

## Combustible Cladding a Consumer Nightmare

MFB's positive response with their involvement in the Victorian Cladding Taskforce  
Page 6.



## Put an End to Toxic Chemical Dumpsites.

UFU seeks legislation to make persons responsible for dumping chemicals accountable by law.  
Page 5



Images;  
MFB Media/  
Comms.

Index	
2	General Meeting
3	President's & Secretary/ Treasurer's. Report
4	Minutes of February meeting
5	Chemical Dumping
6	Combustible cladding
9	Hede the Warning!
10	Tom Driscoll
11	Gone But Not Forgotten
12	Super Deadline
13	Medicine Danger

# “GENERAL MEETING”

Notice is hereby given that the next General Meeting will be held at the Burnley Complex 450 Burnley Street Richmond

1030 Hours, Wednesday 15th May 2019

## AGENDA ITEMS.

Minutes of last General meeting  
President’s Report  
Secretary/Treasurer’s Report  
Guest Speaker; Bryan McNabb—Entertainment organizer, Sales executive  
General Business

Allan Roberts  
SECRETARY/TREASURER  
Address all correspondence to:  
Allan Roberts  
Unit 158 Mernda Retirement Village  
89 Galloway Drive  
Mernda Vic 3754  
Telephone: Mob: 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.**

**All wives and partners welcome  
Please join us!**

### **Non financial Members**

Members be advised if your newsletter has an expiry date of 2/1/2018 that means you have not paid your subs since 2017 therefore if no remuneration is received by the 2/1/19 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).

### NEW MEMBERS 2019.

ROGER NEATE 21/01/19  
KEN COPELAND 26/01/19  
NORMAN OLSEN 18/03/19  
SERGE SLAVIERO 01/04/19

## **OFFICE BEARERS**

**President:** Alex Shepherd  
**Vice President:** Sam Capes  
**Sec./Treasurer:** Allan Roberts

### **General Committee:**

Arthur (Sam) Capes  
Mike McCumisky  
Len Manning  
Ian Geddes  
Kevin Hede  
Colin Harris

### **Auditor:**

Mike Enticott

“Water Off”  
Editorial Staff  
Colin Harris  
John Laverick

## **SICK LIST (\* In Nursing Home)**

John Bellis  
Don Brennan\*  
John Brown\*  
Bob Brunning  
Stan Cameron  
Harold Connell  
Stan Devlin  
Tom Driscoll  
Jack Etherton  
Ian Fowler  
Barry Gavin  
Jim Gibson  
Eddie Gilbertson  
John Hancock\*  
Noel (Dutchy) Holland  
Bob Horgan  
Alan James\*  
Archie McLachlan  
Harry Mitchell  
Brian Morrissey  
John Orange  
Dick Prendergast  
Ron Shaw\*  
Gary Spicer  
John Schintler  
Alan Sugg  
Bob Tottle  
Laurie Trewin  
Ray Wellard  
John Williams  
Tom Williamson\*

### Diary Dates 2019

**May 15th; General Meeting**  
**August 21st; General Meeting Corio**  
**November 17th Christmas Luncheon**  
**Wed. 21st November; Annual General Meeting**

We wish these members a speedy recovery

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

**Don’t forget the RFA website  
www.rfav.com.au**

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

## PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Our President's Wife has been unwell, so I'm filling in some information to our readers of Water Off.

The UFU Picnic which was held at Moonee Valley Racecourse recently was an over whelming success as it always is. Retired firefighters catching up with old mates, current members catching up with their fellow workers etc. The RFA members organised the BBQ along with the wives and partners, for the fun dwellers including many children, so the sausage and rissole turners were hard at it for many hours. Approximately 1000 people turned up for a fun day. There was a fire truck from the Fire Museum of Victoria, face painting for the younger kids, a giant slide, dodgem cars and a jumping castle to entertain the older children. It was a lovely sunny day and a great time was had by all.

For some of our members both young and old, you may know or remember the Smith family name in the MFB. The Smith family have a combined service totalling 150 years. What a great effort! Here are some of this family of firefighting "Smiths". We have the following: Former SSO Kevin Smith (retired), L/FF Aaron Smith, SO Stephen Smith, F/F Kerrod Smith, L/FF Brock Ferguson, L/FF Chris Smith, and S/FF Therese Smith. I wonder how many other potential or young Smiths are out there wanting to follow

their parents dream and join the MFB family one day?

The Paul Riley Memorial Tribute Award 2018 recipient was Station Officer Ian McKenzie No.9 Station. The MFB Firefighters Charity Fund awarded SO McKenzie for this award for his outstanding work in the area of charity fundraising.

I don't know how many firefighters have ever delivered a baby (on or off duty?), however, one Leading Firefighter was on hand (off duty) to do just that last Christmas, when baby just had to come! Well, L/FF Steve Tanner was door knocked by a couple who were heading to hospital – too late she cried! With the aid of ESTA (Communication's operator) and Steve's EMR training, the baby was safely delivered at 12.00pm. Well done Steve! Well done MFB for having brought EMR into the job 20 or so years ago!

Now just before I sign off with the President's Report, winter will soon be upon us! Don't forget all those fire safety measures which were taught to us many years ago. Electric blankets, overloaded power boards, candles, children with matches etc. Don't forget to change your smoke alarm battery and don't forget to test your smoke alarms each week. Maybe remind your family members as well.

**Colin Harris – RFA Committee**

## SECRETARY/TREASURER'S REPORT

Please give your family and friends details on contacting the RFA so we may be able to help you or your family members with support if required.

**SPECIAL GUEST: Bryan McNabb—  
Entertainment organiser, Sales executive.**

**THIS MEETING IS ALL ABOUT YOU THE MEMBERS SO BRING YOUR PARTNERS AND JOIN IN THE DAY.**

Special thanks to John Laverick, for his ongoing help to Col Harris with Water Off.

Thanks to Colin Harris, Kristina Starnawski and Mark Carter for helping out with **Gone But Not Forgotten**. **For your information Russell Hawthorn is looking after all bereavements for me and if you need**

**anything specially required for you, please contact Russell on: 0409 187 945**

**Please make sure that your family knows how to get in touch with the RFA for any assistance.**

Secretary of the Retired Firefighters Association, Allan Roberts, on behalf of all members express our thanks and gratitude for the support that MFB Burnley staff collectively provided to the RFA members at their BBQ's following all our Meetings.

Allan Roberts Secretary.

### **TRESURERS REPORT.**

Closing Balance: 31<sup>st</sup> MARCH 2019

Running account S1 = \$3,063.84.

Fix Term 6 Months L1 Account: = \$7,257.32.

Allan Roberts Treasurer.

## **The following members would like some visitors.**

**DON BRENNAN: at St Vincent's Aged Care 40 Old Sneydes Road Werribee 3030. Melway page 206, J4. Suggest they ring Nancy before said visit on 0409 258 678. Don is often out visiting other medical places re investigation etc.**

**JOHN HANCOCK: at Aged Care Facility Opal Gracedale, 205 Warrandyte Rd North Ringwood,**

**JOHN BROWN: at EMBRACIA MOONEE VALLEY AGED CARE, 76-78 NORTH ROAD AVONDALE HEIGHTS. Phone: (03) 8579 4800**

## Minutes of General Meeting, 20 February 2019, at MFB Burnley Complex

Alex Shepherd (President), Allan Roberts (Secretary/  
Treasurer) Ian Geddes (Minutes)

Present: 29 members, Apologies: 13

Alex Shepherd opened meeting with a report on the Family RETIRED FIREFIGHTERS Picnic at Moonee Valley Racecourse on Sunday, 17 February. Brigade vehicles, including the popular Snorkel, gave adults and many children lots of fun rides. Over 1,000 people were fed by a catering group with RFA volunteers doing the BBQ. A big hit were the icy poles – it was a hot day. A number of new members were welcomed during 2018, including first time attendee Matt Nardella (Eastern).

### Secretary/Treasurer Report:

Allan read the Minutes of the previous Meeting.  
Moved: Len Manning. Seconded – Brian Jackson.  
Carried

Matters arising: Nil

Correspondence:

Letters to/from family of Lou McSweeney  
Various emails & correspondence

Moved: Harry Floyd. Seconded: Dave Prictor  
Carried

### Financial Report: as of 20 February 2019

General Acct - \$3,896.84

Term Deposit - \$7,107.29

### Almoners Report – Ian Fowler:

*John Hansford* – out of hospital

*Bill Grant* – out of hospital

*Don Brennan* – Nancy, John Berry & others keeping an eye on Don

*Brian Thompson* – being looked after by Wyndham Council

*Mick Phelan* – in Nursing Home in Werribee

*Les Napper* – playing tennis and looked at people

*Tom Driscoll* – recovering

*Brian Robertson* – on leaving his house to go to Newport Workshops felt unwell, rang 000 and subsequently had a stent inserted, he is now doing well

*Arthur Mears* – John Berry, Trevor Reed, John Howe and others keeping an eye on young Arthur

*Graeme Taylor* – recovering

### General Business:

*Phil Cleary* – there are additions to the webpage for memorabilia, also for clothes, tyres and overseas trips

(these items change each month)

*Car Sticker* – not going ahead at this stage

*Graeme Duncan* – in Hawaii, you can buy trolley transport ticket. Perchance, he caught up with some of his recruits – small world.

*Water-Off magazine* – a bit late getting in the mail out, time depends on the printers.

*Mike McCumisky* – the Historical Society has 200 paid-up members, but more hands-on helpers are always welcome.

*Brian Jackson* – can organise a Prostate Cancer speaker – to be followed up

*Ian Dewhurst* – Colonoscopy is a great help in early detection

### Guest Speaker:

CEO/CFO Dan Stephens unhappily was a late withdrawal. Luckily, **SO Paul Copeland** stood up with an interesting explanation/presentation about the cladding material used in recent fires. Called Aluminium Cladding Panels (ACP), it is about 1” (2.5cm) thick, with 1/8” aluminium on both sides and covering an oil-based insert. Once the integrity of the aluminium is lost, the insert burns and runs quite fiercely. Station crews are doing inspections and forwarding the locations to Paul and his department.

**Acting ACFO Brad Quinn** (Safety Services – OH&S) spoke about dangerous chemical storage. Monies are being spent on equipment and detection apparatus, with crews inspecting and reporting locations.

**Acting Deputy Chief, Ken Brown**, reinforced Brad’s comments. These storage warehouses are in non-placarded, mostly no-name buildings. Ken answered a lot of our questions in his usual up-front way. There are now 2,000 operational firefighters in the MFB. One Fire Service for Victoria – Fire Rescue Victoria is planned for 2020 – an independent review panel is set up to investigate the larger populated cities, towns or smaller townships as to who would be included in the new Fire Rescue Victoria.

Ken told us that most of his job is now administration and he misses the turn outs (with a wry look to Laurie). He goes to 5<sup>th</sup> Alarms (Big Fires!), and is enjoying his role in the Brigade.

Thanks to Ken, Brad and Paul – all very interesting.

**Meeting closed at 1215** with the BBQ/salads with some of the ladies and members from MFB Burnley Complex.

**Next Meeting – 15 May, 2019**

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

**Fairlie Morgan**— Employee Assistance  
Coordinator— [fmorgan@mfb.vic.gov.au](mailto:fmorgan@mfb.vic.gov.au)  
0407 665 174

**Chloe Henderson** — Peer Coordinator  
0417 538 289

**Scott Darcy** – Peer Coordinator –  
[sdarcy@mfb.vic.gov.au](mailto:sdarcy@mfb.vic.gov.au) – 0429 771 849

**John Howe** — Retirees  
9729 0984

## Download the new VicEmergency app

The new VicEmergency app was launched recently and will replace FireReady this summer. The VicEmergency app is now available to download from the App Store or Google Play and Victorians are encouraged to download it ahead of the summer season.

The VicEmergency website has also been upgraded and a new emergency hotline released. The Vic Emergency app and website will provide warning and incident notifications about floods, storms, fires, earthquakes tsunami, beach closures, shark sightings and more.

## UFU LAUNCHES CAMPAIGN TO PUT AN END TO TOXIC CHEMICAL DUMPSITES

Recently, the UFU commenced a campaign to seek legislation to make persons responsible for illegal toxic dumping accountable by law.

The current legislative structure does not provide a vehicle to ensure that there is a strong enough deterrent to prevent persons engaging in this criminal behaviour.

The Union has today written to Premier Andrews Gov requesting support for dedicated legislation to protect firefighters from what is becoming an ever-increasing criminal business model of illegal transporting and stockpiling of chemical waste.

The Union is seeking the following to be included in legislation:

1. Criminal sanctions inclusive of incarceration;
2. The ability for significant penalties against companies, their directors and persons associated with a company engaged in the illegal activity;
3. The ability for firefighters and/or their families to sue persons individually who are responded for engaging in illegal transporting and dumping of chemical waste.

Recent events have made it clear that perpetrators behind this ever-increasing business model of illegal dumping have done so within a company structure that effectively is devoid of assets, hence the Union is seeking to make the individuals accountable by law with civil litigation for firefighters who become ill as a result of having to combat fires involving illegal transportation and dumping.

It is well-known and irrefutable that career firefighters are more susceptible to certain types of cancer-related illness as a result of their exposure to toxic plumes in protecting the community. This was confirmed by the Australian Senate in 2011 and is well-documented.

Premises that house toxic chemicals/waste are supposed to be placarded by law to enable responding firefighters and officers to ascertain what is inside the building to enable them to take the appropriate precautions.

When it comes to illegal transportation and stockpiling of chemical waste, there is no such placarding and, indeed, the Union has labelled this reprehensible behaviour as akin to a premediated ambush or a death trap. We have had a number of members suffer adverse consequences as a result of fighting fires involving toxic chemical waste. Had there not been such conduct engaged by unscrupulous perpetrators, then such exposure would not have happened.

In short, the persons responsible must be pursued to the fullest extent of which the Union is seeking legislation, not only as a deterrent, but indeed as a way of making those responsible accountable with the most severe sanctions possible for injuring and exposing firefighters unnecessarily and recklessly.

The Union will also be launching a public awareness campaign to engage members of the community and business to identify illegal dumping sites and/or persons responsible via Crime Stoppers.

### Guess Who?

Pictured, a group aged gentlemen who seem to have forgotten their names.

We are asking our members to identify all of these unfortunate men so we can make identification tags for them.

A reward is offered to anyone who can name all of them left to right. This will be in the form of a 2 week camping holiday down at the Werribee Farm. (Supply your own camping gear and breathing apparatus).

All entries to the editor of this illustrious publication. No correspondence will be entered into.



## **The combustible cladding issue, a consumer nightmare**

*Station Officer Paul Copeland gave the Retired Firefighters Association an overview of the issues etc with these products.*

At heart, this issue is about product safety and consumer protection, yet, strangely, consumers face the cost of fixing it. So how did we get to this point? Let's look at this from design-based perspectives of policy, practice and people.

In a former life, I helped create vacuum cleaners in use today. We had strict regulations for electrical safety, energy efficiency and even waste.

If such appliances fail – particularly around safety – big companies have a history of recalling those products, at great expense to their bottom line.

A recent example is a recall of airconditioners. Regulators in these instances focus on protecting the consumer. Rod Simms from the Australian Competition and Consumer Commission notes we still have a way to go due to reactive policy for consumer protections for product safety.

The automotive industry also has a history of recalls. Take the recent lethal-airbags problem. Strong statutory actions resulted, with car companies forced by the ACCC to contact customers about rectifying issues prior to deregistration, justifiably at their expense.

Now let's focus on the Australian building industry. In practice, it appears responsibilities with regard to flammable cladding have entirely missed the mark. This is highlighted by the ruling for the Lacrosse building cladding and subsequent fire, which found that multiple professional disciplines were liable, including architects, surveyors, engineers and builders.

Systemic building defects in apartments, including widespread use of non-compliant cladding, are a well-documented result of industry practice. Apartment owners now have real concerns in their own homes.

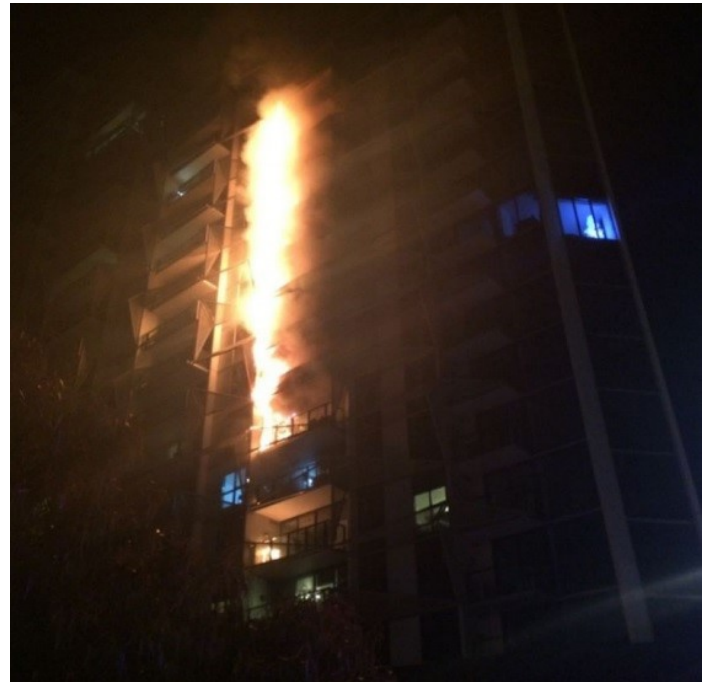
But how did design come to affect so many people adversely? A little history of Victorian design policy and practice sheds some light.

In 1994 the state government authorised private building surveyors to approve aspects of home construction and property development – once the domain of local councils – as new building regulations came into effect. A move to free up building approvals has arguably led to a vast number of buildings being signed off as compliant, when they are not. Owners reasonably believed their properties were safe until recent fires or government intervention exposed their vulnerability.

In 2002 the government enacted legislation that exempted buildings of more than three levels from needing protective warranty insurance, unlike every other Victorian home. This came in the middle of an insurance industry crisis and as the construction of high-rise buildings escalated. The exemption has led to apartment owners having no financial recourse for defective building works when builders go bust or walk away from legal liabilities.

In spite of such odds being stacked against them, many owners consider legal proceedings at their own expense for building defects. With insolvency of building companies/professionals and without warranty insurance, apartment owners are excluded from pursuing legal action against collapsed parties, as there is no one to sue. There are already cases of this happening in regards to cladding. Owners then face the costly work to rectify non-compliant material.

In 2016 legislation passed giving more powers to



***November 2014, combustible cladding burns on the Lacrosse Building.  
Image; MFB Media/Comms.***

regulators to order building work to be fixed in Victoria. Yet, ultimately, it was not enough, as the Victorian Building Authority remained unable to order rectification works by builders once owners took possession. As a result, the VBA has little power to pursue industry post-build. Case in point, when the VBA demanded a builder fix multiple Melbourne CBD buildings for cladding issues, the Supreme Court threw out the case, stating the regulator was outside its operating powers.

These policy or practice changes were not deliberately aimed at undermining apartment owners' protections. In fact, they could each be described as being led by good intentions. However, when taken collectively, it is a death by a thousand cuts for owners.

People should be able to rely on industry professions to design and build compliant constructions, and have access to recourse frameworks when things go wrong. However, they now find themselves in a precarious safety, legal, mental and spatial situation. Many face significant and unexpected financial burdens. In Victoria, Cladding Rectification Agreements (CRAs) have been introduced to help people access loans for cladding work. Yet CRAs have not been hammered out practically, with none so far taken up.

The VBA, a regulator set up to “ensure building and plumbing practitioners are compliant and that consumers are protected”, is now pursuing the consumers rather than building practitioners on the cladding issue. It has been conducting meetings with thousands of people across Melbourne to inform them of impending action in lieu of owners' liability in regard to cladding.

Consumers (that is, owners) are being pursued to foot the bill to fix an issue that was born of regulation, design and building practices. Without acting, they face hefty fines.

They also face legal bills for recourse over long periods of time.

Let us circle back to your vacuum cleaner. The predicament facing people who own properties with non-compliant cladding could be compared to: your vacuum cleaner failing or hurting you; the ACCC sending you a bill for the repair; Consumer Affairs forwarding you a medical invoice; and the tab for legal proceedings to pursue the company responsible lying with – you guessed it – you.

Taken another way, this could be likened to the royal commission on banking revealing a non-compliant financial adviser but the authorities going after their clients instead. Clearly this defies logic and justice.

There are calls for a state inquiry in Victoria and a royal commission nationally. These seem inevitable.

Governments and industry should be compelled to take action to fix the mess. Action should go beyond requiring victims to pay through loans, or prosecuting them for issues of design, policy and industry.

If there is a "pub test", the current approach seems to fall flat. Government and industry must respond with substantial policy and financial support, because lives and livelihoods depend on it.

**Simon Lockrey is a senior lecturer in industrial design at RMIT University, and an owner of property with non-compliant cladding.**

## Built environment Advocacy & background to MFB's involvement in Victorian Cladding Taskforce

**M**FB has been actively advocating for changes to built environment legislation and policy since the Lacrosse fire in Docklands in November 2014. In the wake of the increased focus on these issues following the Grenfell Tower Fire in London, MFB's structural fire safety experts have continued to be at the forefront of advocacy surrounding building reform, including the dangers of combustible cladding.

The Grenfell Tower fire in June 2017 initiated a significant State Government response, including the formation of the Victorian Cladding Task Force (VCT) in July 2017, an expert taskforce assigned to investigate the extent of non-compliant cladding on Victorian buildings.

The MFB is represented on the Taskforce, along with our partner agencies – WorkSafe Victoria, the Victorian Building Authority, the Municipal Association of Victoria and Emergency Management Victoria. The Taskforce is overseeing an audit process to identify where cladding has been used inappropriately and ensure issues with buildings are rectified. It is also formulating recommendations to government on how to improve compliance and enforcement of building regulations to better protect building occupants and firefighters.

MFB provided a significant contribution to the Regulatory Impact Statement for the Building Regulations 2018, and our submission had a key focus on outcomes aimed at addressing problems associated with non-compliant building products such as cladding and the role of MFB's Chief Officer in the built environment. MFB also made submissions both to the Victorian Cladding Taskforce and the Building Minister's Forum, drawing on experience from the Lacrosse fire and other incidents that have exposed shortcomings in the current regulatory framework.

After the Lacrosse building fire, Victoria embarked on Australia's first-ever audit to identify buildings fitted with cladding, and more than 200 Victorian buildings have now been assessed. Although all have so far been declared safe to occupy, many do not currently comply with regulations. Teams from MFB's Fire Safety Department continue to be actively engaged in expert review panels which are assessing compliance and conducting risk assessments of identified buildings across the state. MFB supports all appropriate measures through the relevant authorities to allow the identification of structures where the risk is elevated.

MFB will continue to advocate for changes to legislation and enforcement practices to improve the safety of

firefighters and the community.

### Getting the Information to Firefighters

Information on identified buildings is gathered on site by qualified auditors. This includes: type & location of combustible cladding, Fire protection equipment, egress provisions, fire engineering, firefighter access, Essential Safety Measures (ESM's).

This information is then presented to an 'expert' panel at either the Victorian Building Authority (VBA) or local council offices.

The panel comprises an independent Fire Engineer, an independent Building Surveyor & a representative of either the MFB or CFA depending on jurisdiction. There is usually a Municipal Building Surveyor in attendance also.

An assessment of the building is made by the panel. This is done in terms of risk to occupants and firefighters in relation to Combustible Cladding being present.

The information gathered by the MFB rep. is compiled into a database. A report may be generated depending on the buildings level of risk. The MFB rep. may suggest an enhanced response & a turnout note would be applied to the address informing crews of the presence of combustible cladding.

The MFB representative may need to conduct their own inspection of the premises to gather further information.

This is called an MFB Combustible Cladding Report for Operations.

It is then sent to the 2 nearest stations & also published on the MFB intranet site.

Once the report is received by operational crews they conduct familiarisation inspections of the site. This would include checking for access / egress, location of firefighting equipment, hydrant locations etc.

If operational crews find any fire safety deficiencies they would then report these to the Fire Safety Department.



QLD - 2019



Thirty years ago a very small group of Victorian retired fireies and their partners had lunch at the Southport Yacht Club. When the time came to say hoorah they also made a decision to meet again on the last Thursday in July at the same place.



**And they did!!!!**

**This year of 2019 is the 30<sup>th</sup> year!!!**

**This year is on the 25<sup>th</sup> July.**



Come on and get up here to meet and greet your old mates.

You know the location - Southport Yacht Club.

A reminder will be sent later but now is the time to start letting me know if you are coming. You know I need numbers for the club to seat you.

A phone call or an email will do the trick.

Phone: 07 5522 4321

Gail: 0431 485 141

Ian: 0417 382 935

Email: [fagernes@bigpond.com](mailto:fagernes@bigpond.com)

Silly raffle, stupid door prizes are still on the go! No strippers this year!

## **Notice to CFA Retired personnel who read "Water Off"**

### **CFA Career Staff History**

Over the last few years, I have been working on compiling a record of all CFA Career Staff. I have done plenty of work from the 1940's to the 1970's; I believe that the list is close to being correct over the last 40 years.

I am seeking assistance to determine names, correct spelling and course dates, etc. I would greatly appreciate if you check your respective course and advise of the missing details. For instructors, can you please advise of the year of starting.

**Glenn Jennings AFSM Operations Officer – State Driving Coordinator**

Country Fire Authority Training

C/- 61-65 Separation St, North Geelong, 3215

P. O. BOX 586 North Geelong, 3215, Victoria, Australia

Tel: 61 3 5240 2792 M: 0419 361 053 E: [g.jennings@cfa.vic.gov.au](mailto:g.jennings@cfa.vic.gov.au)

Contact Glenn Jennings as per information above.



## Hede the warning! He joined the MFB!

My name is Kevin Hede and I was born in Coburg and I lived and was educated in North Melbourne.

My first job was learning to be a Wool Classer where I stayed for 2 years. I left that job and took up a position at Gadsden as a fitter & turner and attended RMIT to complete my apprenticeship.

I left after several clashes with the boss so decided that I would pursue my dream and that was to join the Royal Australian Navy. I got a taxi the next day to take me to the recruiting office. As we were travelling there the taxi driver said I will turn off the meter and take you to Eastern Hill (Fire Station) as that would be a better job, (clever taxi driver!) I saw a fellow in the dog box who took me to see Mr. Tueno. He asked are you on holidays or sick leave? I said "so called sick leave". Boy did he go off as we do not tolerate that at a Fire Station.

I then went to see Dr. Marr and started on the Friday. Another chap Kevin Pengally started at the same time. He did approximately 2 hours in recruits and then went straight down to 46 Station and was told to catch the next appliance that goes out.

The first fire I attended was a "kapok" mattress fire, no BA and it was not a good introduction to 48 Station. Later, I was transferred to 47 Station and I wondered what hit me! A watch-room that never stopped 24/7.

One night we had one of the Refinery fires down around Altona and on our way back to the Station we were called on to a fire at the Essendon Airport not yet under control. Another busy night for 47.

Another time we turned out from the Station and all you could see was black smoke. Harry Harrison

called for assistance immediately to attend Whitehall Street Footscray. When we arrived it turned out to be a burning drum of creasote. Mr. Harrison went into shock and had a very red face.

In the early years we got permission to have family parties at the Station in the rear yard. We had train rides, pony rides and fire truck rides. For the adults we had a BBQ at night time. We used to lower down Alan Dick's piano over the 1st floor balcony by ropes off the Pumper. Getting the piano back upstairs was no mean feat. Len Cave played the piano and Peter Harranis did the singing.

Had some big jobs - just to name a few: William Angliss, Wool Stores, Shut & Barries and Boat shed.

Some of the good Officers I worked with were Jack Moore, Claude Selby, Ron Topless, George Foster and Ted Harrison. Some of the characters I worked with were Len Cave, Jack Cockburn Peter Harranis, Rusty McDougal and Harry Sparks.

These days, I have been volunteering for the past 15 years at Broadmeadows Health - Men's Shed which is most enjoyable. I worked at various Stations in the Western District and my final Station was 52. I retired in 2002 after 40 years' service.

I have been married for 50 years to Trish and have 2 sons and 3 grandchildren. My favourite holiday destination is Porepunkah and like to visit other holiday resorts. I reside at Gladstone Park. I have travelled overseas and particularly liked cruising. We Really enjoyed Canada & Alaska.

WELL DONE KEVIN! I remember Kevin standing out the front of Footscray Fire Station in the early seventies when I used to live in the old quarters out the back - he loved watching the trams go by! - CDH - Editor



Above; Kevin Hede, a union stalwart and RFA committee member.

## It was back in 1958 that Tom Driscoll joined the MFB

Tom was born in Fitzroy on the 14<sup>th</sup> October 1930. So that makes him about 88 years of age and he's still humming along.

Tom also grew up in Fitzroy. He went to St. Patricks School until year 8. After school and on most Fridays Tom would attend Eastern hill Fire Station, as it was close by and check out what was going on at the big station.

He was fascinated by all the firemen and fire trucks, as most young boys were in those days (and probably still are these days). Tom would see the fire brigade band playing, various drills being done, the fire brigade gymnast team in action and the Leyland Ladder being operated.

In Tom's mind, he knew how to operate the Leyland Ladder even at the age of eight! He met his heroes of the day. People like, Bill Leonard, Tom Draper, Clarrie Curyer and Jack Patterson. At nine years of age, he decided then he wanted to join the fire brigade, however, his heroes said not just yet Tom!

Time went on and at the age of 22, Tom decided to join the CFA volunteers up at Belgrave, as he was living there at this time. There, he learned lots about fire fighting and saved plenty of chimneys!

With some firefighting experience under his belt, Tom decided it was time to join the MFB in 1958. And of course, who did he meet? Well, it was the Messers Patterson, Leonard, Draper, Curyer, Green and many other faces he had seen many years before. His registered number was 1504.

So, at last he could finally drive and operate the

Combination Ladder, the Leyland ladder, the 7 and 8 Dennis Pumps and so on. Tom worked at various stations, including Eastern Hill, Carlton, Surrey Hills (No.21), William Street (No.2). One of the bad jobs he attended was on the corner of Flinder's Lane and William Street Melbourne. The building stored and contained old film (nitro cellulose). The smoke from this fire caused Tom to be off work for 14 weeks.

After 4 years (1962), Tom realised that earning 13 Guineas a week was far too little to earn each week (about \$27.00 in our language) and decided to drive trucks and earn far more money. (As you can see firefighters were poorly paid for saving life and property in the bad old days).

In 1968, Tom decided to re-join the "family", this time it was the Special Service. Most of us know about the MFB Special Service. No, it wasn't an ASIO type of organisation, it was the men who went out in green vehicles and serviced fire hoses, extinguishers and carried out patrols at the Titles Office, Parliament House, the Museum of Victoria and various theatres around Melbourne. I think from memory they also worked at the Victorian Railways. His new registered number was 5331.

During this time, Tom joined the Fire Museum and worked here part time as a volunteer for about 3-4 years. He was once again reunited with the beloved Comb Ladder, Leyland ladder and the Dennis pumps once more.

These days, Tom believes his life is complete, having fulfilled his ambitions of being a firefighter. He says that "that was part of my life in the way we have in the fire brigade".

*Tom lives in Werribee these days. At age 88 is in great spirits and loved his time in the MFB!*



Above; Tom, resplendent in his old turnout gear at the Fire Museum.

## Smile

A woman visited a psychic of some local repute. In a dark and gloomy room, gazing at the Tarot cards laid out before her, the Tarot reader delivered the bad news: "There is no easy way to say this so I'll just be blunt: Prepare yourself to be a widow. Your husband will die a violent death this year."

Visibly shaken, the woman stared at the psychic's lined face, then at the single flickering candle, then down at her hands. She took a few deep breaths to compose herself. She simply had to know.

She met the Tarot reader's gaze, steadied her voice and asked, "Will I get away with it?"

# “Gone But Not Forgotten”

## Lindsay McCurdy



Lindsay joined MFB on 2 March 1950 at 18 years of age, when L P Whitehead was Chief Officer. At the time, he was considered young as most firefighters were between 21 and 28 when they joined.

Lindsay was first stationed at FS03 (Carlton) before transferring to FS06 formerly Coburg Fire

Station).

Lindsay quickly rose through the ranks, being promoted to Third Class Firefighter, (formerly Third Class Fireman), before his 12 month anniversary.

Over the course of his 36-year career, Lindsay was stationed at various fire stations, including FS04 (Brunswick), FS03 (Carlton), FS12 (Preston), FS09 (North Fitzroy) and FS52 (North Essendon). In the 1950's and 1960's

Lindsay attended many grass fires in the suburbs of Glenroy, Avondale Heights, Broadmeadows and East Coburg, and also attended house and industrial fires.

In June 1961 Lindsay was promoted to the rank of Senior Firefighter (formerly Senior Fireman), rising to Sub Station Officer Grade 2 less than a year later, before being finally promoted to Station Officer Grade 1 (equivalent to today's Senior Station Officer) in 1974.

In April 1986 Lindsay passed the baton to his son, current MFB Commander Dave McCurdy.

Lindsay retired on 12 January 1987 at the age of 55 following more than 36 years of service to the Victorian community.

Lindsay passed away on 4 April 2019 and is survived by his wife, three children, grandchildren and great-grandchildren.

## MFB /CFA Valē

Barry McCormack  
Lindsay McCurdy

Lou McSweeney  
Troy Thornton

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

## Assistance Required,

Springvale Fire Brigade are permanently moving out of their current station by the middle of this year. To acknowledge this occasion the brigade are planning to hold a function for all brigade members past and present.

I'm writing to you to seek assistance in trying to track down the contact details of former CFA Staff from the list below :

Jeff King	Jim Marshall	Tony Bearzatto
	Tony Hunt	Ian Morley
Michael Flemming		Craig Veale
Colin May	Bill Rudge	Eddie Lacko
David Frost	Mark Harvey	Bill Greenaway
David Searles	Vince Bosua	Allan Furness
Ron Stokes	Owen Maslen	Colin Cobb
Mick Woods	Bob Flett	Greg Evans
Len Scheetz	Ray Gouge	Kevin Walsh
Ray Lucas	Ron Potter	Tom Davies
Stewart Hyder	Paul Weibanger	Gerry White
Grant Gaskin	Ian Moore	Ian Findlay

If you are still in contact with any of these former members could you please forward on their contact details to this email address.



**Blake Ross Senior Station Officer**

Springvale Fire Brigade – 518 Springvale Rd, Springvale South  
T: 03 9546 9598 M: 0410 695 350 E: [B.Ross@cfa.vic.gov.au](mailto:B.Ross@cfa.vic.gov.au)

# Super watchdogs give industry deadline for clean-up

**H**ow closely have you managed the administration of your super fund over the past decade or so? Could you have been charged fees for services you didn't request?

Regulators have given the \$2.7 trillion industry until 30 June to clean up the damaging and widespread practice revealed last year by the financial services royal commission – fees for no service.

The Australian Prudential Regulation Authority (APRA) and the Australian Securities and Investments Commission (ASIC) sent a letter to every superannuation trustee company in Australia this week, warning that the issues of compensation and governance needed to be resolved.

The letter, signed by APRA deputy chair Helen Rowell and ASIC commissioner Danielle Press, said the watchdogs had already “identified a range of industry practices in relation to trustee oversight, many of which fall below the standard we expect”, some of which were “the subject of enforcement investigations or actions”.

The letter continued: “This raises concerns about some trustees’ risk governance, capabilities and culture, as well as their ability to appropriately manage conflicts of interest.”

The regulators said they “reserve the right to exercise our powers in relation to any subsequent enforcement action required” and expected super trustees to pursue financial advisers who had inappropriately charged fund members.

The royal commission hearings exposed the likes of NAB, AMP and CBA, which had continued to charge dead people advice fees and clients for financial advice they never received.

Ms Rowell and Ms Press told trustees they “must have in place strong governance, risk management and oversight processes to ensure that only authorised and appropriate fees and other charges are deducted from members’ superannuation accounts”.

“Accordingly, APRA and ASIC expect all trustees to be reviewing the robustness of their existing governance



and assurance arrangements for fees charged to members’ superannuation accounts, and to address any identified areas for improvement in a timely manner.

“Should such reviews uncover any significant issues or deficiencies in the risk management systems and processes of trustees, our strong expectation is that trustees give urgent consideration as to whether a reportable breach has occurred and, if so, whether it has been escalated in a manner that will ensure appropriate remediation takes place.”

The letter said that reviews should consider:

- whether fees had been “explicitly authorised by members”
- whether services had actually been provided
- whether the deductions were in the best interest of members
- whether deductions were consistent with the “sole purpose test” contained in super law.

Recently, it was reported that CBA had repaid an additional \$2.3 million to 232 clients of its worst financial advisers. The disclosures were made in the fifth and final instalment of a KordaMentha review of the CBA’s compensation processes as part of licence conditions imposed by the ASIC.

Would you know if you had been charged for services not delivered? Do you monitor the administration of your super account closely?

**Source; Janelle Ward—YourLifeChoices**

## Volunteers Required

**The Fire Services Museum needs past fire service members to assist on an occasional basis at the Museum**

**Please contact**

**Mike McCumisky on: 9662 2907**

# The dangers lurking in your medicine cabinet

Have you ever gone to your medicine cabinet, looked at some tablets and thought, “They might do the trick” or “I can’t remember what they were for”?

Have you ever stuck a cotton bud in your ear?

Everyone has a medicine cabinet, but everything in it may not necessarily improve your health. Like the humble cotton bud, which may be housed elsewhere, of course.

Now, there’s an example of something that is too often used for a purpose for which it wasn’t intended.

A seemingly harmless cotton bud is great for applying or removing make-up, doing your nails and for odd jobs around the house, but not for removing earwax. Earwax is not your enemy. It’s actually part of an ear’s natural defence system and by pushing a cotton bud in, you may simply be removing something that’s needed, or pushing it in too deeply and causing a blockage or perforating your eardrum.

Do as your grandmother always said: “The only thing you put in your ear is your elbow.”

And then, of course, there’s always a risk in using anything in your medicine cabinet that was not prescribed for you. Antihistamine tablets, for example, may be effective for some people, but for others, they can affect sleep, appetite, sex drive and cause constipation and vomiting.

You may be on medication for a heart condition, but you’ve got a headache. A couple of aspirin can’t hurt, can they?

Actually, they can. Anybody on heart tablets, especially blood-thinners, needs to know that aspirin can cause bleeding in the stomach. Anti-inflammatories can have the same impact, if overused.

Chewable antacids may also seem innocuous enough, but for some people, they can cause cramps, headaches, chest tightness or fever. You’re best to talk to a doctor before taking them or if you experience any symptoms after taking them.

Few things seem as non-threatening as health supplements or vitamin tablets. The reality is, however, that overuse – particularly of vitamins A, D, E and K – can affect your health.

Getting too much preformed vitamin A from supplements, for example, can cause dizziness,



nausea, headaches and worse.

Some of you may have tablets and creams at the back of the medicine cabinet that you bought years ago. Check the expiry dates and if you’re not completely sure they are still safe for you to use, get rid of them.

And if, or when, you throw out any medicines, don’t just toss them in a bin where some person or animal may find them. Wrap them up and bag them first.

## More information about the following substances:

- Mouthwash. It can hurt your stomach or make you nauseous. You may even vomit if you swallow too much
- Anti-bacterial soaps. These have chemicals that are supposed to kill bacteria, but they may actually help make the bacteria stronger and harder for antibiotics to kill.
- St John’s Wort. This herb taken with antidepressants can lower your body temperature and cause trembling, diarrhoea, confusion and muscle stiffness. It also may interfere with some drugs used to treat heart problems, high cholesterol and erectile dysfunction.
- Weight loss supplements. Anything that ‘guarantees’ fast weight loss or claims to be a “herbal alternative” should not be trusted.

When was the last time you cleaned out the medicine cabinet? Do you always dispose of unused medicines safely?

**Source; Janelle Ward—YourLifeChoices**



## **FIRE RESCUE RINGS**

As well as the Fire Rescue rings we now have sets of Tie Bars, Ear Rings and Cuff Links.

These are available in different combination sets or can be purchased as a single item.

They are available from the Secretary and will be on display at the next meeting.

If you would like to place an order now, give Allan Roberts a call.

**Telephone: Mob: 0433 007 720  
Home: 9216 1658**



**Firefighters Credit Union**

*dedicated & committed to the financial needs of firefighters*

Australian Financial Services Licence 204898  
Australian Credit Licence 204898

**“A NEW WAY OF BANKING”**

**Firefighters Credit Co-operative**

**for ALL current & retired  
Firefighters  
and their families**

**If you would like to know more about**

**Phone: 1300 366 350 or 8417 1777  
or visit [www.fccl.com.au](http://www.fccl.com.au) Email: [info@fccl.com.au](mailto:info@fccl.com.au)**



*FightersCreditUnion1976*

**Copy deadline for Water Off Magazine  
for next edition is July 19th 2019.**



**Your hosts:**  
**Jan and Lin Bell,**  
 ex-MFB, offering exceptional  
 customer service since 2006

**M: 0403 221 737**

Home Office: 03 5255 3839



## **DOG-FRIENDLY HOLIDAY HOUSE**

**24 Roditis Drive, Ocean Grove**

Dog beach - 10 minutes walk or 500m in your car  
 Pets can stay and sleep indoors.

- Self-catering, gas/electric cooking, microwave, dishwasher, all equipment supplied. BBQ and outdoor setting.
- Lounge/dining area, gas log fire, reverse cycle aircon, wide screen TV, DVD/CD player, movie & audio libraries.
- Fully tiled bathroom - twin walk-in shower, toilet, vanity, extra toilet off laundry - very handy!
- Comfy beds: 2 queen, 2 singles, electric blankets, pillows, doonas, ceiling fans. Linen/towels for hire or BYO.
- Laundry, outdoor clothes line, drying racks. Warm outdoor shower for humans and dogs.
- Large escape-proof garden, secure fences, short drive to Coles, Woolworths, banks, post office, speciality shops, cafes and restaurants.
- Ocean Grove Hotel, Golf Club and Bowls Club nearby.

**2019-20 nightly rates - for up to 6 guests**

Autumn \$240, Winter \$200, Spring \$240, Summer \$280.

Dogs or cats - always stay **FREE!**

[www.bellsbythebeach.com.au](http://www.bellsbythebeach.com.au)

[info@bellsbythebeach.com.au](mailto:info@bellsbythebeach.com.au)

[www.facebook.com/bellsbythebeachholidayhouse](https://www.facebook.com/bellsbythebeachholidayhouse)

## **Geelong Firey's Muster**

*C.F.A. - M.F.B. - VIVA - AVALON  
 Serving & Retired - Staff & Volunteers  
 Smorgasbord Lunch*

*On the 4th Tuesday of March & October  
 @ 1130 hrs*

**GATEWAY HOTEL**

**218-230 Princess Highway - CORIO**

*Members, Wives, Partners,  
 Family & Friends*

**Contact:**

**Peter Lang 5275 6039**

**To receive Mail out notification**



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

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

John's address - -  
[retfire@bigpond.net.au](mailto: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.

# **UFU RETIRED MEMBERS ANNUAL CHRISTMAS LUNCHEON**

**Saturday 16th November**  
**Peninsula A Shed 14, Harbour Esplanade, Docklands.**

A reminder:

If you have accepted the invitation to the luncheon and through illness, or some other circumstance, find you are unable to attend, please notify the Union Office A.S.A.P.

---

**PRINT POST No. 100002647**

**RFA Newsletter**

**If undelivered return to;**

**Allan Roberts.**

**Unit 158 Mernda Retirement Village**

**89 Galloway Drive**

**Mernda Vic 3754**

**SURFACE  
MAIL**

**Postage  
Paid  
Australia**

