

"WATER OFF"

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



August 2008 Vol 12 No 3
Inc/No: A16839F

A Near Disaster For Flight 216

Pilot's skill saves passengers and crew after engine breaks away.



Above: The Ansett ANA DC6B, (VH-INA) minus one engine taxis back to the terminal after a successful landing.

April 14th 1964 had the potential to see one of Melbourne's worst air disasters.

Can you recall that day?

Were you on duty as a member of the DCA Fire Crew?

Did you turn out and stand by at Essendon Airport as part of the MFB's response?

Was there any significant damage to property as a result of falling debris?

If you have information to any of the above questions please contact us and let us know.

Full story on the events of the day from the pen of Les Gray on page 10.

Thanks to Maurice Austin of the Civil Aviation Historical Society for his advice and assistance with the above photograph.

This issue:

Our next Meeting's Guest Speaker: **Sue Jamieson**, Coordinator of the MFB's Employee's Assistance Program will detail how it can benefit retired members. See page 8 for more information.

3 President's and Sec/Treasurer's Report.

4 Meeting Minutes.

5 RFA Vic. Branch celebrates 20 years.

6 Atherton Report: Firefighter Cancer - A timely study?

8 MFB FS. 26 relocates.

“GENERAL MEETING”

Notice is hereby given of our next General Meeting to be held at the Brunswick Campus R.M.I.T. 25 Dawson Street Brunswick, (Melway 29 F8) 1030 Hours, Wednesday 20th August 2008

AGENDA ITEMS.

- Minutes of last General meeting.**
- President’s Report.**
- Secretary/Treasurer’s Report.**
- Guest Speaker: Sue Jamieson, MFB’s Employee’s Assistance Program**
- General Business.**

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 and beverages available.

JOHN BERRY
ACTING SECRETARY/TREASURER
Please Note;
Until further notice address all correspondence to:
The Acting Secretary,
24 Lincoln Drive Lower Plenty 3093
Ph. 9431 2880

OFFICE BEARERS

- President,** Mike McCumisky
- Vice President,** Ian Fowler
- Sec./Treasurer,** John Brown
- Acting Sec/Treasurer,** John Berry

- General Committee;**
- Ian Geddes
- John Laverick
- Ken McGillivray
- John Schintler
- John Wallace

**“Water Off”
Editorial Staff**
John Laverick
Barbara McCumisky

Auditor; Theo Teklenburg

Valë

- | | |
|-----------------------|-------------------|
| Jonathon Bowles (MFB) | Alf Powell (MFB) |
| Peter Coram (MFB) | Marie Wells (MFB) |
| Ken Croft (MFB) | |
| Ron Farmer (MFB) | |
| Ken Fort (MFB) | |
| Phil Lewis (MFB) | |
| Allan Lowe (MFB) | |

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

SICK LIST

- | | |
|---------------------|--------------------|
| John Brown | Terry Harman |
| Stan Cameron | Clarrie Hart |
| Jim Casley | John (Jesse) James |
| Ron Cass | Ron Kennedy |
| Ken Clinkaberry | Phil Lewis |
| Ron (Sailor) Davies | Jack Sexton |
| Ernie Goodall | Ron Turner |

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 2008

- | | |
|---------------|------------------------------|
| August 20th | General Meeting |
| November 15th | Luncheon, St Kilda Town Hall |
| November 19th | Annual General Meeting |
| November 24th | Geelong Reunion, Shell Club |

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Welcome again to the RFA August Newsletter. To those on the sick list, we wish you a speedy recovery. The second meeting for 2008 held at RMIT complex in Dawson Street, Brunswick was well attended.

We are still looking for other ideas on centrally located meeting places with meals, good public transport and parking to cater for our members travelling from all suburbs. Suggestions from the last meeting were the Fairfield RSL single level, Station 59 (Lincoln Hotel) next to FS 10 with possible parking on an adjacent block. If you know of others sites and are able to check them out, please bring the information along to a meeting so the members can make a decision.

NOTE FOR THE NOVEMBER ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING ELECTIONS

WE WILL NEED TO RECEIVE NOMINATIONS THE POSITION OF SECRETARY / TREASURER

John Brown is retiring after five years as Secretary / Treasurer and currently John Berry very kindly stepped in to act as Assistant Secretary/ Treasurer only until the AGM so we need to find a member with just a little spare time and good with paperwork. The extent of the work as Secretary is to handle a relatively small amount of correspondence and as Treasurer to record all incoming

and outgoing transactions, mainly memberships.

IF THERE ARE NO NOMINATIONS FOR THE ABOVE POSITION AT THE AGM AND NO ONE IS ELECTED, THEN THE RETIRED FIREFIGHTERS ASSOCIATION VICTORIAN BRANCH INC. CANNOT CONTINUE TO OPERATE

SO IT IS IN THE INTEREST OF ALL MEMBERS TO FIND SOMEONE WILLING TO TAKE ON THE POSITION

Looking to the Future Membership of the RFA:

Peter Lang raised this important issue at the February meeting. He moved that a sub committee be formed to look into future planning of the RFA and what processes we need to follow to encourage continued membership. We would welcome several Members with sales and marketing skills to assist in the development of this project.

Don't forget any snippets of news can be sent to our editor, John Laverick. He is always looking for copy and space fillers.

I look forward to seeing you at the next meeting. In the meantime, take care and stay safe.

Regards, Mike



ACTING SECRETARY/TREASURER'S REPORT

Members please note the RFA yearly subscriptions have not increased, they are still \$10-and the committee will ensure, as in the past, that if anything should happen to the member, their Wife and /or Partner will still receive the newsletter and an open invitation to all meetings etc free of any cost, they of course can decline if not interested.

At the August meeting the committee will exhibit a sample cap with embroidered RFA logo for the members to review, the cap is a high quality one with suitable adjuster to fit all sizes, if accepted by the members the total cost of cap with embroidery will be \$10 if we order in lots of two hundred. Any less and the cost increases by 50% (it is estimated the cost of postage throughout Australia in a suitable box is \$5).

Interim discussion with some of the members that have attended Interstate Fire Services and/or Fire Games etc, say that the words Victoria, Australia should be embroidered on the back as they become a very hot item for exchange. These words increase the cost by \$3. I have shown the embroidered sample to a number of non fire-related people and the feedback has been very positive.

One other item I must mention, the Ex President (guess) who shall remain anonymous and his wife Nancy have done it again, won four (4) different prizes before they took off on their trip to Canada then no longer than fortnight after returning won a trip for two, flights and 5 star accommodation to Fiji, being the fine fellows we are, we say well done. (Lucky #*+! *-%)

In accord with the committee's ruling, 2 non financial members have been removed off mailing list.

A tribute to Phil Lewis

Phil was a great stalwart of the RFA. I had the opportunity to meet him a number of years ago following a discussion with Keith Adamson regarding the problems that we were experiencing in printing our newsletter. Keith being a great supporter of our group, immediately put me in touch with Phil and I must say from that first meeting and until he was unable, due to his medical condition, was a very willing assistant. We could not have wished for a more enthusiastic contributor to our need. He always found time for us even if it meant giving up his own valuable off duty time, ensuring that us old retiree's got their newsletter printed.

Phil hid his condition from us; the time I spent with him was always full of light and humour. Looking back he was obviously exhibiting that firefighter's trait of finding humour at the darkest of times.

In closing I must say I am not sure if the MFB realize how great an ambassador he was for them with us retiree's. Phil will be greatly missed by us all. I do believe however, if there is a golf course up there, he will be working on his handicap, (be warned you golfers when your time comes and you meet up with him up there you will be confronted with one mean golfer ready to take you down).

John Berry, Acting Sec/Treasurer.

The minutes from the May meeting are on page 4 of this edition.

R.F.A. MEETING MINUTES

21st May 2008 at RMIT – Brunswick 10.45am

Mike McCumsy (President), John Berry (Act. Secretary/Treasurer), Ian Geddes) Minutes).

Members Present: 33 Members as per attendance book

Apologies: D. & N.. Brennan, K. Wilson, F. Kerr, J. Schintler, G. Edwards, J. Cotter, T. Trotman, T. Osland & A. Mears.

Mike welcomed Graeme McLean (ex 1-B) to his first meeting. Good to see John Brown at this Meeting. Sick list and recently deceased as per 'Water Off' (May '08)

Minutes of previous Meeting: Read and confirmed -
Moved: Harry Floyd. - Seconded Ken Mc Gillvray. -
Carried.

Business arising from Minutes:-

New members – Geoff Setford, Graeme McLean, Keith Lyon, Arch McLachlan, Kevin Oates.

Len Manning – re notification of sickness/deaths to R.F.A. As has been the custom, Ian Hunter (M.F.B.) notifies the Secretary of the death of M.F.B. members

Motion- Len Manning Seconded Don Cameron.

"If partners or friends wish to notify R.F.A. of a sickness or a death, please do so." Carried. A small article will be placed in future "Water Off" editions.

Correspondence In/Out:

Reg Carey – Fish are biting at Forster.

Peter & Marcia Adamson – Caravanning Life is good.

Joan Goodall – Ernie is at a Templestowe Nursing Home.

Wally Steel, Kevin Oates, Len Lette, Gordon Hill.

Treasurers Report:

\$1884.59 at call, \$6,127.91 on fixed term.

Out - \$894 for Luncheon at T/C. IN - \$400 from partners at T/C Luncheon.

Out - \$200 to Petty Cash

Moved– Godfrey Payne, Seconded – Harry Floyd, Treasurer's Report be accepted. Carried.

Secretary's Report:

John Berry – letter from the Dept. of Justice – Our A.G.M. report must be received at Consumer Affairs Vic (Reg Branch) within 5 months of the end of the financial year, failure to do so may incur a \$500.00 fine. John explained that due to ill health of relevant R.F.A. officials, we were a bit late – no further action this time, and no fine.

New computer monitor for Editor John Laverick – costing to be done. A large supporter of the R.F.A. may be able to help.

Report moved – Harry Floyd Seconded – Bob McNeil. Carried.

Presidents Report:

Mike reminded us that nominations for Secretary/Treasurer are required.

Meeting Venue – Suggestions? Brunswick, T/C, Lincoln Hotel (opp No 10). Fairfield R.S.L was visited – Manager is ex Northern F/F Wayne Delamarta. Venue must meet the following criteria's (public transport/parking, single level, meeting room, food, at a good cost)

Write to John Berry a SHORT NOTE by August 15th. If you wish to be part of the venue sub committee

Future direction of R.F.A. (follow on from Peter Lang 20th Feb '08.) – What do we want and where are we going?

Write a SHORT note to John Berry by August 15th if you wish to be part of this important sub committee.

General Business:

Godfrey Payne – could John Berry write to a Brigade rep and tell him a bit more about the R.F.A.? – Yes.

Keith Adamson's assistant (Phil Lewis) returned to Epworth (E. Melb). Contact him before any visit.

The R.F.A. luncheon Day at T/C was well attended; MFB's staff was first class with their assistance making the day a big success.

Godfrey Payne spoke about the ANZAC Runners.

Motion: That a letter of congratulations to Runners and Support Crews, be sent, plus a donation of \$200.00

Moved – Godfrey Payne. Seconded – Graeme Duncan. Carried. (Discussions held later that this is not to be seen as a precedent).

Ian Fowler – Reported the great help he receives from the Union.

Letter to Les Gray for his articles.

Ian Geddes – World Police and Firefighters Games in Vancouver, Canada 31st July '09. Eddie McMullen (34D) is a good contact.

Overview of R.F.A. History:

John Berry's Overview. – Formed in 1988, assisted by the Union, Godfrey Payne, Tom Harrison, Don Cameron and others. Jack Sheridan was the first Editor, then John Laverick. Nina McPherson (T/C), then Keith Adamson and Phil Lewis assisted with Water Off printing. The Union took on the Public Liability costs. For all our R.F.A. functions, invitations are sent to relevant persons of all support organisations. The RFA appreciate greatly the assistance given from various groups. Members requested that this overview be shown in the next newsletter.

There was no guest speaker for this meeting.

Next meeting – 20th August 2008 at Brunswick

Meeting ended 1215hrs

Apologies for next meeting – Harry Floyd

In Time of Illness or Grief

Member information

In the event of illness or following the death of a member the families will be dealing with a great amount of grief. They may wish to notify the relevant fire service of the illness or death, but do not know how or who to contact at this time of need.

The RFA members at the last meeting indicated that a one stop phone contact should be established to assist the grieving family in notifying the person's responsible in the relevant fire service.

This has now been established.

Following the illness or death of a member, the family, if they wish to notify the Fire Service concerned, they should **contact the Secretary/Treasurer of the RFA** whose phone number appears in bold print on page two of all editions of "Water Off". The family may of course decline this offer if they wish

RETIRED FIREFIGHTERS ASSOCIATION (VIC BRANCH) CELEBRATES 20TH BIRTHDAY

Members who were not at the May meeting will see in the Acting Secretary's report on the minutes a reference to a verbal report I gave on the history of the RFA to the meeting, at the end of the report the members present requested it be placed in the next newsletter. The following is an overview of the information found in early copies of the newsletter and general discussions in the past, from inaugural committee members Ern Tamme and the late Peter Holten.

We all know one can not live in the past, however, without it we have no future; it is still one of the best ways to measure if we are advancing or not.

To better understand what initiated the retiree's goal for developing the association you need to understand what was occurring at that time. Emergency services as a whole were experiencing the largest exodus of personnel of all ranks from their respective service. The Police Force already had a retired group which enabled them to maintain their contact. The career firefighter from the CFA, MFB and the non operational staff did not have one they could call their own. Imagine, here we have a group of personnel from every section of the fire services, which in most cases spent more than half their life combating all types of contingencies in the protection of life and property of the community. With a bond to each other almost as close as their biological family and retirement was not a reason to break that bond. From my research this was one of the main reasons for the RFA's formation.

The first gathering was held at the MFB Training College, the interim chairman at that meeting, until **Tom Williamson** was elected as the inaugural President, was **Godfrey Payne** who was at the previously mentioned May meeting. The rest of the committee that were charged with the responsibility of bringing the RFA to fruition consisted of the following, Vice President **Don Brennan**, Secretary **Peter Holton**, Treasurer **Jack Gallop**, Committee **Don Cameron**, **Ern Tamme & Don Plant** and Editor **Jack Sheridan**.

The **United Firefighters Union** afforded them great assistance in obtaining the Incorporation & Constitution by organizing **Slater & Gordon Lawyers** to assist them gain the aforementioned. The Union also allowed the use of their office, equipment & material to print, collate & fold the quarterly newsletter.

The **Firefighters Credit Cooperative** Theo Teklenburg advised them how to set up the bookkeeping and printed the labels for the mailing, also a motion from the late **Bill Webber** brought about the development of the annual reunion day luncheon which we all know has been a great success for members, guest/spouse and supporters to break bread as one.

The **Metropolitan Fire Brigade** was and still is of great assistance to us by allowing the use of their Training College and exhibiting their latest appliances etc on these

days and in various other ways. I did not join the RFA until 1990 and in 1995 I became a member -of the committee and it was during the next 18 months I had the opportunity to learn about the RFA from Ern Tamme & Peter Holton (unfortunately on the 19th October 1997 Peter was called to a higher place).

In 1996 we were able to entice an author who had had two books published, John Laverick, take over the role of editor of the newsletter (Jack Sheridan, the previous one, was under a great deal of pressure with his Mayoral duties etc and was finding it very difficult to spare the extra time we needed). The Committee over the next two years approved the purchase of a computer & printer for John, this gave the RFA the flexibility to develop a new format for the newsletter and apply for print post rates and the position of secretary and treasurer was combined in accordance with Consumer Affairs requirements.

Over the following years there was a change of logo brought about because it was found there was an almost identical one with the letters RFA on a red background for another industry. Replacement computers, increase in retired career members from the CFA, MFB and many other changes/advancements have occurred over this period.

During these years the **MFB** has been of great support to us, although I did find it hard to follow their slant on the 100 year milestone not being one of past achievements but of the future (one can only hypothesize as to the reason). I know? I am just one of those silly old sentimental fools.

Other groups which need special mention are the **Firefighters Credit Cooperative** and **Melbourne Fire Museum**. I have left the **United Firefighters Union** to last, I am sure that most of our members are not aware of the level of support they give to retired union members apart from the Annual Luncheon, the following is but a few. Union's annual picnic, regular health review and research projects, answering numerous phone calls from retirees seeking advice, input and response from World associated unions on retirees health/needs, saved the RFA members over 150% increase in subs by including us in their public liability coverage, (approaches to others resulted in negative replies).

Another example, the editor's computer monitor became in need of replacement and the union had it replaced. In other words the RFA is very fortunate to have the support of the aforementioned groups and we unreservedly thank them, we of course hope that this assistance continues in the future.

One must realize groups such as ours are so important to future generations and we must thank the inaugural members for their foresight.

ANT

Editorial: A push for a national study into firefighter health has been proposed by the Queensland Fire Rescue Service and the Queensland branch of the UFU. Given the high incidence of cancers of all forms amongst firefighters a study of this kind should be welcomed by all.

It can only be hoped the study is broad enough to embrace not only the serving members and members pensioned off medically unfit but retired firefighters as well.

One has only to scan our RFA membership sickness and obituary columns to see there is a serious epidemic of cancers taking these former firefighters.

Atherton report catalyst for national study!

Queensland Fire Rescue Service (QFRS) is leading a national push to undertake a study into firefighter health.

The cohort study, proposed by Victoria's Monash University to take place between 2009 and 2018, is currently under consideration by the Australasian Fire Authorities Council.

QFRS Deputy Commissioner Iain MacKenzie recently met with University representatives and lobbied interstate fire services to promote the study's merits.

"Studies into the health risk caused by exposure to different types of material, both in Australia and overseas, have proven to be inconclusive," Iain said.

"If we consider ourselves a leader when it comes to firefighter safety then we have a responsibility to continue to make progress in this area."

The Monash University proposal was given renewed focus following the release of a Queensland Health report into the five cases of cancer at the Atherton Fire Station.

In December last year, QFRS engaged Queensland Health to complete an epidemiological investigation into the five cases of cancer at Atherton. QFRS staff at Atherton were notified in April of the report's results - particularly that the incidence of brain cancer among Atherton firefighters does fit the definition of a cancer cluster. The study also found there were no identified hazards at the station that were linked to causing brain cancer.

QFRS has agreed to implement the nine recommendations of the Queensland Health report and has commissioned further environmental testing of the Atherton station and surrounding areas.

"Some of the recommendations are common sense, such as the need to reinforce the use of correct personal protective equipment," Iain said.

"However, it also recommends an epidemiological assessment of brain cancer incidence of all Queensland firefighters and we are already well down the track to cross referencing our database with that of the Queensland cancer registry.

"I believe history will show that the report into Atherton will be a watershed moment when we look back at links between the occupation of firefighting and the health risks involved.

"I also see this as a unique opportunity to enhance the health and wellbeing, not only of Queensland firefighters, but of those across the country as well."

The Queensland President of the United Firefighters Union Henry Lawrence has endorsed the QFRS initiative.

"The union fully supports the studies being undertaken and the recommendations in the Queensland Health report and is pleased at the way the fire service has responded to having the recommendations implemented," Mr Lawrence said.

The full report is available at www.emergency.qld.gov.au

Source: *Emergency, the official publication of the Department of Emergency Services Queensland.*

Investigation of concerns regarding cases of cancer in firefighters working at Atherton Fire Station **Executive Summary**

Background

Concerns regarding cases of cancer amongst firefighters at Atherton Fire Station were raised by Queensland Fire and Rescue Service management in December 2007. In response, Queensland Fire and Rescue Service requested assistance from Queensland Health to investigate the concerns of the staff at the Station. For the purposes of this report the Station comprises two buildings, the firefighting Station and the residential house.

In parallel with this investigation, there is increasing international evidence which suggests there may be an association between firefighting as a profession and higher rates of some types of cancer, particularly

testicular cancer, prostate cancer and non-Hodgkin lymphoma.

The Queensland Health investigation at Atherton Fire Station was divided into two aspects. One involved an epidemiological assessment of the occurrence of cancer in past and current staff members at the Station. The second aspect of the investigation involved an assessment of possible hazardous exposures in the workplace. It is important to keep in mind that proper consideration of a potential cluster involves consideration, in unison, of both the nature and magnitude of exposures to environmental agents and the epidemiological aspects of the

investigation when assessing whether there is likely to be a particular causal agent responsible for the cancers.

The aims of the investigation were to determine if there was an increased incidence of a particular type of cancer amongst current and former workers at Atherton Fire Station and to determine if there were any possible hazardous agents at the Station that may have been associated with an increased cancer rate.

Methods

Cancer case information (diagnostic and other personal details) was collated by Queensland Fire and Rescue Service and provided to Queensland Health. The case list was based on self-reporting by staff members as well as the extensive knowledge of key long-serving staff members. Case list details were checked against the Queensland Cancer Registry and, as required, with the treating doctor(s) with informed consent from the cases. Queensland Fire and Rescue Service supplied the data on the length of employment of Atherton Fire Station staff to Queensland Health.

Possible hazardous agents were identified through interviews with previous and current staff at Atherton Fire Station, including some of the men diagnosed with cancer. For the purposes of this report both the workplace environment and broader Atherton environment were considered. The carcinogenic risks of identified possible hazardous agents were assessed by literature review. The focus of the investigation was on the possible hazards present at Atherton Fire Station rather than an assessment of the broader risks associated with firefighting. Results from environmental testing will be released by Queensland Fire and Rescue Service in a separate report.

Results

From 1992 to 2007, five men were diagnosed with cancer amongst current and former staff members at Atherton Fire Station. Three of the men were diagnosed with brain cancer, one man was diagnosed with colon cancer and one with prostate cancer. The cases of colon cancer and prostate cancer were not considered as part of the statistical analysis, as they are different types of cancer occurring in different parts of the body. Expert advice indicated that the three brain cancer cases were all subtypes of a related group of brain cancers (astrocytoma group) and thus warranted further statistical analysis as a group.

Statistical tests were used to explore the data as to whether the number of brain cancer cases at the Station exceeded the number of cases that would be expected, based on the Queensland population. In the period 1992 to 2007, there was an increased rate of astrocytoma group brain cancers among firefighters at Atherton Fire Station compared with the Queensland population. The extent of this increase is unable to be determined accurately. The best estimate suggests that the rate of brain cancer at the Atherton Fire Station ranged from 21 to 62 times higher than Queensland. However, the statistically small number

of cases, limitations of standard statistical tests in cluster investigations and uncertainties in the data (and diagnoses of brain cancer), means that the results are difficult to interpret meaningfully.

The list of possible hazardous agents that might have been present at Atherton Fire Station does include some possible carcinogens. However, none of the possible carcinogens that were listed have been documented in the international scientific literature to cause the types of cancer observed at Atherton Fire Station. In addition, there was no common plausible agent at Atherton Fire Station that all three of the men diagnosed with brain cancer were exposed to.

Conclusions

Relating to Atherton Fire Station

When examining the possible environmental hazards at the Atherton Fire Station there were no agents that were linked to causing brain cancer. It is unlikely that there is a hazard at the Station that is responsible for the cancers.

In parallel with this investigation, there is increasing international evidence which suggests there may be an association between firefighting as a profession and higher rates of some types of cancer.

There was an elevated rate of brain cancer (of the astrocytoma group) amongst staff at Atherton Fire Station. The extent of this increase is uncertain due to limitations in the epidemiological assessment. This increased rate of brain cancer fits the epidemiological definition of a cluster, whereby a cluster is defined as a greater-than-expected number of cancer cases that occurs within a group of people in a geographic area over a period of time. The single bowel and prostate cancer cases are unrelated to the brain cancer cases and are not part of the brain cancer cluster.

Relating to firefighting

It was not in the scope of this investigation to fully examine the cancer risks associated with firefighting. However, it should be noted that the scientific literature has not implicated brain cancer strongly, but there is some evidence that there might be an association with firefighting. The possibility remains that one or more of the cases of brain cancer identified amongst the Atherton firefighters could be related to exposures experienced while firefighting, rather than exposures from working at Atherton Fire Station or living in the adjacent house. This will probably never be known.

In light of the investigations conducted at Atherton Fire Station, the feasibility of an epidemiological assessment of brain cancer incidence of Queensland firefighters, including comparison with Atherton Fire Station, should be conducted. In addition, assessment of the feasibility of further investigation of the possible association between firefighting and cancer, particularly brain cancer and those cancers identified by the International Agency for Research on Cancer (e.g. prostate cancer, testicular cancer and non-Hodgkin lymphoma) should be considered.

Recommendations

The recommendations from the Queensland Health investigation have been split into two parts to address the

(Continued on page 8)

(Continued from page 7)

concerns related specifically to Atherton Fire Station and to the possible brain cancer risks associated with firefighting.

Part A: Recommendations related to Atherton Fire Station

The Director of Anatomical Pathology, Royal Brisbane Hospital to review the pathology slides of the three men diagnosed with brain cancer to ensure the correct diagnosis was made and grouping of the brain cancer cases was valid.

An epidemiological investigation has been conducted at Atherton Fire Station and no further epidemiological investigation is currently required.

The investigation will be reopened if another person at Atherton Fire Station is diagnosed with brain cancer.

The investigation may be opened if new information becomes available in the scientific literature about the causes of brain cancer or if there are new concerns about particular environmental hazards associated with Atherton Fire Station.

The findings of this investigation should be communicated to the staff members at Atherton Fire Station, representatives from the United Firefighters Union, the firefighting community more broadly, and in relevant literature.

Queensland Health will give further consideration to the findings of the investigation once the report from the environmental testing is made available.

Part B: Recommendations pertaining to firefighting

Queensland Fire and Rescue Service continue to promote the use of personal protective equipment to control the hazards that firefighters are exposed to.

The feasibility of an epidemiological assessment of brain cancer incidence of Queensland firefighters including comparison with Atherton Fire Station, should be conducted.

The feasibility of an epidemiological study or disease registry should be considered to examine the possible risks associated with firefighting in relation to cancer, particularly brain cancer and those types of cancer identified in the evaluation of the International Agency for Research on Cancer (e.g. testicular cancer,

MFB EMPLOYEE ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

The MFB's Sue Jamieson, has advised the RFA of a service that is now available if required please see the following.

SUPPORT AVAILABLE FOR RETIRED FIREFIGHTERS

From time to time issues come up in our lives that cause concern. They can lead to sleepless nights, an inability to stay focused, feeling down generally and not to mention, a sense that we have no control.

The MFB acknowledges the contribution made by its former employees and recognizes that retirement can sometimes result in a range of challenges that are not always anticipated. We have contracted our external Employee Assistance Program (EAP)' **IPS Worldwide**, to offer services not only to current employees but also to members of the RFA and their immediate family members.

It is a free service offered by the MFB. Through the service you can access professional advice to help cope with life's difficult issues. You can choose between face-to-face counselling during business hours, alternatively, you can access phone counselling 24 hours. The EAP can provide help with:

Personal/ Family issues such as

- . Relationship issues
- . Financial or legal problems
- . Stress management
- . Substance abuse (including tobacco)
- . Grief and loss
- . Domestic violence
- . Emotional or physical abuse
- . Low self-esteem

Clinical issues

- . Anxiety
 - . Depression
 - . Alcohol, drug or other dependencies
 - . Dealing with traumatic events from past or present
- IPS offers short-term professional counselling. Sometimes your counselor may need to refer you to other specialists within the community. Appointments need to be made in advance for all counselling. Counselling is offered "off site" in professional offices throughout Australia which have easy access to public transport and parking.

TO MAKE AN APPOINTMENT FROM ANYWHERE IN AUSTRALIA,

Call 1300 366 789
For Traumatic Incidents or Crisis Counseling,
Call 1 800 451 138 (24/7)
From overseas,
Call +61 2 9214 4411
For more information contact Sue Jamieson,
Employee Assistance Coordinator, MFB,
On (03) 9665 4405.

GEELONG REUNION

**Date For Your Diary
Monday 24th November**

**Shell Club
Bacchus Marsh Rd.
Corio**

**Contact: Bill Icke 5244 1822
John Wallace 5278 4734**



OAM to John Cannon

RFA member **John Cannon** was awarded an Order of Australia medal in the Queen's Birthday honours list.

John was nominated for his dedication in serving the community, including 54 years with the St Vincent De Paul Society, setting up Youth Outreach centres for homeless youths, assisting in establishing drug rehab centres for young people, assisting the families of prison inmates and delivering the MFB's Retired Fire Ed Program.

John has a son Peter, a Station Officer at 49A. Congratulations to John (an all round good bloke) from the committee and members of the RFA.

For all Australian respondents... Telstra Phone book

For anyone contemplating using the Sensis directory service number, 1234, DON'T!

Sensis, as you may or may not know, is a subsidiary of Telstra. The 1234 number is replacing the Telstra 12456 directory assistance number, but this time with outrageous costs attached: 40c to call the number, then 4c A SECOND!

By law, Telstra have to provide a FREE directory assistance number, because they are still majority owned by the government. They choose however not to pass this number on to the public.

What's the free number? 1223

Thumbs down to Telstra for finding a way to 'charge', for a service that is supposed to be provided for free. Of course, feel free to forward this on...

Ben Hardwick

Lawyer

Commercial Litigation Department

Slater & Gordon

The Old Fire Station 26 Closes.

At 0800 Hrs. Monday 28th July, A Shift mustered for the last time at the old No. 26 Stn. (Pictured Below). They then packed their gear and said farewell to the Croydon Rd. building and moved to a more luxurious accommodation.



New Fire Station 26 Opens

After saying their farewells to the old station, A shift crew moved up to the new FS 26 (pictured below) located in Dorset Rd. Croydon.

Photographs by Bobby Cerny



Coming Up in November Issue!



This man is familiar to many MFB personnel who have worked, or currently work in the old Eastern Hill Fire Station and also some who work in the present FS 1.

Yet it seems no-one has ever seen or spoken to him.

Who is he?

You won't believe us when we tell you his name and his claim to fame.

All will be revealed in a very special issue of 'Water Off' coming in November.

“FLIGHT 216” A NEAR DISASTER

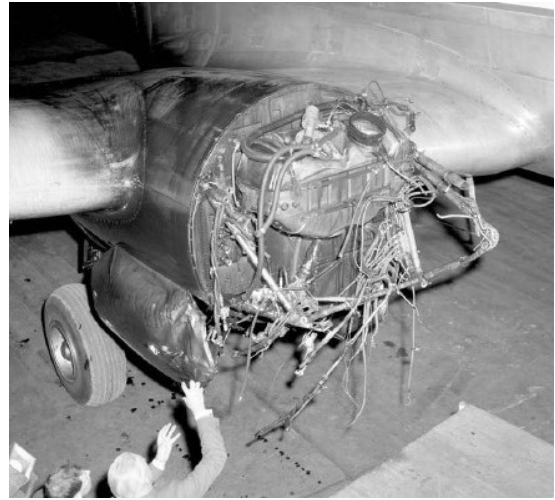
On April 14th. 1964 Rudi Csorba and myself were rostered on day shift (0700 – 1500 hours) at No. 47 District Station, Droop Street, Footscray. Straight after lunch we were detailed by Sub-Station Officer Geoff Burzacott to test the main and auxiliary alarms located in the nurse’s quarters at the Western General Hospital. This was a double storey brick building situated along side at front of the hospital in Eleanor Street, Footscray.

The building had the main alarm on the front wall near the double door entry to the foyer and it had twenty auxiliary alarms attached to it, ten on the ground floor and ten on the top floor, located in and around the building in recommended positions.

We arrived at the hospital about 1325 hours and I contacted the Senior Nursing sister to accompany me around the Nurses quarters whilst I unscrewed the break glass alarm doors and pushed the button, each time this procedure was carried out the electrical circuit was closed and in turn set off the main alarm (that is if they were functioning properly). Rudi, being stationed at the main alarm, would wind up the machine and speak to the Watch room duty man to ascertain if the test went through to the station. Located on the main alarm frame was an auxiliary alarm location map and a shutter board connected to the twenty auxiliary alarms numbered from one to twenty. Rudi left the shutters hanging down and on completion of the tests any shutter that was found not hanging down indicated that the auxiliary alarm was not functioning (and of course the main alarm did not operate) the shutter number was noted in the auxiliary alarm fault test book by the duty officer who reported it to the electrical department and they would send out their maintenance electricians to repair same. In the meantime the Senior Sister and I on the completion of the tests would retrace our steps to the faulty alarms where I would unscrew the break glass alarm door and insert an “Out of Order” card behind the glass and screw the door down again.

The testing of (Street and auxiliary) alarms was ongoing and routine on a regular basis covering public institutions, factories, refineries and other complexes. Testing these alarms were good value for us as we learnt by heart where they were located, having this pre knowledge made us professional in the event of a fire we could go straight to the activated alarm, find the fire and get straight to work.

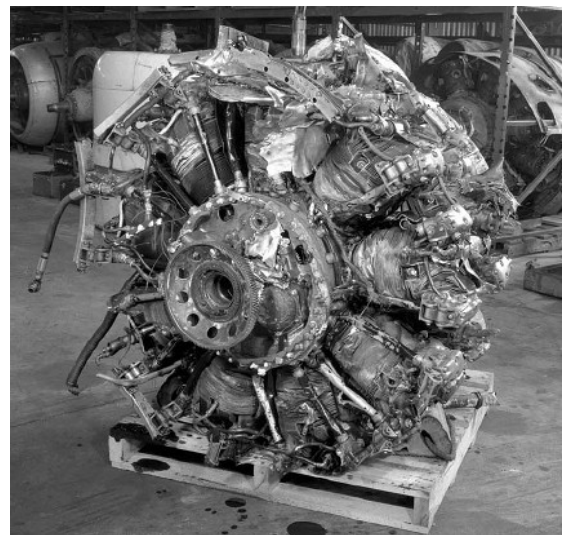
Now back to Rudi and I at the nurses home. We had only just begun when an aircraft flew directly over the hospital, very low and it was making a deafening noise. I knew that the aircraft was in trouble, the senior sister said “I think that plane is going to crash.” We returned to the main alarm where Rudi was and he was very excited, we asked him what had occurred and he said that a four engine plane flew directly over the hospital and it had one of its engines hanging down below it as though it was



Above: *View of the Number 3 engine bay showing remains of engine mount and oil tank.*

Below: *Front view of the Number 3 engine following its recovery from Port Phillip Bay.*

Photographs courtesy of the Civil Aviation Historical Society



hanging on a clock spring. Rudi in the meantime had opened the main alarm door and pushed the open and close button and spoke to the watch room duty man telling him what he had seen, in turn the information was passed on to the District Officer and he relayed it onto the Control Superintendent No.1 Station, subsequently Western district Fire stations were placed on alert for an imminent aircraft crash, fortunately it did not happen.

Flight 216 was an Ansett – Australian National Airways DC-6 four engined aircraft. There were 57 passengers and a crew of 6. It had left Essendon airport at 1321 hours bound for Adelaide. The pilot was Captain Keith Hants, and an experienced World War 2 Bomber Pilot, he kept the plane aloft with his flying skills as he flew over parts of Melbourne, the aircraft had lost power and was suffering aerodynamic drag and had become very difficult to steer. Captain Hants realised that unless he could shake the engine free he would have to make a ditched landing into the bay.

On take off, at the height of about 65 meters, one of the

three propeller blades from Engine No.3, sheared off and landed onto the roof of a house in North Essendon, within a few seconds the other two blades still attached to the propeller hub had broken clear of the aircraft and fell to earth into a back yard of a North Essendon house. Luckily no one was injured by the fallen debris.

On later investigation it was found that metal fatigue caused the propeller blades to break off, the massive torque caused by the incident almost tore the engine, weighing more than a ton, clear of its mountings and left it hanging down from the wing below the aircraft's under carriage. Captain Hants could not return to the Essendon Airport and land the plane whilst the engine remained attached.

Ruptured oil lines sprayed black oil along the fuselage and windows alerting passengers to the crisis. Minutes after take off probably as he was flying over the hospital Capt. Hants alerted the Essendon Airport Control Tower whilst he cleared built up areas below and flew out over the Yarra River mouth and on over Port Phillip Bay, he flew in a rectangular pattern with Williamstown, Dromana, Mud Island and Point Cook as points of reference. He endeavoured to dump fuel to lessen the aircraft's weight, trying to dislodge the engine he began a series of maneuvers including shallow dives and sharp pull-ups in attempts to jerk the engine free. In the meantime his Flying Officer Bob Gordon was trying to maintain a steady hold on the aircraft, and his flight engineer Bert Clarke had his hands full as his instrument panel lit up like a Christmas tree.

Hostesses Judy Murphy and Margaret Harper had plenty on their hands keeping the fifty seven passengers from panicking. They were thrown to the floor several times as they attempted to demonstrate the "ditching position" to the passengers.

Essendon Airport control Tower scrambled a DC-3 twin engined aircraft and in a short time it was flying alongside the stricken DC-6. The crew were using binoculars to study the damage and were advising Capt. Hants via radio on some of his maneuvers trying to dislodge the dangling engine, as obviously no landing could be attempted with it hanging beneath the wing.

Finally, an hour and twenty minutes after take off, at a height of four hundred metres the engine broke free and what was left of it and its mounting dropped into twelve metres of water five kilometres East of Point Cook. It was later recovered and returned to Ansett-ANA workshops for investigation. It was found that the first propeller blade to break free had suffered a fracture twenty one centimetres from its base in the propeller hub which was caused by metal fatigue. (The fracture was found to have occurred due to a section of the propeller which had been heated by an electrical break down to more than 250 degrees quiet some time before the incident.)

Aviation experts believe one of the more remarkable aspects of the near disaster was that neither the three propeller blades nor parts of the engine had smashed into the DC-6, all parts fell clear. Had they hit the aircraft

there is little doubt that Capt. Hants for all his skills would not have been able to avoid an unthinkable disaster, both for the sixty three people on board and those on the ground.

In the meantime as soon as the motor broke free from the plane the pilot headed back to the airport and he made a near perfect landing at 1455 hours.

Captain Keith Hants for his cool nerve and flying skills was awarded with a **Commendation Certificate** "For valuable service in the air", it was presented to him by the Governor of Victoria Major-General Sir Rohan Delacombe on June 18th. 1964

I am unaware to this day if any of Western Districts appliances and crews turned out for the incidents of the propellers crashing into a house roof and a backyard, both in the Essendon area. (Maybe some firefighter can enlighten us in the next issue of "Water Off".

Les Gray,
Reg. No. 1538
Retired district Officer
Kinglake 19.04.08

The Pilot

Born at Warracknabeal, Victoria in 1924, Cyril Keith Hants was educated at Mont Albert Central School, Melbourne. In 1942 at age 18 years, Keith volunteered for RAAF aircrew, and after acceptance began pilot training at Western Junction aerodrome near Launceston, Tasmania, where he completed his first solo in a Tiger Moth.

The following year at age 19 he was awarded his pilot wings brevet at Point Cook after qualifying on the Airspeed Oxford multi-engined trainer. He was posted to England to fly bombers, first Wellingtons and then Lancasters. In mid-1946 Keith returned to Australia for demobilisation at age 22. He joined Australian National Airways in 1947 as a First Officer on DC-3 aircraft based at Melbourne's Essendon Airport. Subsequent advancement saw him flying DC-4 and DC-6 aircraft before returning to fly DC-3 aircraft as a check captain. On 3rd October 1957 A.N.A. was taken over by the much smaller Ansett Airways and Keith was now flying with the new combined airline, Ansett-ANA.

The Aircraft

VH-INA's last Ansett-ANA service operated on 29th May 1966, after which it was withdrawn from service in open storage in the "graveyard" at Essendon Airport until being sold to Taiwan in March 1967.

The old aircraft's last known activity was as a firebomber in Canada in the seventies.

Information sourced from the book "Up here and Down there" by Nan Witcomb and the Civil Aviation Historical Society.

OBSERVATIONS

This article could be defined as another step in the never-ending journey. An old bloke takes in his quest to improve his knowledge about the journey our forefathers endured, to give us the lifestyle we enjoy today.

I think a line from the late Professor Manning Clark best describes it **"THE STORY OF THE PAST SHOULD HAVE THE SAME EFFECT AS ALL STORIES; IT SHOULD INCREASE WISDOM AND UNDERSTANDING"**.

I find when I visit many places and talk to the locals and research their museums, monuments, buildings etc, I not only gain a wealth of knowledge from the books and exhibits, I also hear the frustrations they experience due to the fact the majority of the population have no knowledge about the problems our past generations endured.

This great and ancient continent with its very sensitive natural features, has at times forced many a farmer off the land. The ones that survived learnt to understand the land and weather from their many hard won battles, this of course included going to war to defend their loved ones and their nation.

One can only hope that the recent suggestion to increase the importance of Australian history in the education system reaches fruition, this most certainly would be beneficial to everyone. Who knows it may even make the decision makers look at the country as a whole instead of just the bottom line. Excuse me while I get down from my high horse, as I would like to tell you about a little trip the wife and I took to improve our knowledge of North Queensland.

First I must tell you before we go on any trip in Australia I will discuss it with my travel guru (Don Brennan) personally, I do not know of anyone who has seen as much of this country as he, the information from him is better than from any agent.

This trip was up to Cairns North Queensland by plane, the last time we were in the area was over 34 years ago. That time was with the wife and the four children in the old KINGSWOOD; while we have great memories about it, factually we saw very little. Most of the time was spent with nappies, bottles, rides, accommodation and sleep; I imagine most families would know what I am talking about. Little things like accommodation, I can still hear the laughter I used to get when I told the proprietors it was for two adults and four children.

This time we wanted to explore, look, listen and learn. The best way we felt this could be achieved in the limited time we had (boss does not want to be away from the grandchildren for too long) was to go on an organised holiday. The one we picked was from the R.A.C.V Royal Auto magazine called Holiday Special Packages (Cairns) this is the second trip we have done with them. The packages go to every state and territory and are designed for seniors [no children], they are very cost effective and the day tours you do on them are always with local drivers who are not only great ambassadors, they are also very skilled educators in the history of the places you visit. I know it would take me weeks to cover what you learn from them in a day and at happy hour or at the evening meal when in discussion with others you find that many have been on a number of packages. We found most people similar to us take extra days at the end of the package to explore additional areas at leisure. If you are looking for a holiday where you just sit around, forget it they

are not for you, the package normally is for five days.

The changes to the area as one could imagine after 34 years is quite dramatic for example take the beach at Cairns, as any one would tell you in the past, give it a miss. Well now they have built an area called the Lagoon just off the Esplanade that is very impressive and free to the public. Tourism is now their biggest industry so of course they have a holiday to meet any request. Most of the beach areas have changed, now they are just about all developed, the last time we were here the road to Port Douglas, in many places, was unmade now it is a highway and the land prices in some locations are beyond my comprehension.

When you get out into the countryside you find the way they harvest that long grass, you know the stuff they call sugar cane, is not like the old days NO FIRES just these big machines. Now I ask you where is the joy in that for an old firey, not only that, now the part of the cane that is not used in the sugar etc production is used to run the mills, when the fields are to be replanted after its final cutting they turn the stubble that is left back into the soil which helps prevent soil degradation and erosion. Those horticulturists are pretty smart cookies.

Some areas that need a mention are the Daintree Discovery centre it is a must see with its research etc, others are the Reef, Mareeba heritage Museum, Dream time walk and Lake Barrine a volcanic crater lake and Lake Barrine centre (great home made scones jam and cream). Until we visited I was not aware of the importance of this area in the rehabilitation of wounded troops during and after the Second World War. During the first trip up north with the children we only had time to read about the many points of interest regarding the importance of the area to the war effort, as the family were more into the reef, rainforests and beaches etc. This time we were able to see the locations and learn a lot more about the many military camps throughout the area including the Atherton Tableland and the problems the locals had in supplying the inhabitants of the camps with the necessary essentials.

Kuranda has changed I am not sure if its for the better, the Scenic Railway has gone from a steam engine, which we rode on last time here, to a Diesel Loco not the same atmosphere. The Skyrail Rainforest Cableway and the guided Ranger tours is a winner for the locals and the Engineers that built it, in my opinion score 10 at of 10, not only is it an engineering wonder it has also assisted in the preservation of the Barron Gorge National Park.

Innisfail is most certainly on its way back (banana trees are small but they're on their way). I have got to tell you I would not have liked to have been there during the cyclone. If you are driving past call in and spend a dollar or more every bit helps the locals and storeowners get back on their feet. The nine days we spent in the Cairns region has given us a much better understanding of the difficulties the early settlers had in establishing themselves, also the impact the Second World War had on them. The flora, fauna and the research going on in the tropical Rainforests gives one a better insight into the reason these areas must be protected at all costs for future generations. In closing I hope I may have given you a small insight of what is available and if you want to learn about the history visit the various country town museums they are a great source of information.

A trip that was very worthwhile. ANT

EX- SECRETARY/ TREASURER'S REPORT

Just to keep you up to date on my condition at the moment. After six heavy doses of chemotherapy, my tumour is in remission, but the Oncologist said there is no guarantee that it won't flare up again. As I had a bleed in the brain, I was then taken off Warfrin and put onto Aspirin to prevent any more bleeding, it seems to have worked.

I am feeling quite well at the moment, but because of my age, the Oncologist told me I am too old to be treated in Hospital and if the tumour does flare up again, I will be treated as an out-patient. He stated that if I was younger they would have given me Radium treatment, but the risk being, it could give me Dementia.

I have lost a bit of my memory and now that I am back driving, I don't remember some of the roads, particularly at night I have to ask my wife which way to go.

I still have Atrial Fibrillation and its up to the Heart Specialist, whether I go back on Warfrin, one thing is for sure, I won't be ordering any new suits.

I would like to thank John Berry, the best Secretary the R.F.A. has ever had, for taking over the role in my absence.

JOHN BROWN

Refugee Status Anyone?

(Information from one of our members)

It's interesting that the Federal Government provides a Single Refugee with a monthly allowance of \$1,890.00 and each can also get an additional \$580. in Social Assistance, so a total of \$2,470.00 per month. Family of 4 can receive \$9,880.00 per month or yearly \$118,685

A single Australian pensioner who, after contributing to the growth and development of Australia for 40 to 50 years, receives only a monthly maximum of \$1,012.00 in old age pension and Guaranteed Income Supplement. (Maybe our pensioners should apply as refugees).

Advice to Kids!

I remember my mother telling me. "Finish your dinner. People in China and India are starving."

I tell my granddaughters, "Finish your homework. People in India and China are starving for your job."
Ed.

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.

RECENT RETIREMENTS

Marg Broughton (MFB) 18th May
Billy Evans (MFB / Transfield) 20th June
Darryl Birrell (MFB) 27th June
John Glosz (MFB) 3rd July
John Pearce (MFB)
John Watkins (MFB) 9th July
Roger Tucker (MFB) 17th July

Pending Retirements

Geoff Herbert: Tue. 26th August, 6pm. Clayton RSL.
Peter Geran: Thur. 11th Sept, 6pm. Pt. Melb. Bowling Club.

A Lovely Cuppa!

Retired Firie friend was asked by his daughter would he look after the 2 year old granddaughter while mum went shopping for a couple of hours.

Things were going well as the toddler started making cups of tea for "Pa" with her new little tea set.

Our friend was delighted with his little granddaughter's skill in pouring water into the cup and handing it to "Pa" to drink, which he dutifully did.

When his daughter finally came home our friend eagerly told her about the cups of tea he had and asked the little one to make him another to show mummy. The little girl disappears and returns with another pot of water for "Pa's tea".

The daughter looked at her father and said, "Dad, don't you realize the only water that little girl can reach in this house is in the toilet bowl?"

OBITUARY

Elwyn Ashley Kitchener (Alf) Powell (Senior Fireman)

28-5-1926 to 02.05.2008

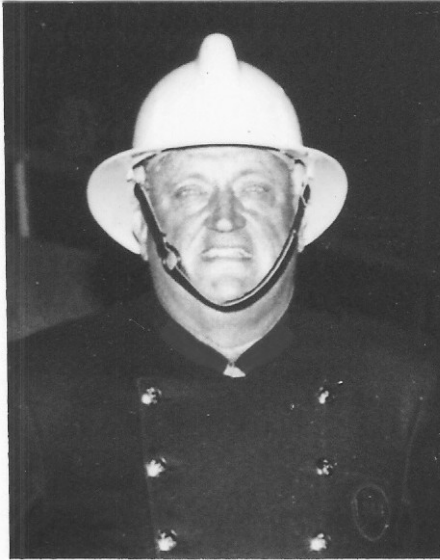
Alf was born at home in Collingwood just before the Great Depression started. These times proved to be hard, no work – no money – no hope – starvation times. He was one of nine children.

He left school at 14 and was lucky enough to obtain an apprenticeship at London Stores, Cr. Elizabeth & Bourke Sts., Melbourne.

He was there until he joined the army on the 13th. Aug. 1945, trained for 100 days and then was sent to Rabaul where he was a cook in an Officers Mess – our troops were still rounding up Japanese soldiers in the jungle and mountains and returning them to Japan. He was there for just over 12 months, the job done he had an offer to go on to Japan as a member of the Australian Occupational Forces, but declined as he wanted to get back to Australia and help out at home.

On discharge he returned to his old job at London Stores and 18 months later on the 10th. June 1949 he joined the Melbourne Fire Brigade.

Deputy Chief Officer L. Paterson (Banjo) an uncle of a later Chief Officer John Paterson interviewed him, after a medical examination, by the Brigade Medical Officer Dr. John Maher, Alf found himself 2 weeks later in the recruit training squad living in the single men's quarters, sharing a room with a fellow recruit at No. 1 Station Eastern Hill.



At the time the brigade was working a 96 hour week, 4 day' on duty and 3 days off. After passing out of recruits, Alf spent a further 10 rosters at No. 1 Station, then 1 Roster at No. 28 Stn. South Yarra. By this time the Brigade had changed from working a 96 hour week to a 40 + hour week. He was then transferred to No. 48 Stn. North Melbourne for 5 rosters, then to No 47 Stn.

District Station Western District, later to No. 44 Stn. Hampshire Road, Sunshine. When the brigade built the new No. 43 Stn. Deer Park in 1967 he was transferred there and finally retired after 35 years service in 1984.

Alf married Beryl Woodhouse a long time resident of Deer Park on the 5th. July 1984. They lived happily married for 14 years until Beryl passed away. A sad time for Alf and the Woodhouse family and friends.

Alf's other interests outside of the Brigade were lawn bowling, fishing and clay target shooting. He was President of the Deer Park Bowling

Club 1978 – 79.

In his early days Alf fished in the bay and later in rivers and streams. He was President of the M.F.B. Gun Club for 36 years, and also a life member of the Woods Point Gun Club.

Alf will also be remembered by firemen and their families as "Santa", playing this role every Christmas around Western District's Fire Stations and also for organisations and private functions.

**Les Gray,
Workmate & long time friend.**

A Word for Mum

Why shouldn't Mum look plain morbid, tired and bored,
There's no union for her, no house-wives award,
There's shopping to do, with it's worries and cares,
With no travelling time and no extra fares,
No claim for her skill before arbitration,
No compo for pain, for the birth of our nation.
There's washing and nappies to dry on the line,
And work every week-end for no double-time.
Ironing and cleaning and tucker to cook,
And up half the night if the kids are down crook.
Pots and pans got to wash up, and dishes that's greasy,
Then the old man walks in an' say's "you've got it easy"!

She's a flaming toiler, you can say what you like,
Cause we'd all feel the pinch, if Mums went on strike.

I reckon us blokes couldn't tackle her job.
Then thank God for our women, this weird, wonderful mob.

This verse was found among Sen. Fireman Alf Powell's belongings after his death. We do not know if he wrote it or not, but believe that the verse is worthy of being preserved for posterity.

Les Gray

Ed's Note
We all knew of Alf's prowess with the pen and have read many of his poems over the years both in "Water Off" and the old MFB Publications. If anyone knows the origin of this poem please let us know.



**BELLS
BY THE BEACH**
HOLIDAY HOUSE • OCEAN GROVE

24 Roditis Drive, Ocean Grove

Phone: (03) 5255 5263

Mobile: 0403 221 737

email:

bellsbythebeach@optusnet.com.au

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

Welcome to our seaside holiday house, an ideal spot for Senior Citizens, families, couples or small groups.

- ☞ 3 bedrooms, sleeping up to six people, two toilets and a shower/spa bath, outdoor hot/cold 'after the beach' shower.
- ☞ Self contained accommodation, TV, DVD, CD player, gas cooking, microwave, cutlery and crockery – all you could possibly need!
- ☞ Tea, coffee, milk, wine and fresh garden flowers on arrival.
- ☞ Two warm, snuggly QS beds, two comfortable single beds.
- ☞ BYO sheets and towels – doonas and pillows provided.
- ☞ Cozy gas log fire for cooler nights.
- ☞ Single garage car parking, ample off street parking.
- ☞ A relaxed, private, secure garden setting.
- ☞ 400 metres from the beach.
- ☞ An easy drive to local shops, Ocean Grove Bowling club, golf clubs, Wineries and tourist attractions.

Vacancies available for week days and weekends.

PLUS: Queenscliffe Maritime Museum, Weeroona Parade, Queenscliff - *FREE* entry for One Adult when a second Adult or Concession admission is purchased for entry to the Museum. Valid any day of the week.

**Your hosts: Retired firefighter Lin Bell and wife Jan Bell.
Postal Address: 17 Miriam Court, Ocean Grove, Vic. 3226**

FROM FIRE and WATER to SAND, SURF and WATER – a real life seachange!

After 35 years in the Melbourne Metropolitan Fire Brigade, Leading Firefighter Linley (Lin) Bell (stationed at No.1 for the last 15 years) decided it was time to retire in 1998. It was also time to revitalize his life and revive his interest in holidaying by the beach – but **THIS** time it was going to be different... he and his wife decided to go and **LIVE** by the beach!

Lin was born and raised in Melbourne's outer east, married his sweetheart Jan at Nunawading Methodist Church (strategically located opposite No. 27 station) in 1967. On their wedding day the stations' tanker provided the back-drop for some really good wedding photos!

The dedicated firefighter and his family lived for 38 years at Mooroolbark. Lin traveled with mates, including Ron Horton and Tom Lawrence, to No.1 station for about half this time. In the early days he spent many rosters at Croydon, Ringwood, Nunawading, Hawthorn and the old Eastern Hill stations.

LFF Bell saw lots of changes in the job – including new fire fighting techniques in high rise buildings and at the Melbourne Underground, and the age of chemical fires and incidences such as Coode Island etc.

Lin's involvement with the World Firefighters Games would still be well known and remembered by older fires. Many interesting and happy experiences resulted from visits to New Zealand, Canada, France, South Africa, the USA and also the 1994 Games in Perth, WA. Friendships were formed, socializing was enjoyed to the max and seeing the Aussies firefighters bring home gold on many occasions was the icing on the cake!

Other Bell family interests included involvement in the Mooroolbark Red Earth Festival in the early '80s, holidaying at Ocean Grove and other places and committee work on several community groups in the outer east.

After leaving the MFB, Leading Firefighter Lin Bell worked for 8 years with the Shire of Yarra Ranges. A most enjoyable time was had, meeting new people and learning new skills totally different from fighting fires.

And so the final sea change was made to Ocean Grove in June 2006 after a couple of years planning and researching the finer arts of running a small business, marketing and promotion. Another new experience was joining the Geelong/Bellarine Peninsula arm of Victoria's tourism industry, networking with accommodations houses large and small, and again meeting more new people.

Lin and Jan Bell have embraced (with a passion) the skills needed to operate a cosy, comfortable affordable holiday house on the beautiful Bellarine Peninsula.

Lin and his wife officially opened the doors at 'Bells By The Beach Holiday House' a couple of weeks after relocating to their new permanent home in another part of Ocean Grove. "**Bells**" celebrated its 2nd birthday on 1st July 2008.

For Lin and Jan every day is an exciting learning experience, new challenges arise, new ideas are formulated and acted upon. New people enter their lives, some for a couple of days, others for a few weeks, but they all enjoy the peace and serenity of a 'holiday by the beach'.

Our rates are reasonable – Off Peak is \$100 per couple per night, or Peak season is \$125 per couple per night.

You're welcome at **Bells** anytime – bring yourselves, bring your family and if you have a small dog who enjoys sleeping in a garage or outside, bring the family pet as well !

You can find us at www.travelvictoria.com.au/

oceangrove/bellsbythebeach/

Jan and Lin Bell
17 Miriam Court
Ocean Grove 3226

Phone: 5255 5263 or 0403 221 737

Change of Venue for Retiree's Christmas Luncheon!
RETURN TO ST. KILDA TOWN HALL
11.30am Saturday 15th November 2008

The UFU Social Committee have successfully re-negotiated this popular venue after the recent refurbishment.

The UFU Social Committee work hard to ensure the success of this function. It is costly to the UFU and it is up to us to support them by selling the raffle tickets. **PLEASE**, when you receive your raffle tickets, **do endeavor sell them all** and return the butts, along with your attendance reply ASAP. If you can't attend for whatever reason, please let the committee know. Invitation and tickets will be mailed to you soon.

Note: Those who do not reply for 2 years will be removed from the invitation list!

PRINT POST No. PP333964/0020

RFA Newsletter
If undelivered return to;
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Lower Plenty 3093

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