

Prologue



This is a Personal Narrative and not intended as an Autobiography of my entire life.

It is primarily a very belated attempt to aggregate some of my experiences, mainly involved with Air Force service now over half a lifetime back.

The narrative also embraces snippets of my younger days leading up to Royal Australian Air Force enlistment, life considerations when serving and downstream consequences from military service.

Official accounts of military-related events can be rather sterile or maybe sanitised and are mostly somewhat deficient in first-hand recollections of happenings from participants. Numerous third-hand compositions often generate the emergence of inaccurate folklore, which compounds when further referenced downstream.

It is thus desirable that those who were involved in military activities convey their own impressions of events, albeit belatedly.

HISTORY'S PURPOSE

'... to reconstruct the past as accurately as the intelligence of the historian and the fullness of the historical sources permit.

Its purpose is not to serve the special interests of any group or doctrine, nor to furnish ammunition for polemics (controversy) or propaganda...'

— Father (Professor) Francis Prucha, 1972

Warriors sometimes encounter very ugly situations that can only be frankly described if downstream effects on participants are to be adequately understood and some accounts of events may be very confronting. But such recollections are often lightened somewhat by humorous incidents that helped those who were involved cope with the psychological burdens of military happenings.

Many cryptic comments in my flying logbooks regarding action events are not now recalled as much has since faded into the mists of time, so errors and omissions are inevitable.

Where people are referred to by their given, nickname or surname, it is simply for ease of presentation with no disrespect to their rank or status.

Armed conflict generally only emerges when political leadership fails and those who serve on all sides and their loved ones mainly suffer the awful consequences. But we are all part of humanity inhabiting the same planet and must thus endeavour to coexist in peaceful harmony post-involvement in military activities, regardless of any lingering bitterness over unpalatable memories.

Hopefully, this Military Reflections narrative might help create broader public empathy for those who serve in the 'Profession of Arms'.



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