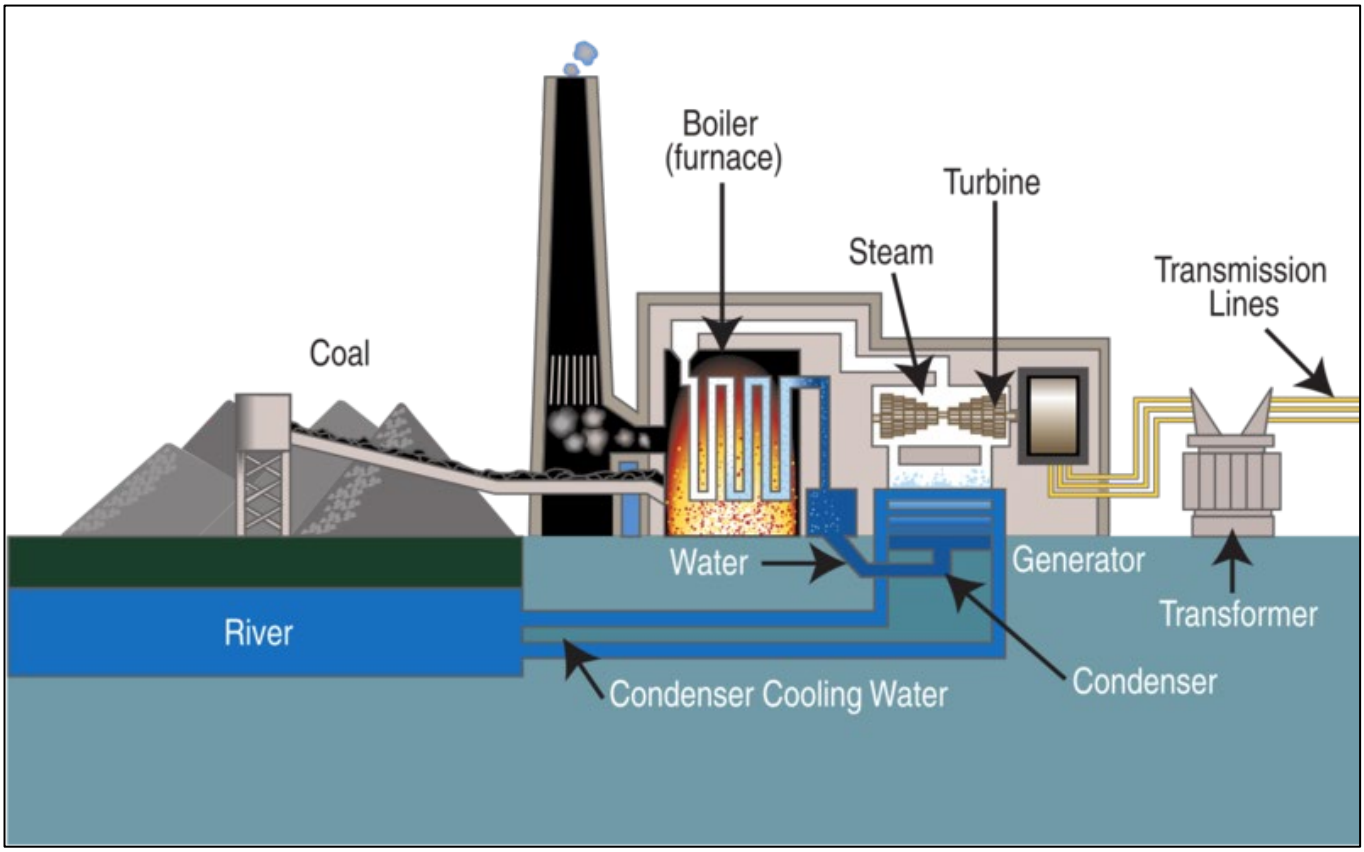
While the Association does not necessarily agree or disagree with everything on this page, we do respect the right of everyone to have their say.

Your Say

Coal fired power plants.

Ted McEvoy sent us this!

Terence Cardwell. spent 25 years in the Electricity Commission of NSW working, commissioning and operating the various power units. His last was the 4 X 350 MW Munmorah Power Stations near Newcastle.



He says this about Coal fired power plants:

- First coal fired power stations do NOT send 60 to 70% of the energy up the chimney. The boilers of modern power station are 96% efficient and the exhaust heat is captured by the economisers and reheaters that heat the air and water before entering the boilers.
- The very slight amount exiting the stack is moist as in condensation and CO2. There is virtually no fly ash because this is removed by the precipitators or bagging plant that are 99.98% efficient. The 4% lost is heat through boiler wall convection.
- Coal-fired Power Stations are highly efficient with very little heat loss and can generate a massive amount of energy for our needs. They can generate power at efficiency of less than 10,000 B.T.U. per kilowatt and cost-wise that is very low.
- The percentage cost of mining and freight is very low. The total cost of fuel is 8% of total generation cost and does NOT constitute a major production cost.

He says, “China is building multitudes of coal-fired power stations because they are the most efficient for bulk power generation. Like the USA , we have coal-fired power stations because we HAVE the raw materials and are VERY fortunate to have them. Believe me no one is laughing at Australia – exactly the reverse, they are very envious of our raw materials and independence. The major percentage of power in Europe and U.K. is nuclear because they don't have the coal supply for the future.

Yes it would be very nice to have clean, quiet, cheap energy in bulk supply. Everyone agrees that it would be ideal. You don't have to be a genius to work that out but there is only one problem---It doesn't exist. Yes - there are wind and solar generators being built all over the world but they only add a small amount to the overall power demand. The maximum size wind generator is 3 Megawatts, which can rarely be attained on a continuous basis because it requires substantial forces of wind and for the same reason only generate when there is sufficient wind to drive them.

This of course depends where they are located but usually they only run for 45% - 65% of the time, mostly well below maximum capacity. They cannot be relied on for a 'base load ‘because they are too variable. And they certainly could not be used for load control.

The peak load demand for electricity in Australia is approximately 50,000 Megawatts and only a small part of this comes from the Snowy Hydro Electric System (the ultimate power Generation) because it is only available when water is there from snow melt or rain and yes, they can pump it back but it costs to do that. (Long Story).

Tasmania is very fortunate in that they have mostly hydro-electric generation because of their high amounts of snow and rainfall. They also have wind generators (located in the roaring forties) but that is only a small amount of total power generated. Based on an average generating output of 1.5 megawatts (of unreliable power) you would require over 33,300 wind generators.

As for solar power generation much research has been done over the decades and there are two types. Solar thermal generation and Solar Electric generation but in each case they cannot generate large amounts of electricity. Any clean, cheap energy is obviously welcomed but they would NEVER have the capability of replacing Thermal Power Generation.

So get your heads out of the clouds, do some basic mathematics and look at the facts, - not going off with the fairies (or some would say the extreme greenies).

We are all greenies in one form or another and care very much about our planet. The difference is most of us are realistic. Not in some idyllic utopia where everything can be made perfect by standing around holding a banner and being a general pain in the backside. Here are some facts that will show how ridiculous this financial madness is that the government is following. Do the simple maths and see for yourselves.

According to the 'believers' the CO2 in air has risen from .034% to .038% in air over the last 50 years. To put the percentage of Carbon Dioxide in air in a clearer perspective;

Australia emits 1% of the world's total carbon Dioxide and the government wants to reduce this by 20% or reduce emissions by 0.2% of the world's total CO2 emissions. What effect will this have on existing CO2 levels? By their own figures they state the CO2 in air has risen from .034% to .038% in 50 years. Assuming this is correct, the world CO2 has increased in 50 years by -.004%. Per year that is .004 divided by 50 = .00008%. (Getting confusing - but stay with me!).

Of that, because we only contribute 1%, our emissions would cause CO2 to rise .00008 divided by 100 = .0000008%. Of that 1%, we supposedly emit, the governments want to reduce it by 20% which is 1/5th of .0000008 = .00000016% effect per year they would have on the world CO2 emissions based on their own figures.

For that, they have gone crazy with the ridiculous trading schemes, Solar and Roofing Installations, Clean Coal Technology, Renewable Energy, etc, etc.

How ridiculous it that?

The cost to the general public and industry will be enormous and cripple, even closing some smaller businesses.

A mother is driving her little girl to her friend's house for a play date. 'Mummy', the little girl asks, 'how old are you?' 'Honey, you are not supposed to ask a lady her age', the mother replied. 'It's not polite'. 'OK', the little girl says, 'What colour was your hair 2 years ago?' 'Now really', the mother says, 'those are personal questions and are really none of your business'. Undaunted, the little girl asks, 'Why did you and Daddy get a divorce?' 'That's enough questions, young lady! Honestly!' The exasperated mother walks away as the two friends begin to play. 'My Mum won't tell me anything about her,' the little girl says to her friend. 'Well,' says the friend, 'all you need to do is look at her driver's license. It's like a report card, it has everything on it.' Later that night the little girl says to her mother, 'I know how old you are. You are 32..' The mother is surprised and asks, 'How did you find that out?' 'I also know that you used to have brown hair.' The mother is past surprised and shocked now. 'How in Heaven's name did you find that out?' 'And,' the little girl says triumphantly, 'I know why you and daddy got a divorce.' 'Oh really?' the mother asks. 'Why?' 'Because on your driving licence it says you got an F in sex.'

The Flag.

John Cridland sent us this.

Adam Bandt is the elected Federal Member for Melbourne and Leader of the Australian Greens party.

Prior to his press conference in Sydney on Monday 20 June 2022, a member of his team removed the Australian National Flag, while the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander flags remained in view. Adam Bandt said the Australian National Flag was "hurtful" to Indigenous Australians and invoked racism. "For many people, this flag (Australian National Flag) represents dispossession and the lingering pains of colonisation," Adam Bandt said.

The Australian Army is the custodian of the Australian National Flag, and it is draped over the coffins of all Veterans who have died in service to Australia.

Adam Bandt's actions have brought outrage from across the Veteran community and families calling for his immediate apology, and actions to be taken by the Government and/or the Governor-General to ensure that this disrespect is held accountable.

Michael von Berg, MC OAM, the National President of the Royal Australian Regiment Association wrote to Brandt demanding an apology, you can read the letter HERE.

Some wise words from an Electrical Contractor in Melbourne.

Mike Gahan sent us this.

I recently did some work for the body corporate at the Dock 5 Apartment Building in Docklands in Melbourne to see if we could install a small number of electric charging points for owners to charge their electric vehicles.

We had our first three applications and we discovered:

- The building has no non-allocated parking spaces ie public ones. This is typical of most apartment buildings so we cannot provide shared outlets.
- The power supply in the building was designed for the loads in the building with virtually no spare capacity. Only 5 or 6 chargers could be installed in total in a building with 188 apartments!!
- How do you allocate them as they would add value to any apartment owning one. The fight started on day one with about 20 applications received 1st day and with many more following.

- The car park sub-boards cannot carry the extra loads of even one charger and would have to be upgraded on any floors with a charger as would the supply mains to each sub board.
- The main switch board would then have to be upgraded to add the heavier circuit breakers for the sub mains upgrade and furthermore:
- When Docklands was designed a limit was put on the number of apartments in each precinct and the mains and transformers in the streets designed accordingly. This means there is no capacity in the Docklands street grid for any significant quantity of car chargers in any building in the area.
- It gets better. The whole CBD (Hoddle Grid, Docklands) and Southbank is fed by two sub stations. One in Port Melbourne and one in West Melbourne. This was done to have two alternate feeds in case one failed or was down for maintenance. Because of the growth in the city, (Docklands and Southbank) neither one is capable of supplying the full requirement of Melbourne zone at peak usage in mid- summer if the other is out of action. The Port Melbourne 66,000 volt feeder runs on 50 or 60 year old wooden power poles above ground along Dorcas Street South Melbourne. One pole is located 40 cm from the corner Kerb at the incredibly busy Ferrars /St Dorcas St Intersection and is very vulnerable to being wiped out by a wayward vehicle. The infrastructure expenditure required would dwarf the NBN cost and that's not including the new power stations required!

These advocates of electric vehicles by 2040 are completely bonkers! It takes 5-8 years to design and build a large coal fired power station like Loy Yang and even longer for a Nuclear one (That's after you get the political will, permits and legislative changes needed). Wind and solar just can't produce enough.

Most Australians don't understand this yet

It's just a dream in the foreseeable future other than in small wealthy countries. It will no doubt ultimately come but not in the next 20 years...

The grid simply cannot support it in most places in Australia!

ADCOLA temperature controlled soldering iron

Mick Downs got in touch, he says: "This is a request out of left field. I'm chasing a circuit diagram for an ADCOLA temperature controlled soldering iron system. This is the one that we made as RADTECHA trainees back in 1980. The PCB was made by 3AD and Radschool supplied the components. My system has been working like a champ since 1980, but lately it's struggling to maintain constant temp.

Would it be possible to put the feelers out via RAM to see if anyone of our vintage may still have some info."

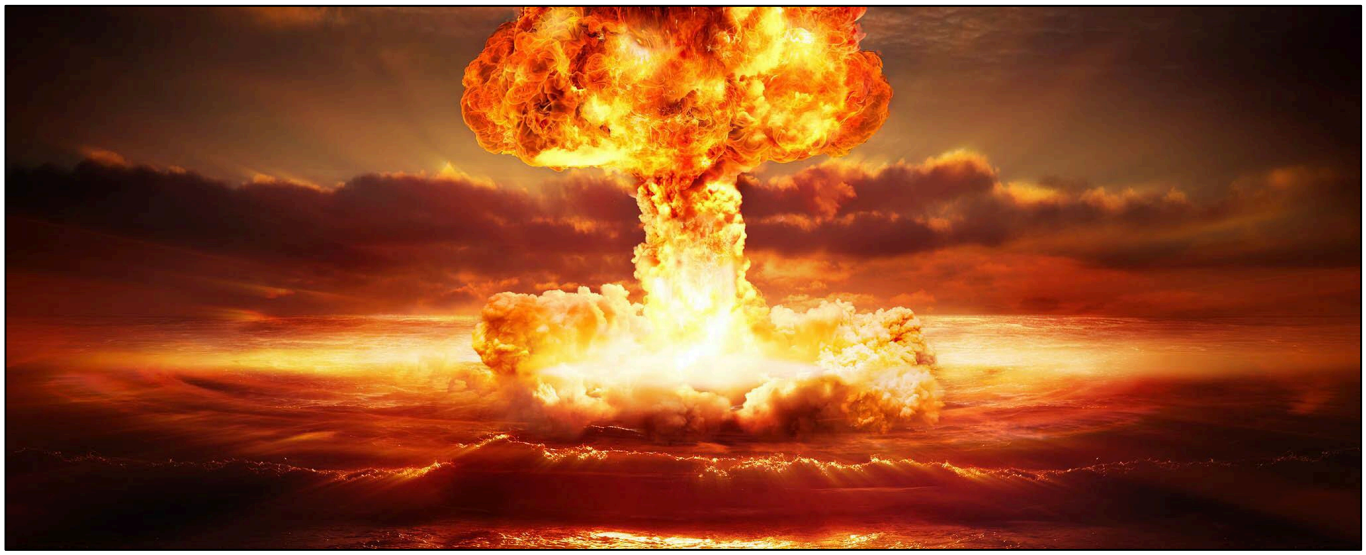
If you can help, let us know and we'll pass on the info to Mick.

Ukraine and nuclear bombs.

John Mark McDonald

Will Putin resort to nuclear weapons now that it is becoming increasingly clear, that he has little or no chance of being victorious in Ukraine by means of conventional war?

As someone who has studied nuclear war for close to forty years now, I am going to give you an answer that will blow your mind. Even if the entire Russian nuclear arsenal were used against Ukraine, it wouldn't substantially change the course of the war. How could I possibly say that? Because, the power of nuclear weapons has been used as a boogeyman for so long that the actual power of a nuclear detonation has almost no relation to their actual destructive power. No nuclear power can afford to actually use one in combat because it would expose the mythical nature of nuclear weapons.



Nuclear weapons are hyped to the point that no one contradicts it when a media outlet publishes a statement indicating that even a single nuclear device will destroy the world. This is a blatantly, stupidly, obviously untrue, but never corrected. After all, two were used in WWII. BUT that is just the tip of the iceberg. I thought there had been a couple of hundred nuclear test that prove this point. I was off by over an order of magnitude. There have been nearly three thousand nuclear detonations already, that are either known or suspected and this has not affected the survivability of life on Earth even slightly.

Well then, how dangerous are nuclear weapons?

Nuclear weapons, if they weren't their own category, would be classified as incendiary weapons. They set stuff on fire. They set a lot of stuff on fire, in fact they can set things on fire as far as two miles away from the actual detonation. Besides this, nuclear detonation is very bright, capable of blinding people 20–30 miles away. This is only constrained by the curvature of the earth. They also create hurricane force winds as the air around the detonation expands and contracts. If you are outside and unshielded and within a mile of a nuclear detonation, you are going to die.

The problem here is that Ukraine is really big. I mean the size of Texas big. Cities there tend to be spread out in modern times and their larger ones cover over a hundred square miles. The average nuclear detonation only burns 2–3 square miles of territory. A city the size of Kiev would take on the order of 200 warheads to cover the whole thing.

Which brings us to our next point. Modern cities are just not that vulnerable to incendiaries. Modern city centres and industrial areas are made of concrete and steel. Most of the damage in Hiroshima and Nagasaki was done because almost all the buildings were made of wood and paper. The initial blast set the city centres on fire which spread and ended up burning down most of the city. Modern cities are just not that vulnerable. In Ukraine, despite millions of rounds being poured into their cities, not one of them caught fire and burned to the ground like the Great Chicago or Great London Fires in the 19th century or the fire storms of WWII. In the Japanese nuclear detonations, the brick buildings were still standing, despite being much less sturdy than modern buildings.

This leads to the most surprising revelation about nuclear detonations: If you are not outside, you stand a good chance of surviving even within the blast zone. Nuclear blasts are mainly line of sight killers. The vast majority of “radiation” created by a nuclear detonation is infrared radiation, or heat the same as a gas stove or fireplace makes. Unless the building you are in is collapsed by the wind or you fail to leave if it catches on fire or you happen to be in front of a window with a direct line of sight to the detonation, you are probably going to be fine.

Thus we get to the real reason why Putin will not use nuclear weapons: they're just not all that effective compared to the boogeyman that is in our collective imaginations. Were a nuclear missile to detonate over central Kiev, no one would believe that it was an actual nuclear blast because the city is still there and all the major buildings are still standing.

Secondly, he doesn't have very many of them. The numbers given for the Russian nuclear arsenal are an outright farce. You get that number by taking of bombs that the USSR claimed to have built, and subtract the number used in their testing program. This leaves you with about 9,000 warheads. First of all, Russia doesn't have nearly enough delivery systems to put those warheads on. The second problem here is that nuclear warheads have a very short shelf life. Nuclear warheads require a detonator made of conventional explosives. These detonators are some of the most precision pieces of engineering in the history of mankind. A series of explosives has to go off in such a way that the core is hit by the same amount of pressure from all directions simultaneously. If any of those explosives are even slightly off, the nuclear warhead will not go off.

You now have an extremely precise machine sitting around a core of material emitting hard radiation. Hard radiation is not friendly to machines. Nuclear warheads need to be rebuilt a least every five years and maintained a lot more often than that. Even with that, a twenty year old warhead is a piece of junk. It's been more than twenty years since the Putin kleptocracy came to power. I'm sure that Russia has a number of Potemkin warheads that are kept in top shape for inspectors, but given the current Russian system, the Russian nuclear arsenal most likely resembles the Russian tank reserves: the bare minimum kept in service while the rest is a scrap pile.

Currently, the image of the vast Russian nuclear arsenal is the last card he has in his hand. If he were to actually use it, it would expose that he never had anything but a junk hand and bluffing to back it up.

86 Telegs

Dave Edwards is trying to get in touch with his fellow course mates. If you were on 86 Telegs let us know and we'll put you in touch with Dave.

Korry Dean Baker.

Kay Trounson got in touch, she is trying to get in touch with a Kory Dean Baker, she says: "I'm trying to find someone who was at the Laverton base around 1983. His name was Korry Baker and I'm pretty sure that's how he spelled his name but that might not be the spelling on his enlistment forms. He would have been born in 1966 / 1967."

Korry, if you're out there and you want to be found, let us know and we'll put you in touch with Kay.

Historical Aussie icon at Phan Rang

Bob Howe.

2 Sqn personnel boldly expressed their Australian identity while at Phan Rang Air Base. Not only were the Aussies well known for their consumption, and occasional sharing, of a great Aussie beer (VB) - they also built a replica of Australia's famous Sydney Harbour Bridge to remind them of home.

To Australians, the Sydney Harbour Bridge was like the Statue of Liberty, especially for those who immigrated with their families to Australia from far away countries, sailing under the bridge to start a new life down under.

Anyone travelling up and down the road leading to the 14th Aerial Port from 19 August 1969 onwards could not but notice an unusual structure, which crossed the stormwater channel between No.2 Squadron's Headquarters building and its maintenance hangar, where ground crew worked on the Canberra Mk 20 bomber 24-7, achieving an extraordinary high maintenance rate throughout the four years the Squadron was based at Phan Rang.

The object was a miniature replica of the Sydney Harbour Bridge, lovingly constructed in their spare time by No. 2 Squadron workshops' crew – Corporal Bert Grossel and Leading Aircraftsmen Bob Cogan, Mal Cryer and Steve Gainsford.

Back in Australia the original Bridge had a well-known history, dating back to its official opening on 19 March 1932, when the Premier (=Governor) of the Australian State of New South Wales (Jack Lang) was supposed to open the bridge by cutting a ribbon at its southern end. However, just as Lang was about to apply his ceremonial scissors, a man in military uniform, Francis de Groot, rode up on a horse, slashing the ribbon with his sword and opening the Sydney Harbour Bridge in the name of the people of New South Wales, before the official ceremony began. He was promptly arrested.

De Groot was a member of a right-wing paramilitary group called the New Guard, which was opposed to Lang's leftist policies and resentful of the fact that a member of the British Royal family had not been asked to open the bridge.

Not to be outdone, 2 Sqn decided to repeat the tradition when visiting RAAF Deputy Chief, Air Vice-Marshal W.E. (Bill) Townsend, was invited to open the Phan Rang bridge. Air Defence Guard (ADG) boss Flying Officer Ken Lawson had a captured enemy sword, so that part was OK, but when it came to the horse, the only one readily available was the mascot of the 554th Civil Engineering Squadron (Red Horse) – a Montagnard pony.

Borrowing the pony for this occasion, Ken duly disrupted the Phan Rang opening ceremony, cutting the ribbon before the distinguished guest, however, because Ken was too large and the pony too small, the pony was only led across the bridge rather than ridden.

It was all good fun.

K

Missing Honour Roll.

John Elliott got in touch, he says: “I’ve been trying to find out if this honour board (see below) still exists or where it was last seen.

I received a pic of it from a lady whose husband was in 2sqn during the second world war. She does not know where the picture was taken and by whom. Comparing some of the names with the WW2 nominal roll, it seems to indicate the names of airmen who died while serving with 2Sqn in the 1942-1943 period of time. The ranks range from LAC – SqnLdr which asks the question, were they all aircrew ?. Maybe not if LAC's are included in the board.

If you can help, let us know and we’ll pass on the info to John.

Electrical Vehicles.

The utility companies have thus far had little to say about the alarming cost projections to operate electric vehicles (EVs) or the increased rates that they will be required to charge their customers. It is not just the total amount of electricity required, but the transmission lines and fast charging capacity that must be built at existing filling stations. Neither wind nor solar can support any of it.

Some problems with electric vehicles (EVs), are:

- they are too expensive,
- too unreliable,
- rely on materials mined in China and other unfriendly countries and
- require more electricity than the nation can afford.

Other causes of alarm:

1. In order to match the 2,000 cars that a typical filling station can service in a busy 12 hours, an EV charging station would require 600, 50-watt chargers at an estimated cost of $24 million and a supply of 30 megawatts of power from the grid. That is enough to power 20,000 homes. No one likely thinks about the fact that it can take 30 minutes to 8 hours to recharge a vehicle between empty or just topping off. What are the drivers doing during that time? And, if you've got cars coming into a petrol station, they would stay for an average of five minutes. If you've got cars coming into an electric charging station, they would be at least 30 minutes, possibly an hour, but let's say its 30 minutes. So that's six times the surface area to park the cars while they're being charged. So, multiply every petrol station in a city by six. Where are you going to find the place to put them?"

2. The government of the United Kingdom is already starting to plan for power shortages caused by the charging of thousands of EVs. Starting in June 2022, the government restricted the time of day you can charge your EV battery. To do this, they will employ smart meters that are programmed to automatically switch off EV charging in peak times to avoid potential blackouts. In particular, the latest UK chargers will be pre-set to not function during 9-hours of peak loads, from 8 am to 11 am (3-hours), and 4 pm to 10 pm (6-hours). Unbelievably, the UK technology decides when and if an EV can be charged, and even allows EV batteries to be drained into the UK grid if required. Imagine charging your car all night only to discover in the morning that your battery is flat since the state took the power back. Better keep your gas-powered car as a reliable and immediately available backup! While EV charging will be an attractive source of revenue generation for the government, American citizens will be up in arms.

Used Car Market.

The average used EV will need a new battery before an owner can sell it, pricing them well above used internal combustion cars. The average age of an American car on the road is 12 years. A 12-year-old EV will be or be close to its second battery. A Tesla battery typically costs $10,000 so there will not be many 12-year-old EVs on the road. Good luck trying to sell your used green fairy tale electric car!

M

Tuomas Katainen, an enterprising Finish Tesla owner, had an imaginative solution to the battery replacement problem—he blew up his car! New York City-based Insider magazine reported (December 27, 2021) The shop told him the faulty battery needed to be replaced, at a cost of about $22,000. In addition to the hefty fee, the work would need to be authorized by Tesla. Rather than shell out half the cost of a new Tesla to fix an old one, Katainen decided to do something different. The demolition experts from the YouTube channel Pommijätkät (Bomb Dudes) strapped 66 pounds of high explosives to the car and surrounded the area with slow-motion cameras. The 14 hotdog-shaped charges erupt into a blinding ball of fire, sending a massive shockwave rippling out from the car. The videos of the explosion have a combined 5 million views." (See HERE)

We understand that the standard Tesla warranty does not cover "damage resulting from intentional actions," like blowing the car up for a YouTube video.

Although the modern lithium-ion battery is four times better than the old lead-acid battery, petrol holds 80 times the energy density. The lithium battery in your mobile phone weighs less than an ounce while the Tesla battery weighs about 500kg and what do we get for this huge cost and weight? We get a car that is far less convenient and less useful than cars powered by internal combustion engines. When the Model T came out, it was a dramatic improvement on the horse and cart. The electric car is a step backward into the equivalence of an ordinary car with a tiny petrol tank that takes half an hour to fill. It offers nothing in the way of convenience or extra facilities.

Another problem, which hasn't been mentioned is for owners without a garage. How do you recharge your EV which parked on the road outside your home, do you just run cables across the street?. In some areas in Sydney and Melbourne, owners have to park some distance from their homes, how do they get on??

The electric car will always be around in a niche market likely never exceeding 10% of the cars on the road. All automobile manufacturers are investing in their output and all will be disappointed in their sales. Perhaps they know this and will manufacture just what they know they can sell....

Fred and Mary got married, but can't afford a honeymoon, so they go back to Fred's parent's home for their first night together. In the morning, Johnny, Fred's little brother, gets up and has his breakfast. As he is going out of the door to go to school, he asks his Mom if Fred and Mary are up yet. She replies, "No".

Johnny asks, "Do you know what I think?" His mom replies, "I don't want to hear what you think! Just go to school." Johnny comes home for lunch and asks his mom, "Are Fred and Mary up

yet?" She replies, "No." Johnny says, "Do you know what I think?" His mom replies, "Never mind what you think! Eat your lunch and go back to school."

After school, Johnny comes home and asks again, "Are Fred and Mary up yet?" His mom says "No." He asks, "Do you know what I think?" His Mom replies, "Ok, do tell me what you think?"

He says: "Last night Fred came to my room for the Vaseline and I think I gave him my airplane glue."

Jennifer Marheine

Paul O'Neill wrote, he said: "I'm looking for Jennifer Marheine, an old friend of mine and I found her photo in some of you magazines (see HERE). I knew her when she was a Sgt in Darwin. If you could pass onto her my email or give me hers.

We don't have Jennifer's contact details – if you know her can you get her to contact us and we'll pass on Paul's details to her - tb.

78 Wing in Malta 1952 – 1958

Ian Pearson got in touch, he said: Thank you for your earlier call for contributions for my research that led to the publication last September of 'Cold War Warriors - RAAF P-3 Operations 1968-91'. The book has been favourably reviewed by the likes of the Australian Naval Institute and Down Under Aviation Network

Since the book was published by the RAAF, and all proceeds go 'back to the system', I have no financial interest in the sales, however, I am probably the single largest private buyer of my own book. You get a good deal by buying it through an APOD discount applied by Booktopia.

Separately, I am now researching the story of 78 Wing's deployment to Malta in 1952-55. While veterans of that deployment are now thin on the ground, they and their families may wish to contribute to my research, which I trust will result in a book of the calibre of Cold War Warriors. I would be most grateful for any recollections, photos or other material contributors may consider to be worthy of inclusion in my final work, and can be contacted by email at: ian.m.pearson@bigpond.com

Welcome to Country.

O

For some reason a huge number of people, and that includes Media, Churches, Schools, Universities, Councils and Governments now insist on reciting a ***Mea culpa*** such as "*I begin today by acknowledging the Traditional Custodians of the land on which we gather today and pay my respects to their Elders past and present. I extend that respect to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples here today*" at the beginning of any (and all) events.

Why?

Not only is it said, it is now written on documents – eg: *"I acknowledge the Traditional Custodian of the land in which I live and work. I pay my respects to Elders past, present and emerging for they hold the memories, traditions, culture and hopes of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander People of Australia."*

What's all this about, who started it, why is it done, what does it achieve?

Another thing that has taken hold is that strange smoking ceremony. What is all that about? The University of Melbourne says: *"Fire has been central to many aspects of traditional Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander life, including cooking, storytelling, providing warmth, as a ceremonial and ritual device, and is also used in medicinal practices. Aboriginal people on mainland Australia also used fire extensively for land management to promote productive ecosystems."*

There is nothing novel or remarkable about that - didn't the rest of the world do the same??

Since time began, people have welcomed visitors one way or another. Some hostile, some friendly. We still do it today, if someone comes calling, we either put the dog onto them or invite them in, offer them a cuppa or a beer or whatever. Some Aboriginal people welcomed each other by their traditional means, some threw spears, others by lighting a fire. There's nothing new there.

But this smoke ceremony that we (some of us) have accepted into our lives is being promoted as being traditional, the standard of welcome practiced by all Aboriginals for a million years when that is obviously not correct. Some might have done it but not all of them.

The way it became common place is very interesting. Back in 1976 Ernie Dingo and Richard Walley were part of the Middar Aboriginal theatre and were in Perth performing at a Perth fringe festival. They were asked by a group of Polynesian performers whether they (the Polynesians) could be given some form of welcome. The smoke ceremony had been practiced in the Perth area by the local Aboriginals so Dingo and Walley settled on and performed it for them. In the years that followed, Dingo and Walley were asked to perform the ceremony on other occasions and in 1988, the Rudd Government had it performed at the opening of parliament.

And that was it.

It is a divisive event. Some people love it, others think it's a joke. I was born here, I don't need to be welcomed by anyone, especially by someone who was born, in some cases, many years after I was.

If you think about it, the Aboriginal people should be holding the welcoming ceremony, welcoming the British. You have to wonder how a people, who have been in existence for, some say, 40,000 years, didn't really invent or build anything!! Apart from a few rock carvings and a fish trap here and there, there is nothing. No homes, no temples, no monuments, no tools, nothing! How could that be?

There wasn't even a wheel, the most basic of basic tools. Surely, over that 40,000 year period, there had to be someone with an idea on how to do things easier or quicker, but there doesn't seem to have been.

You have to wonder why. Just think of the benefits Aboriginal people have access to and have enjoyed since the arrival of the first fleet.

We think the whole process is just designed to make the blue rinse, pony-tailed, caffè latte sipping, kale eating, Volvo driving mob feel better. tb

RAAF Band.

We heard from Kerry Tickner, she said: "Re Vol 42, page 19 of the RAM, my father is in one of the photographs of the RAAF Band at Ballarat - he is listed as Corporal H.B Tickner and is in the front row - he lives in Sydney and is 87 years old - see HERE.

Great to hear from you Kerry – and all the best to your dad. tb

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