

"WATER OFF"

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



November 2017 Vol 21 No 4
Inc/No: A16839F

New leadership for MFB

Friday October 13th the President of the MFESB Dr Andi Diamond announced to the staff that the roles of CEO and Chief Officer is to be amalgamated.

Dear Staff,

I am writing to let you know that the MFESB Board has determined to combine the role of CEO and Chief Officer and will shortly commence a search and selection process for this new leadership position.

This newly created position will align MFB with other contemporary police and emergency service organisations, by amalgamating the roles and key responsibilities of the Chief Executive Officer and Chief Fire Officer.

As an organisation it is imperative that we implement the necessary changes to ensure that we meet our objectives for the benefit of the community that we serve, as we continue to strive to provide a world class fire and emergency service for Melbourne and Victorians.

To achieve this we will be seeking an experienced executive leader with a strong emergency services background, who will continue to take us forward into the future. In making this announcement, I would like to extend my sincere thanks on behalf of the Board to Russell Eddington, Acting Chief Executive and Greg Leach, Acting Chief Officer, who continue to show great commitment in their acting roles. Both Russell and Greg have agreed to continue to act until the new position is successfully recruited.

I want to assure you all that as a Board, and with our Executive Leadership Team, we will work to ensure we attract the best candidates for the position, and on behalf of the Board, I will keep

you informed of progress. For now, it remains business as usual.

As the fire services enters a new era I know that Melburnians and Victorians can rely on the dedication and expertise of our firefighters, corporate and workshops staff. Thank you all.

Kind regards

Dr Andi Diamond

President

Metropolitan Fire and Emergency Services Board

Good Mates

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Two mates epitomized what is —
"The Way We Have in The Fire Brigade"



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“GENERAL MEETING”

Notice is hereby given that the next General Meeting will be held at the Burnley Complex 450
Burnley Street Richmond
1030 Hours, Wednesday 15 November 2017

AGENDA ITEMS.

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

Allan Roberts
SECRETARY/TREASURER
Address all correspondence to:
Allan Roberts
Unit 158 Mernda Retirement Village
89 Galloway Drive
Mernda Vic 3754
Telephone: Mob: 0433 007 720
Home: 9216 1658

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

Lunch available.
All wives and partners welcome
Please join us!

Non financial Members

Members be advised if your newsletter has an expiry date of 2/1/2016 that means you have not paid your subs since 2015 therefore if no remuneration is received by the 2/1/18 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: Colin Harris
Sec./Treasurer: Allan Roberts

General Committee:

Arthur (Sam) Capes
Mike McCumisky
Ian Geddes
Kevin Hede

Auditor:
Mike Enticott

“Water Off”
Editorial Staff
Colin Harris
John Laverick

Valē

Alby Burt (MFB) Steven Molloy (CFA)
Duncan Campbell (MFB) Peter Schmidt (CFA)
Sophie Cann (CFA) Ron Sewell (MFB)
John Cotter (CFA) Bernie Smallwood (MFB)
Alby Deans (MFB) Geoff Tangey (MFB)
Ian Hunter (MFB) Bob Templeton (MFB)
Ernie Lucas (MFB) Brian Trembath (MFB)
Kevin Lynch (MFB) Gordon Winch (MFB)
Jack Macgregor (MFB) Ivan Youngbusband (CFA)
Bob Meyer (CFA)

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

Diary Dates 2017

November 11th; Christmas Luncheon
Wed. 15th November; Annual General Meeting

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

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

SICK LIST (* In Nursing Home)

John Bellis Alan James*
Don Brennan Lindsay McCurdy
Bob Brunning Archie McLachlan
Stan Cameron Harry Mitchell
Huew Campbell* Dick Prendergast
Harold Connell Gary Spicer
Stan Devlin John Schintler
Ian Fowler Alan Sugg
Barry Gavin Bob Tottle
Jim Gibson Laurie Trewin
Eddie Gilbertson John Williams
Bob Horgan Tom Williamson
Jack Hookey

“Water Off” is edited by Colin Harris, 2 Gowar Avenue, Camberwell 3124. Phone 03 9889 6809. Email: retiredfirenews@gmail.com
All articles accepted for publication by the editor are done so in good faith and no responsibility is accepted for any inaccuracies that may occur.
Signed; Colin D. Harris (The views expressed by the editor of this newsletter are not necessarily those of the Victorian branch of the RFA)



Vice - President's Report:

Good day to you all out there in retirement land (and others reading "Water Off").

It's been a very sad quarter as we lead up to Christmas 2017.

The many deaths of our senior members' has been most sad and we extend our condolences to all partners and families of our treasured RFA colleagues.

Our next RFA Meeting will be held at Burnley on the 15th November 2017 and the committee extends our invitation to attend our final meeting before the year's end. It's a time to elect new members of the committee as all places, including Secretary/Treasurer, President, Vice - President and committee members. New blood will offer new ideas and keep us all on our toes and as well keep the RFA relevant in this day and age.

Fellowship with members who you worked with, argued with, had harsh words with, saved life and property with, come together and talk about old times and the many people we have worked with over the many years in the MFB together with our brothers and sisters in the CFA.

Our membership is only as good as the people who hold it together, with support from the MFB and CFA for facilities, lunches after meetings, current information and Peer Support.

The UFU - Retired Members Division is holding their Annual Christmas Luncheon on Saturday, 11th November 2017 at Peninsula A Pier 14, Harbour Esplanade, Docklands. If you have received your invitation, please ensure you respond by the RSVP date.

As you read "Water Off", you may recall some interesting facts and figures you have gathered (mind & matter) over the many years of experience(s) in the job, including of course the many characters you worked with, the pranks you played on them etc. You can send the editor via mail or email photos, information etc to Colin Harris – 2 Gowar Avenue, Camberwell 3124 or email: retiredfirenews@gmail.com

This information we can share with all readers to ensure our magazine continues to be relevant, interesting and readable.

Lastly, our committee wishes all our members and their family a "Joyous Christmas & a Happy New Year for 2018. Be safe and remember to call a friend, a member if you are struggling with any problems or issues you may face as our weary bones get older.

Peer Support for retired MFB members is always available – just pick up the phone and contact a Peer Support member. The following people can be contacted:

Chloe Henderson, 0417 538 289

Scott Darcy, 0429 771 849

John Howe, 9729 0984

Colin Harris, Vice President RFA

SECRETARY/TREASURER'S REPORT

It is sad that we have sent so many of our members to the Fire Station Above.

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

By the time this Water Off is published we will have had the usual fund raiser BBQ at Bunnings Hoppers Crossing on the 19th AUGUST 2017.

Ongoing thanks to Don, Nancy and Brennan Family helping The Secretary and RFA Members.

Ozanam House Luncheon has not had anything done to organize.

The RFA web Site has been running for 4Years and seems to be getting plenty of hits.

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

Thanks to Colin Harris and Mark Carter for helping out with **Gone But Not Forgotten.**

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

This is the AGM Meeting so I hope most of the members will attend.

Treasurers Report.

**PLEASE NOTE: CHEQUES TO BE MADE
OUT TO RFA or RETIRED FIREFIGHTERS
ASSOCIATION.**

**SEND TO: ALLAN ROBERTS
UNIT 158 MERNDA RETIREMENT VIL-
LAGE
89 GALLOWAY DRIVE
MERNDA
VICTORIA 3754**

**BBQ on Saturday 19TH AUGUST.
After Expenses we made \$1,363.90.**

**BANK BALANCE: Term Deposit
\$7,029.33 – General Account \$3,143.73**

**The AGM Meeting is at MFB BURNLEY on
15thNOVEMBER 2017**

**Allan Roberts
Secretary/Treasurer**

Minutes Annual General Meeting 2016

Meeting at 10.30am.

President, Alex Sheppard welcomed all to the RFA 2016 Annual Meeting

A welcome also to new retired members attending for the first time: Russell Johnson, Dave Pricor and Steve Allen.

Apologies (13) were noted in the apologies book.

Secretary/Treasurer's Report – Allan Roberts

Diaries were not available this year, due to an issue with a previous supplier. Matter has been dealt with and prosecution not proceeded with
BBQ at Hopper's Crossing went well on Saturday, 22nd October. Thanks to the Brennan family and the other RFA members who turned up to assist on the day.

Ozanam House lunch was cancelled this year and will be done in 2017

A special thanks to MFB Burnley staff for hosting RFA lunches once again

Financial report for the year sighted by all and detailed by Allan Roberts

Minutes & Treasurer's report accepted. Moved
E. Paddon, I. Munro seconded the motion– carried.

President: Election of Office bearers for RFA Year 2016/2017

There were no new nominations at this time, so the current committee stands.

President: Alex Sheppard, Vice- President Colin Harris, Secretary/Treasurer Allan Roberts, Committee members: Ian Geddes, Mike McCumisky, A. Capes & K. Heade

It was noted that Leon Trembath (Retired Members Division) is the RFA representative for the RMD.

Life Membership of the RFA:

John Howe was nominated at the August meeting by Allan Roberts to become a life member of the RFA. John Berry spoke about John Howe and presented him with life member Badge and Certificate for all the great work which John Howe does for the RFA membership group.

Robert (Bob) Horgan was also nominated at the August meeting by Ian Geddes for life membership of the RFA. Colin Harris spoke and presented life member Badge and Certificate on behalf of Ian Geddes for his long time service and the Bravery Medal he received in Canberra, when he and his son saved the life of a trapped car driver back in 1997.

Guest Speaker.

John Berry spoke about how we older people can improve our balance by specific balance exercises. This information was backed by another RFA member who studies palates and practises this routine.

John Berry also showed a DVD on the PNG Kokoda

Track walk which was most enlightening and showed how difficult it was for the Australian WW2 veterans who fought off the Japanese invaders in some of the most difficult terrains in the world. The RFA audience enjoyed all. Key words Courage – Endurance – Mateship – Sacrifice

Almoner: Ian Fowler spoke regarding the health of some of our retired colleagues.

General Business:

Bruce Smith (RMD Secretary), spoke about Presumptive Legislation for all firefighters which will include PTSD (post-traumatic stress disorder). This legislation is expected to be passed by the Victorian Government later this year or early next year.

Bruce Smith also reiterated that it is the UFU which funds the Annual Christmas Lunch – not the Retired Firefighters Association.

RFA committee member Arthur Capes asked Bruce Smith about the cost variation between the two venues for the Christmas Lunch. The Docklands venue was slightly cheaper.

John Howe mentioned that co-editor of RFA magazine John Laverick, is suffering from an illness at present, continuing tests to find out what is happening.

John Howe talked about the importance of "Peer Support" and mentioned that there are 83 trained peers within the MFB and 1000 contacts were made during 2016. John also stated that RFA members should consider becoming a peer support member for the RFA.

Len Manning asked why there wasn't a Fire Museum stall at Docklands for the Annual Christmas function to sell items for members and families on the day.

The response was that there was not a suitable area at this time.

Trevor Reed asked that a donation be considered for the Salvation Army from the proceeds from the annual Hopper's crossing BBQ.

Meeting concluded at 11.50am. All proceeded to outside for BBQ lunch compliments of Burnley Complex management and assisted by MFB employees.

Volunteers Required
The Fire Services Museum needs
past fire service members to
assist on an occasional basis at
the Museum
Please contact
Mike McCumisky on:
9662 2907

Retired Firefighter's Association – Minutes of General Meeting

16/08/2017

Meeting opened at 1030 hours by Secretary Allan Roberts. Minute taker Colin Harris.

Welcome to all.

Apologies:

Minutes of previous meeting. Moved K. Heddle – Seconded D. Brennan.

Guest Speaker: Archie Conroy (CFA) – Operations Commander.

Archie decided instead of a talk, he instead would conduct a quiz for the members. The quiz consisted of a dozen+ questions regarding why we liked the job as firefighters eg, work life balance, helping the community and other associated questions all relevant to the job we used to do when we were career firefighters.

Secretary Roberts presented Archie with a gift and thanked him on behalf of the members.

Correspondence: Duncan Campbell's Funeral today. Members dues paid. Moved: Fred Laverick - Seconded: John Chambers

New Members: 10. JOHN GRIBBLE, RAY BROWN, LINDSAY JACKSON.

Financials: Term Deposit \$7,029.33 – General Account \$1,181.74

Postage: Water off, Bereavement Cards and Receipts to members Moved: I Munro – Seconded T. Reynolds

Almoners Report: Ian Fowler reported that J. Cotter and J. Gibson are both in nursing homes. The following are on the sick list: Don Brennan, Ian Fowler, John Schintler, Bob Tottle, Neville van Every has dementia and is in a nursing home. R. Clough and T. Wilson are on the improve health wise.

General Business: Nancy Brennan spoke about a government organisation which can assist aged people in need. This organisation or government department is called "My Aged Care". Any one of us can contact this department for advice at any time regarding managing the health, facilities for respite care, prioritising sick people, home help etc. Nancy is using this service in regard to Don's failing health. Nancy is most impressed with this service and urged anyone in the group to contact "My Aged Care" should they require any assistance in regard to themselves or their loved ones. The number to call is **1800 200 422**, 8.00am to 8.00pm Monday to Friday. Saturday: 10.00am to 2.00pm.

Secretary Allan Roberts reminded the group about the BBQ fundraiser at Bunnings, Hopper's Crossing on Saturday, 19th August 2017. A few more volunteers required please.

Peter Lang (Ex- CFA fire officer and ex-branch committee member UFU) spoke about an article in this week's edition of The Weekly Times newspaper. The article refers to a blueprint for the amalgamation of the fire services about 40 years ago.

Colin Harris reminded all about the need to have a flu injection as there is a lot of flu about this season and it could get worse. This was detailed in the news this morning.

Meeting closed at 11.40 hours. Afterwards lunch at local hotel for those who could attend.

MFB - EMR

EMERGENCY MEDICAL RESPONSE

“The introduction of EMR was arguably one of the most significant cultural changes to the Metropolitan Fire Brigade (Melb) in the past 100 years”

(MFB Officer, Denis Rich)

Some facts to digest:

- * Metropolitan Fire Brigade has 1600 trained emergency medical responders
- * MFB has strategically located fire stations
- * ERM capable fire appliances
- * Dedicated EMS (Emergency Medical Service) department
- * EMR trained firefighters have the necessary advanced life support skill sets and equipment to manage airways and deliver defibrillation to non-breathing patients/unconscious patients
- * A large percentage of the public still don't realise that firefighters can deliver life-saving skills to the people of Melbourne and the metropolitan areas in conjunction with Ambulance Victoria.

* Over 300 people have been saved by MFB – EMR firefighter intervention.

The EMR program is part of an organised emergency medical system where the MFB responds simultaneously with Ambulance Victoria to all life threatening medical emergencies (ie heart attacks, drowning, suicide, drug overdoses and severe breathing difficulties).

The EMR program has now been active for approximately 17 years and it's introduction into the MFB has given firefighters the skills, confidence, equipment and support not only to provide lifesaving medical assistance at EMR calls, but at all call types and emergency situations firefighters attend on a day to day basis.

NOTE: At our Annual General Meeting on 15th November 2017, the EMR department has been invited to attend our meeting and discuss, answer questions and provide a practical demonstration for our members as a way of educating our group as to the diverse skills of the modern firefighter today.

This information may assist our members in dealing with a home emergency of a loved one where the information provided may help a save that person's life.

Two Good Mates

My name is Ellen Churchill, widow of the late Frank Churchill.

I would first like to thank you for sending me the "Water Off". After reading the Don Brennan story I thought I would send a story about a couple of good mates who were in the MFB and I bet they will still be agreeing to disagree. I know they would be very pleased that we are still like a family including Don Brennan because I remember the song "It's The Way We Have In The Fire Brigade".

The Len Hubbard story shows how we all become MFB family. We were very close to Len and Lana and we were at their wedding in the garden at "The Pub" in Barmah and stayed a few nights in their "Motel". We even had BBQ kangaroo (yuk) at the reception, you can imagine, it went all night. A few years later they built a house up on the hill and grew lots of grapes, lemons and ran some goats, anything for a dollar, We were and always will be close to the Hubbard family.

Frank and Len use to argue about anything even when fishing in the river or the bay they would be arguing which way the tide was going, they would argue if the grapes were ripe enough to pick. When they were building a fence for those "So and So goats" all the locals heard them arguing.

One night we were going down to the RSL club for a meal and a play, Frank asked me had I put out his clean undies and clothes, I said yes. Well, you should have heard Len, he told Frank he was "a Wuss", then it started again. Frank said he loved it and Len was only jealous and Len said yes he was because Lana would not do it. That was the end of that one. We went out and had a good time.

At Frank's funeral Len did a eulogy and in part of it he said "you all thought that Frank was the Boss and wrote all his own speeches, but no it was Ellen", so I think the arguing was still going on.

When Len passed away Lana and myself did the eulogy so I let them know what good friends we all were and their arguing was only between two mates.

Frank passed away in 2007 and Len in 2009, their ashes were sprinkled in the bay, so you think by now they are moving with the tide.

Len had an appliance named after him and he thought it a great honour. Frank and I were at the presentation and by the look on both faces they were very, very happy.

Ellen Churchill



Two good mates, Frank Churchill left and Len Hubbard at the naming presentation.

News Flash

For both serving and retired personnel

(This message arrived via email just before publication of this newsletter)

Hi Fellas.

Myself and a few others, being Steve Clarke, Les Oliver, Barry Dale, Gerry Woodlock, Barney Miller and Mick Shanahan, have decided to follow Eddie McMullen's southern initiative, and have a luncheon for retired and serving firefighting fraternity in the North/Western region.

The first one will be on Wed 13th December 2017 at 12:00 pm at the Sunbury Football Netball Social Club, Clarke Oval, Riddell Road, Sunbury. Partners are also most welcome.

Could all recipients please forward this E-M on to anyone you think would be interested. Also if they want to be on this list please respond to the below email address with their Phone Number and I will add them to the mailing folder. I hope to see many there, so please support this first one so we can gauge if it is going to work, or worth continuing in the future.

RSVP 7th Dec 2017.

Peter Shanahan pjshanna@bigpond.net.au

Queensland Reunion July 2017



Another forecast of 23 degree's was issued oh!!! Bother, not again heh heh! We arrived (Ian, Geoff Cusack & I) early to get paper work, raffle and other little things in order before anyone else arrived. However, we didn't have to wait long before familiar faces started arriving early at around 10.30 am. It is great because they always kick us out of the dining area around 3.00 pm and by getting there a little earlier means more catching up. Yelp's of 'God are you still alive' - 'didn't think you would ever leave!' were bantered around the club.

Before we knew it, it was time to try a seat the 'rabble' together before ordering lunch.

Ian (Fags) took over the announcements and read from the prepared Agenda. One minute silence was held for those both Victorian and Queensland members that had '*been called to a higher posting*'.

After this however, the microphone would keep shutting off on him. A few humorous remarks were made and I even said "*he should know how to use a mic because he was a drummer in a band*" but his quick come back was "*drummers don't need a mic!*"

Peter the super efficient maître de finally came to the rescue and explained that he kept turning it off instead on. No damage done - at least it he wasn't operating the pump!

There were 'door prize' tickets handed out by Ian and Karen Hawthorn did another job of dragging money out of the moth ridden pockets of all that were there! We raised another \$200 with Karen's tenacity and it will be sent once again to a burns unit on the Gold Coast. Gerard Woodlock won a packet of cloths pegs from the expensive door prizes offered (much to his disappointment) but then and low and behold won the raffle prize as well. Mind you we all had to wait until he finally looked in his trousers for the tickets as by this stage everyone was calling for a re-draw!!!!

Allan Roberts then spoke and thanked all once again

for coming to the reunion. He also thanked the Queensland crew for coming as well. He spoke of Don Brennan and his latest health update.

Once again, I really don't know what I do wrong but I messed up the name tags but at least I had emergency ones (stick on's)! Next year I promise I will have them all ready. Even if I have to print out the entire MFB employees listing! I once again apologise for those I missed!!

Lunches ordered, meals eaten and without realising it, we were being asked to vacate the area for the club workers to get it ready for the next function.

Well, I know the word 'muster' and Ian used it all the time at home but I think most have forgotten what to do when I am trying to get the group shot before all were dismissed! I am always ending up yelling out with my fog horn voice trying to get them in order. But we always get a great shot even if I didn't go back too far and into the water.

Thank you all for making this event. It really thrills me to see such a great turn up. I know it cost of petrol or airplane tickets are expensive but it is great to see so many coming. This year we had altogether 44 '*baggy arse.. firies*' with their lovelies attending also.

Also, remember the QLD retirees always have a luncheon on the 1st Wednesday of every month. Each time at a different venue. So should you be on the coast and would do some networking please do not hesitate in contacting Rob Patterson for further details.
rainyrob@bigpond.net.au

Now, just another thing on the 10th of October at 10.00 am a memorial service is held by the OLD Firies for so many of the Firies that gave their lives for the job. Again, if you are here please contact Rob Patterson for details. Ian has attended and it was a very moving ceremony.

Hope to see ALL in 2018 – JULY 26th THURSDAY!

GONE BUT NOT FORGOTTEN

On behalf of the MFB, I would like to thank the Hunter family for inviting me to speak at this service for our friend and colleague – Commander Ian Hunter. When Ian was 28 years old, he became part of the Metropolitan Fire Brigade family, commencing his career as an MFB firefighter on Friday 14 January 1977.

For the next four decades, he provided guidance, training, expertise, compassion and a dry wit that endeared him to all who were fortunate to meet or work alongside him.

Ian quickly moved through the ranks, eager to learn as much about the fire brigade as he could. Some may joke that Ian was the definition of a crank, but you couldn't fault the depth of his knowledge, his broad network across the sector, and his understanding about the brigade, its technical equipment and role of firefighters.

After completing Fire Investigation training in 1984, he transferred to the Training College where he worked in the Specialist Department teaching Ladders, Snorkel, Teleboom, Hale Pumps, Mk3 Pumpers, Breathing Apparatus and Rescue.

Despite his full workload, Ian found time to organise MFB's Good Friday Appeal from 1984 to 2000, working closely with the Uncle Bob's Club and Royal Children's Hospital.

I'd like to take the time to outline some of Ian's accolades, as they demonstrate his experience and dedication to the MFB:

In 1989, Ian received a Chief Officer's Commendation for organising the Emergency Services Foundation multi-agency open day.

The following year (1990) he was seconded to the Asian Institute of Technology where he wrote and delivered a firefighter training program to 42 security staff, enabling them to form an "in-house" fire brigade over a 10 week period.

In 1994 he was deployed as the Senior Station Officer on the MFB Taskforce to the NSW fires. He later played a pivotal role in investigating the Black Saturday fires in 2009.

On Australia Day 1995 Ian was awarded the Australian Fire Service Medal (AFSM) for outstanding service and dedication, particularly in the area of Fire Service training and education in Australia and

overseas, and also for his long involvement in the Royal Children's Hospital Good Friday Appeal.

Ian was an outstanding firefighter, and really came into his own when he was appointed the Manager of the Fire Investigation and Analysis unit.

As the department's longest serving member, he made a significant contribution to the advancement of Fire Investigation as a professional discipline both at an organisational and National level, an effort delivered over many years for which he was widely acknowledged by his peers.

During his tenure Ian was appointed to the Chair of the AFAC Fire Investigation working party, re-established the role of Electrical Investigator in FIA, was Chair of the Coroners Victorian Fire Investigation Working Party, drove the need to change Australian Standards for Down Lights, key driver of safety in the federal government Home Owner Insulation Program, and conducted significant investigations into serious firefighter injuries at fires.

The MFB is a safer place for Ian Hunter's work.

Despite dedicating 39 years to the MFB, we can't claim Ian as our own.

He was a much loved member of the Wandin CFA Brigade, joining in 1965 and rejoining as a volunteer in his retirement.

He was a Locomotive Fireman with the Emerald tour railway, particularly Puffing Billy.

And he loved music –and we were lucky to enjoy a performance from his band at MFB's Centenary in 1991.

Ian is also remembered for his work producing the Vale messages and funerals for retired and serving firefighters – and today he joins them.

We at the MFB are so grateful to Ian's family for their support over the years –the late nights, the weekends on call, the events and milestones all firefighters miss due to the job, and the long deployments interstate and overseas.

A life tragically cut too short, but a life well lived. Thank you Ian for your professionalism and dedication.

Eulogy by MFB Acting Chief Officer David Bruce



Above; Ian Hunter the fire Investigator.

Image; MFB Media

Walking Helps Boost Memory In The Elderly

For many of his 88 years, Harry S. Truman left reporters gasping for breath as he offered sharp tongued commentary during his brisk morning walk. John glen credits his celebrated return to orbit at age 77 to daily exercise, including a two mile power walk. Now, brain 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 weight lifting did not produce similar cognitive improvements. The experiment was conducted at the University of Illinois reported in an issue of the journal "Nature".

The mental benefits of walking were especially significant researchers said, because the senior had not exercised regularly before joining the study.

"People who have chosen a lifetime of relative 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 aged 60 to 75 years old. 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 hoop 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. The exercise is known as task switching.

The walker's ability to switch between tasks improved by 25% while other 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 involve only people with long term exercise habits. And Alzheimer's involve the death of brain cells, which is different from more generalised



memory lapses that frequently accompany aging.

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

The Shoebox

A man and woman had been married for more than 60 years. They had shared everything. They had talked about everything. They had kept no secrets from each other except that the old woman had a shoebox in the top of her closet that she had cautioned her husband never to open or ask her about.

For all of these years, he had never thought about the box, but one day the old woman got very sick and the doctor said she would not recover.

In trying to sort out their affairs, the old man took down the shoebox and took it to his wife's bedside.

She agreed that it was time that he should know what was in the box.

When he opened it, he found two crocheted dolls and a stack of money totalling \$95,000.

He asked her about the contents.

'When we were to be married,' she said, 'my grandmother told me the secret of a happy marriage was to never argue. She told me that if I ever got angry with you, I should just keep quiet and crochet a doll.'

The old man was so moved that he had to fight back tears. Only two precious dolls were in the box. She had only been angry with him two times in all those years of living and loving. He almost burst with happiness.

'Honey,' he said, 'that explains the dolls, but what about all of this money? Where did that come from?'

'Oh,' she said, 'that's the money I made from selling the dolls.'

Almost down & then the miracle donor found

Our Laurie Crowther - Reg 9018, former Fire Services Communications Controller, was diagnosed with "IDIOPATHIC PULMONRY FIBROSIS" approximately 9 years ago and 6 months ago was operated on to give him his life back after a donor lung was found as a match to Laurie's body.

Starting way back when, Laurie was born a "Pom" (he has been forgiven!) about 69 years ago and now is a fair dinkum Aussie and has been since he came to this fair country and started following the magnificent Collingwood Football Club, as you would, if you lived in Collingwood all those years ago.

Laurie came to Australia aged 11 and attended Fairfield Primary School and then the old Collingwood Technical College for his secondary schooling.

Laurie followed his father into the "Yarra Falls Woollen Mills" in Trennery Crescent in Abbotsford as a general hand at the age of 15. He worked there until aged 19 and then had a sales cadet role with "Spartan Paints" (who remembers that name?). He then became a Sales Rep selling toys and hobbies.

In 1969 Laurie was called up for National Service as many of us were in those days. (The Vietnam War was already going). He joined the army as a signals operator (Keyboard & Cipher (Coding) where his typing skills were learnt. Laurie gained the rank of lance corporal, went to Malaysia on exercises with the military for 2 months with R. A. Signals.

Laurie's biggest regret while away was missing the 1970 Grand Final (now, who was playing again?). After returning from Malaysia, he was based at Watsonia army barracks, home of Field Unit 2 - Signals Regiment.

Australia was involved in the Vietnam War; he volunteered to serve, however missed out and stayed safely at home and kept the home fires burning. We are now into late 1970 and he has been promoted to full corporal. Laurie's last posting with the army was to PNG on exercise and his unit was demobbed in April 1971 from Watsonia Barracks. Later that year Laurie married the lovely Lorraine on the 7th August 1971.

Laurie returned to work as a Sales Rep selling toys and hobbies. He then sold wine and spirits for approximate ten years before seeing an advertisement to join the MFB as a computer aided despatch operator in 1983.

After a 12 week training Course, Laurie and his fellow Operators started work at the newly established Communications Centre at Eastern Hill (men & women



operators). The "Comm Centre" operated for approximately 13 years and then was closed down while ESTA started up at East Burwood as a combined emergency dispatch agency.

Laurie and some of the staff from the Eastern Hill communications centre were retained as watchroom and Control Unit

Operators and were valued due to their unique and professional skills.

This story now comes back to where I started, Laurie's fight for life!

About 9 years ago Laurie started coughing and was puffing when doing mild exercise and went to see his local GP. A scan was performed and Laurie was diagnosed with Idiopathic Pulmonary Fibrosis, which is a hardening of the lungs and narrowing of the airways. How this occurred, nobody knows? Laurie was around 60 years of age and was told he was too old to have a lung transplant. His lung capacity dropped off further over the next 4 years and eventually had to go on sick leave and LSL from the fire brigade. Laurie eventually retired in July 2013.

As Laurie's health was deteriorating rapidly, he was advised to try some experimental drug trials in an attempt to improve his lung condition. While attending an appointment with a medical specialist, the specialist suggested a lung transplant for Laurie. Laurie's spirits were well and truly lifted after hearing this news. He then attended the Austin Hospital to see another specialist with a view for assessment in clinical trials. Another referral to the Alfred Hospital in Prahran for discussions and tests with members of the transplant team. Laurie would be accepted for a lung transplant provided he could pass certain tests over a 3 day period to ensure he was suitable. The 3 day comprehensive tests were carried out over his whole body to ensure he was fit for the donor lung. Elated to be later told that he was suitable (June 2016), Laurie was put on a waiting recipient list. Laurie still had to attend a weekly check-up.

Finally, after a 9 month wait, the phone call came at 9.30pm one evening on 27th March 2017. Laurie had a donor match and was required at The Alfred at 11.30pm that same evening. After a sleepless night, he was wheeled into the operating theatre and 6 hours later, Laurie had received a new large healthy lung.

After coming out of the operation, his first words were “where’s the pie and sauce and a want a coldie!” (well actually a cup of tea and a sandwich please – I’m starving!).

The new lung is performing beautifully and the other lung from the donor was given to a person who Laurie met when in the recovery ward.

All of Laurie’s family and friends were overjoyed to hear the good news.

Laurie had to attend 12 weeks of rehabilitation 3 days per week to ensure his new lung was performing as it should. And it is and still is! The first 6 months are critical as rejection of the new lung was possible.

*Laurie mentioned to me that there’s a fellow out there Leading F/F Sam McKirdy (FS1B) and he wishes

to acknowledge Sam’s support, information and friendship through this very difficult time as Sam had a double lung transplant in October 2016 and is now back on shift.

PS: Laurie continues to take medication to prevent rejection and infection as well as vitamin supplements to keep his body healthy for a continued healthy life. Laurie and Lorraine hope to continue travelling and have a holiday planned for February, 2018.

“This is a timely reminder for us all to be on the donor list to help others”

This is a recent interview I had with Laurie Crowther –
Col Harris (Editor)

Historical London Fire Brigade Fire Dogs

In the early years of the London fire Brigade, firemen kept all sorts of pets at their fire stations. There were cats, birds, even a goat and a monkey were kept as the firemen’s special friends. Tall tales grew up around some of these legendary animals. “Chance” (the dog), ran away to join the fire brigade and when his owner reclaimed him he bided his time before escaping back to the fire station. This act was repeated so often that his owner gave up and Chance achieved his ambition to be a regular member of the Chandos Street crew.

Quick off the mark when the alarm rang, Chance was often the first sign to anxious householders that help was on it’s way. He learned to pull burning timber aside to assist in rescues, had a sharp nose for sniffing out buried fire plugs and was himself an interested observer at the houses of parliament fire in 1834.

Chance died in action. He had been hurt in a fire a few days earlier and was resting at the fire station when a call came. Rushing out to climb onto the engine proved too much for him and he suffered a fatal collapse. Several firemen contributed to a taxidermist’s fee to have him stuffed and then he was displayed in a glass case at the Chandos Street fire station. To raise funds for a fireman’s widow and 3 children, a raffle was organised with chance in all glory as the prize. Every fire station in the metropolis took part and together with the public purchase of raffle tickets at 6 pence each 123.10 pounds was collected. The winner carried off this bizarre prize but no record exists of Chance’s last address.

Another London fire dog, billy, ended up as a stuffed

exhibit at Madame Tussaud’s waxworks. Furthermore, Baron, a Great Dane adopted by the Whitefriars fire station off Fleet Street, figured on one set of post cards lauding London’s noble fire brigades. He too died on active service, run over by a fire engine. In 1855, a fireman and his dog rescued a Rochdale family from their burning home. Fireman Craggs received a Humane Society medal but Carlo the retriever won the loudest cheers of the day.

Wallace the dog from Glasgow (Scotland), was credited with psychic powers in his ability to race ahead of an appliance to get to a fire. He nipped around corners and made unexpected turns to the astonishment of onlookers, unaware that the canny dog paused at any intersection to glance back and check the direction the driver was pointing his whip. Like Chance (LFB), he ended up stuffed and displayed in a glass case alongside a pair of small rubber boots once provided for his sensitive paws by a sympathetic lady from the public.

During the blitz in London (WW2), an abandoned mongrel found a friendly home in a Fulham fire station and like all fire dogs put himself on the strength. Red survived to see peace and earned the honour of a fire engine to take him to his final resting place.

Though working fire horses are now no more than a nostalgic memory, fire dogs are coming back into their own now as official members of the fire service. Sophisticated electronic equipment is far less effective in detecting and isolating chemicals used as accelerants by arsonists than a dog’s nose. The London Fire Brigade today use specially trained fire dogs to help locate trapped people in fire affected properties.

(Reproduced from a publication “London in Flames” by Anna Milford)



FIRE RESCUE RINGS

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

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

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

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**Copy deadline for Water Off Magazine
for February edition is January 20th 2018.**

Annual Super Fund Report Released by Stockspot

Bank funds skimming fees and poor returns

Stockspot's most recent annual Fat Cat Funds Report reveals the super funds that charge high fees and deliver low returns and, unsurprisingly, bank funds are the biggest culprits.

The report showed that ANZ, AMP and CBA were the worst offenders.

However, the banks have hit back, saying the report is "substantially overstated".

Regardless, figures found in the research revealed how some Australians stand to lose up to \$100,000 from every \$400,000 they put into super, simply due to high fees and poor returns.

The Stockspot study examined 4100 super funds worth around \$709 billion. Of these 4100 funds, 521 were deemed to be fat cats, worth around \$45.59 billion. Around \$600,242,623 in fees are paid to fat cat funds each year. The average fee charged by fat cat funds is 1.99 per cent.

Funds that underperform other funds by more than 10 per cent are deemed fat cats. Two thirds of all fat cat funds are managed by the Big Four banks.

And bank-owned funds weren't the only ones who fell into the fat cat category: two per cent of all industry super funds are fat cats, compared with 13 per cent of all retail funds.

The Fit Cat Awards were also announced, with Folkestone Maxim Asset Management taking out the top spot, followed by Forager Funds Management, Firstmac, Supervised Investments Australia Ltd and Equity Trustees.

Find out if your super fund is a fat cat or a fit cat at www.stockspot.com.au

Do you know how much in fees you pay each year? Are you surprised that bank-owned funds are the worst offenders? Is your super fund a fat cat?

New Members 2017

GRAHAM FRAZER.	04/01/17
TOM REYNOLDS.	01/02/17
PAUL SWAIN.	01/03/17
JAMES FRANKLIN	04/03/17
RAY HOLLINGWORTH.	18/03/17
ANTHONY SCOTT.	24/03/17
ALAN HUNTER.	07/04/17
GARY WRIGHT.	07/04/17
CHARLES RICHARDSON	07/05/17
JOHN GRIBBLE	19/07/17
RAY BROWN	08/08/17
LINDSAY JACKSON	10/08/17
MATT NARDELLA	11/10/17
(REJOINED)	
GREG LILLIS	11/10/17

Peer support is available to Retired Firefighters and Associated Members

Fairlie Morgan— Employee Assistance
Coordinator— fmorgan@mfb.vic.gov.au
0407 665 174

Chloe Henderson — Peer Coordinator
0417 538 289

Scott Darcy – Peer Coordinator –
sdarcy@mfb.vic.gov.au – 0429 771 849

John Howe — Retirees
9729 0984

Download the new VicEmergency app

The new VicEmergency app was launched recently and will replace FireReady this summer. The VicEmergency app is now available to download from the App Store or Google Play and Victorians are encouraged to download it ahead of the summer season. The VicEmergency website has also been upgraded and a new emergency hotline released. The Vic Emergency app and website will provide warning and incident notifications about floods, storms, fires, earthquakes tsunami, beach closures, shark sightings and more.



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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 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.



Annual General Meeting-Wednesday 15th November 2017
Nomination For Positions on the Committee

Nominations are called for the following positions on the Committee of the Retired Firefighters Association of Australia, Victorian Branch Inc.:-

- **President**
- **Vice-President**
- **Secretary/Treasurer**
- **Ordinary Member of Committee, Four (4) Positions**

Each position will serve for a term of one (1) year.

Please note that according to the Rules of the Retired Firefighters Association of Australia, Victorian Branch Inc, only financial members may nominate for any of the above positions and any member nominating must have been a member for at least one (1) year.

Nominations must be in writing on the form below, signed by the Proposer and the Secunder and accepted by the Nominee. Completed nomination forms must be returned to the Secretary at the address shown below **no later than 17:00 hours (5.00) on Friday 3rd November 2017**

Allan Roberts
Unit 158 Mernda Retirement Village
89 Galloway Drive
Mernda Vic 3754
Telephone: Mob: 0433 007 720 Home: 9216 1658

Retired Firefighters Association of Australia, Victorian Branch, Inc.

We, the undersigned, being financial members of the retired Firefighters Association of Australia, Victorian Branch Inc. hereby nominate:

Nominee's Name -----

For the position of -----

Proposed by (signature) ----- **(Print name)** -----

Secunderd by (signature) ----- **(Print name)** -----

Nominee Acceptance;

(Signature) ----- **(Print name)** -----

UFU RETIRED MEMBERS ANNUAL CHRISTMAS LUNCHEON

Pier 14, Central Pier - Docklands

Saturday, November 11th 2017

11.30 AM. - 4.00 PM.

A reminder:

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

PRINT POST No. 100002647

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