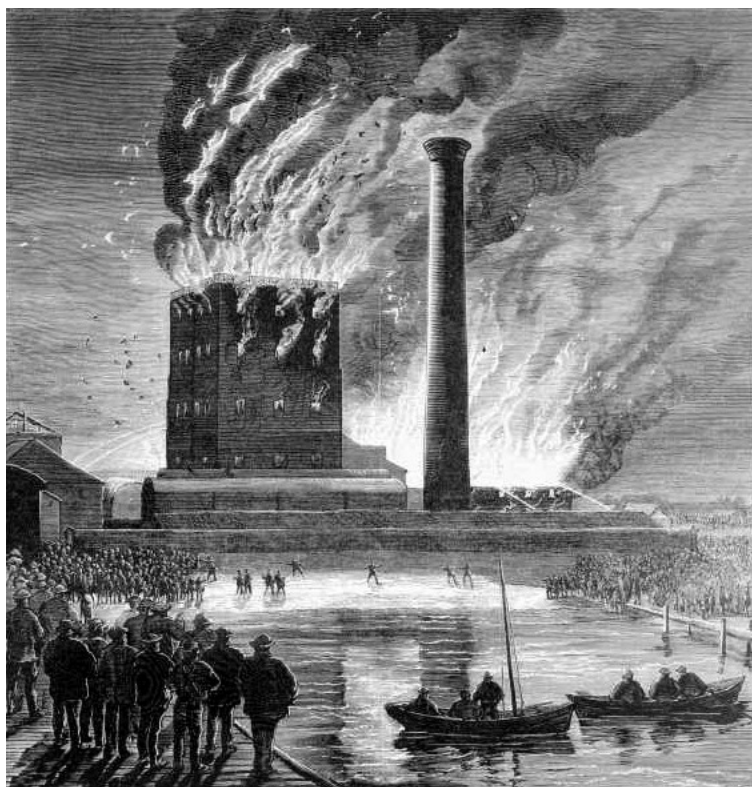


"WATER OFF"

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



November 2010 Vol 14 No 4
Inc/No: A16839F



The Victoria Sugar Company in Port Melbourne was severely damaged by fire on June 12, 1875. One of many large fires fought by Melbourne's Insurance and Volunteer Brigades.

Photo credit: Illustrated Australian News.

TURBULENT TIMES OF THE MELBOURNE FIRE BRIGADES

1835 - 1970'S

Les Gray tells of the problems faced by the early inhabitants of Melbourne with water supplies for domestic use and fire fighting, political intrigue, empire building and dastardly dealings.

This is the first instalment of a series of stories interwoven with documented facts, they are not intended to be a history of Melbourne or of its Fire Brigades, only brief glimpses and insights into the past. I will write of Melbourne and the problems of saving life and property and the difficulties of administration and fire fighting from the early days when it was a riverside settlement until the 1970's.

There were two men destined to play a significant part in the settlement which was to become Melbourne, one was the founder John Batman and the other was John Pascoe Fawkner, who was later to play a prominent role in the development of Melbourne, Colonial Victoria and it's Government.

Continued page 7

IMPORTANT NOTICE

The next meeting is the AGM 2010, and will be held on Wednesday the 17th of November at the MFB Burnley complex starting at 1030 AM.

This is a must attend meeting, bring your partner; following the Annual Financial Report and election of the committee. We then will be addressed by Graham Fountain the new CEO/CO of the MFB, there is also a small possibility that the new Fire Commissioner Craig Lapsley will also be there. Following the meeting we will adjourn to the BBQarea for a light lunch

New Role for Tony Murphy

Congratulations to the CFO and Director Operations MFB, Tony Murphy, on his appointment to the office of the Fire Services Commissioner as Executive Advisor Operations and Interoperability.

We thank Tony for his invaluable assistance to the RFA over the years and we wish him well in his new role.



“ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING”

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

1030 Hours, Wednesday 17th November 2010

AGENDA ITEMS.

- Minutes of last Annual General meeting.
- President’s Report.
- Secretary/Treasurer’s Report.
- Election of Office Bearers
- Guest Speaker ; Graham Fountain, CEO/CO, MFB
- 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 2/1/2008 that means you have not paid your subs since 2007 therefore if no remuneration is received by the 2/1/11 your name will be automatically removed from the mailing list. If, for what ever 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;

Ian Geddes
John Laverick
Ken McGillivray
John Schintler
John Wallace

Auditor;
Theo Teklenburg

“Water Off”
Editorial Staff
 John Laverick
 Barbara McCumisky

Valē

Roy Bicknell (MFB)	Les Power (MFB)
Jim Carlisle (MFB)	Graham (Dodger) Ryan (MFB)
Peter Dryden (MFB)	Myrtle Webber (MFB)
Kim Keher (MFB)	
Jack Martin (MFB)	

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

SICK LIST (* In Nursing Home)

Keith Arms	Ernie Goodall*
Stan Cameron	Clarrie Hart
Jim Casley*	Barry McColl
Huew Campbell	Jack Sexton
Ken Clinkaberry	Alby Smith
Russ Daniels*	Kevin Stein
Wayne Dellamarta	Ron Turner*

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 2010

November 17th	Annual General Meeting
November 27th	UFU Christmas Luncheon Malvern Town Hall

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Once again Christmas is nearly on us. At least the football season is over. For me the saints won in the wrong state. But good luck to all those Collingwood supporters, for their second flag in 50 years. Maybe the Saints will get their's next year.

Friday 15th October, was the 40th anniversary of the Westgate Bridge collapse.

The MFB was in attendance with crews from number 1 and number 45 stations. Retired members who attended the accident were also there – Harry Purcell, Bill Grant, Trevor King, and yours truly. Glen Cummings and Ian Fowler represented the fire museum. We attended in a 1970 C Series international hose carriage. SSO Ross Smith from Number 1 organised our attendance where two wreaths, one from the MFB and one from the UFU, were placed at the memorial. After speeches we proceeded to the pump house at Science Works Museum, for further speeches followed by lunch. The day was wet and miserable but the occasion was



Left:
*West Gate
Bridge Memorial
Park, located in
Hyde Street
Spotswood*

enjoyed by all in attendance.

At our last meeting in Geelong, it was

moved that the annual lunch at the training college, become a fundraiser BBQ which will be held in the New Year at the college in Burnley. A charge of \$5.00 per person with children under 5 free. Spouses and family members are welcome.

In the next water off we will have the date and phone numbers to let us know of your attendance for catering purposes. The MFB will have appliances on display so bring the grandkids along.

See you at the next meeting!

Don Brennan



SECRETARY/TREASURER'S REPORT

I thought at the start of this quarter I would have very little to report then came October and that changed completely, in fact that notion has been blown out of the water. Similar to previous quarterly reports I will start with what I

believe is the most relevant items and finish with points that may be of interest to you.

It starts with the changes that have occurred since the Royal Commission the new appointments are as follows: **Government;** Craig Lapsley Fire Commissioner. **CFA;** Euan Ferguson Chief Officer.

On behalf of the RFA we wish them every success in their new positions.

In the MFESB they have started on a programme to re-energise. Its goal, a better way to meet the needs of the metropolitan region and also the state. The following is a small section of an ad placed in the Age.

“With an objective of pre-eminence, substantial sector change coming out of the Royal Commission and the appointment of a Fire Services Commissioner, the MFESB has undertaken a comprehensive organisational review and as a result is poised to capitalise on outstanding internal capability and launch into a period of strategic realignment. The MFESB is appointing six exceptional leaders to support the newly-appointed CEO/CO to continue to build a pro-active culture of innovation, responsiveness, accountability and greater sector-wide collaboration. *The six positions are as follows, Executive Director People & Culture, Executive Director Corporate Services, Executive Director Strategy & Innovation, Executive Director Emergency Management, Regional Director NW*

Region and Regional Director SE Region”.

On the ABC, I saw a show on “Visions of the Future: The Biotech Revolution”, where the American theoretical physicist MICHO KAKU looks at the coming bio-molecular revolution, a science which promises an ability to manipulate life at its most fundamental level. On part of the show he interviewed eminent Scientists who stated that in less than two decades they will have people living and working a very active life to a hundred years of age or more.

One could hypothesise with the Federal Governments push to increase the age of retirement, this appointment of an Executive Director People & Culture, could this be one of their objectives? (Imagine firies at ninety turning out to fires) There is no doubt, if this is going to occur, I am sure I would not want their job.

On Monday the 11th of October, on behalf of the RFA, I met with Graham Fountain, MFESB CEO/CO and Senior Station Officer Craig Morris to explore the possibility of establishing an Internet Kiosk for RFA members and partners. The meeting I must say was very constructive with the new CEO/CO (his relaxed manner is very conducive to exploring all options).

He intimated, if possible, he is very keen to assist the retirees of the brigade to enhance their knowledge in relation to this new electronic media. However, before we could go any further the college staff must report back to him with what is possible.

On a personal note I must say I was left with no doubt as to why he was selected for the job, I will not give my reason I will let you make your own decision on his appointment when you meet him at our AGM in November.

(Continued on page 4)

(Continued from page 3)

Then, later that day at 1000hrs, the UFU Retired Members Division held their first meeting at the MFB Burnley Complex followed by a luncheon put on by the current members of the Recruit Course and their Instructors.

The meeting gave those present the opportunity to learn about all the intrigue and planning that goes with EBA agreements. Next was the recent Global Alliance meeting and their outcomes, then the UFU centenary celebrations planning and programme including the first issue of the UFU newsletter and cover. Last but not least a précis of the outcome of the Royal Commission.

As this was the first meeting, an interim President and Secretary were selected, Don Brennan and I, the appointments are temporary just to get the wheels moving. I can say without fear of contradiction the knowledge exhibited by the UFU Secretary Peter Marshall and others left one in awe of their research and presentations. At the end of the meeting the people in attendance gave the group of presenters a well deserve round of applause.

There is no doubt this first meeting of the UFU's Retired Division indicates it is now on the threshold of becoming part of the Retired Section of the World Wide Alliance of Firefighting Unions. As stated at the meeting the retiree's age group is now one of the strongest demographics in the community and we have the opportunity to assist the future generations in so many ways!

Important, if you have not received a copy of the union's newsletter it can be that you have moved and did not inform the UFU and/or you have not returned your invitation to attend the union's annual luncheon for two years or more.

June Coulson. June is the wife of one of our members from the Sunshine state, (I think it should be the wettest state), contacted me to pass on a great big thankyou to all the people for their good wishes and flowers for a speedy recovery from her illness. June I

do not want to destroy your image of all sweetness and light about us Mexicans but the fact is they want you both around to organise the yearly get together up there. (Only joking).

Bill Bayley. The Boss (wife) and I visited him recently to check and see if all the stories about his poor health were true, I should have known it was not correct. The fact is, yes, he is not as fit as he was but who is. Bill goes to the gym twice a week, plays lawn bowls regularly, cooks up batches of marmalade for all the retirement village and they in turn make him homemade pies and pasties, he is also the general handyman to many other inhabitants of the village. My wife reckons he is in fact unofficial Mayor of the group, (why am I not surprised about that). On a serious note; Bill would like it known to all the people that sent him cards of sympathy for his sad loss of Jean, his life partner, that he is very appreciative for all the kind thoughts and thanks you very much.

Gordon Winch. I had reason to ring Gordon recently about some gear I sent up to him, during the conversation I found out some information about his time in the Army during the Second World War. He mentioned he was one of the blokes who were based on islands with radios, sometimes behind enemy lines and that the first fire he went to in the MFB was with Basil Smith back in the late forties. Can you imagine these two young returned diggers at a job? You would not have liked to do the wrong thing to them as they would have ripped you apart? I think the fire would have gone out by itself rather than cause them trouble. If I remember correctly he is 87 years old and is still as sharp as a whip.

In closing, I must again reiterate, on behalf of the Members and Committee of the RFA, to the families who have lost loved ones to a higher place since the last newsletter we share in your loss and our fond memories of your loved ones will not be forgotten.

See you at the AGM, MFB Burnley Complex Wednesday the 17th November 1030 hours.

John Berry

MINUTES OF R.F.A. MEETING

**Wednesday 18th August 2010, 10.30am
at CFA Corio Fire Station.**

Don Brennan (President),

John Berry (Secretary/Treasurer),

John Laverick (Minutes).

62 members present. Apologies: As per book.

Don Brennan welcomed members,

Don thanked the CFA Staff for the use of one of the station's meeting room and reminded members to fulfill their yearly subscriptions.

John Berry read Minutes of previous General Meeting 19th May 2010.

J. Schintler moved minutes be accepted, seconded:-
B.Chiron. - carried

Secretary's Report: John Berry

Correspondence 8 in 16 out, Reported on the sad loss of Allan Far, his passing was not known until his newsletter was returned, three other members wives unfortunately were also called to a higher place they were, Jean Bayley, Susan Deans and Wilma Canavan. The meeting was also advised on various MFB stations having time span celebrations over the next few months. L. Napper- moved report be received, seconded: - G. Payne. - carried

John curtailed his report to allow sufficient time for Power Point Presentation.

Treasurers Report: John Berry.

On call - \$3308.58 fixed Term - \$5308.91. Various bills need to be paid Upgrade of Editors Computer \$199.95, Equipment \$285 and Mail charge. Mike

McCumisky moved accounts be passed for payment, seconded G. Payne. - Carried.

Caps, Badges and Polo shirts are still available for sale.

Presidents Report: Don Brennan.

Reported on the Reunion up at Queensland, including June Coulson not able to attend as she was in hospital.

General Business:

John Berry exhibited the framed used travel card, which was first prize for naming the last player in the guess who competition, won by Ray Turner, John will post it to him soon. John Schintler, appealed for new members for the Melbourne Fire Museum, John Berry reported on the Federal Government's Broadband for Seniors and the possible fundraising barbecue in late November in place of the April luncheon.

Guest Speakers: 11.10am

John Berry gave a power point presentation on the history of the Empire State building, its planning and the construction practices used and its relationship to the Twin Towers, including declassified aerial and satellite shots of the terrorist attack on the Towers September 11th 2001. Don Cameron (Silver) (who lost a number of firefighting friends on that fatal day) gave a detailed report on his experience of working with the recovery team sorting through the debris at the site, including the protocol that was followed when certain objects and/or equipment that was identified being from an emergency service person was located. **We must never forget that day.**

John Berry finished with another power point presentation. This one was on the Hubble Telescope including the ten(10) discoveries that have been of value to the human race.

John Schintler moved that a round of applause be given to the two presenters Don Cameron and John Berry for the very interesting and informative presentation.

John Wallace reported on the success of the meeting and the numbers that attended and suggested that it should occur again next year. All members in attendance agreed. I was also requested that a letter of thanks be forwarded to the CFA Officer in charge (Ian Beswick)

John Berry reported that we will have the new MFB CEO/CO Graham Fountain and the Director of Operations Tony Murphy as our guests at the next meeting, which will be at the MFB Burnley complex starting at 1030 AM Wednesday the 17th November 2010.

Meeting concluded 12.15pm.

Members & partners adjourned for lunch to the Gateway Hotel. Thanks to John Wallace for organizing another successful meeting and luncheon venue.

Next Meeting – Wednesday 17th November 2010, - 10.30am - MFB Burnley Complex, Burnley St., near Swan St., Richmond. Melway 44 G12.

AUSTRALIAN TAX OFFICE ON LINE CLAIM

The ATO have an on line claim software programme that is very user friendly.

The way to access is as follows.

Simply open the web site www.etax.com.au and then follow the Get Started Path. It is very smart software- You can easily rerun the initial part to obtain detailed directions because it looks up your computer and knows that you have already loaded it.

It generates an electronic copy of a taxation return which looks exactly like the normal paper taxation when it is printed out at the end. The programme goes something like the following.

1. Downloads a copy of the programme (etax-2011 for next year)
2. When you open the programme it gives you the choice of checking for updates.
3. It then asks you for TFN and the number of a recent tax assessment notice to check your validity.
4. When it is happy it gives you a password which is needed for submission and to give you access to your taxation information.
5. It gives you the choice of doing it yourself or letting the ATO computer preload your electronic form. (Which this person did)
6. It provides a list of all the of the sections of the return (same as normal return) down the left hand side

of the screen from which you can select one and up comes a sub form with appropriate places to enter information (or already filled in if so chosen and ATO has the information).

7. After working down this list it provides an option to Check the Return where it goes through your answers and indicates any errors or omissions, e.g. forgotten to put in Health Insurance details, etc

. When everything is OK a paper copy of the information can be printed – looks like a normal return. 9 An Electronic Submission can then be initiated and it's all finished. The taxation data file on your computer is then locked and made read only and becomes your taxation record.

10. It gives you an indication of the amount of your payment/refund.

11. A bonus is that if a refund is due it pays up very quickly – a few days.

It is still necessary to know all of the related financial aspects for the return but farmers and other people in the country have found this method of submission to be quick and effective and it avoids the problems of having to send in returns and make sure that the ATO gets them.

This information was supplied by people who reside in the country. They did say the amount the ATO know about tax payers investments etc is a bit frightening- it would be a very stupid person who attempted to hide taxable payments etc.

Gone but not forgotten

It is again with regret that we had to include this column in the November issue. As I stated in previous newsletters the RFA members and partners are a very unique group of the community, however the one downside is the fact most are in that wonderful third stage of life that seems to always brings with it health related problems. I do hope the following will refresh your memories about the lives of some of these wonderful people who have left us.

Graham (Dodger) Ryan During my career in the fire service I had the privilege of not only knowing him but also working alongside him at fires. When I set about writing a few words I realised I could fill the whole newsletter. To me he was a typical Aussie, a knockabout bloke that this great nation is renowned for. Great family man, loved a joke, stick with you no matter if it put him at risk, could put the shoulder to the wheel when required and last but certainly not least played footy for the SHINBONERS. When I took early optional retirement because of health reasons, Dodger became my eldest daughter's surrogate father and looked after her whilst she was in the brigade (Her Godfather). The last fire that I attended with him was many, many years ago but I can remember it well because of the major role he played. All you career firies lets embark on a journey down memory lane, when the MFD, outer Metro area and Provincial towns all had large areas of rural and non-reticulated water in many regions. Picture the state after good winter & spring rains which had created a very heavy fire load throughout the countryside not only crop- wise but also bush & scrub followed by a very hot summer and somehow many fires with a unknown cause! This particular evening there had been a recall to duty, the brigade had got together six BRT's and crews and two cars one fitted with a radio that could communicate with the CFA, the other for the Workshops personnel, I was instructed that when we reached our destination (not too far, as the crow flies, from where the Black Saturday one started) I was to liaise with the CFA Officer in charge. Imagine his surprise when he has six urban BRT's and crews of unknown ability offering their services to him, what does he do with them? I will admit I did not call on Dodger to sort it out but I explained to him the cold hard facts, I have six crews with more than 2 hundred years of fire fighting experience who had cut their teeth on "Going grass scrub & Bush fires" and many with past volunteer training. Just give us a front and by the time we finish tomorrow you will have a very large blacked out area, all we need from you is the location of a very large dam and a local who knows the way the winds will be blowing through the night and morning. From my point of view the

MFB crews work was like poetry in motion throughout the whole time, they were all like old bulls doing the job properly the first time and without wasting water. I must admit I have not said much about Dodger until now, well he had the hardest job of all, he not only had to set up his appliance at the best place to fill the trucks "three at a time" he also had to keep me informed regarding water & petrol levels. Well it was not long before word had got around about the Met's and how fast they filled their trucks, next the CFA tankers wanted to know if they could get theirs filled by Dodger, in the end everyone was going to him. Not once did Dodger scream out for a break I had to drag him away for a cuppa, in fact whilst we were having the cuppa at the feeding station the Mayor of the town made a point of thanking Dodger for his assistance. Well all you blokes who knew Dodger like me would be aware I was not sure what he was going to say back to him? I should not have been worried; he handled the moment better than anyone. Mate thanks for the memories, but when you get up there with Len & Frank it will be like old times at Broady. If Harry P. enquires who told you to take your BRT's off the bitumen tell him it was the Devil that made the "Ant" do it. Dodger we will miss you.

The following members have, since the printing of the last newsletter, have had their life partners leave us. They are Bill Bayley's wife Jean, Hugh Canavan's wife Wilma and Alan Dean's wife Susan. On behalf of the Fire Services Fraternity please accept sincerest condolences

Myrtle Olive Webber We often hear the comment (the women behind the man) but I must admit I did not know Myrtle as close as many of the older firies or a younger one, namely Rodney Knowles, but from the research I have been involved in on behalf of the UFU. I feel I now have a much better understanding of just what that statement means. This research has shown me just how fortunate we firies were to have Myrtle on our team. Imagine not only working and running an office for more than 40 hours a week for no pay but also the bringing up of a young family with all its associated problems. I know most will have heard of her late husband William Webber and what he achieved for us firies, I do believe from what I have read the Myrtle & William team was a very formidable team in fact right up to the very end Mrs M O Webber never stopped with her support for the UFU. There is a song by the late Dr Arthur Colahan, called Galway Bay and in it there is a line that goes, and if there is going to be a life hereafter and somehow I am sure there's going to be. If true, what a team they are going to be when they get together again up there. Myrtle on behalf of all us firies we salute you for your belief in us. **John Berry.**

Geelong Meeting

I would, on behalf of the Committee, like to thank all the members and partners who attended the meeting. It was the second one we have held at the Corio Fire Station and the numbers that attended was well up on the preceding year.

The support we received from the Officer and Firies at the station was great, they helped get my lap- top connected to their equipment (for my show and tell) and made us very welcome. The venue for the lunch was again top class, all in all a top day and well worth doing again next year. During the lunch, on behalf of the Committee, I spoke with many members to get feedback and to a person, they said we should do it again.

John Berry

MEMBERS RETIREMENT NIGHT GUESS WHO

In the August issue of the newsletter we had a guess who photograph of a member receiving a presentation from the late Len Hubbard. Well the day after we posted out the newsletter I received a phone call from Barry Gavin, at 0700 hours, informing me that the person was Billy Icke (which is correct). Barry worked with Bill for a number of years in the CFA before joining the MFB.

The first point I raised when he rang at that time in the morning was, "mate have you dirtied the bed" (I admit that is not exactly what I said). I found out he is always up early, not to go to the toilet but to assist the children get to school.

John Berry

TURBULENT TIMES OF THE MELBOURNE FIRE BRIGADES

1835 – 1970's

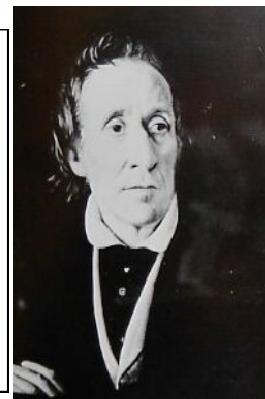
The founder of Melbourne John Batman was born on the 21st. Jan. 1801, at Rosehill, New South Wales, (Rosehill is now a suburb of Sydney). His Father William and Mother Mary Batman came to Sydney as settlers in 1797. In 1821 John and his brother sailed to North East Van Diemens Land to settle and farm. John became a successful grazier and land speculator. In Dec. 1825 the authorities placed a bounty on the head of a notorious bush ranger, Matthew Brady. John being an excellent bushman finally captured Brady and was granted additional land by the government. With most of the viable grasslands of the colony fully grazed, he now turned his attention to the mainland, being a member of the Port Philip (grazier) Association he sought land grants in the Western Port area, but the New South Wales authorities rejected his applications. In 1835 he decided to sail for the mainland in the schooner Rebecca and explore Port Philip Bay, when he sailed up the Yarra River and upon reaching a suitable place came ashore and after some exploration decided "This will be a place for a village". He and his servants unloaded the animals and their possessions and started building bush huts near the river between present day Batman Avenue and Swanston Street. The evidence of this still remains as grapes planted by Batman still grow near the old signal box, situated between the railway lines, the vine trunks are approximately 225mm. in diameter and are lovingly cared for by railway employees. He became an Australian grazier, business man and explorer. He married Elizabeth Callaghan (a convict), they had 7 daughters and a son. In April 1836 Batman built a house at the base of a hill on the Western end of Collins Street and it came to be known as Batman's Hill. His son was later to drown in the Yarra River. In 1833 Batman was diagnosed with Syphilis and by 1835 his health started to decline, he died on May 6th. 1839 and was buried in the old Melbourne Cemetery but years later was exhumed and reburied in the Fawkner Cemetery, a cemetery named after his fellow colonist.

John Pascoe Fawkner was born on the 20th. Oct. 1792 at Cripplegate, London. His father was a metal refiner and was convicted of receiving stolen goods and in 1801 was sentenced to 14 years transportation. Late in 1803 John with his Mother (Hannah nee Pascoe) and younger sister Elizabeth accompanied their Father to a new settlement in Bass Strait, on arrival it was found that it was soon to be abandoned, the settlers and convicts were then taken onto Van Diemen's Land.

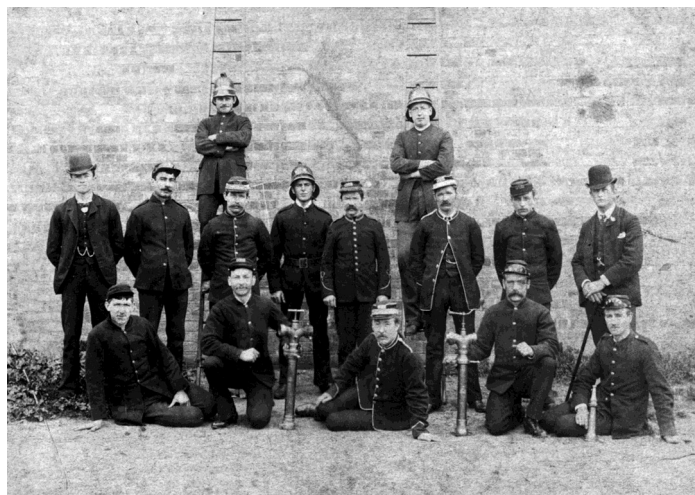


Left:
*John Batman,
Melbourne's
Founder.*

Right:
*John Pascoe
Fawkner, a
leader in the
political and
social struggles
of the times.*



Over the next 30 years in and around Hobart John had many run ins and altercations with the law, despite this he still continued on his way in many nefarious dealings and in the short term suffered dearly for his actions. John decided to put all this behind him and on the 16th. Oct. 1835 John arrived in his schooner "Enterprise" entering Port Philip Bay and made their way up the Yarra River, mooring near the end of what was to become William Street and unloaded their stores and animals. He then set about making his fortune by being a hotel keeper, proprietor of news papers, book and stationery seller, farmer, and had considerable land holdings. One of his properties was of 780 acres, known as Pascoe Vale. (Much later this became the suburb of Pascoe Vale.)



Members of the Carlton District Volunteer Fire Brigade, one of the many brigades in the Melbourne metro area prior to 1891.

Photo : Fires Services Museum of Victoria.

As a man of property and influence he played a leading part in the political and social struggles of the times, he was a Melbourne councillor and in 1851 represented Talbot in the first Legislative Council. With the introduction of responsible government he was returned for the Central Province of Victoria, holding the seat until his death in 1869.

Melbourne is now one of the world's most vibrant and liveable cities having a well administered, trained and equipped fire service second to none which continually strives to update as fire fighting technology improves. It was not always like that, from

the beginning it suffered many challenges and trials, there is no doubt that the first fire fighters would have been volunteer civilian bucket brigades. By 1851 the Launceston based Cornwall Insurance Company had formed and financed a volunteer brigade, the firemen were paid a small sum of money for turning out to fires. Soldiers, policemen and civilians attended the fire as well.

As the instalments progress, until the 1970's they will illustrate the concerns of Insurance Co's, ambitious politicians, unionists and others who had influence in the M.F.B. and will include some of their intrigues.

The three decades prior to the 1970's witnessed much

(Continued on page 8)

(Continued from page 7)

strife mainly because of the poor administration skills and overbearing paternal attitudes of a few men in positions of power who could not accept industrial change. As a result, the Governor in Council presented a "Bill" to parliament proposing that the Melbourne Fire Brigades Act be amended. It was passed and came into law, the administration structure of the M.F.B. was changed forever.

The Scenario has been set.

Water was always a problem for fire fighting, domestic supplies and other uses in Melbourne from its founding days. Water was delivered in wooden barrels both large and small on horse drawn carts by Water Carters, they obtained the water from the Yarra River. Over the next decade water carts were constructed larger of sawn timber planks fitted firmly together, rectangular box like containers (200 gal. capacity) with a filling port covered with a lid at top and a large tap fitted near the bottom at rear, mounted on a 2 wheeled dray drawn by a single horse. They were eventually constructed, on 4 wheeled wagon type carts holding approximately 3 - 4 hundred gallons, drawn by 3 horses. These wooden carts were always kept full of water to keep them water tight. Melbourne's demand for more water was and still is, a continual one.

From 1835 Melbourne's first fire fighters no doubt would have been volunteer citizens who on the alarm of fire would form two lines, starting from the water source leather buckets were filled with water and passed hand over hand down the line to the fire where the contents were thrown onto it, and then were passed back along the second line to the water source and filled again. If the fire looked like getting away the men used wooden ladders and long poles fitted with a metal hooks on the end, axes, large hammers and wrecking bars in advance of the flames, pulling and knocking down timber walls and roofs if need be, to lessen the fire load they removed the contents of the building onto the street

It was well recorded that if a tavern was threatened by fire, publican's would give out free beer, there was never a shortage of manpower to protect their establishments from fire. This type of untrained, undisciplined fire fighting methods ensued for a further decade until the first full time fully paid professional fire brigade was organised and formed.

Melbourne grew from a small village of tents, wattle and daub bush timber framed dwellings and stores, covered with bark or split wooden shingle rooves, within several years substantial 1 and 2 storey buildings were being constructed of timber frames, fitted with external and internal lining boards, with ground floor of bricks or timber, wooden stair case, top floor of timber, and timber roof covered with either slate tiles or the newly English invented corrugated galvanised iron sheeting.

The first official recorded fire in Melbourne was in 1838 when the settlements Watch House and Lockup caught fire, probably lit by inmates who in the following confusion escaped into the bush with the exception of one. By 1839 the settlement was still unprotected from fire, the population of Melbourne at this time was approx. 3,000 people, there was a company of soldiers and a small police force but no organised fire brigade. A group of businessmen got together and formed the Melbourne Fire & Marine Insurance Co., they purchased axes, ladders and 50 leather buckets, some of these were kept full of water and hung on the walls of the

rebuilt watch house, police were responsible for the security of the buckets and gear and in the event of fire issued them out to the volunteers who were responsible for their return after the fire.

In 1842 many citizens took out policies with the Melbourne Fire & Marine Insurance Co., two of the policy holders were a Dr. J. Clutterbuck and the other a Mr. A. Hart. On the 2nd of October Clutterbuck's house and surgery located on the top end of Collins Street burnt down and 2 weeks later on the 16th. Oct. Harts house and shop located further down Collins Street also burnt down. The Insurance Co. had to pay out a loss of 4,500 pounds (this was a huge amount of money in those days) and found it hard to continue on, in 1884 it became insolvent, and wound up its affairs and sold off it's equipment. An article written in the "Port Philip Gazette" issued a few days later did not indicate any suspicious circumstances re the fires.

Circa 1844 the Colonial Insurance Co. started up an office in Melbourne, they had recently imported a fire engine (hand pumper) from England, and supported Melbourne's volunteer brigade.. The volunteer firemen turned out to fires along with soldiers and civilians. The Chief Constable was the Superintendent in charge of the brigade,, funding also came from the Melbourne Council and public subscription.

On the 15th. January 1845 at 20.30hours a fire in Condell's Brewery on the Cr. Swanston & Little Bourke Streets started in the Malt House fanned by a strong North East wind, the fire quickly took hold, the Mayor of Melbourne, Henry Moore, was one of the first on scene followed by members of the Police Force Cadets and Soldiers of the 99th. Regiment under the command of Lieut. Balmire, they got to work with buckets of water until the Cornwall Fire Insurance Co's Fire Engine arrived pulled by volunteers, when the water carters arrived the firemen got to work pumping it and it produced a useful stream of water, about 2 hours later they had brought the fire under control, the salvage and clean up work took a considerable time longer. Whether it was due to the effects of looted beer or not it was stated at the time that the exuberant volunteers fought the fire with more enthusiasm than experience causing much unnecessary damage to the building and contents when extinguishing the fire.

After the brewery fire, concerned citizens organised a Fire Brigade, the Mayor Henry Moore called a public meeting, he and several others of the town council were there. Hendry Condell of the Brewery an Alderman and ex Mayor and others formed the Melbourne Fire Prevention Society, and they appointed Chief Constable Edward Sugden as Superintendent and Fire Fighter Jeremiah Dalton as Foremen (Officer) and six men, each man was to be paid 10 pounds per year, obviously the superintendent and foreman would have been paid more. This was the first officially formed full time and paid professional Fire Brigade in Melbourne. They were to have the use of the Cornwall Fire Insurance Co's Fire engine. The Cornwall Insurance Co's engine and helmets were kept at a house supplied by the Melbourne Fire Prevention Society, each fireman had a key to the premises.

The brigade successfully fought its first fire on the 20th. Jan. 1846, a single storey building in Swanston Street, using the Cornwall Insurance Co's fire engine. The manual engines required a number of men working the handles on either side to keep the water flowing out of the tank to a brass water spout fitted at the front of the pumper, it was exhausting work and men had to be changed over every few min-

utes. The engine had to be occasionally re-positioned to aim the jet of water through the doors and windows into the flames, also they used buckets of water. As the manual pumpers improved, they had an outlet valve connected from the high pressure side of the pump to a control tap to which lengths of leather delivery hose were attached terminating with a nozzle, this was an advantage enabling firemen to advance into the buildings in an effort to extinguish the fire.

The Superintendent Sugden could employ and pay as many hands as required at a fire to pump the engine. He also was authorised to pay water carters a bonus of 10shillings for the first load of water at a fire and 6shillings for the second and 4shillings for the third load, after that the carters were paid whatever the going rate was.

It was a little like "Comedy Capers" at times. A summons of fire was received at their station on June 6th.1846. a hand bell situated outside the front of the Fire Station was rung by a passer by alerting the firemen that there was a fire in a group of timber tenements in Bourke Street. It appeared that Foreman Dalton could not find the horse, however being a new brigade and wanting to impress they enthusiastically decided to pull the engine onto the fire themselves, they reached as far as the Melbourne Post Office in Elizabeth Street and become stuck in the mud, police aided by the military and other public minded citizens and the all important water carters put the fire out without them. (As these fire engines became bigger and heavier they were designed to be horse drawn.)

As early as 1849 there was a water tank installed in Flinders Street, supplied by a stationary Steam Engine which pumped from the Yarra River, at this tank water carts could also fill up. The council passed a bylaw enforcing water carriers to have their water carts filled over night, this ensured that there would be no unnecessary delays in water arriving at a fire to supply the manual engines. In the past it had taken from 10-15 minutes allowing fires to get a good hold.

In 1851 fire fighters and their equipment from the earlier formed Fire Prevention Societies Brigade were transferred and absorbed into the re-organised Victoria Fire and Marine Insurance Co's Brigade. Chief Constable Robert Bloomfield was appointed Superintendent, Jeremiah Dalton and Daniel O'Reilly were appointed as foremen. The government owned first manual fire engine "The Australia Felix" and another used by the mounted Police Cadets and Military were also placed under his control.

Gold was discovered in Victoria in mid 1851 and over the next several years approximately 300,000 people arrived in Melbourne to seek their fortune. They came from Britain and Ireland originally but people from many other nations followed later. There was not enough accommodation for

them in Melbourne, a tent city grew along the South side of the river known as Emerald Hill (South Melbourne) it extended in a series of large encampments from Sandridge (Port Melbourne) East to opposite to where the Flinders Street railway station is now located. Melbourne and its Tent city was in extreme danger from fire particular in the summer when hot strong North West winds were blowing, sparks from camp fires were always a major concern.

Some of the new arrivals were experienced gold diggers from California, U.S.A. and many of these knew that it was easier and more certain to make money setting up as Hotel proprietors and Shop Keepers. Two of these men brought with them their previous fire fighting experiences and formed their own private fire companies, importing from England and America fire engines and other firefighting equipment.

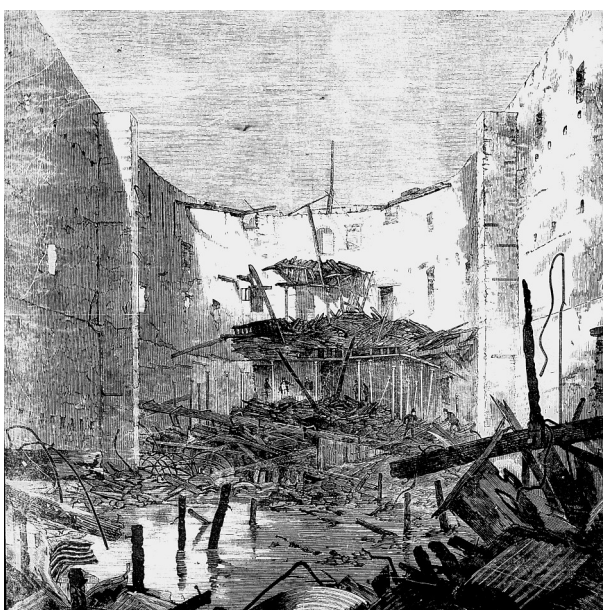
Samuel Moss the American proprietor of the Criterion Hotel in Collins Street, (formerly the Royal Hotel) had been a member of a Volunteer Fire Engine Company in California.

By 1853 Moss had formed his 'Volunteer Fire Engine Company No.1, he was appointed Assistant Foreman and had the use of the old Cornwall Insurance Companies Fire Engine for a short period, until their new engine previously ordered arrived. The Insurance Co. also paid for their water usage.

Another American John Caverly Hall of the Royal Highlander Hotel located in Flinders Lane had been a Foreman of an American Volunteer Engine Company, he joined Moss's No.1 Company and several days later he publicly announced that he was starting up a No. 2 Engine Company and in his honour it was named the Caverly Volunteer Engine Company. Many American expatriates were attracted to join his engine company.

In April 1853 Moss and his men turned out from the Criterion Hotel for a fire in Elizabeth Street, the second in 2 months, one of his bar men an American Volunteer who came from Philadelphia named William Clapp was inside the building with a hose and nozzle when part of the building collapsed, he died in the fire and at the same time Moss's new fire engine was destroyed. The Cornwall Insurance Co. again loaned them their fire engine. Clapp was possibly the first firefighter to die at a fire in Melbourne?

In Melbourne the American Engine Companies created a status symbol which drew in many volunteers, and leading businessmen to their cause and who supported them especially when it came to raising funds. The Americans, in their exuberance, created a subterfuge in the superiority of volunteers over full time professional firemen. Naturally they gained the support of Melbourne's City Council (It cost the



All that remained of the opulent Theatre Royal after a disastrous fire in 1872. It was located in Bourke Street, CBD, where Target's store now stands.

Photo: Fire Services Museum of Victoria.

(Continued on page 10)

(Continued from page 9)

council less money to support the volunteers).

The Americans, to convince the Melbourne Council, organised a parade and demonstration of their new engine, along with the Victoria Fire and Marine Insurance Co's Engine named the "Victoria", and also the Melbourne Councils new engine. On the day of the parade the procession was led by the band of the 40th. Regiment with flags and bunting flying it was a stirring sight. The parade started from Hall's Royal Highlander Hotel, Flinders Lane, the Melbourne Councils engine was drawn by 4 white horses, and was adorned with the British and American flags, followed by the American Caverly Volunteer Companies No.2 Fire Engine, with their Companies blue flag and other decorations fluttering, the engine was drawn by 3 horses abreast, then came the old unadorned Australia Felix Fire Engine which was drawn by 2 black horses, followed by the "Victoria Engine" suitably decked out and drawn by 3 horses abreast.

The fire engines were set up in relay, the "Victoria Engine" took it's water from the Yarra River at the bottom end of Swanston Street, and supplied water to the Caverly Volunteers engine, and finally to the Melbourne Council's engine which was set up on the Corner of Collins and Swanston Streets, water was directed onto the Argus Building and the new Town Hall. (The old "Australia Felix" engine wasn't used as it was not capable of pumping out the volume of water coming in as it would have overflowed and been swamped.)

Supporters of the volunteer system thought that they were going to witness the demise of the Victoria Fire and Marine Insurance Company's assisted volunteer brigade, this was not so. Despite all of the intrigues after the parade and demonstration the Caverly Volunteer Brigade received a request from the Colonial Insurance Company to form a volunteer brigade at Emerald Hill, they complied with the request, this was to be the first officially recognised volunteer brigade in Melbourne, having 78 volunteer firemen and their new fire engine which previously Hall had paid 120 Pounds for. For continuous pumping it took 15 men on each side of the handles to operate it, have in mind that they had to pump approx. 60 up and down strokes per minute for a continuous hard hitting stream, Hall as the foreman through his brass trumpet called the beat of "up down up down me boys", volunteers were called upon from the onlookers to relieve the tiring firemen, to entice the pumper volunteers beer and cheap brandy was issued out. The Caverly Volunteer Company was short lived, Hall was expelled for ungentlemanly conduct and they later called themselves the South Melbourne Volunteer Brigade. By the end of 1855 North Melbourne, Collingwood, Sandridge (Port Melbourne), and Williamstown had Volunteer Brigades. From this time on as Melbourne grew so did the volunteer brigades.

The Insurance Companies had been quietly meeting discussing the formation of a combined Insurance Companies Brigade. As a result they appointed Jeremiah Dalton an experienced Melbourne Fire Fighter as their Superintendent and he was given the control of all the Insurance Companies Fire Engines including the old Cornwall Insurance Companies engine. This spelt the beginning of the end of the private American volunteer engine companies.

Circa 1850's - 1860's approximately another 140,000 people arrived in Melbourne. Throughout the gold rush years

many of Melbourne's men and their families left for the gold fields, including public servants, ticket of leave convicts, con men, and sailors deserted their ships. Every time that word filtered back that there had been a fabulous new find there would be a mass exodus to the new field. It was hard to keep policemen and firemen from periodically disappearing to the latest rush along with everyone else. Once a ship arrived and anchored, the new arrivals and their possessions were ferried by boats to the beach at Sandridge where they hired horse and carts to take them and their possessions onto Melbourne's Tent City. Once there they began organising to go to the gold fields, buying horses, carts, tents, gold pans and cradles, picks and shovels and other essentials plus fire arms then left, others walked pulling light carts or pushed wheel barrows with their gear loaded aboard. Bushrangers followed along waiting to rob particularly later those who were returning with their gold, to overcome this problem later Police escorted the gold back to Melbourne.

It seemed that there was to be no end to the gold discoveries, and as word travelled the world how never ending and rich the strikes were more and more people arrived to seek their fortune. The Governments treasury overflowed with money due to the licensing fees on miners and other duties on gold and other additional taxes that were imposed. Melbourne became very rich and many of the new arrivals decided to stay and take advantage of the good wages on offer than take their chances of finding gold and coping with the hardships.

With the influx of people Melbourne desperately needed more water, large quantities of it. The Government decided to construct a reservoir and found the most suitable place would be on the Plenty River, approximately 20 miles North of the city in a locality known as Yan Yean.

Work begun on the reservoir in 1853 at the height of the gold rush and by 1857 was completed. It is a lake type reservoir, constructed of earth and rock embankment approximately 963 meters long by 9.5 meters wide running across the Plenty River, (which is a tributary of the Yarra river) with an overflow running back down stream into the Plenty River. At the time it was the worlds largest man made lake of stream storage with a top surface area of 556 hectares and has a capacity of 30,000 mega litres (30 million cubic metres) of water. It was high enough to supply adequate head pressure to suit all purposes except on really hot summer days and on Mondays (washing day). In the event of a large city fire in some instances the water pressure would drop alarmingly. It was designed by James Blackburn an English Civil engineer and a former London sanitary inspector who was transported to Tasmania as a convict following charges of embezzlement, after being pardoned he came to Melbourne.

1853 was a dry year, there were many outbreaks of fire in Melbourne, a major fire in Collins Street started, firemen could not do much until the water carts arrived on scene to supply the fire engines, the fire got out of control and destroyed a group of tenements, another fire in November destroyed 11 buildings in the suburb of North Melbourne. Typical of the times property was removed from the endangered buildings and thrown into the streets which gave plenty of scope for looting.

The costs of maintaining full time paid brigades was prohibitive and as the volunteer brigades continued to increase, they were sparingly financed by Insurance Co's, Melbourne

Council, Municipal and private funds. The volunteer brigades turned out to fires willingly, but on arrival on scene the problem was persuading them to take orders from Supt. Dalton or his foremen, the failure of volunteer brigades to recognise Insurance Companies and their Superintendent's authority over them at fires was to remain almost until the end of the century.

In 1855 the Insurance Companies bought the old Police Troopers Barracks at the corner of Collins and King Streets, and refurbished it as a Fire Station, Supt. Dalton, and his paid firemen kept the Insurance Co's equipment there, which included 4 new Fire Engines that belonged to the Government. Dalton was able to lend older Insurance Co's engines to the Volunteer Brigades. After nine years of service Dalton had trained a highly efficient and reliable brigade, the insurance companies spared no costs in making available the latest equipment and gear for their brigade. Dalton retired in 1864 and William Hoad another experienced fireman was promoted Superintendent of the Insurance Co's Brigade.

The Municipal council volunteer brigades received financial support from their councils in the form of the building of fire stations and the purchase of hand pulled hose reels, hoses, uniform and other necessary fire fighting equipment, to the erecting of a brass bell tower outside the station for passer-by's to ring in the event of fire. The insurance companies gave the busiest of these stations fire engines and paid for their water.

In the inner city areas volunteer brigades tended to be supplied and supported by the Insurance Companies and the Melbourne Council more so in the making available of monies for paid on call volunteers and the supplying all their fire fighting equipment.

The volunteer brigades in the suburbs other than the Municipal backed ones had to fend for themselves, raising money to equip and build their own fire stations, probably a tin shed to house their hand pulled hose reel, and other equipment. They also had to buy and maintain their uniforms. To make matters worse the municipal council backed volunteer brigades believed they were superior and considered other brigades in their area to be inferior to them which did not help. These other brigades were self organised and funded and operated under the principal of being a volunteer service, they took offence to the Insurance Companies, and resented Supt. Hoad as their Chief and taking his orders at fires.

As a result the Suburban Fire Brigade Union was formed as a rival to the Insurance Co's Brigade to look after their interests. In the inner Melbourne areas the nearby Suburban

Volunteer brigades turned out with the Insurance Companies Brigade. There was a difference of opinion amongst them in accepting Hoad's orders, tensions increased between some of the volunteer brigades and they supported the Suburban Fire Brigade Union, as the union competed for members a power struggle developed causing much angst between themselves. The Insurance Companies called the members of the Union an ill assorted and undisciplined lot, outcast from the rest of Melbourne's Fire Service.

Whilst the Yan Yean Reservoir was being constructed, large diameter wooden water mains was installed from the reservoir to Melbourne, fitted with turn off valves at regular intervals along the pipeline and as it came through the Northern suburbs branched off in many directions supplying the burgeoning suburbs.



The water tank which was located on the Eye & Ear Hospital site opposite FS 1 at Eastern Hill. It was removed piece by piece from there to the Werribee sewerage facility. It has now been restored and is on public view.

Photo: Mike McCumisky

Contractors constructed a 12inch dia. main down Swanston Street, supplying smaller mains 4 and 6 inches in diameter with wooden fire plugs at regular distances throughout the central business district. These plugs were indicated with a nearby post being painted white, it was the local firemen's job to keep these post painted and in a good state of repair. (The first water from the Yan Yean Reservoir issued from a hydrant in Melbourne on the last day of the year Dec. 31st 1857.)

Where there were no fire plugs indicated, firemen would dig down to the main and hand auger a hole into it and then hammer the stand pipe and wooden wedges in each side of the stand pipe holding it firm and upright, when making up they removed the stand pipe and then would hammer in a tapered wooden plug and indicate it for future fire use. Wooden Fire Plugs were just that, once firemen removed them by tapping them back and forth sideways with a hammer, water gushed out rapidly or otherwise, depending on pressure in the mains. Firemen usually got very wet removing the plugs to enable them to ship and hammer in the standpipe. Upon un-shipping the standpipe the wooden plug had to be driven back into the main, a very messy business. Standpipes were constructed differently to the ones in use today.

Circa 1855, to assist water carters, fire fighters and domestic use, a steam engine pumped water through a pipe line which was extended to water tanks constructed in the central business area, and at the same time water from the Yarra River was pumped via water pipes fitted with turnoff valves which terminated into water tanks in Prahran and St. Kilda. By 1856 water was pumped to a fountain in Smith Street Collingwood, by turning a tap people could obtain water for

(Continued on page 12)

(Continued from page 11)

domestic use. This supply was turned off overnight, however water cart men had access to it at all times.

From 1856 and for the next 27 years, Melbourne City Council had its own corporate fire brigade, it was in 1883, absorbed into the Insurance Co's Brigade. The Insurance Co's had been insuring Melbourne's properties and businesses since the early 1842's. It was very prudent indeed for them to build two permanently manned Fire Stations in Melbourne's Central Business District.

In 1857 there was still limited supplies of piped water in Melbourne, 1 large water tank was constructed on Eastern Hill and again water was pumped by a steam engine into them from the Yarra River. Water pipes from the tanks ran down Lonsdale Street into the city centre into water tanks for fire fighting, and as a back up for water carts and domestic use.

The Making of Wooden Water Mains.

Melbourne's original water mains were made of wooden boards sawn into lengths approx. 20ft. long, 3inches wide and 1 1/2' thick. Both edges on the thick side of these boards were machine chamfered by bevelling off to a given angle allowing the surface edges to meet firmly when fitted together to form the diameter of the pipe. A larger diameter pipe required a lesser angle and a smaller pipe required a more acute angle. Once the mains were made up they were wrapped around with heavy canvas sheeting, wire bound around the circumference, along the length and then painted with hot bitumen.

Some water mains could be made up as above and the bevelled boards could be held together by regular spaced flat metal hoops screwed down with brass coach screws, others were made of machine bored Pine and Elm logs externally painted with bitumen, these pipes were probably imported into Australia from England.

Water Main joiners for joining straight lengths together, right angle and other angled bends, enabling the mains to be

inclined in other directions, were machined out of larger timbers having a female recessed flange on either end. These flanges allowed for hemp and then solidified bitumen to be hammered in tightly, the hemp taking up water making for a water tight joint.

By the 1860's - 1870's as the easy alluvial gold deposits were worked out, mining companies were floated with large capital and prepared to work the gold reefs at depth. There was limited employment for a few and many of the miners and their families returned to Melbourne looking for work. Others returned, well off with gold and set themselves up in businesses of all descriptions, some built magnificent mansions, testimony of their new found wealth and became pillars of society.

Because of the ever increasing demand for water and during a very hot dry period between 1876 and 1879 the Yan Yean Reservoir water dropped to a very low level. It was decided to investigate the tributaries of the King Parrott Creek with the idea of diverting them into the Yan Yean Reservoir. The Government decided to construct a reservoir at Toorourrong approximately 8 miles North East of the Whittlesea township.

The Wallaby and Silver Creeks, North of the Great Dividing Range, were tapped to provide water in 1884. Off take weirs were built and an open granite lined contour channel fed into the Wallaby Creek aqueduct which carries the water across the Great Dividing Range just East of Mt. Disappointment then into Jacks Creek and finally into the Toorourrong Reservoir. The reservoir acted as a settling basin before the water travelled nearly 6 miles down a clear water basalt lined channel into the Yan Yean Reservoir. This solved Melbourne's water supplies for the next 20 years or so, when further reservoirs had to be constructed in the Upper Yarra Ranges and their waters diverted into Melbourne's ever growing suburbs.

-----To be continued-----

Les Gray

TRAVELLING WITH SILVER

Broken leg and ankle now OK and Silver is back on deck in more ways than one.

Mrs. Silver declared that after putting up with me for 6 months she needed a break. A cruise around the Whitsunday islands sounded good.

From the time you check your credit card on board to the time you return, everything is laid on, mountains of food, plenty of shops on board and over 2000 passengers.

Great cabins on level 9 and a dozen lifts to get you to the various bars and restaurants. There's 790 staff to look after you, from the Philippines, India, Indonesia and more recently, Vanuatu. They work 14 hours per day 7 days a week for 8 months, then, 4 months off, (No wonder no Aussies are on the staff).

Two swimming pools and something going on all the time from auctions to floor shows. The bingo was \$2000 1st prize one night and \$6000 the second night.

We made 2 land stops, one at Cairns which was like being in Hong Kong, I thought we had been taken over.

Next year...New York, I want to get there early before George McLennan knocks off my bed.

Happy Travelling - Silver



Above: Mr & Mrs Silver, can be seen standing on the wharf, about to embark on their luxury "Whitsunday Cruise". Initially, the captain refused them a boarding pass as he felt the Silvers would lower the tone of his vessel. However, he let them aboard after the Silvers agreed to help load the cargo.

Guess Where and What?

This picture is of a past MFB football team that has come to us in a very strange way. John Taylor, MFB Fire Services Communications Controller at ESTA, was given the picture by his neighbour and the only information he had was, it is of MFB origin, but, had no idea where it came from. (This person has since passed away). John then passed it on to me.

We know names of all of the people in the picture, but, what we require is as follows.

1. Where was the photograph taken?
2. What is the significance and/or the reason for the team photograph?

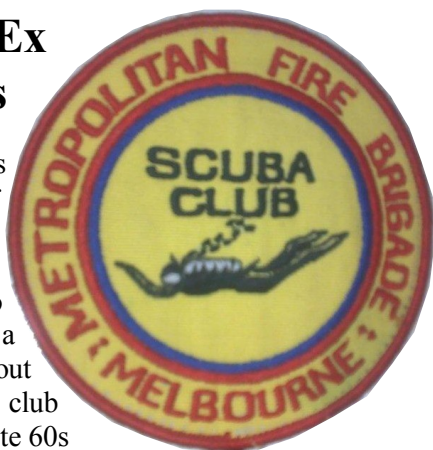
First correct answer will receive a very old but valuable prize. The prize is an old chipped 7oz. glass from Jack Titus's pub. The prize must be collected at the AGM.

John Berry



Seeking Ex Members

I was wondering if there could be some ex members who could submit a story or two about the MFB scuba club from, I think, late 60s and mid 70s?



I have some super 8 film of a club dive at Eden NSW. Need to get the film transferred to dvd and get some photos off it. Has anybody got the equipment? I was a member of the club for about 5 years and still have the cloth club badge (above). I don't think there would be too many of them left.

Ron Moulding. Retired MFB 2325

NEW NAME FOR MEMBER'S WIFE

In the May edition of the newsletter I gave the new name of Autumn Leaves to the Silver headed one, due to his penchant for falling over. Well, guess what, on his first trip away since his last fall, wife Pat does the big swan dive after being called for their flight at the Brisbane terminal, (Don said he did not cause it).

From this day forward, to all and sundry, they are to be known as Mr & Mrs Autumn Leaves.

John Berry

Guess Who?

This photograph, unfortunately, is not as clear as we would wish but one must understand it was taken under great duress. One of the subjects, (the one with the long hair) believes cameras take the soul of the one it's pointed at.



The fact is when the picture was taken the long-haired one took to the trees never to be seen again (Only joking)

First correct answer to the following quiz will receive a used pair of old CFA socks (Washed), again, they must be collected at the AGM.

Question 1. What are the nick- names of the two people in the photograph?

Question 2. How did they get them?

Clues, one was obtained at a rowing club when a request was made to call off his men. The other was due to the fact he spent some time under fire appliances.

John Berry

Recent Retirements

Steve Hudson, September 23rd

Ross Lindley, October 7th

Graeme Oliver, October 12th

Fred Laverick,

Greg Hamilton, October 21st

FIRE SERVICES BOWLS CLUB.

Our AGM was held on the 16th. September at the Newport Bowls club and it was great to see 36 members attend, some retired and some present day firies. We even had members from Ballarat and Yarrowonga come down.

Peter Gerand was elected President with Les Buddle as secretary. The main topic of the meeting was the forthcoming Australian Bowls championship to be held in Echuca from March 27th. till April 1st. 2011.

All people attending will have free membership to the Working man's club for that week. Included in the cost of the carnival is your return fare from Southern Cross Station to Echuca.

So all you bowlers who would like to attend and aren't members of the bowls club contact Les Buddle on; Mob. 0412 332 718 or; Email: buddle1982@gmail.com.

In the coming bowls season we play at different venues at least once a month mainly on a Thursday.

So come along and enjoy the company of your fellow firies. For this information contact Les.

John Chambers

MFB Golf Club Fixture 2010

November 15th St Andrews Beach.
December 13th Cranbourne AGM

Any queries call Ian Muntz 27D or,
Paul Sandilands 24C

WANTED TO BUY

Want to buy the book
'Life under the Bells'.

Written by Sally Wilde.

It is the history of the MFB 1891-1991.

I will pay a reasonable price.

Contact: fagernes@dodo.com.au or
phone: 07 55224321.

BRASS HELMET REPAIRS

Should you have a brass helmet that requires a little TLC

Please contact Markham at for an appraisal.

Brass 'n' Woodwind Workshop
(Service and Repairs) 572 North Road,
Ormond 3204

Monday to Friday 9.00am-5.00pm
Saturday & Sunday - Closed
Public Holidays, Closed

Phone 03 9576 8122

Fax: 03 9578 8166



Week days or weekends, for 2 or 4 nights or whatever takes your fancy...

- Fully self contained 3BR house, close to shops, cafes and beach
- Pet friendly accommodation - dogs and cats welcome at Bells
- Undercover parking, private secure garden, gas log fire, comfortable beds, air conditioning, ceiling fans and all the comforts of home!
- Shower/spa bath, toilet and another separate toilet off laundry
- Doonas and pillows supplied on all beds. BYO sheets and towels
- 400 metres easy walk to the beach past Begola Wetlands
- Bellarine Taste Trail - including food, wine, seafood, olives, wine tours
- Ocean Grove Bowls Club - for reasonably priced meals

Reasonable rates - from \$120 double off peak

Contact: Ph. 03 5251 5899
mobile 0403 221 737

email: bellsbythebeach@bigpond.com.au

www.travelvictoria.com.au/oceangrove/bellsbythebeach

Office address: 25 Gange Place Drysdale 3222 Vic.

24 Roditis Drive, Ocean Grove, 3226

**Your hosts: retired firefighter
Lin Bell and wife Jan Bell**

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.

Annual General Meeting – Wednesday 17th November 2010
Nomination For Positions on The Committee.

Nominations are called for the following positions on the Committee of the Retired Firefighters Association of Australia, Victorian Branch Inc.: -

- President
- Vice-President
- Secretary
- Treasurer
- Ordinary Member of Committee, Six (6) Positions

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

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

Nominations must be in writing on the form below, signed by the Proposer and the Seconder and accepted by the Nominee. Completed nomination forms must be returned to the Secretary at the address shown below **no later than 17:00 hours (5.00pm) on Friday 12th November 2010.**

Return by Friday November 12, 2010, to:
 The Secretary
 Retired Firefighters Association of Australia
 Victorian Branch Incorporated.
24 Lincoln Drive Lower Plenty 3093



Retired Firefighters Association of Australia, Victorian Branch, Inc.

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

Nominee's Name

For the position of:

Proposed by (signature) (Print name)

Seconded by (signature) (Print name)

Nominee Acceptance (signature) (Print name)

Date

JOHN BERRY
SECRETARY/TREASURER
Ph: 03 9431 2880

UFU RETIRED MEMBERS ANNUAL CHRISTMAS LUNCHEON

Saturday November 27th 2010

11.30 AM. - 4.00 PM.

Malvern Town Hall

A reminder:

If you have accepted the invitation to the luncheon and through illness, or some other circumstance, find you are unable to attend, please notify the Union Office A.S.A.P. On Ph: 9419 8811 or Nick Draper Mob. 0431 530 010

PRINT POST No. PP333964/0020

**RFA Newsletter
If undelivered return to;
The Secretary
24 Lincoln Drive
Lower Plenty 3093**

**SURFACE
MAIL**

**Postage
Paid
Australia**

