

“WATER OFF!”

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

MAY 97

Volume 1 No.2

BIJOU THEATRE FIRE, BOURKE STREET, APRIL 22, 1889

The alarm for the fire was given at 5pm. on Easter Monday 22-4-1889. Shortly after the Fire Brigade arrived the fire spread to the printing works of Marshall & Co. on the west side of the theatre. Eight people were injured when a wall of the theatre collapsed. they were all taken to the Melbourne Hospital with serious injuries. Capt. Parsons of the East Melbourne Brigade (left inset) and a civilian later died. Others injured were two more members of the

East Melbourne Brigade, Lt. Scott of the Albion Brigade, Lt. Thomas of the Carlton Brigade and a civilian.

The Palace Hotel also become involved and several firemen working from the lift in the hotel had a narrow escape when the ropes supporting the lift caught fire.

It was after 7pm before the blaze was brought under control. The theatre and printing works were gutted, the Palace Hotel was badly

“ GENERAL MEETING ”

Notice is hereby given of our next General Meeting to be held at the Fitzroy Bowling Club, 1030 Hours Wednesday 21st of May 1997

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 and join in the fellowship of your old friends and make new ones.

Lunch and beverages will be provided as usual. @ \$2 per head.
Drinks at bar prices.

**JOHN BERRY
SECRETARY/TREASURER**

NOTE; Any member who has not been financial for 3 years, will be crossed off the mailing list. If you have not paid your current subscription for 1997, please fill in the form on page 10 of this edition and return to the Secretary.

President's Report

(Dateline, April 97; Great Britain:)

At the time of writing, my wife Nancy and I are travelling again. We are currently in England, having just spent the last week in Ireland.

The weather has been perfect, not one drop of rain since we landed in Hong Kong for Easter, (talk about the luck of the Irish). On this tour we are visiting France, Belgium, Holland, Germany, Poland, Russia, Sweden, Finland, Denmark and finally home through the U.S.A.

I have heard on the grapevine that the lunch at the Training College was a success with serving members of the Brigade putting on displays with new equipment etc. It is a shame more members do not attend as they are usually good days and good food.

Finally, one of our foundation members, Ron Moran, passed away early this year after a long illness. We pass on our condolences to his wife and family for their loss.

DON BRENNAN

FRONT COVER:

The Year 1889 proved to be a tragic one for Melbourne's fire brigades, when several firemen were killed in a series of disastrous fires.

The first occurred on Easter Monday, April 22 when the Bijou Theatre in Bourke Street was destroyed with the loss of two lives and six injured.

Another fatality occurred on August 10 when a fireman from the Carlton Brewery Brigade fell from the roof during a fire at Robb's Buildings in Collins Street West.

Then on September 13, fire totally destroyed the George & George Dept. Store along with Allens Music Store and several other premises on Collins Street between Elizabeth and Swanston Streets, on the site now occupied by the Block Arcade. Three firemen were killed, one from the South Melbourne City Brigade and two from the Insurance Co's Brigade.

After years of disorganisation, Parliament passed the Fire Brigades Act on December 18, 1890 and at midnight on April 30, 1891, all volunteer brigades were disbanded and the



SECRETARY / TREASURER'S REPORT

This is the second report for 97 and I must say the days between seem to be getting shorter or am I getting older and forgetful, now what was I saying?

Our president and his wife Nancy are tripping around the world again, we have other members and their wives, Claude and Patricia Selby, Jock and Margaret Campbell about to embark on overseas trips, also Brian and Val Crawford have just returned from theirs. Not to be outdone by them, I went on an overseas trip to Phillip Island.

An item that was brought to my attention was item 2 of the Secretary's report, I failed to exhibit Peter Holton's name amongst the Committee members. Peter, on behalf of that idiot the Secretary (and a dyslexic editor) I apologise for the mistake, the current Committee is as follows;

President - Don Brennan,

Vice President - Ern Tamme,

Secretary/Treasurer - John Berry,

General Committee - Ian Fowler, Peter Holton, John Laverick, Ross Medwin and Bob McNeil.

Auditor - Theo Teklenburg.

Unfortunately since our last meeting one of our foundation members, Ron Moran, will not be joining us as he has been called to a higher duty.

Ron's celebration of life service revealed a number of points most people would not be aware of. Did you know in 1956, Ron was an unofficial torch bearer for the games carrying his own torch through the streets of North Melbourne to tumultuous applause, and the "Count" (Jim Fleming) and Ron enjoyed a healthy diet of "brown bread", after hearing of this I tried some and it didn't do much for me, perhaps I went to the wrong baker.

One point that was not mentioned in his eulogy was the incredible rescue he took part in. Ron, because of the precarious situation, was forced to become a human poppet-head over a shaft from which a child was saved, this took super-human strength. To Shirley and family, please accept our sincerest condolences.

Items of interest from last meeting:

Item 1- The February meeting was the first time that members partners attended a quarterly meeting.

Item 2- General Business; Frank Churchill identified that some members were not quite sure as to the eligibility required to join the RFA. It was moved and carried that the criteria be shown in this newsletter. The following is the eligibility criteria as established by the foundation members of the RFA.

Criteria;

Membership is open to all ex-firefighters, (career or volunteer and support staff including kindred industries) subject to acceptance by the Committee.

Item 3- United Firefighters Union (Victoria Branch) Secretary Peter Marshall, addressed the meeting to explain their submission etc. to the Emergency Response Delivery Systems (ERDS) review being conducted by K.P.M.G. consultants.

Peter's presentation, with the limited time he had available, was very informative and constructive, the response from persons present showed their appreciation of his presentation.

The Union's submission and various other documentation has been left with the RFA. Secretary, and is available for loan to any member of the RFA.

Item 4- Meeting closed, then the guest speaker from the Arthritis Foundation gave a very informative lecture on the problem, including ways to help if effected by the complaint, new research data and products that are available from the Foundation.

The lecture certainly generated interest and questions. If any member, partner or friend is effected by the complaint, the Arthritis Foundation of Victoria Inc. 263-265 Kooyong Road Elsternwick 3185 have the latest research data and advice on specially made utensils that can assist persons effected.

The Foundation receives a very small percentage of its funding from the Government and relies mainly on community support.

Item 5- On Monday the 24th February, on behalf of the RFA., Peter Lang and myself attended the Combined Council meeting. At the meeting a number of points were raised, one was a letter to the Federal Treasurer, Hon. Peter Costello M.H.R., raising our concern about the possible changes that may arise from the Wallis inquiry, effecting the Insurance and Superannuation Commission thereby flowing on to our members. A copy of the letter was

forwarded to the Shadow Minister for the Aged, Family and Community Services, Jenny Macklin M.H.R. as well.

Senator Lynn Allison is to address the next Council meeting. (cont, over)

(cont.)

Item 6- The RFA. representative on the Council, (myself) has been nominated on a sub-committee to examine ways to improve the recruitment rate of constituent organisations. The sub-committee have met and a pilot case has been developed and will be tried in the future.

Item 7- Peter Lang who is a member of the R.S.E.A. and sits as observer with other groups is the main source of information for our members who have been transferred from the State scheme to E.S.S.S., (mainly CFA.) in relation to their entitlements and any changes that the government may be proposing etc. as well as other valuable information that may effect all of us. Peter's updates and reports are of major benefit to all. Thanks Peter.

Item 8- On the invitation of the Secretary, Mr. Ken Coutts of the Injured Firefighters Support Group and I attended their meeting with the E.S.S.S. representatives to discuss and clarify what appeared to be a contradictory statement in correspondence that one of their members had received. The meeting was most informative and clarified a number of points. The following are the minutes from the I.F.S.G. meeting and approved by the E.S.S.S. representatives.

(a) A person on a full pension from E.S.S.S. may earn an amount of \$150 gross per week, or \$7800 gross per annum without effecting the pension;

(b) However, the recipient must notify the E. S.S.S. Board of any gainful employment they are currently undertaking or intend to undertake;

(c) The old M.F.B. scheme recipients now administered by E.S.S.S. are advised their policy remains the same;

(d) Death of M.F.B. recipient (old scheme). Wife is entitled to 2/3 of pension or could take a lump sum;

(e) All E.S.S.S. members will be assessed in September/October for income each year. The assessment is only for income, not medical, (all reports are confidential);

(f) The E.S.S.S. Board will not investigate current E.S.S.S. scheme over 55 years. M.F.B. (recipients old scheme) transferred to E.S.S.S.

will not be investigated if they are over 45 years, (Note; I am not sure if there is anyone 45 years or less in the scheme);

(g) Death of a current E.S.S.S. member, lump sum only, no pensions. If a person who is on a pension dies after 65 years of age the pension ceases. Normal procedure at present, E.S.S.S. notify the recipient 8 months prior to them reaching age 65 years of this cessation of pension clause, thereby allowing the member to convert his pension to a lump sum payout if they so decide;

(h) State scheme members who have been transferred over to E.S.S.S. was not discussed in detail, however, it was mentioned and the comment was "no change";

(i) Another item that was not a minuted item but was made in general discussion, with this talk about privatisation of Emergency Services, one needs to be aware that if they transfer to a private company and are still doing the same job, (eg Joe Bloggs Fire Service), they are not able to remain a member of E.S.S.S.;

(j) Many thanks to Ken and I.F.S.G. for the invitation, the information gained is important to all our members.

Item 9- Reunion Day:

Our reunion day, Sunday 13th April, was blessed with perfect weather and the large number of members and partners not only had the opportunity to partake of fine fellowship and good food but also the chance to see the latest innovations in rescue and firefighting techniques. In fact a number of members acted as "dummies" (which is their normal way) for the High Angle Rescue Team (HART) who rescued them from the top of the drill tower. One other demonstration was on the "Internet", showing us on the big screen it's functions including the power of the medium to the Brigade. The Chief Officer has allowed the RFA to be shown on their "Web Site".

The day, from comments received from many, that it was a top day and the Brigade (MFB), the Chief Officer and all those from the service who took part in the day are to be congratulated. (Letter of appreciation has been forwarded).

Tidbits from the day:

(a) Don Cameron, (Silver), met a neighbour he didn't know he had.

(b) Alan Boyd, (Boyd), made sure his wife did not intrude on his day, he brought her a pork roll from Springvale, you can guess the rest.

(c) Godfrey Payne enjoyed the day that much

we had to be rude to get him to leave.

(d) The Colonel said he was taking the leftover meat home for his dog, Silver told me he does not have a dog.

(e) Peter Holton, (Piggy), has a new Mazda car, it is great, unfortunately, some person stopped in front too soon so he had to park on their back bumper causing \$2000 worth of damage. Peter, the repair is great. I would not be too upset, the other week the new brick letterbox we have at home jumped out and hit the wife's car as I was backing it out.

Item 10- As you would have noticed by now, the newsletter is in a new format. This has been done for a number of reasons;

- (a) Greater information content;
- (b) Approval for print post;
- (c) Reproduction of pictures etc;
- (d) Ease of compilation.

Our Editor, John Laverick is to be congratulated for his effort.

Hoping that this newsletter finds you all fit and well and looking forward to seeing you at the next meeting Wednesday 21st May

R.S.E.A. REPORT

R.F.A. member Peter Lang, is also a member of the Retired State Employees Association (R.S.E.A.) and regularly attends their meetings. Peter gathers information from these meetings and passes them on if he feels they have any relevance or interest to the R.F.A. members. The following are some of the issues discussed at the February and March meetings of the R.S.E.A.

February meeting;

(1) Considerable debate on Health Care Directives Information sheet, (copy page 6). It was resolved to present both sides of the argument in the regards the ethics of this document which was obtained from New South Wales Retiree's.

(2) It was resolved that the R.S.E.A. exchange magazines with the Retired Police Association and seek other retired organisations to also exchange magazines. *(This would be of interest to the R.F.A. and are in the throes of negotiating at time of writing as there are many benefits to come out of this arrangement).*

(3) Recommend that the R.F.A. give consideration to inviting Peter Leonard-Kanevsky to address a future meeting. *(Peter Leonard-Kanevsky is the R.S.E.A. superannuation consultant).*

(4) R.S.E.A. are now providing joint membership for both retiree and spouse.

Annual fee is - Retiree @ \$10

Spouse @ \$5

The reason behind this is to keep the Spouse informed of her entitlements, especially after the death of the Retiree.

(5) Recommend that a paid life membership be considered for the R.F.A. The R.S.E.A. have provision @ \$80 with the Spouse @ \$40. Their balance sheet obviously reflects the success of this payment.

March meeting;

(1) A representative from R.S.E.A. attended the Australian Council of Public Sector Retirees (A.C.P.S.R.) Meeting in Canberra recently and reports the following;

Rumours abounding in Canberra that those receiving a "top up" from Social Security to their existing superannuation are likely to lose it on the basis of a proposed new asset test being applied, this would include the nominal value of superannuation payout being received by the recipient.

There is of course concern at the possibility of privatisation of existing superannuation funds, at this stage they're only rumours floating.

(2) R.S.E.A. have a reasonably active travel club, approximately forty active participants, but are always seeking additional persons to fill the proposed trips. It may be suggested for those R.F.A. members interested to discuss joining forces with R.S.E.A.

The following are extracts of a report from Peter Leonard-Kanevsky superannuation consultant to the R.S.E.A.

Disability Retirees;

I have been informed that 160 teacher ill health retirees have been medically reviewed according to the recent legislative amendments and that 95 have accepted the disability lump sum payment; 14 have accepted training positions under

the "New Start" Program; 38 appeals are pending.

(cont. over)

(cont.)

I am aware that two medical examinations resulted in an assessment that the individuals were still disabled and would be subject to further medical review in two years time.

I am also aware that the Ombudsman's Office has replied to complainants in the negative stating that in his view, he is unable to assist.

Emergency Services Superannuation Fund;

Similar changes pertaining to the Definition of Disability have taken place in the E.S.S. Scheme effective from June 1996. Similar legislation regarding lump sum payments is apparently being proposed for former ill health retirees, if deemed no longer disabled.

I will be meeting with officers of the relevant organisations in the near future to review the State Superannuation Legislation

HEALTH CARE DIRECTIVES INFORMATION

What is a health care directive?

A health care directive is a written statement that expresses your wishes about health care in advance. It gives written instructions on the kind of medical treatment that you would or would not want in the event that you become unable to make that decision. It also enables you to name someone else to make decisions on your behalf in that situation.

When is it used?

A health care directive applies if an accident or illness (such as a stroke or Alzheimer's Disease) means that you are unable to make medical decisions. This inability to make decisions may be temporary or permanent.

Who can make one?

Anyone who is competent to make decisions about their health care can make a directive. To be competent means that you understand what a medical treatment involves and what the consequences of accepting or refusing that treatment would be.

Why should I have one?

A health care directive offers reassurance. It makes it more likely that, in the event of illness or accident, your wishes will be carried out.

Others are relieved of the added stress of having to guess what your wishes might be.

What is a proxy?

A proxy is someone you choose to act on your behalf. When you name a proxy in your health care directive, you give that person the ability to make health care decisions for you when you are no longer capable yourself. Proxies may be referred to as "agents" or "advocates", and in Victoria can be legally appointed by executing a medical power of attorney.

How do I choose a proxy?

Your proxy must be someone you can trust and rely on. Whoever represents you must be willing to respect your wishes and be prepared to speak to doctors and others on your behalf. You need to discuss your wishes freely with your proxy so they can make decisions confidently.

What type of form do I need?

Your health care directive may be written on any piece of paper as long as it's signed, dated and witnessed. **(An example of a health care directive is available from our Secretary John Berry).**

SICK LIST

We wish the following a speedy recovery from their illnesses;

Ron Farmer, fitted with a pace-maker earlier this year.

Tony Hynson, recovering nicely from a 10 hour bladder reconstruction at the Austin on April 22nd.

Bill Webber, making some progress with his rehabilitation program.

Frank Shevlin,

Tom Knight.

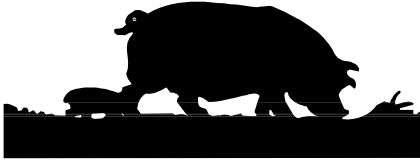
VALE

Ron Moran. One of the MFB's "characters", was well known and liked throughout the job and a long serving member of the RFA.

Arthur Foord.

OVER THE STY

Being an occasional column by an unknown contributor.



La La La La,
Hooray, a sequel
to cousin "Babe"
is underway and
will be in your
theatre soon.

Believe it or
not, the following

happened recently.

A certain member, who will remain anonymous, but he has a caravan park at Alexandra, he used to work at No1 Stn. as BA officer and has a daughter who works for the RTA. Recently, she was driving on the Geelong Road and whilst talking to her father on the mobile phone happened to notice a person, who I shall not name for fear of retribution, passed her car driving his "Silvermobile". She mentioned the fact to her father who suggested to her that she should pull him over. The young lady then observed Silver drive into a service station, she followed him in, handed him the mobile phone asking if his name was Silver and explain that he was wanted on the mobile. Upon speaking on the mobile, Silver recognised the voice and enquired where he was talking from and the reply was from Alexandra. Silver was nonplused, (which is a first). I am not sure what the moral of this story is, but I am rapt that Silver was caught for a change.

Now for some serious business.

Back to No 27 Stn. now the Taj Mahal called 35 Stn.

One night shift in the early fifties and early in the A.M. a loud row could be heard outside said Stn. The public spirited citizen's of the Stn. investigated and found that a male person was abusing and indeed swearing at a person of the opposite gender. The Stn. staff of five fairly husky males told the abuser to "piss off" and leave the lady alone which he did vowing to fix us up. We told him to have a go and retired to the Stn. to comfort the lady, shutting all the doors in the meantime. Soon after, there was a banging on the engine room doors. The noise was caused by the aforementioned abuser hitting the door with the barrel of a double

shotgun. We took swift action, I know what I did, I crawled under the hose carriage, shut my eyes and pretended I wasn't there.

The rest of the shift did similar things, being safe in the knowledge that the Stn. was locked tighter than a drum. After a time he went off and we all agreed that we had fixed him. There is a sequel to the story, but it can't be told as it could cause embarrassment. 27 Stn. again.

A new "State Of The Art" ladder was delivered to the Stn. in the mid fifties. It was brand new, apart from the fact that it used to be mounted on a vehicle complete with chain drive, solid rubber wheels and the ladder movements were all carried out by compressed CO2.

The ladder was now powered by electricity, a great advance.

The first day it was there, the Swede, Cock and myself were giving it our earnest attention when Cock spotted a red mark on the glass of the voltmeter. This mark corresponded to 110 volts, which for safety reasons could not be exceeded during power operations of the ladder. Cock made one of his classic statements, quote; "look what those dirty bastards of painters have done", and proceeded to scrape the warning mark off with his pocket knife. Swede and I could not convince him that it was supposed to be there and despite our efforts in painting it back several times, Cock continued to remove same. It took the careful explanation by the DO. for Cock to allow it to stay.

When the DO. eyed us admiring the ladder, he decided to ask some curly questions, just to test our knowledge. Pointing to a lever on the ladder, (which actually was used to change the extension motor from power to manual operation and vice versa), he enquired from Swede what it was for. Swede replied, "I ddddon't knnnnow". The DO then enquired if it was an "ice cream cone" and Swede, being a man of great tact and diplomacy answered and I quote; "of course it's



To a person who suffers from the pain of osteo-arthritis, any research into this debilitating degenerative form of arthritis would be welcome. An extensive research project is being carried out at the moment by the National Aging Research Institute and as there is a better than even chance that many of our members are suffering from, or are in the process of developing the symptoms this project is of particular relevance to us. We commend this project to you and hope that many will answer the;-

Pain research has made significant gains in our understanding of this distressing symptom. Unfortunately the mechanisms which govern pain in osteo-arthritis remain obscure. To date pain researchers have focussed on animal models which involve inflammation of one or more joints. These models have most relevance for rheumatoid arthritis. At the National Aging Research Institute, Michael Farrell and his colleagues are examining the influence of osteo-arthritis on pain nerves in human subjects.

The model they have developed uses the measurement of pain thresholds in people with osteo-arthritis of the thumb. Heat and pressure are applied to the skin over the thumb to determine the "least" amount of stimulation a person will describe as painful. These results will be compared with the thresholds of people who have no arthritis and people who have osteo-arthritis on X-ray but experience no pain. This experiment will provide new insights into the pain pathway in this disabling disease.

Michael and his team are currently recruiting volunteers for this project. The equipment used for this project is not portable and consequently volunteers must be prepared to visit the National Aging Research Institute in Parkville. Michael can arrange transport if this is a problem. Potential volunteers should expect to spend approximately two hours at the institute.

If you would like to volunteer for the project or discuss any matters relating to pain research in arthritis please contact Michael Farrell on;
(03) 9389 7148 or write to;

Michael Farrell
National Aging Research Institute
Poplar Road
Parkville 3052

All enquiries are welcome, you need not have osteo-arthritis to volunteer. Pain free

"BROWN'S BITS"

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

It happened in the sixties out Western District, (didn't everything). For the sake of anonymity we will call the S.O. Mac, the S/F. Jack and the young F/M. Ivan. Now Mac was known to be a bit erratic, Jack was known to be a bit grumpy while Ivan was not long out of recruits.

A call was received for a house fire in a newly developed area. On arrival, it was found that a partially built house was on fire. But the New Australian owners of the property, being suspicious of their neighbours, had built a high wire fence around the property.

Mac grabbed the branch and headed for the fence, Jack took off in the Hose Carriage for the water, while Ivan helped feed out the hose. The next thing Ivan hears is "Ivan", "Ivan", "Ivan". When he looks, here is Mac hanging upside down with his foot caught in the fence. So Ivan takes off to help Mac, Jack has found water, connected up and turned on the water.

Well, the hose got knotted didn't it and blew the main. Ivan's trying to get Mac unhooked off the fence, Jack's trying to sort out the hose, the house is burning along merrily, water going everywhere but on the fire and all the onlookers chanting "Ivan", "Ivan", "Ivan".

Eventually Mac was unhooked, another main found and the fire put out. Then Mac blamed Jack, Jack blamed Mac and Ivan just

“TRAVELLING WITH SILVER”



Before starting this epistle I would like to answer the comment from the Colonel's

Quarters. Yes, I and Mrs. Silver have moved into the new house, (She calls it “Heaven on the Hill”), the Colonel and wife with General Committee member Laverick and wife have been out bumming free meals.

It's true, I temporarily lost some building materials, but they turned up. I rang Frank C. immediately but his alibi was he was in Queensland, I didn't like to say that would not stop him.

Back to business!

I guess we have all stayed in hotels from time to time that vary from the “Waldorf Astoria” in New York to the “Rob Roy” in Fitzroy.

I would like to suggest a weekend away at the “Hotel Canberra”, now run by the Hyatt people. No doorman like the Colonel spitting all over you on arrival, no food the likes of Holton's House of Dysentery, which I believe collapsed on his leaving. (The quantity of grease and fat melted in the summer heat and it fell over).

The Hotel Canberra is a shining example of a programme of refurbishment and development with the 1920's character of the hotel.

It's proximity to the old Parliament House and about six Leyland Ladder lengths from the new edifice has meant a steady influx of politicians from the granting of it's licence in 1928, four years after it's opening. Labor PM. James Scullin was a long time resident during the years of the great depression. (It cant have effected him to much).

The original hotel played host to a rich roll call of Pollie's, Royal's and Canberra “Cognoscenti”. Currently, a mixed bag of guests are taking advantage of packages for \$160 per room (single or twin) including champagne on arrival and breakfast on the palm dotted Promenade Cafe. This reasonable rate applies on weekends, on week nights tariff starts at \$240 per room only.

This is perfect weekend away territory. The hotel is within easy walking distance of Lake Burley Griffin, National Gallery, National Library, the High Court and the Film and Sound Archives.

If you are bone idle you may choose to spend the weekend holed up without leaving the premises. A pukka afternoon tea in the elegant jarrah-floored Tea Lounge with it's lofty ceiling and french-doors opening out to large verandahs.

For fine dining, book ahead for the Oak Room, a multi-roomed wood-panelled restaurant with open fires, faultless service and classic European Cuisine.

The hotel provides a pocket map of “fat shifting” running routes called Diplomatic Dash and Electoral Run, around Lake Burley Griffin.

Then there's the Speakers Bar with excellent beers from everywhere and a great collection of political memorabilia, if you'r into that. Personally, I can't stand the bastards.

It's only a short stagger to the fitness centre, but why do this when there is so much more to see in Canberra. Guestrooms are generously sized with black marble bathrooms.

I would say this low level 250 room hotel is aimed at the upper market end specialising in personal service with butlers on call and built on an intimate scale in a city park setting.

It feels like a grand country home nestled in a shrub studded estate. It feels like “Heaven on the Hill”.

Happy Travelling

SILVER.

FROM THE COLONEL'S QUARTERS

What's the difference between a mouse and a kangaroo? Well, don't ask the Silver family because they wouldn't know.

It appears that for some time Silver has bragged to all his visitors about an exquisite “mouse” that an American friend carved for Mrs. Silver and has taken pride of place in the lounge for all to see. Only this time they invited someone with a bit of style and an eye for detail to “Paradise Park”, who immediately identified the species that adorns the mantelpiece as a kangaroo.

The problem the Silver's have now, is how to get back on the good side of their American friends since Mrs. Silver wrote thanking them for their beautiful “mousey gift”.

PS. The secrets out! “Paradise Park” was landscaped by the “Gobi Desert Horticultural Society”.

Our guest speaker from the Arthritis Foundation at the February meeting reminded us that many people in the community do not heed warnings published in the daily newspapers from time to time by the Emergency Services. In this case it was a wheat filled heat pack that was being demonstrated as a therapeutic aid and the following is a warning that was published by the M.F. B. concerning these packs.

It has become popular in recent times to use therapeutic wheat packs for the relief of various types of pain (muscular, back arthritic etc.). These units can be heated in the microwave until they reach a desired temperature (as per the manufacturers instructions). The therapeutic wheat packs can also be used as a cold pack by placing in a freezer.

Fires have occurred in both Commercially manufactured as well as "home made" packs.

Investigations of these packs have revealed that the wheat can ignite during heating and also when used as a warmer in bed. In most cases the packs have been used for sometime, with constant use resulting in the reduction of the moisture content of the wheat, causing overheating of the wheat resulting in fire.

The Metropolitan Fire Brigade suggests the following safety hints when using therapeutic wheat packs.

- Use suggested heating times for all type and size of packs as a guide only.
- Be in attendance when heating packs.
- Remember microwaves have various power outputs so heating time will vary accordingly. **Check the manufacturers guide-lines concerning the capacity of your microwave.**
- Check the life of the heat pack according to the manufacturers' instructions.
- Do not reheat until the "wheat bag" is cold.
- Do not use them as bed warmers.
- Do not store away until cold. Leave to cool on a non-combustible surface.
- Watch for signs of over-use, e.g. cooking or burning odour, charring of bag. If these signs are present dispose of after it has cooled down.

Read and follow manufacturers instructions carefully

**RETIRED FIREFIGHTERS ASSOCIATION OF AUSTRALIA
VICTORIAN BRANCH INCORPORATED**

Members who have not renewed their membership are reminded that subscription for 1997 are now due and payable.

The Secretary
Retired Firefighters Association of Australia
Victorian Branch Incorporated.
24 Lincoln Drive
Lower Plenty 3093

Please find enclosed Cheque/Money Order for \$10 being for subscription for 1997.

Name: _____

Spouses Name: _____

Address: _____

_____ **Post Code** _____

Phone: _____

NOTE: Our subscription year is from;- February 1st 1997 to January 31st 1998.



GROWS IT, MAKES IT, SELLS IT, DRINKS IT.

Len Hubbard's latest venture, a vineyard, has released its first wine under the "RAINBOW

BIRD FLAT" label.

Chardonnay, Semillon / Chardonnay, Shiraz and a beautiful smooth Port, all are from grapes grown at Len's 100 acre "Cadell County Vineyard", near Bahmah where Len still has the Hotel / Motel.

The wines had their first exposure at the

Echuca Fine Wine, Food and Jazz Festival and the result was very pleasing to all involved.

Peter Miller (ex Western District) is the vineyard Manager and Salesman extraordinaire as well as doing most of the work while Len handles most of the sampling.

The wines are the first produced in the Shire of Murray NSW (Moama, Mathoura etc) and was officially launched by the Governor of NSW on March 1st.

Tasting facilities are not available at the vineyard, but if you call in at the Bahmah pub and see Len's wife, Lana, she will happily give you a taste of the crop.

REFLECTIONS OF JULIE HEALEY

A letter that recalls a few names and memories.

Hello old Furies! You may not remember me but I am Julie Healey, wife of Jim. My dear husband passed away on 20-4-90, back then I was very happy to be told how many of you chaps came down to Sorrento for the Mass and Funeral, it was wonderful, many thanks.

I believe that the memories of us oldies are always enjoyed by the R.F.A. members, so I wonder if any of the "boys" who were at South Melbourne when Jim first joined remember. I know Joe Palmley, "Bourkie", Mr. Sinclair and Mr. Fleming who was the S.O. were there.

It was hard when we were married in 1940 to get accommodation, to be near enough to your station to have the bells put on your house, so when Jim Parish was promoted, we dashed out to Flemington to secure his house, as he moved into quarters, those were the days when the men were on duty 100 odd hours a week.

We were left there for 20 years. Mr. Newey was the S.O. and Charlie Hubbard, Jack Carter and "Duffy" Plummer were there with us, all of us in houses near enough to the tiny station. Peter Sullivan was the next S.O. followed by Stan Lloyd and Jim. I imagine the boys study efforts are greatly changed now, with the lovely college to help them. Jim swatted at home and I had to hear him, all about male and female couplings etc.

I read a lot in "Water Off" about Don Brennan's travels. Do you remember Don, going with Jim and Harry Purcel on a trip to the centre. I believe Harry, one of the gym. team, stood on his hands on top of Ayers Rock. They continued to Adelaide, put their car on the train and went on to Perth. I bet your travels are more comfortable these days Don.

I still see Portia (Bill Wynne's wife) and Roma (Tom Draper's wife) down here on the Peninsula, but miss the visits of Jim's "ex boys", no doubt they do not know of my new address.

Jim was transferred back to South Melbourne for a couple of years when the new hours award was brought in, and on retirement was given a wonderful night at the South Melbourne Town Hall on February 13th 1976 after about 38 years of a very rewarding career.

JULIE HEALEY
59 Ocean Road
Blairgowrie 3942

Thanks for the letter Julie, I was one of Jim's "boys" at North Melbourne and have fond memories of "Gentleman Jim Healey". I am sure you will get a response to your request for visitors now they know your address. **Ed.**

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