

# "WATER OFF"

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



November 2021 Vol 26 No 4  
Inc/No: A16839F

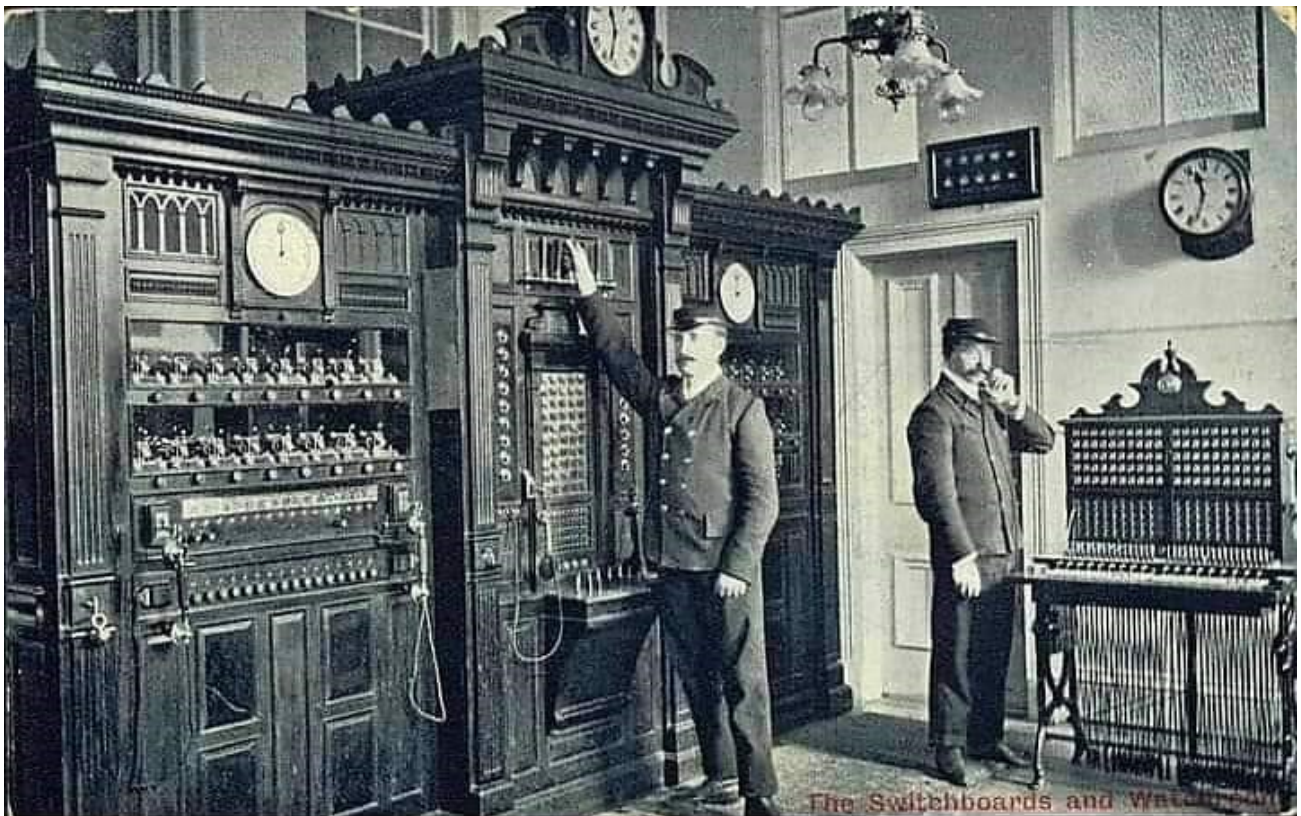
## ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING:

Wednesday 17th November 2021  
FRV Burnley Complex  
10:30 am

**\*Bring Evidence of Double Vax**

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Switchboards and Watchroom of the Eastern Hill Fire Station  
1908.

# “ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING”

**Wednesday 17th November 2021**  
**FRV Burnley Complex**  
**10:30 am**

## AGENDA ITEMS:

**Minutes of last General Meeting**  
**President’s Report**  
**Secretary / Treasurer’s Report**  
**General Business**

### **All Correspondence to:**

Phil Cleary  
RFAV Secretary  
PO Box 93  
Numurkah 3636  
Phone 0419 778 161  
or email at [rfavic1@gmail.com](mailto:rfavic1@gmail.com)

### **Non financial Members**

Members be advised if your newsletter has an expiry date of 2/1/2019 that means you have not paid your subs since 2018 therefore if no remuneration is received by the 2/1/21 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:** Alex Shepherd  
**Vice President:** Sam Capes  
**Sec./Treasurer:** Phil Cleary

### **General Committee:**

Col Harris  
Len Manning  
Mike McCumisky  
Ian Geddes  
Kevin Hede

### **“Water Off” Editorial Staff**

Colin Harris

## **Valē**

Graham Franklin, Frank Cranston, Robert  
Wyllie, Neil Anderson, Gary Grindlay,  
Max Johnson, George Power,  
Michael Gaudion, Max O’Brien, Robert  
Bunning, William Wylie, Dave Ellam,  
Robert Ryan, David Weir, Graham Taylor

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

## **Sick List \* In Care Facility**

Bruce Barrett	Archie McLachlan
Bernie Bishop*	Harry Mitchell
Ken Bouchard	Kevin Mottershead
John Brown*	Michael Phelan
Stan Cameron	Dick Prendergast
Harold Connell	Trevor Reed
Tom Driscoll	Gary Spicer
Jack Etherton*	Graham Thomson*
Eddie Gilbertson	Laurie Trewin
John Hansford	Robert Weitering
Ian Hookey*	Ray Wellard
Noel (Dutchy) Holland	John Williams
Bob Horgan	

## Diary Dates 2021

**November 17, AGM**

**\*No UFU Xmas Luncheon this year due to Covid**

**Note:** If you know of any member who may be ill please notify a committee member.

“Water Off” is edited by Colin Harris, 2 Gowar Avenue, Camberwell 3124. Phone 0432 302 414. Email: [retiredfirenews@gmail.com](mailto:retiredfirenews@gmail.com)  
All articles accepted for publication by the editor are done so in good faith and no responsibility is accepted for any inaccuracies that may occur.  
Signed; Colin D. Harris (The views expressed by the editor of this newsletter are not necessarily those of the Victorian branch of the RFA and Fire Rescue Victoria.

## PRESIDENT'S REPORT



I wish add my condolences to all families who have lost love ones during these past months of lock downs and to all members who have looked after sick members of their families. My thoughts and well wishes go out to you and I hope things will get better soon.

To our Secretary Phil Cleary. Thank you for all your work and efforts in keeping the Retired Firefighters Association going and for keeping all Members and interested parties informed and up to date with news regarding our Association. To Colin our Bulletin editor a pat on the back for a great job in keeping us well entertained and getting out a great read. To all Committee

Members, thanks for all your help during the year and for keeping positive during these lock downs. To the Victorian Fire Service personnel at the Burnley Complex, thanks for providing a meeting place and the lovely BBQ you put on for us. It is much appreciated and it is great to mix with you and have a chat.

Hopefully, we are nearing some sort of freedoms and we can get to something like a normal life again and have some face to face meetings. We are still the "lucky country" and we are better off than some overseas countries, so we have to adapt a little and get on with life as it is.

It has been an honour in serving you this past two years see you all soon! Good health and keep safe!

**Alex Shepherd (President)**

## SECRETARY/TREASURER'S REPORT



**H**i all,

Well, another 3 months has just gone. Victoria has seen the worst of Covid, where our state has been turned upside down again. Let's hope it gets better for Christmas this year.

We are coming up to Christmas and I know 2021 has been a hard year for everyone. Let's hope 2022 is a better year and from all the committee we wish our members and families a Merry Christmas and a Happy New 2022 Year.

Next year on a brighter note we are looking to have a few Social get-togethers. I have to get with the committee and we will decide when and where.

A function I would like to have is a Christmas in July. The UFU have a Christmas Function each year so it would be great for us to have a Christmas function in July! Let's talk about it!

Just a few words about our next meeting and Covid.

There will be a meeting on Wednesday 17th of November 2021 at Burnley Complex at 10.30 am. It will be an AGM for 2020 and 2021 plus our November meeting and BBQ.

Phil Cleary (Secretary)

**NOTE: On entry to Burnley Complex, you must have had your double Covid vaccination with proof of your vaccination with you. You also must sign in with the QR Code. Sanitize your hands and make sure you are wearing a face mask.**

**These are the rules for Covid set out for this meeting by the Fire Rescue Victoria.**

**Any enquiries regarding meetings call the Secretary:  
Mob. 0419 778 161  
Email: rfavic1@gmail.com**





BARRIE LAWS Reg No: 2492  
and his late wife Grace.

I was born Brunswick on the 6<sup>th</sup> April, 1943 and grew up in Numerkah Victoria. I now live at Banora Point NSW.

My first apprenticeship was as a pastry chef and fond memories of making pancakes for the shift at 10 D still remains.

I also did training at CIG and worked at a Engineering firm in Bulleen. I remember making special beams for the San Remo Bridge – Phillip Island and I believe it is still standing after all these years. (Yes it is Barry!)

Initially I worked in Special Service—now Fire Equipment Services and left in 2001. I saw that the Fire Brigade operations was where I should have been.

I finally joined the MFB on the 14/2/68 (Valentines Day). I was 25 years of age.

I still remember the days of holding the ‘net’ open for other to jump into. I also became a tele-boom operator. And I was a drummer in the C M F citizen military band. I was at No.1 then moved to No.10 where I started on ‘C’ shift then finally where I then transferred to ‘D’ shift. Where, I remained until my retirement.

I remember seeing some terrible motor cycle and other vehicle accidents. Coode Island stands out as one of the worst without a doubt. To watch drums exploding into the air like missiles and then returning and thundering through the air until they hit the ground was certainly something to witness. We had of course no way knowing what was in them!!

David Wang – fireworks factory in East Melbourne was also a very entertaining with colours filling the surrounds. Shame it was not very for amusing for those of us trying to put the damn thing out!

Grace and I then moved north and enjoyed the lovely weather that it is renowned for.

Grace and I were married for 38 years. And when Grace died in May 2019 I was shattered to say the least.

My son took me back to No 10 when I was visiting him in Melbourne. The officer then presented me with my original helmet. I very ‘chuffed’ and now it is pride of place in my home.

I love my lawn bowls, snooker and I am completing computer classes for a hobby. It keeps the old joints moving and a great way to socialize.

# JOKES

(A joke or two during Covid to lighten the mood).

The Grim Reaper came for me last night , and I beat him off with a vacuum cleaner. Talk about Dyson with death.

A mate of mine recently admitted to being addicted to brake fluid. When I quizzed him on it he reckoned he could stop any time....

I went to the cemetery yesterday to lay some flowers on a grave. As I was standing there I noticed 4 grave diggers walking about with a coffin , 3 hours later and they're still walking about with it. I thought to myself, they've lost the plot!!

My daughter asked me for a pet spider for her birthday, so I went to our local pet shop and they were \$70!!! Blow this , I thought , I can get one cheaper off the web.

I was at an ATM yesterday when a little old lady asked if I could check her balance , so I pushed her over.

I was driving this morning when I saw an AA van parked up. The driver was sobbing uncontrollably and looked very miserable. I thought to myself that guy's heading for a breakdown.

Statistically , 6 out of 7 dwarves are not Happy.

My neighbour knocked on my door at 2:30am this morning , can you believe that , 2:30am?! Luckily for him I was still up playing my Bagpipes.

Paddy says "Mick , I'm thinking of buying a Labrador ."Bugger that" says Mick "have you seen how many of their owners go blind?"

Man calls 999 and says "I think my wife is dead" The operator says how do you know? He says "The sex is the same but the ironing is building up!"

I saw a poor old lady fall over today on the ice!! At least I presume she was poor - she only had \$1.20 in her purse.

My girlfriend thinks that I'm a stalker. Well, she's not exactly my girlfriend yet.

Scottish Station Officer.  
"VKN8 Pumper 28 Wordback: Assistance Required, we have a wee house fire!".....  
Wordback, you have a small house fire.....  
Noo, Noo, VKN8, I said, a Warehouse Fire!"

A wife says to her husband you're always pushing me around and talking behind my back. He says what do you expect? You're in a wheelchair.

I was explaining to my wife last night that when you die you get reincarnated but must come back as a different creature. She said I would like to come back as a cow. I said you're obviously not listening.

The wife has been missing a week now. Police said to prepare for the worst. So I have been to the charity shop to get all her clothes back.

Sat opposite an Indian lady on the train today , she shut her eyes and stopped breathing. I thought she was dead , until I saw the red spot on her forehead and realised she was just on standby.

They've had to cancel the panto 'Jack & the Beanstalk' in Birmingham, Bristol , Oldham , Bradford , Burnley , Leicester , Luton and London : Apparently the giant couldn't smell any Englishmen.

The wife was counting all the 5cents and 10 cents out on the kitchen table when she suddenly got very angry and started shouting and crying for no reason. I thought to myself , "She's going through the change."

When I was in the pub I heard a couple of plonkas saying that they wouldn't feel safe on an aircraft if they knew the pilot was a woman.  
What a pair of sexists. I mean , it's not as if she'd have to reverse the bloody thing!

Local Police hunting the 'knitting needle nutter' , who has stabbed six people in the arse in the last 48 hours , believe the attacker could be following some kind of pattern.

Bought some 'rocket salad' yesterday but it went off before I could eat it!

A teddy bear is working on a building site. He goes for a tea break and when he returns he notices his pick has been stolen. The bear is angry and reports the theft to the foreman. The foreman grins at the bear and says "Oh, I forgot to tell you, today's the day the teddy bears have their pick nicked."

Murphy says to Paddy "What ya talkin to an envelope for?" "I'm sending a voicemail ya thick sod!"

Just got back from my mate's funeral. He died after being hit on the head with a tennis ball.  
It was a lovely service.

19 paddies go to the cinema , the ticket lady asks "Why so many of you?"  
Mick replies , "The film said 18 or over."

An Asian fellow has moved in next door. He has travelled the world , swum with sharks , wrestled bears and climbed the highest mountain. It came as no surprise to learn his name was Bindair Dundat.

## The Trickey Family in the Fire Service Part 2

With the demise of MFB, I thought I'd share another little snippet of family fire history as the book is closed on the Metropolitan Fire Brigades Board.

As you might know or have guessed, the MFB was essentially a big boys club, especially in Pops day and indeed my father's day and to some extent, my time as well. Not only was it a boys club but it was ripe with Freemasonry too. Most of the senior officers were Freemasons and in fact you did not get promoted unless you knew the secret hand shake!

Pop's time down at Cheltenham was not without incident, not including the time the rear of the fire station caught alight from a passing grass fire. But that is another story altogether! As I mentioned, No.34 Station was a single man station with residence, so Pop was stationed there on his Pat Malone. Nana would book on station duty when he had to turn out. Females in the job? Go figure!

Pops conveyance was a Morris Hose carriage, so called because that is about all it carried. There was no pump, no water, a smattering of small gear like salvage shovels, budge key, gatic key (look it up!), axe, hose keys, crow bar etc. And a heap of canvas 2 ½ inch (65mm) hose, about 1000 feet of it! And no cabin! It was open top, rain hail or shine. The aim of this was to connect directly to the street hydrant. That was how it was done.

Pop gets a call to a house fire in Chesterville Rd, Cheltenham, mid-morning, house going well. Remember he is one up. Next nearest back-up station is Prahran (Windsor), some 20 minutes away. No.34 Stn is an out-station, at the extreme end of the MFD. Nepean Hwy is a single lane dirt track through market gardens and flower farms. Anyway, house going "shit hot" as the turn of phrase was known, weather-board single storey residence.

Pop turns up, alone, runs a hose-line. Remember 65mm canvas is very heavy, especially when wet, back to the hydrant and turns on the water and races back to the branch and proceeds to knock down the beast. A fire-fighting tactic at the time was to grab some lacky off the street to hold on to the branch, whilst you did a size-up and rescue if required. Which is precisely what he did! Some poor bloke walking to work found himself on the end of a 65mm hose line, as Pop bolted off down the street to find a public phone box to call the

job in. There was no such thing as radios. The call was made to Eastern Hill, which promptly despatched the Windsor brigade, still some 20 minutes away. Pop returned to the now fully involved house fire, enters the house and here I must add, with NO Breathing Apparatus. The only Proto breathing apparatus was held at Eastern Hill fire station in the city. It had to come out to a job by car.

Somewhere, in that smoke and fire filled house, Joseph McKinlay Trickey finds a woman collapsed and dutifully carries her out, performs mouth to mouth, so I am told, she goes on to survive. He did this on two separate occasions, two separate house fires in Cheltenham. There was no accolade, no bravery recognition. As a fireman it was expected. You were "trained" for this. Had it been a policeman who had saved that woman, he'd been held up as a community hero and a medal pinned on his chest. But that's the way it was.

PS, I think that civilian went on to join the brigade! He certainly got a baptism of fire with Pop!



Steve, Ernie & Harold  
At 33 Station.

## Covid Times, Health Care Staff Dying & Anti-Vaxxers

**This last lockdown of 2 weeks has now gone past 9 weeks – it reeks!  
Uncle Dan is frustrated, businesses are going broke, and people are over it  
Yet, most of us have held our nerve, done the right thing & had a bit of grit  
My hair's getting longer & with all the walking & cycling, my bones are yet stronger  
The World Health Organisation (WHO) say 115,000 health workers have died  
And it was these very people who have worked tirelessly and who have tried  
To keep infected people from dying – working day to day – they are so, so tired  
They have been abused, spat on, received hate mail from anti-vaxxer cowards  
Anti-Vaxxers think it's their right and believe in the conspiracies of the RIGHT!  
You can't tell them they're wrong, after all it's a democracy hmmm, I see!  
So when they become infected, they'll want a hospital bed and to be fed  
By a nurse, a health worker all gowned up in PPE and doing a top job  
And that now sick Covid patient desperately gasping for breath  
Will have taken a hospital bed, from a heart attack or road accident victim  
Our hospitals are over-loaded, our health workers ARE JUST OVER IT!  
Our comrades in the police force have been assaulted and bashed  
Right wingers and anti-vaxxers have wrought havoc and have trashed  
All the good work Governments of all persuasion, have tried to put in place  
There's a view these anti-vaxxers are just a complete waste of space  
In the USA, firefighters and EMT's have died in the hundreds  
All trying to do their job in this unforeseen "PANDEMIC"  
Let's hope we can all live with Covid – as it seems to be here to stay  
So all you good readers, "GET VAXXED", so we can all get out to play!  
(Editorial Poem for "Water Off" – Ed!)**

### **NOTICE**

**For all future RFA membership  
payments, electronic transfers, internet  
banking etc RFA new banking details are  
as follows:**

**GOULBURN MURRAY  
Credit Union  
BSB 803 078 - Account No 37460**

**Any queries, contact:  
Phil Cleary - Secretary**

**IF ANY MEMBER WISHES TO NOMINATE  
FOR AN ELECTED POSITION ON THE RFA  
COMMITTEE**

**NOTE: UFU Christmas Luncheon is cancelled again  
for 2021  
All going well, it will be on again at the Sofitel in 2022**

**Deadline for February Water Off Magazine: 7th January 2022**

## RFA LUNCHEON GOLD COAST



### **JULY 29<sup>th</sup> 2021**

We arrived as the doors opened at 10.00 am to set up and then escorted to our area that Carmen the Function coordinator had set up for us. The area is called the 'laneway'. It can accommodate up to 200 so wouldn't that be good for us down the 'track'!!!!-

Due to the constant changing of numbers attending I had no idea in the end of what numbers we were expecting. Carmen had set up 5 tables – seating 6 at each table. I really didn't think we would take up the area but I was wrong. About 38-39 finally attended so I was really pleased.

Another lovely sunny day, to greet all that were coming. The 'Laneway' is a brightly lit area with ceiling fans and open louver windows to supply fresh air. This time we could order when we wanted to and the meals were delivered to our tables. The prices of the meals were very reasonable. It was so much better than the 'drop plate meal' that we had at the Southport Yacht club.

The RFA flag was flying high, raffle box of goodies and the silly door prizes were in place before members came.

Marcia Warren took up the challenge of selling raffle tickets and did a spectacular job.

The Queensland RFA and partners helped with the numbers attending and I hope that they continue doing so.

Rob Patterson (Secretary – Gold Coast Region) who I have been in contact for many years is very helpful and always a pleasure catching up with him.

When advising the 'mob' where the fire exits & assembly area was, (trying to do the right thing of course), to a 'mob' of firies is a bit like selling coal to Newcastle as you would expect! The ladies were at least attentive. I advised that should an alarm sound where we should exit. One lady said "Oh how close, I will beat him to the exit." I said to her "I could only imagine with the 'testosterone & with adrenaline pumping in this room, they would throw us out quickly and then probably go back in to organize the staff, grab the extinguishers or hose and have it all done and dusted by the time the BRT and crew arrived". We all had a good laugh and a few nods from the boys.



There were only 8 of us left at the table. This time we were not told that we had to move on. Most of the fires that were at the table were from the 'wild wild west' mad buggers by the sound of it. They talked about the 'good old days' using the 'pompies' and how damn scary they were.

They remembered receiving a pillow on the day they finished at the training college. I remembered this also. Ian came home and his dad said what is that for and Ian told him it was part of his gear. His dad nearly fell off the chair laughing.

One asked the group "who received a 'Gladstone bag' for your 21<sup>st</sup>? A loud cheer went up as many did.

I then heard about the days when some of these bags were attached with a rope by the handles, thrown out of windows – and then bag was then filled with refreshments – no never I said!!!

Climbing the Leyland ladder to the top then having to step off the ladder and climb through a small opening (not for the faint hearted I was told) in fact one said to me he was bloody terrified – of course no harnesses in the good old days. Things have changed for the recruits I hope in this era.

Police pulling up and conducting a drug raid at a station and the officer on duty had no idea what was going on!

**\*Thanks to Gail and Ian for organising this annual reunion for all retired firefighters, their wives and families**



**This plaque sits opposite an empty chair. This occurs at each reunion luncheon to remember all those firefighters who are no longer with us – Gail & Ian Fagernes**



**Rob Patterson  
Secretary Gold Coast Region  
Queensland RFA**

## **Bruce Christie Thornton**

(08/04/1934 – 03/08/2020)

Bruce was born in Melbourne to Frank & Winifred Thornton nee Taylor of Sandringham. He was the second of two boys born 5 years apart and followed by a girls 5 years later. The family lived in Sandringham until 1974. Bruce attended Sandringham east primary school from the start of WW11 in 1939, followed by Brighton Technical School, later to Prahran Technical School doing cabinet making and woodwork carving. Bruce left school at 15 to work for Myers furniture as an apprentice. Bruce's apprenticeship was interrupted by compulsory national service in 1952 and this introduced him to mechanized transport. Motorbikes, cars, buses and trucks followed. Bruce could and would drive anything! Bruce's interest in the MFB started early, as his father was a Part Paid Fireman from about 1940 until the late 1940's. The family lived under lights and bells during that time as P.P's lived independently of , but close by fire stations, so when a call was registered the bells would sound in the house and the lights would come on to assist the firefighter to exit the house safely. Another influence was when Bruce was driving for the Oakleigh Bus Company, Peter Coulson got on the bus wearing the MFB uniform of jodhpurs and leggings which Bruce thought was impressive.

Bruce joined the MFB in 1956 and early in his career, attended the Salvation men's accommodation fire where many men died. Bruce was stationed at No.1, 35, 32 (Brighton) and then for nearly 10 years at Sandringham on D shift. Bruce spent the last 7 years at Eastern Hill driving 1<sup>st</sup> hose carriage out the doors to city calls. Due to a workplace injury in 1969, Bruce spent half each shift in the watch room and the other half driving the hose carriage. Bruce worked mainly on D shift with many characters in the "job". There were the Trickeys', old Joe, young Joe, and the other brothers, Roy Treverton. Bruce was in the 2<sup>nd</sup> gym team coached by Charlie White. Jack "Wacky" Gallop in the Communication Centre was the organizer of the lease of the bush block at Mathoura where Bruce was involved in the building of "The Shack" which members of MFB used for 25 years. So many mates – too many to name! In 1973, Bruce retired medically unfit due to an unstable right knee caused by a slip on wet stairs at Eastern Hill Station. His pension was \$30.32 per week with 4 children in secondary school. His dismissal was sent in a letter to his mother's address whilst he was on sick leave.

Holidays over the years were mainly short breaks taken up to 6 times a year at the shack in Mathoura. Bruce reveled in bush settings, the shooting of feral animals, fishing and boating on the rivers. There were caravan trips around NSW and S.A. Bruce was married to Evelyn Boyd. He later married Rosemary James. There are now 12 grandchildren and 25 great grandchildren.

Bruce was an active volunteer in his community (too many organisations to mention). Here's a few! Yooralla President of Shepparton Diabetes Support Group, President of the Nathalia Community Emergency Response Team, organizing sausage sizzles for "CERT", and his last community service was a sausage sizzle for L.P.A.

Bruce was larger than life itself! Full of fun and mischief. A good story teller, a good observer. He spent most of his life with me (Rosemary) 54 years! I was even taken to a fire one night in North Melbourne after leaving the midnight drive-in theatre. It was the North Melbourne Woolstores which had gone up! It was a big smokey fire!

At the end of each shift, Bruce would come home and talk to me about his day at work, often in gruesome detail. Hair raising stories of driving No 1's hose carriage, proceeding light and bells through city traffic and people. Attending car crashes, recues and fires.

Also, Bruce would share a lot of devilment the shift-mates would get up to when not attending calls. "Water fights!" At a particular call, Bruce was required to back the Magirus ladder down several city laneways. After 2 hours and having positioned the ladder, he was then told to return the appliance back to head station – it was no longer required!

**Life with Bruce was exciting, tumultuous, fun, challenging, interesting and exhausting, but never boring.**

Rosemary Thornton – June 2021

## Life Health

“The Senior” – Vic June 2021

Bowel cancer claims the life of more than 100 Australians per week. However, in seniors, it remains one of the most preventable cancers if detected early enough. Because bowel cancer often develops without any warning signs, screening can help reduce its incidence by detecting blood in the stool, which could indicate a precancerous lesion or existing cancer. “When followed up by a timely colonoscopy, cases of bowel cancer can be effectively treated 99% of the time” said colorectal surgeon Dr. Graham Newstead. “Bowel cancer is a silent killer. Put yourself first – get yourself checked”. Speak to your GP if you experience possible symptoms for two weeks or more. This can include rectal bleeding or blood in your stool, changes in bowel in bowel habit, unexplained weight loss, extreme tiredness, and/or a lump or swelling in your abdomen. [bowelcanceraustralia.org](http://bowelcanceraustralia.org)



### New RFA Badge Design

Secretary Phil Cleary, has designed a new RFA badge. It has been suggested that all interested members if they wish to have input into a new badge and come up with their own preferred design, that they can do this and present it at our first meeting in 2022. We can then have a democratic vote on the preferred design. So all you would be graphic artists, get your pencils, crayons and paints out and start designing.

## Palliative Care: Get the Most out of Life

When we think of palliative care, we often think of death. However, it's really about living well for as long as possible. Palliative Care Australia has launched a campaign to address some common misconceptions and show us how palliative care could help people living with life-limiting illnesses to get as much as they can out of life.

Management of pain and symptoms, can start from the early stages of diagnosis to ensure quality of life is maintained. *Palliative Care – It's more than you think*, seeks to challenge perceptions that palliative care is a “last resort”. It features light-hearted animations which show people doing a number of things not usually associated with palliative care such as golfing, fishing, gardening, travelling and even parachuting.

New survey data highlights the limited community understanding of the broader meaning of palliative care and reluctance to have meaningful discussion about death and dying. Three quarters of Australians said they would ask for palliative care for themselves or a family member when first diagnosed, however, results indicate many do not understand the full scope of care options. The survey suggested less than 40% of people understand palliative care can be requested when a person is first diagnosed with a terminal, chronic or degenerative illness.

It is estimated that in addition to the 40,000 Australians currently receiving palliative care, there are at least 40,000 others who would benefit from this care. (The Senior – Vic, July 2021)

**Email: [morethanyouthink.org.au](mailto:morethanyouthink.org.au)  
Palliative Care Victoria, 9662-9644**

**Volunteers Required  
The Fire Services Museum needs past  
fire service members to assist on an  
occasional basis at the Museum  
Please contact  
Bryan Robertson  
0418 129 252**

## **Rise in scams targeting those 55 and over and how they work**

### **People aged 55 and over, account for almost half of all losses to computer takeover scams.**

The Australian Competition and Consumer Commission (ACCC) reports that those aged 55 and over account for almost half of all losses to computer takeover scams in the past 12 months.

These remote access scams were responsible for losses of over \$7.25 million, with those aged over 55 losing over \$4.4 million.

Breaking it down further, those aged 65 and older lost more than any other group and accounted for around a third of the total losses.

According to the ACCC's Scamwatch, almost 6500 Australians reported phone calls from scammers trying to convince them to download software that gives them access to home computers and their bank accounts, with the figure they reaped from the scams representing an increase of 184 per cent compared to the same time last year.

The scams can start with a phone call, SMS, email or on-screen pop-up seeking urgent contact to fix a problem.

The scammers pretend to be from well-known organisations such as Telstra, eBay, NBN Co, Amazon, banks, government organisations, police, and computer and IT support organisations.

ACCC chair Delia Rickard explained that scammers create a sense of urgency to make you give them access to your computer via remote access software.

"Remote access scams are one of the largest growing scam types in Australia," Ms Rickard said. "Scammers take advantage of the digital world and the fear of fraud and cybercrime to access people's devices and steal their money.

"These types of scams target and impact all people and can be convincing."

Scams of this nature will often be an unexpected phone call saying that you have been billed for a purchase that you didn't make, your device has been compromised, or your account has been hacked.

The scammer will pretend to assist you or ask you to assist them to catch the scammer. They will tell you to download remote control software such as AnyDesk or TeamViewer.

Once the scammer has control of your computer or device, they will ask you to log into applications such as emails, internet banking or PayPal accounts, which will allow the scammer to access your banking and personal information to impersonate you or steal money.

While remote access tools have been around for years to help IT support staff in their work, scammers are also taking advantage of the ability to remotely access people's computers or smart phones.

"It is really important not to let anyone who contacts you out of the blue access your devices, as once you give them access, you have no way of knowing what the person will do to your computer or what programs they may install," Ms Rickard said.

"If you receive contact from someone claiming to be from a telecommunications company, a technical support service provider or online marketplace, hang up.

"If you think the communication may have been legitimate, independently source the contact details for the organisation to contact them. Don't use the contact details in the communication. Also, don't click on any of the links.

"Remember, your bank will never ask you to give them access to your computer or accounts, nor will they ask for the codes to verify transactions. You should never provide those numbers to anyone except to verify transactions you are making in your mobile banking app or through your online banking."

The ACCC is working with the private sector to disrupt these scams, including by sharing information with telecommunications carriers about the phone numbers used to call Australians so they can trace and block calls.

People who think they may have been scammed should contact their bank or financial institution as soon as possible. Support is available through IDCARE on 1800 595 160 or [www.idcare.org](http://www.idcare.org).



## FL Firefighter Overcomes Cancer and COVID-19

Oct. 12, 2021

Lakeland firefighter Clay Geiger, 31, spent 16 months battling a rare cancer and also fought off COVID-19 for three weeks while undergoing treatments.

By Rebecca Lee

Source The Ledger, Lakeland, Fla.



Lakeland firefighter/paramedic Clay Geiger prior to his cancer diagnosis (left) and in a recent photo with Lakeland Chief Douglas Riley upon returning to work after 16 months.

Oct. 11—LAKELAND, FL — A Lakeland firefighter and paramedic returned to work on Friday after a 16-month battle with cancer.

Clay Geiger, 31, started as a firefighter in Lakeland in 2014 but has done fire rescue work for 10 years.

He said he wasn't sure the day would come when he could return but he's excited to get back into a routine, help the community and be with the Lakeland Fire Department again, which he said is his second family.

"It was a long journey," Geiger said. "And I wouldn't be where I am today if it wasn't for the continued support of my family and work-family."

Geiger said he feels like his patient care as a paramedic will improve because he learned a lot from being on the other side and looks forward to helping people in need.

Cancer is a leading cause of death among firefighters, and research shows firefighters are at higher risk when compared to the general population. In 2019, The Florida Legislature passed, and Gov. Ron DeSantis signed into law, Senate Bill 426, granting rights and benefits to firefighters diagnosed with certain cancers, including Non-Hodgkin's lymphoma, which is the type of cancer Geiger was diagnosed with.

"Only about 10 to 12 people in the United States are diagnosed with it a year," Geiger said. "And because it's so rare, they don't have the research — it's just not common enough. So, when they do a study, it's a very limited study, unfortunately."

Geiger was 30 when he was diagnosed with a rare form of Non-Hodgkin's called Natural killer/T-cell lymphoma. Geiger said Dr. Donald C. Lanza at the Sinus & Nasal Institute of Florida diagnosed it and referred him to Moffit Cancer Centre for treatment over a six-month period.

While going through treatments, Geiger tested positive for COVID-19 around Christmas in December. He said it took him three weeks to recover from the virus.

"I'm just left to think, 'Wow, I really don't have an immune system and I have COVID,'" Geiger said. "That was a very difficult time. I didn't really get to celebrate Christmas last year."



## Firefighter's 18 Rules.

1. Come in 30 minutes early so they think you're a good person.
2. Never trust the milk.
3. Always have your water tank full in your Truck.
4. Always check your equipment.
5. If you don't know, ask!
6. Wet is clean.
7. Loud is good.
8. Never leave your email open.
9. Never leave your phone unattended.
10. If you have a water fight, always wear your mate's Turnout/Bunker Gear.
11. Never turn on the light after 2300 hrs.
12. Always check your bed before you jump into it.
13. Don't eat more than a BA Mask can hold.
14. Shower and blow your nose after every fire.
15. If you bring in the newspaper, don't take it home.
16. Turn the correct direction when driving out of the Station.
17. Never bludge on your Mates, &
18. Always backup a Firefighter, never leave him/her behind and all of the crew comes home safe.

Pete Learmonth—FRV

### ***Geelong Firey's Muster***

***C.F.A. – M.F.B. – VIVA - AVALON  
Serving & Retired – Staff & Volunteers  
Smorgasbord Lunch  
On the 4th Tuesday of March & October  
@ 1130 hrs  
GATEWAY HOTEL  
218-230 Princess Highway – CORIO  
Members, Wives, Partners,  
Family & Friends***

***Contact:  
Peter Lang 5275 6039  
To receive Mail out notification***



### **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 Colin Harris. "Water Off" will be sent out in a PDF format.

**retiredfirenews@gmail.com**

### **Peer support is available to Retired Firefighters and Associated Members**

#### **FRV**

**Employee Assistance Coordinator  
Irina Tchernitskaia – PH: 0407 665 174  
Email:- [irina.tchernitskaia@frv.vic.gov.au](mailto:irina.tchernitskaia@frv.vic.gov.au)**

**Peer Coordinators  
Chloe Henderson PH: 0417 538 289  
Scott Darcy PH: 0429 771 849  
Email:- [sdarcy@frv.vic.gov.au](mailto:sdarcy@frv.vic.gov.au)**

**Retirees  
John Howe PH: 9729 0984**

**CFA  
Career Peer Coordinator Trent Egan  
PH: 0448 071 299**

**Email:- [Careerpeercoordinator@frv.vic.gov.au](mailto:Careerpeercoordinator@frv.vic.gov.au)**





**Bells By The Beach Holiday House, Ocean Grove**  
 Pet friendly accommodation for everyone



## **SPRING NEWSLETTER - 2021**

Hello to everyone,

We're contacting you as past, present or future guests at our pet-friendly holiday house. It's been a while since our last newsletter, we know you'll enjoy this edition.

We are so grateful for your on-going support and encouragement during the crisis. We're grateful our regional Victorian guests can now enjoy a well-earned holiday and we'll be even more grateful when metro Melbourne residents can enjoy their holidays, too.

Do you know our cancellation policy? Here it is... 'if bookings are cancelled due to COVID-19 we suggest you re-schedule to another date or we will refund any payments'. That's our policy.

Bells By The Beach has a Service Victoria QR Code for easy check-in. Our team members are fully vaccinated, ensuring a safe holiday experience at our property.

Families with fur-kids (all sizes & breeds) love our 'home away from home'. Everyone can relax and enjoy spotlessly clean surroundings in a serene garden environment.

Guests can be confident our safe and secure property is dog-friendly and escape-proof. Start planning your next holiday now, it's a great distraction!

We suggest you visit [www.bellsbythebeach.com.au](http://www.bellsbythebeach.com.au) for availability details or call 0403 221 737. We still have a few vacancies between now and mid-December.

Thank you for considering our holiday accommodation

*Jan & Lin Bell, local owners, Bells By The Beach Ocean Grove*



24 Roditis Drive, Ocean Grove, 3226  
 M: 0403 221 737 P: (03) 5255 3839  
[www.bellsbythebeach.com.au](http://www.bellsbythebeach.com.au)  
[bellsbythebeach@bigpond.com](mailto:bellsbythebeach@bigpond.com)  
 ABN: 48 244 766 035



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