

# "WATER OFF"

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



May 2014 Vol 18 No 2  
Inc/No: A16839F

## Reminder!

Next Meeting  
May 21st @ 1030am  
MFB Training College  
450 Burnley St Richmond  
To Be Held In Course  
Messroom at Back  
Not Usual Meeting Room

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**HAZELWOOD**

Image courtesy; The Australian Firefighter

# “GENERAL MEETING”

Notice is hereby given that the next General Meeting will be held at the MFB Training College, 450 Burnley Street Richmond.

**1030 Hours, Wednesday 21st May 2014**

## **AGENDA ITEMS.**

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

**JOHN BERRY  
SECRETARY/TREASURER  
Please Note;  
Address all correspondence to:  
The Secretary,  
24 Lincoln Drive Lower Plenty 3093  
Ph. 9431 2880**

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  
Please join us!**

## **Non financial Members**

Members be advised if your newsletter has an expiry date of 2/1/2013 that means you have not paid your subs since 2012 therefore if no remuneration is received by the 2/1/15 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,** Don Brennan  
**Vice President,** Ian Fowler  
**Sec./Treasurer,** John Berry

**General Committee;**  
Arthur (Sam) Capes  
Mike McCumisky  
Alan Roberts  
John Schintler

**Auditor;**  
Theo Teklenburg

**“Water Off”  
Editorial Staff  
John Laverick  
Barbara McCumisky**

## **Valē**

Peter Boyle (MFB)  
Ted Dyson (MFB)  
Laurie Gosetti (MFB)  
George Hodder (MFB)  
George Howes (MFB)  
Bill Icke (CFA)  
John Locke (MFB)

Des Longton (MFB)  
Bob McNeil (MFB)  
Godfrey Payne (MFB)  
Barry Puddy (MFB)  
Ern Tamme (MFB)

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

## **SICK LIST** (\* In Nursing Home)

Stan Cameron  
Huew Campbell\*  
Ernie Goodall\*  
Clarrie Guthrie\*  
Clarrie Hart  
Jack Sexton  
Brian Trembath  
John Wallace  
Tom Williamson

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.

## **Diary Dates 2014**

May 21st General Meeting  
August 20th General Meeting  
November 19th; Annual General Meeting  
**November 15th Annual Christmas Luncheon  
11.30 am. Malvern Town Hall**

## PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Since our last meeting Nancy and I have had a 3 week trip to China and 4 days in Hong Kong on the way home. Beijing with a population of 23 million is shrouded in smog and mist. On one day whilst visiting the Olympic site you could hardly see 200 metres in front of you (and our Governments worry about pollution here).

The weather overall was good temperature wise, 22 – 24 degrees. We covered plenty of km's by air with 8 flights in total. On our bus we had 29 people 50/50 English and Australian with 2 thirds having contacted a coughing virus. We were not exempt from this and continued to have the cough for a week after we arrived home.

In our next issue I will give a detailed report on the trip which overall was a very enlightening experience.

Whilst in Hong Kong, just down from our hotel, we found where our Secretary spent his super money – in a posh restaurant called “Ant One”. I hope he gets a good return on his investment and lets the taxation department know about it.

Hoping to see as many as possible at our next meeting  
**Don Brennan**



**Above;** *The front entrance to the “Ant One Restaurant” on Lung Poon Street. Don and Nancy had just been thrown out for making disparaging remarks about the owner.*

## SECRETARY/ TREASURER'S REPORT

It is interesting that the second quarter of the new calendar year has again been one of highs and many lows. I will keep to the highs to this article and the lows will be covered in the **Gone but not forgotten** article of the newsletter.

Let's start with the new name cards we have had printed, in August of last year **John Wallace** gave me an example of a small Home Emergency Information booklet that would be a valuable resource for members to have. Then lo and behold **Russell Mawson** showed me a very similar concept which the Orchid Society, of which he is a member, have incorporated in their name card. Now seeing that we had run out name cards and were searching to obtain new ones, (less member's name) we were able to have 2000, minus plastic holders, printed for less than \$200. They will be on show at the May meeting, in fact if time permits the members in attendance will have their current one replaced.

The next item is about the RFA's Web site, if you remember at the August meeting 2013 one of our members volunteered to assist us in developing the concept further, **Ian Dewhurst** was the person, however because of pressing needs, which were outside of our control (my highchair was stolen), we were unable to proceed until after the start of the new year.

In the meantime we had another member, **Phil Cleary**, contact us to offer his assistance. Meetings were arranged at which various members of the committee attended. I was fortunate enough to attend both where the ideas & concepts were exhibited. I must say in my eyes both were very professional, in fact, words do not give them the

praise they both deserve. Therefore, the committee have invited both Ian & Phil along to the May meeting, therein giving all in attendance the opportunity of a presentation to hear & see both concepts and vote on the one most suited to meet the RFA's needs for now and into the future.

The fact is the more in attendance the better it will be, we are talking about taking the RFA of Vic Inc. into that global phenomenon **the World Wide Web**. The committee want the members to be aware of just what they will be voting for, understand your committee act as the vehicle to give each and every one of you in attendance the opportunity to select the one you believe is the most suitable for now and into the future. Remember, you the members will be making the decision.

Another bit of good news, if down Geelong way, at the beach in particular, watch out for a short silver headed gentleman running up and down the sand dunes, retired member **Mr John Cotter** has thrown off the shackles of the poor health which were holding him back. Now under the new regime that Olive has him on I am seriously looking at having him run the **One Man Marshall** in the next competitions, trust me - would I tell untruths?

Another high the old bloke you have playing the role of Secretary will be stepping down after the May meeting, there is no doubt he is way passed his use by date. The fact is he is similar to that bottle of wine you were keeping that has well & truly gone past its use by date and has now turned into very poor red wine vinegar, one that you need to pour down the drain. He did say he would look after the books until they are audited by Theo. The one thing I can tell you for sure is, he will never forget the trust you have always shown him, that to him has been the one thing which has made the role worth doing but now he needs a break.

*(Continued on page 4)*

(Continued from page 3)

**One other major item of interest, the MFB my old employer has a new CEO, a Mr Jim Higgins from the Victorian Department of Human Services, he joined them in 2008, and his position was the Executive Director of Corporate Services. Prior to that Mr Higgins spent 13 years with the Queensland Ambulance Service, reaching the position of CEO. On behalf of the members & committee of the RFA, we welcome you to this unique service. We hope that at some time in the future we may be able to entice you to break bread with us at one of our days.**

The May meeting we will, apart from Ian & Phil, have a talk by **David Whyte from the Firefighters Credit Cooperative**, David often assists, not only current members of the services but also retirees, with his guidance in many ways which often goes unnoticed. What

is the old saying? **To be forewarned is to be forearmed** he has a great deal knowledge that can be of assistance to all.

The final item, I recently attended the funeral of Godfrey Payne, his family had requested no flowers instead donations to be forwarded to the Firefighters Charity Fund Melbourne. Eric Anderson attended on their behalf and collected \$255.65 with two donation buckets. Members wanting to make a donation to the charity can do so on line or through the Firefighters Credit Cooperative. Members may not be aware the Fund has been making substantial donations to the Children's Hospital to purchase medical equipment.

In closing we know not all families are going through the best of times, give us a ring what is that old Chinese saying? Many hands make light work, who knows we just may be of assistance. **John Berry**

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## Meeting Minutes 19th February 2014 MFB Training College.

Don Brennan - President, John Berry - Sec/Treasurer,  
Ian Geddes - Minutes.

Don opened Meeting.

Present - 58

Apologies - 10

Sick List - Ron Rae recovering, currently walking and speech is improving.

New Member attendee - Ray Curtis - Western, Northern & R & D.

### Secretary/Treasurer Report:

John - Minutes of Corio Fire Station Meeting, August 2013, Moved - Harry Floyd minutes be Accepted

Seconded - Ernie Paddon Carried

Accounts S1 \$6,081.00 I1 \$6,381.42

### Business Arising from Meeting:

John Berry - R.F.A. website. Discussions ongoing, but control has to be maintained within R.F.A.

Jack Moore suggested that we should not become too professional, after all we are just a social group. Allan Roberts spoke of R.F.A. and the need for it to keep up with the real world, it cannot remain in the past we are already well known here, interstate & overseas. If we don't keep advancing it will not be long before we will cease to exist. We must plan for the future now

### Presidents Report:

Ozanam House - trying to organize for late April/May - If available Contact President

The RFA was well represented at Bob McNeil's (RFA Foundation & Life Member) service -

Tom Williamson and Peter Coulson health updates.

Rod Knowles spoke in support of the President's comments re: Ern Tamme's. passing and of his many contributions to the working conditions of Firefighters.

### General Business:

Ellen Churchill thanked the R.F.A. on behalf of her grand-son Stephen for the article in the newsletter.

Geoff Mays - (Retired Aviation Fire Fighter) spoke about Cliff Dunn's wonderful contribution to the UFU .

Sammy Capes raised the point it would be of a great advantage to have in the newsletter, notification of WHERE/WHICH Nursing Home certain sick retirees may be staying .The Secretary reported privacy rules prohibit general distribution of these details.

Allan Roberts reported on the email from the U.F.U. Social Committee Secretary Nick Draper, expressing his committee's appreciation of the RFA's committee members for their continuing support at the UFU'S picnic by cooking/helping at Moonee Valley Sunday (February 16th).

Ian Fowler - Reported to the members not to forget the annual luncheon on the last Thursday in July at the Southport Yacht Club Queensland. This is a great day organized by the Coulson's & Fagernes.

Aviation Firefighters, Officers Chris Quinn, Paul Gray, & David Léopold attended & addressed the meeting regarding the capabilities of the Airport firefighting appliance they had parked in the drill yard for viewing.

Following the yard demonstration The Secretary, on behalf of the members, thanked the 3 officers for their informative lecture and demo, The facts & operational ability of the appliance was quite staggering which made it easy to understand why they are being called-on to assist at all types of emergency now.

The Aviation members were invited to join with us for lunch.

### **Meeting closed 12 noon.**

During the luncheon break the RFA members presented to each of our visitors an RFA Barbecue Apron as a small gift of appreciation for their attendance.

Andrew Brennan and some of his staff again, because of his organizational skills, made the day a great success. The luncheon barbecue was a winner.

Ian Geddes, who resigned from the committee at the AGM has again stepped into the Minutes Secretary role again, following a long conversation with A. Roberts & H Floyd. Let it be placed on record his assistance is greatly appreciated by all of the Committee.

## RFA Subscriptions

In the February edition of the newsletter we placed an information article relating to subscriptions, re subs, dates and how to pay by electronic debit etc. Unfortunately, unbeknown to us, we had been issued with a new account number for the electronic transfer, thus preventing some members from being able to make the transfer.

Another problem we had, one member failed to add his name for reference, now we have no idea who made the payment through the CBA Bank on the 13/2/2014. If you are that person will you please contact me and give me the amount transferred to enable the books to be corrected.

The following information will enable you to make the most cost effective & easiest way to pay your dues.

BSB: No 803-209, Account: No 100001730

Account Name: Retired Firefighters Association

Reference: **You're Name** not the RFA.

Payment this way is the safest & best way to make your payment.

If members want to use other forms of payment we will of course accept said payment however, I must again advise against sending cash through the mail.

Remember we receive a statement each month from the Credit Union; your receipt will arrive with your newsletter, if later than closing date for printing it will be forwarded with the following edition of "Water Off".

Members receiving the newsletter by email will, if three years behind in their dues, cease receiving the email. The yearly subscription remains the same **\$10 per year**.

## **"Water Off" Deadline To Submit Copy for Publication**

Due to the possibility of Australia Post going to a 3 day week delivery and other factors, we find that we have to set closing dates for acceptance of copy for Water Off.

The members need at least 2 weeks notice prior to both annual and general meetings and the editor requires time to edit copy and set photographs then send off to printers who require at least a week to print.

**August 2014 edition deadline for copy is July 21st**

## GONE BUT NOT FORGOTTEN

*How lucky we were last quarter that not one member was transferred upstairs. This quarter has more than made up for it, in fact this is the worst ever in the history of the RFA. We have not only had three foundation members, but also three other members and two associate members being transferred. The members and committee would like to express our sincerest condolences to the families; we can only imagine the anguish a loss like this creates. We hope the following small tributes are of some comfort to the families, by showing the contribution your love ones have given to make this planet earth, a better place for all.*

### **Robert “Bob” McNeil, 1930--9/2/2014.**

Robert started as an apprentice and retired as Electrical Supervisor after 40 years of service with the MFB 1946-1986.

The position of Supervisor placed him in charge of a large team who were not only responsible for the manufacture of the direct brigade alarm but also the various maintenance teams that serviced said equipment, including the equipment carried on appliances for use by operational personnel. The facts are the equipment that we had when he first started is nothing like the hardware & software they had when he retired.

Robert I found, was not only most generous with his time in assisting dumb people like me pass the electrical component used on promotional courses, but it seemed to me the philosophy he had was that to him anyone in the brigade was family. He would take a genuine interest in the wellbeing of all staff of the brigade, not only the immediate staff, I can still see him at the top of ramp having a quick look to see how you were going in your yard exam and giving you a sly thumbs up as you completed each section.

To me he was without a doubt the genuine article, a great family man, community minded, a top boss, dedicated RFA member, a sportsman, and foundation & life member of the RFA and in his younger days a top cyclist for Fitzroy Amateurs and as Arthur Mears told me, a very keen Fitzroy/Brisbane Lions supporter. **Eleanor**, on behalf of the retirees we thank you for sharing your Robert with us.

### **Ernest “Ern” Tamme, 1919--17/2/2014.**

Ern started in the MFB similar to Robert in 1946 and retired in 1979 after 33 years of dedicated service to the community.

Rod Knowles has placed a great article that included many on Ern’s achievements and a picture in **The Australian Firefighter Summer edition 2014**.

In my case I did not really get to meet Ern until about 1975, yes I did see him at various meetings etc. and he was to me at that stage one of the hard working UFU executive and in fact it was not until I became part of the RFA that I really got to know him. It was then that I realised just how knowledgeable and dignified he was. Apart from the RFA meetings I would often have phone conversations with him about many things where I found his wisdom and information about many, many things so refreshing.



**Above:** Ern Tamme, at the union office where he was tireless as an advocate for rights of workers.

**Image: Rod Knowles**

There is no doubt in bygone time he would have probably been the Chief of the tribe not because of ambition, but because of his wisdom, we have been so fortunate to have a person of such calibre as part of the UFU & RFA executive and yes similar to Robert McNeil, a foundation member and life member.

Rod in his closing comment in his article, states may he rest in peace as he has surely earned it. Never a truer word has been stated however, if there is a big station up there I have no doubt that the big fellow will not be resting too much, Bill will be getting the old team together again.

**Ern** on behalf of all the retirees we thank you for your help, guidance and friendship I found you to be a true Gentleman in every sense of the word.

### **William “Bill” Icke, 1921—15/3/2014.**

I must be upfront I did not know Bill until I met him at the Corio meeting days, the following information is from Peter Lang.

William George Icke born at Ballarat 11/1/1921 passed away 15/3/2014 aged 93 years of age. Bill went to the defence of the country and joined the Army in 1940, Trouper Icke of the 4<sup>th</sup> Light Horse Regiment, in 1944 transferred to the RAAF Leading Aircraftsman discharged from active service in 1946. In 1943 played

two games for the VFL South Melbourne side, then in 1946 played 14 games with Geelong, then went on as playing Captain & Coach of Geelong West & later other sides. The Icke name was well known in VFL, his brother Laurie and Uncle Stephan both played for North Melbourne.

Bill was a CFA volunteer and became a career member in the area when they started the 40 hour week in 1950 and retired in 1981. As I stated earlier my contact with him was only social but what I have heard from others that have been at jobs with him that he was a top firey and a great bloke to be stationed with.

**Betty** your Bill, as you and your family would know, was quite an icon in the Fire Services, at the RFA meetings he was a valuable source of information for us younger blokes and will be missed.

#### **Godfrey Griffiths Payne, 1930—20/3/2014.**

Many may not know Godfrey was not only a foundation member of the RFA but he also played a significant role by being requested to be interim chair of the first meeting until Tom Williamson was selected the first President back in 1988.

Members that knew him would know he and I had one thing in common? When the order was given to fall in, tallest on the right shortest on the left we knew which end to go to. He was the only person I could see eye to eye with.

I am not going to ramble on about his firefighting prowess, as we all know he was right up there with the best. Godfrey was very well-known and highly respected by all throughout the job.

Another trait he had was the use of very colourful words to emphasize a point. In the many years I have been doing the role of Secretary I cannot remember ever receiving the same number of calls as I did about his passing, they rang not only to see if it was true but also to praise him and reflect on a bygone incident or two. Jack Moore his Super, and Bill Franklin his SO for some years both have many tales about their Godfrey.

I will be upfront I was starting to get melt- down from all the yarns I was hearing about him. If the little so & so was around I would tell him it all sounds like bull s+\*t to me, you must have paid them to say that about you. Godfrey in your new posting you will be junior man; the members at your new station, on hearing about your transfer, would have made ready the cleaning gear by shortening all of the handles ready for you; also have the three wheel bike all set up and ready for you to get the lunches.

Mate you may have been a small man but you have cast a mighty big shadow on the job. **Tess** let all know down Bruthen way that your brother, the boy from the bush, will be sadly missed by all that knew him up in the big smoke.



**Above:** *Godfrey Payne receives his National Medal at an award ceremony.*

**Image:** Barbara McCumisky

#### **John Edward Locke, 1932—8/4/2014.**

John joined the job back in 1954. I first came in contact with him around 1960 in the old "B" District, but really did not get to know him well until later, it was then that I found just how competent he was as a firefighter. He was a no- nonsense down to earth get the job done type, great at a fire.

Over the years our paths crossed many times and it was always very reassuring when you knew that he was coming on in a big red truck. He was the type of person who was very unassuming with a great deal of hidden talent, able to achieve anything he set his mind to, a great back up. I have no doubt the reason he stayed as a Station Officer was that he had bigger plans for his family and future.

John came from the country to join the MFB and I believe that he wanted to get back there as soon as possible. The move back to the country at first was great for the family until he started having health related problems, which started early in his retirement years.

John, with good management, was able to remain on the farm, however in the end he was forced to sell up and with his wife moved to the nearest town. I would see him occasionally and/or have a phone conversation now and then but I admit I did not realise just how ill he was, he never seemed to change, always smiling and loved a joke, I should have known better, he never complained or whinged when he was in the job so why would he change.

*(Continued on page 8)*

(Continued from page 7)

One of our committee members Allan Roberts would keep me up to speed on his condition and he found it very hard to accept when John eventually succumbed to his condition. The service for John at Euroa was very impressive, he would have been very proud of his immediate family and the eulogy by his sons was not only very moving it also highlighted the great life he had enjoyed.

**Margaret**, please on behalf of the RFA and the community, thank you for allowing your John to be part of our firefighting community.

**Desmond Arthur Longton, 1931—8/4/2014.**

Des became a member of the MFB in 1959 and retired in 1986, after his initial training was stationed at Eastern Hill, then No35 Windsor, and a number of years at the old St Kilda station No37.

I had never been to a fire or incident with him but one of our members “Ron Rae” was stationed at 37 on another shift but he said from all reports Des was not only a very competent firefighter he was also a great source of knowledge.

Des applied for a vacancy that was advertised for a Drill Instructor at the old Abbotsford Training College and form part of the Recruit Training team. Following on from there he moved on to updating and collating

the various programme syllabuses. I was at the college for a short time around that time and involved in other projects and the only contact I had with Des was more social, for instance Meetings & Mess room discussions etc.

I always found him very amicable and in an environment like the training college you tend to stick to the programme you are running. Des like some other retirees did not seek to join the RFA it was in fact his son that contacted me about joining up his Dad.

**Helene** on behalf of all the RFA members please accept our sincerest condolences it was a shame that you and Des were not able to make it to one of the meetings I thing he would have got a lift from seeing his old work mates.

**Philomena “Pixie” Lavelle, 1931—22/2/2014.**

Associate member, Laurie’s wife, passed away peacefully with her family by her side at Bethlehem Palliative Care after a lengthy battle with illness.

**Lois Lynnette Whiteoak, 1949--3/4/2014.**

Associate member, Michael’s wife, unexpectedly passed away after a very short illness at home. Michael met Lois at the old Eastern Hill Fire station and it was love at first sight, after said meeting he told all the blokes on shift I am going to marry that girl and he did.

**John Berry**

## Man Flu And Other Myths

Rachel Tyler Jones

**Myth: Only women get breast cancer**

Both men and women have breast tissue – women just have more of it. This means it is possible for men to develop breast cancer. Approximately 100 Australian men are diagnosed with breast cancer every year. Ninety per cent of those men are over 50. Catching breast cancer early is the best way to ensure successful treatment, so look out for common symptoms such as a painless lump near the nipple, discharge from the nipple, or a change of shape (such as dimpling) of the pectoral area or nipple. If you think you have any of these symptoms make an appointment with your GP, or to find out more visit the Cancer Australia’s [Breast cancer in men](#) website.

**Myth: Low-carb beer is the healthy choice**

There are very few carbohydrates in beer to begin with. It is actually the alcohol content which affects how ‘healthy’ a beer is. Alcohol contains almost twice as many kilojoules per gram as carbohydrates, and it’s the kilojoules that produce a beer gut. A low-alcohol beer is healthier than a full-strength low-carb beer, and the healthiest choice of all is reducing the amount you drink.

**Myth: Only women get the blues**

Depression affects both men and women, the difference is in the way they respond to it. Women usually focus on their emotional state, whereas men will often take note of physical symptoms such as tiredness and weight loss without really considering whether they are feeling low.

One in six men will experience depression in their lifetime, and the earlier you catch it the easier it is to fix. Depression can be as mild as a period of feeling down and lethargic, or severe enough to require medication. Depression is an illness, not a weakness, so it’s important to get professional help just like you would for any other sickness. If you think you or someone you know may be suffering from depression, visit the [Better health channel](#) website and have a look at the symptoms checklist.

**Myth: Impotence happens to everybody**

Approximately 60 per cent of men aged 60 to 79 will experience impotence, also known as erectile dysfunction (ED). In 75 per cent of cases ED is a symptom of an underlying physical issue, such as heart disease or blocked arteries, so it important to visit your doctor. To find out more about the symptoms of and treatments for ED, visit the [Impotence Australia](#) website.

**Myth: ‘Man flu’ is just an opportunist with a cold**

The common cold can leave anyone feeling rotten, so why do men have a reputation for hamming it up? Until recently the only explanation for ‘man flu’ was that men, who often see themselves as the rock, the supporter and the family protector, can find it stressful to be incapacitated by illness. New research, however, shows that women have a much stronger immune reaction to rhinoviruses (the viruses that cause common colds), so men really are hit harder by colds, and do take longer to recover from them.

Source: Your Life Choices



## Member's Birthday Party --- a winner for Flying Doctor Service

On the 8<sup>th</sup> of February RFA member, **Barry Wells**, celebrated his 60<sup>th</sup> Birthday at home. The theme for the night was a 70's style dress-up beach party. This was no ordinary dress-up, this was the whole shebang.

Barry's family not only made it a party night but also a successful fund raiser for the Royal Flying Doctor Service, raising in excess of \$500, plus other direct donations, (what a great idea).



**Above:** The house and yard was turned into a beach with make believe sea water, sea gulls, sand, beach huts and other paraphernalia including a beachside bar.

Helping the Wells celebrate were many current & retired Firies and their families, of course there was music, our **Vice President (Chook)** whose motto is "**Have music will travel**", not only played music he also played the extraordinary Barman. Unfortunately Chooks early attire was such the guests said it was making their drinks turn

sour. Not to be outdone for the rest of the night he was dressed and had his Sax making the night a real hoot. (picture below).



**Above:** Our Vice President, always willing to provide some music and help out with a charity fund raiser!

Barry, on behalf of all the members "Many Happy Returns for your Sixtieth". We could not use all of the pictures of Chook as they looked like they were out of focus or maybe it was the way he was standing. After viewing them I can understand why your guest were singing out, "put some clothes on Chook", it was not a pretty sight.

**John Berry**

## No one believes seniors anymore

No one believes seniors anymore – everyone thinks they are senile.

An elderly couple was celebrating their 60th anniversary. The couple had married as childhood sweethearts and had moved back to their old neighbourhood after they retired. Holding hands, they walked back to their old school. It was not locked, so they entered, and found the old desk they'd shared, where Jerry had carved 'I love you, Sally'.

On their way back home, a bag of money fell out of an armoured car, practically landing at their feet. Sally quickly picked it up and, not sure what to do with it, they took it home. There, she counted the money – \$50,000!

Jerry said, "We've got to give it back."

Sally said, "Finders keepers."

She put the money back in the bag and hid it in their attic.

The next day, two police officers were canvassing the neighbourhood looking for the money, and knocked on their door. "Pardon me, did either of you find a bag that fell out of an armoured car yesterday?"

Sally said, "No."

Jerry said, "She's lying. She hid it up in the attic."

Sally said, "Don't believe him, he's getting senile."

The agents turned to Jerry and began to question him. One said: "Tell us the story from the beginning."

Jerry said, "Well, when Sally and I were walking home from school yesterday..."

The first police officer turned to his partner and said, "We're outta here!"

## A Night in the Old MFB Control Centre

In the answers to the Guess Who; I mentioned about further information regarding the late Station Officer Arthur Aspel, with the help of his son Shane and an article from Barbara McCumisky, titled the Control Centre, we will take a trip down memory lane.

Let's set the scene, Arthur Aspel, who was a top firefighter, fearless and dedicated to the job, unfortunately sustained a life changing health problem, the brigade not wanting to lose a person of his skill and knowledge placed him in a non-fighting role as Officer in charge of "A" platoon Control Centre.

Well back on this night in February they were confronted with some of the worst storms, causing flash flooding in the City, flooding shops, cars & knocking people off their feet etc, The old control centre received and processed over 100 calls for assistance in less than 30 minutes, in fact some of the crews that were dispatched used their appliances as break-water barriers to protect the pedestrians.

Around 2200 hours things were starting to get back to some normality, you know the normal run of motor accidents, house fires etc.

I can tell you even back then they would have been receiving calls from all over the place, even international news organisations, wanting to know about the unusual flooding and damage to Melbourne. Arthur would have been in his element with his crew, he would have had them operating like a well-oiled machine, no panic and the interaction and one liners would have been flowing thick & fast (Everyone had a nick-name back in those days).

Whilst all of this was going on they received an exchange call for a ship fire at No 5 South Wharf, first word-back was not yet under control (this required further appliances to be dispatched), the fire on the ship was confined to No 2 hold. Not long after this fire they received an exchange call for an explosion in a plastics factory in Cheltenham which turned out to be a false alarm.

At 0800 hours Arthur would not have been able to knock-off and for at least for another 30 minutes as he would be required to bring the oncoming Officer up to speed on all of the must-knows.



**Above:** *Arthur Aspel and his "A" Platoon Control Centre Crew.*

**Image:** Barbara McCumisky



**Above:** *The intersection of Bourke and Elizabeth Streets looking East. Flood waters rush down Elizabeth Street flooding shops, cars and knocking people off their feet.*

**Image:** R. Marsh

For readers who do not know, all radio & phone communication back then would have been recorded and apart from that, there was an occurrence-book that required the written word. Many, including myself, know that on some days you may be over ten foolscap size pages of long- hand behind. That must be completed before you could sign off.

Arthur, if he were still with us today, and you quizzed him about the old Control Centre, I bet his response would be, quote; "Mate I know the system we used was primitive in comparison to today but I can tell you I could not have had a better crew looking after the public when it hit the fan", unquote.

Shane, thank-you for giving us the opportunity to reflect on a time many know so well.

**John Berry**

## Who the hell is Andrew Philips? And why is he ringing me?

Mark Taylor

Telemarketers are just a rude, uninvited interruption of my day.

If I want to buy a holiday for two weeks in the Maldives; well I'll ring my travel agent.

If I want a better deal on my phone service; I'll ring around!

If I want a better price on electricity; I'll jump on the net. See a pattern developing here? And I am sure I am not the only one! So how do you deal with them?

Well I have tried the following with varied degrees of success...

1. "Can I speak to Mark Taylor please?" Sorry.. we're actually at his house attending his wake!

2. "Can I speak to Mark Taylor please?" Er.. can you say that again slowly please so I can understand what you are saying?

"Can I speak with the person responsible for your phone

account?" Sorry, we don't have a phone. "But I am speaking to you on the phone now!" Oh, I borrowed my neighbour's phone and he wants it back now. Good bye!

3. "Can I speak with the business owner please?" He's away at the moment. "When will he be back?" Well the judge said 5 years with good behaviour.

4. "Can I speak with the person who orders your computer supplies?" Sorry. .we don't have a computer. "How do you invoice your clients?" With a pencil and paper. Do you have any 2H pencils on special? I need two. Always keep a spare.

5. "I am from the XYZ cladding company. Our quote team is in your area and we have special deals etc" Sorry, I live in a block of brick units. Or my favourite is to ask if



**Above:** A typical telemarketing call centre and operators are well trained to sell you something you don't want. But, if you place your name on the "Do Not Call Register" many of these calls will be prevented! See story this page.

they can arrange finance. "Yes we can sir" Would my being on the dole be a problem? "Click!"

6. Then there is the young man from our local Telstra business centre who has a new deal on line rentals that will save us a bucket load of cash. We have our own reasons for not wanting to go his way. But he won't take

no for an answer. Ringing wife, ringing me, emailing us both. The only way I could stop his harrasment after 4 months was to say this...

"Mate, if you contact us by any means whatsoever, I will come to your place of employment and violently insert a phone into you!" So far, I haven't heard from him.

And so this brings me back to Andrew Philips who rang this morning. On my mobile! I

answered my phone and he said something like.. "Hi Mark, it's Andrew Philips here and I would.." Hang on.. who is it? "Sorry Mark, it's Andrew Philips here, you don't actually know me and I work for a financial advisor..." and away he went reading his script. Speaking to me as though he and I were good

mates, he went on to tell me he could improve my superannuation performance by up to 30%. Mate, I am about to retire. You're 30 years too late. (Official lie.. cannot find anybody to sponsor my retirement.)

Why don't telemarketers just send me a letter. Then I can put it in file 13. The cost to them must be similar.. and I could have peace!

And finally.. a word of advice if you are a telemarketer. Don't pick a fight with old men. If they cannot beat you.. they will simply hunt you down and kill you!

*Mark Taylor is a professional Queensland photographer who often reflects on life's experiences and publishes on his website.*

## Scammers claiming to be from ACMA's Do Not Call Register

The Australian Communications and Media Authority has received reports from members of the public of scam callers claiming to be from the Do Not Call Register. These callers have attempted to convince consumers to provide them with personal and financial details.

The scammers claim to be from, or work on behalf of, the ACMA, the Do Not Call Register or 'the government'. Typically, the scammer starts the call by asking consumers how many telemarketing or nuisance calls they receive in a day. The caller then offers a device they claim will prevent all unwanted calls, explaining there is a charge for installation (e.g. \$170) that can be paid in instalments by credit card. The caller may also indicate they are pretending to be a telemarketer to test

whether the consumer's phone company would let the call through.

The ACMA reminds Australians that it does not make calls to the public offering services related to the Do Not Call Register. It does not offer any 'device' that can be installed to stop telemarketing calls and is not aware of any device that would be effective for this purpose.

**The ACMA warns that no personal identification or financial details should be provided to callers claiming to represent the Do Not Call Register.**

To put your telephone, mobile or fax on the register, visit [www.donotcall.gov.au](http://www.donotcall.gov.au) or call 1300 792 958.

# GUESS WHO?

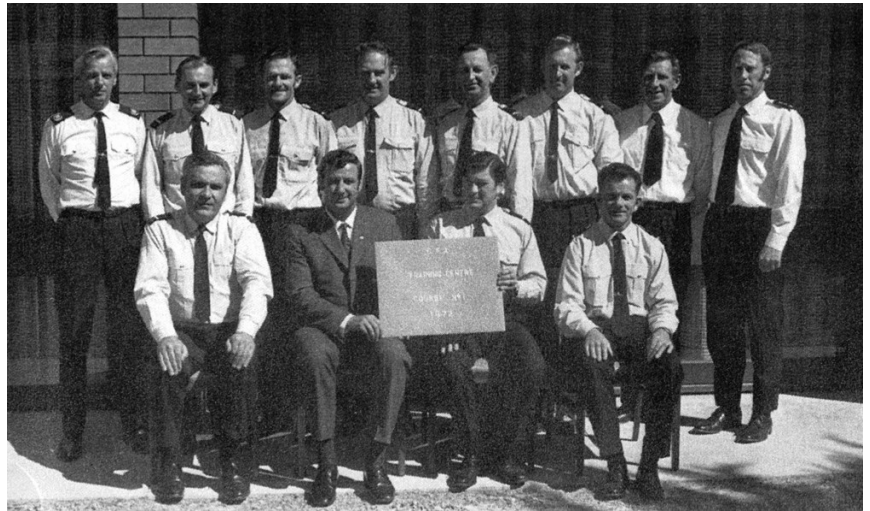
This picture has a very sobering effect as many in this picture have already been transferred upstairs and the passing of the late Chief Officer Brian Potter makes it more than relevant to ask the one simple question?

Name the members from this picture of the 1<sup>st</sup> Course conducted, after Fiskville opened in 1972 that have not been transferred upstairs? In other words name the living

There are no prizes for a correct answer of this guess who, I think we all need at times a reality check and remember how lucky we are to enjoy retirement many do not make it.

I would like to think that this will get the phones ringing, if nothing else it gives members time to reflect on the dedication these Firies gave to the protection of the community.

**John Berry**



## The answers to the February 2014 "Guess Who" questions.

The pictures this time generated a good number of responses, however I think I may have made them too hard.

Let's start with the first question, the name of the station is No 35 Windsor, the appliance is the Electric Ladder. The station he was in charge of before being transferred back to Eastern Hill was No 34 Moorabbin. The easy question, the Firefighter's name was Arthur Aspel. (See story & picture in other section of newsletter).

The picture from the Geelong Advertiser was taken at the Geelong station. The picture showed the recipients who had just been awarded The Queen's CFA Long Service & Good Conduct Medal. Names of career members are as follows. From left to right are; **Wally Cook, John Cotter, John Wallace, Bill Icke and Keith Williams.**

Unfortunately the quality of the cutting was poor, and I believe this prevented the members from naming all of the firefighters.



## Thin Skinned? This could save you!

Using moisturiser twice a day could halve the incidence of skin tears in elderly people, according to Australian research.

As we age our skin gets thinner and tears relatively easily. Catching the corner of a table, for example, or scraping against a stick in the garden can cause tears that may develop into chronic, non healing wounds.

Applied twice daily to arms, hands, legs and feet, this simple, cheap, but highly effective preventative treatment could dramatically reduce the annual health care cost of skin care and chronic wounds, currently \$2.6 billion per annum, and improve quality of life.

The moisturiser should be good quality, but doesn't have to be expensive. Ask your pharmacist to recommend one.

## What's wrong here???



**Am I missing something here?**  
I've studied this picture inside out and still can't believe it.  
A town this size and they haven't got boom gates on the level crossing????  
**"Heads will roll"**

### ~ Bill Gates ~

**This should be posted in every school or kid's bedroom.**

**Love him or hate him , he sure hits the nail on the head with this!**

Bill Gates recently gave a speech at a High School about eleven things they did not and will not learn in school. He talks about how feel-good, politically correct teachings created a generation of kids with no concept of reality and how this concept set them up for failure in the real world.

**Rule 1:** Life is not fair - get used to it!

**Rule 2:** The world doesn't care about your self-esteem.

The world will expect you to accomplish something BEFORE you feel good about yourself.

**Rule 3:** You will NOT make \$60,000 a year right out of high school.

You won't be a vice-president with a car and phone until you earn both.

**Rule 4:** If you think your teacher is tough, wait till you get a boss.

**Rule 5:** Flipping burgers is not beneath your dignity. Your Grandparents had a different word for burger flipping:  
They called it opportunity.

**Rule 6:** If you mess up, it's not your parents' fault, so don't whine about your mistakes, learn from them.

**Rule 7:** Before you were born, your parents weren't as boring as they are now. They got that way from paying your bills, cleaning your clothes and listening to you talk about how cool you thought you were: So before you save the rain forest from the parasites of your parent's generation, try delousing the closet in your own room.

**Rule 8:** Your school may have done away with winners and losers, but life HAS NOT. In some schools, they have abolished failing grades and they'll give you as MANY TIMES as you want to get the right answer.

This doesn't bear the slightest resemblance to ANYTHING in real life.

**Rule 9:** Life is not divided into semesters.

You don't get summers off and very few employers are interested in helping you FIND YOURSELF. (Do that on your own time.)

**Rule 10:** Television is NOT real life.

In real life, people actually have to leave the coffee shop and go to jobs.

**Rule 11:** Be nice to nerds.

Chances are you'll end up working for one.

# APPRECIATE WHAT WE HAVE!

*Sometimes it is good to be reminded of the good things, not just the negatives:*

*There's a lot to admire about Australia, especially if you're a visiting American, says David Mason.*

*More often than you might expect, Australian friends patiently listening to me enthuse about their country have said, "We need outsiders like you to remind us what we have."*

*So here it is - a small presumptuous list of what one foreigner admires in Oz.*

## **1. Health care.**

I know the controversies, but basic national health care is a gift. In America, medical expenses are a leading cause of bankruptcy.

The drug companies dominate politics and advertising.

Obama is being crucified for taking halting baby steps towards sanity.

You can't turn on the telly without hours of drug advertisements - something I have never yet seen here. And your emphasis on prevention - making cigarettes less accessible, for one - is a model.

## **2. Food.**

Yes, we have great food in America too, especially in the big cities. But your bread is less sweet, your lamb is cheaper, and your supermarket vegetables and fruits are fresher than ours.

Too often in my country an apple is a ball of pulp as big as your face. The dainty Pink Lady apples of Oz are the juiciest I've had.

And don't get me started on coffee. In American small towns it tastes like water flavoured with burnt dirt, but the smallest shop in the smallest town in Oz can make a first-rate latte.

I love your ubiquitous bakeries, your hot-cross buns. Shall I go on?

## **3. Language.**

How do you do it? The rhyming slang and Aboriginal place names like magic spells. Words that seem vaguely English yet also resemble an argot from another planet.

I love the way institutional names get turned into diminutives - Vinnie's and Salvos - and absolutely nothing's sacred. Everything's an opportunity for word games and everyone's a nickname.

Lingo makes the world go round. It's the spontaneous wit of the people that tickles me most. Late one night at a barbie my new mate Suds remarked, "Nothing's the same since 24-7." Amen.

## **4. Free-to-air TV.**

In Oz, you buy a TV, plug it in and watch some of the best programming I've ever seen - uncensored. In America, you can't get diddly-squat without paying a cable or satellite company heavy fees.

In Oz a few channels make it hard to choose. In America, you've got 400 channels and nothing to watch.

## **5. Small shops.**

Outside the big cities in America corporations have nearly erased them. Identical malls with identical restaurants

serving inferior food. Except for geography, it's hard to tell one American town from another.

The "take-away" culture here is wonderful.

Human encounters are real - stirring happens, stories get told.

The curries are to die for. And you don't have to tip!

## **6. Free camping.**

We used to have this too, and I guess it's still free when you backpack miles away from the roads. But I love the fact that in Oz everyone owns the shore and in many places you can pull up a camper van and stare at the sea for weeks.

I love the "primitive" and independent campgrounds, the life out of doors. The few idiots who leave their stobbies and rubbish behind in these pristine places ought to be transported in chains.

## **7. Religion.**

In America, it's everywhere - especially where it's not supposed to be, like politics. I imagine you have your Pharisees too, making a big public show of devotion, but I have yet to meet one here.

## **8. Roads.**

Peak hour aside, I've found travel on your roads pure heaven. My country's "freeways" are crowded, crumbling, insanely knotted with looping overpasses - it's like racing homicidal maniacs on fraying spaghetti. I've taken the Hume without stress, and I love the Princes Highway when it's two lanes.

Ninety minutes south of Batemans Bay I was sorry to see one billboard for a McDonald's. It's blocking a lovely paddock view. Someone should remove it.

## **9. Real multiculturalism.**

I know there are tensions, just like anywhere else, but I love the distinctiveness of your communities and the way you publicly acknowledge the Aboriginal past.

Recently, too, I spent quality time with Melbourne Greeks, and was gratified both by their devotion to their own great language and culture and their openness to an Afghan lunch.

## **10. Fewer guns.**

You had Port Arthur in 1996 and got real in response. America replicates such massacres several times a year and nothing changes. Why? Our religion of individual rights makes the good of the community an impossible dream.

Instead of mateship we have "It's mine and nobody else's".

We talk a great game about freedom, but too often live in fear.

There's more to say - your kaleidoscopic birds, your perfumed bush in springtime, your vast beaches.

These are just a few blessings that make Australia a rarity.

Of course, it's not paradise - nowhere is - but I love it here.

No need to wave flags like Americans and add to the world's windiness.

Just value what you have and don't give it away.

**David Mason is a US writer, professor and poet laureate of Colorado.**

# BELLS BY THE BEACH

HOLIDAY HOUSE • OCEAN GROVE

24 Roditis Drive, Ocean Grove, Vic



Hello, my name is Baxter

Your hosts: Jan and Lin Bell

M: 0403 221 737 or  
P: 03 5251 5899

Bring the dog and grandkids for a  
holiday at the beach!

- Easy walking - no hills to negotiate!
- Dogs or cats welcome. Pets can stay, sleep indoors.
- Self catering holiday house, 500 metres to beach.
- Good size kitchen, gas log fire, ceiling fans, air con.
- Bathroom with spa bath, overhead shower, grab rail. Plus an extra toilet off the laundry!
- Comfortable beds, electric blankets - two QS, two singles. Everything provided, or BYO linen & towels.
- Warm outdoor shower for after the beach.
- Single garage parking, secure fences all round.
- Short drive to Ocean Grove Bowls Club, cafes and restaurants. Coles and Woolies close by.

2013 seasonal rates 2 to 6 guests

Winter \$149 per night, Spring/Autumn \$179, Summer \$199

[www.bellsbythebeach.com.au](http://www.bellsbythebeach.com.au)

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## Geelong Firey's Muster

*C.F.A. – M.F.B. – SHELL - AVALON  
Serving & Retired – Staff & Volunteers*

*Smorgasbord Lunch*

*On the 4th Tuesday of March & November*

*@ 1130 hrs*

**GATEWAY HOTEL**

**218-230 Princess Highway – CORIO**

*Members, Wives, Partners,*

*Family & Friends*

**Contact:**

**Peter Lang 5275 6039**

To receive Mail out notification

## Recent Retirements

Alex Conway, May 15

### MEMBERS INTERESTED IN RECEIVING THEIR "WATER OFF" VIA EMAIL.

To those members with easy access to email and would like to have their copy sent by this system, please send your email address to our editor John Laverick. "Water Off" will be sent out in a PDF format.

John's address - -  
[retfire@bigpond.net.au](mailto:retfire@bigpond.net.au)

Before you send your email, click on 'tools' at top and click on 'request receipt'. This will reply to you and verify both email addresses are working correctly.



# Queensland Reunion

Thursday July 31st, 2014  
Southport Yacht Club, Gold Coast



To all who may be travelling through or just on holidays at the Gold Coast in July this year, come join us for the annual Firey's Luncheon at the Southport Yacht Club.

Held on the last Thursday in July, lovely food panoramic views are just a few of the things that will be part of a great day.

Arrive around 11.00am and catch up with old mates for a yarn.

Bring your partners, all are welcome.

Oh, and you don't even have to be retired!!

**For further information contact;**

**Peter Coulson - 07 5529 2632**

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