

"WATER OFF"

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



November 2013 Vol 17 No 4
Inc/No: A16839F

RFA's November Guest to Explain a NEW ERA IN FIREFIGHTER TRAINING

The RFA's guest speaker for the November meeting is Commander Graeme Gant, a member of the MFB's "Future of Organisational Learning & Development" (FOLD) team.

Hear how the new training complex is to be utilised.

Although, owned and operated by the MFB, it will be available for use by other State Emergency Service Organisations, encouraging an integrated approach to emergency management.

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The "Colonel" has left the Station!

Laurie's 80th well attended

Crackerjack team going nowhere

“ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING”

Notice is hereby given that the next Annual General Meeting will be held at the MFB Training College, 450 Burnley Street Richmond.

1030 Hours, Wednesday 20th November 2013

AGENDA ITEMS.

**Minutes of last Annual General meeting
President’s Report
Secretary/Treasurer’s Report
Election of Office Bearers
Guest Speaker; Commander Graeme Gant
General Business**

**JOHN BERRY
SECRETARY/TREASURER
Please Note;
Address all correspondence to:
The Secretary,
24 Lincoln Drive Lower Plenty 3093
Ph. 9431 2880**

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

**Lunch available
Please join us!**

Non financial Members

Members be advised if your newsletter has an expiry date of 2/1/2012 that means you have not paid your subs since 2011 therefore if no remuneration is received by the 2/1/14 your name will be automatically removed from the mailing list. If, for what ever 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, Ian Fowler
Sec./Treasurer, John Berry**

General Committee;
Ian Geddes
Mike McCumisky
Alan Roberts
John Schintler

Auditor;
Theo Teklenburg

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

Valē

Royce Adams (MFB) Peter Hunt (MFB)
Jack Clarke (CFA) Ken Jensen (MFB)
Ken Clinkaberry (MFB) Ron McIntosh (MFB)
Ray Gilligan (MFB) Wes Spencer (MFB)
Arthur Hook (MFB)

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

SICK LIST (* In Nursing Home)

Stan Cameron Clarrie Hart
Huew Campbell* Jack Sexton
John Cotter Brian Trembath
Ernie Goodall* Tom Williamson
Clarrie Guthrie*
Jack Harbrow

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 2013

November 20th; Annual General Meeting

**December 7th Annual Christmas Luncheon
11.30 am. Malvern Town Hall**

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

November 20, 2013 brings us the "Annual General Meeting," and another year completed for the RFA. This also means office bearers are up for election for the coming 12 months. All positions will become vacant and a nomination form can be found on page 15 of this issue.

I offer myself once again for the position of President but am prepared to stand down if we have new blood willing to take over.

I would like to thank the current committee for their work during the year, especially to Secretary/Treasurer John Berry and our Editor John Laverick.

To all the members who help prepare the magazine for posting and the volunteers who helped at the BBQ's thank you very much.

Another fundraising BBQ was held at "Bunnings Hoppers Crossing," and, as previously reported, we made plenty of money which has been donated to various charities.

By the time you read this report we will have completed another BBQ at "Bunnings Hoppers Crossing" and hopefully, have raised more funds for our charity recipients.

In closing, our editor John Laverick, has just had open heart surgery and is progressing very well. Committee member John Schintler has had a stroke which effects the left side of his body, but is making steady progress. Peter Coulson who organises the reunion in QLD has also had heart problems, and has 2 stents placed near the heart, he is also making good progress. We wish them all a speedy return to good health.

As this is our last edition of the RFA Water Off Magazine for 2013, I would like to wish you all and your families a very Happy Christmas and a Healthy and prosperous New Year.

Don Brennan

SECRETARY/ TREASURER'S REPORT

The way the year has passed so quickly I feel that Father-time must be in training as it only seems like a couple of months ago it was 2012 now it is almost 2014. I suppose we should be like Lewis Carroll's Quote "The time has come, the Walrus said, "To talk of many things: / Of shoes - and ships- and sealing-wax- / Of cabbages- and kings- / Of why the sea is boiling hot- / And whether pigs have wings" I must admit I may not be able to talk on all those things however, I will endeavour to bring you up to date on the RFA.

On November the 20th I will be presenting for your acceptance, the yearly and financial report and answer any questions on either subject. Of course if I am unable I will insure that my minders attend to your needs outside after the meeting. **Only Joking.**

One item I feel that needs to be communicated to all the mums and dads, is the way we are been **hood- winked by the labelling of frozen food items?** On a number of shows on television they have spoken about some companies directly attempting to disguise where food products are from. The committee feel we would be failing its members if we did not bring this to your attention.

It appears they are not required to put the name of the country where the product was grown etc. Various shows and some of our members have brought to our attention the importance of knowing the barcode prefix for Australia. The barcode for those that may not know, is a series of small straight lines with numbers under them, the first two number at the start (from left to right) are the ones that indicate the country the contents are from. If the first two numbers are **93, that is Australia**, these products meet the food standards we have here, and the reports on telly showed many other countries do not have

the same standards in fact use chemicals that are banned here. Be warned, take the time and read the barcodes, they may not be the cheapest but they will be the safest.

In the previous newsletter I mentioned that our **Editor** was having some medical work done, well I can tell you that the stretching on the rack did not work! He is still a short "A" like me, however whilst he was in hospital he thought they may as well see if he had a heart. Guess what he does; only problem one of the valves needed replacing so the medical team at the **Royal Melbourne Private Hospital** successfully installed a new one. On my visit to see him he informed me the only problem since it was done, he has found he **likes chewing grass & hay and makes mooing sounds at night**, and cannot explain why?

The meeting at Corio voted to proceed with getting a Website for the RFA, one of our members Ian Dewhurst will be assisting in the development. He has been involved with other site productions and when the Editor has stopped chewing hay & and grass, Ian will be making arrangements to establish a programme with him.

I am in the middle of reading a book called **Capital, by Kristin Otto**; it is about our fair city Melbourne when it was the capital of Australia 1901-1927. A small extract from the Argus stated **THE FIRST DAY OF JANUARY 1901**, The people of Melbourne woke up to find themselves living not just in a new nation, but in the city that was about to become, for a time, its capital. Quiet joyousness was the dominant note. Three weeks later, Queen Victoria died. The twentieth century had begun and so had the Commonwealth of Australia. The reason I have mentioned this, look at us now! The island state of Tasmania are keeping abreast of the times and are ahead of us, they saw the need to protect their volunteers & career members of their fire services when their Minister O'Byrne, championed the bill. **To pass occupational cancer legislation for firefighters.** I can

(Continued on page 4)

(Continued from page 3)

remember when this state was at the forefront and a leader for the Commonwealth, what is going on. I will admit upfront I am a proud Victorian but now I have to say it through clenched teeth. I feel we seem to have lost our way regarding our volunteers & career firefighter's protection.

This one I must tell you about, the heading should read "**Toaster closes Innisfail Queensland Shopping Mall.**"

It seems Tom Tullett's partner (who shall remain nameless) runs her business from an office there, got distracted whilst attending to a client and forgot that she had an item cooking, the toaster of course caught on fire. The local brigade attended post haste and went through the normal procedure and evacuated the mall because of the smoke. The one down side was, they were not able to

isolate the energy supply until the power company attended, which took, as the norm, some time. Tom stated the rest of people in the mall did not appear to be too upset; but he did get a bit worried when it looked like they were erecting stocks in the front car park. Now if travelling up that way in the near future and there is one in the front car park could you let me know. I have not heard from him for some time.

I would just like to advise you that I will be happy to assist the new Secretary for a few months after he takes over.

I would like to wish all a great Festive season & New Year; the families not going through the best of times hang in there, do not forget we are family and we can touch base with support groups and others.

John Berry

International Day For Older Persons 2013

The following is an update on a meeting I attended on behalf of the **UFU's Retired Firefighters Division**. The International Day for Older Persons (IDOP) was created by a resolution of the United Nations General Assembly in 1990, as is observed by all UN member states on the 1st of October each year. **This was part of Victorian Seniors Week 2013.**

The meeting took place in the Ground Floor Meeting Room of the AMWU Victoria Office. It was very well attended and the Guest speakers were the President of the ACTU Ged Kearney, and Luke Hilakarie, VTHC Industrial Officer.

Ged was the first speaker, her lecture was about the aims and objectives that they were hoping to achieve for all older Australians, advising us that all must understand this not about a wage push or a "them and us" argument, it was about embracing all older Australians to obtain a more fulfilling 3rd stage of their life. It was a most informative lecture and many questions were raised from the various groups in attendance.

Next up was Luke, he reinforced many of the points already raised and explained ways the groups can reach some of the goals that had already been highlighted. The day to me, was one that reinforced how lucky we are in this country to have people of such foresight pushing for the older person.

In closing I would just like to bring to your attention an article that was in the next day's Herald/Sun. The heading was titled **Old-Timers Struggling** which stated Australia, was not in the top ten nations in the quality of life and wellbeing of the nation's older people!

It was rated 14th in the **Global Age Watch Index**, which looked at income, health, personal capabilities, education, employment and social environment to help highlight what older people experience around the world. Sweden topped the index, commissioned by **Help Age International**. One could call that Karma, one day attend lectures, next day read about it.

John Berry

RFA Members and Committee Give a Big Thank You

As the 20th of November meeting is the last for this calendar year there are a number of organisations that we must thank for their continuing support and wish them all, along with their families, a Happy & Joyous festive season and a great New Year.

I have said before, many do not realise just how much they contribute, this year the committee want it clearly identified in alphabetical order, and they are as follows:

CFA Corio Fire Station, Officers & crew, giving their ongoing support for our annual Geelong meetings.

Firefighters Credit Co Op, Management & Staff for their helpfulness & financial guidance.

Les Gray for his continuing research on the MFB history.

Andrew Brennan & staff, MFB Training Complex Burnley, for their great support in providing a venue for our quarterly meetings.

Melbourne Fire Museum Executives & staff, from us and the community, thank you.

MFB Media group, we would not be able to maintain the quality of the newsletter without them.

MFB Management & Operational staff, we are not sure what we would do without your support.

The United Firefighters Union, Management, Staff and Social Committee, their support has been outstanding again. We do not know of any other industrial group that looks after their retired members the way they do.

Our Guest Speakers, who make our quarterly meetings so interesting..... thank you again.

John Berry.

Minutes General Meeting 21st August at Corio Fire Station

Present - 38.

Apologies - 14

First time Attendees - Bob Douglas (31 Stn), Geoff Mays (C.F.A. & Tullamarine).

Minutes from 15 May -

John read Minutes, accepted - Harry Mitchell

Seconded - Allan Boyd - carried

John showed R.F.A. Apron for sale (\$18).

Business arising -

The secretary spoke of the new equipment obtained with the Federal Government grant still learning how to use same.

Graeme Edwards asked is it worth approaching the Fire services to assist in training us how to use same. In the short term no.

Alan Roberts - OUR own website could be used to link into MFB/CFA, on our independent site.

Ian Dewhurst address the meeting advising all he has created sites for himself and Melbourne Computer club.

Moved - Alan Roberts Moved that this meeting of the RFA develop its own website - Seconded Ian Fowler - Carried.

Ian Dewhurst be invited to assist us in its development .

Sec/Treasurer Report

On Call Account: \$3,800.53

Fixed Term: \$6,192.24

Tom Williamson and Val have moved into an apartment in Coffs Harbour - John has details of Tom's number.

Jim Hunter is very ill. and undergoing treatment

The Editor sends R.F.A. information to overseas Brigades & Past Furies (R.F.A. style) associations.

Presidents Report

Manpower required on 3rd November Bunning's - See Don.

Queensland Reunion - going since 1988, was well attended and a good day had by all (30 people)

John Laverick (Water Off Editor) having an operation on his heart. Trish Hede on the mend.

General Business

Fred introduced Judy McGillivray (Bob's widow).

Godfrey Payne thanked members for their calls, cards, visits during his recent illness.

Meeting closed 11.10

Guest Speaker - Euan Ferguson

Don introduced Euan Ferguson - Chief Officer of CFA (Refer May 2013 edition for Euan's history). He told of the camaraderie both here and of what he has experienced overseas and commended members present and partners

on our continued brotherhood. Brought up in Gippsland and started his career in Gippsland.

Loves bushwalking and the great outdoors (well suited) - had some hairy experiences, seen a lot of Bushfires that create fire storms etc.

Training THEN and NOW - Mentoring versus Structured Procedural training.

Told of Esso (Longford 1998), Ash Wednesday (Feb 1983). - Procedural training/strategy stood up well in the subsequent Inquiries.

Introduced basic structural/apparatus training for all volunteers.

Challenges within Victoria - 3 Fire Agencies, Minister, and Fire Commissioner working to manage/cooperate in times of major emergencies.

Interestingly, the entire Corio Station crews attended and were attentive to every word.

Euan's philosophy on Firefighters-

The most important person in CFA are the newest/less experienced members - everyone needs mentoring/training, especially the newer members.

Discussions

Fred Kerr

Standardized Fire Appliances - CFA moving to Scania trucks and standardized Appliances.

Graeme Edwards - when a firefighter is lost at fire/incident - cultural direction/risk assessment and training are paramount to minimize the loss.

Don Brennan - why not get Army in to clear up after a major fire (explosives used on burnt out/smoldering trees) - usually the Army, because of the countries commitment to the United Nation etc. and the Country's defence, are too involved however if the Government believe they are needed they will be activated.

Ian Dewhurst - Mutual Aid on MFB/CFA boundaries - it's improving and being implemented.

John Berry - climate change - Raised the question regarding The Senate's motion that the states inoperability needs to be addressed to meet the changing climatic condition.

Euan stated Vic is well on the way but problem with other state's communication.

Don presented a talking "Bickie Jar" to Euan to use (perhaps) at the "Tea and Bickies time" for retiring firefighters (The Jar gave warning when used!)

The President then thanked the Chief and the members present gave a warm round of applause.

Members advised the Secretary to give Euan one of our aprons.

Don thanked crew at Corio - Lunch at Gateway Hotel.

Commander Graeme Gant Guest Speaker



The forthcoming Annual General Meeting Guest Speaker is none other than Graeme Gant, part of the FOLD team who has agreed to attend the meeting to give us retired members detailed insights into the new MFB Training College Craigieburn.

The RFA committee believe that when you hear and see what is happening out in the City of Hume with this \$109 million Victorian Major Project, you will understand why we have been pushing to have Graeme attend.

The following is just a small insight into the aims of its construction; strengthen the MFB's position as a leader, the adoption and promotion of new technologies and the development of new training initiatives, and practical learning environments (PLE). Also including advanced classroom based training and when you read and hear the Environmental benefits which will rate with the world's best practice you can't help being in awe of the project.

Thanks to MFB, Media and Communications for their assistance.

The Metropolitan Fire Brigade (MFB) is building a specialised emergency services learning and training facility in Craigieburn, which will ensure a safer and more capable MFB and the ongoing protection of the Victorian community.

Located in Melbourne's City of Hume, the new \$109 million facility will strengthen MFB's position as a leader within the emergency services industry through the adoption and promotion of new technologies and the development of new training initiatives.

MFB recognises that growing community expectations require an increase in the capacity and nature of fire and emergency service training. The facility's design has a fundamental focus on 'practical training', flexibility, innovation and technology.

This facility will also be available as a resource for other emergency service organisations (ESOs) to supplement their own training programs.

The facility will comprise both academic and practical learning environments (PLE). The academic building will provide classroom-based learning, while the PLE allows practical exercises to be undertaken within a safe and controlled environment. The PLE will comprise a number of structures (props) laid out within a streetscape urban



environment, which is unique in that it has been designed specifically to mimic the Metropolitan Fire District.

The design of the PLE fundamentally focuses on realistic practical training that simulates real life emergency scenarios encountered by MFB and other ESOs and provides environments which include elements of fire, smoke, sounds and other physical and psychological challenges.

The facility will attract, engage and inspire visitors, trainers, candidates and staff, leading to improved training and more effective learning environments.

When complete, the facility will be MFB's primary training facility, part of a network of training facilities across the State.

Images: MFB Media and Communications

Gone But Not Forgotten

I have stated this is the part of the newsletter which is, without doubt, the most difficult to complete. On one hand you must keep it brief because of space limitations, and then on the other you cannot possibly give the person identified their full story? The members and committee would like all families involved to know that your loved ones will always receive our utmost respect and appreciation for the service they have given by their dedication to make a safer place for all.

Kenneth David Clinkaberry 1929-7/9/2013.

Ken joined the MFB 15/12/1950 and retired on the 20/2/1987 after 36 years. The following are extracts from the Eulogy that his lifetime friend Rod Knowles UFU Life Member prepared for Ken's Celebration of Life service. Rod, who was interstate, invited Peter Marshall to read it on his behalf.

One particular paragraph I believe gives a great insight into Ken's support of his workmates. When, on behalf of them, Ken took on the MFB hierarchy over their unjust expectation of firefighters to polish the underside and grease the appliances.

Every station had a mechanics trolley and, on a daily basis, would be detailed to roll under the truck and wipe the underside of the truck from front to back and grease where necessary. Ken thought this order was ridiculous, degrading, humiliating and other colourful expletives that you could imagine him using. As far as greasing, well that was a mechanics job. Ken explained to the Chief Officer what he could do with his draconian cleaning & greasing order.

Ken was subsequently charged for refusing a lawful order of an Officer. Meaning his job was on the line and dismissal was imminent. The UFU Secretary Bill Webber applied for and was granted an emergency meeting of the Industrial

Commission. The Commission Chairman agreed with the Union, advising the employer that the work practice that they were trying to enforce was stupid and it was to cease immediately and the greasing of vehicles must be carried out by the MFB mechanical workshops.

Rod identified in the eulogy many other battles that Ken took on to improve the working conditions for his workmates both past and present. There is no doubt all firefighters would agree with the final quote in the eulogy; "On behalf of all firefighters both past and present we thank you Ken "Colonel" Clinkaberry for your sterling contribution it was a pleasure and privilege to work in unity with you."

We extend our sincere sympathy to his wife Pam and family for their sad loss.

Ronald McIntosh 1934-2/9/2013.

Ron joined the MFB 31/5/1957 and took early optional retirement in 8/2/1980 during his time in the job he was stationed at a number of inner city stations.

I first met Ron at the old Eastern Hill station and I was very impressed by his demeanour and his Firefighting ability. One person who was very impressed with him was retired Superintendent John Moore, John who, in discussion with me, said that Ron was on his shift at the old South Melbourne (38) and that he was a very accomplished Firefighter and caring person who would go out of his way to assist others.

John was never sure as to the reason why Ron took optional retirement, but he also stated that he may have been a bit disappointed that he was losing a very experienced Firefighter from his shift.

Nellie there is no doubt you would have been well aware that your Ron was special; rest assured that us retirees will always remember him.

John Berry

"IT'S THE WAY WE HAVE IN THE FIRE BRIGADE."

They say in times of adversity we find out who our true friends are. Recently Mike and I discovered the truth of this statement.

Sadly our daughter, Helen passed away in mid September after a three year battle with cancer. Being our only child, we are devastated. As she died in Queensland, her funeral was delayed for a fortnight to allow time to get her back to Melbourne.

During that time so many of our firefighter friends sent cards, emails, flowers, and made phone calls. We were both amazed and extremely grateful for all the support.

Then came the day of the funeral. Of course we were expecting a large representation of family and Helen's friends. What we were not expecting was the huge crowd of firefighter friends and their wives who attended the service.

Unless you have been in our situation you would not know how comforting it is to see so many friendly faces. The RFA was represented by the President, Secretary and many members. The Fire Museum was represented by the Vice President, Secretary and most of Mike's 'Thursday Crew' many of whom are also members of the RFA. Most of my Fire Museum Photographic & Research Group were there, some of them also being RFA members.



Helen McCumisky collecting with SO. Alex Shepherd at the Royal Childrens' Hospital Good Friday Appeal back in the late 1970s.

Photo: B. McCumisky.

Considering the majority of you had not even seen Helen since she was a young child accompanying Mike and I to Fire Brigade events, such a show of support truly stunned us. All we can simply say is 'Thank you', and we both want you all to know that your kindness at such a difficult time was certainly very much appreciated.

RETIRED CFO LAURIE LAVELLE NOW AN OCTOGENARIAN.

In June this year, retired Chief Fire Officer Laurie Lavelle celebrated his 80th Birthday along with family and friends at the Albert Park Bowling Club.

Photos by B. McCumisky



Above; Laurie greeting special guest, well-known priest, Fr. Bob Maguire who is a neighbour of Laurie's in Albert Park. Fr. Bob announced to all "He was only there for the scones."

Below; L-R: MFB CFO Shane Wright, Laurie, Bill O'Connor (school friend), David Roos (MFB Board member 1980s and father of recently appointed Melbourne coach Paul Roos), Shane's wife, and in background, John Butler (retired MFB Special Services Dept. and MFB Band)



Above; Guests at the party included; L-R: Noel Flakemore, Ian 'Chook' Fowler and Victorian Fire Commissioner Craig Lapsley.



Above; Retired DO Rodney Rudd and his wife Eileen (retired MFB Comms Centre operator)



Left; Laurie's son, Paul spoke about his father's history which focussed on many achievements during his 80 years. Several newsclips and numerous images of Laurie's life and career were shown on the big screen during Paul's presentation.



Above; Granddaughter Leila helps Laurie blow out the candles as her mother Linda looks on.



Above; Fr. Bob and some of the guests listening to the speakers.



Above; L-R Jack Moore (ret MFB Supt.) his wife Linda and Laurie's wife Pixie listening to Noel Flakemore (trumpet) and 'Chook' Fowler (saxophone) playing 'Happy Birthday'.



Above; Daughter Linda helps Laurie to cut his cake.



Left; Laurie speaks and reflects on life, family and friends who have filled his eighty years.

GUESS WHO?

In this issue of the newsletter we are tempting you with a couple of pictures from the past, one that shows firefighters have other aims in life apart from fighting fires, (creating new firefighters) and the other one is of the first group of personnel that was given the task of training MFB firefighters in the new 20th century Training College Abbotsford? (now gone). We thank both families for sending in the items for the quiz.

Right: This cutting from the Sun, was sent in by the wife of one of the firefighters in the picture. The clue for this one is, it was taken at the Deer Park Fire Station not the current rebuilt/refurbished one.

1. Name the seven Firefighters?
2. Did any of the babies go on to become firefighters?
3. If any did, what are their names?



Left: The questions for this photograph, which has members sitting & standing is going to be a little harder.

1. Where was the picture taken?
2. What is the name of the building in the background of the picture?
3. Name all of the people in the picture?

Winner will receive a mystery prize, but you must attend the meeting to receive it!

The answers can be emailed to the Editor retfire@bigpond.net.au or my number 03 9431 2880

GUESS WHO ANSWERS

The answers to the August edition's guess who, are as follows.

1. The picture shows the yard in front of the drill/hose tower at the old Eastern Hill fire station.
2. The names of the people are as follows, Bottom man Ray Turner, Middle man Charlie White, Top man Bill Moore, Man in white Harry Purcell, Appliance name in background, Hose Layer. Many rang about this one, some even letting me know that Tracey Mears is the child on the bike however, no one came up with Ray Turner's name. I will admit it was a bit hard when it is a two dimensional picture and you were not a member of the Gym team.



Smile

A grade 5 teacher in a country school asked her students to use the word 'fascinate' in a sentence.

Molly put up her hand and said, 'My family went to my grandad's farm and we all saw his pet sheep. It was fascinating.'

The teacher said, 'That was good, but I wanted you to use the word 'fascinate, not fascinating'.'

Sally raised her hand. She said, 'My family went to see the Sydney Opera House and I was fascinated.'

The teacher said, 'Well, that was good Sally, but I wanted you to use the word 'fascinate.'

Little Johnny raised his hand. The teacher hesitated because she had been burnt by Little Johnny before. She finally decided there was no way he could damage the word 'fascinate', so she called on him.

Johnny said, 'My aunt Gina has a sweater with ten buttons, but her b**bs are so big she can only fasten eight.'

The teacher sat down and cried.....

Queensland Reunion 2013

We had a great get together of 33 retired furies, friends and family attending the Southport Yacht Club on Thursday 25th July for the annual RFA luncheon in Qld. Once seated Peter Coulson welcomed all. After reading out the apologies he then also welcomed the long lost John Berry to the luncheon. (It has been 14 years since John & Elaine attended last.)

John was asked to speak to the guests. John advised that since 1988, Peter Coulson had been organising this luncheon and how very important for us to let other retired members know that this luncheon is held annually.

Currently, there are in excess of 500 retired members which include Police, Airport Firefighters etc and within the MFB another 200 members will be retiring with this year. (A lot of 'grey nomad's' out there)!

John also advised that the RFA have raised through various functions \$12,000 for various charities and has a 'Newsletter' which is sent around the world electronically. What a wonderful contribution from the RFA.



Lunch was served and laughter and memories filled the dining area.

For the first time a raffle was run at the luncheon. The winner was a family member of Sammy Capes. 'Silly' door prizes were won by: Merv McInnes – Water pistol, Colin Brieley—Tablet Organiser and a stick on boob support for Alan Boyd!!!!!! \$70.00 was raised and will be donated on behalf of the RFA QLD to Cancer research.

TRIVIA: We had three retired furies at the luncheon with registered numbers: 2776, 2777, 2778 any guess's who they might be?

Should anyone wish to have photos sent to them of the day please contact:

Gail Fagernes – fagernes@bigpond.com or contact me on 07 5522 4321 I will be only too happy to send them to you.

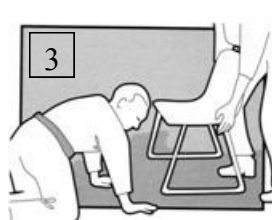
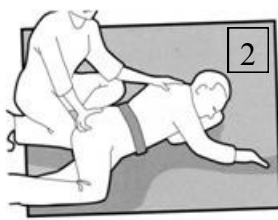
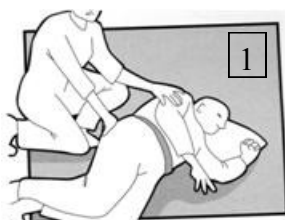
“Don’t Fall For It” Thanks to Shirley & Ron.

Received a phone call recently from one of our country members who lives some distance from a provincial city. He explained that he had a few falls recently and how difficult it was for his wife to assist him as he is a big man and she is much smaller.

They attended a meeting recently where a Occupational

Therapist and a Physiotherapist demonstrated techniques in assisting falls victims to get up from the floor and spoke of “Fall Proofing Yourself and Your Surroundings.” They were given a booklet of instructions called “Don’t Fall For It” issued by the Department of Health and Aging.

It was suggested that we invite these speakers to one of our meetings as it may benefit our members even if they don’t have a problem with falls yet.



Slips, trips and falls can happen to anyone, but they are more common and more significant as we get older, because we are more likely to injure ourselves.



Note:
Technique illustrated here is to assist a fall victim who is obviously not injured. If injured call 000.

People often dismiss falls as 'part of getting older' or 'just not concentrating' but they are often a warning sign that something is not right, so it is important to discuss any fall with your doctor.

MYSTERIOUS FIRE SERVICE SINGLE PERSON APPLIANCE

These two pictures were sent us from one of our forward scouts whose name must be kept secret, (Phil. sweet tasting white dinner wine). His project is learning the skills of wealth generation from the earth's mineral deposits, which is very risky.

An example of the secrecy needed can be seen in the way the details that were attached to the pictures arrived. I can only imagine the Carrier-Pigeon that brought them must have been trained to devour it before it fell into unscrupulous hands as they were in a bad state of damage on one side. Luckily I got it out of the pigeon loft before they were destroyed.

I was however, able to read some of the letter, the part where the scout stated that he was able to use his giant microscope to examine the badge and found the crest in the middle of the badge was different to the MFB Melbourne one.



The following questions I believe we should explore further!

1. is the MFB carrying out trials overseas of this type of one man appliance?
2. is the Chief that designed the MFB badge doing freelance work for the City of Milwaukee USA?
3. is there a push to make it the recognised badge for all fire services?
4. is the MFB motor cycle club on a clandestine push for new members?

Our scout is reluctant to carry out any further enquiries out of fear of blowing his cover.

The final part of the letter stated that he and his family were seeking refuge with some of his children in the Eastern Premier State and may visit our fair state later in the year.

John Berry (Believe it or not)



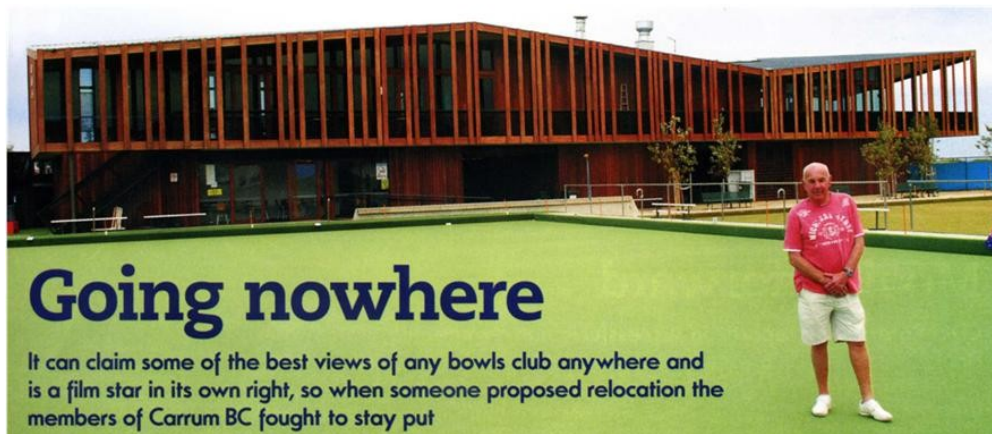
RFA member involved in fight to save bowling club

The following picture and some extracts is from the Bowls Victoria official publication THE SHOT.

Many of our members who play lawn bowls would have seen the Australian film Crackerjack that was based on a fictional club called Cityside that was fighting off a business magnate; the Carrum club in the film was seen

as the idyllic one on the waterfront called Brown's Point.

Little did their members know that the movie was almost going to imitate real life for the Carrum club, but this time playing the role of Cityside fighting the local council off? Not a business magnate. Ron Rae, RFA member and President of Carrum and an extra in Crackerjack (see picture) called on the star of the film Mick Molloy to help save the club which was originally created in 1911.



The final scene in real life is, the club was not only saved but has a new club house, which is without a word of a lie one of the best in the state. Like all good stories there is one down side? Ron is still not a great bowls player and all the RFA members are sick of him wanting us to bow when he enters the room.

John Berry

Going nowhere

It can claim some of the best views of any bowls club anywhere and is a film star in its own right, so when someone proposed relocation the members of Carrum BC fought to stay put

IS IT AGEING OR DEPRESSION?

There are symptoms we all associate with ageing. Everyone expects grey hair, a few extra wrinkles and less physical ability. However, there are certain symptoms demonstrated by the elderly which can be taken for granted. Excessive complaints of physical pain, slow deliberate movement, slackened speech, a will to isolate one's self from others, or even direct expressions of guilt and sadness are all potential indicators of much more than just age.

Older adults are among the most likely to suffer severe depression – second only to young adults. It is so common a condition among seniors that many people confuse these symptoms as being natural to ageing. But in order to reduce the condition's impact on you or your family members' wellbeing, it's important to know how to identify these symptoms.

What causes depression in older adults?

It may surprise some that the incidence of depression is so high among seniors, an age group in which people often retire and free themselves of financial responsibility. But there are many circumstances which can cause depression to become so common among seniors. Symptoms of grief are healthy and natural after a tragedy, but those who do not eventually come to terms may be depressed.

Medical conditions and medications used to treat certain conditions can produce depression either directly or as a psychological consequence. Cancer and diabetes are terminal conditions which contribute to depression rates considerably, along with strokes, heart disease, various forms of dementia and physical disabilities.

For others, financial difficulties and a need for continued employment through the years of retirement can cause depression. In fact, seniors are poised to be the quickest growing demographic in our workforce within the next four decades. But the physical and mental exertion required of a full-time job can become unmanageable for some once they age.

Others who need work to support themselves, but are unable to find employment due to their age can suffer depression as anyone would; individuals dealing with unemployment grapple with depression much like those mourning the loss of a friend or handling a divorce. No matter the reason, remember

that any major life-changing event can have significant consequences on our mental wellbeing, and adjusting to life as a retiree is no different.

How can I help depressed seniors?

As with anyone suffering depression, it's key to recognise that it is a treatable condition and those afflicted should seek counselling and medical aid as prescribed. More importantly, elders and caregivers should consider that the conditions in which seniors live can contribute to depression. Often, elders choose to isolate themselves and appear lost in thought. While a desire for some privacy is perfectly healthy, it can lead to loneliness and depression if isolation is constant.

To combat depression due to isolation and loneliness, older adults should try to stay involved in community or church-related events when available and try to become an active member of a household in daily routines and chores. Retirement communities can be an excellent living solution for elderly individuals who aren't involved with others in their area. Any environment which gives the elderly meaningful routines is a preferable living arrangement than others.

Another good way to diagnose depression in yourself or others who might be suffering, is by being an active and responsive listener. A non-judgemental ear to the concerns and anxieties of elders can help them tremendously. If you or an elderly loved one have feelings of low self-worth, guilt, or even ideas of suicide, take their words very seriously and provide as much help as you are capable. Most importantly, know when professional assistance is necessary.

For further information about depression, visit beyondblue.org.au.

Source: YOUR Lifestyle Choices

Author: Morgan Darrow.

Morgan is a lifelong advocate for awareness of the special needs of seniors.

Selling the family home???

The Australian Securities and Investment Commission offers advice to retirees who may be considering "Downsizing" the family home!

By the time you are considering retirement, it is likely that you will have substantial equity in your home. You may even own your house outright. Selling the family home is one way to free up cash for retirement. The money you receive can be invested in shares, term deposits, managed funds or superannuation.

In addition to finding a place to live, there are many financial, practical and emotional factors to consider before putting up the 'For Sale' sign.

The impact on social security

Your age pension depends on what your assets are worth (the assets test). Selling your home may have an impact on the amount of social security benefits you receive.

Your home and the 2 hectares surrounding it are not counted in the assets test. If you sell your home, the proceeds will be exempt for up to 12 months, as long as you are planning to use the money to buy another home. However, the interest you earn on the proceeds in the meantime will be counted under the income test.

If you sell your home and buy a cheaper one, the surplus cash will be counted in the assets test. It's best to speak to a Department of Human Services Financial Information Service (FIS) officer for more information.

Case study: Lee Lin sells the family home

Lee Lin is 67 and divorced. She decided to sell the family home after her children moved out because it was too big. She expected to sell her old home for \$600,000, buy a cheaper apartment for \$400,000 and have \$200,000 left to invest.

Before she put her house on the market, she went to Centrelink and asked how the sale would affect her age pension. The FIS officer told her that the \$200,000 would be counted towards the assets test for her age pension. Lee

decided she was still better off downsizing, even though it would reduce her pension slightly.

Alternatives to selling

Selling the home where your children were raised and leaving behind neighbours and friends can be difficult and stressful. Add to that the challenges of relocating to a new area, moving into a smaller space and making new friends. Suddenly, staying put might seem like a good idea.

Here are some alternatives to selling your home:

- Think about converting your home to dual occupancy so you can live in one half and rent or sell the other half
- Rent out some rooms (this has tax implications and may affect your age pension so seek financial advice before you proceed)
- Consider a reverse mortgage if you need extra cash and have solid equity in your home

If you intend to stay in your house for the long term, you should consider renovating your home to ensure it is safe and easier to move around as you get older. www.myagedcare.gov.au has information on getting help to stay in your own home so you can maintain your independence for longer.

What to do next

After you've sold your house, you may have money to invest in other income-producing assets. There are lots of options available so seek financial advice on the best mix of investment products for your needs.

Selling the family home is not an easy or simple decision. Before you do anything, consult a financial adviser on the tax and social security implications, and speak to family and friends.

The History of 'APRONS'

I don't think our kids know what an apron is..

The principal use of Grandma's apron was to protect the dress underneath because she only had a few and because it was easier to wash aprons than dresses and aprons required less material. But along with that, it served as a potholder for removing hot pans from the oven.

It was wonderful for drying children's tears, and on occasion was even used for cleaning out dirty ears.

From the chicken coop, the apron was used for carrying eggs, fussy chicks, and sometimes half-hatched eggs to be finished in the warming oven.

When company came, those aprons were ideal hiding places for shy kids.

And when the weather was cold, Grandma wrapped it around her arms.

Those big old aprons wiped many a perspiring brow, bent over the hot wood stove. Chips and kindling wood were brought into the kitchen in that apron.

From the garden, it carried all sorts of vegetables. After the peas had been shelled, it carried out the hulls.

In the autumn, the apron was used to bring in apples that had fallen from the trees.

When unexpected company drove up the road, it was surprising how much furniture that old apron could dust in a matter of seconds.

When dinner was ready, Grandma walked out onto the porch, waved her apron, and the men folk knew it was time to come in from the fields to dinner.

It will be a long time before someone invents something that will replace that 'old-time apron' that served so many purposes.

REMEMBER:

Grandma used to set her hot baked apple pies on the window sill to cool. Her granddaughters set theirs on the window sill to thaw.

The Govt. would go crazy now trying to figure out how many germs were on that apron.

I don't think I ever caught anything from an apron- but love...

BELLS BY THE BEACH

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Peter Dusting, July 23
Phil Kelly, July 23
Murray Wallis, August 8
Ron Haines, August 9
Helen Koop, Aug 12
Stewie Gilmore, September 23
Bob Tottle, September 23
Russell Walsh, September 23
Ian Munro, September 25
Bryan Millsted, October 15

Pending Retirements

Russell Hawthorn, December 4

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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 December 7th 2013

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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