

INFORMATION REQUIRED!

Fire Museum request for Gym Team Historical Information

- Photographs
- Stories
- Names of the original team members
- Names of subsequent team members
- Dates, Places, Events, Memorabilia
- Copies of original photos and articles would be appreciated.

Contact:
 Harry Purcell 5774 7254,
 Or send to H. Purcell c/o Fire Services Museum
 39 Gisborne St. East Melbourne 3002.

Note:
 Any piece of information no matter how small can help build a better picture.
 All original items will be copied and returned.

The information required is to set up a web site containing Fire Brigade history and the gym team is part of our historical past.

PRINT POST No. PP333964/0020

RFA Newsletter
 If undelivered return to;
The Secretary
 6 Wingara Ave.
 East Keilor 3033

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"WATER OFF"

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

*November 2003 Vol 7 No4
 Inc/No: A16839F*

R.F.A. President Steps Down

After 10 Years of leadership President Don Brennan will step down at the November Annual General Meeting..... "It's time for new blood" he says.

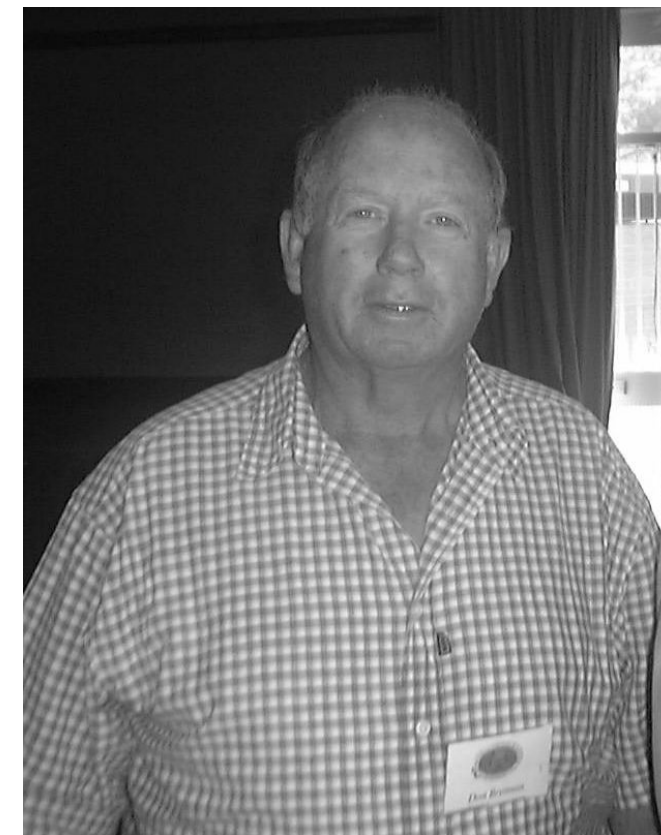
Editorial:

After 10 years as President of the RFA Don Brennan has decided to step down following a decade of nurturing the Association to the nationally recognized organization it is today.

Don, along with the immediate past Secretary John Berry, has been at the forefront in fostering good relationships with Victoria's fire services, the UFU and other related organizations. They instigated strong contacts with other state and federal retirement organizations which, collectively, make a very strong lobby voice. Assistance and advice has been given to interstate groups when they sought to organize their own associations.

It would be fair to say that in the last ten years of this association's existence we have enjoyed immense progress from our very humble beginnings to a membership in excess of 400 and financially strong under the guidance of these two men.

Thank you to Don, Nancy and family for ten years of dedication to the advancement of the RFA and their willingness to make their home available for Committee meetings and functions where you were always made to feel welcome.



Don Brennan. Ten years at the helm and now feels it's time to hand over to someone with a fresh approach and a willingness to "Have a Go."

Where do we go from here?

John Brown, our new Secretary has very ably stepped into the shoes of John Berry following his step down last year. Now we have to fill the shoes of Don Brennan.

Will it be a big task?

No, the infrastructure is already there - Don has seen to that. What we have to do is ensure that we maintain the momentum we have by standing up and being counted.

We have enjoyed all that the RFA has to offer now we ask that the membership give a little back by electing to nominate for committee positions at the

November Annual General Meeting. (Nomination form on page 12)

The RFA is a sturdy ship and isn't difficult to keep on course with the committee working as a team. Decisions have to be made and the person who nominates for President can be assured they will have a good team behind them.

“ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING”

**Notice is hereby given of our next Annual General Meeting to be held at the
Carlton Football Club Social Club,
(Melway 29 G12)
1030 Hours, Wednesday November 19th, 2003**

AGENDA ITEMS.

**Minutes of last Annual General meeting.
President's Report.
Secretary/Treasurer's Report.
Election of Office Bearers
General Business.**

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 and beverages available.

**JOHN BROWN
SECRETARY/TREASURER
Ph: 03 9336 2492**

OFFICE BEARERS

President, Don Brennan
Vice President, Ian Fowler
Sec./Treasurer, John Brown

General Committee;

John Laverick
Ken McGillivray
Bob McNeil
John Schintler
John Wallace
Auditor; Theo Teklenburg

Diary dates 2004

February 18th General Meeting
April ? Reunion to be announced
May 19th General Meeting
August 18th General Meeting
November 17th Annual General Meeting
November ? Luncheon St Kilda Town Hall

VALE

Harold Baker (MFB)	Keith Milte (MFB)
Cliff Bassett (MFB)	Jim Nevins (MFB)
Ray Bishop (MFB)	Tom (Mate) Smith (CFA)
Ted Brown (MFB)	Don Snell (MFB)
Len Burgess (CFA)	Roy Treverton (MFB)
Wayne Fleming (MFB)	

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

SICK LIST

Jim Casley	Ron Kennedy
Arthur Graham	Kevin Roderick
Clarrie Hart	Jack Sexton
Ian Heath	Graeme Simpson
Peter Hornsey	George White

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.

“Water Off” is edited by John Laverick, 40 Brunel Street Essendon 3040. Phone / fax 9337-9820. E Mail rfa@smartchat.net.au
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; J. Laverick.

DO YOU WANT TO BE PART OF RECORDED HISTORY?

The Fire Services Museum has undergone in the last 12 months a complete renovation of all its display areas, included in this is a room that has been set-aside as an area to reflect upon the commitment of the firefighters and support staff to the community. This room is known as the 'Griffiths Gallery', which was named after the first and highest fire brigade Valour Award winner Jumbo Griffiths, who won the award in 1918. Three walls of the room will, feature separate displays.

Victorian Firefighters Memorial Wall.

This wall honours the 91 Firefighters who have lost their lives in the line of duty. A large action shot of a firefighter covers an area 2.2meters x 2.7meters, superimposed in front of this are 4 Perspex shields with the honour roll in gold lettering.

Valour Wall.

The 6 M.F.B Valour Award recipients are featured with their Military and Brigade Service Medals. A larger area in the C.F.A. room will feature the 17 recipients of the 'Horrocks Shield' and 20 Valour Medals winners; this section should be completed by the end of the year.

Ex Serviceman's Memorial Wall.

Fire Brigades have traditionally given their first priority to recruiting from the ranks of the ex-serviceman but the role of the ex serviceman within the firefighting community has never been fully understood or publicly recognised. This recruiting policy has resulted in a high proportion of servicemen within its ranks that have had a huge influence on the evolution of Brigades, i.e. In the MFB alone, 5 of its

Chief Officers and 4 of the 6 valour medal recipients were servicemen.

This memorial wall will display the medals and particulars of MFB employees Brigade and Military Service; the information will also serve as a genealogy base for future generations. Because of the numbers involved with the CFA section, 2,087 firemen enlisted in W.W.1, this section will again be displayed in the CFA Room, which is a much larger area.



Now the reason for all this information... we are seeking your assistance in obtaining the medals or replicas of fire brigade employees for both the CFA and MFB collections. As a lot of ex servicemen still wear their medals at parades and reunions it would be a big ask to donate the originals but the replicas of your sets make an excellent record for future generations.

The museum is also pursuing unusual sets of medals of brigade employees; we have already obtained the replica sets of Lieut. Borella. VC. MM. MFB. 1910 - 1913 and Jock Stewart's Military Medal set. If you know of any unusual medals sets maybe you could let us know.

**“Jumbo Griffiths” to be honoured
by the “Griffith's Gallery**

The best way to know what is going on at the museum is of course to bring in the family and have a look, so how about it?

Thank you to all that have contributed to this memorial, too many to record here.

Bill Bayley.

Murphy's Law of Bus Transportation

- 1.The bus that left the stop just before you got there is your bus.
- 2.The amount of time you have to wait for the bus is directly proportional to the inclemency of the weather.
- 3.All buses heading in the opposite direction drive off the face of the earth and never return.
- 4.The last rush-hour express bus to your neighborhood leaves five minutes before you get off work.
5. Bus schedules are arranged so your bus will arrive at the transfer point precisely one minute after the connecting bus has left.

PUTTING UP WITH THE PUT-DOWNS

When negative people try to rain on your parade, when someone who knows nothing and cares less tries to make your life miserable, think about this.

A woman was at her hairdresser's getting her hair cut before a holiday in Rome. She told the hairdresser of the trip who responded: "Why would anyone want to go to Rome? Italy's crowded, dirty and full of Italians. "So how are you getting there?". "We're flying" was the reply. "We got a great price". "That airline," said the hairdresser. "That's a terrible airline. Their planes are old, their flight attendants ugly and they're always late."

"So where are you staying in Rome?" "We'll be at an exclusive place called Teste..." "Don't go any further I know the place. It's a dump, the worst hotel in the city. The rooms are small, the service is surly and they're overpriced.

"What are you doing when you get there?" "We're going to the Vatican and we hope to see the Pope". "That's rich", said the hairdresser. "You and a million other people trying to see him. Boy, good luck on this trip of yours".

A month later the woman ran into the hairdresser, who asked about her holiday. "It was wonderful" said the woman. "We not only flew on one of the airline's new planes but it was overbooked and they bumped us up to first class. The food and wine were great and I had a handsome steward who waited on me.

The hotel was marvellous. They had just finished a \$5 million refit and now it's the finest hotel in the city. They too were overbooked, so they gave us the owner's suite at no extra charge."

"Well", said the hairdresser. "That's great but I know you didn't get to see the Pope". "Actually, we were lucky. As we toured the Vatican, a Swiss Guard tapped me on the shoulder and explained the Pope likes to meet some of the visitors and if I'd be so kind to step into his private room and wait, the Pope would personally greet me.

Sure enough, five minutes later the Pope walked in and shook my hand, I knelt and he spoke a few words to me". "Oh really, what did he say?". "He said, "Where did you get that awful haircut?"".

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Our August meeting was the last to be held at the North Melbourne Football Social Club. They closed the Fogarty Street premises and moved to the Telstra Dome. I would like to thank the Club Management for their assistance over the years.

I announced at the meeting that I had made arrangements to hold our future meetings at the Carlton Football Social Club. It was also moved that in future we pay for our own lunch which is Bistro style. Each attending member at Carlton will have a wider choice of menu by paying for it themselves. Prices range from \$3.50 to \$8.00. The meal arrangement at the North Melbourne Club was the attending members paid \$4 at the door and the remainder subsidized from Association funds.

This will enable the Association to keep our yearly subs at the \$10 level which has remained the same since our formation.

I would like to thank the committee wives for preparing and serving the chicken and salad lunch which was enjoyed by all at the meeting.

Finally, the November Annual General Meeting will be my last as President of the RFA. We have a vibrant Association and can only remain this way with new blood on the committee and I urge you to consider nominating for a position on the committee.

My wife Nancy and I thank you for the support and assistance you have given us over my ten years as President.

Don Brennan

SECRETARY/TREASURER'S REPORT



At the August Meeting the Members authorised me to write to the C.E.O. Peter Akers regarding Appliances attending Ex-employees Funerals.

We gained another four Members - Len Clarke from Healesville, Ken Lambert now Ulladulla, Gordon McKenzie from Melton and Barry Stevens - now Scarborough Qld.

The C.E.O's response was immediate and assured me that the M.F.B. cared about Ex-employees and an Appliance would attend if circumstances permit. He informed me that if the R.F.A. contacted the D.C.F.O. Director of Operations (at the moment Tony Murphy) he would make an Appliance available if circumstances permit.

About 2,500 applications were received for Recruit Course No.88. of these 34 Males and 2 Females ranging in age from 20 - 40 years of age were selected, they were trained at various sites, team building at Gembrook and undertook driving skills there. 5 days of Emergency Medical Response, 3 days at the C.F.A's Fiskville where they were trained in Flammable Gas and Liquid Fires, Structural Fires, Foam Drills and B.A. Exercises.

Senior Management of the M.F.B. has helped the R.F.A. in many ways and we are most appreciative.

The C.E.O. Peter Akers stated in Firemark that Gender Equity is the aim of the M.F.E.S.B. only 1.04% of staff are Female, that in future a Male/Female balance was the AIM, also people from Non-English Countries would be given every consideration.

At our August Meeting Matt Morgan from the Union wrongly apologised for a recent Bereavement Notice he placed in the Newspaper. For the information of those who complained, at a Meeting of the then Officers Association and the United Firefighters Union Executive called by the then Union Secretary, Bill Webber, he asked the O.A's Members to abandon the O.A. and join the Union, his reason being that being one Body we would have more bargaining power. When Harry Purcell asked Bill Webber how that would affect some who were involved in an incident that happened in 1950, Bill Webber replied that they would be accepted back in the Union. So the person named WAS a Union Member.

Up until now Union Members could only rise to Senior Station Officer, all ranks above that are Contract Employees. Now the M.F.B. has agreed to create a Commander Operations Rank and after examination twenty two S. S. O's have been promoted to this Rank (like the old D. O. Rank) Commander Administration are still Contract Employees. At the time of writing no Chief Fire Officer has been appointed.

TREASURER'S REPORT

As from the 11th August, 2003 -
Access Account Balance: \$1,260.22
Term Deposit Balance: \$4,021.79

JOHN BROWN
Secretary/Treasurer

RETIRED FIREFIGHTERS ASSOCIATION OF AUSTRALIA VICTORIAN BRANCH INCORPORATED

NOMINATION FORM.

For election of Office Bearers of the Association and ordinary members of the committee.

We hereby nominate;

Name: _____ For the position of; _____

Proposer's Name: _____

Address: _____

Post Code _____

Secunder's Name: _____

Address: _____

Post Code _____

I hereby accept the above nomination; Signature of Nominee; _____

Return by Friday November 14, 2003, to:
The Secretary
Retired Firefighters Association of Australia
Victorian Branch Incorporated.
6 Wingara Ave. East Keilor 3033

Date; _____

FUNERAL NOTICES....

If, upon your death, you would like an M.F.B. or U.F.U. Logo included in your death notice, instruct your family to notify M.F.B. Commander, Ian Hunter on 942 3882 and U.F.U. on 9419 8811 as soon as practical, also notify John Brown (Sec/Treas) RFA, 9336 2492.

A request for an appliance to attend a funeral should be directed to the D.C.F.O. Director of Operations (at the moment Tony Murphy), time and date of service given.

If in the M.F.B. area and circumstances permit, an appliance will attend. Exceptions will be TOTAL Fire Ban Days and particularly busy days.

If you require an old appliance from the Fire Museum, you need three days notice.

CONTACT MIKE McCUMISKY on 9808 1659

JOHN BROWN
Secretary/Treasurer

DECIDING WHEN TO GIVE UP DRIVING

By Alix Johnston

When are we physically unfit to ? Many the decision when to stop as theirs alone to decide; they are upset when considering the social impact of not driving. Some prefer to risk the safety consequences, just to continue to drive. Independence and lifestyle are crucially linked with the ability to drive, as the car is often used daily as an important part of family and social contact.

Living close to public transport is one strategy to avoid becoming isolated when it is no longer safe to drive. I was pleased my mother decided to move to be closer to family when she could see her driving days coming to an end.

In fact, she lived in NSW, where there is a compulsory driving assessment each year for people aged over 85. This means brushing up the road rules and attention to signage and techniques.

A lesson from an instructor is the best way to do this. Research for the ACT Government shows most drivers believe their own driving skills are superior to those of the average driver. Receiving any type of traffic infringement proves there is room for improvement with older drivers, whose most frequent offences include: failure to give way; failure to observe signs and signals; careless crossing of intersections; changing lanes without due regard to other cars; reversing; driving too slowly.

The reason for these is usually related to complex driving situations and an

inability to process too much information.

Many older drivers feel their long experience of driving stands them in good stead, compared with that of younger drivers. Assessment of driving capacity needs to be done on an individual basis. Normal age-related changes, such as reduced dynamic visual acuity, reaction time and difficulties with divided attention tasks, impair our driving ability.



It's hard for people to notice these changes themselves, as many of these changes occur gradually. Individual assessment by a trained professional is vital.

In an article in the *Weekend Australian* of July 5, Sarah Saunders states: "Recent Swinburne University research found the social impact of being without a car is so high among seniors that fear and denial are getting in the way of objective assessments of driving ability."

Many other organisations such as road safety authorities and health professionals are giving great consideration to the question of older drivers as their numbers increase, due to ageing baby boomers, and the mobility of older people becomes even more important.

There has been a large increase in the number of cars on the roads in the past 10 years. For instance, in Victoria, there are three million registered vehicles and the RACV now has more than 1.3 million members. In addition to increased congestion we also see changes in car design, road rules and the road system, specifically roundabouts and freeways.

Road safety research for the Australian Transport Safety Bureau (ATSB) examination of crash records shows older drivers generally do not drive far enough to record high accident levels (about 10%). However, when the distance travelled by certain age groups is taken into account, the older driver's fatality rate rises to levels equivalent to - and for females, higher than - the levels of the 15-24 age group. The older driver's accident risk also tends to increase with advancing age ...

The high fatality rate among older drivers is thought to relate to their increased frailty and, consequently, a greater risk of crash injuries resulting in fatalities.

Factors thought to contribute to the accident involvement of older drivers relate to the physical changes associated with ageing, which can

Days of Our Lives Or, "It wouldn't happen these days!"

FROM CENTRAL DISTRICT

On arrival for afternoon shift, I found that I was not driving the ladder but the hose carriage. The District Officer said (with a voice once heard - never forgotten), "I must have a Senior Fireman on the ladder not two First Class Fireman."

District Officer left the Station at 1515 hours, at 1600 hours light duty man off duty. At 1605 hours hose carriage turned out for open and close on a street fire alarm's electrical circuit, hose carriage returned to Station at 1630 hours.

The next time I see the ladder crew, the Senior Fireman and First Class Fireman, were coming out of the Hotel over the road at 1745 hours. The First Class Fireman has the relief in watchroom at 1830 hours. At 1845 hours the station bells come on and the Senior Officer entered the watchroom to see if keys were required, but the Fireman was slumped in his chair, Senior Officer said "I thought he was dead" (he was dead drunk).

Executive Officer and District Officer said "He is drunk and can't do his job." The Brigade Medical Officer was called to the Station. Before BMO arrived, the First Class Fireman goes upstairs and changes into street clothes, but us other Fireman dragged him upstairs and put him back into his uniform.

The B.M.O. arrived and took the First Class Fireman into the Executive's Office to check him out and found that he had a high temperature and put him off duty, but told to report to the B.M.O. the next day.

At 2100 hours, the Executive Officer was summoned to the Chief Officer for kick a in the rear over getting B.M.O. in when the Fireman was ill.

Fireman sees B.M.O. next day for a check-up, and was told, "You told me that you only had two beers yesterday, if that amount had done that to me I would give it up."

This was a very entertaining afternoon shift.

WESTERN DISTRICT OUT STATION

HOW THE GLASS IN THE MESS ROOM DOOR WAS BROKEN

An Officer said to me, "An inconsiderate Fireman ducked when I threw a can at him for giving cheek. Now I have to put in a report on how the glass was broken."

The Officer (now well retired), has just had a hip replacement, it's a wonder he hasn't had to have an elbow replacement as well.

(Names and dates withheld to protect the guilty)

RACING TIPS From My Mate's Cousin



Our informant has been very busy over the last couple of months with time devoted to his two passions, the billiard table and the track.

It seems the billiard's team were running one short and our man was asked to fill in and play an overweight English gentleman of dubious parentage. Having to give his opponent 10 points to begin with, our man, after a very shaky start, soundly thrashed the interloper and sent him on his way. He's also been skulking about the bush tracks and chatting up some of the ladies in the know (Lady Trainers and Jockeys we were informed). We don't know what this may lead to but if they can give him the good oil to pass on to us we don't care who it comes from.

Face Value:

This one is for the Derby at Flemington, so we hope you read this in time to put your dollar each way. Trained by S.B. Laming.

Sweet Corn:

There's nothing sweet about this, it's all business and giving trainer, D. L. Freedman, some confidence in its ability. Keep an eye out for it's next start.

Akimbo:

From the J.R. Hawkes stable in Sydney. Has been training well and performed beyond expectation at a recent outing. Has the ability.

Force Apollo:

There was a famous strong man years ago who called himself "Young Apollo" and performed amazing feats of strength like pulling a Bourke Street Tram along the track with his teeth. This one has an excellent set of teeth and strength to match. Another from the Hawkes stable.

Glimpsing:

Only showed glimpses of talent prior to Gae Waterhouse taking over. The lady dynamo put a lot of effort into making sure it's ready for the next start.

May the Horse Be With You

“A DROP KICK AND A PUNT”

Thank you to the members who have forwarded lists of AFL/VFL/VFA players employed by the MFB. Listed below are the names I have, and I invite additions or alterations etc. so that a complete record can be compiled of the Fire Brigade's participation at the senior levels of Aussie Rules.

Titch Renwood	Collingwood	Norm Thompson	St Kilda & Footscray
George Beasley	Collingwood	Stan Lloyd	St Kilda
Cracker Knight	Collingwood	Reg Garvin	St Kilda
Charlie Tyson	Collingwood	Paddy Walsh	Essendon
Laurie Jarman	Fitzroy	Percy Bushby	Essendon
Ernie Trickey	Fitzroy	Alby Yeo	Essendon
Bob Wilson	Fitzroy	Duffy Plummer	Essendon
Arnie Briven	Fitzroy	Bob Spargo	Footscray
Colin Davey	Fitzroy	Jock Thompson	Footscray
Jack McGregor	Fitzroy & Northcote	Dodger Ryan	Nth Merlbourne
Ken Jones	Fitzroy	Mick Gaudion	Nth Melbourne
Bluey Clarke	Fitzroy	Artie Peters	Nth Melbourne
Fred Goldsmith	Sth. Melbourne	Gerry Britt	Carlton
Roy Treverton	Sth. Melbourne	Les Johnson	Preston
Jack Graham	Sth. Melbourne	Yorky Shaw	Coburg
Gordon Lane	Sth. Melbourne & Ess.	Graham Danby	Coburg
Doc Steel	Melbourne	Ron Wilson	Coburg
Hughie McPherson	Melbourne	Bill Wynd	Coburg
Jack Barker	Hawthorn	Keith Milte	Coburg
George Hancock	Hawthorn	Alan Stirling	Northcote
Cyril Collard	Hawthorn	George Musgrove	Northcote
Len Crane	Hawthorn	Bob McKenzie	Camberwell
Col Campbell	Hawthorn	Jack Sharples	Camberwell
Jim Bohan	Hawthorn	Les Powell	Oakleigh
Clarrie Curyer	St Kilda	Mick Adamson	Prahran

Please criticise, correct and advise re above and post it to Fire Services Museum of Victoria, 39 Gisborne Street East Melbourne 3002 C/O F. Kerr or ring me at 9376 3669.

Another thank you for all of the “Yarns” concerning the watchroom supervisory unit. It brought back many memories of those years of fixing the bell when the boss went upstairs. Many of our members have marveled at the skills and expertise of some of the inventors.

After careful perusal of all the entries, the board

of the F.S.M.V. have decided that the winner for the best story is Ted Osland. Congratulations Ted and we all hope you enjoy your “World Tour” all expenses paid on the Q.E. 10.

“It's The way we have in the Fire Brigade”
F. C. Kerr

Take a Punt

The MFB team below featured a number of VFL players and at least one Victorian representative. Can anyone identify those players and what year was this photo taken?



affect vision, hearing, physical mobility and cognitive processes.

Thus older drivers perform worse than other drivers on manoeuvres, vehicle handling and observing, due in part to a reduction in flexibility (mobility of neck and trunk). As people age, their ability to process information declines in terms of capacity and speed. Older drivers are therefore more at risk in novel situations.

The literature on older drivers also cites certain conditions, such as diabetes mellitus or depression and medication use, as impacting on driving abilities. Our review found no comparisons with teenage drivers in this regard (see: www.atsb.gov.au/road)

Nick, my local suburban hairdresser gave me a younger person's view. He is amazed at the number of older drivers who cannot manoeuvre their cars to park, probably don't have power steering and consequently have many accidents outside his shop.

Then there are the cars that appear to be driving themselves, until you come closer and realise the person driving can hardly see above the dashboard. All are good reasons to update to a vehicle with modern handling features.

White-haired and vivacious, Mary Richardson of the RACV is one of several presenters who run one-hour presentations called 'Years Ahead - Road Safety for Seniors', offered free to groups of senior Victorians. Along with nearly 80 other people, I recently attended an Older Driver Issues Forum organised by ARPA Over 50s Association South Eastern Branch at Mount Waverley, Melbourne. As well as Mary's presentation, the full afternoon programme included presentations from a member of the Victoria Police Road Safety Awareness Unit and Vision Australia.

During RACV's Years Ahead Programme presentation Mary Richardson noted: "We older drivers have more experience than younger drivers and are more courteous, law abiding and take fewer risks. However, many are driving older cars, which are not as safe as newer ones,

and we're not as physically fit as when we were young. Those over 75 years are less likely to survive a crash."

Questions from the audience during the Years Ahead presentation involved tailgating, lack of indicators, how to U-turn across a median strip (must give way to all traffic), blind spots and use of mirrors.

Common misconceptions and problems were covered, including the following tips:

- On joining a freeway, it takes less time to slow down than to speed up, so use the onramp to reach the speed of the freeway.

- . Move over to accommodate a car entering on the left when travelling on the freeway.

- . Any time you cross a line, you must be the one to give way.

- . Always check blind spots when parking, reversing and changing lanes. Check all mirrors and turn your head to check through the rear passenger window. Make eye contact if possible.

- Don't travel in other people's blind spot.

- On a freeway, don't slow down when the sign for your exit comes up. Maintain speed and slow down on the off ramp only.

- Be patient if one lane is blocked or ends and merging is required. Where there is no dividing line drivers should zip merge, where drivers take it in turns e.g. vehicle from left lane then one from right lane.

- Multi-lane roundabouts: to do a right hand turn, enter into the right hand lane and stay in the lane all the way around, changing indicator to 'left' on the exit before yours.

- A vehicle entering a roundabout must give way to all vehicles in the roundabout and trams.

- Aggression on the road: Pull over and let them pass if its safe to do so. . Don't be angry. Don't make eye

contact or become involved with an aggressive driver.

- If someone's tailgating you: travel with the flow of the traffic, keep in the left lane where possible, stay calm.

Robyn Seymour, speaking for RACV, says: "Our purpose is to keep older people safe on the road and driving safely as long as they can. In metropolitan areas older pedestrians are far more at risk than older drivers. RACV's policy is to keep people driving as long as they're safe while encouraging them to prepare for a time when they may not be able to drive."

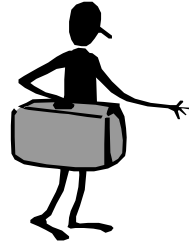
Years Ahead program presentations can be arranged for organised groups of older people by phoning 03 9790 2915 or contacting your local auto club outlet.

Most state road safety authorities seem to produce handbooks for older drivers such as 'The Victorian Older Drivers Handbook', by VicRoads, which includes articles on: assessing your driving skills, medical conditions, medicines, safe driving practices, good health and driving and 'Licensed to Drive' which includes your legal obligations, the importance of medical reviews and driver assessment.

When speaking to the Over 50s Older Drivers Issues Forum, Senior Constable Lindsay Hyde from the Victoria Police Road Safety Awareness and Information Unit stressed the impact of fatigue and drink driving on the road toll. The attitude changes (aided by booze buses and safety cameras) regarding seat belts and drink driving over the past few years have been very effective in lowering the road toll.

It is wise to take our own precautions, have assessments and be in control of the decision to stop driving, rather than waiting for family or medical intervention. It's best to give up night driving first, then the city and freeways. It's our responsibility!

Over 50s Association Lifetime Magazine November edition



TRAVELLING WITH SILVER (But Not Very Far)

I can't get away just yet, so, here is part two of the trip to Richmond - Epworth Hospital to be more precise.

I think it's a bit poor that while all you old fellas are waiting for your telegrams from the Queen, us younger guys are having to put up with these occasional medical problems.

Arrive at Epworth at 0830 hours, in bed by 0900 and at 10.00 on the table. Just about to leave this world and a tap on the shoulder, "Mr. Silver, I'm Dr. ???? and I'm Assisting Dr. ????". I said a very slurred "OK". I still don't know who he was but he must have known where I lived because he sent me a bill for \$1200.

By 1400 hours I'm back in bed after recovery and feeling great, no pain and hungry. Two pain killing injections, one each night and nothing since.

Out of bed the next day and the physio has got me. By day three I'm walking the block. I'm dressed in shorts with those awful white TED stockings on and the physio calls out "Hey chicken legs, not so fast." Cheeky bastard. He also said I could go home after day five.

I'm booked into Donvale Rehab for 7 days and on arrival, my room is near the gym and pool, I thought I'll go for a walk, forgetting the crutches. I turned back my bed and just got outside my room and the nurse walks out of the next room. She says, "Hey what do you think you're doing," in that "Jim Hunter" voice. "You're not allowed to walk barefoot."

Where are your crutches? Get them now. What's that bed turned down for? You're not going to bed, you've got physio in an hour." I said, "Good morning, How's Adolph today?" Fair dinkum, she was like a rottweiler with lipstick.

I got a bit of a grin and we finished very good friends.

Seven days of Gym in the morning and pool in the afternoon and I'm back to one crutch and lose that by the end of October. There are not many places you go to where you can't find something wrong but I couldn't fault these two hospitals. They are really good. They even provided a high chair for John Berry when visiting.

I even had a visit from Ernie Goodall, it was 40 years since I last saw him and he hasn't changed all that much.

At the time of writing I'm still sitting on a raised chair receiving guests and messages of goodwill, I haven't had any yet, although a member of my family who I haven't seen for 8 years rang and bit me for 3 grand.

God, I need a holiday before Christmas, even if it's interstate.

Happy Travelling Silver

PS. If you lend someone \$100 and never see that person again, it was probably worth it.

How to survive the HEALTH SYSTEM

IN A NUTSHELL

- Every year, hospital and medical care causes thousands of deaths and hundreds of thousands of lesser 'adverse events'.
- By taking a more active role in your health care you can dramatically reduce the chances of things going wrong.-
- There are plenty of free resources that can help
- -see Where to find out more, below right.

There's even a word for it *iatrogenic* illness. It means doctor induced disease.

Hospitals can be dangerous places. Just how dangerous was shown by a big 1995 study. Based on 1992 data, it found over 16% of people going into Australian hospitals suffered injury or death not

because of their disease but as a result of their treatment. One in five of those 'adverse events' caused serious disability or death. Half were preventable.

Based on their results, the researchers estimated that across the nation in 1992 there had been up to 14,000 preventable deaths because people's treatment had gone wrong. New safety programs are being instituted but many experts doubt these have yet had much practical effect.

That's just in hospitals. Nobody has a clear idea of how many deaths and injuries occur in other parts of the health system - including people having trouble with over-the-counter and prescription medicines in their own homes.

But there are ways you can help yourself. By taking an active part in your healthcare, making sure you know what's going on and learning to use medicines wisely, you can dramatically improve your chances of

DARWIN AWARDS

Named in honor of Charles Darwin, the father of evolution. The Darwin Awards commemorate those who improve our gene pool by removing themselves from it.

Tree Hard, Head Empty 2003 Darwin Award Nominee Confirmed True by Darwin

(17 February 2003, New York) A 25-year-old man, long accustomed to annoying neighbors by snowmobiling at high speeds through sleeping streets, finally received his comeuppance -- and in the process, a Darwinian nomination -- when he drove headfirst into a tree.

It is not only his reckless speeding through a night time residential area that makes him eligible, nor is it merely because he was driving an unregistered, uninsured snowmobile without a helmet while drunk. Although

these spectacularly stupid ideas were ultimately responsible for his demise, there is yet another relevant aspect to report.

Brian "**The Brain**" Sabinsky was a fireman, a member of the same company dispatched to peel him off the tree, the same organization that preaches snowmobile safety; responds to other gruesome, drunken, helmet-free snowmobile "accidents" every year; and the very same company that posts an illuminated "helmet safety" notice 700 feet from his own home.

Clearly, while others have been as foolish as Brian in their choice of recreational activities, few have been so uniquely aware of the possible repercussions prior to making that choice!

Confirmed Darwinian

(1911, France) I have a picture of someone who may be my relative, called Franz Reichelt. He is dressed in what looks like a huge black overcoat, and the caption reads, "Monsieur Franz Reichelt with his early parachute -- an outstanding example of the way in which early aviators were as spectacular in their failures as in their successes.

"Reichelt was an Austrian tailor who sought to combine his interests by creating a garment to serve as both an overcoat and a parachute. In 1911, he decided to test his invention. Having told the authorities that he wanted to make a 'dummy' drop, at the last minute he strapped himself in, and with sublime confidence stepped from a platform off the Eiffel Tower, and fell to his death."



Eating breakfast fights the fat

In a recent study, researchers in the US found that people who'd regularly skipped breakfast had four and half times the chance of being obese as those who regularly ate breakfast. They also found that people who ate out frequently for either breakfast or dinner had twice as much chance of being obese as those who did so less frequently.

A second study, conducted by the University of Sydney in conjunction with Kellogg's, has also linked obesity to children who skip breakfast. It found that children who ate breakfast regularly were generally leaner than those who didn't. A number of other studies have shown that eating breakfast may help children concentrate better.

People who eat breakfast also have more nutritious diets as a whole, eating less fat and more fibre and many vitamins and minerals. All in all, you really are better off with more than just a cup of coffee.

ACTION'S CHARACTER COLUMN

Robbo the Railway Fireman

Ask any old Firey, what was the dirtiest job they ever had! Was it a factory or a house, or was it a grass fire? No never, who can remember the dreaded words of the S.O. as you came on duty "**You've Got the Heaters**".

Now for those who did not know, or old enough to have forgotten, the whole of the Station revolved around the heaters, hot water for the quarters, showers, dishes, meals and particularly for thee staff and families living in quarters so you would never want to be the poor unfortunate that allowed them to go out.

At the old No. 6. Station, Coburg, the heater room was at the back and the coke, no not the drinks truck, would arrive usually in the afternoon just after you spent all day cleaning the Station and got changed to go home, the driver who always looked like "**Darkie**" from the Minstrel Show always arrived a day early, as I suspect that he wanted us to look the same. Now the method of unloading the truck was very typical of the Brigades advanced thinking during this era, "We have been unloading like this since 1895 and we will continue this bloody way, any other questions lad? Now put on your blue coat and flat cap and get moving."

This clothing provided no protection at all to either yourself or the Station, as the coke bags were made of 5mm square mesh and the coke broke and turned to ash. So you could imagine why we all looked like Nat King Cole and the Station was filthy after you emptied the coke into the hopper. Heaters, this was a most important, but hated job and in case they had gone out during the night, there were many a rush at 6AM to the heater room.

How there were not Stations blown apart as half a tin of "Wundawax" floor polish was thrown into the heater to fire it up quickly as this was virtually the same as petrol. I know our floors were kept highly polished,

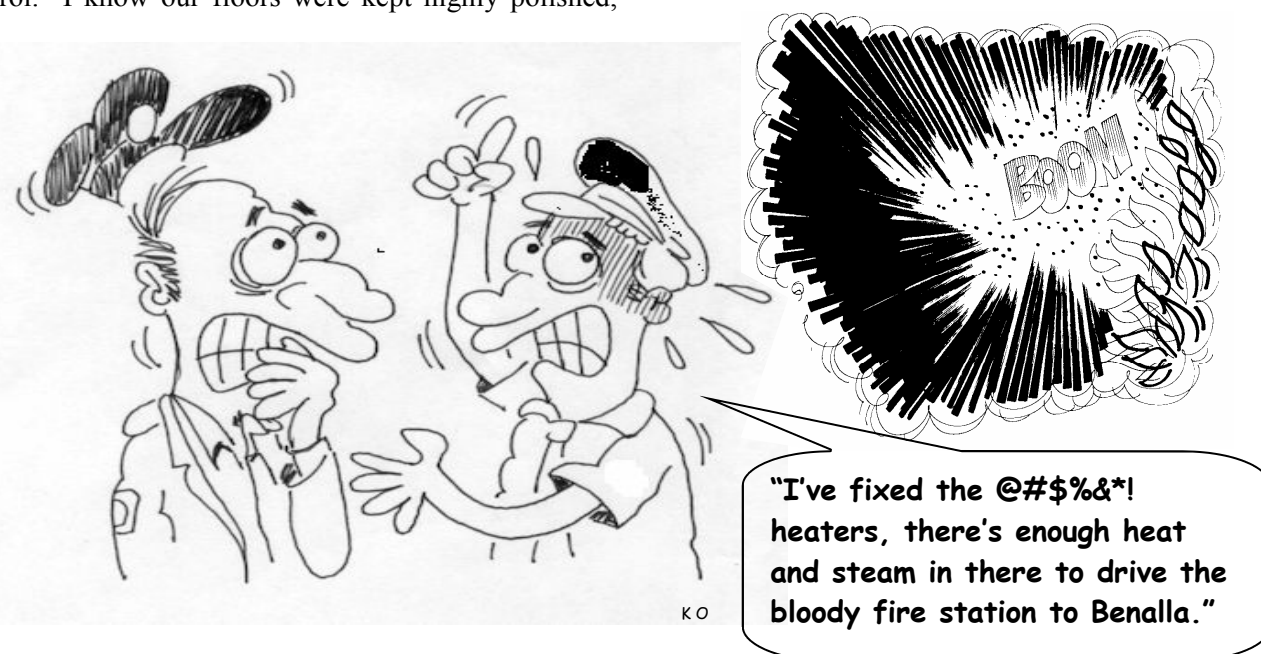
but the store staff must have scratched their heads at the volume of polish used.

Sunday Afternoon Shift - "Robbo" you've got the heaters, "But I had them yesterday," said he, can't be helped said the S.O. you've got them today too and he went upstairs. Now normally you had to empty, fill and stoke the heaters three to four times per shift. "I will fix them," said Robbo and I'm doing them only once today and that's it, he said and stormed into the heater room. Not known to many was that Robbo had been a Vic. Rail Fireman on steam trains before entering the Brigade and he was determined to use this experience to the full. With everyone quietly having a cuppa, all we could hear from the heater room was the constant shovel, shovel, scrape, scrape from behind the door. Eventually after about thirty minutes Robbo appeared from within, with his usual dour look. I've fixed the @#\$%&*! heaters, there is enough heat and steam in there, if this Station was on wheels we'd end up in Benalla.

Fifteen minutes later, there started this rumbling and whistling noise from the heater room and it quickly got to the frightening stage, with nobody game enough to open the door, very quickly there was a mighty explosion and all the pipes in the building started to hiss and rattle, everyone started to run, Dick Smith and Frank Hiho came running down the stairs from their quarters above with their kids yelling, wondering what the hell had happened as water came running down the walls from above, Fireman Robbo had blown the hot water pipes out of the back of the heater box and the pressure had blown all the seals and pipes in Dick's flat above.

He said he was only stoking it once and he did, but we were boiling bloody hot water for days.

ACTION JACKSON



getting the best out of your healthcare and avoiding the worst.

So CHOICE has put together a list of basic tips, as well as some reliable - and free - internet resources to help you steer a safer course through your medical care.

CONSUMER TIPS

1 Take an active part in your healthcare. Learn about your condition. Speak up if a doctor, pharmacist or nurse says something you don't understand. And keep asking until you do understand. Surgeons must tell you about the risks involved in an operation as well as the usual success rates.

Keep a list of all the medicines you take. That includes the non-prescription medicines you buy in pharmacies or supermarkets as well as vitamins and so-called 'natural' remedies. Some prescription drugs and complementary medicines interact with others, preventing some drugs from working and boosting the side effects of others. Remember that your new doctor may not have access to your old records and may have to rely on you for the information.

Tell your doctor about all ongoing conditions. When you're dealing with a new doctor, make sure he or she knows about the illnesses you've had in the past, particularly those that are ongoing. Sometimes these need more monitoring and possibly more treatment. Or they may impact on the treatment you'll receive for something else.

Take your pills as prescribed. No medicine will work if you don't take it, or miss too many doses. Unless your doctor or pharmacist tells you otherwise, finish the whole course of treatment. Finishing the pills is particularly important for antibiotics - your bug can become resistant to the drug and rebound nastily if you don't finish the course.

Be aware of generic drug names. Many drugs have several manufacturers, each with their own brand name. This can be dangerously confusing. It's not unknown for someone to get a different brand of a drug they're already on and take both, doubling the dose. But the generic (scientific) name is always the same. You'll find it in smaller print beneath the brand name on the packet. So, for example, Coversyl is really perindopril, Prozac is fluoxetine, Valium is diazepam, Norvasc is amlodipine, Nurofen is ibuprofen, Imodium is loperamide. A pronunciation tip: the stress is usually on the second syllable (flu-0x-a-teen).

Think about risks as well as benefits. Every treatment decision should be based on full knowledge not only of the likely benefits, but of what might go wrong. Ultimately it's your decision, not just your doctor's. X-rays and CT scans are indispensable diagnostic tools and have saved millions of lives. But unnecessary or too frequent use of them can expose you to undesirably high levels of radiation. General anaesthetic carries risks, too: a small number of people die each year from the anaesthetic alone.

All medicines have potential side effects. Make sure you know what side effects to watch out for. Read the information leaflet in the packet. For instance, aspirin is a comparatively safe drug but a number of people die each year from the gastric bleeds and ulcers it can occasionally cause. Few drugs work for everybody and even if one doesn't work for you, you may still get its side effects!

When you leave hospital, ask your doctor or nurse to explain the treatment plan you'll use at home. Going home from hospital is often not the end of your treatment. Research shows that when people are discharged, doctors think patients understand more than they really do about their continuing treatment and follow-up.

Make sure you get the results of any tests or procedures. Ask the doctor or nurse how you'll be given the results - on the phone, in person or in the mail. For results with potentially serious consequences - such as tests for cancer, Hiv, hepatitis c or heart disease - it's important to get these face-to-face, where you can ask questions and get a bit of support if it's an answer you'd rather not have.

Where to find out more.

The internet is a great tool for health information but not all of it is reliable. But some dependable, independent websites aimed at consumers have done the weeding for you.

Perhaps the best of these is the Commonwealth Government's Healthinsite (www.healthinsite.gov.au). It provides a staggering array of information - both its own and links to the best of other people's sites. It's mostly Australian info, so it relates well to our health system.

There's also the Victorian government-sponsored Better Health Channel (www.betterhealth.vic.gov.au). It, too, is a comprehensive and credible source of health information on how to understand your condition and get the best out of the health system.

Many good health sites are aimed mainly at doctors, but consumers can get a lot out of some of them too. The Cochrane Collaboration sifts the scientific evidence surrounding treatments for all sorts of conditions and publishes the results. It runs a free site aimed at consumers at: www.cochraneconsumer.com.

And the prestigious Mayo Clinic in the United States has a comprehensive and consumer-friendly information site on medicines and disease management: www.mayoclinic.com. The site has independent editorial content but does carry advertising.

If you go to www.choiceextra.com.au and click on 'Surviving the health system' in the index, you'll find links to all these websites.

Source: Choice Magazine, October 2003 edition

DO YOU REMEMBER? OLDEST FIRE BRIGADE?

Apart from William Buckley, no Europeans are known to have visited the shores of Corio Bay until 1824 when Hume and Hovell explored the area and reported favourably on the fertility of the area.

In 1835 John Batman formed the Port Phillip Association to search for appropriate land on which to settle, he explored Corio Bay and the You Yangs.

In 1836 the first wave of settlers arrived and Geelong was proclaimed a township in 1838.

Later firefighting equipment was provided by the Cornwall Insurance Company and the only appliance was a small manual engine of very antique type about five feet long, drawn by hand and mounted on four wooden wheels. It was described as an almost useless machine, its pumping gear being so primitive and the supply of water available being lamentably small.

In February 1854 the citizens of Geelong had become dissatisfied with the Fire Fighting arrangements and a Public Meeting was held and the Geelong Fire Brigade was formed.

Sixty four members were enrolled. the majority being merchants or traders of the town.

The motto "*Ready and Willing*" was adopted.

Each member was to bear the cost of his uniform which consisted of a red serge shirt with pleated cuffs, lettered in black across the chest "*G.V.F.B.*" No. --, a leather belt, fireman's axe and trousers of navy blue pilot cloth, strapped with leather down the inside leg seam, and round the bottoms. The helmet was locally manufactured, resembling a sou'wester, made with a hard crown and stiff brim of stout black painted canvas and saturated with a resinous substance.

A uniform that certainly did not lack in brilliance, leaving however the efficiency to be tested in due time.

The composition of the helmets proved at the first fire, so flammable that they had to be discarded for more suitable headgear and the leather strappings so buckled with the heat as to necessitate removal.

In February 2004 will be the anniversary of one hundred and fifty years of continuous service of the Geelong Fire Brigade.

It is proposed that many events and activities will take place to celebrate this great milestone.

For further information please contact Danny O'TOOLE at Geelong City Fire Station on (03) 5221 2755

Peter Lang

Memoir of a Chief

Lt-Colonel T. S. Marshall retired 1926 after 32 years as the Chief Fire Officer of the Victorian Country Fire Service and wrote his memoir which was published in 1930. Below is a reading taken from that publication.

Glancing back to 1894, when I was appointed Chief Officer, and remembering, as I do, the great work that has been accomplished by the thousands of men who so loyally and unselfishly chummed and

Brigades and Dates Established Up To 1929			
1854	Geelong (Feb'y.), Sandhurst No. 1 (March), Creswick	1893	Kyabram, Seymour, Bright, Wedderburn
1856	Ballarat	1894	Dandenong, Carisbrook
1857	Ararat	1896	Wycheproof
1859	Ballarat City, Newtown and Chilwell.	1898	Mansfield
1861	Daylesford, Inglewood, Talbot, Maryborough	1900	Cumperdown
1863	Warrnambool	1901	Rupanyup, Boort, Ballan, Minyip
1864	Clunes	1902	Nathalia, Yea, Heathcote
1867	Sebastopol, Castlemaine, Smythesdale	1902	Terang, Cobram
1872	Echuca, Buninyong	1904	Mildura
1873	Stawell, Beechworth, Wangaratta, Chiltern, Kilmore	1905	Port Fairy, Lilydale, Sunbury
1873	Eaglehawk, Long Gully, Kangaroo Flat, Maldon	1907	Leongatha, Yarram
1874	Horsham, Beaufort, Dunolly	1909	Pyramid Hill
1878	St. Arnaud	1910	Sea Lake, Birchip, Nagambie, Rainbow, Tallangatta, Healesville
1879	Bairnsdale	1911	Elmore, Alexandra, St. James, Belmont, Queenscliff, Wonthaggi, Bacchus Marsh
1880	Murtoa, Hamilton.	1912	Kingston
1882	Sale, Benalla, Rutherglen, Taradale	1913	Jeparit, Beulah, Mortlake
1884	Geelong West, Kerang, Linton, Kyneton, Rushworth	1914	Wendouree, Trentham, Woolmelang
1884	Golden Square, Numurkah	1915	Maffra, Warrabee, Morwell, Warburton
1885	Avoca, Charlton, Donald	1916	Yackandandah
1886	Swan Hill	1917	Mornington
1887	Colac, Rochester, Korong Vale, Bowenvale	1918	North Geelong
1888	Walhalla, Nhill, Shepparton, Murchison, Yarrowonga, Traralgon	1920	Orbost, Merbein, Watchem
1889	Casterton, Tungamah, Dimboola, Korumburra, Frankston	1922	Cohuna
1890	Natimuk, Mooroopna, Warracknabeal, Allendale	1923	Carrum, Chelsea, Aspendale
1891	Tatura, Wedonga, Tarnagulla	1924	Redcliffs, Kaniva
1892	Koroit, Warragul	1925	Edithvale
		1926	Berwick
		1927	Nyah West, Coleraine, Trafalgar
		1928	Corryong, Spring Vale, Noble Park
		1929	Lakes Entrance

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worked with me from the start to the finish, it will doubtless be conceded that it was during this long, lone watch over 25 years that the foundation was laid, and the present sound position of the Victorian country fire service was assured. The great humanitarian and voluntary work achieved will stand for all time as a tribute to the patriotism and the unselfish devotion of our country firemen. It is my fervent desire that the good work may be carried on by the present and future generations of firemen in the same spirit as was evinced in the days of yore by "The Boys of the Old Brigades." In this compilation the *ego* appears rather prominently, but as more than one-third of my life has been devoted to the country fire service as part and parcel of it, there may be some justification for the frequent recurring "I." My resignation took effect on the 1st October, 1926, just 32 years to the tick and the day of my appointment. On my retirement

I received many expressions of esteem by letters and presentations from brigades all over the State, the Board and members of the staff participating in the same kindly way.

Now my boys, in losing you as fellow workers, I, quoting from a recent reading, hope to keep you as friends, and as such I greet you and wish you all "Good Luck," and bid you God Speed. The work achieved by you is worthy of being writ in letters of gold, but, failing that, this memoir has been finished with the golden fountain pen presented to me by the members of the Country Fire Brigades Board on my last day in the service.

The following ex fires of the C.F.A. have gone on to a higher duty.

Senior Firefighter Tom (Mate) SMITH B.E.M.

Returned service man from 1939/45 war
Joined staff at Geelong City Fire Station at the introduction of the 40 hour week in 1950, Retired some time ago and lived at Orbost.

Was a former State Committee Member of the U.F.U.

Senior Firefighter Len BURGESS

Returned service man from 1939/45 war
Joined Staff at Geelong City Fire Station at the introduction of the 40 hour week in 1950.

Has been retired for some time and was living in Japan where he had established business interests.

GEELONG REUNION

**Monday 1st
December, 2003
11.30 onwards
Shell Club**



**Bacchus Marsh Rd.
Corio**

Drinks at bar prices

**Contact: Bill Icke 5244 1822
John Wallace 5278 4734**

Promotional Branchpipe?

"The harder you suck the higher you get."

The things you find in hose cabinets. This branch photographed below, converted to a "Bong," was found stashed away in a hose cabinet some years ago in the Geelong area.

