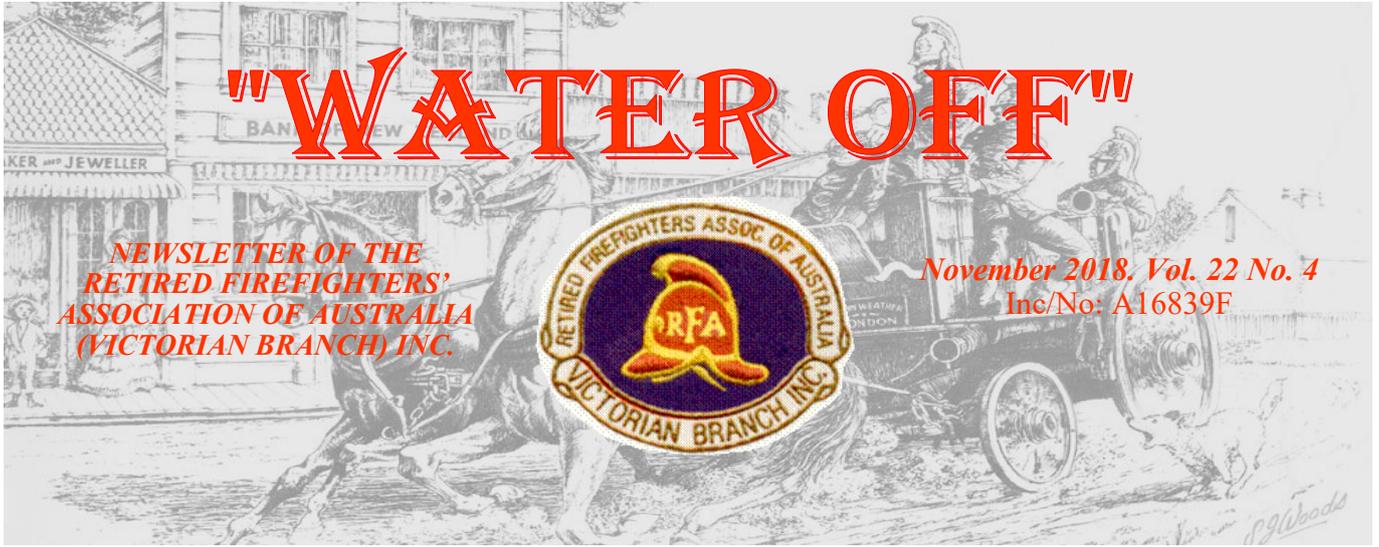


"WATER OFF"

*NEWSLETTER OF THE
RETIRED FIREFIGHTERS'
ASSOCIATION OF AUSTRALIA
(VICTORIAN BRANCH) INC.*

*November 2018, Vol. 22 No. 4
Inc/No: A16839F*



RFA Secretary to Retire

Allan Roberts has announced his retirement to be effective at the November AGM.

We thank Allan for the hard work he has put in over the last four years and the initiatives he has introduced to the betterment of the RFA. Allan is retiring from the Secretaries position due to ill health. We wish Allan and Bev all the best for the future.



MND STRIKES AGAIN!

Page 6

**More donations for research needed.
Please Support.**

Geelong starts CFA's EMR program

This announcement means that 31 of CFA's 36 integrated stations, and three volunteer brigades, are EMR-capable. Lucas fire station in Ballarat is also EMR capable.



Index

- 2 General Meeting Corio
- 3 President's & Secretary/
Treasurer's Report
- 4 Meeting minutes
- 5 AGM 2017 minutes
- 6 Gone But Not Forgotten
- 7 Who Dunit?
- 8 CFA—EMR
- 9 John Chambers
- 10 Viv Hyland
- 11 A day at the Zoo

**We know it's expensive to fuel
fire trucks these days but is the
picture above going too far????**

“GENERAL MEETING”

Notice is hereby given that the next General Meeting will be held at the Burnley Complex 450
Burnley Street Richmond

1030 Hours, Wednesday 21st November 2018

AGENDA ITEMS.

Minutes of last General meeting
President's Report
Secretary/Treasurer's Report
Guest Speaker;
General Business

Allan Roberts
SECRETARY/TREASURER
Address all correspondence to:
Allan Roberts
Unit 158 Mernda Retirement Village
89 Galloway Drive
Mernda Vic 3754
Telephone: Mob: 0433 007 720
Home: 9216 1658

Please come along, bring your partner and have your say in the running of the Association. Join in the fellowship of your old friends and make new ones.

Lunch available.
All wives and partners welcome
Please join us!

Non financial Members

Members be advised if your newsletter has an expiry date of 2/1/2017 that means you have not paid your subs since 2016 therefore if no remuneration is received by the 2/1/19 your name will be automatically removed from the mailing list. If, for whatever reason any member is unable to meet this request please do not hesitate to call the secretary, (confidentiality is assured)

OFFICE BEARERS

President: Alex Shepherd
Vice President: Colin Harris
Sec./Treasurer: Allan Roberts

General Committee:

Arthur (Sam) Capes
Mike McCumisky
Ian Geddes
Kevin Hede

Auditor:
Mike Enticott

“Water Off”
Editorial Staff
Colin Harris
John Laverick

SICK LIST (* In Nursing Home)

John Bellis	Brian Morrissey
Don Brennan*	John Orange
John Brown*	Dick Prendergast
Bob Brunning	Ron Shaw*
Stan Cameron	Jack Shelley
Huew Campbell*	Gary Spicer
Harold Connell	John Schintler
Stan Devlin	Alan Sugg
Tom Driscoll	Bob Tottle
Jack Etherton	Laurie Trewin
Ian Fowler	Ray Wellard
Barry Gavin	John Williams
Jim Gibson	Tom Williamson*
Eddie Gilbertson	
Bob Horgan	
Alan James*	
Lindsay McCurdy*	
Archie McLachlan	
Harry Mitchell	

Diary Dates 2018

November 17th Christmas Luncheon
Wed. 21st November; Annual General Meeting

Note: If you know of any member who may be ill please notify a committee member.

Don't forget the RFA website
www.rfav.com.au

PRESIDENT'S REPORT



Our meetings for 2018 has been well attended and I hope our Annual General Meeting is also well attended as it's in a great location and is catered for by the M F B and the Training staff of which we must thank them very much for their care and hospitality.

Over the past year we had a Bunnings BBQ and the monies raised we donated to the Australian Farmers Relief fund a worthy cause. one that touches a lot of people.

We have grown in membership in 2018 and I hope it continues to grow in the future as I believe there is a need for the Retired Firefighters Association in catering to the needs of Retired Firefighters to stay connected with each other be it at meetings or over the telephone.

We must thank JOHN LAVERICK and COLIN HARRIS for putting together our great newsletter Water

Off, I look forward every edition for its wonderful articles and pictures a great read. They are always looking out for new ideas and articles, so get in touch with them.

To all members and their families who have had bad luck with their health I wish you a speedy recovery and good health in the future.

Over the past year we have lost so many retired and serving Firefighters to ill health and age, we also have lost many family members to ill health and age, so to all we say our thoughts and best wishes are with you and **LEST WE FORGET.**

We cannot continue to grow and be stronger without a great Committee and we have one so thank you one and all for good work and I look forward to the coming year in working with you again. A big thanks goes to our Secretary/Treasurer Allan Roberts for his hard work and his diligence in keeping us on track.

To all members thanks for your support and confidence.
Alex Shepherd

SECRETARY/TREASURER'S REPORT

FOR THE AGM: 21st NOVEMBER 2018.

It is sad that we have sent so many of our members to the Fire Station Above.

To all the sickies please know that we are thinking of you and your families and please try to think positive.

Please give your family and friends details on contacting the RFA so we may be able to help you or your family members with support if required.

It is with great regret owing to my health that I have to give up being on the committee and as Secretary / Treasurer.

I would like to thank everyone at the MFB Burnley Complex, Senior Staff and Len Manning for all the assistance that they have given to me and Retired Firefighters Association.

I would like to thank the Firefighters at CFA Corio for allowing us to hold our meeting at the Corio Fire Station in August.

The RFA web Site has been running for 5 Years and seems to be getting plenty of hits.

Special thanks to John Laverick, for his ongoing help

to Col Harris with Water Off.

Thanks to Colin Harris and Mark Carter for helping out with **Gone But Not Forgotten.**

Secretary of the Retired Firefighters Association, Allan Roberts, on behalf of all members express our thanks and gratitude for the support that MFB Burnley staff collectively provided to the RFA members at their BBQ's following all our Meetings.

Allan Roberts Secretary

TREASURER'S REPORT.

Closing Balance: 1st OCTOBER 2017 Running account S1 = \$3371.37.

Fix Term 6 Months L1 Account: = \$7,181.30.

Accounts: \$1200.00 for Computer up grade and new Software.

\$100.00 to Lyons Club for special project.

\$1,000.00 for Rural Aid.

Australia Post Water Off. \$312.83

Allan Roberts Treasurer.

Peer support is available to Retired Firefighters and Associated Members

**Fairlie Morgan— Employee Assistance Coordinator— fmorgan@mfb.vic.gov.au
0407 665 174**

**Chloe Henderson — Peer Coordinator
0417 538 289**

**Scott Darcy – Peer Coordinator –
sdarcy@mfb.vic.gov.au – 0429 771 849**

**John Howe — Retirees
9729 0984**

Download the new VicEmergency app

The new VicEmergency app was launched recently and will replace FireReady this summer. The VicEmergency app is now available to download from the App Store or Google Play and Victorians are encouraged to download it ahead of the summer season.

The VicEmergency website has also been upgraded and a new emergency hotline released. The Vic Emergency app and website will provide warning and incident notifications about floods, storms, fires, earthquakes tsunami, beach closures, shark sightings and more.

**Minutes of RFA Meeting – CFA Station
Corio
10.30 Hours, Wednesday 15th August
2018**

President Alex Shepperd, opened the meeting and welcomed all including visitors present.

Apologies: J.Shintler, L. Lavelle, I. Dewhurst, J. Berry, F. Laverick and Brian Thompson

Presidents Report: Bunnings BBQ at Mill Park on 4th August was a success, with \$880.00 raised. The BBQ staff were a little stressed, as there were too few RFA members to assist, however, the President Alex thanked those who did attend.

Correspondence: A letter from a member whose wife had recently passed away.

Treasurer’s Report: General Account at 13th August = \$4,461.53 Term Deposit = \$7,181.30 Monies paid out: Postage Water Off - \$314.45, Members Subs - \$780.00 and a Donation to Rural Aid for our drought-stricken farmers was given - \$1000.00

Moved – K. Hede and Seconded by E. Patton and carried.

**RMD Report: (Retired Member’s Division) –
from Leon Trembath (RFA rep to RMD)**

The “Senior” firefighter magazine has received positive feedback.

It’s 35 years since first females were employed in the Communications Centre RMD are discussing ways of assisting retired members eg PTSD

Future RMD events. RMD Meeting to be held at Fire Services Museum 28/08/18

Retired Firefighters Christmas Luncheon, Docklands on Saturday, Nov 17th 2018.

Almoners Report: (Ian Fowler)

Don Brennan is not well, Ian Hookey and Ray Wellard are both out of hospital.

*Reminder to all RFA members to ensure they update their phone numbers and addresses.

Guest Speaker: Rob McVey – CFA Station Officer at Corio

Rob spoke about the new EMR role which CFA permanent staff have undertaken. In the short term, there has been an increase in the number of cardiac arrests. The Corio fire stations crews will be called to an extra 100+ calls per year dealing with EMR patients. This has been a positive outcome for the public. Peer support within CFA is increasing and benefits the operational crews. Recruitment is continuing to increase. We now have a new Emergency Services

Commissioner.....? Some of the CFA crew on duty at Corio were introduced to the audience. President Alex Shepperd thanked Rob for his great talk.

General Business:

Secretary reminded members of the next fund-raising BBQ at Hopper’s crossing on Saturday, 15th September 2018 and asked for more members to come along and assist please.

Retired member Graham Edwards informed members that if you down size and sell your home, under the new superannuation rules, you can deposit \$300,000 into your superannuation.

Meeting closed at 1130 hours.

Procedure Re passing of Retired Member

Liaison person to be notified {Retired SO Russell Hawthorn} Phone No 0409187945 HOME 97026249

Liaison Officer to contact family and offer the following,

- 1 Brigade Chaplain.
- 2 Brigade /UFU flag, Brass Helmet on casket.
- 3 He shall notify a Senior Officer and request Brigade involvement.
- 4 That being a rank of commander or above to attend funeral to recognise deceased member’s contribution with years served.
- 5 Arrange Pumper and crew from nearest station to attend.
- 6 Contact Fire Museum for use of No 8 pump.
- 7 Advertise date and time of funeral through RFA, RMD and other channels.

Consideration must be given for families wishes Liaison officer to contact Union Office for Families contact details.

RETIREMENTS:

L/FF Patrick White

SO Adam Myszka

L/FF David Pettigrew

L/FF Andy Riddle

SO Brad Webb

O/O Graeme Neil.

This is a celebration of OO Graeme Neil’s CFA employment of 40 years committed service.

Graeme’s retirement function will be held on Friday 16th November at The George Kerford, Mayday Hills, Beechworth.

Minutes of RFA AGM, 15th November 2017 at Burnley

President Alex Shepherd opened the November 2017 meeting and welcomed all.

One minute silence for the fallen members over the past 12 months – we remember them.

Allan Roberts spoke about the financial report for the past 12 months.

Motion passed Harry Floyd - Seconded Ian Munro.

Secretary Allan Roberts mentioned the Bunnings BBQ and the money raised.

Don Brennan is now in a nursing home and is going ok.

The Ozaman House BBQ luncheon did not go ahead this year as Oz House could not accommodate the RFA to a suitable date this year to cook for their clients.

Secretary thanked John Laverick and Col Harris for producing "Water Off" magazine.

Allan Roberts also thanked the management and staff of Burnley Complex for the continued support of the RFA and for the luncheons they put on each time we meet.

Treasurer's Report: Report produced for all to view.

Moved Len Manning - Seconded Ernie Padden.

New members this 2017 year amounted to 17.

Letters were sent to prospective retired MFB personnel encouraging them to register as RFA members.

Correspondence: Various cards were received by the secretary thanking the RFA for various positive actions taken over the year. Moved John Howe - Seconded Doug Overton.

Merchandise: Various quantities of fire rings, tie bar sets etc in reserve for members to buy.

Secretary Roberts then called for any nominations from persons seeking to be on the committee (all positions vacant). No nominations were received, therefore the current committee and those allocated positions are duly re-elected to those positions for the next 12 months. Moved Don Brennan - Seconded Ian Munro

The UFU – RMD nominated representative for the RFA for 2017 is Leon Trembath. Leon was re-elected for another year. Moved Len Manning - Seconded Sammy Capes.

General Business: Retired RFA member Phil Cleary,

spoke about the RFA website and the various special deals that Phil can achieve for our members by talking to various business owners. Phil encouraged all members to check into the website to view these deals on line.

John Howe talked about "Peer Support" and the 15 contacts were made in the past year from RFA members and their families to John and the MFB peer support group.

Nancy Brennan Thanked John Berry & John Howe for the continued support she and husband Don has received from these two gentlemen since Don has been in respite care.

John Schintler thanked John Howe and John Berry for their continued support for John as his wife's sole carer.

Sammy Capes showed the membership an old black and white photo of an exploded acetylene cylinder at a fire at the "Allen's" confectionery factory in South Melbourne about 30 years ago.

Guest Speaker: President Alex Shepherd introduced Brenda McAuley – Hines (Program Manager, Dementia Australia) as the guest speaker for the RFA Annual General Meeting.

Brenda spoke about the 150 types of dementia that people can get. Dementia is not an age - related disease. Brenda said that 7 out of 8 elderly people do not get dementia.

Brenda discussed the various programs available for people with dementia.

Many questions from the audience were answered by Brenda and overall this was a very interesting talk from a well-informed speaker.

At the end of the talk, Alex Shepherd thanked Brenda and presented a \$500.00 cheque as a donation to assist people with dementia via programs the organisation provides.

Ian Fowler (Almoners Report) had little to report, however, from the floor we heard that the following people were unwell – Peter Driscoll (sick), Fred Kerr (sore back).

Ernie Padden had DVD's on the History of the Fire Service which he kindly offered to the group.

Meeting closed at 12.05 pm and all adjourned to the courtyard at Burnley Complex for a BBQ lunch which was supplied by the MFB and cooked by willing employees and we thank them all for their generosity.

Valē

Carl Anderson

Michael Born

Wayne Crossley

Brendan Finucane

Tom Harrison

Phil Hayes

John Hookey

Viv Hyland

Jeff Jones

Merv Steadman

Murray Swinton

Peter Wright

We offer our condolences to the families of these members who have gone on to a higher duty.

Volunteers Required
The Fire Services Museum needs
past fire service members to
assist on an occasional basis at
the Museum
Please contact
Mike McCumisky on:
9662 2907

“Gone But Not Forgotten”

Murray Swinton

I attended a funeral of a comrade who I knew for a few short years. Leading Firefighter Murray Andrew Swinton, was remembered at a wonderful service attended by hundreds of MFB family including our new Chief - Dan Stephens, David Bruce and Ken Brown from the MFB hierarchy.

Good to catch up with old colleagues on such a sad occasion. Our MFB Chaplain Graeme Scorringle leading the service which was honest, absorbing, comforting and above all embraced the brotherhood and sisterhood we have in our Metropolitan Fire Brigade.

What a wonderful organisation, what a wonderful bunch of people who work seamlessly together, help one another and never forget one another when the chips are down. Well done Commander Paul Illman and Station Officer Pat McGrath for your honest appraisal of our Murray Swinton, the professional firefighter who cared and was proud to give his all to save life and property and to serve his fellow firefighters as the UFU shop steward for Southern District.

I first met Murray when rostered to Southern District in 2011 for the next 2 years of my career with the MFB. Murray loved the MFB, loved his mates and of course his family. As a shop steward, he was fair and only too happy to discuss where the job was going and about some of the decisions his Commander made at various times and about various topics.

Murray served the community for 29 years before Motor Neurone Disease (MND) took over his body, and life was now a completely different scenario for him to challenge, contemplate and above all to deal with. Wife Tracy, the love of his life was always there as well as his two sons Nick and Mitch. Collingwood Football Club representative, former captain Nick Maxwell was there representing the club, as was many of Murray's friends and family. Lots of Collingwood scarves and many dressed in black and white. Even the chaplain wore his Collingwood scarf as he led the service.



As the service was ending, photographs of Murray growing up were shown, blending in with beautiful music. There was Murray as a young boy through the years, wearing his Collingwood jumper and collecting the newspaper articles from the age of 10. Collingwood Football Club was like a second family to Murray. I was at the big game between the Demons and the Magpies on the Queen's Birthday this year at the MCG. What a day it was for Murray and his family. Once again Collingwood trounced the Melbourne boys and one could think that Murray's inspiration and enthusiasm before the game helped spur on the Magpie boys to a memorable win.

Some of the retired firefighters from the Fire Services Museum (Sammy Capes and Mike McCumisky) were there to carry the Murray's casket on the old Dennis 8 pump, long since retired from service.

Thanks Murray for being a loyal and professional firefighter, for saving life and property, for being a great family man, a joy to his many wonderful friends and of course a great mate to his other family, the Metropolitan Fire Brigade – Melbourne.

REST IN PEACE!

Merv Steadman

I spent the afternoon with John Steadman, his twin brother and his sister Kathryn in Gisborne. A celebration of Mervyn (Merv) Steadman's life was held at the Mans shed / Steam Park.

I spoke to John and Kathryn about their father, John a retired Officer 2689. He left the job in 2002 and now lives in Portland, with ties to the Coast Guard. We talked about their father Merv, John said that his father joined the Brigade in 1945 and left in 1973. His registered no was 307.

Merv was pensioned out medically at the age of 50, this occurred after a fire and explosion earlier on in his career. At the time a young Ernie Osbourne was his Officer, Merv was blown up at this fire and spent time in hospital.

For a period of time after this incident he was both

blind and deaf. According to John his father returned to work at No 1 where the orderly's box was commissioned. Merv was one of the first to use it.

Several people spoke today about Merv and his devotion to the Men's Shed and the Steam Park. His daughter Kathryn spoke about a passionate man, a man that had saved her life several times.

From the way people spoke about Merv I could see a man that was forthright, funny, understanding, compassionate and concerned for others.

HE REMINDED ME OF A FIREMAN

Gone but never forgotten, Mervyn Steadman was 92 years when he passed.

R.I.P Merv.

Russell Hawthorn

WHO DUNIT?



In the early 1950's Fire Brigade Officers and Firemen were members of separate Unions. Officers were apparently employed for 56 Hours Weekly, whilst Firemen were employed for 40 Hours Weekly.

During a General Strike, which was called during negotiations for a standard 40 hour working week, it appeared that seven (7) scabs sought Promotion to Base Officers and joined the Officers Union. One of the suspected scabs was transferred to the Kew Fire Station.

Firemen were called to a fire at the garage and chauffeur quarters at the residence of Dr. Cunningham DAX, (a prominent Melbourne Psychiatrist) near the Kew Mental Hospital, during this period of disenchantment.

Gordon Winch was allocated the duty of shifting the standpipe to gain maximum water flow. Recent street

re-surfacing had allowed screenings to enter the ground ball hydrant and prevented shipping the standpipe. Gordon attempted to clear the screenings with his bare hands which soon became bloody. Executive Officer Steele was passing by and said " Are you having trouble, Fireman ", and when made aware of the issue, joined Gordon in attempting to clear the blockage.

There was loud cursing, before the crew came back, wondering why they had yet to receive any water flow. They hurriedly put the standpipe in place, without flushing. Anger grew when it became evident that someone had tied an overhand knot in the hose. The water flow had to be turned off.

The firemen added another length of hose and turned the water back on. However, the nozzle quickly blocked with the flow of gravel from the standpipe. When the fire was finally extinguished, an enquiry was conducted to ascertain who may have deliberately applied an overhand knot.

Gordon Winch was exonerated by Executive Officer Steele, however there remained a mystery, " Who Dunit ".

JEFF PEIRCE
(Son in law of Gordon Winch)

TimeShares, Choices Shonky of the Year

For trapping holiday-makers into a bad deal for a lifetime

While most investments aim to deliver a financial return, the same cannot be said for holiday timeshare schemes. In Choice investigation of five popular timeshare programs—the Accor Vacation Club, Classic Holiday, Ultiqa Lifestyle, Wyndum WorldMark South Pacific Club and the Marriott Vacation Club—the financial outcomes we uncovered ranged from terrible to terrifying.

The shonkiest of a very bad bunch is the Marriott Vacation Club International, which has a contract term over 40 years in length. Choice found that visiting a two-bedroom apartment on the Gold Coast for one week in high season will cost a whopping \$450,001 over the contract lifetime, and \$154,823 is due in the first five years. This was 938% more expensive than similar accommodation sourced on a online booking site, which cost \$14,907 in the five-year period for comparable holiday accommodation.

Figuring out an accurate cost for any particular timeshare holiday scenario can be a difficult job, even for the financially astute. But any scenario assumes you're able to take a holiday every year (timeshare schemes will cost you every year whether you take a holiday or not), and that accommodation will be available when you want it. Chances are, you might have trouble taking a holiday when it suits you.

According to statistics from the Australian Timeshare and Holiday Ownership Council, timeshare occupancy sat above 90% in 2016, which is "considerably higher than the 72.5% occupancy rate all hotels and resorts in Australia".

With this in mind, companies selling these "investment" products are often quoted explaining that this is a lifestyle purchase and should not be viewed in the same way as investments.

For example, Marriott makes the point on its website that it's timeshare scheme offers the chance to "make the most of every precious vacation moment", promising to let you "live the vacation lifestyle". You'll certainly need a good break after attempting to navigate the ins and outs of holiday timeshare schemes.

In Choice visits to timeshare sales presentations from other companies, they found the sales tactics were likely to leave people feeling bamboozled or coerced.

A lifetime investment product that doesn't offer a financial return, based on an emotional purchase? That's Shonky. Contracts lasting 40 years and longer that could leave families in financial ruin? Shonky. Marriott Vacation Club snaring people in an especially atrocious deal costing hundreds of thousands of dollars? Downright Shonky. This so-called investment is the bad deal of a lifetime.

Source: Choice Magazine, October 2018

Geelong fireys respond to medical emergencies

22 Aug 2018 | Liselotte GearyViews: 1614

Residents in Geelong and surrounding areas will benefit from a co-responder initiative between Victoria's fire services and Ambulance Victoria to improve cardiac arrest survival rates.

From today, CFA career firefighters from the Geelong City, Lara, Corio, Belmont and Ocean Grove integrated brigades will deliver Emergency Medical Response (EMR) aimed at increasing potentially life-saving medical assistance at the scene of emergency incidents.

They are among 35 CFA brigades helping to protect more Victorian lives by responding to life-threatening medical emergencies alongside Ambulance Victoria paramedics.

The State Government has provided \$46.7 million in funding to implement the EMR program at all integrated CFA brigades over a four-year period from 2015.

CFA Operations Manager Tony O'Day said the program means firefighters and paramedics are dispatched at the same time to treat unconscious, non-breathing or pulseless patients.

As a result, it will become more common to see both a fire truck and an ambulance at life-threatening medical emergencies in the Geelong region.

"By working together we have a better chance of saving someone's life," he said.

"Our message to the public is: Firefighters take on many and varied roles so don't be surprised if a firefighter arrives at your door in the event of a life-threatening medical emergency and do not turn them away. Every second counts in emergencies.

Ambulance Victoria Acting Regional Director Duncan Erwin said the program was the result of a successful pilot and was already well-established at the Metropolitan Fire Brigade.

"In a cardiac arrest, what you do before emergency services arrive can greatly improve the chance of someone's survival," Mr Erwin said.

"Call Triple Zero for assistance and listen carefully to the call taker who can provide instructions for cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR). Any CPR is better than no CPR.

"Early CPR provides blood flow to a person's brain and vital organs, and means they have a better chance of survival when medical help arrives.

"Early bystander defibrillation through the use of Public Access Defibrillators increases the chance of survival even further."

Today's announcement means that 31 of CFA's 36 integrated stations, and three volunteer brigades, are EMR-capable. Lucas fire station in Ballarat is also EMR capable.



Geelong City firefighters Scott Ware and Catherine Hughes demonstrate their new EMR skills.

Image CFA Media Comms

BRASS HELMETS

About the late sixties, the district car came around to all of the stations one afternoon shift to collect the brass helmets and replace them with the white (plastic) poly-carbonate helmets. They didn't get all of them, as some of the fireys were on annual leave. The driver took them back to No.1 Station put them on the engine room floor and backed the hose carriage over and crushed them. In September 1984, I received a phone call from the store. They said that seeing that I had worn a brass helmet, I could come and collect my helmet for the cost of \$150.00 (they had two tea chests



full of brass helmets). I still have the receipt! Six months later, the store rang again and said there were three tea chests full of wood-handled axes. I went out in the district car and picked them up before the end of day shift. I had sold the lot for \$2.00 each. The phone was

running red hot – everybody wanted one. That's what they did in the fire brigade in those days.

Sammy Capes (ex-35 Stn, Retired Leading Firefighter)

A Brief From John Chambers

John Chambers (Retired District Officer)
Birth Date: 14-July-1932 - Where: Windsor,
Victoria.

Grew up in St.Kilda.

Schools: Brighton Road Primary School
Sacred Heart Primary West St. Kilda
St. Joseph Technical College South

Melbourne

Work: Engineering Firm as a Fitter and Turner in St.
Kilda

MFB: Joined Friday 24th August 1956

Promoted SO2 - 8th June 1962

SO1 - 14th January 1977

DO - 2nd November 1979

Reason of joining: Tired of working indoors. Also in
winter time going to work in the dark coming home in
the dark. My brother was in the MFB and enjoying it.

Station's worked at.

Fireman - at Brunswick (4) Coburg (6) Essendon (52)

SO 2 - Carlton (3) 18 months. Then placed on
relieving. Many stations and Districts, including the
following:

All Eastern, All Southern, Central: South Melbourne
(38), Eastern Hill (1), Batman Street (2), Richmond
(10) old & new.

Northern: - Ivanhoe (15) Greensborough (16) Western:
Deer Park (43) and Ascot Vale (50).

SO 1 - 1, 2 and all District Stations. Promoted to DO.
while at No.2, I became the last serving District

Officer. As No 2 was downgraded to an SO1 station
District Officer - At No.1 and all District Stations and
Acting Control Officer on occasions.

GOOD OIC's:

Outstanding ones DO. Jack Shaw (Yorkey), Ken
Wilson, Claude Selby
George White, Tom Shields, and many others over the
years.

Some Best Memories:

Where would I start? Enjoyed just going to work,
meeting different people and some interesting critters.
The district functions etc. Also, as District Officer,
arranging Sunday lunches by inviting other stations to
the District Station.

Hated doing race duties at Caulfield on race days.

The time officers were on 24 hour shift, being called in
to No1. To be the watchroom officer for the night shift.
Too bad if you had a busy day.

All good memories.

MEMORABLE Work Colleagues

Have to start with my shift mates at No.4 Alan Eley,
Jim Scarsbrook, Snow Arie, then later Alan (budgie)
Graham, a great team! It is hard to mention all the great
people I have worked with over all those years, but I
still remember them.

Large Fires Attended:

Bowater Scott - Box Hill

Naval Stores - Port Melbourne.

Fairfield Paper Mill store.

Tottenham stores 2nd day on joining MFB

Tannery - Richmond.

Plastics Factory Burwood - not a large fire, however
very interesting

An interesting situation: During an industrial
dispute where appliances were put out of action if gear
was used. In Western District, all stations were out of
action except being the DO at No.47. I could use the
car which carried hose, branch and standpipe. With a
driver we turned out for a house fire in Footscray, on
arrival found the back of house well alight and not
trying to use our gear we commandeered the hoses
from places nearby and ran the hose line from their
millcock, until the next stations arrived, which were
from Port Melbourne and Preston.

Who was the Chief Officer on joining?

CFO Whitehead

When Did I Retire?

5/09/1988.

Enjoy the job?

YES.

WHAT HAVE I DONE SINCE?

I like to travel: Australia - 4 x wheel drive over a fair
part of the country from bottom to top and from East to
West.

Overseas - Europe, USA, Canada, Africa, (top &
bottom) Middle East, many Asian countries and the
United Kingdom.

Sport: Lawn Bowls with MFB, Mulgrave Country
Club and at Mansfield.

Volunteering: Fire Museum for 10 years, St. Vinnies
Mansfield.

Ran a B&B at Mansfield for 2 years until family health
reasons intervened, we then had to return to
Melbourne.

Family: 4 Children - 10 Grandchildren - 8 Great
Grandchildren.

A couple of funny stories:

One day at No.3 Station, a certain S/FF arrived at work
with a dead carpet snake (which he had accidentally
killed in his back yard - oops! It belonged to his
neighbour).

Then, a certain Station Officer placed it on the front
floor of the hose-carriage all coiled up (looking like it
was sleeping - or ready to strike!)

Low and behold we received a call and the DO open
the carriage door and nearly fainted! Later on in the
day, a ute arrived from the store to pick up tins of foam
from No.3's store and of course the snake went with
them the time of foam. Stores people were not happy
when the interesting delivery arrived!

On another occasion, I attended a fire in Brunswick
and on arrival this chap came charging out of the place
stark naked and sprinted up the street and we never did
find him!?!?

John had many other stories to tell, however, those are
not for publication in his lifetime!

Stories by Viv Hyland - Retired firefighter in the 60's & 70's

I received a letter today, dated 07/07/18 from a retired firefighter Viv Hyland. (thanks Viv!). Viv joined on the 7th July 1961 and resigned 12.6 years later due to his wife being ill. Viv has written after a plea from the editor for stories to keep our "Water Off" newsletter relevant and ticking along. Viv applied for a position as a MFB firefighter and 3 weeks later a telegram arrived which set him on a career path he did not expect. (From now on it's all in Viv's words).

"Started training on the 7th July 1961 – just 20 years old. I applied to go to 29 or 37 stations – yeah right! Went instead to No.1's watch-room whilst I watched all the other 4th class firemen from my squad go to out stations.

A mere 2 weeks later I went on night shift". "Here you go lad, take these keys and get on the bike, go to the Melbourne Museum with a torch, meet the police and go and find the watchman and tell him to punch one of the clocks". Yep, just the place to send a young 20 year-old.

Meeting the police, I said "ok follow me, I have the keys." "No son we will wait out here" says the policeman. So, plucking up some courage, I walked along between the display cases to the echo of footsteps in the darkness. I didn't see the large glass panel I bumped into. Raising my torch, aaaaah! I screamed, as I looked into the eyes of a huge silver back male gorilla. Finally finding the watchman, I got the hell out of there!

SSO Des Pelcarno and I

I was sent to 29 Station after one roster at No.1 Station. I spent 8 months at 29 Stn. Whilst there, I was sent on a fire duty one night shift. I don't remember the date however, I remember the job. It was near a bridge over the Yarra River near Spencer Street in the city.

In the D District car was an SSO and myself in the back seat. I think he realised I was "green" and said, "stick with me young fella." We got to the fire duty and then proceeded into a great large opening which was black and noisy. I crapped myself. It was my first large fire. "Oh my God – I'm going to die!" I said to myself. So, I followed SSO Pelcarno into hell! I never forgot those words of wisdom "stick with me young fella" and whenever I was stationed with a new recruit, I would offer the same words of comfort.

What I can say about SSO Pelcarno is that Des was to me a wealth of information, gave good guidance and above all a fellow work-mate who one could trust and rely on.

Des may have a been a short arse, but he was not short on courage or manners – he was a gentleman. At 37 Station, the access from the station was by a 50 metre driveway onto Scott Street. Over the road were flats. In one of the flats lived a somewhat solid man who drove a meat truck and was as strong as an ox due to lumping meat into butcher shops on a daily basis. It was his habit to turn into the driveway of St. Kilda Fire Station, reverse out to face the direction of travel ready for the following morning. Des being the responsible officer that he was, was concerned that should the meat truck break down and being a large vehicle and not easily moved, may block the hose carriage from responding to calls. Des hopped on the running board of the meat truck and suggested to the driver that he not park on the driveway in case his truck

doesn't start and block the hose carriage from turning out. Now, this "ape" took one look at this twerp of an officer (a minnow) and started stating that Des's parents were unmarried and other nasty names and then thumped Des in the chest, forcing him off the running board step and left him sprawled on the driveway. That was a big mistake! The ape needed to learn a lesson. Des picked himself up, retreated to his flat and called the police, telling them that 3 firemen were going to assault him (the ape). The police turned up, spoke to the innocent and angry firemen including myself and Ray Hayes and then suggested to the "ape" that he not park and turn his truck in the fire station turnout area. This he duly did!

I served with Des for some 10 years until I resigned and headed to Queensland to join the South Coast Fire Brigade (now part of the Queensland Fire and Rescue Service). I was the third MFB fireman to join the South Coast Brigade and at that time, was somewhat backward from what we were used to in the MFB, however, it was a good place to do fiery work. There were not the number of calls that I had been used to (in the MFB).

The hose carriage was a converted body of a bus, cut short and loaded with a water tank and a hose reel and a small motor. I was used to driving a 6 cylinder fire truck that had a bit of grunt. Not this converted bus. Once we were going to a call, driving up a hill and a bike rider passed us – oh what red faces we had that day!

One day a call came in for a bomb threat to the Surfer's Paradise Post Office. We arrived on scene and people were all over the road. We looked at each other thinking hmmm? When suddenly the officer said "we're it, no bomb squad available today". "Does anyone know anything about explosives?" asks the officer. I put my hand up as in the past, I had a go at making my own bullets for sport shooting. The officer then said that as I was from the big smoke I was it! "No, hang on a minute, I don't know anything about bombs" I said (too late) as it was decided that I along with another fireman would go into the post office. Standing there sh..ting myself, I convinced myself to go inside the GPO. I also convinced myself, that if the bomb did go off I would feel nothing. The other fire and I picked up various parcels and shook them, listened for ticking sounds – nothing to be heard, so believing it was now safe we declared it so. God knows what we would have done if a bomb had gone off!

Note: Viv Hyland served the MFB for 12+ years and had to resign due to his wife's ill health. He moved to Queensland and once there, joined the South Coast Fire Brigade.

**Sadly, Viv passed away recently. We offer our condolences to Viv's family. Over the years Viv had contributed articles to "Water Off" which has brought back memories to many of our members. It would be remiss of us if we didn't publish his last contribution. Thanks Viv!
Vale Viv Hyland!**

A DAY AT THE ZOO WITH LES NAPPER

Les Napper, one of the MFB's most senior fire (then), tells why he never gives a donation to the RSPCA or the Melbourne Zoo?

Sometime ago, I went to our first-class Melbourne Zoo with some friends. I was leading the group, and as we were approaching the gorilla enclosure I turned to see if they were following. As I turned my head, I felt a huge "whack" on my chest. Looking down, I saw I had been hit with a huge pile of gorilla POO! Taking into account of the size of a gorilla's hand, you can imagine a lump of gorilla poo the size of a family meat pie. (Nice metaphor Les).

A foot higher (that's 300mm) and it would have hit me in the face! A zoo ranger nearby said to me, "no worries mate, it's all organic." (I didn't give two hoots if it was or wasn't). The ranger told me to go up to the office and they would help me get cleaned up. On the way to the office, a group of people approached me. Not wanting to be seen this awful condition, I ducked into a small building alongside the pathway. Alas, it was the LADIES toilet! As I stood inside, a girl came in, so I had to hurriedly explain what had happened. As if to prove my story, a young boy ran past the open doorway yelling "a man has been hit with flying gorilla shit!"

Eventually, I reached the office and the ladies there tried not to laugh behind their strained looks. They got me a bucket of warm water and detergent. Since the manure had penetrated my shirt, it had also touched my skin. The manager said he'd try and get me a T-shirt from the souvenir shop as my clothes were too soiled. When he returned with the shirt, it was bloody miles too big and I swam in it. To top things off, the shirt was covered in giraffes and came down to my knees. The manager said the Zoo would pay for the laundering of my clothing and for a taxi ride home. (There was no way I was going home on the tram!).

There were over 2000 people at the Zoo that day and I'll never know why the gorilla singled me out to lob crap at. I still have a letter at home from the Zoo manager thanking me for being a good sport, as well as a free pass if I want to return someday. Yeah right.....!

By Les Napper – a happily retired Leading Firefighter.



The World's Strangest Laws

Where is it illegal to pass wind in public? What about flushing the toilet? We're all familiar with the common laws of our own county, but what about those of others? When you're travelling overseas, it pays to know what is and isn't illegal. Find out which countries have the strangest laws – **number 13 will really surprise you!**

1. In Milan, it is a legal requirement that citizens smile at all times, or they'll face a fine. Funerals and hospital visits are exempt.
2. In Utah you are allowed to marry your cousin – but only if you are both over the age of 65.
3. In Dubai, you can be jailed for having extramarital sex. In the case of rape, both the victim and the criminal can be charged with the crime.
4. Forgetting you wife's birthday in Samoa is illegal.
5. When you're in Thailand, don't step on money – that would be against the law.
6. If you need to pass wind in Florida after 6pm on Thursday, you might want to run home first, otherwise you could be branded a public nuisance.
7. Flushing the toilet in an apartment in Switzerland after 10pm is illegal. Its government considers it noise

pollution, so you'd best do your business earlier in the evening.

8. In the United Kingdom, a pregnant woman has the right to relieve herself wherever she likes – including in a police officer's helmet!

9. It is illegal in England to die in the Houses of Parliament.

10. Selling and importing non-medical chewing gum in Singapore could fetch you a fine of \$1000. Even pharmacists who sell medical chewing gum but fail to produce identification can be punished with two years in jail.

11. It is also illegal to spit and litter in Singapore. If a person is caught littering three times, they can be forced to clean the streets while wearing a bib that reads 'I'm a litterer'.

12. In Hong Kong, a wife is allowed to kill her husband if she discovers that he's cheating. However, she must use her bare hands.

13. Last but not least, in Victoria, only a qualified electrician is allowed to change a light bulb. Those who disregard this law could receive a \$10 fine.

Which law do you think is the most unreal? Do you know of any other strange laws from around the world?

The Lunch Room.

By Alan Dickinson

The year is 1978. It is morning tea time in the lunch-room of a Government Office somewhere in Melbourne. The atmosphere in Government lunch-rooms around that time was regimental. Everyone had a designated seat and newcomers were told in no uncertain terms if they inadvertently sat in a seat that was taken. A taken seat was flagged with either the owners' lunch box, usually bearing the logo of the owners' chosen football club or a brown paper bag that contained their neatly wrapped sandwiches. Soft drinks and cartons of flavoured milk were all placed in the communal fridge but no-one ever removed the wrong drink or touched anyone else's food, it just did not happen.

Some people would bring a newspaper to work and leave it on their table with the intention of reading it during morning tea. I recall arriving in the lunch-room one day to find my colleague Graham in a foul mood; someone had stolen his newspaper. The next fifteen minutes were to say the least, uncomfortable, as Graham accused all and sundry of the crime. The atmosphere at lunch-time was restored when he arrived to find his newspaper had been returned.

The next day it was the same routine; his newspaper was missing in the morning then returned by lunch-time. The following day, I arrived to find Graham sat at his table, seething over the theft yet again when a visitor from another department emerged from the nearby toilets and gingerly placed a dishevelled newspaper on Graham's table. Graham looked at it in horror. It was *his* newspaper, the newspaper that *he* bought. The newspaper that he would read while eating, licking his finger and flicking over the pages. The newspaper that he would place his sandwiches on while he completed the crossword. The newspaper that minutes earlier was sitting on the lap of a person in the gents.

Using a pen from his pocket Graham carefully lifted the newspaper by its fold, carried it across the room like the egg in an egg-and-spoon race then dumped both the newspaper and the pen in the bin. From then on, no-one left their newspapers in the lunch-room.

The lunchroom was a haven, an escape from the stresses of work, a place free from phone calls from people who needed everything done yesterday. Albeit for only fifteen minutes, it was a sanctuary where



conversation was kept to a minimum. No-one told my colleague Michael about that policy.

I'd known Michael for many years. There was no shortage of friendly abuse exchanged between us, especially if he thought I was too driving too fast. He hated it when it was my turn to pick him up.

Michael just happened to sit opposite me in the lunch-room. He had the annoying ability to read upside-down. He would often slam his hand down on my newspaper or magazine preventing me from turning the pages.

"I haven't finished," he would say and his hand would stay there until he had.

He loved the sound of his own voice. He would pass comment on things that didn't even involve him, like, "How much sauce are you putting on that pie?" and, "Don't you know how to use a knife and fork?"

One day I was quietly enjoying my pie when Michael spoke, yet again, "Hey, Alan."

"Michael," I interrupted, through a mouthful of pie, "for once, just once, can you just shut up and give your voice a rest?"

Well, I should have made a stand earlier. Michael sat in silence for the rest of morning tea. It was bliss. After, I went to the locker-room to retrieve my cold sore ointment. I had a nagging cold sore on my upper lip and my ointment aided the healing, well, sort of, by helping a huge scab develop.

When I looked in the mirror I found the cold sore had gone. Completely. I was amazed.

I went back to the office where Michael was quietly working and informed him, "Hey Mickey, my cold sore has gone."

Michael smugly replied, "I know, I saw it hanging off. I tried to warn you when it fell onto your pie but you told me to shut up, so I did."

The author is a retired Telco employee responsible for maintaining communications for Melbourne's emergency services.

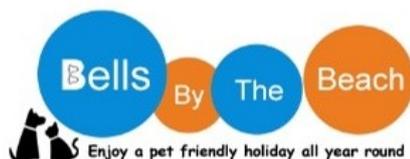
Daily Fitness

No 1 Station day shift (7-3) 1961, over the PA comes "All hands except those on special duties report to the Gym" on arrival SO Tom Draper had us doing the usual warm up exercised and after that told us to pair off for lifting drill, everyone scurried to match up with a partner and somehow, me a short arse was matched with this bloody big giant 6'6+ of about 20+ stone named Senior Fireman George Hancock, I had a crick in the neck just trying to look him in the eyes.

The exercise was fireman's lift then three times around the Gym with the partner on the shoulders. It would have been impossible for me to shoulder him

from the ground so George agreed to just flop across my shoulders, that drove my height down from 5'8" down one inch, with his toes dragging on one side of me and the tips of his fingers dragging on the other side off I went laboring step by step around the Gym and by the time I had finished three rounds I had to be 5'6" bugged and had the bells gone on I, F/M John Richardson (Just off recruits) would have been useless at a fire.

When it came for George's turn he just threw me on his shoulder like a sack of potatoes ran around the Gym three times put me down and was still breathing easy. He was a great man to have with you in a fire.



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As well as the Fire Rescue rings we now have sets of Tie Bars, Ear Rings and Cuff Links.

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**Copy deadline for Water Off Magazine
for next edition is January 18th 2019.**

Annual General Meeting-Wednesday 21st November 2018
Nomination For Positions on the Committee

Nominations are called for the following positions on the Committee of the Retired

Firefighters Association of Australia, Victorian Branch Inc.:-

- **President**
- **Vice-President**
- **Secretary/Treasurer**
- **Ordinary Member of Committee, Four (4) Positions**

Each position will serve for a term of one (1) year.

Please note that according to the Rules of the Retired Firefighters Association of Australia, Victorian Branch Inc, only financial members may nominate for any of the above positions and any member nominating must have been a member for at least one (1) year.

Nominations must be in writing on the form below, signed by the Proposer and the Secunder and accepted by the Nominee. Completed nomination forms must be returned to the Secretary at the address shown below **no later than 17:00 hours (5.00) on Friday 9th November 2018**

Allan Roberts
Unit 158 Mernda Retirement Village
89 Galloway Drive
Mernda Vic 3754
Telephone: Mob: 0433 007 720 Home: 9216 1658

Retired Firefighters Association of Australia, Victorian Branch, Inc.

We, the undersigned, being financial members of the retired Firefighters Association of Australia, Victorian Branch Inc. hereby nominate:

Nominee's Name

For the position of

Proposed by (signature)

(Print name)

Seconded by (signature)

(Print name)

Nominee Acceptance;

(Signature)

(Print name)

**UFU RETIRED MEMBERS
ANNUAL CHRISTMAS LUNCHEON
Saturday 17th November
Peninsula A Shed 14, Harbour Esplanade, Docklands.**

A reminder:

If you have accepted the invitation to the luncheon and through illness, or some other circumstance, find you are unable to attend, please notify the Union Office A.S.A.P.

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