

"WATER OFF"

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



February 2015 Vol 19 No 1

Inc/No: A16839F

RFA Elects New Secretary and Vice President

We thank John Berry and Ian Fowler for their years of dedicated service to the membership.

Changes to the Committee structure will steer the Association into the future.



New Training Facility Venue For February Meeting

Victorian Emergency Management Training Centre will play host with lunch and an inspection of the facility for our members. Shoes and long sleeves required for the inspection!

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“GENERAL MEETING”

Notice is hereby given that the next General Meeting will be held at the Victorian Emergency Management Training Centre, 284-290 Hume Hwy Craigieburn, Melways 132 P6.
1030 Hours, Wednesday 18th February 2015

Note: OHS require shoes, long sleeves for inspection of facility

AGENDA ITEMS.

Minutes of last General meeting
President’s Report
Secretary/Treasurer’s Report
Guest Speaker;
General Business

Allan Roberts
SECRETARY/TREASURER
Address all correspondence to:
The Secretary
50 Cameron Parade
Bundoora Vic 3083
Phone:- 0433 007 720
email: rfavic1@gmail.com

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

Lunch available Please join us!

To assist in catering requirements could you please notify your intention to attend by contacting either Allan Roberts 0433 007 720 or Don Brennan on 9742 6626.

Non financial Members

Members be advised if your newsletter has an expiry date of 2/1/2014 that means you have not paid your subs since 2013 therefore if no remuneration is received by the 2/1/16 your name will be automatically removed from the mailing list. If, for whatever reason any member is unable to meet this request please do not hesitate to call the secretary, (confidentiality is assured)

OFFICE BEARERS

President, Don Brennan
Vice President, Alex Shepard
Sec./Treasurer, Allan Roberts

General Committee;

Arthur (Sam) Capes
Mike McCumisky
Ian Geddes
Kevin Hede

“Water Off”
Editorial Staff
John Laverick
Barbara McCumisky

Auditor;
Theo Teklenburg

Valë

Peter Cox (MFB)
Wayne Gosden (MFB)
Kevin Kennedy (MFB)
John Tullis (CFA)

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

SICK LIST (* In Nursing Home)

Stan Cameron	Jack Sexton
Huew Campbell*	Neville Smith
Ernie Goodall*	Brian Trembath
Clarrie Guthrie*	Tom Williamson
Clarrie Hart	Brian Whittaker
Jack Moore	

We wish these members a speedy recovery

Note: If you know of any member who may be ill please notify a committee member. We endeavour to keep you informed, but can only do this with your help.

Diary Dates 2015

February 18th General Meeting
May 20th General Meeting
August 20th General Meeting
November 19th; Annual General Meeting
**November Annual Christmas Luncheon
11.30 am. Malvern Town Hall**

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Welcome to 2015, hopefully, another good year for the RFA. We have had some changes to the committee with the retirement of John Berry, Ian Fowler and John Schintler.

I have written about John Berry's invaluable work as Secretary before but it would be remiss of me not to mention Ian (Chooker) Fowler. Ian has served us as Vice President since elected to the position at the 1998 AGM and as well as being Almoner has always attended our many other activities – eg Bunnings, Ozanam House, UFU Picnic and putting together the Water Off.

John Schintler has served us on the committee for a number of years and also committed himself to the above mentioned activities. On behalf of the Committee and all members we thank these three members for their years of dedicated service.

We welcome on to the Committee – Alex Shepard (Vice President), Kevin Hede and Ian Geddes.

Alan Roberts is now our Secretary/Treasurer and is busy coming to grips with the responsibilities of his office. John Berry is working closely with Allan to ease him into the job and we thank John again for his dedicated service to the RFA.

Peter Coulson in QLD has had a hip replacement and is coming on quite well. I have spoken to Tom and Val Williamson and both are as well as can be expected.

As reported our next meeting is at the New Training Facility in Craigieburn at 284 – 290 Sydney Road, Entry is opposite Grassland Avenue. Melways reference 132 P6

Please wear shoes (no thongs or sandals) and a long sleeve shirt or jacket for OHS requirements whilst on the ground.

To assist in catering requirements could you please notify your intention to attend by contacting either Allan Roberts 0433 007 720 or myself on 9742 6626.

Hope to see you at the meeting and our guided tour of the training college

Don Brennan.

SECRETARY/ TREASURER'S REPORT

Well, it's like this, I put my hand up to take on the job from John Berry as Secretary / Treasurer - Oh my God, what have I let myself in for?

I do believe that, with the help of the committee, we will strive to keep you informed.

Could all members please have a good look at the RFA Web Site www.rfav.com.au and give us some feedback as to the content and some comments.

I have started an Email address for RFA: rfavic1@gmail.com

Please use this email for all RFA business.

Could all members please supply an updated email address so I may be able to keep you informed of anything that may happen between meetings.

This is a short report as I am just getting organised. We transported a truck load of documents and equipment from John Berry's home to mine. I then had to set up and find a place for the many items that the RFA have.

I would like to thank John Laverick for his excellent work with "Water Off" preparation.

I have asked Ian Fowler to act as Almoner for the RFA.

SPECIAL EVENT: FIREFIGHTERS PICNIC on the 8th February 2015 at Mooney Valley Race Course.

Annual General Meeting Minutes, November 2014 other matters), and the UF.U. (Paying Insurances).

President - Don Brennan, Secretary/Treasurer - John Berry, Minutes - Ian Geddes.

Present: 54 Apologies: 8

New attendees - Duncan Strang (Southern), Ken Edwards (Eastern –T/C).

Sick List: Jack Moore, Brian Whittaker, Neville Smith.

Secretary/Treasurer Report:

John read Minutes of 2013 A.G.M.

Accepted – John Howe, Seconded – Harry Floyd – Carried.

Matters arising: - Nil

President's Report:-

R.F.A. now in 26th year, with over 500 members.

Bunnings (October) - \$1685.00

As of today, John Berry will be retiring as Sec/Treasurer.

Don thanked John, also the M.F.B. (use of T/C and

Financial Report – John Berry:

Closing balance - \$4835.31

Term Deposit - \$6438.21

This report must be submitted to Corporate Affairs before the end of each November to comply with legal requirements. Theo Teklenbury (Auditor) has done this for MANY years and is now retiring. Mike Enticott, (General Manager of Credit Union) has offered to do the Audit. THANKS THEO for your diligence, experience and control.

Moved – John Berry, Seconded – John Chambers – Carried

Elections:

President – Don Brennan.

Secretary/Treasurer – Allan Roberts.

Vice President - Ian Fowler and Alec Shepherd both nominated.

(Continued on page 4)

(Continued from page 3)

Both men gave us a short presentation, and by a show of hands Alec Shepherd scraped in. Alec is new Vice – President.

Committee – Sam Capes, Ian Geddes, Kevin Hede, Mike McCumisky.

Don, and ALL of us, thanked Chook Fowler for his great involvement/enthusiasm over the many years.

Don, and ALL of us, thanked The Ant for his great work over 18 years and presented John with a signed photo of the recent Southport (Qld) lunch.

P.S. – we know that nick names are not to be used, but in the case of these two stalwarts.....

General Business:

Geoff Annal has supplied a Brass Helmet and MFB Flag.

Allan Roberts Supplied a CFA Flag. and Mick Shanahan will obtain an Aviation Services Flag – to be used at Funerals.

Craigieburn Training College – visit will be in groups of 12 -notify Don. Pick up at 25, 27, 44 and Burnley

(using M.F.B. Bus). Wear long sleeve shirt to prevent chaffing.

Historical Society - Mike showed us a M.F.B. Fire Museum Book 1891 – 1920 (\$45, and \$38 to Museum Members).

Sam Capes motioned a \$200 Bunnings Voucher for John Berry. Graeme Duncan suggested a plaque.

Amended Motion - Graeme Duncan/Ian Geddes, seconded - Noel Pinnell - A fire related item – Carried.

Col Harris spoke of the Brigade Classic Cars Display held each November at Burnley Training College.

John Brown spoke glowingly of the work done by Don, Nancy B. and daughter Angela P.

Doug Overton asked about Tom Williamson - some old mates still enjoy a phone call with Tom.

Phil Cleary - R.F.A. Website. www.rfav.com.au

It is up and running – whatever you want to post on it (retirements, news/goss, events, - whatever). Use this website to notify and pick up information.

Meeting ended 12 noon

Fire Service Bowls.

Our December outing was to the Epping RSL to play for the John Tate shield. This time we were not successful.

The attendance of Beryl Tate at the game was pleasing to see.

The number of fire service members attending was a little disappointing at this game.

We must thank the Epping RSL for their great hospitality.

January’s game to Sunbury was cancelled because of the weather forecast.

Our up and coming fixture for 2015;

Feb.1st. Public Services Day at Keilor

Feb. 5th. versus Police at Broadmeadows Bowls Club 10am start

Feb 5th. 1pm. Club singles championship finals at Broadmeadows.

Feb.26 versus Bacchus Marsh B.C.at the Marsh 12 30 pm start.



Above; The John Tate Shield Team at the Epping RSL venue. Unfortunately, unsuccessful this time.

March 12th. Twilight Game at Glenroy BC 5 pm start. BBQ after game.

We hope as many members can attend these games, we are also looking for new members whether retired or still serving in any fire service.

John Chambers.

“Water Off” Deadline To Submit Copy for Publication

Due to the possibility of Australia Post going to a 3 day week delivery and other factors, we find that we have to set closing dates for acceptance of copy for Water Off.

The members need at least 2 weeks notice prior to both annual and general meetings and the editor requires time to edit copy and set photographs then send off to printers who require at least a week to print.

May 2015 edition deadline for copy is April 17th.

**RETIRED FIREFIGHTER'S ASSOCIATION OF AUSTRALIA
VICTORIAN BRANCH
REG NO A 16839F**

Statement of Income and Expenditure for year ended 30th June 2014

<u>Income</u>	\$	2013 \$
Opening Balance Credit Union 1st July 2013	10,178.77	8,886.37
Member's subscriptions	3,917.60	3,038.60
Sale of promotional items	63.95	172.65
Fundraising	1,912.55	3,862.60
Joining fees	75.00	55.00
Government grant	-	2,700.00
Interest received	<u>257.77</u>	<u>288.39</u>
	<u>16,405.64</u>	<u>19,003.61</u>
 <u>Expenditure</u>		
Postages and telephone	1,531.92	1,274.94
Catering	20.16	-
Magazine expenses	110.31	173.93
Computer upgrades & software & internet	368.38	-
Government grant expenditure	-	2,625.26
Merchandise	-	915.00
Donations	3,049.95	3,737.64
Sundries	-	39.17
Government & Credit co-op fees & charges	<u>51.40</u>	<u>58.90</u>
	5,132.12	8,824.84
Closing Balance Credit Union 30th June 2014	<u>11,273.52</u>	
<u>10,178.77</u>		
	<u>16,405.64</u>	
<u>19,003.61</u>		
 <u>Bank Reconciliation</u>		
<u>Bank balance as at 30th June 2014</u>		
Main Account	4,835.31	
Term deposit	<u>6,438.21</u>	
	<u>11,273.52</u>	

Independent Person's Certification.

I have examined the accounting records, including receipts, of Retired Firefighters Association for the period 1st July 2013 till 30th June 2014, In my opinion the Statement of Performance above is correct.

Theo Teklenburg

Retired Credit Union Manager

WANTED

Person required to take on the role as Editor of "Water Off"

Some computer skills needed, experience with Microsoft Publisher program an advantage.

An interest in producing something worthwhile will be a bonus.

Assistance will be given.

It's an interesting job as you keep in touch with old workmates and what's going on in the Fire Services

Our present Editor wants to retire after more than twenty continuous years at the desk and wants to train somebody to eventually take over.

For more information call John Laverick Ph 9337 9820 or Email; retfire@bigpond.net.au

Editorial

John Berry Retires

I have agonised over the appropriate words to describe the service John Berry (“The Ant”) did for our Association. When you have worked with a man for over 20 years you think you have him pretty much “summed up” and know his every move. But, “The Ant” is a person that never ceases to amaze me in his tireless pursuit in advancing the cause of the RFA.

Twenty years ago, the Retired Firefighters Association Victorian Branch was in decline, with falling membership and poor attendance at meetings, the future was looking bleak. The then Secretary, the late “Peter Holton”, fell ill and without hesitation, John Berry stepped into the role as “Acting Secretary”.

If a job is worth doing - it’s worth doing well, and John threw himself into the task and did some research on the standing of the RFA in our community and then reported his findings to the membership. His report contained the following:

- Membership losses were greater than new applications;
- Association assets held by Credit Union lower than previous years;
- No new initiatives etc. being generated;
- No policies developed to show where the association was going towards the year 2000.

John’s report then went on to recommend steps to address all of these issues. He went on to recommend that the issues contained in his report be addressed immediately if the association was to remain viable.

The rest is history, John, along with President Don Brennan and the committee, did turn things

around to make the association what it is today, a viable organisation that has affiliations across Australia and overseas and increased membership. As a result of this, through the work of the membership, we now have cash assets big enough to make regular donations to charitable organisations which brings our Victorian branch to the forefront of retired groups throughout Australia. International contacts have been established which has seen our “Water Off” now on Retired Firefighter websites in the UK.



John Berry’s vision for the RFA has seen many advances in the role of the RFA in our community.

John Berry had respite from the role as Secretary for a five year period when John Brown took the job on. But, again “The Ant” stepped in when Brownie took ill and couldn’t continue.

John has been a mentor to many of our members being just a phone call away, ready with advice and encouragement when contacted. We have spent many an hour on the phone with “The Ant” receiving guidance over occasional problems we’ve had with the production of this newsletter.

John, you have been a pleasure to work with over the years and we will continue to pick your brains for “Water Off” until you tell us to “Bugger Off”.

Our new Secretary, Allan Roberts has some big shoes to fill but, having seen Allan’s résumé he is the most qualified candidate to take control of the business side of the RFA. We offer Allan our full support as he eases himself into the job.

We wish John Berry and his wife, Elaine, a long, happy and healthy retirement and thank you for the generosity of time you have given to us as members of the RFA.

ALLAN ROBERTS.

Brigade Resume'

Hello, as I stated in the Secretary/Treasurer's report I am now responsible for the aforementioned position on the RFA committee, the following is a short heads-up for your perusal. In January of 1962 I joined the local Research Rural Brigade as the area was regularly being threatened by bush fires. After 5 years as a firefighter the members elected me to the position of 4th Lieutenant and when the 3rd Lieutenant's position fell vacant the members again voted for me to take over the role.

Like many other volunteers I believe the role influenced me to apply to join the MFB and in 1968 I successfully became a recruit firefighter in the Metropolitan Fire Brigade. A position I held for over 20 years. The training, skills and knowledge I gained there was not only of great assistance to my personal development it also enabled me to keep the other members of Research brigade aware of any recent development or protocol in firefighting technology.

In 1971 I was elected to the position of Captain of the Research Rural Fire Brigade, unfortunately because I was an active member of the UFU it became apparent to me that I may, because of my position of office in the rural brigade, create conflict so I resigned from my position of office with the CFA.

I continued to remain a volunteer firefighter carrying out the role in the protection of life and property from fire in the community. During this time I was instrumental in building up a brigade tanker from a cab chassis which the Brigade purchased from Ford at a very good price. A year later, after many man hours a firefighting appliance with a 400 gallon tank, pump, equipment, lights and siren was born and commissioned to the Brigade. This vehicle was a great adjunct to the brigades firefighting ability.

In 1992 I was elected by the Lower Yarra Group as a DGO (Deputy Group Officer and in 1994, elected to the position of Group Officer, which I held until 1996. During this time it enabled me to make many improvements to operations, including the purchase of the Lower Yarra Control Unit.

In 1983 I was awarded the National Medal for service in the MFB and in 1987 was made a Life Member of the Research Fire Brigade, then in 1997 I was awarded Honorary Life Membership of the CFA.

The Officers and Members of the Research Fire Brigade fully supported that Ex-Captain Allan Roberts be awarded a National Medal Clasp (first) for over 35 Years of diligent service to the Country Fire Authority of Victoria. (I now have 2nd and 3rd Clasps).



In 2008 the Brigade elected me as 2nd delegate to VFBV Region 13; in 2009 I was elected as region 13 VFBV State Councilor until 2011.

When the Districts changed I was elected by the Brigade as VFBV Delegate to District 14.

During my career with the MFB, back in 1984, I applied for a position in the Driving Department and in 1988; I took the option of early optional retirement to explore other successful business opportunities.

I am still a volunteer with the Salvation Army Emergency Services at major fires & emergency situations when required

In 2007 I became a Director of the Firefighters Credit Union. From 2009 to 2011 I was Chairman of the Board.

As this position is only for 2 years at a time in November 2011 I reverted back to being a Director and am still current.

At the moment I am still Training and Assessing CFA Volunteers on driving CFA Vehicles.

In 2012 I received my 50 year service award.

In 2015 I will have completed 53years as a registered volunteer Firefighter with the CFA.

I have been an active member of the RFA since 1990 and I believe my firefighting background and my business accruement would assist in the role of the Retired Firefighters Association Secretary / Treasurer Position and this is why I put my hand up for the role.

Allan Roberts

Employee Support Program Update

Post-traumatic stress.

Hello everyone, welcome to 2015. So far we in these newsletters we have covered an introduction to the Employee Support Program and some information on the wellbeing checks that are offered to all MFB employees.

I would like to focus on this article on some information on Post-Traumatic Stress. I will apologise at the outset if this reading triggers some unpleasant memories for you or family but this term is attracting more and more interest and it is good to understand the nature of the problem. Two important things to remember: firstly, some psychological distress following exposure to traumatic events is completely normal. Secondly, the longer you go without doing something about the longer term effects, the harder they are to treat.

When we talk about Post traumatic stress, the following symptoms may or may not be included: trouble sleeping, trouble eating, difficulty concentrating, feelings of constantly “walking on eggshells”, and a tendency to want to isolate yourself from others (social withdrawal). There is a marked need to avoid anything to do with the event that has triggered the traumatic response, including avoiding memories, activities, places, and people. I have heard stories of firies driving an extra suburb on days off just to avoid a place where a particular turnout took place, although they are continually exposed to the area during their shift. Generally people affected by PTS don't remember the whole event exactly. Flashbacks may occur in disjointed snippets that may not make sense to them. These “flashbacks” are not memories. They can't be quickly controlled by the person experiencing them and are more like an actual replaying of the event, with smells, sounds, images, thoughts, the whole lot. Recurring distressing dreams may also occur.

The biggest symptom to come out of the current research is the development of anger, expressed through behaviour, words, thoughts, and / or feelings. According to the diagnostic manual for PTS and other disorders of mental health (DSM-V), two things have to be present for the illness to be formally diagnosed:

- 1: The person experienced, witnessed, or was confronted with an event or events that involved actual physical or threatened death or serious injury, or a threat to the physical integrity of self or others;
- 2: The person's response involved intense fear, helplessness, or horror.

Given what firies are exposed to in the course of their

careers, 1 and 2 may certainly be experienced. Although one may not be directly exposed to death and or serious injury one can certainly feel trauma from witnessing what others go through. The introduction of Emergency Medical Response (EMR) some years ago has seen firies come into contact with distressed relatives and bystanders who may be angry or even aggressive, or showing intense signs of grief and shock. These highly emotional people can “stay” with a person for a while.

As humans, we are essentially “pack animals”. We thrive on social networks and a feeling of connectedness to others. So their distress is going to affect us to a degree. This does not mean we are suffering psychologically. It is when we can't get these people out of our heads after a long time that we may need help to “lay them to rest”.

In terms of PTS, again using animals as a comparison, it is normal when confronted with something startling to want to either fight it or run away, classic “flight/fight” stuff. If our bodies haven't dealt with processing the ordeal we may get stuck in a pattern where the primitive part of our brain thinks the threat isn't over. This can be very hard for the higher functioning level of our brain to master. So as irrational as it feels we lose sleep, can't eat, feel angry, feel on edge, isolate ourselves, and keep being haunted by those thoughts and feelings that won't go away. Some may even start to drink alcohol, which while giving short term relief doesn't help in the long run.

Remember, PTS disorder is an anxiety disorder, not depression. Depression comes into it when you are so exhausted physically and mentally that you start to “shut down”.

Doctors may diagnose acute stress disorder if symptoms last one to three months. Anything longer than three months and you are potentially in the PTSD category. Remember the symptoms described in the short term are normal reactions to abnormal events. You are not “crazy” or in the “head bin”. You do need to talk to someone though, and try to exercise, even walking, as these physical symptoms need space to be released, even in the short term. Just as importantly, many will go their entire careers without being affected. This is also “normal”!

Any comments or queries, I'd be interested to hear from you. Email droperto@mfb.vic.gov.au or call (03) 9665 4405.

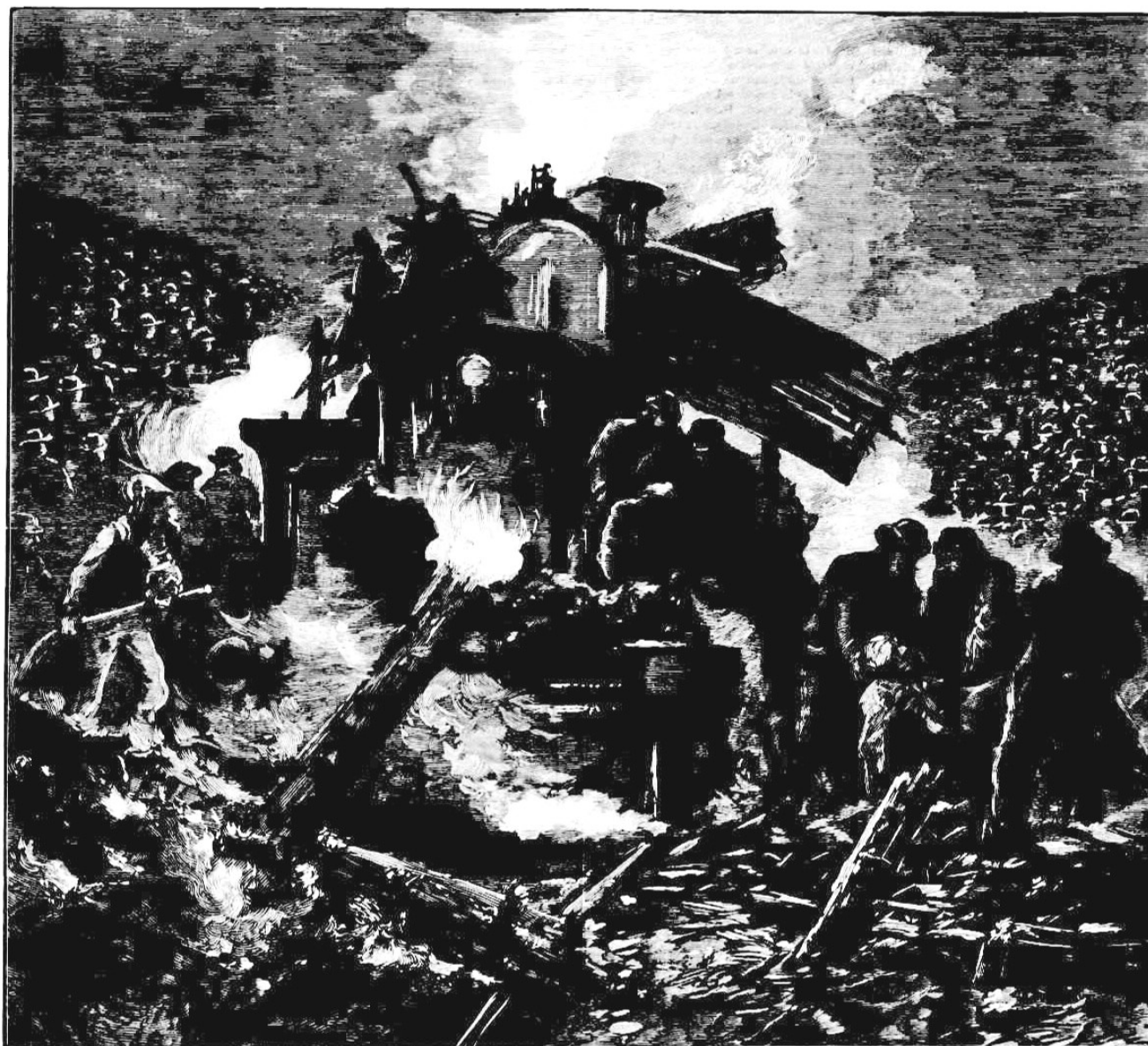
Warm regards, Nic Roperto, Employee Support Coordinator.

THE ILLUSTRATED AUSTRALIAN NEWS

No. 384

MELBOURNE, SATURDAY, MAY 21, 1887

PRICE 6d.



THE RAILWAY ACCIDENT AT PRAHRAN - WORKING PARTIES REMOVING THE WOUNDED
Story next page

Melbourne's Fire Heritage Prior to the MFB.

'Water Off' continues with its series on fires and fire brigades in Melbourne before 1891, when the Metropolitan Fire Brigade became the only Fire Brigade in the metropolis.

This edition's topic is the collision of two suburban trains near the Windsor train station in 1887. The following is a brief account of the tragedy from the Melbourne newspapers of the time - *The Argus*, *The Illustrated Australian News* and *the Australasian Sketcher*.

The Windsor Train Collision. May 11, 1887

The large text headlines in 'The Argus' on the morning of May 12 left little doubt that a serious incident had taken place the night before....

"Shocking Railway Disaster"
"A Terrible Collision"
"Serious Loss of Life"
"Many Passengers Injured"
"Two Men Roasted To Death"

Everything was normal on the afternoon of Wednesday May 11, when the 5.30 p.m ordinary train, packed with passengers going home from work, left Flinders Street Station. It had stopped at all stations, and by the time it reached Prahran many of the passengers had already got off at their various destinations.

Ten minutes later, at 5.40 p.m an express train departed from Flinders Street Station for Brighton. Also packed with passengers, it usually ran express to Windsor and then stopped at all stations to Brighton.

About 300 yards from the Windsor Station, on a sharp curve in the track in a steep cutting, the hose pipe of the Westinghouse steam brake on the ordinary train burst and brought the train to a standstill, locking the wheels and making them immovable. The guard got down to see if anything could be done to rectify the problem. He knew about the express train somewhere behind his train, but assumed that the red signal would stop it before it reached them.

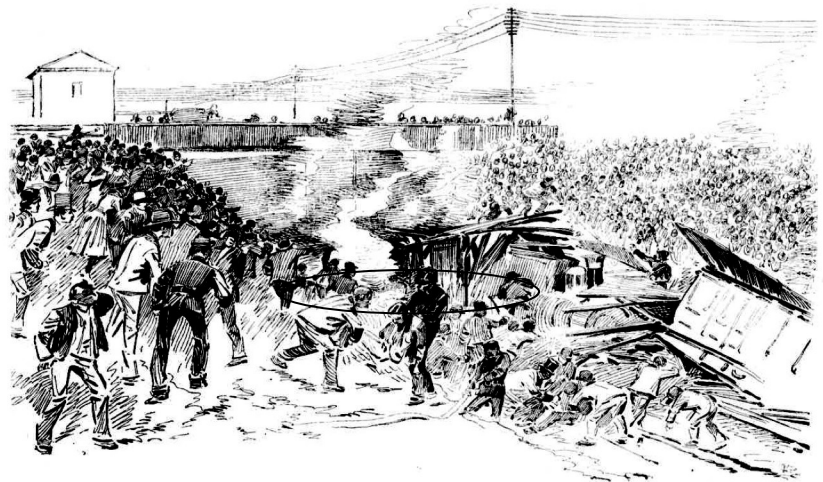
Both trains should have been protected by the block system, the vital principle of which was if the correct procedures were observed, a clear distance would be maintained between the ordinary train and the express. If the express gained distance on the ordinary train, it would be stopped by a red signal. A white signal would indicate a safe distance between the two trains and it could proceed. The block system worked very efficiently, so on the night of the collision it seemed that one or more persons must have disregarded the warnings.

Approaching Windsor Station at speed, Maskell, the driver of the express could not see the disabled ordinary

train due to the bend in the track just beyond the High Street Bridge. The crash was only seen to be inevitable immediately before it occurred. Some of the ordinary train passengers, on hearing the long blast of the express train's whistle, escaped by jumping out of their train just in the nick of time, but the others stayed in their seats.

Rounding the curve, sighting the stationary train and realising the imminent danger, in that split second, Maskell reacted instinctively and manually squeezed the brake with such force as to marginally weaken the impact of the collision. It so happened that Mr. Speight, chairman of the Railway Commissioners, was riding in the van just behind the engine of the express. He stated emphatically that Maskell's promptitude and presence of mind saved many lives on his train.

RAILWAY ACCIDENT AT PRAHRAN.



THE CROWD ON THE EMBANKMENT

Caption on the above image reads; "The Crowd on the Embankment".

Hearing the tremendous noise of the crash, local residents in the area rushed to the scene.

The advancing express locomotive ploughed into the guard's van of the stationary train and three of the carriages, smashing them to fragments. The engine, in telescoping the rear part of the ordinary train, was nearly buried in debris. There was a huge mound of timber and ironwork, which, but for the presence of the remainder of both trains, was unrecognisable. The impact raised the guard's van of the ordinary train into an upright position, from where it fell over onto the express engine, killing the

engine driver Frederick Maskell and James McNab, his fireman

Hearing the tremendous noise of the crash, local residents in the area rushed to the scene. Fading twilight had darkened into night and being at the base of a steep cutting, the mangled wreck made a very terrible sight, but care of the injured and recovery of the dead was the first priority.

Soon the scene was lit up by a beacon fire fed by the splintered wood from the destroyed rolling stock. The flames cast a weird, red light on the pale faces of the injured, many of which were contorted in pain, and revealed the horrible surroundings with ghastly distinctness. The terrors of the situation were intensified by the overpowering escape of steam from the ruined locomotive, deterring rescuers from immediately approaching to render assistance.

A short time later the firemen from the Prahran City, Windsor and South Yarra Brigades arrived on the scene. They had responded to the sound of the fire bell which rang out the alarm. They were soon joined by police and railway authorities.

Once the dangerous steam from the wrecked engine had cleared away, The Prahran City Brigade under Capt. Kelly were able to go into action. Their first task was to quench the flames in the fire box. Having accomplished this, their energies were directed to ascertaining the fates of Maskell and McNab. The engine had been running 'tender first' and the cab had been doubled back onto the furnace doors pinning the poor fellows. There appeared to be no time to think of self preservation judging from the attitudes in which their bodies were discovered. Both were badly scalded on their faces from the escaping steam and burnt from the heat of the furnace.

At one time during the chaos, a constable displayed strange behavior ordering Mr. Speight, chairman of the Railway Commissioners from the scene, even after the gentleman's identity was made known to the overly officious policeman. It was suggested that the Chief Commissioner of Police, Mr. Chomley, should administer a severe rebuke for such action. The constable in question then told Mr. Speight that since he declined to remove himself from the area, then he (the constable) would refuse to remove any persons who tried to hinder the work of the rescuers or the people endeavoring to clear the wreckage.

Within an hour of the collision all the dead and injured had been removed from the wreckage by a large number of people who had come to assist with the task. They had

been transported to hospitals, private houses and police stations.

In all, six people died, the engine driver Maskell, his fireman McNab, a female and a male passenger from the ordinary train were killed by the impact of the collision. The fifth person was Mr. E. Parkes, superintendent of the Melbourne branch of the Bank of Australasia. He was rescued from the wreck with two badly broken legs and conveyed to his home in Balaclava. There a doctor was attempting to amputate both his legs, when he died. The sixth person died some time later. In excess of 150 persons sustained injuries in varying degrees, one of the most serious being Mr. J. 'Cosmo' Newbery CMG, Director of the Technological Museum, Melbourne.



Soon the scene was lit up by a beacon fire fed by the splintered wood from the destroyed rolling stock. The flames cast a weird, red light on the pale faces of the injured.

Another injured passenger was Mr. H. Butler, of Sargood, Butler & Co., Flinders Street Melbourne.

The speed and efficiency with which the dead and injured were removed was quite amazing, but the clearing of the track was even more remarkable. Under the organisation and supervision of a large number of police, the firemen, the railway authorities and a huge army of volunteers, aided by a large goods locomotive, worked diligently to dismantle the tangled wreck of the two trains into manageable units, which could be transported away or moved to the sides of the embankment. In less than three hours from the time of the collision, the trains resumed running to Brighton. A truly marvelous feat indeed!

NOTE:

In the next edition of 'Water Off' the tragic saga of the Windsor rail collision will conclude with the findings of the inquest which commenced the following month.

All images from the Illustrated Australian News.



Queensland Reunion

Thursday July 30th, 2015
Southport Yacht Club, Gold Coast



To all who may be travelling through or just on holidays at the Gold Coast in July this year, come join us for the annual Firey's Luncheon at the Southport Yacht Club.

Held on the last Thursday in July, lovely food panoramic views are just a few of the things that will be part of a great day.

Arrive around 11.00am and catch up with old mates for a yarn.

Bring your partners, all are welcome.

Oh, and you don't even have to be retired!!

**For further information contact;
Ian & Gail Fagerness 07 55224321
(0431 486 141)**



MYSTERIOUS FIND IN QUEENSLAND

Recently, whilst holidaying, we came across a roadway in an outer central Queensland town with a very familiar name, at the end of the road there was this small town's public library. We of course enquired about the naming, who named it, does the person come from the area etc? Unfortunately we were getting very negative answers.

We can only assume that our late famous foundation member made a name for himself in the town during the late 40s - early 50s when a well known travelling boxing troupe was raised in the area.

So from this day forward whenever you visit the small town of Calliope and you see the drive you will be able to say I knew that bloke, he was a foundation member of the Retired Firefighters Association of Australia Victorian Branch.

I must confess it was Howie, (Don's partner in the Employees Support Group) that thought we should set a date to all meet at the Drive, dressed only in a belt, axe & key to pay homage. (If we did imagine what Don and the rest of the blokes stationed upstairs would say)

John Berry

Gone but not forgotten

This section of our quarterly newsletter is always the most difficult to complete, I sit at the computer and the memories of a bygone time come flooding back, you know, the ones of joy & laughter, the battles and heroics of the people you are trying to describe in a way that we hope will do the same to you when you read them.

Kevin Kennedy 1929-28/11/2014.

Big Kevin was one of those Senior Firefighters who was an icon in the job (MFB) I will go further, the late Basil Smith would often say he was the best firefighter he was ever on shift with.

Now for the members who did not know the late District Officer B. Smith, he was, because of his exploits, a person with an almost God-like status and for him to say that about Kevin means he must have been a top firey. In my case the only contact I had with Kevin was the occasional further assistance job and/or phone conversations re fire reports etc.

Interestingly I did have a long conversation with him in retirement after he had sent me some pictures of Basil Smith and the old No 19 Station (Kew), Kevin remarked during the discussion he thought that he could look after himself in a storm or whatever but he admitted he had never met a harder man than Basil Smith. Kevin said that bloke was unstoppable at a fire or anything else and it was such a pleasure to be on shift with him.

It is interesting Kevin talking that way about Basil when Kevin was so highly regarded by so many of his peers, not only for his firefighting ability, but also his stoic approach to life.

Shirley, on behalf of the community and his fellow Firies, thank you for allowing your Kevin to play such an integral part of our protection.

John Berry



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BY THE BEACH

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Smorgasbord Lunch

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@ 1130 hrs*

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Members, Wives, Partners,

Family & Friends

Contact:

Peter Lang 5275 6039

To receive Mail out notification

Recent Retirements

Alan Birtwistle

Graeme Danby

Ron Darby

Harold Kiernan

Barry Magann

Tony Martin

Dominic Quaresima

MEMBERS INTERESTED IN RECEIVING THEIR "WATER OFF" VIA EMAIL.

To those members with easy access to email and would like to have their copy sent by this system, please send your email address to our editor John Laverick. "Water Off" will be sent out in a PDF format.

John's address - -
retfire@bigpond.net.au

Before you send your email, click on 'tools' at top and click on 'request receipt'. This will reply to you and verify both email addresses are working correctly.

Firefighter's Picnic

Sunday 8th February 2015

11am. till 4 pm.

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

Retirees - Bring the Grandkids

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

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

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