

**RETIRED FIREFIGHTERS ASSOCIATION OF AUSTRALIA
VICTORIAN BRANCH INCORPORATED**

Members who have not renewed their membership are reminded that subscription for 1996 are now due and payable.

The Secretary
Retired Firefighters Association of Australia
Victorian Branch Incorporated.
24 Lincoln Drive
Lower Plenty 3093

Please find enclosed Cheque/Money Order for \$10 being for subscription for 1996.

Name: _____

Spouses Name: _____

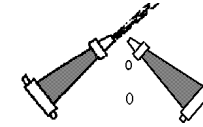
Address: _____

_____ Post Code _____

Phone: _____

(Please include address even if it has not changed so computer records can be updated for future mail-outs).

NOTE: Our subscription year is from;- February 1st 1996 to January 31st 1997.



“WATER OFF!”

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

MAY 96



OZ TREK TOURS P/L

Ex fire-fighter Gerry Tilker & his wife Betty started a tour company called **Oz Trek Tours** in 1988, and have organised tours for, and have been chartered by national and international travel companies to operate tours to many destinations throughout Australia. In between time operated their own tours to many remote areas throughout Australia in their luxury 6WD coach. Gerry has since sold the 6WD and now operates a luxury mini coach which carries 16 passengers. If you would like more information on their tours, give **Oz Trek Tours** a call. Gerry also has a charter licence and would be happy to take your groups on day tours or extended tours to most destinations throughout Australia.

DAY TRIPS, WEEKENDS AWAY AND 5 DAY HOLIDAY TOUR WITH: OZ TREK TOURS

1-2 June 1996; Weekend Tour - Mount Buffalo

Under a carpet of snow or a tapestry of wildflowers, Mt Buffalo National Park is breathtaking in all seasons.

Cost per person twin share; Lodge =\$122 or Motel =\$132.

8-9-10 June 1996; Queens Birthday Weekend - Renmark

A great value packed weekend as we visit many attractions in this area.

Cost \$299 per person twin share includes entry to all attractions, motel accommodation, 2 dinners and 2 breakfasts.

3-7 August 1996; 5 Days - Canberra / Dubbo

Give Oz Trek Tours a call for an itinerary on this value packed tour for only \$475 per person twin share, single supplementary \$140.

Great West Coast Adventure

1997 we are planning a 20 day coach tour taking in Broome and the many attractions on the West Coast of Australia. Fare includes air fare, accommodation, most meals, entry and permit fees into National Parks and attractions.

For information or bookings on any of these tours, give

Gerry or Betty a call. PHONE (03) 9434-5744.

(All tours depart from and return to Spencer Street Coach



we also discuss recent fires that have occurred where these topics were relevant to the situation.

I would like to make "Fires Of Interest" a regular feature in "Water Off", just to remind you that the "job" still goes on! Here are a couple of examples gleaned from Com. Centre media releases:

Address:.....*Croydon.*

Details: A neighbour helped rescue a man aged in his forties from his blazing unit. The fire was reported just after 9pm and had a strong hold by the time firefighters arrived only five minutes later. The man broke windows and the handle off the deadlocked security door in an effort to escape but could not get out until a neighbour managed to force the door open. An ambulance was called to treat the man for minor lacerations to his hands.

The two bedroom flat was severely damaged by fire which took fire crews half an hour to control. The cause of the fire is thought to be due to a discarded cigarette in contact with flammable materials and caused an estimated \$30,000 damage. A smoke alarm was found in the unit but the battery was disconnected because it had activated previously due to cigarette smoke.

Address;.....*Canterbury.*

Details: One call was received from a neighbour for this house fire. Firefighters were confronted by an extensive fire involving the rear of the house on arrival two minutes after the call. While an attack on the fire was conducted at the rear, other firefighters using breathing apparatus, conducted a search of the heavily smoke logged house. An elderly woman was found in the front bedroom and she was not breathing. They commenced CPR at once and revived the woman who was then handed over to the care of Ambulance Officers. The fire appears to have started in the kitchen at the rear and is being investigated by the FIU. There was no smoke alarm installed to warn the occupant.

JOHN LAVERICK

"IMPORTANT GENERAL MEETING"

Notice is hereby given of our next meeting to be held at the Fitzroy Bowling Club, 1030 Hours Wednesday 22nd of May 1996

AGENDA ITEM.

The Committee requests your attendance at this meeting, as a vote will be taken to change the constitution; ie- Offices of the Secretary and Treasurer to become one.

(See Secretary's report page 4 of this issue for details.)

Please come along and have your say in the running of the Association and join in the fellowship of your old friends and make new ones.

Lunch and beverages will be provided as usual.
Drinks at bar prices.

NOTE;

Any member who has not been financial for 3 years, will be crossed off the mailing list. If you have not paid your current subscription for 1996, please fill in the form on the back page of this edition and return to the Secretary.



Secretary's Report.

The "General Meeting" notice for the 22nd of May 1996 has the word "Important" in front. Let's explain the reason why.

At a general meeting held on the 5th of June 1995, I requested that the committee explore the possibility of combining the positions of Secretary and Treasurer, due to the fact we were having trouble filling both positions.

Inquiries at the Office of Fair Trading revealed that this change is allowed so long as certain protocols are followed; ie- membership must be given 21 days notice of the agenda item and a quorum must be present. If the vote is for a change to the constitution, the Office of Fair Trading must be notified.

At the meeting of the 28th of February 1996, the result of the investigation was reported and a motion was put and carried that the committee proceed to make it an agenda item in line with the Office of Fair Trading guide-lines.

The following are items that have been discussed at meetings which all members should be aware of:-

Item 1-

Peter Lang, ex CFA career member, brought to the meetings attention the fact that a number of retired members may be missing out on an entitlement from the Taxation Department. This entitlement was brought about because of the maximum claim one could make for superannuation contributions was \$1200. If you had been paying more than this you may be entitled to a refund.

The President (Don Brennan) is going through the process of getting the information from the MFB of his yearly deductions made towards his super. "Keep tuned for the result of Don's efforts".

Item 2- Reduced rights of disability retirees.

On your behalf after an invitation from Peter Lang, I attended the Retired State Employees Association meeting at VRI Hall Geelong.

MFB. RETIRE ED



Retire Ed involves a group of retired MFB fire officers voluntarily giving their time to educate senior citizens in our community about fire safety. They have recognised the fact that senior citizens are a high fire risk group and that fire safety education for older citizens is more effective when presented by peers with similar concerns and challenges.

Retire Ed is now into its fourth year and since the program started in mid-1993 over 300 senior citizen groups have attended one of our lectures. Well over 10,000 people have been entertained and informed about fire safety.

Even in these troubled times industrially, the U.F.U. has encouraged the group to continue with this community service and as a result we completed a very successful 1995 with 132 lectures and a total of 5633 people attending.

On a personal note, Retire Ed has been one of the most rewarding activities that I have been involved in since my retirement from the MFB. It has given me an opportunity to put back into the community what I got out of it during my career in the job. It has also raised my self esteem, I don't feel as though I have been thrown on the scrap heap, I'm still doing what I was trained to do!

Any retired firefighter who would like to be part of a team, meet people, share experiences and their fire safety knowledge. Join the Retire Ed group! Give Sharon Landers of the Fire Prevention Dept. a call on 9665-4464 or myself on 9337-9820 for more information.

As Smoke Alarms, escape plans and deadlocks on doors are some of the important issues discussed during our talks,

(con. over)

(Fire Ed cont.)

Next stop is Paris, once again we visit all of the tourist spots, Eiffel Tower, Notre Dame Cathedral, Louvre Museum, Champs Elysees, Arc De Triomphe. We travel by underground train to visit the Eiffel Tower at night, the view is fantastic. The tower was built in 1887-89, is 968 feet high and has 7,300 tons of steel. At the Louvre Museum we see the Mona Lisa and various other paintings by Michelangelo. We spend two days in Paris nowhere near long enough, would take at least 2 weeks.

(To be cont. next issue)

DON AND NANCY BRENNAN

The Royal Children's Hospital Good Friday Appeal



The annual Good Friday can shake at the St Kilda junction this year was again a very successful exercise thanks to the efforts of the volunteers who gave their time for this very worthy cause.

Firefighters in association with the Uncle Bobs Club have traditionally manned the St. Kilda junction for years and has raised many thousands of dollars and many lasting friendships have been made.

But now this great group of people need your help to maintain the strength at the Junction. Our President and his wife went down to lend a hand for a few hours and reports that they were busy and needed people to relieve them for a while. If you could give some time on Good Friday next year it would be greatly appreciated. We will run a reminder notice in the edition prior to Good Friday next year, again this is a very worthwhile cause.

The meeting was informed that all persons who were on a disability pension and attached to the emergency services, were transferred from the State scheme to the Emergency Services Superannuation Scheme (ESSS) and should be aware that there may be changes in the future. Again any member on a disability pension, keep in contact with the employees representative on the Super Board, Ray Goddard and/or your financial advisor so you will be kept aware if changes are going to occur. They were not sure if it was only going to be the group transferred from the State Scheme, or all persons on pensions with ESSS.

Mr. Leonard Kanevsky drew attention to the Superannuation Act (Miscellaneous Amendments) Bill, 4-12-95, which reduces some rights of disability retirees retrospectively from the 1-2-95. Such retrospectivity would appear to conflict with the rules administered by the Commonwealth Insurance and Superannuation Commission.

One consequence is that a disability retiree who returns to former duties will obtain a top up to a salary if he or she accepts a job offer at a lower salary than was applicable to the grade of employment prior to the disability retirement. However, this could be confined to the salary at the time, rather than to the current equivalent as an officer.

Item 3-

A membership certificate has been developed for members of the RFA. This is to be forwarded with the "Water Off" newsletter. If you do not receive one it will indicate you are not financial.

Item 4-

Harry Morgan gave a report to the meeting on 13 Stations (Northcote) 101 years celebration. This is the only active station that has been on the same site for that length of time. I would also like to mention I was there also. Harry turned up in a dungaree jacket with brass buttons, pants (the old pants with red stripes) and a flat cap. What he did not mention was

(cont.over)

(Secretary's Report cont.)

that he still had his original tin of Brasso and button stick.

When I was standing in the engine room, I swore, I heard somebody with a strong Irish accent drop a four letter word and when I looked around nobody was there. I'm not saying the place is haunted, but???

Item 5

Western District's luncheon at the Plough Hotel 333 Barkly st. Footscray, will be held on the last Wednesdays' of June 26-6-96 and September 25-9-96.

Item 6-

RFA Calendar for the rest of the year is as follows;
General meetings; 22nd May and 21st August.
Annual General Meeting; 16th October.

Item 7-

New members are as follows;
K. Gray (Saxa), Bruce Mackay (Beamer), Robert Brockley, John Wallace, Raymond Lunnie, Bob Renwood, Gerry Tilker and Reg Humphries has rejoined.

Item 8-

I believe with some of the phone calls we have received we should restate the charter / aims of the RFA.

- * To act as a medium for the promotion of communications between fellow retired firefighters;
- * To provide a regular newsletter;
- * To encourage dialogue between relevant community groups which are of assistance to members and their dependants;
- * To provide support and mateship to each other and any other worthwhile activity that the membership so decides;
- * To encourage social activity amongst its members;
- * The Association is non political and is open to all ex-firefighters (volunteer or permanent) and support staff.

through some spectacular countryside including driving through the worlds longest road tunnel at 17 km. This city is also on a lake and surrounded by mountains.

Next stop is Venice in Italy. We travel by water taxi to the city centre square where there is a cathedral, a bell tower and numerous cafes and shops. The views from the top of the tower are excellent. We then took a Gondola ride around some of the canals and were serenaded by a local tenor (about 80 not out) plus an accordion player. Next day we travel across the Po delta and skirt the Adriatic coast and arrive at Assisi, a walled city where St. Francis was born in 1182.

Next stop was Rome where we see all of the tourist spots, the Colosseum, Roman ruins, St. Peters Cathedral, Vatican, Sistine Chapel, Popes Tombs etc. Each one of these you would spend hours and not see all them all. We were fortunate to be in Rome on a Sunday and were blessed by the Pope from his window. An evening tour of the Roman hills with dinner next to the Popes Summer Palace topped off a great time in and around Rome.

We leave Rome for a short drive north to Florence. This is a very beautiful city renowned for its leather shops. The cathedral is one of the largest five in the world once again with ornate ceilings.

Up at 6am. we leave for Nice passing through Pizza where we visit the Leaning Tower, it looks like it could fall over at any time. We pass the Port of Genoa and look down onto parts of the Italian and French Rivas. The motorway passes through 168 tunnels. At night we go by our coach to Monte Carlo for dinner then visit the palace of Prince Rainier before going on to the Casinos. Had a go at the pokies and won a few francs.

Next morning we have a look around Nice. Visited the famous beach, water is blue and clear but no sand only pebbles as big as eggs, very hard to walk or sunbake on. (cont. over-)

TRAVELLING WITH THE BRENNANS

(Cont. from last issue:)

We leave London by bus and travel to Dover where we catch a ferry to Calais in France, after passing through immigration and customs we leave by coach for Brussels in Belgium arriving about 1800 hours in the dark. We take a stroll from our hotel to the City Square which is surrounded by buildings dating back to the 13th century. We found a statue of a little boy relieving himself, appears it is pretty famous. The streets around have plenty of restaurants with food displays on the footpath outside.



Next day we leave early and travel through four countries. First we leave Belgium and have morning tea in Luxembourg, a very pretty place, would have liked to have spent more time there. The city is built in deep ravines and hills and is one of the smallest countries in the world. We then travel through the French Provinces of Metz and Nancy and after lunch on the motorway we arrive in Lucerne Switzerland and stop on the edge of Lake Lucerne for the night.

Next morning after a short drive into Lucerne where we visit the Covered Walkway Bridge, part of this was burnt down in 1993 but has now been restored. We then take a boat trip on Lake Lucerne, very interesting with snow topped mountains coming right down to the waters edge.

We visited the Lion Monument which is built into a rock wall to commemorate the lives of 26 Swiss Guards who died trying to protect the French Queen Antoinette in 1792. Following a short drive we take 3 cable cars, the final one that revolves as it travels up to the top of Mt. Titlis which is 10,000 feet high. Temperature was - 12 degrees with spectacular views.

We then leave for Lugano on the Swiss - Italian border, travelling

Item 9-

The committee has received a great letter from Ian Heath, one of our members in the Sunshine state. I am referring to one of the people that used to keep the Brigade General Office going without all the whizz-bang stuff they have today. Great to hear from Ian and all the best to the family.

Item 10-

Sailor Davies celebrated his 80th birthday in February and some of the members made a surprise visit and reckon he has lost none of his dry humour.

JOHN BERRY
SECRETARY

As some
of you
be aware. one of our members, John Howe, has been a regular on Golden Days Radio for the better part of two years. Golden Days Radio is a community radio station targeted at the seniors market. It broadcasts on 99.9FM from 7.00 AM.- 11.00 PM every Saturday and Sunday.

John and the Program Manager, Fred Cross, have spoken on fire safety topics ranging from Smoke alarms, electrical appliances, Fire Awareness Week and the World Police and Fire Games to the International Firefighters Exchange Program and the Fire Services Museum.

Johns program goes to air 5.00 PM. every Saturday and is always looking for new ideas and guest interviewees for his program. If you have any ideas for John or would be prepared to be interviewed, contact John on 9729-0984.

OVER THE STY

Being an occasional column from an unknown contributor.



“La la la la”, oh how sweetly our relative “Babe” could sing, especially when her friends recently won an Oscar. Congratulations Babe, I have never heard of a “Silver” winning an Oscar.

Congratulations also to the “Silver family” on the marriage of his daughter recently, I see she had the good sense to marry a “Firey”. I also heard on good authority that “Silver” was trying to flog off to the caterer of the wedding some out of code food left over from a certain Heidelberg coffee shop. Nice try “Silver”, it has been alleged that the money you would have saved would have been used to finance an overseas trip, like to Phillip Island.

Talking of overseas trips, a member and a confidant of the occupiers of the Sty, recently went on an overseas trip to Tasmania. It was interesting on the trip over to discover an elephant as one of the passengers, he was on one of the lower decks and travelling with the rest of the circus.

Upon arrival in Devonport, which happened to be Tasmanian election day, our confidant who goes under the name of “Gold”, (a much superior type of metal to “Silver”) travelled through Burnie to a major road leading to Strahan, passing on the way an inferior road on the Devonport side of Burnie, an extra 5 km. After travelling some 1 hour he was flagged down by a “police person” who directed him down a side unmade road and telling him that the road to Strahan was closed on account of a car rally. After travelling for some 1.5 hours “Gold “ found himself on the inferior Strahan road at a signpost which said “Burnie 17 km”. “Gold” is a very fast traveller, 2.5 hours to travel 17 km.

After “Gold” arrived back in Melbourne the day after the Federal Election, he then faced up to the State Election 3 weeks later and

didn’t back a winner at any of them.

Attached below for members attention is an advertisement from the “Age”. Would members interested in any of the positions and requiring a reference, please form a queue and write to “Over The Sty” c/o this publication. All communications will be treated as strictly confidential.

OINK, OINK.

PIG RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION

**Commonwealth Department of Primary Industries and
Energy**

Non- Executive Directors

The Pig Research and Development Corporation is seeking Expressions of interest to fill six Director positions on the Board of the Pig Research and Development Corporation (PDRC). The Directors, who will be part time, must have substantial experience in one or more of the following fields;

- pig or animal production
- food processing
- marketing
- conservation of natural resources
- finance
- sociology

Remuneration of Board Members is determined by the Remuneration Tribunal.

Applications are invited setting out career and personal details and stating those areas from the above list in which the applicant would have particular skills.