

"WATER OFF"

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



February 2014 Vol 18 No 1
Inc/No: A16839F

**Steven Churchill
The Quiet
Achiever
Eight Years On!**

**Annual Reports
Good,
But Secretary Gives
Warning**

**Around Cambodia
and Vietnam, some
scenic wonders!**

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**Australia Day
Honours for
2 Members**

**Commander's
Retirement
Recognised**

“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 19th February 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

Valë

Rod Brown (MFB)
Clifford Dunn (MFB/
Aviation)

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	Clarrie Hart
Huew Campbell*	Ron Rae
John Cotter	Jack Sexton
Ernie Goodall*	Brian Trembath
Clarrie Guthrie*	Tom Williamson
Jack Harbrow	

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
February 19th General Meeting
May 21st General Meeting
August 29th General Meeting
November 19th; Annual General Meeting

November 15th Annual Christmas Luncheon
11.30 am. Malvern Town Hall

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Welcome to another New Year. I sincerely hope you all had a Happy and Healthy Christmas. To all members and families who are not enjoying the best of health I hope things will improve throughout the year.

We have been allocated another BBQ at Bunnings Hoppers Crossing on Saturday 11th October 2014. This has been a good fundraiser over the past few years. The members attending have a good laugh and enjoy each other's company.

We hope to have another BBQ at Ozanam House in North Melbourne. When the date has been decided I will ask for volunteers to help.



Left; John Berry at the last Bunning's BBQ. A big charity fund raiser for the RFA

Photo; the Brennan Collection

There have been changes in the MFB with the CEO Nick Easy and CFO Shane Wright both resigning and gone onto greener fields. Both of these people have been a great help to our association. And I wish them all the best in their future endeavours.

The UFU Picnic will be on held Sunday 16th February at

Moonee Valley Racecourse. Bring your families along for a great day. Please contact the UFU office if you are attending for catering purposes.

Hope to see you at our next meeting

Don Brennan

SECRETARY/ TREASURER'S REPORT

Welcome to 2014, the year of the Horse in the Chinese calendar. One prediction that I looked at identified that it is a good year for the leaders in business etc. I wonder if that is the reason why there has been unprecedented change in the leaders of my old employer the MFB.

Just in case our interstate and overseas members are not up to speed on the changes; **Nick Easy the CEO, Shane Wright Chief Officer have resigned** and I have been advised that a department head from the workshops has also **resigned**. On behalf of our members & committee we wish them every success in their new careers. The one down side of the changes is that both the CEO & CO were supporters of the RFA and in fact each addressed one of our meetings, the CEO in particular was a first, previous CEO's had never accepted our invitation.

At the **November meeting**, one of the committee (Ian Geddes) stood-down to allow for a change in the executive, The new committee is as follows **President Don Brennan**, Vice President **Ian Fowler**, Sec/Tres **John Berry**, Ordinary members, **Mike McCumisky**, **Allan Roberts**, **John Schintler** and **Arthur Capes**. **Theo Teklenburg** Auditor. The RFA fees remain the same, **\$5 Joining fee, Yearly subs \$10**, no change since 1988, this has been achieved because of the voluntary work of the committee keeping the cost down.

The members present at the meeting were given the privilege to hear & see first-hand all about the new multi-agency training complex **Craigieburn** from **Commander Graeme Gant** (Project Officer) and **S.O Steve Brown** (Procurement Officer), their presentation was first class. From the discussions I heard during the lunch break from those in attendance it was said, it was not only very

informative but also one of the best show & tells that they had been to in a long time. (Letter of appreciation forwarded).

John Howe our only member of the MFB Peer Support Group, introduced to the members present at the start of the meeting the new **Group Co-ordinator Domenica (Nic) Roperto**, Nic addressed the members and with the limited time that was available gave a small insight into her back-ground and would like the opportunity to attend one of our meetings again in the future to better explore hers & the group's role. One area titled Ageing & Aged Care; a joint project with the UFU, is one that needs to be better explained to the RFA.

Nic recently forwarded me a brochure titled Ageing & Aged Care which gives a brief insight into the following. Social effects of ageing support for personnel, Linkcare Australia, help with assessments; help with the management of community care plans, Residential care advice and assistance to secure a suitable vacancy in a nursing home or hostel. If members are interested in the subjects at the forth coming meeting you will have the opportunity to vote on a meeting about said subject.

In the last newsletter we wrote about **Ron Rae** and the Carrum Bowling Club redevelopment etc. Unfortunately he has become another of our members that has been affected by that insidious problem (stroke). The day I visited him, he was the Ron we all know, very positive, committed and ready to meet any challenge that the rehab will throw at him, of course looking forward to getting back into bowls and ready to become a member of a team who gain an "eight". If thinking of visiting him I suggest you get in touch with Rod Knowles, due to the fact we do not want him tired-out whilst he is involved in the strenuous rehabilitation programme. Ron, on behalf of the

(Continued on page 4)

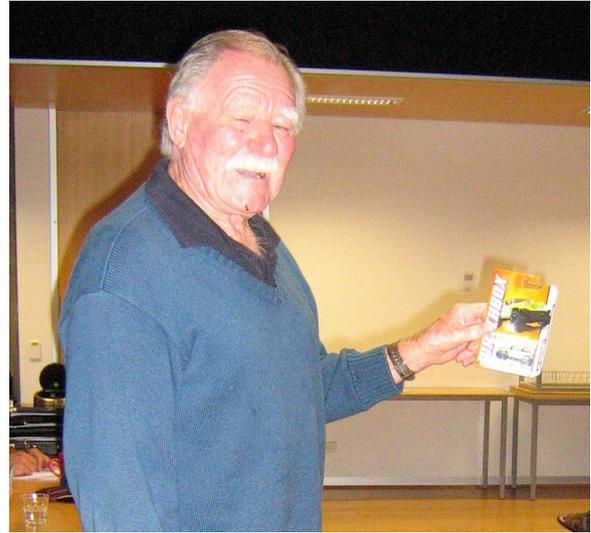
(Continued from page 3)

members we are all looking forward to seeing the Rae name in bowls journal "The Shot" as part of an eight. One other point Ron, if the wife can do it so can you!

Another item I need to mention about the November meeting, this one was a first for the committee; we went to great expense and gave away a "Jeep" to the winner of the **(Guess Who)** quiz, the one that showed the group photograph of Brigade personnel. There were three questions that needed to be answered? Well the first person, who had the correct answer to all 3 questions, was no other than **Stan Gough**, Stan rang with the answers and I advised him to receive the prize he must attend the meeting. The photograph shows Stan exhibiting his prize of the Jeep (Willy's) to the members present.

In closing, another year has started I would like to say we are going to have the best year ever however, with what we see & hear in the daily papers and on T.V, one can only wonder? That of course is all the more reason to attend the meetings and enjoy the company of like people. To the families not enjoying the best of times we may be able to assist in some way, just give us a ring.

John Berry.



Above; Stan Gough shows off his prize, the much sought after "Jeep".

Valê Clifford .G. Dunn

In the Sun/Herald death notices the other day there was one from the UFU of A for Cliff. Many may not be aware of the significance of the role he played in bringing the firefighting fraternity in Australia under the one banner **One Union One Voice.**

In discussion with Rod Knowles (Past President of UFU of A) and member of the RFA, he brought to my attention many aspects about Cliff (his mate & friend for over 40 years that I was not aware of one in particular, he was an MFB firie before he transferred to Aviation. I mentioned to Rod, even with the limited times I had been in contact with Cliff, I found him to be not only a very intelligent person but also very generous in the sharing of knowledge.

Both Rod and I agree that the Career Firefighting Unions in Australia and the world have been made the richer from Clifford's endeavours. On behalf of the Members & Committee of the RFA we offer our deepest sympathy and condolences to his wife Pauline and her family.

"Water Off" Deadline

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.

May 2014 edition deadline for copy is April 25th

RFA Subscriptions

With the new calendar year here the committee believe we need to better explain how the members current financial standing is expressed on the newsletter, the following I hope will simplify the system we use.

- The address label is the vehicle we use for the transfer of your current financial position;
- Below the person's name and address is the word expires & a date, indicating when you are no longer financial i.e. expires: 2/1/14. That is the date the member ceases to be financial;
- The yearly subscription has not changed since formation of the RFA, it is still **\$10** per year;
- If a member is non-financial for three calendar years their name is removed from the mail-out;
- The committee is well aware it is sometimes overlooked so what we do before removal from the list is send with the newsletter a gentle reminder, however be aware we do not keep sending them;
- We also exhibit on page 2 of the newsletter another gentle reminder.

Of course the committee is very understanding and wants all members to know we are aware life is not always a bowl of cherries so if confronted with whatever just give the Secretary a ring, the number is in bold print on page 2 (confidentially is assured)

In this edition of the newsletter there will be a need to include some notices. Remember the cheapest way to transfer money is electronically into the Firefighters Credit Cooperative as follows.

BSB: No 803- 209, Account: No 91469

Account Name: Retired Firefighters Association

Reference: Your Name (Informs us who is making the payment)

If your bank or whoever request the name of the bank it is to go to! It is the Firefighters Credit CoOp, NAB Please do not send cash through the mail, Cheques and/or money orders are good, but they cost you money, plus the postage, with the above transfer there is no charge.

John berry

Minutes Annual General Meeting - 20th November 2013

Present - 49

Apologies - 15

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

First time Attendees - George McLennan (Southern), Ian Munro (Western).

Sick List - Andy Johnston, Ray Wellard, John Laverick, Trish Hede, John Cotter, Murray Jelleff.

John Howe our (Peer Support member) introduced Domenica (Nic) Roperto, the new Group Coordinator to the meeting, Nic recently commenced in this role and is interested in the foundations, background histories of the Brigade.

Don called for a One Minute Silence for fallen comrades.

Secretary/Treasurers Report: John Berry.

John thanked the M.F.B. and U.F.U. for their on-going assistance, without which the R.F.A. could not exist. He stated that we must adhere to a set of rules and regulations, and presented the Minutes of the 2012 AGM and Accounts. For 2012/2013. Monies received \$19,003.61. Expenditures which included \$3,737.64 to charity was \$8,824.84. Monies in accounts as of the 30/6/13, is as follows.

Main Account \$3,986.53, Term Deposit \$6,192.24 - Total \$10,178.77.

Report accepted John Schintler, Seconded Ian Fowler
Report accepted.

Presidents Report: Don Brennan.

Don thanked members for assisting at the Bunning's Barbeques fund raising days, Ozanam Community Centre barbeque day, also for the compilation/distribution of Water Off, Kirsty (T/C Manager) for use of facility and barbeque lunches. Big thanks to U.F.U. for covering the R.F.A. Third Party Insurance costs.

Stan Gough won the August "Guess Who" - first Abbotsford T/C staff. (members names). He was presented with a New Willy's Jeep being the first correct answer. (Match-box size)

Elections for 2013 -2014.

President - Don Brennan (unopposed)

Vice President - Ian Fowler/Alec Shepherd - Ian Fowler elected.

Secretary/Treasurer - John Berry (unopposed).

John was VERY DEFINITE that he will STAND DOWN in MAY 2014, and will assist any member who wishes to take over.

4 Committee Members - 5 nominees, Ian Geddes on hearing this stood down, to allow a new member onto the committee.

Alan Roberts, Mike McCumisky, John Schintler and Sammy Capes elected.

John spoke of the excellent work Angela Potter (Don/Nancy's daughter) has done in securing Government funds/grants and numerous other tasks for the RFA. Angela has agreed to accept a Honorary R.F.A. Membership.

Guest Speaker - Craigieburn Training College Team.

Don introduced Commander Graeme Gant (Project Officer) and S.O. Steve Brown (Procurement Officer). Graeme, explained the research & reason for the new Training College

In 2002, it was decided to sell Abbotsford, and Burnley was built, which unfortunately did not meet the needs of Victoria. Why Craigieburn? It's a 18.5 hectare Greenfield site, road, train, bus access, 25kms north of GPO. The \$109 million project was given the go ahead. Designed to function for 230 persons at any time, 120 seat cafeteria with basic hot foods, sandwiches etc, car/bike parking, and first buildings to be completed by December '13, first staff commence in March '14, and first Courses by June 2014.

Training Facilities.

The following is a précis of the pictorial exhibited at the meeting.

Seven Floor High Rise - modules include Restaurant, Hospital, Prison, Bedroom, Kitchen, Lounge room, Lifts, other portable scenarios, also High Angle Rescue Team (HART).

Residential - gas meter, kitchen, bedroom/s etc as in normal house, plus town house and mansion.

Show and Tell House - building construction, utilities, timber/roof/walls.

Petro Chem. - tank farm, cylinders, valves/piping - foam facilities.

Shipping containers for "dirty burns" equipped with water and air purifying.

Industrial Building with lights, smoke, noisy audio to put Fires into "real life" situations.

Petrol Station - with petrol/L.P. pumps, rubbish hoppers, attached shop/convenience store.

Marine - floating "ship", docks, engine room, deck, on-ship fire fighting equipment.

Urban Search and Rescue (U.S.A.R.) - building collapse, car park collapse on 2 levels.

Transport - real train, tram, bus in open/underground situations.

And last but not least - Open Water Pumping dam.

Don thanked Graeme and Steve for their presentations, and we adjourned for lunch.

Meeting closed at 1220 hours.

RETIRED FIREFIGHTERS' ASSOCIATION OF AUSTRALIA

VICTORIAN BRANCH

Reg.No. A16839F

Statement of Income and Expenditure for year ended 30 June 2013

<u>Income</u>	\$	2012 \$
Opening Balance Credit Union 1 July 2012	8,886.37	12,445.73
Members' subscriptions	3,038.60	4,070.30
Sale of promotional items	172.65	36.00
Fundraising	3,862.60	-
Joining fees	55.00	35.00
Government grant	2,700.00	-
Interest received	288.39	330.57
	<u>19,003.61</u>	<u>16,917.60</u>
 <u>Expenditure</u>		
Postages and telephone	1,274.94	1,206.13
Reunion Day & catering	-	601.43
Magazine expenses	173.93	128.21
Computer upgrades & software & internet	-	1,203.00
Government grant expenditure	2,625.26	-
Merchandise	915.00	-
Donations	3,737.64	4,545.00
Sundries	39.17	299.16
Government & Credit co-op fees & charges	58.90	48.30
	<u>8,824.84</u>	<u>8,031.23</u>
Closing Balance Credit Union 30 June 2013	<u>10,178.77</u>	<u>8,886.37</u>
	<u>19,003.61</u>	<u>16,917.60</u>

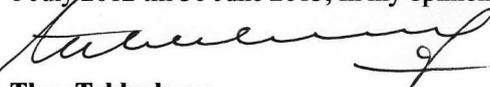
Bank Reconciliation

Bank balance as at 30 June 2013

Main account	3,986.53
Term deposit	<u>6,192.24</u>
	<u>10,178.77</u>

Independent Person's Certification.

I Have examined the accounting records, including receipts, of Retired Firefighters Association for the period 1 July 2012 till 30 June 2013, In my opinion the Statement of Performance above is correct.



Theo Teklenburg

Retired Credit Union Manager

Two Retired Firies Receive Order of Australia Medals.

Heartiest congratulations go to retired District Officer Alan Eley AFSM and Ron Barker formerly with the Fire Equipment Services Dept. Both were recipients of the Order of Australia Medal in the 2014 Australia Day Honours List.

Many RFA members will remember Alan Eley. Alan was a foundation member and the first President of the Melbourne Fire Brigade Historical Society, now the Fire Services Museum of Victoria. On retirement from the MFB, Alan moved to Echuca where he became heavily involved with the CFA as a fire investigator, and many other community activities. Now aged in his '80s Alan is still investigating fires in his local area.

For service to the community of Echuca.

The following is Alan's OAM citation:

President, Rotary Club of Echuca Moama, 1988-1989; Member, for many years; Chairman, Steam Rally Committee.

Volunteer, Meals on Wheels, for many years.

Member, Probus Club of Echuca; Secretary, 2007/2008.

Member, Ambulance Advisory Board.

Brigade Secretary, Echuca Urban Fire Brigade, 1985-1999 and 2006-2008; Volunteer Firefighter, since 1985; Life Member; Brigade Historian, for many years; Brigade Training Officer, for 10 years; Brigade Finance Committee Member, for 28 years.

Deputy Group Officer, Deakin Group, Country Fire Authority, for 10 years; Secretary, for 8 years.

Volunteer Fire Causation Investigator, Fire Investigation Group, for many years; Fire Investigation Team Leader.

Public Relations Officer, State Championships, 2005 and 2010.

Awards/recognition include:
Australian Fire Service Medal, 1995.

Ron Barker; a regular at the RFA meetings, was also an original member of the MFBHS. His enthusiasm and dedication led to him becoming Vice President for many years, and finally President of the Fire Services Museum. Although retired from the FSMV Committee now, Ron is still a regular face in the Museum on Fridays and Sundays.

The following is Ron's OAM citation:

For service to cultural heritage, particularly the history of fire services.

President, Fire Services Museum, Victoria, 1983-1993; Vice-President, 1980-1983, Life Member. Member, Metropolitan Fire Board Fire Equipment Service, 1961-1992; assisted in the establishment of Fire Brigade Historical Society, 1972.



L-R: Sff. Jack Kelly and SO1 Alan Eley in the MFBHS rooms at FS48 Nth Melbourne in 1973. Alan was the original President of the Melbourne Fire Brigade Historical Soc. (now the Fire Services Museum of Victoria) Jack was the first secretary.

Photo: B. McCumisky



Retired President of the Fire Services Museum of Victoria, Ron Barker, at the wheel of the Museum's Hotchkiss hose carriage.

Photo: Fire Services Museum

Did You Know?

A recent study found that the average Australian walks 900 miles a year!!

Another study found that Australians drink an average 22 gallons of alcohol a year!!

That means that, on average, Australians get41 miles to the gallon!!!

Makes you proud to be an Aussie doesn't it?

Touring Vietnam and Cambodia

Both countries have survived centuries of conflicts in which millions have died but history lives on in the monuments of their past glories. Our President, Don Brennan and wife Nancy take us on a journey through these two ancient but beautiful lands.

Following a 9 hour flight to Saigon, we changed over for a further 1 hour flight to Siem Reap in Cambodia. This town is influenced by the French architecture and is the centre for visitors to Angkor Wat and numerous other temples. Some which are now only ruins. Angkor Wat is the biggest and it was built in the 12th Century. It was occupied by a King, Priests and servants approximately 20,000 people in all.

There is an outer wall with the main building in the centre and a five tower temple in the inner walls. All walls have carvings engraved in them. It is hard to imagine how they could build these with such precision in those days. The whole complex was surrounded by a moat, which is now dry.

On day 3 we visited lake Tonle Sap which is the largest fresh water lake in south east Asia. The lake flows into the Mekong River and has an abundant of fish stock for the locals. Here there is a floating township. Including a church, shops and mechanical workshops. If you cant get on with your neighbours, you just tow your house to another area. You can catch a boat here to travel down to Phnom Penh. It was near here we seen some motorbikes with double bed mattresses tied onto the rear carrier. This is very much a tourist area.

Next day we flew 55 minutes to Phnom Penh which is built on the Mekong River. With lovely waterfront buildings and housing. Pol Pot took over the city in April 1975, and held it until it was liberated by the Vietnamese. It has many pagodas. We spent some time at the Tuol Sleng genocide museum. It was originally a school. This was turned into the Khmer Rouge torture headquarters. Up to 17,000 men, women and children passed through here to the killing fields. Most did not make it there.

There is a photo gallery of many people who were brutally tortured. Some rooms had hundreds of human skulls stacked behind glass doors. When liberated there were only 7 people alive. It is hard to believe what some humans are capable of.

Leaving Cambodia, we flew to Saigon. A city of 10 million people and 6 million motor bikes plus plenty of luxury motor vehicles ie BMW. Our hotel was near the Ben Thanh market, where you could buy any clothing, leather goods etc (all copies of DVD latest films were 50 cents each, cans of coke 20 cents). Next day we visited more temples and war museums. The Vietnamese call it the American war. Plenty of photos of action and show cases full of guns and ammunitions. In the yard were tanks, helicopters, and aeroplanes. There was no animosity shown to us for our involvement in the war.

Over the next 2 days, we did boat trips on the Mekong River, on motor boats, wooden boats. We travelled in paddle boats in some canals where you would fit 3 people in a boat. Next day we were taken to Cu-Chi district.

Where we visited a large Buddhist temple, where services go on all day and people queue up for an hour to get in.

After lunch we visited the Cu-Chi tunnels. These ran from North to South Vietnam and in places they were 5 levels deep and well booby trapped. Yours truly being slightly bigger then the locals did not venture down in the tunnels. You could fire, for a price, an AK47 rifle and M16 rifles at about \$2 per bullet.

The following day we flew to Da Nang and then by bus to Hoi An. We visited China beach where the US Forces had their R&R breaks. Also we visited Marble mountain, where the marble is mined and made into statues and exported all over the world. Hoi An is an older type village on the river. (16th Century) where you can have suits, jackets etc made to order over night.

Next day we were taken by bus, 4 hours (approximately 140km), over the rugged coast and mountain passes to Hue. Here we visited the tomb of Minh Mang which is a large complex, which stretches from the front to the back doors approximately 700 metres.

Another flight to Hanoi, our hotel was in the old district close to the markets. Next morning we were taken by bus to Ha Long Bay. It took us 4 hours to cover 170 kms. The traffic was horrendous. Leave a gap of two cars and someone would jump in. Double lines mean nothing. At Ha Long Bay we boarded a motorised Junk for an overnight cruise. There are approximately 400 junks on the water with about 100 having overnight accommodation. We had a double bed and ensuite. The meals were cooked onboard and very good. Each junk had its own tender. We were taken to some of the islands including through a hole into a large grotto. I counted 35 junks anchored near us over night. There are over 1,000 little islands and rock formations in the area.

Next day back to Hanoi for dinner. Then an evening water puppet show, which was excellent. On our last day we visited to Ho Chi Minh mausoleum, where his body lies in state. We had to march in pairs approximately 1km, to enter the mausoleum and no stopping or taking photos inside. We were then taken to a University which, we were informed, set up around the year 1100. From there we were taken by cyclo (rickshaw) back to our hotel. My driver had to work his butt off. In the late afternoon we were transferred to the airport to fly back to Saigon and then transfer to our flight back to Australia.

I would recommend this Wendy Wu Tour to anyone. We were well looked after and well catered for.

Don Brennan, taken from the notes of Nancy Brennan. Photos from the Brennan collection.



Above; Angkor Wat temple, built in the 12th century, is recognised as the largest religious building in the world.



Above; A visit to the Cu-Chi tunnels that ran from North to South Vietnam proved to Don that he was a little larger than the locals. He, of course, did not venture down.



Above; Buildings of the floating village on Lake Tonle Sap



Above; A tired cyclo driver taps Don on the shoulder and tells him to put the camera down and pedal himself. Below; The Ho Chi Minh Mausoleum. The Brennans were told not to take photos inside lest they disturb the old chap lying in state.



Above; The Brennans at Marble Mountain. The area is famous for its sculpture and stone cutting crafts. Nancy wanted the fountain for their garden but Don said he could get a better one at Bunnings.



“Love & Determination Overcomes Adversity.” Revisited

This article is a follow on from the contribution Ellen and Frank Churchill placed in the May 2006 edition of the newsletter, titled “Love & Determination Overcomes Adversity.” The article was a good news story about their grandson Steven, who has Cerebral Palsy. Their article highlighted Steven’s journey through life, the highs & lows including what the family had encountered along the way, I have read it a number of times and I must say without doubt it is a great story. It explained what can be achieved in the life of a person who had been given a very large hurdle at birth.

Well here we are, over seven and half years later and their grandson has been working on a book with Dr Jack Reynolds titled “**Jean-Paul Sartre: Key Concepts**” which virtually required a full-time commitment from Steven over the past two years. The involvement with Dr. Reynolds was as a co-editor and contributor. On learning about the book from Ellen, John Laverick (our editor) & I felt we needed to carry out an update on the previous article.

Recently, I had the privilege of not only renewing my acquaintance with his father John (who I was on shift with for some time) but also Steven. I found Steven was not only a person of great intellect but also a very charming young man with a very easy manner which helped us to explore some of the contents of his book.

I am not going to insult your intelligence by making out I know all about the philosopher Jean-Paul or philosophy itself, but, rather than ramble on about the subject I will use the notes that Steven emailed me, so let’s embark on this trip through academia using his notes as the guide.

Steven is 26 years old, he attended Gladstone Park Secondary College from 2000 to 2005; his main interest at that stage were in subjects such as history, English literature and philosophy (particularly in the final two years of high school). In 2003 (in year 10), he was awarded dux in English. In 2004, (in year 11), he was awarded dux of English, history and philosophy. In 2005 (in year 12), Steven was awarded dux for the highest grades on all coursework submitted during that year by anyone in that year level.

He subsequently graduated with a tertiary entrance score of 92.5, with a subject study-score of 50 for English (the highest study-score possible in any individual subject). In 2006, he commenced a Bachelor of Arts degree at Melbourne University, majoring in philosophy and Classics (the study of ancient Greek and Roman cultural history). In 2008, graduated with a B.A with first-class honors grade average. Of the 24 subjects taken over the course of the B.A degree, Steven received first-class honors in 17 subjects, and high second-class honors in 7 subjects.

Of particular assistance to him throughout his studies was a laptop computer which was funded through Freemasonry Victoria, due in a large part, to the advocacy of his grandfather (the late Frank Churchill) on Steven’s behalf, (Frank started in the MFB on the same day I did).

The following year (2009), he completed an honors degree in philosophy. This was a specialised degree in one’s major

area of study, the grades received at the end of an honors year determine entrance into a Master’s and/or Doctoral study. At the end of that year was awarded an honors degree with a first-class honors grade average, and first-class honors for his thesis.



This thesis focused on philosophical themes in the literature of Jean-Paul Sartre, the philosopher with whom he has since been preoccupied with in-depth study. Steven then commenced a Master’s degree on philosophy in 2010 at La Trobe University; Dr Jack Reynolds supervised his Master’s thesis (on ethical dimension of Sartre’s philosophy). It was completed and submitted for grading in May of 2011. The thesis was graded by a panel of two Professors in philosophy (one in Sydney and the other in America), he received first-class honors.

During this time, he began to teach tutorial classes in philosophy at La Trobe; where he was responsible for grading student essays and making course material taught in lectures comprehensible to smaller class groups of students. Steven also gave lectures on various philosophical topics in the Melbourne School of Continental Philosophy, a privately-run philosophy school with courses open to the general public, housed at Melbourne University.

I stated at the start he was a co-editor and a contributing author of the book “Jean-Paul Sartre: Key Concepts.” The book, as the title suggests, is a collection of essays on Sartre’s philosophy; each essay is by an author (generally a professor of philosophy), with specialist knowledge of the particular aspect of Sartre’s philosophy in question. In his notes it was identified that Steven was responsible for getting each chapter author involved with the project, by writing back and forth via email. Then as each chapter came in, was responsible for editing the whole thing into a series of sections.

The book was released on Amazon in the UK on September 30th and then on the world wide Amazon site on October 31st 2013.

Now that the book is complete, he intends to return to La Trobe to begin his Doctoral thesis (PHD) in 2014.

In closing I would just like to add here an old saying;

When the going gets tough; the tough get going.

Steven, on behalf of the members & committee what a great effort! Also thank you for giving of your valuable time to speak with us.

John Berry

Commander Rob Dean Retires:

After 36 years with MFB, Cmdr. Rob Dean retired on December 16, 2013. The night, held at the Clayton RSL, was well attended by a large contingent of firefighters and family to make sure Rob did indeed retire, a significant show of respect for the popular Commander. **Images: Barbara McCumisky**



Below: DCO. Dave Youssef presented him with this impressive plaque.



Above: Early in his career Rob earned the dubious honour of 'launching' the MFB's first amphibious fire appliance into the Yarra River off Victoria Dock. Phil Cuthbert made sure Rob would never forget the incident by presenting him with a large photo of the truck's 'rescue'.

Right: The highlight of Rob's night was a joint presentation by retired Fire Chief Mike Fuge (at lectern) and retired SFf. Scott Campbell of the Woodside Fire Dept. Both very good friends of Rob's, they flew all the way from San Francisco to deliver the helmet from their Dept., which Rob is proudly holding aloft.



Below: Some of the hundred plus firefighters who crowded into the Clayton RSL. The night was a fitting tribute to Rob who worked tirelessly for various charities fundraising through the "Classic Car Club".



Above: Rob's wife (in black) and family members listen to the speeches.

GUESS WHO?

This issue we have two great pictures to get the old grey matter working. One is of a group of career firefighters from the Geelong area. I myself have not turned out with any of them however, from the stories I have heard and the respect they have from not only their peers but also the younger Fireys, speaks volumes on the calibre of each and every one.

The other, of the firefighter in boots & leggings, I do know. Not only have I been to jobs with him, I found him to be one of the types you could not help but respect. Loved a joke but at the same time a great educator with a genuine desire to not only be a great family man, but also a protector of the community.

First correct answer to either question will receive one of our new lapel badges; remember you must be at the February meeting to receive your prize.



Above:

1. Name the Station & appliance?
2. Name the station this highly regarded fireman was in charge of, before being transferred back to No1?
3. The easy question, what is his name?



Left:

This picture was reproduced from a paper cutting of the Geelong Advertiser.

1. Where was the picture taken?
2. Name the reason for the article and picture?
3. Name the CFA career members in the picture?

I expect to have the phones running hot on these "Guess Who's." All of the firefighters in these photos were not only top Firies but great blokes to be stationed with.

John Berry

The answers to the November 2013 "Guess Who" questions.

The picture below shows a group of firefighters in a line holding babies and/or very young children, the questions that needed to be answered were, name the seven firefighters, did any of the babies go on to become firefighters, if any did what are their names
The only response we had was a letter from a non-

member of the RFA **Terry Walker** who is also in the picture. His letter gives the names, starting from left to right are as follows. Terry Walker, Leon Trembath, Noel Ewer, Bert Peck, Barry Conlon, Brian Wilson, Hugh Campbell. Another source told me the only child that went on to join the MFB was Barry Conlon's.



Other interesting facts that Terry mentioned were; there should have been eight firefighters, the one missing was Kevin Lynch and his child, unfortunately he was on leave at the time of the picture. One other fact he mentioned was a bit sobering; Kevin and three of the firefighters on the right of Hugh Campbell have all been transferred upstairs. Adding Kevin to the picture means only 50% of the group of eight are still with us.

"Terry, the RFA appreciates your input." >>>>

Congratulatory Message from Her Royal Highness Queen Elizabeth

One of our members, Robert Teychenne, sent in a cutting from the South Gippsland Sentinel Times with a "Blast from the past."

The article is about an old Western District Firefighter's wife who resides in her home in San Remo. The fiery we are talking about was, in his younger days, a top Footballer and played in the VFL for a side known as the Footscray Bulldogs, his name was **Bob Spargo**.

When he was in the job he had our Vice President bluffed, and if all the stories I had heard about him in his younger days were true, he must have been something else.

Now let's get back to the real story about his wife **Dorothy** (see picture), the writer of the article, Gay Ross, stated at the start of the column that Dot, as she is known to her friends, is blessed with the memory of an elephant and recalled vividly what San Remo was like after the First World War when Mum & Dad used to travel down there for holidays.

Imagine no suspension bridge and or shops just farmland, travel to and from on unmade roads, all supplies had to be brought with you, no ice box just hang your food in damp calico bag hanging from a tree. One night a fox got to the food ripping the bag open and if it wasn't for a farmer who lived in Newhaven who rowed by with a bag full of apples, they would have had to go



without; Dot stated she never thought an apple could taste so nice.

The writer mentioned many other interesting facts about the family's holidays down there and the car trips from their home in Tottenham, also that Bob swept her off her feet when she first met him as a girl of seventeen. The Spargo family moved to San Remo when Bob retired from the MFB, the home they moved to has since been demolished and a new one is built closer to the road. Many will remember Bob, unfortunately he passed away in 1996.

Dot still remains a devoted Western Bulldogs supporter, which is something she has in common with our editor, John Laverick. What is the saying, you can take them out of Footscray but you can't take Footscray out of them. In the attached picture you see Dot holding her very special congratulatory message from Queen Elizabeth.

On behalf of all the Brigade Retirees we also would like to congratulate you Dorothy on reaching the three figures.

Thanks Robert for sending in the article.



The answers to the above Guess Who, the one that won the "Jeep" for Stan Gough, are as follows.

1. The picture was taken on the flat roof of the old quarters facing Gisborne Street;
2. The Building in the background is the Eye & Ear hospital;

3. The names of the people, starting in the back row from left to right are as follows; Dennis Lynch, Jim Mauchline, Bernie Brennan, Dick Smith, Basil Smith, Noel Dahl, Bill Bayley; Front Row Jim Logan, Stan Devlin, Gordon Geddes, Helen Gibson and Laurie Coulson.

One point about the old quarters and Gisborne Street Stan forgot to mention was that many believed they were haunted. Strange things happened there! Like empty foam drums rolling down stairs and motor-mowers starting up in the middle of the night, sometimes it even affected the cars parked at front, and I can vouch for this one. When I got into my old Ute to go home I found the vehicle did not want to move, on closer examination I noticed my rear wheels were spinning. I then saw what appeared to be an apparition looking down on me from one of the windows and laughing. Believe it or not!!!

The Huntsman, The Vacuum Cleaner and The Can of Mortein!!!!

The author of this story is a professional Queensland photographer and he gives an eloquent description of his brush with these three items, quite innocent on their own but when combined????

Huntsman spiders...I had never seen a bloody huntsman spider until I was in Melbourne in 1981. Fast forward to 1984 and the ex and I had bought an old worker's cottage in Albion, a suburb of Brisbane. It had been renovated by a National Geographic Photographer in about 1974 and had a studio.... Bonus!

Anyhow.. we had been there about 3 or 4 weeks and the ex gets cerebral diarrhoea and decides that it is time to set up happy home with a bloke she works with.

I am now living by myself and discover the house is full of bloody huntsman spiders. And they terrify me.

Around this time my elderly Aunt offers me her old Electrolux vacuum cleaner... as mine has departed!

This thing is a pre WW2 model and has a metal body and bakelite end caps.

So.. when you see a huntsman.. you suck the little blighter up.

Trouble is you lie awake at night wondering if he is going to walk back along the tube, out of the vacuum cleaner and come looking for you!

Well.. the answer is this:

Suck the spider up and while the machine is running.. spray Mortein up the hose!

Brilliant!!!!



Saturday Morning I'm doing my washing and I spy a huntsman on the wall in the lounge.

Grab the old Electrolux... fire it up.. got you!

While the machine is running.. spray Mortein into the hose.

Big Mistake!

You see the machine is old.. the brushes on the motor are worn... and they arc when it runs.

Effect is I have my own jet engine going here.

The hydrocarbons in the mortein ignite... the sound of the explosion is deafening and the resulting fireball blows the bakelite cap off the end of the vacuum cleaner and it describes a neat arc (because it is still

attached to the hose) and hits me on the forehead.

The entire room is filled with a cloud of about a kilo of fine dust particles, dog hair and spider body parts.

End result is.. the Electrolux is totalled, I have a gash on my head... and the inside of my open plan home is coated with the above.

Even the plates in the kitchen cupboards copped the fallout!

Conclusion!!.. Vacuum cleaners are not the go for killing spiders. Cattle prod might explode them if you can get them to sit still for long enough!

Mark T.

Museum Needs Help!

The Fire Services Museum of Victoria is in desperate need of volunteers.

The museum was started by a group of dedicated firefighters with a passion and vision for preserving the history of the Victorian fire services. However, the average age of active members is now 68 years, making it hard to keep up with the activities planned for the museum.

Do you want to get involved? Every little contribution helps!

Some of the activities include guided tours, shop keeping, vintage vehicle displays, community events, station openings, film shoots and

graduation ceremonies.

There is also the opportunity to get hands on and help maintain and restore the historical fleet at the Newport Workshops.

"Even a day a month can keep us afloat, but the bottom line is we need more members," President Mike McCumisky said.

"We have two choices: join us and preserve the museum or stand by and watch it disappear".

For more information contact Mike McCumisky 0418 129 252 or call the museum (open Thursday to Saturday) 9662 2907

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To receive Mail out notification

Recent Retirements

Mick Convery; 28th November 2013
Joe Hoey; 28th November 2013
Col Harris; 12th December 2013
Rob Dean; 16th December 2013
Tony Branchflower, 6th February 2014

Pending Retirements

Peter Halls, 4th March 2014

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

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.

Firefighter's Picnic

Sunday 16th February 2014

11am. till 4 pm.

**Venue; Moonee Valley Racecourse
(Enter from McPherson St.)**

Retirees - Bring the Grandkids

Note: For catering purposes, please ring the union office on 9419 8811 and let them know how many you are bringing along.

**BBQ sausages, hamburgers and drinks
for the kids supplied.
BYO salads, plates etc.
Rides, games and prizes.
Lots of fun for all!**

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