be the primary and most immediate threat to the Command Module in a sea-level (i.e. on-pad) explosion, although dynamic pressure from an explosion, the actual dynamic load imposed on the vehicle, became a greater threat than overpressure at high altitude, approximately 95 seconds into flight.

The study assumed that an overpressure greater than five pounds per square inch (psi) would destroy the Apollo spacecraft. Because the S-II stage had the greatest explosive yield, that stage dictated how far the Command Module had to travel in a launch pad explosion to avoid the shock wave, which diminished over distance. The distance requirement for the S-II was 317 meters but because the Command Module was already 43 meters from the assumed centre of the explosion in the S-II, the Command Module only had to travel 274 meters to escape the lethal overpressure wave and therefore survive the explosion.

The study's authors determined that the fireball, shrapnel and noise were irrelevant factors for an on-pad explosion. Because any shrapnel from the exploding stages had to travel through the stages above them as well as through the Lunar Module, Service Module and Command Module heat shield, shrapnel was not considered a threat to the spacecraft except in a case where the vehicle toppled over on the pad. Noise would not be important either. Although the fireball would be the biggest ever produced by a non-nuclear detonation, at most the capsule would spend only 2–3 seconds inside of the fireball and the temperature would never be greater than what the spacecraft was already designed to withstand during reentry.

In late 1964 or early 1965, the engineers at the Manned Spacecraft Centre in Houston, Texas initiated the "Fireball Study" to evaluate the effects of the fireball produced during an on-pad explosion of either a Saturn 1B or a Saturn 5. In August 1965, Richard W. High and Robert F. Fletcher of the Flight Engineering Section and Mission Feasibility Branch, respectively, issued their report on the effects of a fireball produced by a Saturn 1B or Saturn 5 explosion.

Although the earlier explosion hazards study had indicated that the fireball posed no major threat to the Command Module itself, NASA engineers became concerned about the effect of radiated heat from a fireball on the parachute shroud lines of a descending Command Module. It would do the astronauts no good to escape the initial explosion and the fireball only to have their shroud lines burn up because of the heat of the fireball. Plummeting to the ground from a thousand meters was no better than being crushed in the initial blast wave.

High and Fletcher used both mathematical models and data gathered from previous on-pad explosions, such as the March 2, 1965 Atlas-Centaur failure, to calculate the size, duration and thermal emissions from a fireball, however, they admitted that some of their conclusions were little more than educated guesses. The two men assumed that virtually all of the propellants in the rockets would be consumed in a

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fireball, feeding it even after the initial explosion. They based this assumption on the belief that the initial blast wave would completely rupture all of the fuel tanks and that any fuel not consumed in the initial explosion would burn underneath it and feed it.

Based upon these assumptions and their calculations, High and Fletcher determined that the fireball from a Saturn 5 exploding on the launch pad would last for 33.9 seconds. This fireball would rise, but they assumed that it would only begin to rise in the last quarter of its expansion phase, based upon empirical data. They were unable to make an accurate calculation of the maximum surface temperature of the fireball and ultimately settled for the maximum value they obtained from several other studies—1,370 degrees Celsius. They then calculated the radiated heat at a distance of 600 meters from the surface of the fireball. This information was then used in the design of the Launch Escape System.

A towering collision

These studies provided useful data for the requirements for the Launch Escape System and emergency planning but they started with the assumption that the vehicle was exploding. NASA engineers also looked at the question of what set of circumstances could lead to such a situation in the first place. In a conclusion that surprised few rocket veterans, they determined that the most likely cause of an on-pad explosion of a Saturn 5 was a collision with the tower during lift-off. Colliding with the tower would immediately rupture the fuel tanks causing fuel to flow out and contact the hot engine exhaust, leading to an explosion in fractions of a second. Tower collisions had been a major concern for earlier rocket programs, including the Saturn 1. Saturn program officials even placed cameras on the top of the Saturn 1 launch tower looking down to assist in manually determining if the rocket was sliding toward the tower.

In 1964, David Mowery of the Control Applications Section at Marshall Space Flight Centre in Huntsville, Alabama conducted an evaluation of the Saturn 5 lift-off. The primary purpose of Mowery's study was not to estimate the chances that a tower collision could take place, but to determine what factors could actually cause it. By knowing this, the designers of the Launch Escape System could develop sensors and electronic equipment for determining when this was about to happen in order to fire the escape rockets.

The Saturn 5 did not simply rest on its launch pad through force of gravity. It was actually held down to the pad by four pairs of hold-down arms which kept the rocket secure until the five F-1 engines achieved their proper thrust, at which time the arms retracted and the rocket lifted off the pad. Mowery noted that due to structural considerations, the Saturn 5 could not be released instantaneously, so Saturn designers were developing a system to release the rocket gradually. The hold-down force would decrease linearly to zero in 0.6 seconds. But this system had to work perfectly or it could create a dangerous situation during lift-off.

Mowery considered seven factors that could disturb the lift-off path of the vehicle. These were: a variation in the hold-down force of plus or minus 15%, a variation in thrust of 4%, engine misalignment, an offset in the vehicle's centre of gravity, wind, engine failure and an "engine hardover."

Engine failure and engine hardover, unlike the other factors, were considered vehicle malfunctions and if they occurred for either of the engines closest to the tower, engines 1 and 2, they posed a danger during the initial lift-off phase. In order to steer the giant rocket in flight, the Saturn 5's huge F-1 engines could gimbal, or move, in several directions, pushed by actuators. In an engine hardover, a failed actuator would push the engine all the way to its maximum gimbal limit, rolling the rocket in the opposite direction and causing it to slide toward the tower. If this happened for one of the inboard engines before the Saturn had risen above the height of the tower, it could push the Saturn 5 toward the tower. It took 7.5 seconds for the Saturn to clear the tower.

Mowery concluded that: "no problem as to tower collision exists for combined disturbances if a malfunction does not occur." In other words, simply wind or a misaligned vehicle, even in combination, could not cause a tower collision. In addition, neither an engine failure nor an engine hardover for either of the inboard engines alone could cause a tower collision.

But if any of the other factors occurred combined with an engine malfunction, the vehicle would roll and slide toward the tower and one of its large fins would collide with the tower structure, causing a catastrophe. Probably the most likely non-malfunction factor would be wind pushing the vehicle toward the tower. The Saturn was designed to be capable of launching in windy conditions with no risk of tower collision, provided nothing else went wrong during lift-off. Of the two kinds of malfunction, engine failure posed the greatest overall risk because the vehicle was most susceptible to this failure for the longest period of time. An actuator failure between T minus zero and T plus 5.5 seconds could cause a tower collision but engine failure at any time between T minus zero and T plus 7.5 seconds could cause a collision.

Conclusion

NASA launched thirteen Saturn 5's without a single catastrophic failure. Although the vehicles did experience occasional engine problems in flight, an engine hardover never occurred and these problems did not greatly affect mission performance. During the launch of the first vehicle, AS-501, Rocco Petrone watched the rocket lift off from his seat in launch control and kept his hand near the button that would close protective covers over the windows if the Saturn 5 exploded. But he always suspected that if something did go catastrophically wrong and the Saturn 5 detonated with the force of a small atomic bomb, he would simply keep watching instead.

Steering the machine once aloft

Once the Saturn powered space craft left earth orbit, how were they steered. There's no reference out there in space, no horizon, no compass from which to get a reading, no up, no down, no left or right – how was it done.
Remember, this was the 1690s, black and white TVs, no personal computers, no mobile phones, no internet, the UBD was the way we found our way around cities, how were those astronauts expected to stay on track, do a loop of the earth then fling themselves out into space and head for the moon.

The answer will amaze you – see HERE

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