

"WATER OFF"

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



November 2004 Vol 8 No 4
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6 Wingara Ave.
East Keilor 3033

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MEMORIES OF CHRISTMAS PAST.

By Barbara McCumisky

The big green doors of the front engine room at Eastern Hill were open. A hose carriage, the No.5 Pump and the mighty Leyland Ladder looked out on a grey Victoria Parade. Dark clouds scudded across the sky as steady rain fell on an almost deserted street. Two firefighters stopped polishing the Leyland and glanced at the watery scene outside, muttering something about a gloomy Christmas. The date was December 25, 1977.

Suddenly the silence was shattered by the sound of a brass band ringing out the merry tune of 'Jingle Bells'. The engine room became a hive of bustling activity. Dozens of firefighters appeared as if from nowhere, all chattering excitedly. Some brightly dressed clowns went through a quick rehearsal of acrobatics, while others made last minute adjustments to the shining Leyland. The band, all dressed in spotless tunics and helmets, continued to play Christmas carols until a loud cheer interrupted the music. Santa himself appeared and was assisted aboard the Leyland. Then the clowns, the band and all the firefighters who help Santa each year, clambered onto the appliances. Amid cheers and shouts of encouragement, the Brigade's 'flagship' drove slowly out into the grey morning.

The rain poured down as the small, but impressive convoy of fire vehicles entered the park behind the Royal Children's Hospital. The parade was led, of course, by the Leyland and Santa. Then came a mobile tender, a Snorkel and a hose carriage. Bringing up the rear were several Brigade cars carrying the CFO and other members of the 'Once A Year Club'. Eager young faces were pressed to nearly every window and colorful umbrellas sheltered nurses and patients on the balcony as they waited for the show to begin.

In this issue we salute the achievement of those firefighters who gave their special talents and time to entertain children too ill to be home with their families on this special day.



Harry Purcell playing 'doctors' with a young patient. The smiles on the children's and parent's faces tell the story.

Soon the ladder was extended and Alan Stirling was lowered to the ground. Down below fellow clowns, Harry Purcell, Johnny Berry, Len Cave, Bob McPhee and Billy Grant held a handkerchief to catch him, should he have to misfortune to fall. This was followed by a display of pyramids and other acrobatics, as all the clowns were formerly members of the Brigade's gym team. Two firefighters went aloft in the Snorkel, but there were loud objections from the clowns below when they received an added soaking from the artificial rain, as the appliance's water power was demonstrated.

(Continued on page 4)

“GENERAL MEETING”

**Notice is hereby given of our next Annual General Meeting to be held at the
Carlton Football Club Social Club,
(Melway 29 G12)
1030 Hours, Wednesday November 17th, 2004**

AGENDA ITEMS.

**Minutes of last Annual General meeting.
President's Report.
Secretary/Treasurer's Report.
Election of Office Bearers
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 2004

November 17th: Annual General Meeting
November 20th: Luncheon St Kilda Town Hall
November 28th: Firefighters Picnic
Moonee Valley Racecourse

VALE

Ray Allen (MFB)	Peter Hornsey (MFB)
Merv Goodson (MFB)	John Murfitt (MFB)
Clarrie Molin (MFB)	George White (MFB)

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

SICK LIST

Neil Allen	Bob McLoone
Jim Casley	John McLoone
John Cotter	Wally O'Shannassy
Terry Harman	Alan Roberts
Clarrie Hart	Jack Sexton
Ian Heath	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.

"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.

RETIRE FIREFIGHTERS ASSOCIATION OF AUSTRALIA VICTORIAN BRANCH INCORPORATED

NOMINATION FORM.

For election of Office Bearers of the Association and ordinary members of the committee.

We hereby nominate;

Name: _____ For the position of; _____

Proposer's Name: _____

Address: _____

_____ Post Code _____

Seconders Name: _____

Address: _____

_____ Post Code _____

I hereby accept the above nomination; Signature of Nominee; _____

Return by Tuesday November 9, 2004, to:

Date; _____

The Secretary
Retired Firefighters Association of Australia
Victorian Branch Incorporated.
6 Wingara Ave. East Keilor 3033

Don't Ever Be Late

A parish priest was being honored at a dinner on the twenty-fifth anniversary of his arrival in that parish. A Liberal politician, who was a member of the congregation, was chosen to make the presentation and give a little speech at the dinner, but he was delayed in traffic, so the priest decided to say his own few words while they waited.

"You will understand," he said, "the seal of the confessional, can never be broken. However, I got my first impressions of the parish from the first confession I heard here. I can only hint vaguely about this, but when I came here twenty-five years ago I thought I had been assigned to a terrible place.

The very first chap who entered my confessional told me how he had stolen a television

set, and when stopped by the police, had almost murdered the officer. Further, he told me he had stolen money from his parents, embezzled money from his place of business, had an affair with his boss's wife, taken illegal drugs, and gave VD to his sister. I was appalled.

But as the days went on I knew that my people were not all like that, and I had, indeed come to a fine parish full of understanding and loving people." Just as the priest finished his talk, the politician arrived full of apologies at being late. He immediately began to make the presentation and give his talk. "I'll never forget the first day our parish priest arrived in this parish," said the politician. "In fact, I had the honor of being the first one to go to him in confession."

Moral: DON'T EVER BE LATE

Firefighter's Picnic & Christmas BBQ

10.00 till 4.00, Sunday November 28th, 2004
Moonee Valley Racecourse

Retirees - bring the Grandkids

**Santa for the kids
(and the big kids)**

**Rides, Games,
Prizes.**

Lots of fun for all.

**BBQ sausages, hamburgers and
drinks for the kids supplied.
BYO salads, plates etc.**

Too Risky!

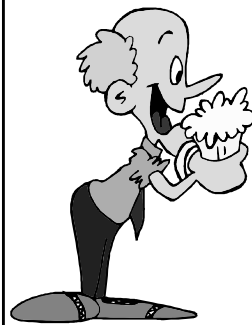
A man went to see Mel Gibson's new movie, "The Passion," and was inspired to take his family to Israel to see the places where Jesus lived and died. While on vacation his mother-in-law died.

An undertaker in Tel Aviv explained that they can ship the body home to Melbourne at a cost of \$10,000 or the mother-in-law could be buried in Israel for \$500. The man said, "We'll ship her home." The undertaker asked, "Are you sure? That's an awfully big expense and we can do a very nice burial here."

The man said, "Look, 2000 years ago they buried a bloke here and three days later he rose from the dead. I just can't take that chance....."



GEELONG REUNION & Christmas Lunch



**Monday 29th
November, 2004
11.30 onwards
Shell Club
Bacchus Marsh Rd.
Corio**

Drinks at bar prices

**Contact: Bill Icke 5244 1822
John Wallace 5278 4734**

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Welcome again from the RFA. To those on the sick list, we wish you a speedy recovery.

The August meeting at the Carlton Football Social Club, held in the 'John James' room, was very well attended. As usual the Social Club management in made sure that we were well looked after. The tea, coffee and muffins in the room were well received.

During general business, the members were presented with the details and costs involved, if we were to move our quarterly meetings to either Moonee Valley or the Footscray Football Club. This was compared with our current location and costs. I suggested that the members discuss this amongst the other members over the next few months so that a decision can be made at our annual general meeting.

We also managed to have the opportunity for two representatives from Slater & Gordon to speak at our meeting.

Marcus Clayton presented some interesting comments and happenings during the time doing his articles under the late Geoff Jones. He also discussed the current inquiry being held in New South Wales involving the James Hardie Company and some of the asbestos related claims against them and answered a number of questions from the members.

Gorgina Dorg spoke about the facilities the company offers to update your will and information on

estate probate. Mention was made of the changes in the estate laws that allow relatives to challenge a will even if they had not been included.

Marcus then presented the RFA with a very interesting book titled, "That disreputable firm", covering some of the history of Salter and Gordon, with a sample of the different types of cases that they have pursued through the courts over the years.

Monday 23rd August

An excellent turn up of past and present fires, RFA members and committee members, attended the funeral for Mrs Annie Fowler, our Vice President's mother, at the morning service in the Chapel of Repose at Altona Memorial Park.

The Annual General Meeting is the time for the members to elect your committee for the following year. Come along and have your say, maybe you would like to be on the committee, just fill in a nomination form and send it in to the Secretary by the closing date.

On behalf of the RFA President and Committee, we wish all our members and families Seasons Greetings

I look forward to seeing you at the next meeting. In the meantime, take care and travel safely.

Regards, Mike

SECRETARY/TREASURER'S REPORT



As I missed the last Meeting, being up at Surfers Paradise, I will leave what happened to the President, Mike McCumisky.

We had a great time up at Surfers Paradise, spending time with Ted and Rhonda Harrison (lucky them) they were spending three months at Coolangatta. We also caught up with Neil Allen, who is not enjoying the best of health, and his lovely wife, Beverley who had come to Queensland for three days on a package deal. Neil is coping well with all his problems.

Theo. Teklenburg who was to be made a Life Member of the R.F.A. for his many years as Auditor in February this year, could not make the meeting as he had to take his wife to a doctor, in May he had a medical problem and in August he plain forgot. So when I took the books to be audited by him in Woori-Yallock I told his wife to remind him to attend on the November meeting. We hope he is reminded by the string he was supposed to tie on his finger.

As you know by now, Tony Murphy has been appointed Chief Fire Officer of the MFB. I sent a letter on the member's behalf congratulating him on his appointment, he replied stating "He was looking forward to the challenge".

Chief Executive Officer and Chief Officer, Peter Akers has been re-appointed to his position for a further five years. Board President, Brian Parry has been appointed for another twelve months. A letter was sent to both offering our congratulations.

RECRUIT COURSE HAS FINISHED: 32 Males and 4 Females passed.

I was a bit disappointed when I found out that only 3% of the eligible population donated blood. As a donor of many years I found out that they look for abnormalities in the blood and inform you of any problems. One of our Members was informed that his blood count was high and his doctor diagnosed prostate cancer. In my case an erratic pulse was picked up by them and I was diagnosed as having

(Continued on page 4)

(Continued from page 3)

"Atrial Fibrillation" and was referred to a heart specialist, I was placed on Warfrin, so has ended my association with the Blood Bank. I gave blood up till 73 years of age, 71 years is the cut off. If you feel OK a medical certificate is required every twelve months, if you wish to continue donating. 81 years is absolute cut off time. So if you feel fit, please, please donate.

We hope we can get a good turn-up at the A.G.M. on the 17th November, 2004. Committee positions are open again, therefore we urge you to think about

(Continued from page 1)

Then it was into the wards as Santa delivered presents to all the children who had to spend Christmas Day in the hospital. He visited them all, from the tiniest babies through to the teenagers, no one missed out. Children clapped and sang as the band led Santa around the beds. Others sat spellbound as the sounds of brass instruments echoed around the corridors. Smiles broke on young and old faces alike as the clowns performed tricks in the confined spaces of the wards.

As the clowns themselves put it, this is what Christmas is all about, - the shy smile from a little girl hiding behind her mother as Harry played doctors with her baby brother - the embarrassed look as two clowns daubed a girl's face with make up - an even more embarrassed look on the ward sister's face as all the clowns give her a Christmas kiss leaving six lip prints - a little boy with big brown eyes grinning cheekily from under Laurie Lavelle's silver helmet - a boy left hopelessly disabled after a car accident, shrieking with joy as the clowns help him unwrap his very own transistor radio - a tiny baby almost hidden in the folds of a bean bag, grabbing hold of Jim Fleming's finger - a girl admiring herself in a mirror as she tried on Bill Bayley's brass helmet..... This is the reward that all the members of the 'Once A Year Club' get for devoting their day to bring a little merriment to the children.

Santa did not forget the hospital staff. From the wards the band led down to the kitchens where cooks and cleaners took time off to join in the Christmas carols. Laughter reverberated around the huge stainless room as each clown took a partner for an impromptu dance. They say they enjoyed those few moments of nonsense and it gave the staff a feeling of involvement.

Following a well earned break, refreshments and speeches in the reception room, the procession headed off to the nurses' dining room where the band and the clowns, with their hilarious antics, entertained the staff as they ate Christmas dinner. Once again the clowns and the firefighters took partners for a quick dance. All too soon it was time to leave, so it was farewell till the next Christmas as the Leyland and convoy headed back towards the city and St. Vincents Hospital.

taking a role in managing the RFA and nominating for a position. Nomination form is on page 15.

Someone sent me \$20.00. in cash in late July or early August, the address on the back of the envelope was lost, so please contact me for a receipt.

Treasurer's Report As of 31st August, 2004

Access Account: \$2073.78
Term Deposit: \$4216.24



Above: Alan Stirling clowning around in the nurses' dining room.

In St. Vincent's courtyard the ladder was extended and the clowns went through their routines. The band played more carols as the nurses and patients watched from windows and balconies. Then came the ceremonial march as the clowns and band led the Leyland down the drive, into Victoria Parade and along to St. Vincent's Private Hospital.

The final stop was the After Care Hospital a bit further down the road. Here the patients reacted very differently. These were the 'oldies'. Tears filled the eyes of ladies and men alike as the band went through the wards playing Christmas carols. Then the tears turned to smiles as the clowns ran round kissing all the 'girls' and shaking hands with the men. One old lady jiggled with a clown even though her leg was encased in plaster. A mischievous twinkle came into the eyes of a 92 year old lady as one of the firefighters kissed her.

Time again passed quickly and soon everyone was boarding the Leyland for the short trip back to Eastern Hill. After a quick exchange of farewells, the firefighters and bandsmen of the 'Once A Year Club' headed towards their own homes; each one enjoying the satisfaction of knowing that he had contributed to the team effort of bringing enjoyment to so many people, whose day might have otherwise been spent in sadness and loneliness. This was Christmas Day - the Fire Brigade way.

LETTERS

Reading the August Water Off, I found it interesting as to where ex MFB members are now living, eg: Terry Harmon and Lionel Sleeman. So I thought it might be of interest as to the ex members living along the Murray as far as I know.

Echuca: Tony Scott
Fred Harris
Ern Trickey
Alan Eley
Moama: Keith Muir
Ian Sutherland
Gerry Keinhuiss
Barmah: Len Hubbard
Peter Miller
Nathalia: Kevin Strang
Phil Cleary
Bruce Thornton
M. Geisler
Corowa Don Muir
Mulwalla Jack Kelly

Alan Eley

Hazard at Twentieth Hole

After a day playing golf with a shift mate, Tiny brought him home to our Fire Brigade flat and said to me, "Put some tea on for us, we are hungry." I stood on top of the stair-case and said to Tiny, "I don't cook for drunks" and hit him with a golf club. He fell back on the stair-case landing and his mate retreated out the door.

As I walked out of the flat the next day, about ten firemen who were on shift put their fists up and said, "Are you ready for round two."

When Tiny arrived at work and lined up for his shift he had a big egg on his head and when asked "What happened to you," his golfing mate said, "Do you know his missus, she's a wild bitch, she cleaned him up with a five iron."

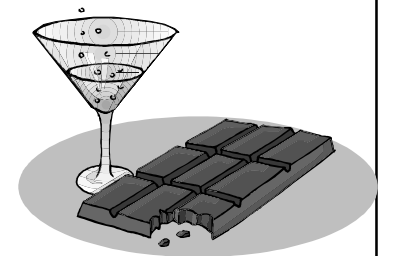
J. A. Wintle

The Fibber's Timepiece

Donald Rumsfield died and went to Heaven. As he stood in front of St Peter at the Pearly Gates, he saw a wall of clocks behind him. "What are all those clocks for?" he asked. St. Peter answered: "Those are Lie Clocks. Everyone on earth has a Lie Clock. Every time you lie, the hands on your clock move". "Oh", said Rumsfield, "whose clock is that?"

CHOCOLATE MATHEMATICS

It's pretty neat how it works out - it's cool chocolate math!!!!!!
DON'T CHEAT BY SCROLLING DOWN FIRST!



It takes less than a minute.....

Work it out as you read, but be sure you don't read the bottom until you've worked it out! It's not a waste of time thing, it's fun.

1. First of all, pick the number of times a week that you would like to have chocolate. (try for more than once but less than 10)
2. Multiply this number by 2 (Just to be bold)
3. Add 5. (for Sunday)
4. Multiply it by 50 I'll wait while you get the calculator.....
5. If you have already had your birthday this year add 1754.... If you haven't, add 1753 ...

6. Now subtract the four-digit year that you were born.

You should have a three-digit number

The first digit of this was your original number (i.e., how many times you want to have chocolate each week).

The next two numbers are

YOUR AGE! ~ (Oh YES, it IS!!!!)

THIS IS THE ONLY YEAR IT WILL EVER WORK, SO SPREAD IT AROUND WHILE IT LASTS.

John Rodda

"That's Mother Theresa's. The hands have never moved indicating she never told a Lie". "Incredible", said Rumsfield "Whose clock is that one?". St. Peter replied: "That's Abraham Lincoln's clock. The hands have moved twice, telling us that Abe told only two lies in his entire life". "Where's George W. Bush's clock?" asked Rumsfield. Replied St Peter: "Bush's clock is in Jesus's office. He's using it as a ceiling fan".

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 "bulldust".

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.**

Murphy's Laws

- Tell a man there are 300 billion stars in the universe and he'll believe you. Tell him the bench has wet paint on it and he'll have to touch to be sure.
- The primary function of the design engineer is to make things difficult for the fabricator and impossible for the serviceman.
- Some people manage by the book, even though they don't know who wrote the book or even what book.

OVER THE TOP

From the UK's Consumer "Which" magazine comes the following product warning:
"Before starting work, turn off water supply and drain the section of the system you intend to be working on. Isolate any adjacent electricity and gas supplies. Do not disturb any earth bonding connections. Some plumbing work is subject to regulations. If in doubt, contact your local authority. On restoring the water supply, check all joints for signs of leakage."
The product? A sink plug

Mount Eliza or Bust

It was December 1955, and about 100 off duty MFB firemen complete in brass helmets, boots, leggings and breeches were assembled outside the Royal Children's Hospital Orthopedic Section Mt Eliza.

At a given signal by District Officer Jack Bramwell, the Hawthorn Pipe Band commenced playing and marched off, followed by CFA Frankston Fire Station's International Pumper (now owned by Ian Hunter MFB). On board the pumper was Jack Bramwell, Jenny Howard (singer, entertainer) and about eight MFB firies in their clown regalia, listening and singing to Jack Harbrow playing the guitar and the firies in fours bringing up the rear.

As we wound our way down the driveway past the front of the hospital all of the children had been brought out of their wards by the nurses, parents and helpers and settled on the lawn with their beds, frames, trolleys and walking sticks.

The whole entourage then moved past the kids amid cheers and clapping then disappeared around the corner, came to a halt, then dismissed. The clowns and the firies then carried or wheeled the children from the lawns to the auditorium.

The organizers, RCH administration and the Uncle Bob's Club always had suitable children's pantomime with jugglers, magicians and our own MFB clowns to provide the magic for the next 2 hours.

I remember one year we had Max Reddy and Stella Lamond, Toni Lamond and Helen Reddy and over the years many overseas artists. To get these celebrities to attend was a huge bonus. It was always rumored that Jack Bramwell, a genius in promotion and organization, made them an offer they could not refuse.

At 4pm the show finished, we then had the job to return all of the children to their wards. Sometimes this was very disturbing because we entered the wards where the children could not be removed. Children on life support, encased in plaster from neck to knee or their legs spread to forma Y and then immobilized. I think that many of the firies with children of their own returned home that evening and thought how lucky they were.

One of the extra benefits for participating in such a worthwhile day was the get together involving the

band personnel, entertainers and firies organized by the Uncle Bob's Club. None of the nursing staff were allowed to join in for the 2 hours of drinking, singing, speeches and stories. But we did become acquainted with many of the doctors and nurses.

At the conclusion of the festivities some of the single firies who had made arrangements to meet nurses at the end of their 8-6pm shift started to disappear. This invariably led to procuring a few bottles and finding a suitable spot at the nearby beach. Of course the nurses would bring their medical books with them and we would only be interested in finding the right pressure points, coma positions, fireman's lift, cardiac compressions, massage and a host of other techniques and procedures which I feel would be quite boring for the readers.



The Big event, Christmas Day, the Uncle Bobs, the firemen, the pantomime and the Scotties.

To be continued next issue: How six very drunk firies forced a Sub Station Officer to make a difficult decision, nearly knocked

out a District Officer and redeemed themselves by putting out a house fire that was going "S..t hot".

"It's the way we have in the Fire Brigade"

F.C. Kerr

Footnote:

1927, Royal Children's Hospital purchased 20 acres of land at Mt Eliza.

1929, Eighty eight bed hospital, operating theatre and X-ray room built.

The purpose in building this Orthopedic Section was to care for the many children in Victoria with tuberculosis of the bones and joints, osteomyelitis, poliomyelitis and other children's disabilities.

1930: The first patients admitted.

1967: Grown to 140 beds with Physiotherapy dept. saltwater swimming pool, kindergarten etc.

1967: Was the last year that the firies attended R.C.H. Mt Eliza, thankfully, because of the low number of children being admitted owing to the dramatic reversal of poliomyelitis victims, the hospital was in the process of being closed down.

Get Rich Quick Investment Seminars

Brought to you by the Australian Securities & Investments Commission. Every day people lose lots of money to scams and swindlers. By drawing attention to the unfortunate fate of those people who were the victims of fraud and dishonesty, we hope to make people more aware of the dangers lurking out there.

Protect your money from 'get rich quick' pushers
You have probably seen or heard advertisements for investment seminars that claim:

'You can become a millionaire in three years' 'Traditional investments are too slow and lack excitement' 'You can turn your financial dreams into reality' 'Amazing, fabulous, unbelievable strategies for building massive wealth' In ASIC's experience most of these seminars push dangerous strategies, such as borrowing huge sums of money to buy property, unusual investments or shares. Some are simply scams.

Keep your eyes open to the risks
ASIC sees the shattering impact from rip offs and investment disasters. People tell us about the shame and guilt at losing money they had spent years building up for their dreams or their retirement.

Many people also tell us how disappointed they became when the money they spent on 'get rich quick' investment strategies failed to live up to the promises, even if they did not lose money.

By all means try to make your savings and investments work hard and grow fast. But keep your eyes open to the risks. Many of these seminars make money from attendance fees, over-priced reports or books, and from selling property and investments from which the promoters rake off fees, commissions and other profits.

The worst 'get rich quick' schemes will simply be scams designed to take your money. Some seminars try to get you to invest in offshore schemes where you will have no protection, and will probably never see your money again.

Avoid 'get rich quick' pushers. Higher returns mean higher risks, and if it sounds too good to be true, then you'll end up the loser. The 'get rich quick' promoter will be the only winner.

Five safety checks to protect your money

1. Take your time before investing your money. 2. Research any investment - *only get involved if you understand the offer*. 3. Make sure you're comfortable with the risks, especially if you're borrowing to invest. 4. Get information and advice only from reputable people - licensed financial advisers or genuine educational organisations such as the ASX, Securities Institute or Centrelink's Financial Information Service. 5. Visit ASIC's consumer website fido.asic.gov.au for financial tips and safety checks, tips on choosing licensed advisers, and scams to avoid. You could also join Fido News to get a free monthly newsletter.

Avoid seminars that make these claims:

'You can become a millionaire in three years' 'Traditional investments are too slow and lack excitement' 'You can turn your financial dreams into reality' 'Amazing, fabulous, unbelievable strategies for building massive wealth' Don't get sucked in by glossy brochures, over-the-top testimonies from past customers, pictures of people punching their hands in the air in triumph, or pictures of the promoter relaxing on his yacht.

Avoid salespeople who:

- Pressure you into investing and/or borrowing money
- Promise you high returns with no explanation of risk
- Promise you access to 'secret' or 'exclusive' techniques for building wealth
- Lure you with free seminars only to hit you later with high fees

If you've been caught out by a 'get rich quick' scheme then contact ASIC on 1300 300 630 if the scheme involves shares or investments. If the scheme involves direct property contact your state office of Consumer Affairs or Fair Trading.

TO YOUR HEALTH

From the US Consumer Reports on Health:

Much has been written about the potential health benefits of drinking red wine in moderation. Now comes similar good news for beer drinkers; two studies have suggested a brew a day may help prevent heart attacks. While these studies don't prove beer is the best drink for your heart, they should give beer enthusiasts some ammunition against wine sippers who scorn their foamy brew.

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

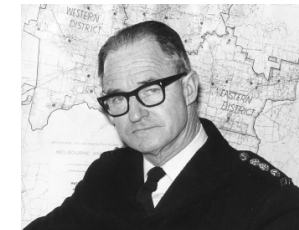
The Editorial Committee were delighted with the response to the "Who, Where & What?" segment in our previous edition of 'Water Off'. We are pleased to announce that one person correctly named all three photos.

Congratulations to JOHN CHAMBERS

Some of our other readers sent in some interesting comments on the published photos, but your co-editor has misplaced the file, so we will have to include them in the next edition. Sincere apologies from 'Water Off' for this delay.

The answers:

Who is this firefighter?
Retired DO. Vic Rogers



Where is this fire station?
It is the old Fire Station 36, in Bluff Rd. Sandringham.



What is this appliance?
It is one of the Dennis Rolls Royce Pumps being trialled on the banks of the Yarra shortly after its delivery in the 1950s. We accepted either the No. 7 or No. 8 Dennis Pump in answer to this question.



We hope you will continue to support this feature.

From The Past

Fireman Injured at City Fire

From the Sun News Pictorial dated Friday, November 15, 1957.

The caption to the photograph reads:

Fireman Jack Gallop, who was overcome by smoke while fighting last night's fire at the Australi Wine and Spirit Agency Pty. Ltd. in Flinders-Lane. Gallop was on the fourth floor when he broke a window to obtain fresh air. Here he is being taken to a car, where he received treatment for his hand which was cut when he broke the window.

Of course, Jack survived the ordeal and went on to a great career in the MFB. He is now retired and has plenty of stories to tell.

Can anyone identify the two firefighters assisting Jack?



The Argus, September 1904 Football Final Abandoned

The match which was to be played this afternoon for the Association premiership will not take place. Richmond and North Melbourne were to have met on the East Melbourne Cricket ground. The committee of the Richmond club were of the opinion that Allen, who umpired in the game between North Melbourne and Footscray last Saturday, had altogether failed to secure any control over the players. On hearing that he was appointed for their match with North Melbourne, the

Richmond committee met, and decided not to play unless another umpire was appointed. The players agreed with the committee in this view; in fact, they were the first to take action. A meeting of the permit and umpire committee of the association met to consider the situation, but they declined to appoint another umpire. The committee of the Richmond club, under the circumstances, unanimously agreed not to play the match, which accordingly has been abandoned. By default of their opponents, North Melbourne therefore become premiers for the season.

WHO, WHERE & WHAT?

Following the success of the first two "Who, Where & What?" that we ran in previous editions of 'Water Off' we now have 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

Who is this Firefighter?



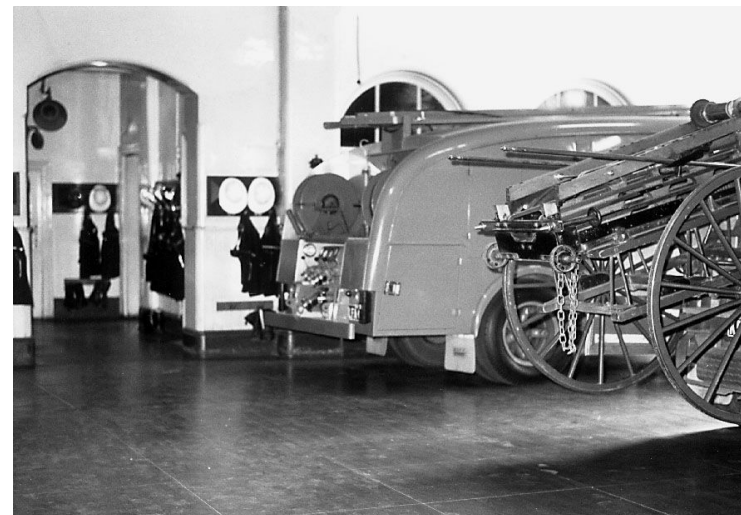
FOR THE WINNERS.

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 finalised before Christmas.

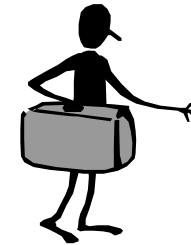
John Chambers will be the first recipient.

Good luck!!!

Where is this fire station?



What is this appliance



TRAVELLING WITH SILVER

This is a story about Hawaii. Know I've written in previous issues about this beautiful place, but the reason I'm writing again is because Mrs. Silver says we are going there shortly if for no other reason than to preserve our miles with United.

We have something like 75,000 miles each and if you don't add to them or use them within a certain time you lose them, so we are going to add on she says. Most people who say they are going to Hawaii never go there. They go to Waikiki, a suburb if you like to the City of Honolulu on the island of Oahu in the Hawaiian group.

The "Big Island" is the largest in the State of Hawaii having the biggest mountain in the world if you measure it from the sea floor, the largest orchid industry in the world and the sunniest coastline in Hawaii.

Big Island tourism is millions of dollars behind Oahu and Maui and is spread over a much larger area. Of the 22 climate zones in the world the Big Island has 20 of them and you can drive through the lot in one day.

At the foot of the worlds most active volcano is a desert while atop the inactive Mauna Kea you can ski for 5 months of the year. The old world town of Hilo has one of the heaviest rainfalls of all time while on the other side of the island, no rain, just plush jungles held back by hotel gardeners. If you are sick of spending your holidays under palms and white sand, how about black or green sand.

The Big Island's active volcano "Kilauea" has been erupting steadily since 1983 and is considered quiet. It's called the drive in volcano because of it's easy access and on any day you can see lava and underground rivers of molten rock which flows into the sea. One scientist has estimated the amount of lava in any one year since 1986 would build a 2 lane freeway to the moon. Very interesting, I think he should get a life. You can stay on Kilauea's rim in the Volcano House, a guest house built in 1877.

There are sophisticated hotels along the Kona

and Kohala coasts where movie star, tycoons and politicians gather. They deserve each other so give them a miss for the Condo's and the B&B's.

On the less developed sections of the island camping is popular (not for me), there are no nasties but be ready for rain on the Hilo side of the island. The small towns on the coast make you feel like you are in a time warp. Tin roofed wooden buildings, 1960's soda fountains, spinning stools, antique cash registers that ring up the price, the only other one I've seen was on King Island.

If you plan to move around the island the best way is to fly to the opposite side and drive back. You will have to pay a \$70 US drop off fee. If your car isn't in your accommodation package you will get one for a little over \$50 US per day if you shop around at the airport. If you book from Australia it is a lot more expensive.

I'm a man who likes to make his own travel arrangements and select where I'm going so, Hawaii it is ... unless Mrs. Silver changes her mind.

Aloha Silver.



Above: Kilauea's active crater taken by Mr and Mrs Silver with their box brownie as they para-glided over the volcano during an eruption.

Pigeon Paradise Awaits Old Mates

Heard from ret. SO. Neville Smith recently and it appears his hobby and investment in racing pigeons is paying off.

He's off to South Africa soon to enter his birds in the worlds richest pigeon race in which a million dollars is waiting for the winner.

Neville is extremely confident that his best bird is a world champion with offers already coming in from other countries to buy. Of course, Neville is

knocking them back.

Neville is living in Queensland and invites any of his old workmates a holiday at his place with Lady Musgrove Island, reef fishing, the Blue Water Club and a pub TAB just a short walk up the road.

If any of the above sounds attractive, give Neville a ring on 07 4159 4002. He will be pleased to hear from you.

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.

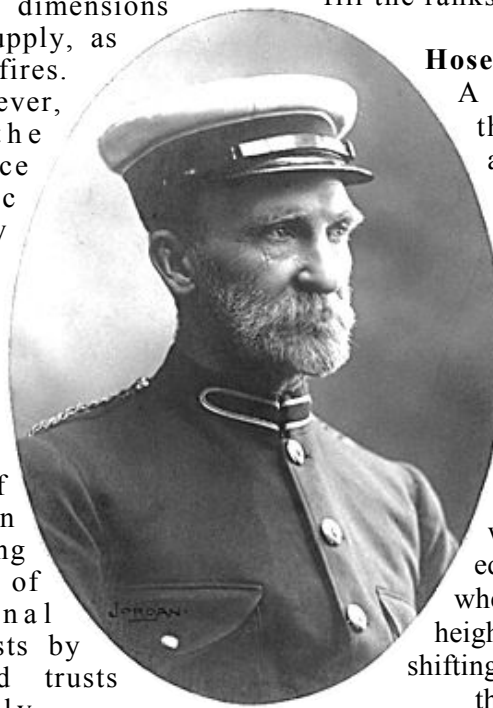
He was involved with the Victorian country and Melbourne suburban fire services from 1860's prior to his appointment as Chief Officer of the Country Fire brigades Board in 1894. He was for nine years Captain of CHILTERN and six years Captain of FLEMINGTON and KENSINGTON FIRE BRIGADES.

The Victorian Country Fire Service (continued from August issue)

Water Supply:

As towns became more settled, local committees, mining and road boards were established, and among the first problems grappled with was that of water supply. A few councils displayed much foresight by installing mains and pipes of sufficient dimensions to ensure a good domestic supply, as also to successfully cope with fires.

The great majority, however, rested content with the installation of 3in. service mains, and 2in. for domestic supply, a short-sighted policy which the residents have ever since regretted. Such small mains and pipes are next to useless for a domestic supply, and utterly so for fire extinction, and, besides, they are a serious handicap and a never-ending source of annoyance to our firemen when working a fire. Notwithstanding numerous protests on the part of the Board, and personal interviews and written protests by myself, some councils and trusts persisted in this falsely economical policy, which was a sheer waste of money, as the small pipes, after a very short service, had to be replaced by larger ones. I have all along contended that, even in our smallest towns, suitable mains to extinguish fires should be installed, and that a permanent supply all through the year should be conserved in wells and elevated tanks for fire extinction purposes



Lt.-Col. T. S. Marshall

only, so that life and property might be. to a greater extent, safeguarded.

The advent of motor pumps makes a larger and more effective supply absolutely necessary, especially where dependence must be entirely placed on the local reticulated water supply.

The installation of water supply was the prelude to the establishment of a fire brigade, little difficulty being experienced in recruiting the requisite number of eligible young men to fill the ranks.

Hose Reels:

A permanent water supply led to the universal use of hose reels, and this necessitated an entirely different system of practice and working from that of the manual engine. For training and practice purposes the hose reel, vastly lightened and otherwise greatly improved, pertains to the present day. On their first introduction, and, for some years later, the hose reels, when loaded with hose and other necessary equipment, were very heavy, the wheels being of such an abnormal height that the machine took some shifting, but, when once started, it covered the ground well, that is when all hands pulled equally, which was not always the case. The polers and the two wing men were harnessed in

ropes, and a slack rope, which was frequently in evidence, was a clear indication that not every man was doing his duty. My first hose reel was designed and built by the two village blacksmiths, and, iron being cheap and plentiful, they turned out a machine that might have had a chance with a steam roller. At

that time we had to drag the reel fully 200 yards, the men at the start taking their positions on the reel. We ran with our monstrosity at the first Geelong demonstration. We did not win. It was our first and last run with it. Four years later, with an improved machine, I ran with the winning team, Chiltern, as hydrant man, carrying a 291b. hydrant, the prize being the Britannia Challenge Cup, its second year, Sandhurst City having scored the first win in the previous year.



Hose reels and ladder outside the Stawell Volunteer Fire Brigade station circa 1890. A permanent water supply led to the universal use of hose reels.

Horse Vehicles:

To meet the requirements of our cities it was found necessary to introduce a vehicle that would convey men and appliances to a fire more expeditiously than

a hand reel, hence the installation of hose carts by the councils and brigades of Bendigo, Ballarat and Geelong, and, later on, Eaglehawk. The introduction of horses was another big advance in fire equipment. The horses were all handsome, stalwart animals, wonderfully well trained and as docile as children; aye, frequently more so. When the fire bell sounded an alarm they would strain on their halters and beat incessantly with their hoofs in their eagerness to get into action. Backing into the shafts, they were

harnessed instantaneously; then off at a hand gallop with its crew to the fire to the admiring gaze of the spectators. One of the best known of these grand animals was "Larry," a magnificent, upstanding dapple grey located for years at the Ballarat City fire station. In his day Larry was quite an institution, known to every resident, old and young, in Ballarat. Station keeper J. McKay had trained him so thoroughly that when lady visitors, and they were numerous, arrived, Larry, on being told to shake hands with the lady, would immediately lift his hoof and place it gently in the lady's hand; then, again being told to kiss the lady, he would bow his head gracefully to receive the chaste salute of the visitor.

Like the gallant and faithful animal he was, Larry met his death in harness, and on active service, dropping dead on reaching a fire, leaving his old friend and pal Jim McKay quite broken up by the death of his dear, old Larry.

Next Issue: District competitions, the first demonstration, the torchlight procession and the first meeting of captains!

Queensland Reunion 2004

The Annual MFB Queensland reunion took place at the Southport Yacht Club organized as always by Peter and June Coulson. A great day of lunch, drinks and memories was enjoyed by all. A silence was held for those members who had passed on and apologies accepted for those unable to attend. Special mention was made to Ian Heath being unable to attend because of illness.

Don't forget, same time, the last Thursday in July, same place, Southport Yacht Club, next year.

Contacts are:
Peter Coulson, Gold Coast,
Ken Hopper, Melbourne.

Ken Hopper

Photograph by Brian McMillan



Left to right: Gordon Hynes, Basil Smith, Geoff Cusack, Tony Hynson, Bob Burroughs, Kevin Kennedy, John Hodder, Brian McMillan, Bing Lyons, Bill Moore, Alan Boyd, Ted Harrison, J. Robertson, Ken Hopper, Peter Coulson. Front: Rhonda Harrison, Barbara McMillan, Marg Moore, June Coulson, Julie Boyd. A special mention for the "Senior Man" Arthur Henning, not included in the photograph.