

# "WATER OFF"

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

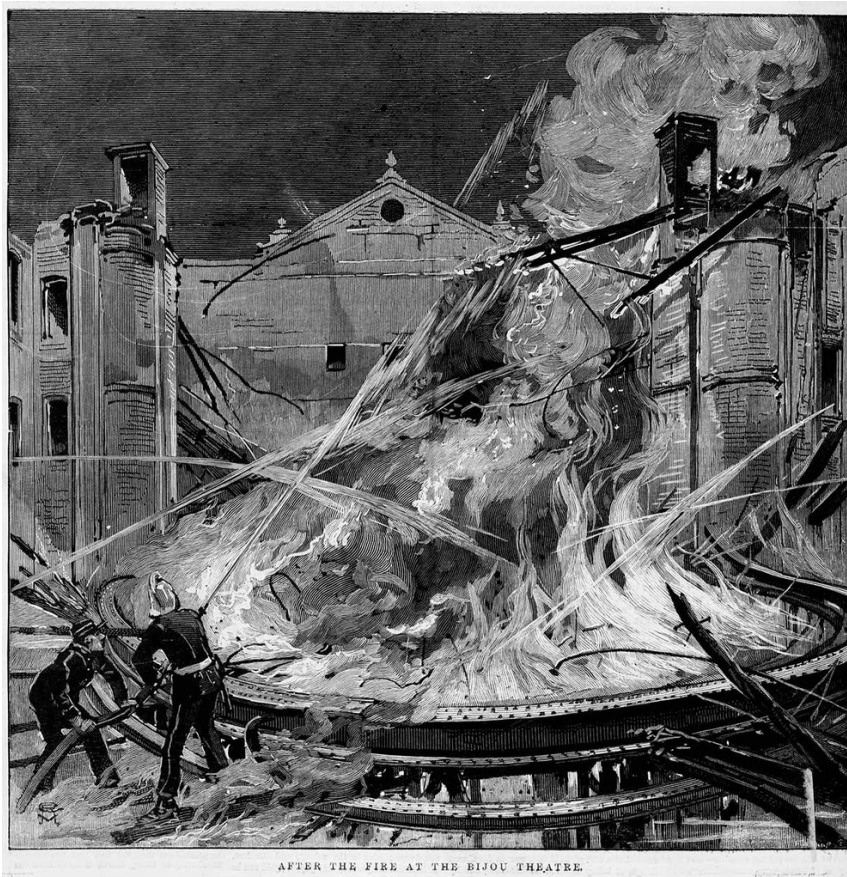


February 2022 Vol 27 No 1  
Inc/No: A16839F

## ANNUAL MEETING FOR FEBRUARY CANCELLED DUE TO COVID

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AFTER THE FIRE AT THE BIJOU THEATRE.

The Bijou Theatre fire in 1889 was a disaster and resulted in the deaths of two firefighters on duty. The outcome of the inquest into those deaths found that the current system of voluntary and company-based fire brigades was totally inadequate and something needed to change. IAN01/05/89/65, State Library Victoria.

# “GENERAL MEETING”

## Cancelled due to Covid.

**Volunteers Required**  
**The Fire Services Museum needs past fire service members to assist on an occasional basis at the Museum**  
**Please contact**  
**Bryan Robertson**  
**0418 129 252**

**All Correspondence to:**  
Phil Cleary  
RFAV Secretary  
PO Box 93  
Numurkah 3636  
Phone 0419 778 161  
or email at [rfavic1@gmail.com](mailto:rfavic1@gmail.com)

### Non financial Members

Members be advised if your newsletter has an expiry date of 2/1/2019 that means you have not paid your subs since 2018 therefore if no remuneration is received by the 2/1/21 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:** Alex Shepherd  
**Vice President:** Sam Capes  
**Sec./Treasurer:** Phil Cleary

### General Committee:

Col Harris  
Len Manning  
Mike McCumisky  
Ian Geddes  
Kevin Hede

### Social Secretary:

Brian Jackson

**“Water Off”  
Editorial Staff**  
Colin Harris

## Valē

Graham Thomson, Brian Renwood, Ray Wellard, Peter Lucas AFSM, Mike Shanahan, Kevin Smith and Bernie Bishop.

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

## Sick List \* In Care Facility

### Diary Dates 2021

Next proposed General Meeting  
Wednesday 18th May 2022  
\*Depending on Covid.

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

**Bruce Barrett**  
**Ken Bouchard**  
**\*John Brown**  
**Stan Cameron**  
**Harold Connell**  
**Tom Driscoll**  
**\*Jack Etherington**  
**Eddie Gilbertson**  
**John Hansford**  
**\*Ian Hookey**  
**Noel Holland**

**Bob Horgan**  
**Archie McLachlan**  
**Harry Mitchell**  
**Kevin Mottershead**  
**Michael Phelan**  
**Dick Prendergast**  
**Trevor Reed**  
**Gary Spicer**  
**Laurie Trewin**  
**Robert Weitering**  
**John Williams.**

## PRESIDENT'S REPORT



**H**ello All, 2022 is with us and it seems like the last two, the media loves a crisis or something they can beat into one I don't read the papers anymore I still do the crosswords though and no to the tv news also. We just have to get on with our lives and look after our loved ones and friends like there's no tomorrow. I hope you all had a great Christmas and New Year and were able to celebrate with friends and family and everyone was safe and well. The weather is great so let's get out if we can and enjoy it, if we can't enjoy it with friends and family that's what really counts. To all who lost Family and Friends or who have sick Family of friends my deepest thoughts go out to you I know how you feel.

Happy New Year to all.

**Alex Shepherd (President)**

## SECRETARY/TREASURER'S REPORT



**H**i all!

I hope you all had a great Christmas & New Year! I know I did with my family & friends.

This year hasn't started very well with Covid and other illnesses and a lot of families suffering out there with no work or very little income, I have put myself on a volunteer list in my area to help people the best way we can, We have a lot of companies in Shepparton area who are helping out, giving away food for example. They then need people to pick it up and deliver it to those families that are doing it hard. Maybe in Melbourne or your area, you might be able to help those families or do something for them. As retired firefighters we were there saving lives and property, helping the public 24/7. Maybe it's time to start doing it again by flying the RFA Flag! Any ideas you may have, share them with your fellow RFA members and contact me. Send me an email or give me a phone call. Best wishes to all in retirement land.

Regards,

**Phil Cleary (Secretary)**

**Any enquiries regarding meetings call the Secretary:  
 Mob. 0419 778 161  
 Email: rfavic1@gmail.com**

### **Road named in recognition of Allan Roberts—November 23, 2021**

Allan joined Research Rural Brigade in 1962 and was a dedicated CFA member for 59 years until his death earlier this year. In recognition of his legacy, CFA has named Roberts Road at VEMTC Central Highlands in his honour.

## The Trickey Family Fire Service History

Dad's time in the MFB started with recruit training at the Old Eastern Hill fire station, station No.1. There was no such thing as a training college then and recruit fireman were schooled and trained by the officers and senior men in the rear yard. They were also assigned "gear" to catch and turn out as required, each attached to a senior man who would look after you at a job. It was on the job training in the strict sense of the word. It was hands-on where they learnt the craft directly and were mentored and coached by the senior men on the gear. Loafers, or duds were quickly sorted out and did not progress to retention examination. Rather, were 'recommended' to seek other employment. If you were fit and athletic or held down a trade, you had a head start as tradesmen had the inherent hand-eye and distance judgement parameters and could handle tools competently.

Dad was a natural athlete, tall strong and had excellent hand-eye co-ordination and was working as a concreter at the time of recruitment. These attributes saw him selected to drill in the Pompier Ladder drills held each Friday in the rear yard to the amusement of several hundred school kids transported in to N0.1 station for the Friday Display. The Pompier Ladder (pompy ladder), was a ladder with a central metal spine with the rungs protruding each side of the spine and the top of the spine held a large hook that would grip the window ledge. These ladders could allow fireman to enter a multi-storey building from the outside windows and thus by-passing any internal fire floor. Hose and gear would then be hauled aloft, lines run out and tied off before water was pumped to the fire floor from the street below.

The Friday display required fireman to "run the pompys" to the fourth or fifth floor, rescue the entrapped maiden (another fireman dressed in a skirt and blouse!), and throw the maiden out of the window to be, hopefully, caught by the street fireman holding a jump net below. Imagine the OH&S reports for that today!

Dad's athleticism saw him playing VFL rules with Cheltenham football club, the Rosella's. Cheltenham was also within the VFL recruitment area for the Fitzroy football club (now Brisbane Lions) and he soon came to the attention of the talent scouts and was selected to play with Fitzroy. I think he played about 12 games with Fitzroy Lions in the 1953 to 1954 season. Fitzroy Lions' home ground was the Brunswick street oval, not far from eastern Hill. Fireman worked a triple-eight shift. That is three shifts of eight hours, day, afternoon and night shift.

Football training for Fitzroy was of an evening during the week and of course the Saturday game home or away. You might think that this would clash with the shift-work. Well, it did, but you see the number One ticket holder for Fitzroy was the Deputy Chief Fire Officer, Tom Williamson.

Dad did not miss training or a match as word came down to the station duty officer, that Fireman Ernest Trickey was lightly tasked with duties that would allow him to 'slip away' as it were. Tom was not about to see his beloved Lions suffer the loss of their number one ruckman.

For reasons that escape me, Dad was dropped by the Lions, I think it was a long spell on the bench with a hamstring injury. In any case, he was approached by the South Melbourne football club and began training with them at their home, the junction oval South Melbourne.

To say that DCFO Williamson was not happy would be an understatement! The Monday morning after Sunday's training with South Melbourne, he was called in to the Deputies officer for a right royal piece of his mind. "You, Trickey!! You traitorous, low down spandrel of a man! How dare you play for the enemy! May the fleas of a thousand camels infect your armpits!! (I made that last bit up, but you get the gist).

Needless to say, Dad's dream run of light duties turned into the harsh reality of all the menial tasks and station cleaning duties at the behest of the day-duty officer, whom was briefed that the Eastern Hill fire station had better have shiny, spotless brass on every bit of gear, and the name on the top of the list for all and sundry cleaning, mopping and swabbing duties, - Ernest William Trickey, registered number 1327.

Cheers to all.

## BRIAN JACKSON – (“Jacko”)

### Retired MFB District Officer

Brian Jackson tells this story of some avid would - be sailors of the Metropolitan Fire Brigade 1973/4.

In the 1970's for the formation of the new 10/14 system, a new shift was required. At No.1 Station, this shift was presided over by Sup't Gordon Geddes, DO Reg Carey, SSO Arthur Cowban and the plebb station officers Duncan, Meggs, Ward and Jackson, supplemented by a numbers of firefighters of all ranks, including a number of firefighters just out of recruits. I could see this was going to be a big task to bond this group together! Being given permission to attempt to bond this lot by the Sup't and the District Officer, we started having fitness sessions at the start of each shift which included all ranks. After a short time when the aches and pains had subsided, this became the norm and was enjoyable as well as beneficial to all. In time, comradery and benefits on the fire ground together with shift morale was noticed. I started to look at the social side & my options? One stood out!

A fishing trip on the Gippsland Lakes. After a meeting and most agreeing, it was decided we would go to Metung after a night shift and hire a couple of “Bulls” cruisers for three nights on the lakes, sometime in August/September, 1974. Eighteen starters put their hands up to attend, which included Billy Forest from No.10 Stn, who volunteered to be chef for this trip. Three x 32 foot cruisers were hired. I being a non-drinker, volunteered to drive the bus, as blokes driving in vehicles could end up being a disaster. All this was arranged and Billy Forest spent 2 days with the station car buying out half the stock of the old Rosella factory (Port Melb) and the meat/bread etc that would be required for this “fishing” trip. This was becoming quite easy, organizing of this said fishing trip (little did I know what was coming)?

My plan was to have lunch at the Bairnsdale Hotel, then continue on the Metung. As eating, drinking and smoking was allowed on the bus, it was a right happy bunch of furies when we arrived at the hotel. \*\*That was my first mistake. I should have pre-made vegemite sandwiches to eat in the local park! Departing time from the Metung pub was supposed to be 1330 hours, but ended up being 1400 hours because as I chased them out of the front door of the hotel, some doubled back through the back door. There always seemed to be one missing?? I found him! Then we were able to head off to lovely Metung. As we approached Bulls boat yard, I stopped the bus and presented all with bins and brooms to clean the bus, stating that if a Bull's employee on seeing the condition of the bus, they will send us straight back to Melbourne. Bus spotless & occupants looking like church parishioners, I knew it couldn't last! “Bulls” had our 3 cruisers lined up ready for the Eastern Hill crew, so unloading our supplies and equipment was easy. Most of the senior furies had organized who was going on each boat. With dusk coming on early, I asked an employee of bulls to show me an area on the map where we could anchor for the night in a quiet area with no access to land (Ideal I thought!). We headed off with myself in the 1<sup>st</sup> boat. We were about 2 kms from the

jetty when I noticed a small boat coming at speed from Bulls jetty. We stopped and the employee in the boat requested a signature on the boat hiring document. It stated that “Bulls” accept no responsibility for anything that occurs on this trip. I thought, what has caused this?? It appears that one of the lads, \*Brian Morrissey was standing on the edge of the edge of the jetty holding his slab of beer. Now as many know, it is always possible to see a drunk almost touch his nose on the ground and yet still come back upright. Simply, Brian lent so far forward from the edge of the pier that Harry Drew reached forward to grab him. Brian lent backwards, Harry missed him and ended up in the drink! Harry then had to be rescued. “Bulls” management then thought they had better get the book signed. Of course, I knew nothing of this!? We continued on for about 30 minutes and I noticed boats 2 & 3 catching up. Somebody was waving on boat 3! Someone in boat 3 is yelling out “we can't find him”! It appears that fireman Morrissey has disappeared! At this stage, I'm thinking this is going to look good on a report to the Chief back at No.1.

First trip away, one rescued from drowning, another is missing in action. After some swearing, I say “the boat is only 32 foot long and 5 of you can't find him”? This is not looking good at all! Finally, after some frantic searching, the call comes out that Morrissey has been found fast asleep in a tiny open punt on top of the cabin. We continue on. I am now happy. Nobody missing and all three boats side by side, so anyone can step from one boat to the next. It's now dusk and everybody has been fed. Billy and a few helpers have done a good job with the roast dinner. All are settled for the night. Drinking, cards, music and a number are fishing off the jetty and boats. About 9.00pm, a few are getting ready to bunk down and then a question? Where is Morrissey? Still in the punt said his crew. Get him down I said, it is still August and there will be ice on the deck in the morning. They bring him down, frozen (as stiff as a board), clothes damp and teeth chattering. Put him in the bunk in the bow. Take off his wet shirt and then cover him with blankets and his was plied with whiskey and whatever! Everything was quiet during the night. Around dawn, 6.00am it's clear and frosty. Suddenly, all we can hear was agitated cows mooing over the countryside. Looking out through the window, all you could see was Morrissey in his goal umpires white coat flapping in the breeze, running around the paddocks and confused cows scattering in all directions. I said, go and get him quickly before the milk turns to bloody cream and some farmer shoots him! (Morrissey).

The next two days were quite pleasant. Good weather, a few fish and an eel caught, plenty of fun. When we returned to “Bulls” jetty, I'm sure they were still quietly counting us, just in case! This was the start of many similar trips over the years and this led then led to a good social and family environment.

From memory, those attending were the following: Brian Morrissey, Harry Drew, Graham Purdon, George McLennan, Ray Jackson, Les Napper, John Kennedy, John Gribble, Peter Egan, Brian Jackson, Colin Harris, Garry Deveraux, Billy Forest, Mick Convery, Peter Andrews and Eddie McMullen.

“Action Jackson” - (Brian Jackson)

## **Marcia Warren (Bernau)**

I emigrated to Australia in 1975 as a 10 pound pom (although by the time I emigrated it cost me the princely sum of 40 pounds). My initial job was an Executive Secretary having had a lot of experience working in London prior to emigrating. I found my way into the Metropolitan Fire Brigade first working as Exec Secretary to the President and Secretary of the Board - during this time they were setting up the Communications Centre and were anticipating the first female civilians to operate the centre. It seemed too good to be true so I applied and managed to get on the second course in 1983 - I had the privilege of being Dux of the Course and still have the award on display.



In December 1984 due to marital problems I left the brigade but missed it a great deal and after my marriage broke down I spent a lot of time pestering District Officer John Berry to help me rejoin the brigade and fortunately in November 1987 I was extremely lucky to be re employed as an Operator in the Comm Centre.

It was a great place to work although we had a fair amount of downtime but we all became very adept at catching up on our sleep whenever we got the chance on nightshift. I really loved it when it was busy and I worked through various busy periods - including Coode Island.

In 1996 the Government in their wisdom decided to combine the Emergency Services communications centres ie. Police Fire and Ambulance into a centralised computer system run by Intergraph - so I went across and worked through many frustrating early days when the computer didn't really do what it was supposed to do - but after some time we seemed to be getting on top of the system and it was working well enough although a number of Station Officers used to want to go back to the good old days of the MFB Comm Centre - but that was not to be. The staff who moved across now had to get used to 12 hour night shifts with no sleeping!!!!

I worked with a great bunch of people across various different shifts but missed the camaraderie that we had had at the MFB but we all worked well together and had great fun together - we used to inform the Officers on the radio that a call had been received from a caller with "No Further Information" as there would be a notation on the call of "NFI" but it actually meant the caller had No F>>>>ng Idea!!! - of the correct location.

Eventually Integraph elected to cease handling the staffing of the centre and we then were run by a government body - Emergency Communications Victoria - then finally Emergency Services Telecommunications Authority - where I stayed until I retired in 2012 - taking some Long Service Leave at half pay before properly retiring. I then moved to Toowoomba to be a bit closer to my sister but couldn't really settle in to retirement - I don't think I was quite ready to give the life away just yet so in 2013 I applied to Queensland Fire in Toowoomba to join their Communications Centre as a casual operator - at the age of 62 I was accepted (no age discrimination there) and commenced the training on a completely different system and different location (I was lucky I did have some knowledge of outback Queensland as my sister had lived there for a number of years). This communications position was quite challenging due to the vastness of the area we covered - but all good things come to an end so in 2016 I had to retire once again as I had reached 65 years - (I would have still been there if I could have).

My husband, Dale and I moved to Bribie Island and love it here - plenty to do and I have taken up golf again and we play Pickleball - a great sport for the ageing. Our two dogs Sophie and Dexter enjoy having us around 24/7 and are totally spoilt.

I enjoy meeting up with the Retired Firies each year at Southport but of course COVID restrictions have affected the attendances somewhat but hopefully we will get back to some sort of normal eventually.

# **Four (4) Steps to Get You on the Way**

(An article in "The Senior – Vic" Aug. 2021)

Has the time come for you to consider assistance to help you live well? MyAgedCare is your one stop shop to make it happen.

**Get familiar with the different types of aged care available: help at home, short-term care and aged care homes.** Find out if you're eligible for government-funded care and the costs involved. While the government may contribute to the cost of your care, you will be asked to contribute if you can afford to.

**Get assessed.** You will need an assessment to see if you are eligible for government-funded aged care services. Phone MyAgedCare or apply on line. If you are eligible, you will have a face-to-face assessment in your home to determine which services you are eligible for.

**Arrange for services.** It is important to find a provider that's right for you. There's a handy search tool on the MyAgedCare website. Get all the information you need, work out the costs and how much you might need to pay, before choosing your provider.

**Get the most from your services.** Your needs may change over time. Discuss these with your provider. If you, or the provider, feel you need to be reassessed, contact MyAgedCare. You can change providers.

**You can contact MyAgedCare, phone 1800-200-422, [myagedcare.gov.au](http://myagedcare.gov.au)**

**Navigators:** If you don't have a family member to help you through the steps, or you're not confident to approach the process by yourself, help is at hand. Council on the Aging has teamed with 30 organisations around Australia to leading the Aged Care Navigator trials. People with computer access can go to [opan.org.au/navigate](http://opan.org.au/navigate) and live chat with someone from the Older Persons Advocacy Network. You can also download the handy My Aged Care Journey Road Map. Or you can call 1800-700-600 (8am to 8pm Monday to Friday, 10am to 4pm Saturday), which will connect you with an aged care advocacy organisation in your state.

## **NOTICE**

**For all future RFA membership payments, electronic transfers, internet banking etc RFA new banking details are as follows:**

**GOULBURN MURRAY  
Credit Union  
BSB 803 078 - Account No 37460**

**Any queries, contact:  
Phil Cleary - Secretary**

## **UFU Firefighter's Picnic**

**at  
MOONEE VALLEY  
RACECOURSE is**

**"CANCELLED"**

**IF ANY MEMBER WISHES TO NOMINATE  
FOR AN ELECTED POSITION ON THE RFA  
COMMITTEE  
PLEASE CONTACT SECRETARY PHIL  
CLEARY**

**Deadline for May Water Off Magazine: 7th April 2022**

# Fire Rescue Victoria (News)

Some news from FRV which we share with our members.

For those of our retired firefighting members, here is the make-up of the hierarchy of FRV:

Commissioner Ken G. Block

Deputy Commissioner Ken Brown AFSM, Deputy Commissioner Martin Braid AFSM

Deputy Commissioner Brendan Angwin AFSM, Deputy Secretary Kirstie Schroder

Deputy Commissioner Michelle Young AFSM, Deputy Commissioner David Bruce AFSM

- FRV Assistance at public housing towers in North Melbourne and Flemington – where FRV responded 18 pumpers and more than 50 firefighters to assist with the necessary relief efforts during a hard lockdown on Saturday 4<sup>th</sup> July 2020.
- Australia’s first 5-star “green station” at Derrimut opened on Monday, 9<sup>th</sup> Nov 2020
- Unveiling the site for the new Clyde North fire station on Wednesday, 7<sup>th</sup> April 2021
- An increase to capabilities at Wodonga was announced - 20 F/f’s & a Pumper Tanker
- In late 2019 Tarneit Fire Station was operational. Officially opened later due to Covid
- During Covid restrictions FRV appliances, stations and uniforms have been rebranded for all Victorians to see. The FRV logo was developed following an extensive and collaborative process. More than 95 potential designs were submitted for consideration and nearly 2000 staff participated in the badge vote survey.
- Supporting women in firefighting. During the past year FRV have been navigating the many changes required to enhance our fire & rescue service. One of the enhancements has been to implement the Women’s Support Coordination Project, helping FRV to be inclusive and supportive of becoming a firefighter if you’re a woman.
- Employee Support Program. FRV is committed to supporting employees to thrive in their jobs and in their lives, with the understanding that employees may need to access mental health support tools, resources and initiatives throughout their career, to stay well and navigate the impacts that work and life matters can have on mental health.
- During the past 2 years, 120 recruit firefighters have passed through the VEMTC training centre at Craigeburn. These new recruits have undergone 20 weeks of rigorous training, covering traditional hose drills, compartment fire behavior, hazardous material and Emergency Medical response training. They have proved that they have what it takes to respond to any emergency situation they may face. Congratulations to Victorian Recruit Firefighting Courses and we look forward to seeing you out serving community.



Fire Rescue Commissioner—Ken Block



FRV Senior Leadership





## Exercise the key to a long life, not watching your weight: study

Brad Lockyer – “Your Life Choices” Digital Editor

November 9, 2021

Exercise is more important for better health and a longer life than weight loss, especially if you’re already overweight or obese, a report has found. According to the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare (AIHW), around two in three (67 per cent) Australians aged 18 and over were overweight or obese (36 per cent are classed as overweight but not obese, with 31 per cent obese), or approximately 12.5 million adults. A key measure of obesity is your body mass index (BMI), an internationally recognised standard for classifying overweight and obesity in adults.

With obesity comes an increased risk of a slew of health problems including cardiovascular disease, type 2 diabetes, high blood pressure, sleep apnoea, psychological issues, some musculoskeletal conditions and some cancers. For a long time, losing weight has been virtually synonymous with improving your overall health. But in a new paper, researchers from Arizona State University have found that when it comes to those increased health risks, getting enough exercise is more important than simply losing weight. The team was specifically trying to find out the best ways to improve the health outcomes of obese and overweight people.

The study looked at the results of hundreds of previous studies relating to weight loss and workouts and found obese people usually lowered their risks of heart disease and premature death more dramatically by improving their fitness rather than by dropping kilos. “Compared head-to-head, the magnitude of benefit was far greater from improving fitness than from losing weight,” lead author of the study Dr Glenn Gaesser told The New York Times. The results showed that obese, sedentary people who added exercise to their daily routine could lower their risk of premature death by as much as 30 per cent – even if their weight didn’t go down.

Crucially, this puts them at a lower risk of early death than people who are considered to be normal weight but physically unfit. The notion that your weight may not be as good an indicator of your health as your fitness levels isn’t new and was first studied back in 1995. Since then, many more studies have reinforced this theory. Dr Gaesser wanted to conduct this most recent study to find out if improving fitness, even just a little, might allow overweight people to enjoy sound metabolic health regardless of their body mass numbers. The results show overweight people can potentially live just as long as thinner people – or even longer, if the thinner people are out of shape. “It looks like exercise makes fat more fit,” Dr Gaesser says. “You will be better off, in terms of mortality risk, by increasing your physical activity and fitness than by intentionally losing weight.” Does this make you want to do a little more exercise? Have you been a couch potato during 2021?



## The Roster Man AKA as the Man Power Deployment Officer

Ray joined the job in 1970, employed as the senior roster clerk and I got to know him fairly well, as he lived close by in Wantirna and we would socialise quite often. He told me what life was like for him growing up and attending school in Collingwood where he was often taunted by fellow students because of the birth mark on his face.

In later life Ray would tell people he was born in Lower Kew. Because of that, he learnt to box thus ending the taunting. He was a mad Collingwood supporter. I actually went to a Collingwood and Carlton game with him once. That was enough, never again! The first couple of years in the job, Ray had a bit of a chip on his shoulder but gradually he gained and earned the respect of fellow firefighters.

He was into several sports including swimming, running, cycling, triathelons and off-course basketball. One of his favourite recreations was kayaking and fishing. He not only coached the Brigade basketball team but was very involved with intellectually and disabled basket ballers for many years.

He often went camping and travelling with fellow firefighters for many trips around Australia. Ray attended and competed in the first World Police and Fire Games in San Jose in 1985 and again in San Diego - 1987 In San Jose we were having a drink with some police from Texas when one female police officer asked what happened to Rays face we told her that Ray was a hero in Melbourne. We told her that Ray turned out to a house fire going pretty well. He was first out of the truck raced into the burning house and rescued a 10 years old child resuscitated the kid with CPR and then went back into the burning building to rescue the kids pet dog when the ceiling collapsed on him. Apparently the female police officer liked hero's. Ray was last seen walking out with her. When we saw him next morning he had a smile on his face like a cat walking into a dairy.

He had a wicked sense of humour once I was in local supermarket down at the meat section when this voice yelled "Howie how was the result of you aids test," people moved away from me very quickly. In the middle of the 1990 football season he made a comment in the General office mess room that Collingwood would win the grand final this year. One of the female employees commented that 'If Collingwood wins the grand final you can make love to me in the goal square at Victoria Park at midnight'. Needless to say he had that smile on his face again.

Another time when I was doing day work at No 1 we were travelling home on the train and there was this young lady talking very loudly on her mobile phone apparently to her boy friend annoying all of us Ray gently tapped her on the shoulder and said "hurry up with talking love and come back to bed" You could have heard a pin drop except for the giggling of fellow passengers.

When Ray retired they employed 4 people to do his job. During his years in the job Ray not only knew every firefighter but their registered number also.

After he retired he and his lady friend Wendy went travelling in their caravan all around Australia. Some 3 years ago Ray underwent a serious cancer related operation resulting in the removal of one of his kidneys and several cancer affected areas.

He knew his time was limited but he fought for as long as possible never losing his sense of humour. On 19<sup>th</sup> November 2021 Ray was admitted to Peninsular Health palliative care ward for pain relief unfortunately he passed away on Tuesday 22<sup>nd</sup> Nov.

He was a greatly respected member of the Fire service for just on 35 years.

Our condolences go to His son Paul, daughter Dana his grand children and other family members especially his lady friend Wendy

**He will be sadly missed!**

By John Howe (A dear friend)

## Jokes

A doctor that had been seeing an 80-year-old woman for most of her life finally retired. At her next checkup, the new doctor told her to bring a list of all the medicines that had been prescribed for her. As the doctor was looking through these his eyes grew wide as he realized Grandma had a prescription for birth control pills.

"Mrs. Smith, do you realize these are birth control pills?"

"Yes, they help me sleep at night."

"Mrs. Smith, I assure you there is absolutely nothing in these that could possibly help you sleep!" She reached out and patted the young doctor's knee and said, "Yes, dear, I know that. But every morning, I grind one up and mix it in the glass of orange juice that my 16-year-old Granddaughter drinks. And believe me it definitely helps me sleep at night."

You gotta love Grandmas!

A man was riding on a full bus minding his own business when the gorgeous woman next to him started to breast-feed her baby. The baby wouldn't take it so she said, "Come on sweetie, eat it all up or I'll have to give it to this nice man next to us."

Five minutes later the baby was still not feeding, so she said, "Come on, honey. Take it or I'll give it to this nice man here." A few minutes later the anxious man blurted out, "Come on kid. Make up your mind! I was supposed to get off four stops ago!"

Students in an advanced Biology class were taking their mid-term exam. The last question was, 'Name seven advantages of Mother's Milk.' The question was worth 70 points or none at all. One student was hard put to think of seven advantages. He wrote:

- 1) It is perfect formula for the child.
- 2) It provides immunity against several diseases.
- 3) It is always the right temperature.
- 4) It is inexpensive.
- 5) It bonds the child to mother and vice versa.
- 6) It is always available as needed

And then the student was stuck. Finally, in desperation, just before the bell rang indicating the end of the test he wrote:

- 7) It comes in two attractive containers and it's high enough off the ground where the cat can't get it. He got an A+.

A woman and her 12-year-old son were riding in a taxi in Detroit. It was raining and all the prostitutes were standing under awnings.

"Mom," said the boy, "what are all those women doing?"

"They're waiting for their husbands to get off work," she replied

The taxi driver turns around and says, "Geez lady, why don't you tell him the truth? They're hookers, boy! They have sex with men for money."

The little boy's eyes get wide and he says, "Is that true Mum?"

His mother, glaring hard at the driver, answers "Yes."

After a few minutes the kid asks, "Mom, if those women have babies, what happens to them?"

She said, "Most of them become taxi drivers."

An elderly, but hardy cattleman from Texas once told a young female neighbor that if she wanted to live a long life, the secret was to sprinkle a pinch of gunpowder on her oatmeal each morning. She did this religiously and lived to the ripe old age of 103. She left behind 14 children, 30 grandchildren, 21 great-grandchildren, five great-great-grandchildren and a 40-foot HOLE where the crematorium used to be.

## Organs

All the organs of the body were having a meeting trying to decide who was the one in charge.

“I should be in charge” said the brain; “because I run all the body’s systems, so without me nothing would happen.”

“I should be in charge” said the blood, “because I circulate oxygen all over so without me you’d all waste away”

“I should be in charge” said the stomach, “Because I process food and give all of you energy”

“I should be in charge” said the legs, “because I carry the body wherever it needs to go”

“I should be in charge” said the eyes, “because I allow the body to see where it goes”

“I should be in charge” said the rectum, “because I’m responsible for waste removal”

All the body parts laughed at the rectum and insulted him, so in a huff he shut down tight.

Within a few days the brain had a terrible headache,

The stomach was bloated,

The legs got wobbly,

The eyes got watery,

And the blood was toxic.

They decided that the rectum should be the boss.

The moral of the story? .....

## Walking Helps Boost Memory in the Elderly

By The Associated Press

Astronaut John Glenn, credits his celebrated return to orbit at age 77 to daily exercise, including a 2-mile power walk. Now researchers finally are catching up with senior pedestrians. A new study suggests that taking an invigorating walk gives older people’s brains a good workout, boosting memory and sharpening judgement. Anaerobic exercise, stretching and weightlifting, did not produce similar cognitive improvements. The experiment was conducted at the University of Illinois and reported in Thursday’s issue of the journal Nature. The mental benefits of walking were especially significant, researchers said, because the senior citizens had not exercised regularly before joining the study.

“People who have chosen a lifetime of relatively inactivity can benefit mentally from improved aerobic fitness,” said the study’s lead author, cognitive neuroscientist Arthur Kramer. “It’s never too late.” Researchers recruited 124 sedentary men and women ages 60 to 75. They were randomly assigned to either a walking program or an anaerobic regimen of stretching and muscle-toning. The experiment lasted six months. Walkers eventually were completing an hour-long loop around the university’s Urbana-Champaign campus three times a week. Kramer and others administered a variety of simple tests to gauge the participants’ ability to plan, establish schedules, make and remember choices and rapidly reconsider them if circumstances changed.

Neurologists call these brain functions “executive control processes” because they help a person live independently. They are controlled in the brain’s frontal and prefrontal lobes. “These areas of the brain decline the earliest with aging,” Kramer said. “So executive control is more severely affected by the normal aging process than other brain functions.”

Among other things, participants were shown alternating letters and numbers, and asked to quickly determine between vowels and consonants and odd and even numbers. This exercise is known as task switching. The walkers’ ability to switch tasks improved by 25 percent, while the non-walkers’ showed little improvement.

Previous studies have shown that regular exercise may reduce the risk of developing Alzheimer’s disease later in life, possibly because exercise enhances the production of certain hormones and other protective compounds in the brain. Those studies involved only people with long term exercise habits. People with Alzheimers (which is the death of brain cells), is different from the more generalized memory lapses which generally accompany aging.

Experts who reviewed the Illinois study, said it is not clear how walking might stimulate memory and planning ability.

## LENNIE AND GINGER MICK

It's 1932 and Australia is in the grip of the Great Depression. One in three workers are unemployed. Decrepit shanty towns hug the outskirts of the big cities. A scrawny rabbit caught in a trap will feed a family for a week. Country roads are filled with broken men walking from one farmhouse to another seeking menial jobs and food. On the outskirts of the South Gippsland town of Leongatha, an injured farmer lies in bed unable to walk – or work. World War I hero Captain Leo Tennyson Gwyther is in hospital with a broken leg and the family farm is in danger of falling into ruins. Up steps his son, nine-year-old Lennie. With the help of his pony Ginger Mick, Lennie ploughs the farm's 24 paddocks and keeps the place running until his father can get back on his feet. How to reward him? Lennie has been obsessively following one of the biggest engineering feats of the era – the construction of the Sydney Harbour Bridge. He wants to attend its opening. With great reluctance, his parents agree he can go. So Lennie saddles up Ginger Mick, packs a toothbrush, pyjamas, spare clothes and a water bottle into a sack, and begins the 1000+ kilometre (600+ miles) trek to Sydney. Alone. That's right. A nine year old boy riding a pony from the deep south of Victoria to the biggest and roughest city in the nation. Told you it was a different era. No social media. No mobile phones. But even then it doesn't take long before word begins to spread about a boy, his horse and their epic trek. The entire populations of small country towns gather on their outskirts to welcome his arrival. He survives bushfires, is attacked by a "vagabond" and endures rain and cold, biting winds. When he reaches Canberra he is welcomed by Prime Minister Joseph Lyons, who invites him into Parliament House for tea. When he finally arrives in Sydney, more than 10,000 people line the streets to greet him. He is besieged by autograph hunters. He becomes a key part of the official parade at the bridge's opening. He and Ginger Mick are invited to make a starring appearance at the Royal Show. Even Donald Bradman, the biggest celebrity of the Depression era, requests a meeting and gives him a signed cricket bat. A letter writer to The Sydney Morning Herald at the time gushes that "just such an example as provided by a child of nine summers, Lennie Gwyther was, and is, needed to raise the spirit of our people and to fire our youth and others to do things – not to talk only. "The sturdy pioneer spirit is not dead ... let it be remembered that this little lad, when his father was in hospital, cultivated the farm – a mere child." When Lennie leaves Sydney for home a month later, he has become one of the most famous figures in a country craving uplifting news. Large crowds wave handkerchiefs. Women weep and shout "goodbye". According to The Sun newspaper, "Lennie, being a casual Australian, swung into the saddle and called "Toodleloo!". He finally arrives home to a tumultuous reaction in Leongatha. He returns to school and soon life for Lennie – and the country – returns to normal. These days you can find a bronze statue in Leongatha commemorating Lennie and Ginger Mick. But Australia has largely forgotten his remarkable feat – and how he inspired a struggling nation. Never taught about him in school? Never heard of him before? Spread the word!

Happy New Year to all the RFA and UFU members

Ian and I both wish you all a great New Year with heaps of travel and no sickness to yourself and your family.

We had friends who came up from Melbourne and they really did 'cop' a lot of bad weather which I feel sorry. It is January here, a rotten month however, they said "we are outside and enjoying the fresh air". The worst part of their trip was the constant testing after arriving and then before flying out. And of course QLD moved the 'goal posts' a day before they left!

This year our Luncheon will be held on the 28<sup>th</sup> JULY. I have made the booking at CSI Club in Southport. We hope to see you all here this year.

**CSI CLUB SOUTHPORT**  
**154A SCARBOROUGH STREET**  
**SOUTHPORT**

**28<sup>TH</sup> JULY 2022**  
**(LAST THURSDAY IN THE MONTH)**

Cheers,

**Gail & Ian Fagernes**  
**07 5522 4321 0431 485 141**  
**fagernes@bigpond.com**



## ***Geelong Firey's Muster***

***C.F.A. – M.F.B. – VIVA - AVALON***  
***Serving & Retired – Staff & Volunteers***  
***Smorgasbord Lunch***  
***On the 4th Tuesday of March & October***  
***@ 1130 hrs***

***GATEWAY HOTEL***  
***218-230 Princess Highway – CORIO***  
***Members, Wives, Partners,***  
***Family & Friends***

***Contact:***  
***Peter Lang 5275 6039***  
***To receive Mail out notification***



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

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

**[retiredfirenews@gmail.com](mailto:retiredfirenews@gmail.com)**

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

#### **FRV**

**Employee Assistance Coordinator**  
**Irina Tchernitskaia – PH: 0407 665 174**  
**Email:- [irina.tchernitskaia@frv.vic.gov.au](mailto:irina.tchernitskaia@frv.vic.gov.au)**

**Peer Coordinators**  
**Chloe Henderson PH: 0417 538 289**  
**Scott Darcy PH: 0429 771 849**  
**Email:- [sdarcy@frv.vic.gov.au](mailto:sdarcy@frv.vic.gov.au)**

#### **Retirees**

**John Howe PH: 9729 0984**

#### **CFA**

**Career Peer Coordinator Trent Egan**  
**PH: 0448 071 299**

**Email:- [Careerpeercoordinator@frv.vic.gov.au](mailto:Careerpeercoordinator@frv.vic.gov.au)**



## Bells By The Beach Holiday House, Ocean Grove

Pet friendly accommodation for everyone



Hello to everyone,

We're contacting you as past, present or future guests at our pet-friendly holiday house. It's been a while since our last newsletter, we know you'll enjoy this edition.

We are so grateful for your on-going support and encouragement during the crisis. We're grateful our regional Victorian guests can now enjoy a well-earned holiday and we'll be even more grateful when metro Melbourne residents can enjoy their holidays, too.

Do you know our cancellation policy? Here it is... 'if bookings are cancelled due to COVID-19 we suggest you re-schedule to another date or we will refund any payments'. That's our policy.

Bells By The Beach has a Service Victoria QR Code for easy check-in. Our team members are fully vaccinated, ensuring a safe holiday experience at our property.

Families with fur-kids (all sizes & breeds) love our 'home away from home'. Everyone can relax and enjoy spotlessly clean surroundings in a serene garden environment.

Guests can be confident our safe and secure property is dog-friendly and escape-proof. Start planning your next holiday now, it's a great distraction!

We suggest you visit [www.bellsbythebeach.com.au](http://www.bellsbythebeach.com.au) for availability details or call 0403 221 737. We still have a few vacancies between now and mid-December.

Thank you for considering our holiday accommodation

*Jan & Lin Bell, local owners, Bells By The Beach Ocean Grove*



24 Roditis Drive, Ocean Grove, 3226  
 M: 0403 221 737 P: (03) 5255 3839  
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