

"WATER OFF"

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



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TRADITIONS LIVING ON

The MFB family traditions continued with The Good Friday Appeal at St Kilda Junction, Carols by Candlelight at the Sydney Myer Music Bowl, Family Cricket Days to Christmas Day at the Royal Children's Hospital. Of course some traditions fade as we get older and new ones begin. However, it was great to see on Christmas Day the MFB had photos on their Facebook page of one of those ongoing Traditions – taking Santa to the Royal Children's Hospital. This tradition just entered into its 87th Year. Job well done to all !

Mike McCumisky was just one of many who are keeping this honoured tradition going.



Unfortunately there were no retired firefighters attending on the day, only 3 support staff Brenda (admin), Victor (car park) and Mike.

Some of the brass band members have over 30-35 years but non MFB, with Santa, the other band group and several clowns being current operational members.

The OYC organisers are starting to plan for the 90th year in just three years and would like to see some of the retired MFB members who used to be part of the day, come and celebrate the event. If you are involved in any traditions which are still going please let us know so we can help keep them alive.

Written by Mike McCumisky on behalf of the OYC organisers

CHANGE OF THE GUARD

Over the years I have had a privilege to know some of the members of the RFA, however it is great pleasure to see newly retired personnel step up to keep the organisation going.

As time flashes like a blink of an eye I asked both Alex and Col to provide me with some insight into their lives. Col's introduction is later in this edition.

Alex Shepherd (President)

I joined the Brigade in November 1970, where I trained at Richmond Fire Station in Course No.2.

Finishing recruits I was stationed at Eastern Hill for a couple of rosters then was transferred to No.3 (Carlton) on C platoon where I stayed for 7 years. In that time I did the S/F and the SO2 exam, serving at all Central Stations. After 4 years I did the SO1 exam and at first completed a roster at No.1 and then I was transferred to No2 (Batman Street) on D platoon.

After a year I was transferred to Western District (47 Stn) - District Station. When the District Station became 44 Stn, I went there. After a few more years I crossed over to Northern District, serving at 12, 4, 7 and then back to 4 Stn from whence I retired.

All up, I served the Brigade and the Community for 41 years and loved every minute of it.

I was a Health and Safety delegate for D platoon

Northern and was a Peer on the Peer support program and was very honoured to be awarded the AFSM.

And I loved a bit of a muck around involving buckets.

Alex Shepherd



The Retired Fire Fighters Association of Victoria Office Bearers 2015-2016

President: Alex Shepherd
Secretary/ Treasurer: Allan Roberts
Vice President: Colin Harris
General Committee members:
Arthur (Sam) Capes
Mike McCumisky
Ian Geddes
Kevin Hede

Auditor: Mike Enticott
Magazine Editor: Angela Potter

At the recent AGM the above people were elected into the positions. We would like to wish them all the best for the next 12 months.



Left to Right— Past president Don Brennan, Kevin Hede, Ian Fowler, Allan Roberts (Secretary/Treasurer), Alex Shepherd (President), Col Harris (Vice), Carol Cooke AM (AGM Guest Speaker), Ian Geddes, Mike McCumisky, and Sam Capes

SICK LIST (* In Nursing Home)

Bob Brunning	Dave De Fonte
Stan Cameron	Gary Spicer
Huew Campbell*	Don Brennan
Eddie Gilbertson	Arch McLachlan
Clarrie Guthrie*	John Henry Cotter
Clarrie Hart	
Bob Horgan	
Murray Jelleff	
Brian Whittaker	
Harry Mitchell	

We wish these members a speedy recovery.

Note: If you now of any member who may be ill please notify a committee member. We endeavor to keep you informed, but can only do this with you help.

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2015 New Members

Over the last 12 months we have had a number of new members join. We would like to welcome both them and their partners to the association :

Alan Smith	Steve Aicher
Graham Spiby	Phil Rook
Graham Thompson	Peter Flavelle
Jim Stargatt	Noel Lovelock
Peter Andrews	John Hoskin
Reg Christiansen	Fred Koolstra
Ron Darby	Keith Willison
Bob Ross (rejoined)	Rod Nixon
Russell Hawthorn	Bill Thomas
John Cooper	

Allan Roberts
SECRETARY/TREASURER
Address all correspondence to:
The Secretary
50 Cameron Parade, Bundoora Vic 3083
Phone:- 0433 007 720
email: rfavic1@gmail.com

PRESIDENT'S REPORT



To all Members and their families a very happy new year. May you all enjoy good health and do the things you like doing in the coming year, whether it's travelling or just smelling the roses each day.

I look forward to 2016 knowing that I have big shoes to fill in taking over from Don who has done a great job for the Retired Firefighters Association and it's Members for a long time, I promise I will keep up the work Don has done in promoting and making the RFA a strong and relevant body well into the years to come.

We the Committee will represent you the members, at every opportunity and will try to cater for all needs. The Retired Firefighters Association has a great working relationship with the United Firefighters Union. The UFU do a lot for our members and we must keep making the relationship even stronger.

We have a couple of important dates coming up during the year, the first one is the Union Picnic in February, where the RFA Committee and Members help man the BBQ and assist with the catering. It's a great day, so come along and help make it a better day. The other day is Oznanam House where we assist on the BBQ and help out people who are homeless and having hard times.

I look forward to a New Year and many more to come with my fellow RFA members.

Yours fraternally,
Alex Shepherd

SECRETARY'S REPORT

After the Annual General Meeting your new committee is:

President: Alex Shepherd

Vice President: Colin Harris

Secretary/Treasurer – Allan Roberts.

Committee: Sam Capes, Ian Geddes, Kevin Hede, Mike McCumisky,

Almoner – Ian Fowler.

Nominations – All accepted by the members.

I would like on behalf of the members to thank Don and Nancy Brennan for the fantastic job and time committed to the RFA.

Also, to thank the team of Don Brennan, John Berry and earlier committee and family members who put

time in to keep the RFA in good shape.

I mentioned in the last Water Off that I had been contacted about 2016 diaries. Unfortunately there will be no 2016 diaries distributed at this stage due to a problem with the publishers.

This matter may be further discussed at our next meeting.

I am still attending Retirement Seminars held at Burnley Complex for MFB Members who are looking at retiring in the near future.

Don't forget the RFA web Site: Lots of info.
www.rfav.com

On behalf of the Retired Firefighters Association, I have also expressed our thanks and gratitude for the support that MFB Burnley staff collectively provided to the RFA members at the Annual General Meeting including the most appreciated BBQ following all of the General Meetings.

The RFA appreciates current MFB staff supporting the Retired Members.

The retired firies really enjoy being treated to a cup of tea whenever they knock on the door of their local fire station and have a chat. The Retired Firefighters have a wealth of "hands on" knowledge and experience and are always glad to share this information with current firies.

We have had several new members join us in the last 2 months.

PLEASE NOTE THE FOLLOWING DATES:
OZANAM HOUSE BBQ put on by the RFA for homeless people on 8th February 2016.

UFU FIREFIGHTERS PICNIC: 21st February 2016 at Moonee Valley Racecourse at 11 am.

TREASURER'S REPORT

Bunnings BBQ: Thanks to all helpers.

Money Raised: \$1598.90.

We have donated

Berry Street Homes.	\$500
M.S. through Carol Cooke.	\$500
Prostate Foundation.	\$500
Jason Clymo (Son of a Firefighter)	\$500

Closing Balance: 31st December 2015

Running account S1 = \$7129.34.

Fix Term 6 Months L1 Account = \$6752.69.

INTRODUCING YOUR VICE PRESIDENT

Col Harris (Vice President)



I joined the MFB as a recruit firefighter in May 1973 and froze my pants off during a chilly 14 weeks of winter recruit training at the now-gone MFB training college - Abbotsford.

There were many clever and interesting people on my course. The likes of Paul Riley, Bob Cheshire, Jimmy Leigh and Wayne Garrard come to mind. After battling through recruits, I was stationed at No.1 and then out west where I was bounced around various stations before being permanently stationed at the Infamous North Melbourne fire station (48) on C shift.

Some great leaders here were SSO Bob Burrows and SO Gary Cronin. I learnt many skills from these two professionals. After the great Stn 48, I went for promotion to SO (to get out of 48) and was most swiftly returned to Stn 48 on D Shift as an SO.

A year or so later I became an instructor at the Abbotsford Training College where I spent 2 productive and interesting years on Senior Firefighter and SO promotional courses. Worked here with some good people – the likes of Geoff Patman, Ian Mackenzie and the most interesting Ted Dyson. After being told by “big John Perry” that it was time to go, I ended up at Port Melbourne fire station as I had recently completed the SSO course. From 39 Stn it was No.3 station for about 7-8 years before the big house (No.1 station). I was here for another 8-9 years.

Four years in Emergency Response Management where I was involved in the design of the first Mk 5 pumper, new firefighting uniform and was on other committees whilst in that position. In 2006 I was accepted on the commanders course. I worked on 3 shifts as a commander, my last 2 years on C shift (my original shift) in Southern District where I met some great and experienced officers and firefighters.

Technology was catching up with the old brain and it was time to go after 40 wonderful years in the best job in the world.

- regards, Col Harris Reg No. 2739

RFA Member’s Exhaustive Review brings results

It has been brought to the notice of the committee that one of our esteemed members, travels around the state enabling him to come up with a very interesting theory regarding cake fillings.

Let us explain. John Howe (**Howie**) who is a non-drinker was intrigued that wine tasters give so much information on the wine they taste e.g., grape, type, location, harvest etc. but there was no such testing done on CWA cream sponges. Howie, being the dedicated person that he is, set about attending every function throughout the state, in his late uncle’s Toyota (Clarrie Howe X CO, CFA) which he has restored, sampling the **CWA sponges cream**.

He has assured us this research now gives him great insight into the type of cow, grass make up, side of hill, time of day milking etc. In fact he has often rang to inform us he would be dropping off some samples to try. This unfortunately has never happened due to the fact the vehicle’s vibration could turn the cream to butter creating the need for him to consume them rather than let them spoil.

His next project is to find the person responsible for moving the wheel-caps on the Toyota as he lines them up each day then next morning he finds that someone during the night must have moved them as they are always different and he knows they were correct when he had left home the day before.

Trust us we are your committee. By the Ant

MEMORIAL BOARD AT 44

On Sunday 15th November, along with Lewis Family, Don Brennan, Alex Shepherd, Allan Roberts, Angela Potter and Ian Fowler attended No. 44 Station (Sunshine) for the unveiling of the Phil Lewis plaque.



Phil was instrumental in the publication of the RFA Magazine in the past with the printing of the magazine. Phil would organise

the printing which was done manually using a number of office photo copiers. He would often be accompanied by a number of different RFA members to assist in the removing of jammed paper and loading the printers with paper.



AN UPDATE ON THE MFB EMPLOYEE ASSISTANCE SERVICES

The new Employee Assistance Coordinator (EAC):



Fairlie Morgan started as the new EAC in November 2015, and is already feeling very welcomed and supported in her new role. Fairlie is a registered Psychologist, with over 20 years' experience in the mental health industry. She has spent the last 10 years focusing on staff support and wellbeing, and the last 5 years

of her career concentrating on staff support in front line health services (*The Royal Flying Doctors*, and Indigenous Primary Health Care). She is passionate about supporting staff wellbeing within challenging and complex environments, and has a strong clinical focus on trauma and post traumatic growth.

Fairlie can be found at Burnley and Eastern Hill and is keen to visit stations and work places to talk about what the Employee Assistance services can offer MFB staff and their families as well as retired personnel.

MFB Wellbeing Checks: The MFB Wellbeing Checks are a free, voluntary, confidential service offered by the Employee Assistance Service. They are available to all MFB staff members, and can be done at stations/your workplace. They are undertaken by highly trained mental health clinicians, who are experienced in supporting emergency services workers and their families.

The Wellbeing Check involves a short discussion about "What is Wellbeing", followed by the completion of some brief screening tools to explore your individual risk and protective factors. The results are discussed with you privately, and are not recorded in your personnel record or given to anyone else.

The Wellbeing Check is designed to pick up any concerns before they become a problem – they are just like a smoke alarm, letting you know that the building needs checking. Most of the time people are doing well on their own, but occasionally people may need additional support, and a Wellbeing Check can help to point you in the right direction.

To discuss the process further, or to arrange a Wellbeing Check for your team, please contact Fairlie Morgan, the Employee Assistance Coordinator, on **0407 665 174** or fmorgan@mfb.vic.gov.au.

UFU CHRISTMAS LUNCHEON



I arrived at the Malvern Town Hall for the Annual UFU Christmas Luncheon and was immediately set upon by Angela and Nancy Brennan (she who must be obeyed!) to get behind the desk and assist in taking the annual RFA fees from members.

It was a quick learning experience from the very qualified ladies and soon I was in the flow of meeting old fires I hadn't met for 10, 20 and 30+ years and many I had never met. Writing receipts and collecting the money was being done by Alex Shepherd and myself until the last stragglers turned up to this very important annual event.

A VB helped quench the thirst during the process and before we knew it, it was time to sit down for the day's proceedings at Malvern Town Hall. The slow old boys (Alex & myself) will do it again in 2016.

- Col Harris

BUNNINGS BBQ October 2015

Following on from the article in the last edition about the Bunnings BBQ held in October. The heat was on that day and the old boys were starting to melt. Thankfully we had the Country Women's Association (Werribee Branch- juniors) on site performing, who gracefully jumped in to assist in the heat of the afternoon (great sausage turners!).

We would like to thank the following girls - Losalini, Suzanna, Lotto and Luini for your help



GENERAL MEETING 19 AUGUST 2015 at Corio – 10.30am

Present – 26

President – Don Brennan, Secretary/Treasurer - Allan Roberts, Minutes - Ian Geddes.

Apologies – 18

New Attendee – Nil

Don opened Meeting. Allan read Minutes from 20th May 2015.

Moved – Alex Shepherd, Seconded Ian Fowler – Carried.

Matters arising – Nil.

Presidents Report –

Letter of appreciation to John Laverick for his fabulous editorial work over 20 years – supported unanimously.

Don had a Fire Truck (35A) named in his honour for services 1959-1987.

Luncheon in Queensland – 57 attended, well organised by Ian & Gail Fagerness.

Tour/Lunch at Parliament House (18th August) – 80 attendees.

Correspondence –

In – Members must renew subscriptions.

16 new members.

Email list is growing – and this keeps us all in touch with news, sickies, and retirements.

Out – Letter of thanks to H.I.B. (Albury) for \$100 donation.

Rod Wintle (Tiny's son) passed away in house fire in 2010 – letter and membership sent to Rod's widow.

Phil Cleary has organised a Plaque (\$160) to be placed on a funeral casket – approved for distribution and available through R.F.A. Website.

Carol Cooke – will be Guest Speaker at A.G.M., 18th November.

Moved – Ron Rae, Seconded – Ian Munro – Carried.

Treasurer's Report-

As of 31st July General Account \$5,567.67 Term Deposit \$6,711.25

Total - \$12,278.92

In – Progressive Diaries \$500, H.I.B. donation \$100.

Out – Postage, Water Off, Office - \$326.09

Moved – Allan Roberts, Seconded – Col Harris – Carried.

Almoners Report – Ian Fowler.

Don Brennan – ribs and back – 2 months ago - slow/sore recovery.

Allan Roberts – pace maker – 2 weeks ago - ok.

Ian Geddes – heart stent 2 days ago – ok.

Dave De Fonte – stroke, in wheel chair, at home in Cheltenham.

Ron (Darkie) Heywood – in Balmoral Home in Grovedale – Heart. Ron has since passed on.

Brian Thompson – in Footscray Hospital – ok.

Bob Brunning – in Warringal Hospital for hip and possible heart operation.

Merv Mc Inness – breast/back cancer, at home in Cannonvale, near Airlie Beach, Qld - fighting.

Allan James, at home in Woodend.

Please let Ian Fowler know of any sickies (9749 2606).

General Business –

Hoppers Crossing Bunnings 10th October – contact Don Brennan.

Ozanam House lunch – 23rd November – contact Don.

“Let The Bums Burn” book- \$10 - “It’s a Good Reed”.

17 Firefighters retire in July and 13 in August.

Barbara Mc Cumisky retires as Co-Editor.

U.F.U. Retired Members Division.

Members at this R.F.A. Meeting were asked to think about joint meetings with R.F.A. & R.M.D.

Angela Potter will become Editor after A.G.M. in November.

Alan Boyd had heart stents in April 15th and tried to renew drivers licence. Do you disclose full medical history or don’t you? Possible repercussions either way.

Ray Dingey, Jack Hancock – 60 year wedding anniversaries.

Laurie Lavelle – do we want to establish an area at Springvale Crematorium, such as Victoria Police have?

Carol Cooke, A.M., - Para Olympic Gold Medal, World Champion Bike rider, good friend of Howie, Ian and others for past 30 years. Carol somewhat overcomes the effects of Multiple Sclerosis.

Guest Speaker – Alex Shepherd.

Orchids – Alex and Lenore joined Warringal Society 12 years ago, with both Natives and Cymbidiums. He now has 400. Alex tore apart some 10” pots with many leaves/shoots and re-potted them into numerous pots using wet Pine Bark mix. (wear a dust mask if you’re using a dry mix).

Report every 2 years, like drenching but never wet feet, shade cloth in summer, cow manure soaking in a bucket for a few weeks for fertiliser (he CAN NOT get away from b----- buckets).

Russell Mawson is a big Orchid grower, and Ian Fowler, Kevin Hede and few others like to grow them also. Alex has won Best Australian species in Australian Orchid Show. His final words were “If I can grow them, anyone can do it”.

Alex then spoke enthusiastically of July World Police and Firefighters Games in Virginia, U.S.A.

Don Brennan thanked the members of Corio Fire Brigade for the use of the meeting room and facilities.

NEXT MEETING: AT MFB BURNLEY ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING.

Meeting ended 12.Noon

Went to Gateway Hotel for lunch (seniors) and chats.

P.S. Let The Bums Burn – I spelt read as reed (Trevor Reed was heavily involved both at fire and information to Author – it’s just a little trick on words)!

IMPORTANT DATES

8th February 2016 OZANAM HOUSE
BBQ

21st February 2016 UFU Firefighters BBQ

17th February RFA Meeting

22nd March 2016 Geelong Fireys Muster

MFB Chaplain

My name is Graeme Scorrige and I am the MFB Chaplain. I have been in this current role for three years, having been a CFA & Victoria Police chaplain for more than 10 years. Many people don't know that MFB have a chaplain, so much of my time has been spent making my role a bit more visible. I have found that two of the biggest misconceptions surrounding my role are:

- 1) I am only available to current serving MFB members and their families!
- 2) I perform only religious services!

Nothing could be further from the truth, I am available to assist both current serving members & retired members AND their families with all manner of spiritual & pastoral care matters. This does not necessarily mean religious, and whilst I emanate from Christian faith background, this does not mean that I can't provide non-religious services, or pastoral care. In fact I often lead a funeral service that are in fact a celebration of a person's life.

Apart from leading funeral services, I can assist bereaved family members in all aspects of finalizing a service, irrespective whether the MFB have any involvement in the service. The chaplain is available to provide a basic level of post bereavement support. The chaplain can also assist with & is licensed to perform weddings, baptisms, name day ceremonies etc. I can & I currently visit people in their homes, or nursing homes or hospitals, and regularly visits fire stations, and other MFB work sites.

Please feel free to contact myself directly on be 0439972030 or via email: GSCORRINGE@mfb.vic.gov.au or indirectly via, UFU or the Retired Firefighters Association.

Valě

Laurie Coulson
ACFO Len Sixsmith
LFF Matthew Haar (MFB
Serving)
LFF Peter Neate (MFB
Serving)

Jack Sexton
Ron Hayward

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

SUPPORT IS ONLY A CALL AWAY

The passing of a colleague can impact on us in many ways. If you combine this with the fact that the nature of our industry is one that generates inherent stress and anxiety which may result in depression or other illness, these are indeed difficult times.

For current and ex-MFB personnel there is 24 hour access to a dedicated counselling service with psychologists by calling 1800 451 138 or 1300 366 789.

CFA members can access Critical Incident Stress Peer Support by calling either the CFA Chaplain Service on 1800 337 068 or CFA Welfare Support on 1800 626 616.

On the beyondblue website <https://www.beyondblue.org.au/> the following support services are listed that are external to the CFA and MFB and that are available to all.

- Lifeline 13 11 14
- Suicide Call Back Services 1300 659 467
- beyondblue Support Service 1300 22 4636

Not sure if your membership dues are paid up to date?

One of the questions that was asked at the recent UFU Christmas Luncheon was how do I know if my membership is up to date.

To determine if you are up to date or not on your membership please look at the address sticker on your magazine, there will be a date on it, that will advise if your membership is current.

If it is not up to date we would really appreciate if you could please forward the outstanding dues through to secretary Allan Roberts ASAP.

Please be advised that if your dues do lapse and you have not advised Allan Roberts, then your membership may be revoked until your dues are paid up to date.

Please forward all payments to

Allan Roberts
SECRETARY/TREASURER

GONE BY NOT FORGOTTEN

The New Year brings a sense of rejuvenation to all. However, we must never forget the family and friends who gave the ultimate gift that enable us to enjoy this rejuvenation. The committee offers their utmost condolences to those families who had loved ones transferred upstairs. It has been said previously this is one of the most difficult articles to write, not only because of the memories that keep flashing up, but also the need to give all members the opportunity to understand the reason they should never be forgotten.

David Gallop 1944-14/7/2015 David's career in the MFB started back in 1971 and finished when he retired with the rank of Leading Firefighter in 2006. He also was awarded a National medal & Bar from the Commonwealth Government and the MFB Long Service Medal & Bar. I personally cannot remember him well or if I attended any incident or fire that he had been at, so the following is from the many firefighters who knew and/or were on shift with him. It is obvious from their comments he was not only well liked but was also a top firefighter. Another thing I learned was to make sure you never challenge him to a game of golf as he was a very good player. Most of the Fires that I spoke to started by telling me of the many jobs they had attended with him. One would not need to be a Rhodes Scholar from what they said to not realise the community has been very fortunate that David took on the career of a Firefighter, as he turned out to be very good at it. Unfortunately his retirement years did not bring him the many goals he most certainly deserved. Similar to many other retired firefighters David succumbed to life changing health problems which unfortunately brought about his demise.

David, on behalf of the community of Victoria, thank you for being there for us!

Ronald Hayward "Darkie" 1931- 26/10/2015. With an icon like Darkie it is going to be very difficult keeping it brief when you could write a book about his exploits. Let's start with when he joined the MFB in 1955 after doing his recruit course up to the time he retired in 87. Ron spent most of his career as an inner city firefighter, (a very good one). My first meeting with him was at the old William Street station and to me he appeared to be a laid-back type person. In fact his brain was ticking over at 100 miles an hour. You would not have any idea what type of prank he was going to pull next. Get him to a job and he would do the work of two. Another retiree Jack Moore, who was in quarters there, told me about a job they were at where they had to get a line aloft to the third floor roof of an adjoining building to the one that was on fire, when lo and behold Darkie falls through the corrugated asbestos cement sheet roof. Jack immediately thought the worst being three storeys up!

Hole A cupboard had stopped his fall. Still shaken and injured he resumed the attack on the fire with Jack. Some years later the brigade built a new station in Batman Street West Melbourne to replace the William St one. Of course Darkie was transferred there. In my travels as a reliever I again came in contact with him there and found he had not changed one bit - still a top bloke & fire with that joy of life about him. When not attending fires or whatever and you are back at the station you would always need to have your wits about you and be prepared for the unexpected "good times". Here is an example of what I mean. Yvonne had advised us due to failing health he was now in full time care, so following our visit to see him John Howe organised the MFB Chaplain Graeme Scorrige to visit him. During the said meeting & as soon as he found out who Graeme was, Darkie replied I did not know the brigade had one - "you can bury me!". Why waste time on idle chatter. One other point I forgot to mention Yvonne and Darkie in retirement were like pepper & salt for the region. They were into everything. You know whatever the area needed they did it. This came over loud and clear at his celebration of life service.

Yvonne, your Darkie as you well know will be sorely missed by us all.

William Franklin "Bill" 1938- 27/10/2015. District Officer (DO) Franklin, I had the privilege of not only working with him but also being on the same shift for some time. He was a very competent firefighter/officer who was a great asset to the MFB & the community. Bill and I were both afflicted with the same problem, both vertically challenged! The only thing I had over him was that I joined the job before him, I would of course always make sure he knew this. His response seemed to always finish something like this "you little s#*t!". One day many years ago on one of my many visits to head station (probably for more guidance) he was given the responsibility of looking after the two districts. Whilst I was away he had to respond to an incident on my behalf involving a large LPG bullet spewing vapour into the air. The so called experts, in their attempt to stop the leak, turned it from a vapour to a liquid leak one going about 15 metres into the air escalating the original problem, I arrived just before this occurred. Being the understanding person that I am I did suggest to him something along the lines of his visit to our district was over, get in your little red station wagon and pi###-off back to your side of the Merri Creek and do not expect a Christmas bonus. His response went along the lines about the high chair he left for me and the built up shoes I was wearing did not make me any taller!

Fact is, if it wasn't for the local plumber and his expertise in handling this type of problem, with his long handled screwdriver the incident could have finished up bigger than Ben Hur!

Bill retired on the 2/11/90 but this third stage of his life did not bring Valerie and Bill both all the joy they most certainly deserved due to the major health problems they experienced. Bill in fact lost the love of his life Valerie; the loss of course took a great toll on him but with the help of his family, friends and other retired Firies he picked himself up only to be knocked down again, this time they had to remove part of his leg. Being the unscrupulous type of person I am on hearing this I knew immediately this was my chance to challenge him to a race. So when I visited him in hospital I suggested we have a race around the hospital. I must confess I am unable to print his response. It would make you blush and apart from that I was very busy ducking for cover from the flying projectiles. Now even with this major change of lifestyle he was now confronted with, it did not affect his sense of humour. Bill will be, by all who knew him, remembered as a top firefighter and a great bloke gifted with a wonderful sense of humour.

Mate I have no idea about your new posting however, the best part is you will be Valerie again.

Jack Sexton Passed away on the 28/10/2015. Jack moved from Victoria a number of years ago and was living in Queensland at the time of his demise. The following retirees Arthur Capes and John Schintler are the ones who have been able to expand on his time etc in the MFB. Jack spent most of his time at the Windsor station No 35, for those who do not know much about the MFB, No 35 is one of the very busy stations. You name it they have had it. Add to that, First Responder calls. If you want experience this is the station for you. As I said Jack spent most of his time stationed there. Both Arthur & John, if you have a day or two, will be able to verse the reader on the many fires & incidents they attended with him. In my case let me take you on a trip that three others and I took with him many years ago when we were still in the job. We decided that we would like to go to Broken Hill NSW for the St Patricks Race Day Meeting. The group consisted of George Whyte, Stan Patten, Stan's cousin, Jack Sexton and I. George organised the hire of the plane (Cessna 210) and it was all go. We arranged to meet at the Moorabbin airfield and head off picking up Stan's cousin at a bush runway on the way. The weather started to close in and Biggles (George) landed at the Ballarat airfield while it passed over. Biggles being a member of an aero club allowed us to use the facilities there including a number of cups of tea. Later the weather cleared and we were airborne again, next stop was to pick up Stan's cousin. Me being a short a#&e was required to sit in the small back seat. About an hour and half later Biggles informs us we will have a look at the Menindee Lakes area rather than go straight to Broken Hill. You will all know there are no toilet facilities on a plane of this size and I am busting.

Jack of course suggested I get out on the wing! Luckily I was able to find a sick bag that overcame the problem. When we do land at Broken Hill they form a guard of honour whilst I alight from the plane with the bag. For the rest of the trip I became known as the Piss Ant. In fact, I was presented on stage at one of the clubs we visited with a colostomy type bag with suitable appendage attachment for the trip home. Of course I refused to test it in front of everybody. It was one of those once in a life time trips. We spent a whole shift down the mines, attended a very large two up game and also the country race meeting with people who flew in from all over the place. Because of Stan's extended family we were shown over many things one would normally not be able to see. Jack being Jack helped make the trip. On arrival back at Moorabbin, the plane, as the norm, had to be cleaned and filled similar to hiring a car etc. We planned to do the trip again if we could arrange our four days off. Unfortunately this never came to fruition. In retirement Jack would often ring and keep me up to speed on his health or whether he would be down for the UFU's Annual Christmas Luncheon. He loved being amongst the other retirees, however it was very obvious early in 2015 it was not going to ever happen again.

Mate, I have got to say to your son and family, the brigade Chaplin and the Firies from No.10 Station made sure you were given a great send off at the spreading of your ashes.

Frederick Leonard "Len" Sixsmith. 1931-23/11/2015. The morning of the 23/11/15 I received a phone call from a very close friend of Len's. It was RFA member Bernie Bishop advising me that Len had unexpectedly passed away. It was obvious from his voice it was not expected. Bernie's friendship with Len started many years ago when they were workmates in the MFB Fire Protection Department. Following Bernie's call, the normal protocol re: information transfer on Len's demise etc, was forwarded and the glowing comments I received during said calls about Len's contribution to the brigade, his workmates, the community and new immigrants to the country was amazing, I do not think I have ever heard a person being as highly praised before. Retired Chief, Laurie Lavelle forwarded to me some notes regarding his association with Len, also informing me to personally pass on to the family his apologies as he would be unable to attend the service. He and his family would be visiting his sister who only just returned home to Clunes from hospital. The notes clearly showed the versatility of Len and his ability as a firefighter. From all these glowing comments it is not hard to understand why he reached the rank of ACFO. Remember back then there was only an Administration and an Operational one, unlike the current rank structure. Well in my case one could say I did not get off on a high with Len. Lt me explain. Many years ago

he was the DO in charge of No1's Hose Carriage. I was a sub station officer on the combination ladder and the crew with me beat the carriage crew to run a line on a fire in Carlton—utter sacrilege!. After we had made up with the DO he wanted to know if I had ordered that line to be run, I replied yes, expecting the worst but all he said was I see. Let's move forward a number of years to when I was transferred into the administration area. Reporting to Len, on my first day there, as the norm, I received my pep talk re my role, when he suddenly opens up about the job in Carlton, expecting to be told it was a no-no. He states, I just want you to know I have a good memory and started laughing. I found he was a good boss to work for. The only down side was the fact he was preparing to take up the early optional of retirement and all his wealth of knowledge was being lost to the job. I am not sure if most know just how much people like Len and his ilk did in protecting the community and firefighters. The battles they undertook and in most cases, won against developers/builders and the experts who wanted to build structures and high rise buildings without proper consideration for the people who would inhabit them and the equipment etc firefighters required to protect their lives and the property of the said buildings. This knowledge came from not only attending the various fires but also from a great deal of home work on Len's part.

Mary, on behalf of the community and brigade

OLD FIREMAN TALES REQUIRED!

To help keep the magazine interesting for all of readers we are calling for some of the stories that either never left the station or the fire field. Please help share some of the fun times over the years. .

Knuckles I would assume that you would definitely have a few stories you could tell.

There is also another retired firefighter who's truck liked water. What happen to them when they turned up at the next muster?

Guys you should know who you are, would you like to share your experiences and or elaborate on the above. (Thanks in anticipation—John Berry)

UPDATE ON ONE OF OUR MEMBERS

This is an update on one of our RFA members. Following advice from Alan Boyd (Boydy) that Arch (The Shearer) had been transferred to the Allan Davis Lodge Grovedale, John Howe (Howie) and I visited him on Monday 21st December, to see how he was going and hang s#it on him. John H hit on the idea to assist Arch in his rehab we should take along a stuffed Teddy Bear he had purchased to enable Arch to keep his shearing hand up to speed. Unfortunately we forgot to bring a pair shears. The lodge staff checked to see if they had a pair. Unfortunately this proved fruitless. It did however create interest with some of the staff who rushed in to see this 85 year old man with a stuffed teddy in bed with him.

Hot off the press, I have just received a phone call from Boydy. The Shearer has just been moved, with his bear, from the Lodge to Grace McKellar Rehab Hospital South Wing, Room 10 Ph 03 4215 6314 The staff made sure the Bear's head was clear to enable it to enjoy the ride to his new room at Grace McKellar. On the serious side when you hear about blokes with intestinal fortitude, well Arch has it in bucket loads. What he has been through and still loves a joke makes the visit so important.

The Ant (John Berry)

At the time of producing this magazine Arch is hoping to be home by the end of this month.

Merchandise and Membership Fees

Once off Joining Fee	\$5.00
Yearly Subs	\$10.00
Badges	\$5.00
Cap	\$20.00
Polo Shirts	\$20.00
Apron	\$20.00

MAGAZINE UPDATE

Unfortunately due to medical circumstances I have to put my heath first and therefore I will not be continuing with the production of the magazine. I am please to announce that your Vice President Col Harris will be taking the magazine on in the future. I wish Col all the best and look forward to reading future editions.
Regards Angela Potter

SUMMER IS HERE

With the holiday season in full swing and a long hot summer ahead of us, it is important that we have the right plans in place in the event of an emergency and you have to evacuate.

Good planning can save lives. This was demonstrated in the Wye River fires on Christmas Day. Although they lost buildings and possessions they did not lose a life.

Here is the CFA Fire Ready Quiz . Are you ready?? Answers are on page 14.

True or False

Question 1: Victoria is one of the most bushfire prone areas in the world.

Question 2: People living in cities, towns and surrounding suburbs can be at risk of bush and grassfire.

Question 3: After a wet winter there's far less chance of fires in summer.

Question 4: Fire Danger Ratings can be different in each of the nine districts across the state.

Question 5: Some kinds of barbecues are OK on a Total Fire Ban day.

Question 6: I've cleared up around my property so I'm prepared for bushfire.

Question 7: Someone will tell me when it's time to leave.

Question 8: It's too dangerous to stay and defend your home on a Code Red day.

Question 9: If there is a bush or grass fire near my home a CFA fire truck or fire fighting helicopter will always come and help.

A LITTLE INTELLIGENCE

$$6 + 4 = 210$$

$$9 + 2 = 711$$

$$8 + 5 = 313$$

$$5 + 2 = 37$$

$$7 + 6 = 113$$

$$9 + 8 = 117$$

$$10 + 6 = 416$$

$$15 + 3 = 1218$$

GOLD MEDALIST ATTENDS

AGM

What an honour it was for all of those who attended the RFA AGM. The guest speaker on the day was Carol Cooke AM. She was gold medallist in the Paralympics.

Carol shared with us some of her life and the experiences which drastically changed her life. Some of these included moving to the other side of the world and what she thought at the time to be a devastating diagnosis of a chronic illness. Compounding the chronic illness with a cancer scare and a major life-changing surgery.

Carol shared her life story starting with being born in Toronto, Canada. During her youth years she was involved in a number of sports including gymnastics and swimming.

Her career path saw her follow in the footsteps of her parents and become a police officer at the Metropolitan Toronto Police Force. During her career she spent the first few years as a uniformed officer, then became an undercover officer for years in the prostitution and drug areas and then finally as a detective constable in the Criminal Investigation Bureau.

In 1985, the very first World Police and Fire Games were held in San Jose, California. This is where her friendship with some of the MFB officers and their wives began. Especially building a wonderful relationship with John Howe (Howie) and his family.

In 1992 she took leave and came to Australia for 12 months. Not long after this she moved to Australia. In 1998 she was diagnosed with Multiple Sclerosis. However she was determined that MS was not going to define who she was. As with all MS sufferers this didn't happen overnight and in 2001 she was introduced to a future disabled lifestyle.

In trying to get her health and fitness back on track, she started the 24 Hour Mega Swim, which is a charity event to raise money for the Go for Fold Scholarship Program run by the Victoria's MS Society. This program gives people living with MS the opportunity to follow their dreams. To date this swim has raised a total of \$6 million dollars. Carol was lucky enough through her career to become an actual recipient of one of the scholarships.

In 2003 Carol experienced another health setback whereby in the end she had to go through major surgery and have her large intestine removed.

Unfortunately the MS got worse, which then meant additional rehab to try and learn to walk again. Once back on track she then experienced another medical set back—cancer.

In 2005, the World Masters Games were being held in Edmonton, Alberta, Canada and for the first time in the history of these games they had a Paralympics classification in both swimming and athletics. At these games she won a silver medal and 4 Gold Medals. Later that year she was asked by the Australian Paralympics Development people to take up the sport of rowing. Rowing was to be a new sport for the 2008 Beijing Paralympics.

In 2007 she obtained her first national title in the boat category of the double scull. In 2008 she was named as a member of the national team. Unfortunately her coxed four boat team failed to qualify for the Paralympics that year.

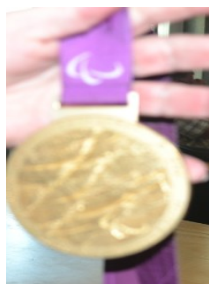
In 2009 her team was named as part of the team to travel to Poland for the World Rowing Championships at which they made the final and came in 6th place.

In 2011 she decided to switch sports to cycling. Due to the impact of MS on her body she was unable to ride a normal bike. However there was a category for trikes.

In 2011 after attending the Australian national Para-Cycling Championships during April in Queensland, Carol qualified for the national team in the T2 category. Later that year Carol travelled to her first World Para-Cycling Championships in Denmark whereby she was beaten by a Canadian girl however obtained a silver medal. She then competed in a road race where she came in second. Amazing that her bike weighed in at 22kgs. What an achievement.!

Her ultimate goal was to make the team for London 2012. This involved dedicated training and nutrition and at the same time she was presented with a trike that weighed 14kgs. At the end of 2012 she was officially part of the Australian cycling team to go to London. At one point her position on the team was challenged by another rider, however her dream of representing her adopted country finally came true.

Carol shared with us that the gold medal really just topped it all off. For her to be able to make the team, then compete and to do her personal best was all she could have dreamed of.



In 2013 Carol had wins in the third World cup that year and also in the 2013 World Championships and becoming World Champion in the time trial and road race.

Carol brought with her, her gold medal and also the trike that was on the back of her car as she had already been for a training ride that morning.

If we were to take a piece out of Carol's inspirational life story it would be that although life's journey can be unexpected you can take control of your life and continue in any direction that you choose to.

Carol has released a book which I will be honest with you and say is a most inspirational life story which I recommend everyone should take the chance to read. "Cycle of Life" - a Gold Medal Paralympian's secrets to success by Carol Cooke AM.

Note the contents of this article has come from Carol's book.



Alex inspecting the Trike

PHOTOS RECENTLY TAKEN AT AGM LUNCH



ANSWERS TO THE CFA FIRE READY QUIZ

Question 1. **True**

Victoria is one of the most bushfire prone regions in the world because of its weather patterns and vegetation. Other bushfire prone areas include California and Spain. So remember, if you live in or are visiting a high risk bushfire area in Victoria, you need to know which fire weather district you're in. Check your Fire Danger Rating daily and have a bushfire survival plan.

Question 2. **True**

Bush and grassfires can occur where suburbs meet the bush or where houses have grassland, parkland or bush around them. People who travel or holiday in high risk bushfire areas are also at risk of bushfire. Even people considering a day trip should be prepared.

Question 3. **False**

Rainfall fuels the growth of vegetation – especially grass – meaning that higher rainfall can actually result in greater fuel loads for fire. In years of wet weather Victoria often sees an increase in the number of large grassfires. It only takes two weeks of hot, dry and windy weather to create dangerous fire conditions

Question 4. **True**

Victoria is a large state with varying landscapes and weather conditions. As such, your Fire Danger Rating is determined by the district where you are living or travelling.

It's your responsibility to know which district you're in (there are nine in Victoria) and to check the rating.



Question 5. **True**

Solid and liquid-fuel barbecues and ovens are banned on Total Fire Ban days. However, gas or electrical barbecues that are fixed appliances – built into permanent structures of brick, stone or concrete – ARE allowed, provided you adhere to the guidelines for use. Portable gas or electric barbecues are also allowed if they are commercially manufactured exclusively for meal preparation and you make sure they are in a stable position when alight

Question 6. **False**

Clearing up around your property is just one part of planning and preparing for bushfire. You need a well thought-out bushfire survival plan, which has been agreed and discussed with members of the household. While leaving early is always the safest option, there are many things you can do to prepare you and your family for bushfire.

Question 7. **False**

Don't wait to receive a warning. It's up to you to know when to leave. It's your responsibility to make the best possible decision for your family based on the current Fire Danger Ratings and official warnings for your area.

Question 8. **True**

Homes are not designed or constructed to withstand fires in these conditions. Defending a house requires at least two able-bodied, fit and determined adults who are physically and mentally prepared to work long and hard in arduous and difficult conditions. Code Red days are rare – when forecast they are very serious.

Question 9. **False**

There are no guarantees that fire crews will attend your property. CFA firefighters will be doing everything they can to prevent injury to people and damage to property during a bushfire. But you should never expect a fire truck at your door to personally protect you and your home.

Get alerts and warnings on:

cfa.vic.gov.au

Emergency broadcasters: ABC Local Radio, commercial radio and designated community radio stations
SKY NEWS Television

Victorian Bushfire Information Line: 1800 240 667



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28th JULY 2016

To all out there that may be travelling or just on holidays to the Gold Coast, QLD in July this year, come and join us for the 'Retired Furies Luncheon' held at the Southport Yacht Club.

Lovely food and panoramic views.

Meet up with old friends, talk about the days gone by and be part of a great day with fond memories.

Arrive around 10.30am/11.00am and say you are with the 'retired furies group'. Discounted drinks & food are available.

Partners and friend welcome.

Oh, and you don't even have to be retired!!
For further info contact:-

Ian & Gail Fagernes 07 55224321 (0431 485 141)
fagernes@bigpond.com



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C.F.A. – M.F.B. – SHELL - AVALON
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On the 4th Tuesday of March & November
@ 1130 hrs

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Contact:
Peter Lang 5275 6039
To receive Mail out notification

Firefighter's Picnic

21st February 2016

11am. till 4 pm.

Venue; Moonee Valley Racecourse

(Enter from McPherson St.)

Retirees - Bring the Grandkids

Note: For catering purposes, please ring the union office on 9419 8811 and let them know how many you are bringing along.

BBQ sausages, hamburgers and drinks for the kids supplied.
BYO salads, plates etc.
Rides, games and prizes.
Lots of fun for all!

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