

"WATER OFF"

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



November 2024 Vol 29 No 4
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Annual General Meeting
NOTE
Burnley Complex
Burnley
Wed 20th Nov 2024
at 10:30am

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Melbourne City Square Fountain Rescue 1981—Garry Cronin & John Rodda.

“ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING”

**Burnley Complex, Burnley
Wed 20th Nov, 2024 at 10:30am.**

**Volunteers Required
The Fire Services Museum needs past
fire service members to assist on an
occasional basis at the Museum**

**Please contact
Bryan Robertson
0418 129 252**

All Correspondence to:
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RFAV Secretary
PO Box 93
Numurkah 3636
Phone 0419 778 161
or email at rfavic1@gmail.com

Non financial Members

Members be advised if your newsletter has an expiry date of 2/1/2020 that means you have not paid your subs since 2019 therefore if no remuneration is received by the 2/1/22 your name will be automatically removed from the mailing list. If, for whatever reason any member is unable to meet this request please do not hesitate to call the secretary, (confidentiality is assured)

OFFICE BEARERS

President: Alex Shepherd
Vice President: Sam Capes
Sec./Treasurer: Phil Cleary

General Committee:

Col Harris
Len Manning
Mike McCumisky
Ian Geddes
Kevin Hede

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

Valē

**Shane Morgan, Victor Bizzina, Geoff Cuzac,
Des Pelcamo, Simon Gray, Brian Garnett,
Colin McNamara, Michel Strongman.**

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

Sick List * In Care Facility

**Stan Cameron,
Jack Etherington,
*Gary Spicer,
John Williams,
Bob Chiron,
John Danby,
Dick Cleary.**

Diary Dates

**“ANNUAL GENERAL
MEETING”
Burnley Complex, Burnley
Wed 20th Nov 2024 at
10:30am.**

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

PRESIDENT'S REPORT



It's great to see the sun back again for another year. Those who have gardens, the plants are enjoying new growth and making our lives a little brighter. That's what's good about this time of year, things seem less troubling somehow. I look back at the past months and wonder where it's all gone. Anyway, enough of reflection the sun is out and everything is great again. I hope our members, family and friends have so far been OK and looking forward to Christmas and the New Year.

There has been a lot of talk about where our Association is placed in our plans for the future and where our members would like it to go. Do we have less meetings or do we stick to the same agenda and have more guest speakers from our Fire Rescue Victoria. Remember it's your Association and it's your decision as to where we go, so come along to the next meeting and have a say.

All the best for now I hope all's well with you and your loved ones and have a happy Christmas in 2024.

Alex Shepherd
(President)

SECRETARY/TREASURER'S REPORT



Hi all,

Well it's this time of the year. The AGM in November and Christmas in December.

Before I go on about the next meeting I would like to wish all of our members and families a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year. Now, our next meeting on November we will vote to bring the Constitution up to date, which includes change of committee members, Secretary and President,

This has to be done before we can vote on the future of the RFAV and its continuation.

The membership at the moment is as follows:

Financial members 151

Courtesy Members 173

Total Membership = 324

When I took over 5 years ago it was 500 but there has been a lot of members have passed away and a lot of members drift away.

So it's very important for all members to come along to this meeting. We need your support.

Phil Cleary
(Secretary/Treasurer)

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

What's next on the Travel Calendar? - Editorial

I recently read an article about what's installed for the next 20 years. Well, at 73 and a bit, I might not be here in 20 years, however, I intend to make the most of what's left by keeping fit and to keep travelling! Let's think about those future years and what one could achieve before the inevitable fall, hospital stay, and loss of hearing heart attack or getting the dreaded "C". There will be friends passing away along the way before our worried eyes. Memories, lots of them which we hope to always remember before one's brain clouds over and fades away with dementia or some other horrible affliction.

On a positive note, I intend to S.K.I. down the slopes of Mt Buller one more time, travel to France, Italy, Spain, Portugal, England, Scotland and Ireland and lots more in Aussie before it all ends. Hopefully, a shot at paragliding in the highlands of Victoria, Bright in fact, is also on the agenda.

Travelling, whether it's in Australia or overseas, is an experience that many of us get to do. We may meet new people in a bar in Holland, or have Tapas in San Sebastian, a taste of Port in Porto and maybe a beer on Broadway. Sadly there are others who don't travel. It could be that they are home bodies and just like to stay at home reading books and lying on the Facebook couch all day. It could also be that they don't have the money to travel! It could also be that ill health prevents them from travelling – sad, and it may not be their fault!

I look at the travel adventures many of our retired fellow members do each year when they head up north to keep warm. We have the likes of Bob & Beryl Burrows who have been travelling for many, many years and are still doing it. I recall seeing photos of Glenn and Linda Marks, Col Matheson, Russell Hawthorn, and many others catching up with fellow MFB/FRV retired members on the way, at a stopping point, a camping ground or caravan park. It could even be at an out-of-the-way pub, somewhere in the never, never. I remember meeting Frank & Heather Stockton on a Saturday morning on a deserted Darwin Street about 20 years ago!

As the editor of "Water Off," I come across many members' names who have passed away. Some I knew and remember and sadly, others I do not remember or never met. This year, my wife and I travelled to Queensland's Gold Coast (CSi Club) and caught up with Ian Fagernes and many other work colleagues from the past. There was a two week trip to Japan in September, a dog-sitting holiday (for friends) in Manly (best part of Sydney) and a holiday with extended family on the Mornington Peninsula. Next year is already planned, with Qld Gold Coast again and Thailand in July.

I'm a member of a French car club, (I have a little yellow Pug). We have many outings in country Victoria, where there's plenty to see and do. Many new places that have been there for over 170 years that I'd never been to before. There are the painted silo tours which are situated in many country towns. There are vineyards a'plenty and tasty restaurants and pubs along the way. Many businesses went kaput during the pandemic. We were in the most locked down state in the world. Our wine to China was halted, so wine makers (vineyards) had to sell wine at wholesale prices, just to keep afloat. Many vineyard owners had to sell – they couldn't afford to keep going. The average Joe and his family is doing it tough these days, so let's travel and support these towns.

With many of us in the sunset of our lives, what matters most? Family, friends, old colleagues, neighbours. Keeping healthy and fit as best as we can. Having a few interests to keep us happy and sane. A few glasses of wine, the doctor said was fine. It's now time for bed, I'll say good night and hopefully wake up tomorrow and just be happy I'm still alive. I'll do a bit more travelling in my little yellow Pug. I might see some of you at an outback pub, having a beer & maybe some grub! Keep travelling and see the sights. Remember, life is short!

So, we need to keep planning for the rest of the time we have on planet Earth. We need to keep engaging with people and keeping our bodies active, eating and sleeping well, where possible. Have **YOU** planned for the next 20 years if you are around the age of 70+ years? Keep travelling and have a few beers! - **Col Harris – Editor**

A quote to think about:

"The world is a book and those that do not travel, have only read one page." (St. Augustin).

The Life of Ian Hugh Hookey

Ian Hugh Hookey was born on January 20 in 1938. Storm clouds were gathering in Europe. Hitler marched into Austria that year. Kristallnacht took place. The Nazis destroyed Jewish shops, homes and synagogues on two successive nights.

Ian almost didn't make it into this world. He was the first baby of Hugh and Irma Hookey. He was in a breech position as labour started. His legs extended up around his body. Nowadays, he would have been born by Caesarean Section. However, the labour proceeded in the small private hospital around beachside Melbourne. The situation soon became dire and my mother and brother owed their lives to the fact that an additional doctor fortuitously turned up at the critical time to administer an anaesthetic as Ian was forcibly removed. Ian had breathing difficulties after the birth and our mother was physically traumatised by the birth. She was advised not to have another baby for a few years.

Not surprisingly, Ian was a sickly baby who could not tolerate cow's milk. His projectile vomiting caused the new parents much anxiety.

However, Ian finally began to thrive. Around two years old, Ian developed Scarlet Fever. At that time Scarlet Fever was regarded as infectious. Ian was admitted to Fairfield Hospital where he remained for three months. The wisdom of the day said that children became distressed when their parents visited and left. Therefore, it was inadvisable for his parents to visit him. Every day our mother rang the hospital to inquire about him until, after three months, she was told she could retrieve Ian. This separation understandably affected his behaviour for some time.

By now war had broken out. Ian remembered planes overhead. Our father was in the Police Special Branch and often absent investigating Communists and submarine sightings and escorting POW's.

It was a time of rationing. Fortunately, our mother trained as a tailor at Canns, a Flinders Lane retailer in women's clothing. She often produced clothing for her children on her treadle machine.

Once the tide of the war was turning, Irma and Hugh extended their family with the birth of Laurence Howard – a 6-year gap.

Ian enjoyed the usual interactions with family. His maternal grandparents, Bass and Florence Humffray lived at Elsternwick. Their son, Howard, was a young uncle in his life. Later, they built a holiday home at Sorrento. Great Aunt Jane McIntyre, fondly called Auntie, was a big part of his life when she visited on her days off as matron of the Kew Asylum. She was somewhat eccentric and quirky but very fond of Ian and a great admirer of his cheeky nature. Auntie was also a generous benefactor- bestowing gifts of two pounds ten shillings on birthdays and one pound at Christmas.

The Hookey side presented endless interest for a young boy as Fred and Florence Hookey lived at Taradale in Northern Victoria. Trapping rabbits, shooting foxes - it was like living a Boys Own adventure story. Uncle Bert presided over the hunting on the family's bush block. He was always somewhat wary of Ian and possibly identified him as a reckless youth. When Uncle Bert had endured enough of family visits, he would famously remark - "It looks like rain." This was a cue to vacate.

Again, in the wisdom of the day, Ian who was a natural left hander, was forced to write with his right hand. School was not such a happy experience for Ian. However, he enjoyed his neighbourhood friends - the de Montignis, the Browns, the Salmons and Norman Kay.

Ian made an early exit from school. He studied some business subjects at Bradshaw's Business College where he learnt to type.

By now, Janice Andrea was added to the family in 1951 – an 8 year gap.

Ian tried out for the Police Force in Victoria and the Northern Territory – missing out on their height requirement. He enjoyed an adventurous trip to the Northern Territory in the hope of pursuing a career there when the roads were rough and it was like a frontier country.

Eventually, Ian became a Fireman. I am sure he loved commanding the road when driving the fire appliances. The Warrandyte Hotel was a social hub in the sleepy hamlet of Warrandyte. It was there in the mid 1960's that he met a pretty young widow with four children - Ann Dealy.

Ian's life was about to change dramatically from bachelor to husband and instant father. Ian and Ann had a whirlwind romance amidst children and domestic life.

Bill remembers Ann asking him how he would feel if she married Ian. He said he was ok with it. Nobody pretends this was an easy adjustment for Ian, Ann or the children, however, they all needed to get on with life.

With his primary employment as a fireman, secondary job on the poultry farm and numerous other part-time jobs Ian and Ann managed to stay afloat.

Christmas night at their home in Warrandyte was often a boisterous time of relatives, kids and free flowing food and drink.

Ian's passion for cars continued through life. He liked American cars particularly V8's. His fleet over the years included a purple Monaro, a Studebaker and an F100. He meticulously maintained and serviced these cars.

After 28 years of service, Ian took a redundancy from the Fire Brigade. Their family was now self-sufficient. Ian and Ann celebrated this new found freedom by spending a year taking the big lap around Australia in their purpose-fitted caravan. Ian turned to bus driving for Ventura Bus Line to replenish diminishing funds in retirement. It was an easy change after driving fire engines.

Ian's later years were ravaged by Parkinson's. Ann's health, too, was in decline. She passed away in 2019. Janice (relation) recalls that as the only time she had known Ian to cry, as he broke the news to her over the phone.

Ian eventually he needed more care and moved to Estia Health in Wattle Glen. The family are grateful for the kind care he received there until his death on the 7th July, 2024.



We say goodbye to our esteemed colleague Ian Hookey in the old MFB Dennis 8 Pump.

MFB Boat Crew 1938



Names of the crew from right to left

Trainee Coxswain - John Paterson, born 26 July 1922

Stroke - Ray Godfredson, his son Jeff became the MFB Chief Fire Officer in about 1987

Ted Lindsay - very keen about the RAAF during WW2, he became a wireless Air Gunner in the RAF, and died over the Mediterranean whilst on a bombing mission.

Wally Lloyd - Wally married Olive Musgrove, the youngest sister of John Paterson's mother, Alice Paterson. Jimmy Sinclair in the bow.

Information from Ian Dewhurst

MFB boat crew before World War 2 started. The school boy who is steering the boat was a good friend of mine, John Paterson who was born at Eastern Hill in 1922, he died a couple of years ago about a month before he turned one hundred. His Dad was Lou Paterson who became Deputy Chief back in that era, Lou was also Jack Paterson's uncle.

Appliance named to honour SO Bob Hetherington AFSM

FRV has proudly named an appliance in honour of one of our extraordinary retired firefighters.

Pumper Tanker 6 at FS06 Pascoe Vale will now be known as the Robert 'Bob' Hetherington AFSM appliance, with an inscription of his rank and years of service displayed on the door.

Bob joined MFB in 1985 and retired from FRV in July 2023 after 38 years' service during which his knowledge and passion resulted in an incredible legacy that improved safety for his fellow firefighters and the Victorian community.

Bob received an AFSM in 2005 for distinguished service, leadership and dedication, particularly his contribution to public fire safety for major events and the night club industry. He achieved this through his ability to establish strong relationships between the former MFB, Melbourne City Council, Victoria Police, the night club industry and event organisers. While working in Building Inspection and Compliance, Bob also championed new legislation that made tampering with installed fire alarms an offence.

A surprise ceremony was held at FS06 on Friday 20 September with speeches from Commissioner Gavin Freeman AFSM and Acting Commander Colin Rose. Former colleagues from Bob's time as a Fire Safety Inspector and Station Officer joined with his family to celebrate the occasion and honour his contributions to the fire service and our community.



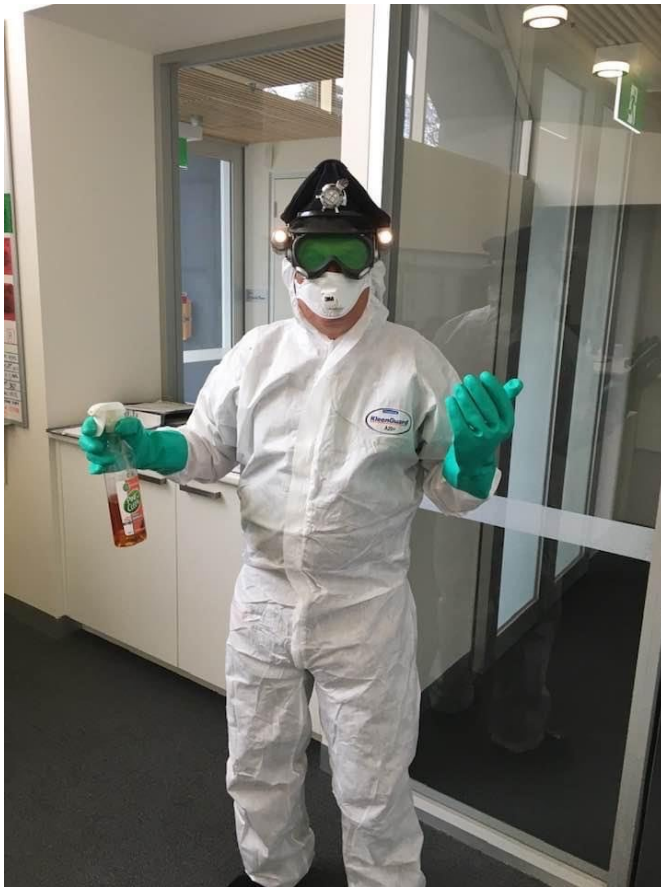
The 11th of the 11th

I just read a book about an Aussie soldier in France - WW1.
 These heroes did it tough, they were Aussies & many were rough!
 They finally came home, yet many of their mates did not
 Their families & friends came to meet them at a portside dock
 They did their country proud
 The reception they received was cheerful and loud
 On the 11th of the 11th, just think for a moment
 Of these heroes, their time in Gallipoli or the Somme
 The mud, death, the cruel end to a man's life
 The noise, the blood, the pain of it all
 Today and now, what was it all for?
 (FREEDOM, DEMOCRACY and a fair GO!)

“FUNNY MAN”

R.I.P. Shane (Chad) Morgan

He was quietly funny with a smirk on his face
He had a great sense of humour
He was a clever firefighter
He was thoughtful
He had charm and wit
He was a prankster and a bit of a clown
Always smiling, never a frown
He would always help a mate
He loved growing food and bottling good wine
The wine label was called “Chadfolds”
It was a “Strange Hermitage”
He loved a good joke
Chad, my friend, you were such a lovely bloke!



Chad on Station Cleaning Duties at FS24 during Covid19.



Chad's bottle of Strange Hermitage by Chadfolds.

Retired Senior Firefighter – Doug Overton

(In his own words)

I took the resignation option on 4th May, 1989 after 23.5 years' service. I was a brigade driver and a breather apparatus operator. I was also the car driver for the late DCFO Tom Williamson at No.1 Station on "A" platoon. Other times, I drove Neville Van Every and Laurie Lavelle. After serving mostly in Southern District, my last station was at Kew Fire Station, in Eastern District..

I felt very proud on the 4th of September 1965 to be (after acceptance by DCFO Frank Tueno and the brigade doctor) presented with my brass helmet and fire tunic with the shiny brass buttons etc. My registered number was 2181. I didn't realise at that point, that soon they would be dirty and damaged by fire, smoke, falling debris etc.

Before joining the brigade, I knew that the fire brigade put out fires, but I did not know that they also attend most emergency situations eg: car accidents. After 12 months (basic recruit training) at Eastern Hill – No.1 Stn, I attended fires in factories, timber yards, bond stores, warehouses, cinemas, wool stores, private residences etc. They also perform rescues from tunnels and drains (MMBW). I also attended many motor car and motorbike accidents, having to extract many injured and sometimes deceased adults, children and babies. There were also some animal rescues.

The largest loss of life I remember was 30 men (overcome by smoke) at the "William Booth Memorial Home" in Lt. Lonsdale Street, Melbourne. 140 men were evacuated. This was on Saturday, 13th August 1966. It was Australia's worst loss of life in a building fire.

Even though as a firefighter you end up smelly, wet, dirty, tired and sometimes injured. In my opinion, there is no better job that I enjoyed doing. I really enjoyed my time in the fire brigade and the companionship we had and have, still enjoy with the R.F.A. and the R.M.D.

DOUG OVERTON Reg: 2181 – thanks, Doug, Ed!

Peer support is available to Retired Firefighters and Associated Members

FRV

Employee Assistance Coordinator

Irina Tchernitskaia – PH: 0407 665 174

Email:- irina.tchernitskaia@frv.vic.gov.au

Peer Coordinators

Chloe Henderson PH: 0417 538 289

Scott Darcy PH: 0429 771 849

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Retirees

John Howe PH: 9729 0984—MO: 0417 112 993

Tony Branchflower Retired SSO MO: 0400 695 622

Peer Coordinator Trent Egan

PH: 0448 071 299

Email:- Careerpeercoordinator@frv.vic.gov.au

NOTICE

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

GOULBURN MURRAY

Credit Union

BSB 803 078 - Account No 37460

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

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