

**"WATER OFF"**

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



*February 2005 Vol 9 No 1  
Inc/No: A16839F*

PRINT POST No. PP333964/0020

RFA Newsletter  
If undelivered return to;  
The Secretary  
6 Wingara Ave.  
East Keilor 3033

**SURFACE  
MAIL**

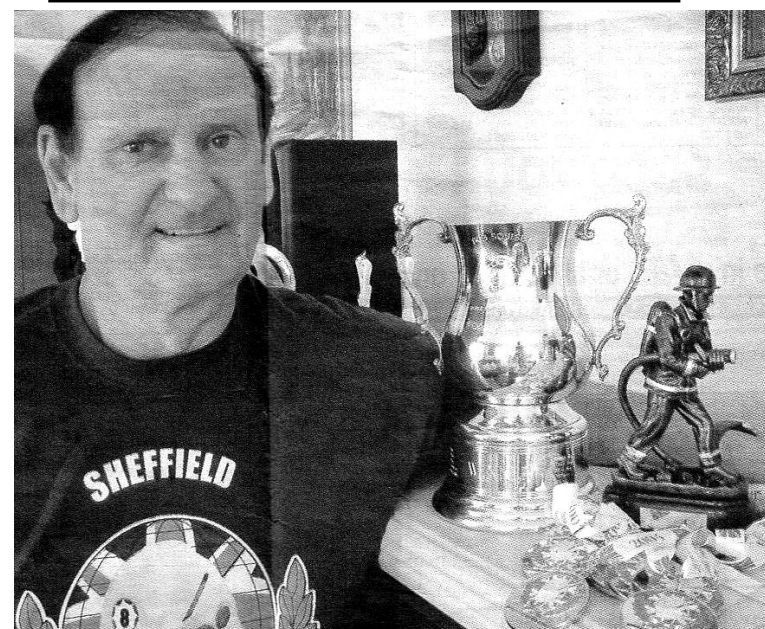
**Postage  
Paid  
Australia**

*RFA member Bob Soulsby has done it again and returned from the World Firefighter's Games with 10 gold medals from his 10 events.*

**AN  
AMAZING  
MEDAL  
RECORD**

Bob, 68, returned from the games in Sheffield, England, not only with a swag of medals but with his six World Firefighters Games records intact. He has held his six records since the 1996 games in Edmonton, Canada.

*Above: Bob Soulsby at home, displays his medal haul and trophies*



**FRANCIS CLIVE CHURCHILL  
OAM**

*Congratulations to Frank from the RFA membership, on receiving his award of the OAM, in recognition in the field of Social Welfare.*

*Frank has been a tireless worker for many years as former UFU Secretary, instrumental in the development of the Credit Union being on the Board of Directors since its inception and Northern Support Services for disadvantaged families. A long standing member of the RFA, Frank still finds time to attend our meetings and go fishing with his old mates.*

He took gold for Australia in the 100m, 200m, 400m, long jump, triple jump, high jump, discuss, shot-put, javelin and the 4x100m relay. A record number of medals for an athlete at the Sheffield games, but he isn't sure if it's an all-time record.

Bob is probably the only one surprised by his success at the games, which he attained despite sustaining a back injury a month out from the games.

He was a professional runner for more than 25 years until his retirement six years ago and has accumulated over 300 medals in his sporting career.

Bob was part of a team of over 200 Australian athletes which included a small contingent from Melbourne. "Gee, it was a surprise," he said of his medal haul. "But fitness wise, I was the fittest I've ever been going into these games."

The games were Bob's sixth, but his first visit to England and is hoping to stick it out for the Hong Kong games in 2 years time. But, Bob is modest about his future potential: "I don't think I would ever do it again to be quite honest."

Given his attitude, we're sure he will give those records a nudge again.

**"Well done Bob Soulsby."**



# “GENERAL MEETING”

**Notice is hereby given of our next General Meeting to be held at the Carlton Football Club Social Club, (Melway 29 G12) 1030 Hours, Wednesday 16th February 2005**

**AGENDA ITEMS.**

- Minutes of last General meeting.**
- President’s Report.**
- Secretary/Treasurer’s Report.**
- Guest Speaker**
- General Business.**

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 and beverages available.

**JOHN BROWN  
SECRETARY/TREASURER  
Ph: 03 9336 2492**

## OFFICE BEARERS

**President,** Mike McCumisky  
**Vice President,** Ian Fowler  
**Sec./Treasurer,** John Brown

**General Committee;**

John Laverick  
Ken McGillivray  
Bob McNeil  
John Schintler  
John Wallace  
**Auditor;** Theo Teklenburg

### Diary dates 2005

16th February: General Meeting  
20th March Reunion Luncheon  
MFB Training College  
18th May: General Meeting  
17th August: General Meeting  
16th November: Annual General Meeting

## VALE

Neil Allen (MFB)	Dennis Lamb (MFB)
Lance DeLuca (MFB)	Deb Miller (MFB)
Ian Heath (MFB)	Kevin Roderick (MFB)
Des Halligan (MFB, Shell)	

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

## SICK LIST

Jim Casley	Bob McLoone
Jack Gallop	John McLoone
Terry Harman	Wally O’Shannassy
Clarrie Hart	Graeme Simpson
Peter Heslop	Kevin Sullivan
Ron Kennedy	

We wish these members a speedy recovery

**Note:** If you know of any member who may be ill please notify a committee member. We endeavour to keep you informed, but can only do this with your help.

# REUNION DAY LUNCHEON Sunday 20<sup>th</sup> March 2005

**Our annual reunion day Spit Roast Luncheon will be held at the MFESB Training College**

in the Engine room in the lower yard at

**11.30 Hours**

**BYO drinks  
Tea and Coffee will be supplied**

**Cost: \$15.00 per guest, members free.**

Parking will be available in the top yard and also in the lower yard for those with reduced mobility. As the top gate will be closed, please turn right off Victoria Street into Flockhart Street, then right into Shamrock Street down to the wire gate to the training yard.

**Looking forward to seeing you there.  
Acceptance form below.**

## Reunion Day at MFESB Training College

**Acceptance Form  
Members Free; Guests = \$15.00 per head  
R.S.V.P. by Friday 11<sup>th</sup> March 2005  
Please return the slip to;**

**Mike McCumisky  
26 Roslyn Street  
Burwood Vic 3125  
Phone 9808 1659**

**Name.....  
(please print)**

**Your Telephone No.....**

**Guest / Spouse Name.....**

I / We will be attending the Reunion at the MFESB Training College  
619 Victoria Street, Abbotsford  
at 11.30 hours on

**Sunday 20<sup>th</sup> March 2005**

Please find enclosed Cheque / Money order

for the sum of \$.....

“Water Off” is edited by John Laverick, 40 Brunel Street Essendon 3040. Phone / fax 9337-9820. Email retfire@bigpond.net.au  
All articles accepted for publication by the editor are done so in good faith and no responsibility is accepted for any inaccuracies that may occur.  
Signed; J. Laverick.

## Hot Offer for the W.A. Bound Retirees

*When John Berry was Secretary of the Victorian branch of the RFA he had discussions with the Western Australian UFU Secretary regarding retired firefighters in that state. The result of those discussions generated a close link with the W.A. group.*

*John and wife, Elaine, while holidaying in W.A. called in to the union office and was made most welcome. A number of holiday concepts were discussed which would be of interest to our members venturing over to the west and this one below looks to be a bargain for retired firefighters.*

### SOULHAVEN W.A. BUSH GETAWAY

When did you last stand around a campfire and talk "bull-dust".

Retired Fire-fighter Muzza Venning gives mates rates.

#### Total Cost

\$20.00 a day bush getaway

One hour north of the City of PERTH

**No packing saga - Bring only sleeping bag, binoculars, camera, torch and fishing gear, all b.y.o.**

#### **You get**

Brand new accommodation in the bush on the Moore River.

Brand new bathrooms in the bush on the Moore River.

A.F.L. - all games broadcast on country satellite T.V.

Conveniences -phone, fax, internet, email, printer, copier, scanner

**Phone Muzza on 08 9655 0098**

**Email - Soulhaven@iinet.net.au**

Examples; 2 days 1 night \$30

3 days 2 nights \$50

4-days 3 nights \$70

Optional extra cost

Nearby roadhouse - paper, fuel tobacco, ice cream, film etc.

No sleeping bag? \$5 linen hire duration of stay.

Mini bush safari - total cost \$40 - 2 go your cost \$20 - 4 go your cost \$10 - 8 go your cost \$5

Types of Bookings

Mates only, girls only, couples only (no kids), family, father and son time-out.

Note; types of bookings do not clash with each other.

**IMPORTANT - This is a wildlife sanctuary don't bring your dog or cat.**

**Breakfast,  
Morning Tea,  
Lunch,  
Afternoon Tea,  
Evening Meal,  
Campfire,  
Pontoon Jetty,  
Canoe,  
Fishing &  
Best hot showers in W.A.**

### DOUBLE TROUBLE

This is the story of two Firies from a long time back. Now these two were partial to a drop? of Ale and this day they were very partial, and were walking home, which were quarters in a City Fire Station, both had the same Surname, but different First Names. They were spotted by a Police Divvy Van and as they were using the whole of the side walk, the Van stopped and one of the Cops got out and confronted them. "What's your names Boys" both replied in turn, their names.

"Brothers are you", "no," said each in turn.

"Where do you live", both in turn gave the number of the City Fire Station. At which, the Copper went THUMP, THUMP.

"Now boys let's start again, what's your names, and where do you both live". Somehow they convinced the Copper that they were telling the truth and were let go on the proviso that they went straight home.

Unfortunately these two characters passed away a few years ago.

## PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Welcome again to the RFA in 2005. Barbara and I wish you all a happy, healthy and prosperous year ahead. To those on the sick list, we wish you a speedy recovery.

My thanks to our Committee members, along with Don and Nancy Brennan and John Berry, their assistance and advice is both welcome and appreciated, along with the continued support of the members.

The AGM was well attended. As there were no nominations received for committee positions, so no ballot or voting was required to be held. The current committee members have agreed to continue their service as representatives on behalf of the members. My apologies for not presenting the 2003 - 2004 financial balance sheet to the meeting, for the members to approve.

There was much discussion during the meeting about the RFA Committee voting for changes to the UFU Co-Op with some information read out at the meeting. It was suggested that this might be printed in 'Water Off'. After some discussion by the committee, it was realised that this information would be well past the ballot date and would not be relevant this year.

Also our sincere thanks go to the UFU Social Committee and helpers, who as usual, worked tirelessly to give us that wonderful lunch at the St Kilda Town Hall, an event that we all look forward to with much enthusiasm.

I would like to thank our committee and members for their assistance in the catering area at the UFU Picnic

Coming up in 2005 we have our first RFA meeting for the year on February 16. At present our Secretary John Brown is negotiating the charges for the use of meeting room at Carlton. We may be able offset this by encouraging as many members and wives to come along and enjoy the activities and stay for lunch. There is a reasonable choice of hot or cold dishes on the menu and sandwiches to cater for most.

The annual RFA Spit Roast lunch is to be held at the MFESB Training College in the engine room on Sunday March 20, 2005. See page 15 for more details.

I look forward to catching up with you all very soon. In the meantime, take care and stay safe.

**Regards,  
Mike**

## SECRETARY/TREASURER'S REPORT



Our A.G.M. at Cariton Football Club was attended by 32 Members and as there were no nominations received for Committee positions. The present Committee stands as is.

Our Honorary Auditor, Theo Teklenburg was awarded Life Membership of the R.F.A. for his many years of service as Auditor. Without Theo's guidance, we Treasurer's would be deep in the mire, John Berry and I can attest to this. Thank you Theo.

Thanks must also go to the Committee of John Laverick, Ian Fowler, Mike McCumisky, Bob McNeil, Ken McGillivray, John Schintler and John Wallace for helping out at meetings and also their attendance in getting "Water Off" together. Even though Don Brennan is not on the committee, he and Nancy are always on hand to help, also John Berry still arranges the posting of "Water Off".

We would also like to thank D.C.F.O. Keith Adamson and Phil Lewis for all their help and keeping us informed on what is going on in the M.F.B. Keith

enlightened us to what was transpiring in the job now. The success of the First Responder recorded response under 4 minutes in most cases (7-1/2 minutes is the aim) and well over 40 people saved. The Training College has been sold for \$20,000,000 and Laverton Fire Station and surrounds sold for \$26,000,000 and all must go into property. The new College is to be built in Burnley Street near South Eastern Freeway, will be "State of the Art". The State Government allows 2 courses of 36 recruits a year.(over 3000 applicants for each course).

The sharing of the facilities with other services is Government Policy (Ambulance share many Fire Stations).

The Union Luncheon at St Kilda Town Hall on 20th November, 2004 was attended by nearly 600 members and what a great day. Retired members from NSW, Queensland and country Victoria got together and enjoyed themselves. Pleased to see the Minister for Emergency Services, Andre Haermyer attended and addressed us. Bruce Smith and the U.F.U. Social Committee are to be congratulated.



The Union Picnic at Moonee Valley Racecourse was again thrown open to retired members and their grand-children, and those attending had a great day. Once again the R.F.A. committee helped to set up and cook.

**Carlton Football Club Social Club... meeting venue**  
The vote was taken at our November 2004 meeting to stay on at the Carlton Football Club as our meeting venue as we were getting a good deal under the existing management. But things were looking grim for 2005 at one stage with the this venue coming under new management. They wanted to charge us \$200 for the meeting room plus \$2 per head for tea and coffee and of course pay for your own lunch. After long negotiations with the new catering management we still have a good deal. The offer being the room we use is free as long as the attending members have lunch there. **We are hoping the membership support our committee by coming along to the quarterly meetings and stay on for lunch after the completion of business.**

This Year we have gained 18 new members they are: Ron Turner, Robin Jackson, Ron Blair, Ray Holt, Kevin Weir, Roy Tucknot, Graeme McDonald, Doug Knight, Tom Reynolds, Bob Cameron, John Russell, Bill Thompson, Fred Panozzo, Bob Weitering, Noel Barnes, Terry Sloan, Lionel Sleeman, Brett Hume.

Member, Bob Soulsby won 10 Gold Medals at the Police and Firefighters Games. He entered everything except the Melbourne to Warrnambool bike race. Congratulations Bob.

**TREASURER'S REPORT**

As of 30.11.04  
Access Account \$1935.11  
Term Deposit \$4267.11

**JOHN BROWN  
SEC/TREASURER**

**RFA Committee at Work**

The U.F.U. Social Committee are to be congratulated for their work after a successful Christmas picnic at Moonee Valley Racecourse.

With Santa attending, carnival rides, fire appliances, competitions and races for all ages. There was something for everyone.

Members of the RFA committee including Don and Nancy Brennan again assisted with the BBQ, serving drinks, icy poles and lollies.

It's a great day and open to the retired firefighters, we hope to see more of our members attending with their grandchildren.

We do not have a date as yet for this years picnic but will keep you informed.



**Above:** RFA Secretary, John Brown waits for his next customer as John Laverick tries to explain to a horde of kids that the icy poles hadn't arrived yet.

**Ted's Birthday Bash**

Ted Osland recently celebrated his 80th birthday with a few old shift mates at the Fire Station (The old No15 Stn, now a restaurant).

Ted, far right in the photo, said he can't remember the names of his guests, so he's asked us to help him out.

Can you identify the other four reprobates in the photo?



**Obituary**

*The Victorian Emergency Services lost two men who made a significant contribution to not only the fire services but the wider community in general.*

*Although not members of the RFA we recognize the talents of these men and the giving of their time for the welfare of all. Below is only a very brief testimonial in their honor.*

**LANCE DE LUCA**

A page in the MFB history was closed with the passing of Mechanical Technician Lance De Luca on Christmas eve. Lance, at the time of his death, was the current longest serving member of the MFB Workshops with 35 years service.

Over the years he played key roles in the development of the Mark 3 and Mark 5 Pumpers and more recently the fit-out of the new Rescue Units. Lance was a strong supporter of the Fire Services Museum in Melbourne and, given that he did his apprenticeship as a boilermaker/fitter in the Victorian Railways, was responsible for maintaining the Shand Mason Steamer in operating condition.

In preparation for the MFB Centenary celebrations, in 1991, he led a team of Workshops staff in restoring the Pierce Arrow "Melba Pump" to running condition. In a fitting tribute to Lance the Museum displayed the Shand Mason and Dennis 8 Pump (along with Scania Mk5 Pumper 20) on the forecourt of the Chapel where Lance's funeral was held.

Lance was one of the "characters" of the Workshops and a master craftsman in everything he did



**Above:** Lance receiving his 35 year awards from the Director of Tech Services, Peter Whelan and Fleet Manager Rob Wilson a couple of months ago.

- proof of this was the fact that over 500 mourners attended his funeral. He will be sadly missed all who knew him and particularly by the Brigade and Museum.

**KEVIN RODERICK**

It is with regret that we advise all personnel of the death of retired Station Officer Kevin Francis RODERICK AFSM (Reg No 1929).

Kevin joined the Brigade on 27 July 1962 and retired on 30 April 1993 after 31 years of dedicated service to the Brigade and the Community.

During his career Kevin was stationed at FS01, FS 40, FS 46 and FS 42 on D Platoon. Kevin dedicated himself to the protection and saving of life, not only as a firefighter but also as an active member of Surf Lifesaving Victoria. Through these activities he was a key person in the development of the Westpac helicopter rescue service. His experience in this regard enabled him to play a key role in the development of the MFB Aerial Observers training program. Kevin boasted a long involvement with the Surf Life Saving Association Helicopter Rescue Service as a crewman and later on as Director, having closely liaised with N.S.C.A. Aviation Services and other associated bodies over a number of years

His contribution to the MFB, combined with his proactive approach to the fostering of inter-service relationships, resulted in him being awarded the

Australian Fire Service Medal on Australia Day 1989 .Kevin fought a courageous battle with poor health after having a Heart/Lung transplant several years ago and finally succumbed on the 4th January 2005.



**Above:** Kevin, Back row, second from left, with members of the first Aerial Observers course.



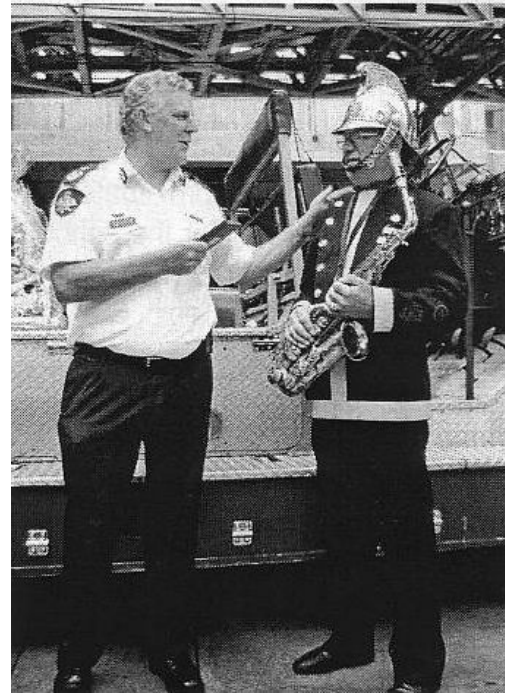
## “ONCE A YEAR CLUB” CELEBRATES 76 YEARS

On Christmas Day, the 'Once A Year Club' celebrated its 76th year of bringing happiness to the sick children and their families at the Royal Children's Hospital with a fantastic turnout of 50 volunteers. The Club is made up of retired firefighters, MFB staff and firefighters, Museum volunteers and friends and family; who, along with a double decker bus, museum vehicles and fire trucks, all donated their time to entertain the children. A donated giant gingerbread house was also well received.

Thanks to the organisation of the supply department, the Museum volunteers looked resplendent in their new wildfire tunics and their shiny brass helmets, and the clowns, bright, in their new costumes, rode the museum vehicles and bus to the hospital, sending Christmas cheer on their way. All wards were visited and children and families were presented with showbags and lollies and lots of cheer, remind us of the true meaning of Christmas.

The highlight of the day was retired firefighter Ian (Chooka) Fowler celebrating his 50th consecutive year of attendance. It was also great to see the retired doctors and surgeons who come to the hospital every Christmas Day especially to see the Once A Year Club.

Article and photo courtesy MFB "Fire Call"



*Congratulations to RFA Vice President Ian 'Chook' Fowler, celebrating 50 consecutive years at the Children's Hospital entertaining the kids and staff with the Once A Year Club. A record? Above: Dave Nicholson congratulates 'Chook' on his achievement.*

## Australian Securities & Investments Commission issues a warning

The Australian Securities and Investments Commission (ASIC) urges the public to be extremely cautious about phone calls or emails out of the blue offering shares or other investments, following a sharp rise in public complaints.

ASIC's Director of Consumer Communication, Dr Michael Dunn said cold calling complaints had doubled from August to September 2004. 'Criminals and con artists, operating from offshore, pretend to be stockbrokers or financial advisers. They phone or email you with offers of shares or other financial products that may or may not exist. Slick marketing, high pressure tactics and promises of high returns are commonly employed in ways that can deceive even experienced business people', Dr Dunn said.

More buoyant stock markets may have contributed to the re-emergence of these scams. In September last year, ASIC received twice as many complaints from the public about cold callers compared with August. We also observed an overall increase in the number of complaints about cold calling throughout 2004', Dr Dunn said.

'Furthermore, we have seen increased efforts by these con artists to swindle previous victims through 'secondary' scams, sometimes even posing as

investigators or lawyers acting on behalf of other victims.

'For example, one victim told ASIC that he received a call from a man who claimed to have tracked down the originators of a scam, and had managed to get some assets out of them, including shares in Ford Motor Corporation. All the victim had to do was pay him \$400 U.S. to 'process the claims and cover his costs'. Fortunately, this victim knew better and reported the call to ASIC', Dr Dunn said.

'We are pleased the public are becoming better informed about investment scams and alerting us to them. The well-informed consumer is the best 'scambuster. However as the sophisticated techniques employed by scammers are also improving and always changing, consumers need to be extremely cautious, and to reject unlicensed advice', Dr Dunn said.

'Once your money has gone offshore it is probably gone forever. If you want to invest, deal only with a licensed Australian financial services business. Licensed Australian businesses can easily help you deal in overseas investments if you want, and you have more protection if anything goes wrong', Dr Dunn added.

End of release

## A RETURN TO REALITY

C'mon you blokes, it's 10 o'clock and we're on night shift tonight. This remark by our "Senior" Mal Simmons, brought us back to reality. As much as we were enjoying our period of techniques with the nurses at Mt Eliza Royal Children's Hospital we reluctantly said our goodbyes and started on our journey home.

There were six of us in my Ford Zephyr and after glancing off the bridge at Frankston, we realized we had consumed quite a lot of alcohol during our few hours on the beach. As we pulled up outside the Windsor fire station, somebody suggested hamburgers. A quick nod to the 3-11 shift man on watchroom duty we set off for the Junction at 10.50pm.

On our return at 11.05pm we mustered, a very scraggy lot indeed. Sub Station Officer Kevin Smith was taking the muster, and many years later we appreciated what a difficult situation we had put him in. Start them? Send them home? Call the District Officer? (who happened to be Jack Bramwell, the very officer who had been in charge at Mt Eliza. After a lot of soul searching Kevin decided to start us, not say a word and hope for a quiet night.

In those days at 35 Stn, both District Officers, Jack Bramwell and Jim Parish, kept their cars in the courtyard behind the centre bay which meant the combination ladder had to be taken out and reversed back in.

Sure enough, at 11.45pm, Comb. Ladder driver front station and move the comb ladder out. Unfortunately, the driver was Mal Simmons who was drunker than most. He got the comb ladder out OK but after trying to reverse into the watchroom, then into the hose carriage bay, he was stopped and someone else completed the task.

We bedded down in our own spots, (remember it was 1958 and we did not have sleeping time). The back seat of the carriage, back seat of the comb, and my favourite, a top tray of hose with the couplings put aside and the air in the rubber lined length providing a nice air cushion. We slept fully clothed of course but did take our leggings off, (boots and leggings replaced by trousers late 1958).

0230, on go the bells. A mad scramble took place by all, put on the leggings, hide the pillows and blankets and replace seats, hose trays etc. As I put on my gear, the PA announced, "Hose carriage and comb ladder turn out for an exchange call for a house fire, Peel St near Albert St Prahran.

I threw my belt, axe and key into the front seat and started the hose carriage, as I waited I tried to sort out my bearings. The call, I realized, was just around the corner on the other side of the picture theatre. We

set off and as we rounded the corner - lo and behold - a weather board dwelling was well alight. I stopped the carriage and fortunately knew that a ground ball hydrant, tested only a few months before, was about 200 yards down Peel St.

Morry Kane, with the branch, commenced to run between the two houses just as D.O. Bramwell was coming out. Morry shirt fronted the boss into the front picket fence and kept on going. When I reached the plug, Bobby McLoone helped me straighten the hose, ship the standpipe and get water on. Considering our condition, luck was on our side and everything turned out beautifully.

We both retraced our steps and reported to the boss. "Fireman Kerr, send word back, fire in a single storey dwelling and under control." "And put your belt, axe and key on," he absolutely bellowed at me.

I ran back to the carriage, gave word back and reached in for the belt, axe and key. Nowhere, in the space of a few short minutes I went through seats, lockers, everywhere, disappeared.

Knowing the boss's reputation and guessing he was in a filthy mood because of "the bump" I panicked. I ran back to the fire station, plucked a belt, axe and key off the helmet rack and ran back puffing and panting. "What kept you so long, and you had better do something about your fitness level Young Fellow." I mumbled something about the radio being busy and

tried to merge into the still burning house.

When we returned to the station the boss only made one remark. "I will see all of you in my office on your first day shift." We adjourned for a cuppa and once again congratulated ourselves on a "great save." I also found my belt, axe and key on the floor near the watchroom. Apparently when I jumped behind the wheel I threw it too far over and it landed in the boss's seat and he thought the afternoon shift's driver had left it behind and he threw it out.

The next day shift as promised we were paraded before the D.O. Ever had a blast from Jack Bramwell? We walked out with our tails well and truly between our legs and heads bowed. There was never a next time for any of us, fronting for duty drunk with D.O. Jack Bramwell in charge. SSO Kevin Smith got a blast too for accepting us for duty.

Kevin, we never said thank you for putting your job on the line and saving ours. Thank you!

**It's the way we have in the Fire Brigade.  
F. C. Kerr**

**Knowing the boss's reputation and guessing he was in a filthy mood because of "the bump" I panicked. I ran back to the fire station, plucked a belt, axe and key off the helmet rack and ran back puffing and panting.**

## FIVE STOREY BUILDING GUTTED IN FLINDERS STREET.

As reported by The Argus.

Barbara McCumisky continues her historical series of significant fires and incidents that occurred during the formative years of the Metropolitan Fire Brigade

On Saturday night April 30, 1921, the Fire Brigade was called to a disastrous fire in the city area. A five storey building at 100 Flinders Street owned by the Sunday School Union of Victoria and occupied by the Union and a number of other businesses was gutted. The damage to the building and stock was estimated at about £40,000.

On the western side of the building was the warehouse of the Dunlop Rubber Co., but it was saved and unharmed, beyond the flooding of the cellar. The top floor of Dreman's Building, on the eastern side, occupied by the Federal Manufacturing Co., was damaged by fire and water, and the stock on the whole five floors of the building was saturated and a portion burned.

It was 10 mins to 10 o'clock when the alarm was received at the Eastern Hill Fire Station from two street alarms and by telephone from Dunlop's. In a very short time the Brigade was on scene and the fire was found raging above the third floor.

Despite the efforts of the firefighters to confine the flames to the upper portion of the building, the whole structure was enveloped within five minutes. It was then seen that all efforts would have to be devoted to saving the adjoining properties. As the top floors were burned through large quantities of blazing material fell to the floors beneath until the whole building was a mass of flames.

Crowds of spectators were controlled by fifty foot and six mounted policemen. All traffic was suspended in the section of Flinders Street between Russell and Exhibition Streets, and the Richmond cable tram was interrupted. When the theatres closed, thousands of people made their way to the Russell Street barrier, but by that time, the fire had died down somewhat. A sharp shower of rain at 11 o'clock helped disperse a portion of the crowd, but there were still hundreds who stood in the rain to watch the firefighters at work.

When the Brigade arrived the fourth and fifth

floors were well involved, but there was some hope of saving the lower floors. Two motor ladders were run up in front of the building and the fire was attacked from all sides. The front door had to be battered in to admit the firefighters who took a line of hose to the third floor to cut off the fire. Five minutes after they entered, a large piece of cement, from the ornamentation on the top floor, dropped onto the pavement and severed the hose. Simultaneously the flames came down the lift well, and in an instant, all floors were ablaze, the firefighters on the third floor seemingly trapped.

The men's comrades stood by ready to go to their rescue, but there was relief when they rushed through the flames and into the street. The anxiety of the fire chiefs for their men was apparent, as they stood at the door and counted them as they emerged. The men escaped with slight burns and abrasions.

This incident did not interrupt the operations of the Brigade. Twelve lines of hose were all the time pouring an excellent pressure of water into the flames. Men were stationed with hoses on the roofs of adjoining buildings, and the salvage corps entered Dreman's and covered the stocks with tarpaulins.

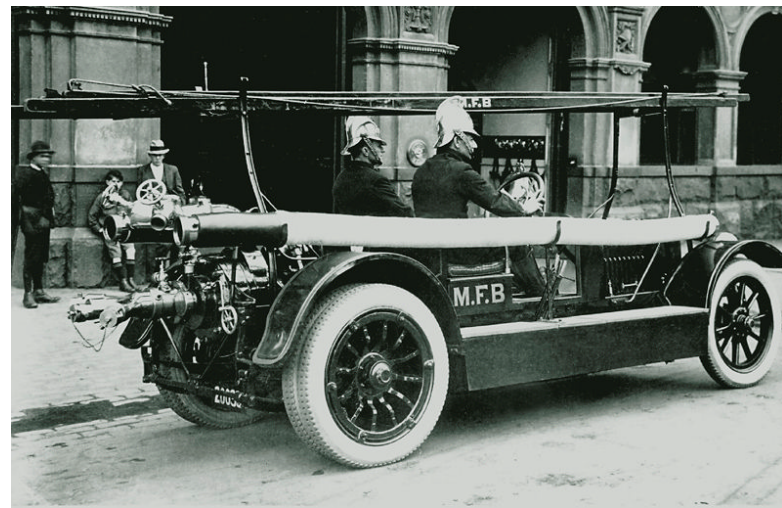
At the rear of the building was the congested warehouse district of Flinders Lane. The intense heat broke every

window in the vicinity and many firefighters received cuts from flying glass. A sheet of plate glass fell from

a great height onto the head of a firefighter and stunned him for a few minutes. His brass helmet saved him from death, but it was cut through.

By midnight the fire was well under control and Chief Officer Harrie B Lee was able to send some of the men and appliances back to the station. On scene had been 52 firefighters with four motor hose carriages, five wagons, four motor pumps, one motorised steamer and a motor salvage van. Assisting Chief Officer Lee was Deputy Chief Wilkins.

Barbara McCumisky



The American Pump which attended the Flinders St. fire. State-of-the-art in 1921, this ultra large was commissioned in March 1920 as Car 64.

## Answers to Who, Where & What? from the last issue.

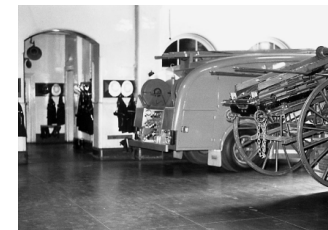
The Editorial Committee were delighted with the response to the "Who, Where & What?" segment in our previous edition of 'Water Off'. We are pleased to announce that two people correctly named all three photos.

**Congratulations to JOHN CHAMBERS again! and TED OSLAND.**

### The answers:

Who is this firefighter?

**Former Deputy Chief Fire Officer John/Jack 'Doc' Steel**



Where is this fire station?  
**It is the engine room 'front station' in the old Eastern Hill Fire Station, now the Fire Services Museum. The image was shot by B. McCumisky in 1973.**

What is this appliance?

**It is the old Morris Magirus gas turntable ladder which was commissioned way back in January 1915 as Car 17 and spent much of its life at FS 2 William St., City West where the image was shot. The firefighter in the photo has been identified as Jack Sexton.**



Some interesting comments which are printed below:

### JOHN CHAMBERS said:

"The firefighter photo is: Jack (Doc.) Steele. not sure from the photo if helmet is brass (Dist.Officer) or Silver( Senior Officer). He was an ex. Collingwood Footballer. As D.O. in charge of "B" District stationed at No.10.Hoddle St."

Fred Kerr actually had all the photos correctly identified, but as an active Fire Services Museum member and its President, he is ineligible for a certificate. However the Editorial Committee thought his comments are well worth printing.

### FRED KERR said:

"The station photo is: front station at Eastern Hill Fire

Station. A color photo would show whether helmets outside Deputy Chief's office were brass or chrome. If brass, photo was taken pre 1971. The hose carriage on the left was Car 174 which was transferred to No 47 Stn in 1968. The combination ladder on the right, Car 111, retired in 1982 and purchased by SES. It was bought by the Fire Museum in 1998 and still waiting for restoration.

The appliance photo is: the 87 foot turntable ladder, Car 17, outside William St Fire Station (No. 2). The ladder was assembled by John Morris and Sons England in 1907. Originally it was on a horse drawn appliance until 1915 and then mounted on a chain drive, solid tyred truck chassis. The ladder itself was a Magirus ladder of German origin and was used as a model for two other wooden turntable ladders, (Cars 53 & 67), built by the MFB Workshops at Albert St.

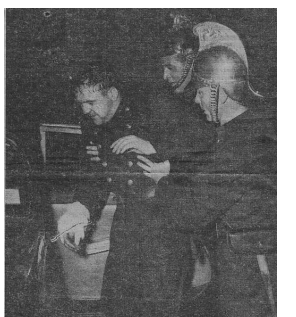
In 1954, the ladder was demounted off the old chassis and placed on an Albion 5 ton chassis. Until then it was raised by carbonic acid gas, but at its conversion it was changed to electric operation, (this was mostly a failure and is a story in itself). It was retired in 1972. Cars 17 and 67 have been lost. Car 53 has been restored and is on show at the Fire Museum, Eastern Hill.

The appliance on the left is a K.S. 5 International Hose Carriage, Reg No. HB 709, car 19, which went to Kew, No. 19 Stn in 1957. The fireman on the left in boots and leggings was on A shift, he was 5 foot 9 inches tall, had blue eyes and bad breath, Before joining the job he was a male model and part time actor. His name? ..... Wouldn't have a clue mate!!"

**On the opposite page there are another three photos, we hope you will continue to support this feature.**

## LETTERS

The following letter relates to "From The Past" which featured an injured Jack Gallop being assisted by two unknown colleagues. We asked readers to help identify



From The Past

I think the tall fireman on the left is my husband, Jim Reeve, he was on shift with Jack Gallop. All the family think I am right, it just looks like Jim.

Thank you for sending Water Off. I look forward to it.

Sincerely, Norma Reeve



# WHO, WHERE & WHAT?

Following the success of "Who, Where & What?" that we ran in the 2004 editions of 'Water Off' we have decided to continue the series with three new photos. We won't tell you who, where or what they are until the next issue of 'Water Off'. We are asking you.

What you can send us is something about the history of the subject; a different photo of the same subject; or a story (humorous or serious) about the subject. It is up to you.

We will then print the best replies that we receive in the next issue (space permitting), assuming of course, that the photos are identified correctly.

Many thanks to all those who responded to the

last "Who, Where & What?" and we look forward to hearing from you again.

**If you think you can identify any or all of the photos, you can either ring:  
The 'Water Off' Editorial Committee 03 9808 1659  
or send an email to:  
[firechaser@optusnet.com.au](mailto:firechaser@optusnet.com.au)**

### FOR THE WINNERS.

The Editorial Committee of 'Water Off' Have decided to produce a certificate for all those who correctly identify the photos in the "Who, Where & What?" segment. The certificate will be in color, in A4 size and will be frameable. It will include the name of the winner and the month and year. The design is expected to be shown and approved by the RFA Committee at the February meeting.

John Chambers and Ted Osland will be the first recipients.  
Good luck!!!

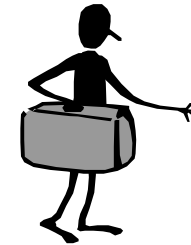
## Who is this Firefighter?



## What is this appliance?



## Where is this Fire Station?



# TRAVELLING WITH SILVER

Not a lot has happened since our last trip with family to Tasmania other than a November family trip to Merrimbula for a few days. We do have a trip to New Zealand organized for March coming up to compensate for a cancelled trip to Hawaii ... which is a story in itself.

We did go down to Port Cambell on the West Coast for a dirty long weekend, you see Mrs Silver and I have been together for 31 years. Who said it wouldn't last? A number of you lost bets on that. I was just a slow starter and believed in "try before you buy", the only trouble was I bought early a couple of times.

The old Port Cambell has changed a lot, we used to visit frequently, cliff climbing etc. and the lack of supervision was its main attractions.

Now the township is full of restaurants and plenty of motels. That had to come, but the visiting sites are all boardwalk and signs, even signs that say "In Australia we drive on the left". I guess nowadays with people not taking responsibility for themselves the threat to sue has bugged up what was once a beautiful, natural place.

Anyway, we enjoyed ourselves at a Best Western complete with spa and that was something to see. The two of us in the tub and when we got out there was 2 inches of water all over the floor.

**Last October** I had the good fortune to go to the "Boxing Hall of Fame" annual dinner at the Dome. Amongst all our champions, Rose, Famechon, Michael etc. were from Japan, Fighting Harada, From England, Alan Rudkin and from Italy Rocky Mattioli who, I hope, doesn't answer "A Bomb" when questioned at the airport re the contents of a small bag, like he did last year. Cost him a 24 hour delay, Bloody Idiot.

### Whilst at the dinner this following story about Elley Bennett surfaced.

Australia has had many great champions and Queenslander Elley Bennett is on that unique list of naturally talented. When Elley boxed in Melbourne, he and his trainer Snowy Hill stayed at The McKinnon Hotel where I trained as a young Amateur in 1946 and I boxed him on occasion. He was a gentle person who died in poverty.

A recent report in the Melbourne Herald Sun stated that a Queensland judge has urged Elley's three descendants to sue the Queensland government for allegedly holding of Elley's earnings in a trust that was never past on. For the last 12 years, Bennett's cousin, John Dulungdalee Jones, has been pursuing the matter



**Above:** The view from Silver's Port Cambell motel bathroom. The water in the foreground is the overflow from the spa after Mr and Mrs Silver jumped in. The SES was called in to rescue other guests and flood mitigation.

through the courts. However, his claims have been struck out because he does not have legal standing to launch the case.

The beneficiaries of the estate have been given 2 months to re-file their pleadings before the case will be dismissed forever, so the Herald Sun report said, Bennett was a bantamweight and featherweight champion of Australia between 1948 and 1954, and the majority of the money from his title fights was put into trust. Mr Jones calculated that with interest, the estate would be owed more than 18 million dollars. R.I.P. Elley.

### Happy Travelling Silver

## Right Ball - Wrong Call

A man staggered into an emergency room with two black eyes and a golf club wrapped tightly around his throat. Naturally the doctor asks him what happened. "Well, it was like this," said the man. "I was having a quiet round of golf with my wife when she sliced her ball into a cow paddock. We went to look for it and while I was rooting around, I noticed one of the cows had something white at its rear end. I walked over and lifted up the tail and sure enough, there was my wife's golf ball - stuck right in the middle of the cow's butt. That's when I made my mistake."

"What did you do?" asks the doctor.  
"Well, I lifted the tail and yelled to my wife, "Hey, this looks like yours!"



# Memoir of *The Victorian Country Fire Service*

by Lt-Col. T. S. MARSHALL

Published in 1930, details the Victorian Country Fire Service during the period 1854 to 1930.

The Country Fire Brigades Board was created by the Act of 1891, at that time there were 72 Fire Brigades in the Country area. The first Chief Officer was Captain W.H.HENNAH, at the time of his appointment was in command of the BALLARAT CITY FIRE BRIGADE.

In 1892, the position of the Office of Chief Officer and Secretary were amalgamated, thus saw the demise of Chief Officer HENNAH.

In 1894 the Board reverted to the dual control of a Secretary and a Chief Officer. Lt-Col. T. S. MARSHALL was appointed the second Chief Officer of the Victorian Country Fire Brigades Board and served

for the next 32 years, during this time a further 72 Country Fire Brigades were established.

Lt-Col. T. S. MARSHALL was employed by the Victorian Education Department, during this time served as an Officer with the Victorian Volunteer Rifles as well as serving with the Fire Service.

He was involved with the Victorian country and Melbourne suburban fire services from 1860's prior to his appointment as Chief Officer of the Country Fire brigades Board in 1894. He was for nine years Captain of CHILTERN and six years Captain of FLEMINGTON and KENSINGTON FIRE BRIGADES.

## The Victorian Country Fire Service:- (Continued from the November 2004 edition.)

### 1872. District Competitions.-

The prevalence of hose reels throughout the city and country, and the practice with them being common to all, induced district and neighbouring brigades almost everywhere to hold competitions. The rivalry thus engendered was a great factor in improving the efficiency of the brigades, and these local efforts and strenuous competitions were undoubtedly the means of establishing our Annual Demonstrations which, throughout so many years, have become so increasingly popular, and have so greatly improved the efficiency, discipline and esprit de corps of our fire service.

At this period Melbourne could only claim one permanent brigade, a very fine one maintained by the Insurance Companies, and several private brigades. The suburban brigades were maintained by the councils, business firms, breweries taking the lead, and several volunteer brigades

Lt.-Col. T. S. Marshall



raised and maintained as in the country. Among the business brigades were the Carlton, Abbotsford, and Yorkshire Breweries, and the Albion and Halstead and Kerr's timber workers Simpson's Road was prominent for many years as a semi-private brigade.

1873. Almost all the metropolitan suburban councils maintained their brigades partially or wholly, so that the city and suburbs could account for about 30 brigades, and the country about double that number. With such a number of brigades, the time was deemed ripe to arrange for a Demonstration in Melbourne, but it was astonishing the meagre support that was given by the city and suburban brigades to this proposal.

### The First Demonstration.-

This demonstration, open to all brigades, Metropolitan and Country, was carried out by the Melbourne brigades, under the superintendence of Joseph Hoad, chief of the Melbourne Insurance brigade, on the 26th and 27th May, 1873. It was held in Spring Street, the run being from the Model Schools to the top of Bourke Street. The arrangements were excellent, the ground being well guarded by police and 70 men of the local defence force.

Scant notice was taken by the local press of the display. It was summed up thus: "On several occasions the men started with hose reels from the Model School and ran to the plug opposite the Princess Theatre and had the water ready for a fire within the minute."

Unfortunately accidents occurred, one very serious, to Fireman Goding during the day. Goding met with his accident in the most spectacular event of the demonstration, jumping from the roof of the Imperial Hotel at the top of



Above: The first demonstration at the top end of Bourke St as Fireman Goding jumps from the Imperial Hotel roof to the loosely held jump sheet

Talbot, 24; Sebastopol, 16; and Smythesdale, 15. Total, 393.

### First Meeting of Captains.-

This meeting was held after the Torchlight Procession, the following brigades, represented by their respective captains, answering the roll call:-Ballarat, Ballarat City, Sandhurst No. 1, Geelong, Daylesford, Talbot, Creswick and Clunes. Collingwood and Emerald Hill represented Melbourne and suburbs. Superintendent Connelly (Sandhurst) was appointed chairman. Capt. Glover, Ballarat City, moved, and Capt. Kennedy, Sandhurst No. 1, seconded, the following motion: "That the United Insurance Fire Brigades' Committee be requested to have a Bill, to be called the United Fire Brigades' Act, framed, and to forward the draft of same to every district in the colony prior to it being introduced to Parliament." The motion was carried. It will thus be seen that three of our pioneers, Connelly, Glover, and Kennedy, set the ball rolling that led to all brigades, town and country, being brought under the present Act, but it was not until nineteen long years had elapsed that the goal was reached.

**Next issue:** The first Geelong demonstration and the establishment of the Metropolitan Association.

Bourke Street into a jumping sheet held by his mates. The canvas sheet, having been held too loosely, collapsed with Goding's weight, and he crashed on to the footpath, injuring himself very seriously. The Melbourne brigade authorities had him attended to carefully, and, although he was badly knocked about, he was appointed to a physically easy job, which he held until his death many years afterwards.

### The Torchlight Procession.-

The Torchlight Procession was the first held by firemen in Melbourne, and, according to the press reports, it was a great success. This result was due almost entirely to the country firemen, as out of 460 firemen who took part in it, 393, representing 14 brigades, were from the country, while Melbourne and suburbs, from seven brigades, sent only 67 men. It may be interesting to the present generation of firemen to learn the names with the strength of each country brigade that attended the first demonstration 56 years ago. They were Ballarat, 40 men; Ballarat City, 54; Sandhurst No. 1, 28; Sandhurst City, 78; Sandhurst Temperance, 35; Geelong, 16; Daylesford, 24; Newtown and Chilwell, 12; Castlemaine, 18; Creswick, 17; Clunes, 16;