

"WATER OFF"

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



August 2015 Vol 19 No 3
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What is the Significance of This Motor Cycle?

August Meeting Will Be Held
at Corio Fire Station
1030 Hours Wednesday 19th
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New Editor for "Water Off"

Angela Potter to Take Over
As John Laverick Retires
See Editorial page 5

Prometheus is Here!!

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“GENERAL MEETING”

Notice is hereby given that the next General Meeting will be held at the CFA Fire Station,
Birdwood Ave. (Melway’s page 441 K2.)
1030 Hours, Wednesday 19th August 2015

AGENDA ITEMS.

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

Allan Roberts
SECRETARY/TREASURER
Address all correspondence to:
The Secretary
50 Cameron Parade
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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 at a venue nearby, (at your own expense)! Please join us!

Non financial Members

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

OFFICE BEARERS

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

General Committee;

Arthur (Sam) Capes
Mike McCumisky
Ian Geddes
Kevin Hede

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

Auditor;
Mike Enticott

Valē

Bill Cuzens (MFB) Barry Masuglia (MFB)
Dexter Downs (MFB) Keith McNiece (MFB)
David Gallop (MFB) Ron Millard (MFB)
Ernie Goodall (MFB) Beth Williams (Wife of
Andrew Johnstone (MFB) Alun Williams MFB, QFS)

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

SICK LIST (* In Nursing Home)

Don Brennan Ron (Darkie) Hayward*
Stan Cameron Bob Horgan
Huew Campbell* Murray Jelleff
Keith Dumas Jack Sexton
Eddie Gilbertson Ralph Weitering
Clarrie Guthrie* Brian Whittaker
Clarrie Hart

We wish these members a speedy recovery

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

Diary Dates 2015

August 19th General Meeting (Corio Fire Station)
November 18th; Annual General Meeting
November 21st; Annual Christmas Luncheon
11.30 am. Malvern Town Hall

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

This is my second last report as President of the RFA. As one gets older it is time to hand over to the next generation of Younger retirees.

In mentioning older persons Yours truly had an accident at home in early May, when I tripped on a Carpet Mat, and propelled myself forward hitting a chair, fracturing 5 ribs on the left side in the back. I spent 5 days in hospital and on returning home slept in an electric chair for 5 weeks. Unfortunately these ribs are not joining up, so I will have to put up with the grinding of the bones for the rest of my life. I would like to thanks the UFU, members of the RFA and MFB in general for their cards, telephone calls and visits in hospital and at home during my convalescence.

At the time we receive this magazine Nancy and I will have attended the reunion in Queensland.

The retired Members Division of the Union (RMD) is continuing to progress with the first an outing to Parliament house on Tuesday 18th August. The first General Meeting will be held in October – further details on date and location to be provided in the future.

The executive of the RMD is as follows – Don Brennan President; Col Harris Vice President, Bruce Smith Secretary, Eileen Rudd, Rod Knowles, Ross Linley, and subject to agreement Barry Cole from the CFA.

Our next meeting of the RFA will be held at the Corio Fire Station on Wednesday 19th August. Following lunch at the Gateway hotel at your expense. We would like to see as many members and partners there for this meeting.

Bunning's BBQ

Our next BBQ at Bunning's Hoppers Crossing will be held on Saturday October 10. I ask members to put their names down to help on the day at the August meeting, or ring me on 9742 6626 to register your name. This is a excellent fundraiser for us and a enjoyable day for all who take part.

Yours

Don Brennan

SECRETARY/TREASURER'S REPORT

The committee have been busy with meetings at the UFU for the Retired Division which is progressing, some of our members have nominated for the Functions committee.

I mentioned in the last water off that I had been contacted about Diaries they will be ready for distribution in December 2015 for the 2016 year. The publishers have started to pay a weekly Payment of \$100.00.

Peter Marshall gave a very informative update on Fiskville and the UFU Retired Division.

Michael Thorbecke and Sandy Hearn gave insight on what the MFB can do for our members and spoke to a couple of members after the meeting.

I am still attending Retirement Seminars held at the Burnley Complex to MFB Members who are looking at retiring.

The RFA web Site has been running for 12 Months so the trial period is over and has been down The committee have authorised that we have to pay for the

web provider fee \$155.00. It was felt that by the phone calls that had been received when it went down that we decided to go ahead and pay for it to keep running.

The secretary of the Retired Firefighters Association, Allan Roberts, has expressed his thanks and gratitude for the support that MFB Burnley staff collectively provided to the RFA members at their BBQ following a general Meeting.

The RFA appreciates current staff supporting the group and in particular the Retired Firies really enjoy being treated to a cup of tea whenever they knock on the door of their local fire station and have a chat. The Retired Firefighters have a wealth of "hands on" knowledge and are always glad to share this information with current Firies.

HIB Insurance Brokers in Albury did not want to put an ad in the Diary so has promised \$100.00 Donation.

TREASURER'S REPORT.

Closing Balance. 30th June 2015
Running account S1 = \$4774.45.

Fix Term 6 Months L1 Account = \$6658.38.



Photo....Stacey Warren (Health & Safety) receives the certificate from Alan Roberts in appreciation of the support the Burnley Complex staff give during the RFA meetings.

Allan Roberts

Minutes of General Meeting 20 May 2015 at Burnley Training College

Vice President – Alex Shepherd, Secretary/Treasurer - Allan Roberts

Minutes - Ian Geddes. – Don Brennan on sick leave.

Present – 47 Apologies – 8

New Attendee – Peter Flavelle (Finance Dept. at No 1), Graham Thompson – 35, John Cooper – Central, Russell Hawthorne - Southern

Secretary/Treasurer Report-

Allan read Minutes of General Meeting 18th February 2015, at Craigieburn

Moved – Harry Floyd, Seconded – Peter Shanahan – accepted.

No business arising.

Presidents Report –

Bunning's B.B.Q. – Hoppers Crossing – 10 October, contact Don.

Don Brennan slipped at home in early May, cracked some ribs, and recliner – chair bound for a few weeks.

Moved – Barry Beer, Seconded – Fred Laverick – accepted.

Almoner's Report – Ian Fowler has followed up on the following –

Don Brennan

Huey Campbell is in a Geelong Home.

Big Brian Thompson's wife is in hospital.

Bruce Fisher – in a convalescent home down south.

Ron Millard – in a Bendigo convalescent home.

If anyone knows more details, contact Ian Fowler. (97492606).

General Business –

Recent visit to Craigieburn Training College a great success.

Alex Shepherd spoke in depth about Challenge – supporting kids with cancer. They organise play groups, outings, celebrity visitors.

Some of these kids CANNOT come into physical contact with other people due to the risk of infection, so arrangements are made to give them some special times before they need to return to hospital. Ron Darby spoke glowingly from personal experience with Challenge.

John Berry spoke about “Let the burns burn” book – Trevor Reed has asked John to bring the book to our attention.

Motion – John Berry, Seconded – Ian Geddes, that the R.F.A. purchase 50 copies at \$9 each (Authors price special) to be given to our Guest Speakers etc.

Motion carried.

Our rfavic1@gmail.com internet site – a few minor screen adjustments being done.

Aviation Air Safety members – need more contact with updates/info.

Sammy Capes – Dexter Downs passed away in April, also Barry Watkins and Andy Johnston attended a fire in Windsor and Barry got the commendation and Andy could also have been acknowledged.

Ian Fowler – Southport (Qld) Reunion on Thursday, 30th July 2015.

Guest Speaker – Peter Marshall

Peter's researcher Dan Hunt also at meeting. Fiskeville Inquiry started on Monday 18th May and runs til today (20th May). The inquiry ascertained that there was/is a problem. Incidences of cancer clusters at and around Fiskeville are documented, neighbouring farms have livestock that cannot be sold because of contaminated animals, and one farmer was offered a lot of money to overlook this contamination, but decided to refer his situation to Slater & Gordon.

Other respected bodies also presented witness evidence, adding to 470 U.F.U. member's submissions.

Bruce Smith Jack Moore, Ray Curtis, and others, raised questions.

John Brown asked if the current Victorian Government accepts/implements the Federal Court ruling of Firefighters cancer – Union still working on it.

The main problem seems to have been the use of “A” class foam compound used at Fiskeville, and other fire/incidents. This foam compound would rot the metal tanks on Appliances, so it was probably not much good on humans.

U.F.U. Retired Members Division – (R.M.D.)

A Steering Committee, including Bruce Smith and Don Brennan, will call for nominations to elect a Committee. The R.M.D. is open to all retired members, their spouses and widows. It has at present 299 members (and more filled out their Application today).

The R.M.D. is planning to have 3 Central Meetings per year, plus two regional Meetings.

Currently no joining fee.

Good discounts being established with Bupa Health Insurances.

See “Water Off” (Feb 2015) for more Q & A's.

It was noted AGAIN, that the R.M.D. is an add-on for the R.F.A., and NOT a problem for our independence.

Guest Speaker – Sandy Hearn. Peer Support Department. Joined in 2004, she was at 1 & 35, promoted to S.O. 3 years ago, and with Peer Support for the past year. Peer Support is available to other family members. (technically who live under the same roof). Confidentiality is paramount.

Guest Speaker – Michael Thorbecke – Linkcare Australia. Michael has considerable experience, with Union support/joint initiative, to assist with the mine-field in relation to Aged Care Support, Community Care Plans and residential/Nursing Home and Hostel accommodations. With the Union backing, Michael could assist with advice, options, and alternatives for us or our families.

Michael Thorbecke – 0419149901 or Peter Keil – 0419142968 or the M.F.B. Employee Support Co-ordinator – 96654405.

A lot of us are thinking, when we may need or we needed it most? Sandy and Michael did well.

Allan thanked Peter Marshall, Dan Hunt, Sandy Hearn and Michael Thorbecke and we enjoyed our B.B.Q. chats later

Meeting ended 12.15pm.

Next Meeting at Geelong, 19th August, 2015

EDITORIAL

I have been privileged over the last 21 years to be your editor of "Water Off" and have enjoyed every moment of that time. The early years saw many contributors writing about their experiences in the Job, the big fires and incidents they were involved in, the humorous and the sad times, the many characters who left impressions on all of us. Sadly, many of these people have gone on to higher duties but have left us with memories of their exploits through the pages of those early "Water Off" issues.

It has been increasingly difficult for us to bring you stories from the past as it seems that the younger retirees are reluctant to tell of their experiences or, just not interested in sharing their stories with us.

We have been fortunate enough to have been assisted over these many years by **Barbara McCumisky** who, as our Sub Editor, has brought a wealth of knowledge in producing Fire Service newsletters in her long association with the MFB and the Victorian Fire Services Museum.

Barbara was a teacher in her early years and an



Above: Barbara with Dennis, one of the Fire Dogs she trained for the MFB's children's fire safety & education programs.

extremely talented photographer and many of her photographs have appeared in these pages. The contribution Barbara has made to the production of "Water Off" is immeasurable. Barbara has produced many a story on historic fires and incidents that have occurred over the 200 year period of Melbourne's existence.

Barbara's experience as Photographic Archivist for the Fire Museum and for some time the MFB has been invaluable. When a story has been submitted for publication I only have to ring Barbara and she can come up with a photograph to compliment and enhance the article.

Barbara has decided to take a step back from the busy life she and husband Mike (RFA Committee Member and past President) have led and hope to enjoy a more relaxed retirement. Mike and Barbara have been through some very difficult times lately having lost their daughter recently after a long battle with cancer and I can understand the decision to take this step.

This has not influenced my decision to retire as editor of "Water Off" entirely. I feel I've given as much as I can and now totally bereft of ideas to improve the magazine. It needs a person with new ideas and a modern, fresh approach to keep our members interested.

I must thank those many people who have contributed and helped me over the years particularly Barbara and John Berry who encouraged and mentored me.

A New Editor For "Water Off"!!!

As advertised in the February 2015 issue I called for offers of interest to take on the role of editor, and, after sifting through the hundreds of applicants, one offer stood out. I'm pleased to say that Angela Potter (daughter of our President, Don Brennan) has put up her hand.

Angela has computer skills, knowledge of programs necessary to put a publication together, the writing skills required to put a story together and the experience in getting things done, having a management role in one of Australia's biggest companies. Angela has assured us that putting "Water Off" together will be.... "No Problem"!!!

I have complete confidence in her abilities and wish Angela all the success in her role as editor.

Angela has set up an Email address for contributors to use as follows: rfa.magazine@my.com

Say G'Day

A few of our members haven't been travelling too well lately and would love to hear from some of their old shift mates. For various reasons they may not be able to get around like they used to but would dearly love to get a call from someone.

Some of them may have been on shift with you or even backed you up at a job somewhere, let's not forget them.

If you have 5 minutes to spare give them a call.

Phone Numbers have been approved to give out.

Murray Jelleff (03) 5286 1326. Mble: 0408 919 055

Ron (Darkie) Hayward. Age care.

Rob (BOB) Horgan 9857 3220. Mble: 0404 199 891.

Ralph Weitering. 9750 7333.

GONE BUT NOT FORGOTTEN

Over the years we have, in this section of the newsletter, tried to the best of our ability to highlight the unique and wonderful contributions the deceased members have given of themselves in their role as emergency service personnel. Thanks of course must also go to the member's loved one or family for supporting them in the role. All are invited, when you read the following, to take a moment and remember how lucky we were to have these members as a workmate and friend.

Ernest William Goodall.
24/8/1928 – 5/5/2015.

I and many other firefighters had the opportunity during his 27 years in the MFB; to not only attend many incidents and/or fires but also have him as a Sf/m of great knowledge & guidance in his role as a Z man at the old Eastern Hill during the old 40 hour a week system. I had the added advantage as I later became a shift mate with him.

With your indulgence let's go back in time to around the second half of the last century when I first met him. He was one of those types, because of their outstanding ability, you could see there was no role or task they could not do as they were that capable. I could never understand why he did not go for further promotion. But Ern being Ern was more than happy being a Senior Fireman with outstanding qualities & ability.

Just to clarify a Z man's role, they were required to be multi-skilled, due to the fact they would relieve on a different shift each fortnight, during that time they would cover all duties & tasks.

One task was as a reliever for the Senior-man at Head station watch-room (This without doubt was one of the most responsible tasks in the MFB) unlike to-day this person handled all exchange, station and any other service calls for all of the Metropolitan Fire District and recorded same on tape and in long-hand in an occurrence book. On a busy 8 hour shift you may have had over 100 fires plus incidents, many Firies found this role very difficult, not him, he was more than capable, in fact he was amongst the best.

The following will give a little insight: Out-station Officer's back then would be sent in to do the role as station management for the night-shift, they would locate themselves in the watch-room, during the quiet times, say early morning hours, Ern with his great skill, would start creating music on the various warning bells. The stand-by officer had no idea what was going on would be told all sort of tales, you know the place is haunted or he must have touched something and caused it. Then when things settled down he would then create mystery phone calls.

By the end of the night he would have the stand-by officer not knowing whether they were coming or going (Ern would off-course inform them before they knocked off).

It was great to have him backing you up at any emergency and/or fire, the members who were in the job during the fifties & sixties will remember the evolution that was going on in relation to the Olympic Games and the changing sky line. It was almost like a lot of the building fires we were attending may have been caused deliberately. I know it is hard to imagine, that people unknown, would do this for personal gain but it seemed to be so strange that the fires often occurred towards the end of a financial year, probably just my imagination.

One thing I forgot to mention he was the only bloke I knew that could keep four (4) conversations going on different phones at one time whilst at the same time recording all to paper.

Unfortunately it is a fact; some people who give so much of themselves to protect the community do not always gain the rewards in retirement they so richly deserve, this was the case with Ern, due to a debilitating medical problem that left him needing full time nursing home care.

Joan your Ern was a great firefighter & friend and on behalf of all the Firies we thank you for

sharing him with us.

Ronald James Millard. 1-11-32 / 3-6-2015.

The gentlemen firefighter; Ron, to me, when I first joined the job, appeared to be one of the untouchables in his role as one of the operational shift typists. They, when on duty, answered only to the **Third Officer** who was charged with the responsibility of completing the final draft of the fire reports, the typist would need to have finished said report in preparation for the general office staff to wire it to the Insurance Council each morning.

These firefighters were still operational and attend fire calls as required. I find in looking back at their role it did have some strange peculiarities, imagine it is a still dry evening yet just getting to their office they may have been hit with a sudden shower or two, which did not look good when reporting to the **Third Officer**. The following will give you an idea just how strange they could become!

A shift-mate Trevor Reed and I were chased down the pole wells by one of them with buckets of water causing us to fall out of the bottom one at the feet of the **Chief L Whitehead and Deputy W. Aldridge** just as they were passing. Now I ask you were it fair to have these typists terrorizing us when all we were trying to do was to prevent them from getting too hot by cooling them down with buckets of water.



Ron and I did not come in contact that often back then with me on a different shift. However, I do know when I changed shift or whatever I found him to be a very competent firefighter and very fast on his feet, he was a professional runner I am not sure if many knew, he ran in various gifts including the Stawell Gift.

Shirley his wife and he would organise great social nights at various locations, one I can remember was an exotic meal night which I think had about 20 courses, I am not going to attempt to try remember what we ate but nobody was ill so it must have been good.

As it is with the brigade we lost contact when I started moving around the different stations, then when the early optional retirement came in, Ron after 27 years, retired from the job and later moved to Bendigo.

Both Shirley and Ron became very involved with volunteering on many projects. Unfortunately like Ernie Goodall, Ron suffered a life changing condition, in his case, a degenerative disorder - Parkinson's disease.

This did not stop Shirley and him from still being involved in the different projects, and in fact he was always willing to assist others. For example, I would ring him to check on others that had moved up there to see if they were OK or needed help etc.

Both of them would always keep us informed in the latest treatments he was receiving or including information on how to assist others to raise someone who has tripped and/or fallen, (exhibited in earlier RFA newsletters).

On the rare times I did get see him was at the annual luncheon and/or visits up there, they were always very positive and great company. Just recently we received a phone call from Shirley advising us that Ron needed to be moved into full time care so John Howe, Noel Pinnell and I visited Ron at the nursing home at Bendigo (I was going to hit him with a bucket of water) where we gave him a new UFU hat, I thought it better to keep it dry and left it on his bed head. I was only joking about the bucket of water but we did tell him if he was out on the lawn it may have been different.

Unfortunately some weeks later Shirley rang to inform us Ron had sustained a heart attack from which he never recovered. Ron obviously must have known he was not going too well as he had previously informed the family that he only wanted them present at his service.

The three of us that visited him feel so fortunate to have had the opportunity to visit and chew the fat with him only a number of weeks before the attack.

Shirley and family please take strength in the knowledge if had not been a private service there would have been bus loads to say good bye to your Ron.

John Berry

UFU

Retired Members Division

Just to let everyone know what has happened since the combined meeting took place at the Burnley Complex.

We have now disbanded the Steering Committee that was set up and we now have a Committee in place to go forward, the Committee that is in place as follows.

Don Brennan; President, and if he is unavailable Col Harris will fill in as President and is a Committee member,

Bruce Smith; Secretary,

Rod Knowles,

Ross Lindley,

Eileen Rudd; representing the ex communication girls and boys;

Kevin Hede; Representing the RFA and if he is unavailable, Alan Roberts.-

There will be representatives from the CFA and Airport Firefighters as well.

I would like to thank the people who were on the steering committee for all their help and guidance especially John Berry.... great support for me, Alex Shepard, Allan Roberts.

So, all told there will be 9 Members of the Committee for the next 12 Months or until we have elections.

We have organised an outing to Parliament House for the 18th August to do a tour and have lunch in the Federation Room. I believe that the Premier will drop in also. We have only 96 positions so when invitations are sent out... "first in first serve."

Bruce Smith

Secretary

Retired Members Division of UFU

For More Information

www.ufuvic.asn.au/rmd

(03) 9419 8811

United Firefighters Union

Victoria Branch

410 Brunswick Street

Fitzroy 3165



Employee Support Program Update

This will be the fifth instalment in the series of articles coming from MFB's Employee Support Program. Reading back through the previous offerings one could be forgiven for thinking that the information is coming from the angel of black, death, as I realise some of these topics are not the sort of thing one enjoys reading in a newsletter with a cup of tea. But! They are useful if you need them and that is why they are written.

Just to keep up the happy tempo (!) this edition will focus on depression. it is important that depression is not confused with grief. I often speak in retirement readiness seminars on this point as I believe that retirement can be a time of grieving, of letting go of something that has been an important part of your life for a long time. Many retirees have told me that it is the loss of "The Family" that they feel the most. I often respond by saying that maintaining that sense of family is in part up to you. Get on the phone, email or whatever and organise those regular catch ups with the people you worked with. Remember, no one will understand some of those jobs except the people who were there: with you.

Depression can be a numb feeling, not necessarily just "sadness". it can go on for months or years, You can't just "get over it"; if it were that easy we would be handing out cups of cement left right: and centre instead of spending time and effort on researching this illness. Causes include genetic factors as well as what you may have been exposed to in your life.

Treatment can include medication, cognitive-behaviour therapy (CBT), behaviour therapy, and the use of mindfulness techniques.

CBT involves working with a professional therapist like a psychologist, psychiatrist, mental health social worker, or occupational therapist to identify patterns of thought that are making the feelings worse or stopping people getting better. These patterns are then looked at and challenged. Behaviour therapy focuses more directly on activity levels and encourages a person's involvement in enjoyable things to slam the tendency to isolate, withdraw, and avoid life and everything in it.

Mindfulness is actually based on Buddhist psychology, and teaches breathing techniques and the ability to "stay in the present". It is very much in line with current knowledge which identifies that it is not the life event on its own which can cause distress, but what happens in your head as a reaction. Different people react to different things in different ways. I am not by any means saying "it's your fault". But learning what you can control in your own thought processes and putting things in place to stay mentally healthy and strong will help. Breathing is seen like a metronome for your body and learning how to regulate it can combat both anxiety and depression symptoms.

Have a look at information from Black Dog Institute and Beyond Blue, two fabulous Australian resources. You might like to have a go at the questionnaire below called the K10. It's a simple self-assessment guide to check for both depression and anxiety symptoms and can be self-administered. If you find you are marking a lot of the questions towards the right hand side of: the choices (i.e. "most" or "all of" the time), take the questionnaire and go-and have a chat with your doctor. There is help out there.

I have decided it is time to leave the Brigade and so will be handing this work over to whoever sits in the chair. I would like to thank you all for your support of the Program. John Berry (and Elaine) and Allan Roberts have been absolute gems to work with and I am honoured to have met them.

**Take care
Nic Roperto.**

		None of the time	A little of the time	Some of the time	Most of the time	All of the time
In the past 4 weeks						
1.	About how often did you feel tired or exhausted for no good reason?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
2.	About how often did you feel nervous?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
3.	About how often did you feel so nervous that nothing could calm you down?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
4.	About how often did you feel hopeless?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
5.	About how often did you feel restless or fidgety?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
6.	About how often did you feel so restless you could not sit still?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
7.	About how often did you feel depressed?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
8.	About how often did you feel that everything was an effort?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
9.	About how often did you feel so sad that nothing could cheer you up?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
10.	About how often did you feel worthless?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Prometheus is Here!

MFB has unveiled the newest member of its marine fleet – Fireboat 2 – a world-class, firefighting vessel that will protect Melbourne’s waterways and marinas.

Measuring 12 metres long, the water-jet powered craft, christened **Prometheus**, was purpose-built in Canada and can travel at speeds in excess of 32 knots.

At a cost of \$1.4 million, CEO Jim Higgins said the investment is an example of the increasingly diverse skills needed by the modern fire brigade and recognises the growing importance of marine infrastructure in the development of Melbourne.

“The increase in boating activity, rise in waterside living and recreational activities and escalation in port traffic and cargo coupled with the nature of hazardous goods carried are all factors contributing to the likelihood of fire or emergency incidents in the bay,” he said.

“It is therefore vital to equip the brigade with better, faster and more capable marine assets that will be paramount in ensuring public safety and protection of property and the marine environment.”

MFB’s increasingly diverse capabilities in the complex urban environment of Melbourne include emergency medical response, high angle rescue, urban search and rescue, hazardous materials and scientific officers and fire investigation.

MFB has trained more than 100 firefighters in shipboard fire fighting, and currently has 40 firefighters trained as coxswains.

Features of Fireboat 2 include:

- Modern radar and GPS based navigation system so it can respond to incidents under most environmental conditions
- A full suite of radios to enable communications with marine vessels, MFB/CFA appliances, other Emergency Response Organisations, such as Victoria Police and the Regional Control Centre.
- Four monitors that form part of its core fire fighting system to deliver water directly onto a fire or it can be used as a mobile pumping station to help supply endless water to other land based appliances
- On board foam capabilities
- Forward looking infrared camera system to locate hotspots and fires on board vessels without personnel having to transfer into dangerous situations
- Capable of providing medical care and in an emergency tow a distressed vessel to a point of safety.



Above: *Prometheus - Fireboat 2 – a world-class, firefighting vessel that will protect Melbourne’s waterways and marinas.*

Story & Photographs courtesy MFB Media and Communications.

Vessel Details:

Make:	Firestorm 40
Length:	12 metres
Class:	2c
Engines:	Cummins QSM11
Beam:	4.39m
Weight:	18.3 tonnes
Fuel Capacity:	312 USG
Fresh Water:	117 L
Sprint Speed:	33.0 kts
Service Speed:	27.0 kts

Built to Lloyds Registry Standard, the vessel is fully compliant with Australian standards and has been certified by Transport Safety Victoria as a Class 2C vessel under the National Standards for Commercial Vessels (NSCV).

Operational Capability:

The vessel is capable of carrying a firefighting team of eight, at up to 33Kts. Fitted with four monitors and a foam generating system, the vessel can deliver approximately 16,000 Litres of water per minute.

Area of Operation:

The vessel is designed to respond to incidents in the Docklands precinct and throughout Port Phillip Bay, by day/night in up to seas state five/force seven winds.

Manning:

Up to 12 personnel (including a crew of four)

Pump:

Pump Type:	Darley
Pump Capacity:	16,000 Litres / Minute
Foam Tank Capacity:	189 L
Main Monitor:	8,000 Litres/ Minute
Hose Lines:	16,000 Litres / Minute

Melbourne's Fire Heritage Prior to the MFB.

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

The February 2015 edition of 'Water Off' covered the tragic details of the collision of two suburban trains near the Windsor train station in 1887. The following is the conclusion of this saga from the Melbourne newspapers of the time - *The Argus* and the *Australasian Sketcher*.

The Windsor Train Collision - the Inquest May 11, 1887

After a previous adjournment, the inquest into the deaths of those killed in the Windsor train collision was resumed under Dr. Youl, the City Coroner, and a jury of fifteen, on Thursday May 19, 1887 at the Atheneum Hall.

Legal counsel comprised of Mr. J. Purves QC, who, with Mr. Coldham, were acting as the prosecution on behalf of the Crown; Mr. G Skinner for Mr. Gedge, station master at Prahran; Mr. Gillott for the Westinghouse Brake Co.; Mr. Gannson on behalf of the Engine Drivers' & Firemen's Association; and Mr. Talbot for the Victorian Railways Employees' Association. The Crown solicitor, Mr. R. Sutherland instructed Mr. Purves. The dead and some of the injured persons also had legal representation.

The inquiry into the collision took some weeks. There was a quite an army of barristers and solicitors questioning many witnesses, making an exhaustive search for the evidence in an effort to ascertain on whose shoulders the blame should rest, and investigating the causes which led up to the disaster.

Finally on Friday, June 10, 1887 the Jury handed down its verdict.

No single factor caused the collision, but more a combination of lax supervision, systematic neglect and inappropriate decisions. It was proved to the

satisfaction of the jury that carelessness and negligence were not confined to the three unfortunate individuals whose disregard of the regulations directly brought about the disaster, nor the disorganisation limited to the officials at Prahran. A similar attitude and lack of management was found to exist among supervisors and throughout the Railway Traffic Department.

The accident occurred in the deep cutting between the Prahran and Windsor train stations, one of the busiest suburban rail lines. Two trains were wrecked, six people killed and 150 persons injured.

An ordinary train (stopping all stations) which had departed Melbourne at 5.30 pm, was stopped by the Windsor signal showing danger. When the signal indicated proceed, the driver couldn't start the train again, as a tube of the automatic brake had burst causing the brake to lock all wheels.

While the guard was endeavouring to release the brake, a following train, the 5.40 pm express from Melbourne arrived and, being unable to see the stationary train due to a bend in the cutting, ploughed into the rear of the ordinary train. The guards van and three carriages were smashed.

Frederick Maskall, the express driver and James McNab, his fireman were killed on impact. Their engine was running tender first. The ordinary train was almost empty otherwise the death and injury list would have been much greater.

Under the 'block system', where a safe distance can be kept between following trains by means of the signals, the collision should not have been possible, however a



number of circumstances brought about the tragic accident.

First of all the express was allowed to pass Prahran before the section ahead was clear, because the inexperienced booking clerk misinterpreted the signal he received from Windsor. The signal actually meant the line was clear for the ordinary train, but the clerk thought it was clear for the express, due to the ordinary train having already passed through. The express had only rounded the curve beyond the station when it crashed into the disabled train. Letting the express pass Prahran was the cardinal error.

Secondly the clerk was only 16 yrs old, having started his job just eight days prior to the collision. The station master had put him in charge of the office before he had mastered the 'block' instruments and become familiar with his duties.

Third, the driver of the ordinary train was at fault for stopping in the cutting, where his train could not be seen from the



Above: *Captain James Kelly, was in charge of the Prahran and Sth Yarra Fire Brigades on the night of the accident.*

Photo: State Library of Victoria Collection

Windsor signal box, instead of drawing up close to the signal. The driver said during the inquiry, his train should have been visible to the signal men, as he could see them.

In the fourth place, if the brake tubing had not been damaged the ordinary train would have been able to move when it got the clear signal.

Finally if the guard of the ordinary train had gone back with a danger lantern, instead of trying to free the wheels, he could have given the express ample warning in time for it to stop.

The Coroner was very critical of the supervisors and their superiors, as the evidence suggested they had a very casual approach to their duties and responsibilities. He concluded there were serious problems in the system which should be immediately addressed. The first priority of the Railway Commissioners was to rectify the situation and make train travel safe for all.

Barbara McCumisky

Images: The Illustrated Australian News

Good Bye from Barb too!

by Barb McCumisky

Like your Editor John Laverick, the time has come when I must also move on to a more 'leisurely' lifestyle. Mike, Smokey and I have so many things we want to do together while we are still young enough to enjoy them.

I have thoroughly enjoyed working all these years with John. It all started back in 1989, when John first set eyes on my dalmatian Phoenix, who went on to graduate as MFB Fire Dog Kitt 1, the first official canine fire safety educator in the Southern Hemisphere.

The concept of fire dogs as canine educators was John's initiative. Three more fire dogs followed and I continued to work with John long after he retired from the MFB, as he worked with the MFB's Retire Ed program. For fifteen years I worked with the fire dogs, and John was with me all the way, offering advice and encouragement.

In the meantime John had taken on the job as Editor of the RFA magazine 'Water Off'. As the work became

more demanding, he sought the assistance of a co-editor. Having had considerable experience with MFB and dog club magazines, I initially agreed to help John out until a permanent co-editor could be found, as I had supplied copy and images for 'Water Off' on a couple of occasions previously. That was back in 1998. We worked so well together, I soon took over the co-editor's role.

I hope you, the readers, have found my contributions interesting, because I have had great fun over the years researching fire related articles and photos for you, and at the same time increasing my own knowledge on the MFB and Melbourne's history.

I wish our new Editor, **Angela Potter** all the very best in her new role, and will be more than happy to help out with the odd photo or two, if she needs them.

My heartfelt thanks go to John for all the good times and occasionally the not so good, but now I wish you and Pauline all the best for a happy retirement whiling away the hours with more relaxing activities.

So now the only thing left to say is good bye from me too!

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World domination is ours...

MFB firefighters have dominated at the World Police and Fire Games in the United States, bringing home 15 medals!

A group of about 20 firefighters from MFB travelled to Fairfax, Virginia, to compete in the international competition in a range of different pursuits.

The medallists were as follows:



Leading Firefighter Michael Benham	3 x Gold Indoor Rowing
Leading Firefighter Michelle Field	2 x Silver Golf
Retired Firefighter Alex Shepherd	1 x Gold Orienteering
Senior Station Officer John Garvin	2 x Gold Darts
Leading Firefighter Robert Foote	2 x Gold Bronze Indoor Rowing
Leading Firefighter Robert Foote	1 x Bronze Indoor Rowing
Leading Firefighter Robert Foote	1 x Gold Orienteering
Leading Firefighter Robert Foote	1 x Silver Bronze Stair Race
Leading Firefighter Robert Foote	2 x Bronze Stair Race

Above:
The MFB team in high spirits at Fairfax, Virginia

Experience the Benefits of Travel

This advice from Leon Della Bosca of “Your Life Choices” gives us alternatives to overseas travel.

There is no better way to change your outlook on life than by travelling. There’s something about getting out there and seeing the world that really puts things into perspective. However, there are plenty of things you can do to simulate the beneficial effects that travelling offers. Why not try adopting some of these subtle life changes to see how much better you feel about the world around you?

Spend your money on experiences, not possessions

The most rewarding aspect of travelling is the experience itself, not the goodies you bring back home with you. Instead of buying the latest technology, why not save your money for a weekend away, or a day trip into town to wander around the gardens, galleries and museums? You’d be surprised at how much these types of mini adventures help you to feel more connected to the world around you.

Do something you’ve never done before

Another great benefit of travelling is being able to reconnect with your inner self without the people you know giving you their opinion on how you should live your life. Being by yourself in a strange place can awaken the inner you, so try moving out of your comfort zone more often, and open yourself to new opportunities. It can be as easy as trying a yoga class or catching a train to the end of the line. More adventure will create a spark inside you that will quickly have you feeling invigorated.

Expose yourself to more diversity

It almost goes without saying, that when you travel, you quite literally experience another world. We are lucky that Australia is one of the most culture-rich and multiculturally diverse nations in the world. Why not take advantage of the different ethnicities, beliefs and ways of life in your immediate area? Such as shopping at your local Asian supermarket or fresh produce market, or trying the international foods at the weekend farmers’ market. Don’t be afraid to ask the vendors questions, such as the correct pronunciation of words or with what they would eat the food you’re buying. This way, you can open yourself to new experiences right in your own backyard.

Learn about the culture around you

Most capital cities in Australia will have its own Chinatown, Greek precinct, French quarter, Spanish strips or similar areas that feature specific foreign cultures. Look out for the immigration museums or foreign historical societies. Learning about the cultures around you will not only offer new perspective, but will also exercise your brain as well as your body. It may also have you looking at things in new ways, which can help you better adapt to change and embrace life as it happens. After all, living in the present is, indeed, the ultimate gift.

Life is beautiful – and you don’t need to cross the globe to see its beauty.



SAVE THE DATE

UFU SPRING GALA BALL | SUNDAY 4TH OCTOBER

Sunday 4th October 2015
at 7PM
Peninsula Ball Room, Docklands

Contact Trudie at the
UFU office on 94198811
or pa@ufuvic.asn.au
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9/11 Tribute Motorcycle Honours Owner And All NYFD First Responders Who Died On That Tragic Day

As far as tribute bikes go, this 1979 Honda CB750 is probably the most heart-rending.

It sits in the 9/11 Museum in New York as testimony to how colleagues have kept alive the spirit of those who died in the line of duty and as a sobering reminder of how dreams were shattered by that day's tragic events.

The bike was bought in the summer of 2001 by Firefighter Gerard Baptiste, New York City Fire Department (FDNY) Ladder Company 9.

Despite the advice of his fellow firefighters and



motorcycle enthusiasts, he bought the bike for \$100 and stored it in the back of the Engine 33/Ladder 9 firehouse with plans to restore it for use as his first motorcycle.

Gerard was unfortunately one of the brave firefighters who climbed the North Tower to help rescue people trapped in the floors above.

He died in the line of duty.

The bike sat in the back of the fire department for some time before one of his colleagues decided it would be a



fitting tribute to have the bike restored in Gerard's memory.

Over the next 15 months FDNY members restored the bike with the help of motorcycle enthusiasts, Backroads Magazine, American Honda, a motorcycle restoration shop in New Jersey and financial support from several corporations.

The firefighters refer to it as the "bike of healing" or "dream bike". Firefighter Kevin Duffy painted 10 roses on the cover of its gas tank to honour the 10 members of Ladder Company 9 and Engine Company 33 who were killed on 9/11.

The artwork is also replicated on the boom of Ladder 9's tower ladder, the firehouse floor, on a hand-carved plaque and as tattoos on several members of the 33/9 house.

The artwork also features other symbols including a cross, 343 to honour all emergency workers who died in the tragedy, a hose and pike pole, and two helmets signifying the companies represented.

The bike has been displayed in the French-American School of New York Museum of Firefighting in Hudson, but is now part of the Tribute Walk section of the 9/11 Memorial Museum.

This section focuses on the outpouring of tribute items made honouring the victims and first responders after 9/11.

• *Thanks to Mark Taylor for the photos he took while visiting the museum recently.*

“Water Off” Deadline To Submit Copy for Publication

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

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

November 2015 edition deadline for copy is October 16th.

BELLS BY THE BEACH

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- Brochures and more information available

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Graham Frazer
Cary McFaul
Rod Nixon

Rob Pagey
Bill Pearce
Morris Simpson
Bill Thomas
Alan Warfe

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.

UFU RETIRED MEMBERS ANNUAL CHRISTMAS LUNCHEON

Saturday November 21st 2015

11.30 AM. - 4.00 PM.

Malvern Town Hall

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.

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