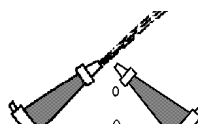




Inc/No:A16839F



“WATER OFF!”

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

August 1999

VOL. 2 No. 3

Our November 1998 edition of “Water Off”, carried an article on the MFESB’s Emergency Medical Response - First Responder pilot program. We now have an update and things are looking bright for the success of this initiative.

E.M.S. FIRST RESPONDER

July 1998 marked an important milestone in the history of the MFESB as the Brigade undertook, for the first time, a formal Emergency Medical Response (EMR) First Responder role within the Melbourne Emergency Medical Services (EMS) system.

The EMS First Responder concept is orientated towards Basic Life Support and reversing sudden

death or sustaining life over the first few minutes of a medical emergency until arrival of advanced EMS provided by the existing ambulance services, First Responders have been trained to respond to time critical medical emergencies focusing on unconscious/non-breathing patients (which implies a high probability of cardiac arrest).

(Continued page 11)



MFV First Responder Firefighters have the skills in initial management of patient in cardiac

“GENERAL MEETING”

Notice is hereby given of our next General Meeting
To be held at the North Melbourne Football Club Social Club,
Fogarty Street North Melbourne (Melway 43 B4)
1030 Hours, Wednesday August 18, 1999

AGENDA ITEMS.

- Minutes of last General meeting.
- President’s Report.
- Secretary/Treasurer’s Report.
- General Business.

Please come along and have your say in the running of the Association, join in the fellowship of your old friends and make new ones.

Lunch and beverages will be provided as usual. @ \$3 per head.
Drinks at bar prices.

JOHN BERRY
SECRETARY/TREASURER
Ph: 03 9431 2880

OFFICE BEARERS

President, Don Brennan
Vice President, Ian Fowler
Sec./Treasurer, John Berry
Proper Officer, John Wallace
General Committee;
John Laverick
Bob McNeil
Ross Medwin
Ern Tamme
Auditor; Theo Teklenburg

SICK LIST

Ron Cass
Noel Egan
Jack Gallop
Jim Nevins
Bill Severn
Ern Trickey

VALE

Jim Horley
Brian Stewart

CHRISTMAS SOCIAL

Any members interested in
attending at;
The Shell Club,
Bachus Marsh Rd. Corio,
on Monday December 6th.



Please advise
John Wallace, phone 03 5278
4734,
to help with the catering.

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Our first meeting at the new venue, (the North Melbourne Football - Social Club) was well attended by 80 members and partners. The guest speaker was Paul Clitheroe through the courtesy of Financial Resources group Pty Ltd.

Paul spoke for approximately 1&1/2 hours on investments in general and stories related to his TV show "Money" and his personal life. Everyone in attendance enjoyed his presentation and professionalism. John Laverick presented Paul with a bottle of Scotch on our behalf. My thanks goes to Jack Lake for arranging his financial people for the day.

The North Melbourne Football Club provided a roast lunch to complete a very good day.

Our next meeting will be held at the North Melbourne Football Social Club on Wednesday 18th August, so please feel welcome to come along with your partner for an enjoyable day.

Don Brennan
President



SECRETARY / TREASURER'S REPORT

With your indulgence I would like to start this report off with a special thank you to the people that made our quarterly meeting at the new venue the

success it was. They are John Lake, Christian Schween, Paul Clitheroe and the North Melbourne Social Club Staff.

John Lake (Swampy) – for suggesting Senior Consultant Chris Schween, Financial Resources Group attend our meeting. Chris – for arranging the guest speaker Mr Paul Clitheroe (Director of I.P.A. C. Securities) and the presentation on "Developing your Financial Strategy – A new Approach". Paul Clitheroe – a special mention for delaying his flight to Sydney to enable him to address our meeting. Paul's ability to take you from the unknown to the known of a very complex subject by the use of simple terminology, analogies and visual displays demystified an industry where many investors have lost their savings because of a lack of knowledge. The North Melbourne Social Club staff – for their assistance, their service and their pleasant demeanour which truly helped make this a very successful day. "THANK-YOU".

ITEMS OF INTEREST SINCE THE LAST NEWSLETTER

In recent newsletters we have made mention of the Queensland Retired Firefighters Association. On their executive's recent visit to this state they met with our Vice President Ian Fowler and Committee Member John Laverick to clarify various items on the running of the R.F.A. (Vic) and to make a presentation of a shield to our group. The shield is currently on display at the Secretary's residence (The shield was shown at our last quarterly meeting). The company that makes the shields in

Queensland have loaned one for exhibit at the Southport Yacht Club meeting – note (we are currently discussing with them the possibility of a Victorian one, further news later).

COMMUNICATION

In the previous newsletter I made mention of the fact that we had not received a reply to a letter previously forwarded to one of the emergency services. Well I have forwarded a further letter and guess what - still no reply. One can only wonder what has happened to common decency in the push to streamline things. Have they forgotten we pay rates and insurance, forget the fact that we are past employees of the respective fire services. I must tell you that the Police and any of the Industrial bodies always reply to our letters. Note - I have checked and both letters were received.

REPORT FROM THE COMBINED COUNCIL

At the last meeting of the Council discussion took place regarding the impact the new Act will have on pension recipients of the Vic State scheme etc and it was decided further letters to the Treasurer and Minister of Finance should be forwarded seeking clarification of various points of the Act – no replies have been received to date on questions raised. Note (E.S.S.S. is not affected by this Act).

T.V. PRESENTATION

The Retired Firefighters Association of Australia (Vic Branch) was invited by the Director of Corporate Relations M.F.B. Mr Keith Adamson to take part in their in-house transmission called Mess Room T.V., to answer questions on the R.F.A. etc, which lasted about (5) five minutes. We thank Keith for his invitation.

JIM NEVINS (M.F.B. RETIRED) UPDATE

Several months ago Member Trevor Reed and myself called to see Jim whilst he was going through rehabilitation after the loss of his leg (due to a medical problem). During the visit we reflected on bygone days as I have known Jim for many years and Trevor from childhood as he lived with his parents at the Ascot Vale Fire Station where Jim was stationed in his early years in the Brigade. During this reminiscing I learnt a lot more about Jim's prowess as a runner. I knew he was a top performer but I did not realise just how good. The determination he exhibited through life is still there it showed when they were wheeling him back from rehab – go for it Jim! Unfortunately since this visit we have heard that Jim now has problems with his other leg.

FIRE SERVICE MEMORIAL BOOK

Fred Kerr President Fire Service Museum has been investigating the proposal and has contacted us regarding how this proposal and/or a similar concept can be brought to fruition.

REPORT OF MEETING 19/5/99

Item 1 President welcomed members and their partners to our first meeting at the new venue.

Item 2 Secretary reported to meeting the R.F.A. had made a claim to the Victorian Government for a grant to assist us with our computer hardware. This claim was in accord with the Government's guidelines of money being made available for older

age groups in this "YEAR OF THE OLDER PERSON". Note (We have not received a reply to the claim which indicates it has not been granted).

Item 3 Secretary reported to the meeting that he will be standing down at the November meeting. Position of Secretary will become vacant as he will not be available.

Item 4 Financial Report
SI \$959.44 I1 \$4135.97

GENERAL BUSINESS

Item 5 Frank Churchill gave a report on the Firefighters Credit Co-Op and advised that another bank has developed a credit card which may be confused with the Firefighters Co-Op card.

Item 6 Committee member John Laverick foreshadowed a motion re change of Constitution to prevent President and secretary from retiring in the same year.

Item 7 President welcomed Guest Speaker Paul Clitheroe.

Trusting this newsletter finds you all fit and well. Come join us at our next meeting and bring your partner.

I leave you with a quote from William Cowper "Absence of occupation is not rest. A mind quite vacant is a mind distressed".

Travel club warning

THE TRAVEL COMPENSATION FUND (TCF) IS WARNING potential travellers to steer clear of unlicensed travel clubs offering cheap domestic and international airfares and accommodation deals in return for upfront membership fees.

The fair trading ministry in WA recently laid charges against one such club, Interval Resort Networks (Australasia), alleging it made false representations in connection with the promotion of a travel and accommodation network discount scheme. In addition, after paying membership fees ranging from \$3500 to \$20,000, consumers complained they couldn't get the discounts, and holidays couldn't be taken at times that suited them. The travel club is now in receivership.

People spending money with unlicensed travel

clubs are not protected by the TCF, which monitors the financial security of all licensed travel agents in Australia (except in the NT) and compensates anyone who loses money on prepaid travel services where the agent is unable to offer refunds because of bankruptcy or insolvency.

When you're planning your next holiday, book with a travel agency that's a member of the TCF to ensure you're protected if that agent goes out of business. TCF members can be identified by a blue and gold TCF agent membership certificate, and if it's not on display, ask whether the agent is a member.

If you've lost money due to a travel agent's financial collapse, closure or failure to pass your money on to other travel principals (airlines, hotels, etc), call

WANTED URGENTLY

Old MFB or CFA trousers, turnout tunics, blue shirts;

in fact any old gear you may have stored in the garage or under the house.

If you have any items of interest could you please bring them in to the next meeting and give to Fred Kerr or ring Fred on 9509 8906 or the museum on 9662 2907 and we will

COMMUNITY EDUCATION

A new name for a busy department

If you're wondering who or what Community Education is, think Community Safety....Fire Prevention. Yes, the department has had another name change. The idea is to make the department's name more consistent and reflective of our core activities.

The Community Education Department has been very busy over the last few months especially with the launch of the Winter Fire Safety Campaign in conjunction with CFA. Be Aware, Be Alarmed, Be Prepared is our slogan for the campaign. Hopefully you have seen many of the news articles in your local press, our TV ad on kitchen fires and numerous posters and brochures advertising The Great Home Escape Day, held on Sunday, July 25. The purpose of the day was to draw people's attention to the need to develop and practise a home fire escape plan. Now that smoke alarm legislation has been passed, we are trying to promote other safety behaviours and preventative strategies. From all reports the day was a great success and achieved its aim.

Our RETIRE ED lecturers have also been extremely busy in the last couple of months, because of the winter fire safety campaign and also the International Year of Older Persons. In the last two months, they have delivered an amazing forty eight lectures to close to two thousand people. The rest of the winter is looking equally as busy, so there is no rest for these retirees. Since the inception of the



Above; Godfrey Payne explains the importance of a home fire extinguisher during one of the RETIRE ED sessions.

program back in 1993, these retirees have delivered over 700 lectures to 30,000 people. Quite an achievement!

Speaking of seniors, the MFB has launched a partnership with Manningham Council by holding a Seniors Safety Day in conjunction with CFA and Victoria Police. Representatives from all seniors organisations within Manningham Council were invited to attend a series of lectures, workshops and demonstrations on fire safety and Confident Living at the Manningham Shire Offices. Over forty people attended to hear Retired Fire Officer Basil Smith speak on Home Fire Safety. We also had the assistance of the fire crew from Templestowe Fire Station, SO Ian Fagernes and SFF Paul Pratt, and SSO Phil Patterson from Northern Zone demonstrating the use of home fire extinguishers and fire blankets. From all reports the attendees enjoyed the day and learned a lot about safety.

Retired Officer Barry Puddy and I also attended a function in the City of Darebin for their Arabic Senior Citizens. The day was mainly one of entertainment and information sponsored by the Arabic Youth Network. We were able to distribute some of our winter fire safety information in Arabic to this group.

As always, we are keen to "recruit" any retired firefighters who may be interested in participating in some of our Community Safety/Education initiatives. If anyone is interested in finding out more information about the RETIRE ED Program, please feel free to ring Sharon Landers on 9420-



Above; Retired Fire Officers Ian Fowler, John Cannon and John Laverick at a RETIRE ED Training Session

QUOTE

To know how to grow old is the master work of wisdom, and one of the most difficult chapters in the great art of living!

SHOWGROUNDS FIRE

Ascot Vale, September 22, 1914

*The next in the series of significant fires during the formative years of the MFB from -
Barbara McCumisky.*

On September 22, the grandstand at the Royal Agricultural Showgrounds was destroyed by fire. The two Special Service firemen on duty at the grounds could do little to save the structure, as the water pressure was very bad and the flames were fanned by a strong north wind. The heat became so intense that the firemen could not approach the fire with water. Destruction of the 8,000 pound stand was inevitable and the wind swept the flames onto the flimsy, but ornate pavillions along Plummer and Lennon Avenues.

Eighteen pavillions were destroyed or badly damaged and the Industrial Hall was gutted and flattened. The buildings contained many highly flammable items and it was only the efforts of the show staff, and later the firefighters with their steamers, that averted a really terrible disaster. The firefighters did an excellent job of preventing the spread of fire on the east side of the stand, but on the west side they were assisted by an open space that acted as a fire break.

At 4.25 p.m., the time of the outbreak, the grandstand was crowded with spectators watching the equestrian events in the arena. They took little notice of the wisps of smoke which first came up through the floor of the stand. However when it increased in volume, they made a hasty exit. Several men tore down the flags and bunting. By this time dirty yellowish smoke was belching from the rear of the stand. The one fireman on duty in the stand, put the only hose into operation, but the water pressure was very poor.

When the firefighters arrived with their appliances, all the efforts were being concentrated on the front and western end of the stand. There was no order amongst the volunteers and this hindered the firefighters. All the time, underneath the stand could be heard a rumbling and roaring noise. Then ten minutes after the first alarm, the flames broke through in one massive sheet. Fanned by the northerly wind, the fire quickly spread to the roof. As each sheet of roofing iron fell in the area around was showered by sparks. Then finally with a strong gust of wind, the remaining skeleton of the stand crashed into the inferno.

At 4.40 p.m. an official climbed the grandstand tower in an attempt to save the clock, but the fierce flames drove him back. Great excitement ensued amongst the crowd and bets were taken on whether the clock would stand until 5 p.m. At 5.09 p.m. the clock tower swayed and toppled into the fire. When the fire first broke out, the stallholders in Plummer Avenue started to move all their goods. However

they were badly hampered by the crowd moving forward to see the fire and soon it was a scene of wild confusion. Before long the intense heat drove them all out, but not before a considerable amount of property had already been saved.

The water pressure from the Showgrounds mains was miserably low. Pressure was eventually got by pumping water from the Langs Road Pond about 1/3 of a mile away.

The fire raced along at hurricane speed and soon the Vacuum Oil Co., Rosella and several other pavillions were ablaze and the whole block of Lennon Avenue was engulfed. The wind shifted to the north west and carried the fire to the Industrial Hall. At the sheep pavillion, volunteers were throwing wet hessian over the outside of the building and were busy wetting down all the valuable sheep inside. Show staff managed to remove a lot of the items from the Industrial Hall before it caught alight. In less than ten minutes, the roof had collapsed and the building was a blazing hulk. The fire reached the end of its course at the railway line, but not before it had burnt some of the fence and the telegraph wires.

At the western end of Lennon Avenue all efforts were directed at saving Sanderson's new building. The firefighters did their job well and the pavillion was saved.

When the Fire Brigade first arrived some of the men attacked the blaze at Maples, the furniture and piano merchants. For the first fifteen minutes their efforts were wasted due to bad water pressure. The heat was so intense and the smoke so thick, that the firefighters could not get close enough for the small trickle of water to reach the flames. One firefighter, clad in a smoke helmet, climbed to a precarious position on the roof of the adjoining premises and played water onto the burning Maples. This action played an important part in checking the fire at this end. All the vehicles were removed from the carriage shed and other buildings were evacuated. But this was unnecessary as the fire was now under control.

At the eastern end of Plummer Avenue, the Brigade had better success due the water pressure from a steamer. The fire was stopped just short of the Aust. Explosive Chemical Co., but it was later discovered that the explosives had been removed at the first alarm of fire.

Later fire broke out in the tower of the A.E.C. Co., but again the water only trickled from the hoses and the firefighters could not reach it. One of the Show staff climbed up the inside of the tower and extinguished the flames with a bucket of water.

Wertim's evacuated all their valuable pianos and organs, but the fire was checked before it reached there.

The Royal Agricultural Soc. suffered the most damage, but about fifty other firms were also affected. The Secretary of the R.A.S., Mr. Schweiger, said that during the week prior to the Show, DO. Meehan from F/Stn. 48, Nth. Melbourne, had inspected the grounds and had tested the hoses and found all to be in order. However he did recommend further provision of extinguishers. The Secretary also stated that prior to the fire there was 40 lb. pressure in the mains, but as soon as the alarm was raised the turncock was notified and the pressure increased.

The firefighters got as close as possible to the flames, but the poor water pressure prevented their efforts from having an affect for some time. They managed to keep the flames in check and as they subsided, the firefighters could paddle through the debris to get to the seat of the fire. Several firefighters were scorched on the hands and face due to their proximity to the intense heat.

The Brigade had the fire under control in thirty minutes, although it continued to burn for some hours. A District Officer and eighteen firefighters remained on duty throughout the night.

There was much argument as to the origin of the fire. At some time between 1 and 2 p.m. a small fire had occurred in the cooking section of Grevilles, the caterers who were housed underneath the stand. Greville stated that he had noticed the fire in the roof and had called in an SS. fireman, who he

understood, put out the fire. It was thought that some hours later, the fire must have broken out again.

The Brigade had got the call at 4.33 p.m. The watchtower at Eastern Hill reported seeing smoke at this time also. The Brigade turned out in full strength, and the district stations were notified. Within ten minutes of the first alarm, fifty firefighters were in attendance.

Appliances were sent from Flemington (F/Stn. 49); North Melbourne (F/Stn. 48); Ascot Vale (F/Stn. 50); Carlton (F/Stn. 3) and Eastern Hill HQ. These included a motor hose carriage, two motor pumps, two steamers, two horse drawn hose carts and two cars. Chief Officer Lee directed the operations and was supported by DCFO. Wilkins and SO. Kemp.

Chief Officer Lee said that the solitary Special Service fireman, on noticing the smoke in the grandstand, had gone under the floor and found Greville's entire roof to be on fire. He then gave the alarm and the Brigade got the call by phone from Schweiger's office. There was no fire alarm at the Showgrounds although the MFB had recommended that one be provided.

Lee said it was impossible that the second fire had been smoldering under the grandstand for some hours. He was convinced that the SS. fireman had put out the first fire. He maintained that the timber in the stand was so dry, that it could have smoldered only a few minutes before bursting into flames.

Lee also said that authorities at the Showgrounds had been advised by the Water Board that the

THE BEAUTY OF AUSTRALIAN TIMBER!

Whilst wandering around this country of ours you meet some wonderful characters.

I happened to meet such a man by the name of Neville Gray, in Elmhurst, (on the Pyrenees Highway between Ararat and Avoca). We got talking about the merits of timbers that were suitable for burning in stoves and fireplaces, (those softwoods foul the flue).

Neville, (an old volunteer fireman himself) invited me to come down to his small mill and gather some red gum offcuts to burn in our shack's pot belly stove, an invitation which I eagerly accepted, as my supply was desperately low.

In typical bush fashion I was invited to "come in and meet the wife" and to have a look at some timber that he had been working with. I'm a lover of Australian timbers and in particular furniture made from them.

On the verandah was a beautiful coffee table made from Fiddleback Red Gum. With its busy grain glistening I ran my hand over the surface and it felt like silk, perfectly smooth and craftsman built. It was obviously constructed to last for at least a couple of hundred years, a future antique that

would outlast any imported timber that you care to name.

I was shown a number of other tables that were in use around the house and made from a variety of Australian timbers, all of equal quality and craftsmanship.

Neville, who has spent a lifetime working in the bush, selects eucalypts only. Cutting from timber that may be hundreds of years old, he passes it on to the craftsmen who create the furniture.

If you have an appreciation of the quality of Australian timber in furniture, and looking for something to pass on to future generations of your family, there is a display on at;

THE GREAT SOUTHERN WOOLSHED

(On the Western Highway as you come into Ballarat from Melbourne)

September 17, 1999

For further information ring:-

Nick Gray, Ballarat (03) 5339 5848

Neville Gray, Elmhurst (03) 5354 8254) evenings.

TRAVELLING WITH SILVER



This is just a short story about the big storey's. It may be of interest for some.

It's about 5th Avenue New York U. S.A. This is the heart of the "Big Apple", the most famous street in

one of the most famous cities in the world.

I have it visited here four times with a fifth coming up next year.

5th Avenue is the centre of the famed New York Shopping District and everyone who is anyone can be seen at one time or another in it's elegant stores and eateries. Notable real estate on 5th Avenue includes the Empire State Building, a New York institution that still holds a few surprises.

Most people would be familiar with the tale of the U.S. Air Force bomber that crashed into the buildings 79th floor back in 1945. But, did you know the Empire State has it's own fire station in the building. Less people would be aware that an

airship mooring mast was incorporated into the original construction.

In the 1930's (it's an old building isn't it...Silver was in a bottle of Bonox then). A privately owned blimp moored successfully on the mast for 3 minutes, but during a second attempt in 1931 a navy blimp was almost upended and nearly swept away celebrities attending this historic affair. The mooring mast idea was ultimately abandoned.

As I said, everyone who is anyone has been there, even Eddie McMullin. We lost Eddie in the toilets, he was running from one to another pinching the cakes of soap, he thought they were vanilla slices.

Another of 5th Avenue's noteworthy institutions is the Guggenheim Museum, completed in 1959. The Guggenheim houses one of the worlds finest collections of modern contemporary art...Beaut! The building itself is one of the museums greatest works.

New Yorkers who long for a taste of Old Manhattan will find plenty in the old Rainbow Room on the 65th floor of the Rockefeller Centre, another of 5th Avenue's landmarks.

This very elegant supper club first opened around 1934 and has been frequented by civic and political leaders to Mafia gangsters, (now hang on, what's the difference?). It was named in honour of it's magnificent organ which converted sound to colour and flooded the ceiling in a kaleidoscopic light show.

The organ has long gone, but little else has changed in the Rainbow room in 65 years. If you look for it, Old Manhattan is still very much alive.

Just a tip, cash is for beggars and bus fares (and \$50 sleeper in the sock if you get mugged). Credit cards are the desired currency.

I was purchasing something and had my wallet open when a voice behind me said, "anyone with a Myer Card would have to be an Aussie". I snapped the wallet shut, I thought "the Churchills are here", they always appear when you open your purse - either Frank or Ellen, but no, just another OZ!



Pity it's black and white, 5th Avenue at night - a colourful sight!

Mr. and Mrs Silver can be seen standing holding hands on

SMOKER'S NOTE

U.S. tobacco companies have been lacing cigarettes with ammonia, according to France's *60 Millions de Consommateurs*. Ammonia compounds alter the pH of cigarette smoke and make it easier for nicotine to be absorbed more rapidly into the body, which, in turn, makes cigarettes more addictive. The report cited in *60 Millions* says that ammonia was the secret to the success of Marlboro cigarettes: its makers started using ammonia in the 1960s, and when it became the leading national brand other cigarette companies jumped on the pH manipulation bandwagon.

This article, by Fred Kerr, pays tribute to a man who has the ability to leave a lasting impression on all who are fortunate enough to meet him. I can recall as a young firefighter, August 1965, my first day at No3 Stn. walking into the watchroom and seeing this big man standing behind the desk. He looked at me, stuck out a huge hand and said quietly, "G'day, my name is Russ Coulter". (Ed.)

BIG BASH FOR BIG RUSS!

On Sunday 11th July, 1999, big Russ Coulter celebrated his 80th birthday. As you know, Russ has been a very hard working member of the Fire Services Museum of Victoria since the early eighties. The Board of the F.S.M.V. decided to give Russ a surprise birthday party at the museum on 11-7-99.

Secrecy was to be the keynote and because we had decided to do a "This Is Your Life" segment several members of the Board had to surreptitiously glean all available information from Russ about his early school, teenage, army, MFB and museum years.

After contacting Russ's family, friends and counting some of the museum members we had 50 guests to cater for. As the time grew closer we were finding it increasingly difficult to refuse Russell's invitations to "come and have a pizza with me" or "what about we do something for my birthday". I am sure we hurt the old fella's feelings because of our seemingly lack of interest in his big day.

So every thing was planned, Russ was going to come in to the museum from 10am - 4pm as normal on Sunday the 11th. He had been told we were going to take him out in a fire engine at 4.15 pm. to get some photos taken of him in uniform, (the guests were to arrive from about 4.30pm.on).

Alarm bells rang when Russ rang the museum Sunday morning and informed us that he was not coming in as he had a surprise invitation to spend the day at his church. Plan "B" went into action, Russ was picked up from the church.

All of the guests had arrived by 5.10pm., at 5.15pm the fire engine, with Russ on board, stopped in Victoria parade, opposite the centre doors of Eastern Hill. He dismounted, the centre doors swung open and Russ stepped inside to be greeted by 50 people shouting "surprise, happy birthday" and "for he's a jolly good fellow". It was truly wonderful to see, Russ was surprised, shocked, overwhelmed and emotional. But he quickly regained his composure and thanked everyone for coming.

After the meal had been served it was time for "This

Is Your Life". He was born at Drouin Base Hospital on 11-7-19. We had "on tape" an interview with Sister Bullwinkle who said amongst other things that "he was a little shit whose long legs stuck over the basinette". Moving on, we discussed his school days at Finley N.S.W. With another "interview" with Father Fitzmichael, Russ's teacher. We learnt of his practical jokes with the girls pigtails being dipped in the inkwell and double bungers being placed in the can in the boys toilet.

His army days came and went and another "interview" with Sgt. Bill Curry, long since retired, but still kept a .303 rifle outside his caravan just in case that "bastard" Coulter showed.

Russ's 33 years in the MFB came up next with Russ locking horns with "The Bull", Albert Manning. Russ, acting on previous union instructions, refused to change a flat tyre on "The Bull's" car at No3 Station. He fronted the Chief and was recommended to be fined three pounds.

Proceedings were then

interrupted by a knock on the door and in walked a very retired District Officer, John Berry, resplendent in brass helmet, old D.O's tunic, beard and walking stick. Unfortunately, John was a little angry because he was recovering from insecticide poisoning and after talking to the wrong person for 2 minutes we realigned him, cleaned his glasses and stood him next to the guest of honour. The old DO. then recanted some of the old Senior Fireman's practical jokes, near misses in a fire engine, big fires etc. to the thorough enjoyment of all present

After a few words from Russell's son, Peter, and the close loving relationship the three boys had with their father, it was time to get serious. I thanked Russ for being such a marvelous contributor to the museum. A bloke who would give his all, help all and sundry, work all hours and have a demeanor that never changed, always good humored, even tempered, telling a story or cracking a joke. A man whose very presence made it a pleasure to belong to the same organisation.

Russ Coulter - we salute you.



The angry antipodean, ret. officer, John Berry, recalls a few half truths about Russ Coulter (centre) in the board room at the Fire Museum.

DO YOU REMEMBER?

COLES SUPERMARKET FIRE - Tuesday 10 March 1970

At 1443 hours an exchange call was received at the Watchroom at Frankston Fire Station from the Frankston State Electricity Commissions Office that smoke appeared to be coming from the roof of the Coles Supermarket.

This was followed by further calls that the Coles Supermarket was on fire and that female staff were trapped in a toilet on the first floor.

Electricity Commission workers responded and on arrival disconnected the electrical supply.

The Fire Brigade on arrival were informed that seventeen staff members were trapped on the first floor that was now smoke logged.

This was obvious by the screams that could be heard and the hand waving through the lattice brickwork covering the toilet windows.

Using a triple extension ladder Sub Station Officer Jim Scott gained entry to the first floor by cutting away the cyclone burglar screen and breaking through a window, after searching this area was forced to retreat due to the intense heat and smoke.

The State Electricity Commission crew also using extension ladders demolished the lattice brickwork covering the toilet windows on the first floor and were able to gain entry by breaking the window and subsequently rescued eight female staff members down their ladder.

It was then established the remaining Staff members had been evacuated out of the fire area prior to the Fire Brigade arrival, those who had taken refuge in the Toilet had apparently followed a Staff member who had refused to go through the smoke during the evacuation.

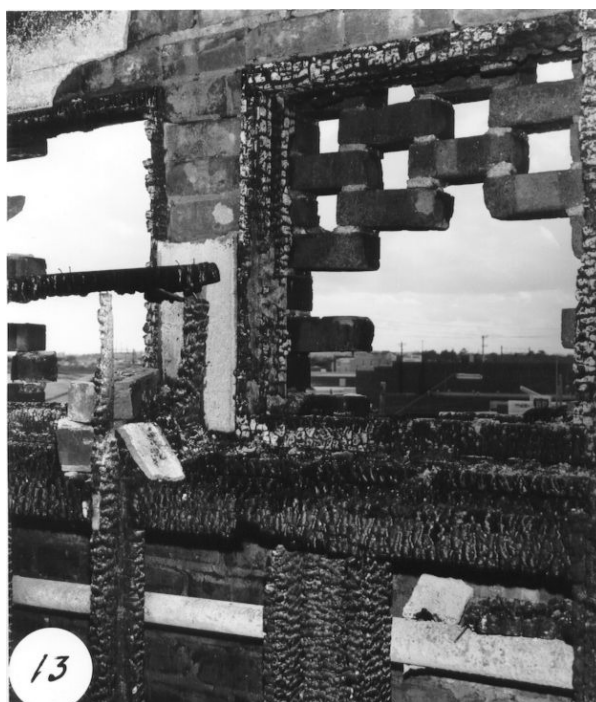
As the fire fight escalated Brigades from Chelsea, Carrum and Mornington arrived to assist, the fire fight was hampered by the crowd that gathered to watch and water supply failure which necessitated pump operations from adjoining areas.

Peter Lang.



Above;- The lattice brickwork over the 1st floor toilet windows taken from ground level in the narrow side lane.

Below;- View from inside toilets shows the narrow opening that S.E.C. workers made to rescue the eight female Coles employees.



Left;- Fire damage and structural collapse on first floor indicates the severity of the blaze. Lattice brickwork in toilet area can be seen in background.

The employees trapped in this area were fortunate the S.E.C. workers were close at hand with ladders and tools to smash their way through to effect their rescue!

ACTION'S CHARACTER COLUMN

Lardner, Duncan and McLachlan. How many times did I hear that trio mentioned in the short time I had been in the job. The driver, the orderly and where the shearer fitted I don't remember, sit down and talk as individuals - ideal, the trio together - a disaster.

As most remember, part of survival in the early years was a part time or casual job, of which there were many available. This was not compulsory though, as once when a S/f. A. Boyd was asked by the late C.F.O., Jack Patterson, was 6 pound per week adequate, he replied "yes, I spend 2 pounds on the horses, 2 pounds on beer and squander the rest. But most had a job anyway.

Part of the requirement of the Brigade was the ability to be able to climb and it was because of this, the aforementioned trio became known as "Tree Lopper Inc." Because of the three shift system, the ideal time for this work was not after day shift as that was Boundary (pub) time, but before afternoon shift.

This, unfortunately, could create problems, as there was always a large amount of foliage to dispose of. Now these days are long gone by and if this trio had been around today they probably would have been stoned by the greenies, prosecuted by the E. P.A. and jailed by the council.

The normal procedure was to arrange a large pile of branches, pour diesel over it and light. Slow burning, but effective. It would occasionally need help if time was running out, so, Arch (McLachlan)

would clamber into the middle of the pile to break it up then throw on kero or petrol to assist.

This particular day, time was running out and the stack was not burning as required, so Arch said, "I'll fix it" as he strode into the middle amongst the sparks and embers to pull the stack apart. We all know how hard and difficult it is to clamber over trunks, bushes etc. Well, there was Archie, in the middle of the pile when in runs Lardner with a full bucket of water screaming "this petrol will fix it up" and throws the lot all over Archie. I will not relate the words or actions that transpired that day, but revenge can be swift or patient.

The greatest fear in this world of Lardner's was spiders of any description. Not long after this incident settled, Arch managed to find, at another job, a large tarantula which he placed in a matchbox. The trio's usual mode of transport was Lardner's Holden ute and they were returning home from a job, Arch in the middle and Lardner wearing shorts. "Revenge is sweet" Archie said as he emptied the spider from the matchbox on to Lardner's bare leg.

Reaction was immediate, Lardner landed on his bum in the middle of the track after he just opened the door and jumped out. With the car driverless, it plunged into the scrub with Archie and Duncan wondering what the hell happened.

These were just some more memories that made "the job".

E.M.S. FIRST RESPONDER (From page 1)

First Responder skillsets include initial management of the patient in cardiac arrest, including defibrillation and the use of oxygen and assisted ventilation in resuscitation.

The 6 month pilot program, which started on 14th July 1998 and concluded on 14th January 1999, has suggested that response times to cardiac arrest patients have been reduced by about 2 minutes,

A 6 month scientific report on the EMR pilot has recently been finalised by Monash University's Department of Epidemiology and Preventative Medicine and along with a covering letter and recommendations, submitted to the Minister for Human Services. The Minister for Police and Emergency Services has also been briefed on the report and it is now expected that within the next 2 - 3 weeks there will be a meeting between the two Ministers to discuss the outcomes and recommendations arising from the report,

What we can say from the ongoing review of the program conducted by the MFESB in conjunction

with Metropolitan Ambulance Service staff is that operations have been going smoothly and professionally with

good inter-service cooperation. The MFESB have received a good deal of complimentary feedback about the skills and performances of First Responder firefighters. Although there have been fewer witnessed cardiac arrests and defibrillations than expected, First Responders have continued to provide the public with potentially valuable treatment in the form of basic life support, CPR and oxygen administration. First Responders have also increasingly been using their new skills and equipment at the scene of fires and rescue incidents.

Firefighters can be proud of what they have been achieving whilst waiting on the official outcome from the pilot program.

Denis Rich
Inspector EMS Department

"Water Off" will endeavor to give an update next issue if the Ministers and Government come to a

"Australasian Fire Bowls Carnival", Moama, April 17 - 24, 1999.

The Carnival is held every two years at different State Venues. Victoria was host state on this occasion with 234 people attending from NSW, Qld, SA, Tas, N.Z. and 61, including partners (for most) from Vic. The Carnival was a great success due to the hard work of the Vic Committee - Ted Brown, John Tate, Les Buddle their wives and helpers, not forgetting Kevin Lynch and Lindsay Edis (bus drivers). Well done!

Some of our boys put in good performances. Three sides reached the semi finals of the Pairs. Les Coulson was our most successful singles competitor, being defeated in the finals by the Runner-up (Qld).

The Fours was different kettle of fish. Four sides reached the semis only to find out they were playing each other. Of course, the losers drop out. Woe and behold the remaining two Vic sides were drawn against each other, with

the winner going on to play NSW for the Gold Medal. Alas, only the Silver came their way after a close game up to the last three ends.

The team included : Frank Thompson (L) ex SS, Jack Sexton (2nd) ex SFF, John Chambers (3rd) ex DO, and Keith Warfe (S) ex SS. it was great to see Jack Sexton down from Hervey Bay, Qld.

The next Carnival will be held at Glenelg South Australia, in the year 2001. Past or present Fire Service Personnel, who are Lawn Bowlers and would like to play with the Fire Services team during the Season, are eligible to enter.

Enquire through Les Buddle (Secretary) on (03) 9546 2603. E-Mail buddle@alphalink.com.au Mobile Phone 0412 332 718.

Regards,
John Chambers



RACING TIPS *From My Mate's Cousin*

The last time we heard from our man he was flogging firewood off the back of his pushbike in order to raise a stake to further his punting career. I'm pleased to advise that he was so successful, he was able

to put the bike back in the shed and juice up the Vespa.

With a jingle in his pocket, he thought he might expand his horizons and relax a bit, by getting away from the rigors of form guide study, and take up the "sport of gentlemen" - billiards!

It didn't turn out the way our man expected. The story, it seems, is this. He was invited to play a friendly game (with a little side wager for interest) at an RSL club out the western extremities of our fair city.

He was to play the local club champ, described by our man as, "a rotund person of English extraction with 'questionable' ancestry".

During the match, it is claimed, this person did not play the game according to the rules of gentlemen and our man was moved to challenge his methods.

After a short discussion, and being told it would be anatomically impossible for him to place a cue in such a position on the other player's person, he was asked to leave the premises and - "don't come

back".

He's a little miffed about the ... "sport of gentlemen", but sure that sort of thing does not happen in the .. "sport of kings".

Once again, much to our delight, he has returned to the form guide and wishes to advise our readers of - "fast equines worthy of their consideration" and these are as follows;

Theatre -

A local, trained by Hoare-Lacey.

I feel it may have been named by an aspiring actor who got tangled up with a "lacy whore", and thought, by combining the two they might come to something. ... Could be worth it!

Seeking Fun -

Another local trained by O. Cox.

What can you say? With a stable armed with Cox and Seeking Fun, it's got to be a lethal if not an entertaining combination and well worth an "each way" wager.

Renega -

Yet another local and trained by P. C. Hayes.

An honest tryer? Yes! Renega? No! Whoever named this horse must have had a bad experience in a previous life. Do follow... it will be good value!

"May the horse be with you".

HOBBIES GIVE LIFE AFTER -

Ex MFB, Jack Nevill, took up his hobby while still serving as a firefighter and has provided meaning to the saying "there is life after the Fire Brigade".

This article appeared recently in one of Preston's community newspapers.

Like the surfer who chases the summer sun around the country in search of the perfect wave, every winter Preston's John Nevill is lured to Queensland in search of the perfect dog track.

"We've been heading to Queensland every winter for about 11 years," the greyhound trainer said.

"From about May, June, July, August we're in Queensland and we come home for the footy in September.

Mr Nevill, his wife, Irene, and greyhounds Lady of Hay and Prince John will soon make their annual trek north, car full and dog van in tow.

Mr Nevill said he would tackle this winter season in Queensland with renewed confidence given the good form of his two starters.

"They've been going very well," he said. "Lady of Hay finished fifth in the (\$50,000) Warrnambool Classic last week."

The warm weather will make a nice change from the biting winds of Warrnambool, where the Nevills have spent much of the last month.

Mr Nevill said being a greyhound trainer meant a lot of travel to country tracks.



"There is a bit of travelling but it keeps me active and on the ball," he said. Mr Nevill, a retired fireman, bought his first greyhound in 1976 and has

MEMO'S FROM "YORKY"

Some officers had a habit of leaving humorless little notes about the station giving instructions for staff to do this and that. D.O. Jack "Yorky" Shaw, was a prolific memo writer but he had character, style and a great sense of humor with a flair for the written word..... Here's a sample;

MEMBERS OF OFFICERS MESS PLEASE NOTE

Following Mr Chamber's working bee each member will -

- (a) Walk across ceiling to avoid marking floor.
- (b) Turn out by rope line from bedroom window to avoid marking floor.
- (c) Partake of meals on malthoid landing to avoid marking floor.
- (d) Proceed to malthoid landing by walking on hands to avoid marking floor.
- (e) Wash at cold water tap in yard to avoid soiling hand basin in bathroom.
- (f) Clean teeth on return to private residence to avoid soiling hand basin.
- (g) Use urinal in station yard to avoid soiling bathroom lavatory.
- (h) In fact after Mr Chambers has cleaned up - lie down and die!

By Station Officer Shaw;
I'm going to be an officer,
I'm smart and really clever,
I'll never make a bloomer
No, never, never, never.
I've always worked real hard, I have
and never been late,
My name is John F. Chambers
my number 130 and 8,
I carry on my tunic a number 492,
I'm giving that away soon, and
wearing just plain blue,
I'll be finished with all numbers,
with them I'll have no trouble
My pay will be much bigger,
nearly almost double
And when I make out car reports
I'll make bloody "cert"
That S.O. Shaw can't throw at me
His rotten Irish dirt.

ODE TO A FIREMAN

BROWN'S BITS

From the roving correspondent of the north-west of our fair city.

Chapter 1.

In early 1952, a small town nestled in a gully in central Victoria - quaintly named after one of Australia's indigenous Little Furry Tree Dwellers (LFTD Gully), sent out one of its sons to find fame and fortune in the big smoke.

This lad, who we'll call "Bushy", applied for a job with Melbourne's noble Fire Brigade and his interview was with the late "Banjo", who was Deputy at the time. "Banjo" took a few particulars from "Bushy" and then called in the measuring officer who was told by a bemused "Banjo" to "measure this man up, he's from 'LFTD Gully' ha, ha, ha".

"Bushy" apparently, had never been to the city before and after a short time was sent to the old No2 Station. During his first muster at No2 the officer allotting the duties told "Bushy" he was to drive the combination ladder.

In those days everyone crammed into the hose carriage while the comb. ladder driver was on his own. He asked his shift mates what he had to do with the comb. ladder and was told to follow the hose carriage everywhere. Of course that's what "Bushy" did, after the first call to the CBD was investigated and dealt with, it was time to return to the station and, with the

myriad of appliances at the scene, "Bushy" followed the first hose carriage to return home - which happened to be No1 Station's.

As No1's driver was reversing into the engine room he heard the beep of a horn and looked up to see No2's comb. ladder backing up on him. After informing "Bushy" he was at the wrong station, he was told to go back to No2 Station, to which he replied, "I don't know where it is". A fire had to be sent with him to show him the way.

Chapter 2.

"Charlie B" was the S.O. at No2 station at the time and "Bushy" was the bane of his life. "Charlie was always threatening to get rid of him. "Bushy" was sent on foot to test alarms and you guessed it, he got lost. The man on watchroom duty tried his best to get him back to the station, but again, someone had to be sent to bring him back!

Chapter 3.

"Bushy" was allotted the coke heaters. He looked at them, they were burning OK so he bedded down for the night. In the morning they were out.

"Jackie", then the 4th Officer, had his quarters there and when he got up for his shower, the water was cold. "Jackie" gave "Charlie a cook, "Charlie gave "Bushy" a cook and again said "I'm going to get rid of you".

Chapter 4.

"Bushy" was not as "Dim as he Sim". As six fires were on shift, they broke the night shift into one hour each. For the new boys, someone stayed with them to show them the ropes.

At No2, they had watchmen's clocks coming in and with their "Pre and Omission" signals and watchmen ringing in from various factories, all had to be recorded. The man with "Bushy" explained it all to him and then said, "the man from Kitchen's is due to ring in and when he does, give him a number and record it.

The phone rang, "Bushy" picked it up and remained silent. The fire said, "give him a number". "Bushy" said, "how do I



"I think we lost Bushy when we turned right into Bourke Street Mr. B' Sir"

CY AMMON'S NOTES

Date - April 99

Just a line to thank the RFA for a beaut day at the reunion (Fire Museum Sunday 18th April).

Whilst I have the pen in my hand, I would like to relate some stories told to me by Tom Geilser whose nephew went to "F" District. Tom goes on to tell a few stories about Chief Officer H. B. Lee who had a "Po Juggler" named Red Reynolds whom H. B. Lee sacked. It is related that Red Reynolds said to him, "if you don't know when you got a (good) man, I know when I have a good boss". H. B. Lee turned to Red Reynolds and said "your not sacked"! On another time, H. B. Lee came down to his office one Monday and was not in a very good mood and pulled out the top draw of his desk and -lo and behold- said, "that is how the buggers are pinching my whisky". With that he called the D.O. on duty and told him he had better lock the bloody tower or they will pinch that next!

It was also related that there had been a fire in Flinders Lane one Friday night and on the following Monday the owner complained that some of the stock was missing. H. B. Lee asked the owner was there any stock left? The owner replied yes! H. B. Lee stated that "if it had been my boys they would have taken the lot"!!!

Date - May 99

Further to my last letter, I would like to relate a few things that happened when I was in the job (35 years).

I was in the Auxiliary Fire Service at No52 Stn. (1939). There were two names sent in by the Station Officer and I was one of them chosen, the other was Peter Pattison, this was in 1944. I went into Head Station and sent to Dr. Meagher who found I was 1/4 inch short. I went to Weber and Rice and was stretched 1/4 inch, so that enabled

me to join and it was a good job for me over the years.

I well remember some of the fires we attended. I can also relate that as a new recruit I had gone to bed early one night and of course, what happened? - the alarm clock went off and I jumped up to turn out. It wasn't going to happen the second time so on hearing the clock ticking on the window-sill I got out of bed and pulled it to pieces then handed it back to Bill Rigby the next morning - he could have killed me!

One morning, we were about to knock off and Lindsay Edis had put his toast on then went to the bathroom. He sang out to Alan Lowe and myself to watch his toast for him and when he returned to the kitchen it was burnt to a cinder, he said, "I thought I asked you pair of buggers to watch my toast", we replied we did, but you did not say to turn it!

I can recall a few names from the past: The senior men in the watchroom - Charlie White, Dick Weatherson, Albert Collins, Len Purves, Frank Stevens, Aub Mather. Hose Cellar - Jim Adamson, Hep Cat Davidson, and others. The Workshops - Thomson, Barker, Plant, Currie, Brockfield, the Wright Brothers and Bobby Bourne. The Electrical Department - Stock, Weir, McNeil, Growler Douglas, Boss Walker and others.

I served under eight Chief Officers - Kemp, Whitehead, Aldridge, Patterson, Tueno, Osborne, Van Every and Lavelle.

Our pay was 5 Pounds and a couple of shillings and paid our Mess of 21 shillings a week. Leave was one 24 hour and two 18 hours - we had to be back by 1am those days.

There were a number of brothers in the job at the same time and to name a few - Ted and Nob Brown, Dick and Danny Weatherson, Jim and Tim Healy, Fred and Jim Kerr, Bob and Tich Renwood, Col and Bill Campbell, Bill and Frank Condon.

QUEENSLAND REUNION

After all the rain we have had, the Gold Coast put on a lovely sunny day for the retired firefighter's 11th Annual Reunion lunch at Southport Yacht Club.

This day, July 29th, just gets bigger and bigger. Our phone was busy with Melbourne retired Firie's and wives saying they were coming. We also had a call from Brisbane Retired Firefighters asking could they join us. They came down on a bus along with Gold Coast Ret. Firefighters. We had 70 plus attending.

Meals were good and inexpensive. Only two small speeches made by myself and Don Brennan. A reply was made by Vic Horne of

Brisbane thanking us for a great day. A minutes silence was observed for departed comrades. Two group photographs were taken, one of the men and one of the ladies.

On a sad note, Arthur Henning rang to say he was here for the reunion and had just received a phone call telling him his 23 year old Granddaughter, a diabetic, had suddenly passed away and he had to go home.

Once again, the accident prone George Hancock was unable to attend. Better luck next year.

A really good day was had by all!

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