

"WATER OFF"

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



February 2011 Vol 15 No 1
Inc/No: A16839F

UFU 100 Year Celebration

The RFA congratulates the UFU on reaching this milestone.
See page 6 for celebration programme.

TURBULENT TIMES OF THE MELBOURNE FIRE BRIGADES

1835 – 1970

Les Gray's continuing story, page 8



Above; A panorama from the parapet of St Patrick's Cathedral, circa 1880. It shows the water tank on Eastern Hill right in the centre of the image. On the left is a row of cottages on Gisborne St. They occupied the land which later became the site of the Eastern Hill Fire Station, now the Fire Museum.

Image; Courtesy Victorian Artists Society.

Left; This is possibly the only hand operated pumper from the volunteer years to be inherited by the MFB. It was stationed at the first FS20 in Watt Street, Box Hill until it was replaced by a Hotchkiss hose carriage in the 1920's. Image: Fire Services Museum of Victoria.

“GENERAL MEETING”

Notice is hereby given that the next General Meeting will be held at the MFB Training College 450 Burnley Street Richmond.

1030 Hours, Wednesday 16th February 2011

AGENDA ITEMS.

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

**JOHN BERRY
SECRETARY/TREASURER
Please Note;
Address all correspondence to:
The Secretary,
24 Lincoln Drive Lower Plenty 3093
Ph. 9431 2880**

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

**Lunch available.
Please join us!**

Non financial Members

Members be advised if your newsletter has an expiry date of 2/1/2008 that means you have not paid your subs since 2007 therefore if no remuneration is received by the 2/1/11 your name will be automatically removed from the mailing list. If, for what ever reason, any member is unable to meet this request please do not hesitate to call the secretary (confidentiality is assured)

OFFICE BEARERS

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

General Committee;

Ian Geddes
John Laverick
Ken McGillivray
John Schintler
John Wallace

Auditor;
Theo Teklenburg

**“Water Off”
Editorial Staff
John Laverick
Barbara McCumisky**

Valē

Graeme Billington (MFB) Terry Sloan (MFB)
Lawrence Fellows (MFB) Alby Smith (MFB)
Joe Fitzpatrick (MFB) Kevin Stein (CFA)
Rod Flanagan (MFB)

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

SICK LIST (* In Nursing Home)

Keith Arms Ernie Goodall*
Stan Cameron Clarrie Hart
Jim Casley* Barry McColl
Huew Campbell Jack Sexton
Ken Clinkaberry Ron Turner*
Russ Daniels*
Wayne Dellamarta

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 so with your help.

Diary Dates 2011

February 16th General Meeting
May 18th General Meeting
August 17th General Meeting (Geelong)
November 16th Annual General Meeting
November 19th Annual Christmas Luncheon
Malvern Town Hall

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Welcome to all Members and their families for 2011.

The older we get the quicker the time seems to fly. I'm sure most members would be amazed how they ever had time to go to work.

It certainly is a funny country we live in, with floods in Queensland, NSW, Victoria, Tasmania and WA and Bush Fires in WA. The victims of the floods are doing it tough, particularly those in Queensland and Victoria and we encourage members to donate to the various flood relief charities through local banks, Red Cross or the Salvation Army.

If any of our members were caught up in any of these disasters, we wish you all the best for the future. Please let us know if you have had any

problems. We would love to hear some of your stories.

We have been allocated Saturday 30th April 2011, for a Sausage Sizzle at Bunnings – Hoppers Crossing. It requires 2 shifts of 5 personnel to work the day (8-12 and 12 -4).

If you are able to assist on the day please either speak to me at the next meeting or phone 9742 6626.

Hope to see you all at the next meeting at the Training College.

Regards
Don Brennan



SECRETARY/TREASURER'S REPORT

The report this quarter is one where I was not sure where to start, I suppose the best place to begin is back on the 16/12/2010. That was the day that three others and myself attended the MFB Training Complex Burnley, to repay the staff there for

the wonderful support they had given us throughout the year by doing the role of barbecue chefs for the afternoon, whilst they had the opportunity to enjoy each other's company before they broke for Christmas.

During the afternoon a message came through that the MFB CEO/CO Graham Fountain had resigned (this left everyone in a state of surprise). Whatever the reason for his resignation I would like it known that his support for the retired members of the service was greatly appreciated and I have no hesitation in wishing him every success for the future. Example of Graham's pro-active role in his support can be seen in the following. This year we have been given permission to not only use the library at the MFB Burnley complex for all members, but we also were given the opportunity to conduct training sessions at the Complex on basic computer operation and internet protocol, session days and times will be explained at the February meeting.

United Firefighters Union 100 year programme see separate article page 6.

I reported in the November edition of the newsletter of the new positions being created in the MFB to build a pro-active culture of innovation, responsiveness, accountability and greater sector-wise collaboration. Well the interviews were completed and the appointments to the six positions are as follows.

PEOPLE & CULTURE Danielle Byrnes, Executive Director. STRATEGY & INNOVATION Peter Rau, Executive Director. CORPORATE SERVICES Russell Eddington, Executive Director. EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT Shane Wright, Executive Director. SE METRO DIRECTOR David Youssef, Regional Director. NW REGION DIRECTOR Paul Stacchino, Regional Director, the RFA wish them all the best in their new appointments.

At the time of printing the MFB, CEO/ CO is Shane Wright in an Acting role

The Annual General Meeting -

The guest speaker as advertised was unable to attend because of a reason beyond his control, now our members, being retired emergency service members with the trained ability to meet most contingencies, went into action, one of the members raced out to the front of the building and dragged this little old bloke in to do a show and tell. During said presentation it was noted that some members in attendance were sleeping! One member (a silver headed one) obtained a large stool to enable the speaker to be seen when standing behind the podium this action allowed all to see him and stopped the back-stalls from sleeping. Following the Old bloke's show & tell, we then had a visiting **Firefighter from Las Vegas (USA)** give a most interesting talk on his career, also including the impact the downturn in the economy has had on Las Vegas.

The meeting then broke for a chance to enjoy the company of the MFB Training staff over a cuppa & bite to eat.

(Continued on page 4)

(Continued from page 3)

It has been reported that **Peter Coulson** (Retired Commodore Southport Yacht Club) has been studying his old drill book on the Proto B.A, learning the difference between the high & low pressure sides and non return valves to better prepare him for his upcoming operation to replace one of the valves in his heart. On the serious side, mate we want you around to look after the Mexicans reunion, **June**, if he steps out of line let me know and I will send up one of my RFA heavies to sort him out.

In an earlier edition of the newsletter I made mention of the new names for **Mr & Mrs Silver** to be known as **Autumn leaves** well he has now got to have one of the knees checked as he stated it locked-up, plus he stubbed his toes creating the need for more X-Rays. He of course claims he was not kissed as a picket.

Ken Clinkaberry has proved us all wrong he has a heart, he proved that when they raced him in to hospital. To all the people that said he was a heartless so and so, you are wrong. (Mate good to see you up and around)

Peter Lang is planning to become known as the **Bionic-Man** he has just had another knee replaced next it is the hips, his wife reckons when he sits close to the telly, Channel 31 gives a better picture. Peter has suggested not getting it done if it is just to improve the quality of your viewing.

See you at the joint RFA/UFU Retired division meeting 1030hours Wednesday 16th February 2011.

John Berry

MINUTES R.F.A. ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

**17th November 2010, 10.30am
at MFB Training College.**

Apologies - as per book.

Attendance as per book - 70 members approx,

Sick list - Wayne Dellamarta, Joe Fitzpatrick.

Recently deceased - Ron Flanagan.

New attendees: - Rudy Newlands, Joan and Dave Berthet, Wilma and Doug Overton.

President Don Brennan called for one minutes silence for those who have passed away - (there have been 33 members in the past year).

We have had 16 new members. Join the RFA

Secretary John Berry read Minutes from 2009 A.G.M. minutes moved they be accepted—Moved B. Jackson, seconded- G. Butterworth.

Carried

No business arising from 2009 A.G.M.

Treasurers Report -

John did a slide presentation of accounts. As of June 2009, a balance of \$9240.

As of June 2010, a balance of \$8569.49.

Main 2010 expenditures - Donations \$2067.30 (Royal Children Hospital, plus Prostate Cancer Foundation).

Phone/ Postage - \$1,040.

Theo Teklenburg audited all accounts as correct.

John Berry moved that Treasurers Report be accepted, seconded R. Rae - Carried
Business arising - Thanks to the Firefighters Credit Union, with Alan Roberts as main instigator, for the donation of printing paper through the year.

Election of Committee.

President Don Brennan informed the Meeting that the Committee for 2010 would remain unchanged for 2011.

John Berry was notified the Guest Speaker Graham Fountain (M.F.B. C.E.O./C.O.) could not attend this A.G.M. as he was required at a meeting with the Victorian Government Minister of Emergency Services. Mr. Fountain was disappointed, but would be very keen to attend a later R.F.A. Meeting.

A suspension of standing orders was called for and Moved Don Brennan and Seconded John Berry Carried

There is a "Seniors Social Club Experience" to the M.C.G. - includes a tour and lunch at Hugh Trumble restaurant all for only \$30.p. - more at next meeting.

In 1961, Cyril Collard when playing for Springvale (the year they won the premiership). After the game, he exchanged jumpers. This exchange recently was in an article in a Leader newspaper - the jumper is now on display at Springvale. (Not a bad player for the Furies either, and many times finalist at Stawell Gift).

Joint meeting with R.F.A./U.F.U retired division, at the February meeting. This is to be in conjunction with our normal meeting.

H. Floyd and R. Rae spoke in support of this joint meeting and the idea was accepted by those present.

As there was no guest speaker John B. did a slide show on how our brain/eyes can trick up sometimes. Nobody got to the high I.Q. mark, but it was interesting. J. Schintler, and us, thanked John for his fill-in "guest speaker" job. (P.S. John did NOT receive our customary cap for his presentation).

MOTION: Don Brennan moved that this meeting of the RFA reimburse the Secretary \$200 for his out of pocket expenses, seconded J. Cotter - Carried.

A friend of Ron and Joy Barker was over from Las Vegas. David Garcia was in the US Air Force and now a Government Contractor/Fireman at the Defence Testing Facilities in Nevada, and works in support with Las Vegas City/County Departments. David gave a background history of his career and of Las Vegas life, and took questions from our members and joined us for lunch. (Yes, HE did get a cap).

Brochures were brought in by Jack Moore about C.O.T.A. - The Council of The Ageing. Information included accommodation and medical options and much more. Just give C.O.T.A. a ring if you want a set and they will send it out.

A resumption of standing orders was called and moved Don Brennan and seconded John Berry Carried

RETIRED FIREFIGHTERS ASSOCIATION OF AUSTRALIA (VICTORIAN BRANCH) REG NO A16839F

Statement of Income and Expenditure for year ended 30th June 2010

Income

	2010 \$	2009 \$
Opening Balance Credit Union 1st July 2008	6,551.43	9,240.63
Members subscriptions	3,550.00	3,061.80
Sale of promotional items	265.00	1,122.00
Donations	2,067.30	-
Socials	-	360.00
Joining fee	80.00	25.00
Transfers	-	-
Interest received	<u>205.76</u>	<u>389.50</u>
	<u>12,719.49</u>	
<u>14,198.93</u>		

Expenditure

Postages and Telephone	1,040.39	1,018.85
Reunion Day & catering	140.05	752.06
Magazine expenses	92.50	136.94
Computer upgrades & software & internet	285.00	219.00
Donations	2,107.00	2,658.00
Promotional material	372.07	2,450.00
Petty cash	-	-
Stationary	-	-
AGM and meeting expenses	-	149.05
Sundries	56.75	208.90
Government & Credit Co-op fees & charges	<u>56.24</u>	<u>54.70</u>
	4,150.00	7,647.50
Closing Balance Credit Union 30th June 2009	<u>8,569.49</u>	<u>6,551.43</u>
	<u>12,719.49</u>	<u>14,198.93</u>

Bank Reconciliation

Bank balance as at 30th June 2010

Main account	3,260.58
Term deposit	<u>5,308.91</u>
	<u>8,569.49</u>

Independent Person's Certification.

I have examined the accounting records, including receipts, of the Retired Firefighters Association for the period 1st July 2009 to 30th June 2010. In my opinion the Statement of performance above is correct.

Theo Teklenburg
Retired Credit Union Manger

FEBRUARY GENERAL MEETING

The general meeting to be held on Wednesday the 16th of February 2011, at the MFB Training Complex Burnley starting at 1030 hours, it will be a joint meeting with the RFA and the UFU Retired Division and we are hoping to be able to entice a very interesting guest speaker and also a surprise guest if they are able to change their current arrangements. Come along bring your partner and break bread with old shift mates.

UNITED FIREFIGHTERS UNION 100 YEAR CELEBRATION PROGRAMME

The UFU reached a great achievement on the 22rd of January, that day marked 100 years since the first meeting took place in the small room under the marble stairs of the **old Eastern Hill Fire Station**, this was no small feat and I do believe we owe all the foundation members a debt of gratitude for their foresight, the union and the union movement has been very beneficial to the community of Victoria and Commonwealth. Each and every member of the union has in one way or another played a significant part in its development I implore you to be proud of your role and engage in any way you can with the 100 year celebration programme.

The first part of the celebration was to forward to every member and/or partner whose name was on the **UFU Social Committee's list** a newsletter each month that covers the UFU development in blocks of approximately one decade. The next part is the **Parade & Family day Sunday the 30th of January 2011** (unfortunately this will have occurred by the time this newsletter reaches you) the day I have no doubt will be a great success, it is being supported by the CFA & MFB and the Retirees it will be showing all the latest personnel & equipment from all Fire Services. Leading the parade will be the famous Victorian Police Pipe Band and there will be another Band at the end of the parade. The retired personnel will march with the equipment of their era.

Then on Saturday June the 18th 2011 the **Gala Ball** will be held Shed 9 Central Pier 161 Harbour Esplanade Docklands (Dress code formal), the venue is



The UFU Centenary Banner adorns the facade of Trades Hall. A reminder to the community of the role of the firefighter in their safety and wellbeing.
Image; MFB Media & Communications

not what we oldies remember about Vic Dock, this is up-market and it holds a thousand. I have been told if you are interested in going ring the union office ASAP as the tickets are going very fast, they are now saying that perhaps they should have gone for a bigger venue. Then, later in the year will be the launch of **William Webber's Book**, unfortunately again because of the interest shown the launch attendance will be by invitation only.

Remember during the celebrations we should not forget the people who made all this possible, it is not a celebration of the future it is of the past achievements.

John Berry

Secretary's Comment

2011 has so far created many highs and lows for the Commonwealth, this island; our home that is girt by sea has been experiencing very trying climatic conditions which has tested the mettle of every State and Territory inhabitant. It is very pleasing to say from what has been seen and read, the majority have shown enormous resilience to what has confronted them, the downside is a very small minority who took advantage to rob and plunder during the crisis.

The Retired Firefighters Association (Victorian Branch) members and committee want it publicly known that the personnel of the Military, Emergency Services and the Community who give of themselves in the protection of others in their time of need our Highest Commendation. The families who lost loved ones we can only imagine the pain you are going through at this time, please accept our sincerest condolences.

To the lowlife's who seek to cause havoc during this time our utter contempt for your actions, hang your head in shame.

John Berry

Copper Wire

After having dug to a depth of 10 feet last year, British scientists found traces of copper wire dating back 200 years and came to the conclusion that their ancestors already had a telephone network more than 150 years ago.

Not to be outdone by the Brits, in the weeks that followed, an American archaeologist dug to a depth of 20 feet, and shortly after, a story published in the New York Times: "American archaeologists, finding traces of 250-year-old copper wire, have concluded that their ancestors already had an advanced high-tech communications network 50 years earlier than the British".

One week later, the state's Dept of Minerals and Energy in Western Australia, reported the following: "After digging as deep as 30 feet in Western Australia's Pilbara region, Jack Lucknow, a self-taught archaeologist, reported that he found absolutely bugger all. Jack has therefore concluded that 250 years ago, Australia had already gone wireless."

Just makes you bloody proud to be Australian.

GONE BUT NOT FORGOTTEN

It is again with great regret that I needed to include this column in this edition of the newsletter, the members and committee are well aware that as time marches on all of us will transfer to a new station. The only problem we have with that is we will need to go through the rigours of being the new person there. It is important you never forget the members who are up there now as you never know who you may finish on shift with. I hope the following will refresh your memories about the lives of these members who have left us.

Albert Thomas Smith 24/1/1927-7/11/2010



During the sixties I had the privilege of spending a number of rosters with Alby at the old No 11 Station Lalor; he was and always will be in my eyes a top bloke and a good firey.

It is interesting it was not until his celebration of life that I learnt, amongst other things that he ran at Stawell; I knew he was quick on his feet but I thought it was only to get away from me at the

station, now I know why I could not catch him. David Lodge was the other bloke on his shift, both a top crew to have with you when it hit the fan.

I remember the crews at the station were all very proficient with all facets of their appliance and its equipment. The first day I arrived there Alby & David told me what drill they were doing that day (open water drill with the use of a 200 litre drum) now me being the new boy on the block I thought they were joking as the appliance there was a tanker with approximately 5000 litres of water. Why? Later that roster I learnt the reason why, imagine one of those nasty summer days where we responded to assist the CFA in the Plenty/Yarrambat area, on proceeding to the area it was obvious from the colour of the products of combustion this was more than just a bushy.

On arrival at one front we found two volunteer crews fighting a losing battle with their small tankers and hose reels as they had run out of water. The fire they were fighting involved one farmhouse well alight next to it a double garage also on fire which by its radiated heat had set another farmhouse on the other side on fire. We set up one attack line and an exposure line just when a off duty firey (Ken Jones) arrived to give us a hand, I went looking for water and found a small wash out from the farms piggery (not the sweetest smelling) I doubled back and told them, seeing them get to work with the suction I now know why they do a lot of open water drill. "Alby and David made sure I never forgot" Alby will be missed by all.

(A little footnote for all, if you use suction hoses in a wash out from a piggery make sure you clean them ASAP, I forgot and the smell is not the best).

Kevin Stein 13/6/41-8/11/2010.



Kevin a career firefighter from the CFA, I did not meet him during his career the first time we met was as a member of the RFA, I must say he was one of those blokes you meet and you know up front he is the genuine article. I have no hesitation in saying he would have been a great bloke to be on shift with.

In discussion with some of his peers I found my assessment of him was very close. This is what they said

about him; one said he was the ultimate career firefighter, others said they could not think of a better firey to have backing them up at a job, safe, highly skilled, committed to the safety of others, fun, kind, community minded this is just some of his virtues they mentioned.

Kevin I am not sure of the CFA career protocol with the junior man when they arrive, but from what I have been told I imagine you will have no worries. Kevin will be missed by all.

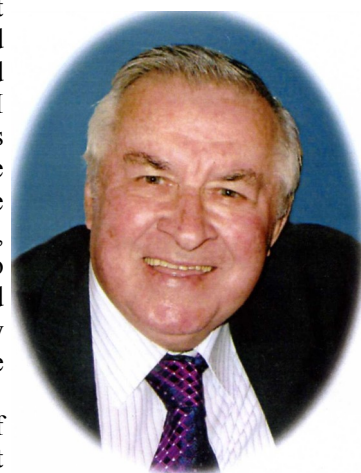
Terence Vincent Sloan 9/7/37-2/1/2011.

I first came into contact with Terry at the old Eastern Hill Station and from the limited time I had with him it was obvious he had all the attributes that I believe make a good firey, loyal, dedicated, fun, willing to do the hard yard, good family man and very interested in the community.

I remember after one of the jobs you like to put out of your mind Terry sensed that some of the crews needed a lift and he responded positively to help them overcome their problem. I lost contact with him, the different shifts and districts have a habit of doing that, in fact even as secretary of the RFA I was not even aware he was not going through the best of health. Why am I not surprised, that was his nature not to burden and/or tell anyone that he was crook.

Terry's family arranged Funeral Prayers at the Heritage Chapel and during the service one of his close mates Robert Ireland gave the Eulogy and I must tell you from what we heard Terry never lost his great sense of humour he had from early childhood right up to the time he left to go around the corner. Terry was a top firey who will be missed by all.

John Berry



TURBULENT TIMES OF THE MELBOURNE FIRE BRIGADES

1835 – 1970

Author, Les Gray, continues with his insight into the early days of Melbourne's Fire Services, the political intrigues between the volunteer and insurance brigades and the struggle for a decent water supply for the growing city.

From the 1870's until the late 1880's Melbourne had a major building boom and continued to grow, it's suburbs kept spreading. Immigrants from many countries around the world kept coming in, they brought with them their skills and there was ample scope for enterprising people to prosper.

The most effective way for early detection of fire in the city was the firemen on duty in the Watch Tower at the Insurance Companies Headquarters Station in Little Bourke Street, many of the city's fires were spotted this way, it was still a far better method than any one seeing a fire and having to run to the nearest fire station or town hall to raise the alarm of fire. But times were slowly changing, as early as 1839 in Boston U.S.A. the first electric telegraph fire alarm system was in use and by 1852 the first electric fire box alarm circuits were installed. Alas, in Melbourne the brigades were approximately 33 years away from installing street fire alarms and telegraphic links between buildings and fire stations. Captain Kelly of the Prahran Brigade was well aware of the advantages of these overseas developments. Supt. Hoad, many years before they were installed in Melbourne and it's outer suburbs on a systematic basis, advocated their use. By 1885 both Capt. Kelly and Capt. Catt of the North Melbourne Brigade had conceived and installed a form of electric street fire alarm circuit connected to their appropriate fire stations.

By 1876 there was a telegraphic link between the Insurance Co's Headquarters Station and the South Melbourne Fire Brigade Station. Nine years later there were telegraphic links between the Insurance Companies Headquarters Station, Melbourne Post Office, Albion & Carlton Breweries Brigades, Exhibition Buildings, Government Printery, and the Russell Street Police Station. The first automatic sprinkler system was patented in America in 1872. By 1889 Grinnells patented the automatic sprinkler alarm system and they were now being installed in large factories, spinning mills, and multi story buildings, four years later they were introduced into England and several years later into Melbourne). The Grinnell system operated once the temperature rose above 120 deg. F. this triggered a local alarm, it was not long before the alarm systems were linked by electric land lines to the nearest fire stations. These developments restricted the need for more volunteer fire fighters but opened the way for more permanent full time paid firemen manning the stations to take the calls, etc.

By this time the old 50 ft. lengths of leather, copper riveted delivery hose which had been in service since the 1850's had been replaced by rubber lined cotton web fire hose, (it was a relief for the fire fighters as the leather hose was heavy and had to be greased regularly to keep them supple and prevent cracking, when in use they picked up dirt and mud making firemen's uniforms and hands very dirty). This new type

hose now could be wound around the drums of hand pulled hose reels and the larger drums of horse drawn hose reels, by the early 1880's seamless cotton hose appeared, this hose was ideal, capable of being carried on hose carts flat, made up on the flake, coil, or bight and enabled hose held in reserve to be made up on the bollard and stored off the ground hanging on wooden pegs on the walls in fire stations hose rooms.

In 1883 to gain some control over the volunteer fire brigades at fires the insurance companies offered each brigade an amount of money up to more than half the amount provided by their Municipal Council annual allowance, in return for this the Insurance Companies Brigade Superintendent and his Officers would be allowed to inspect them, only on condition that they were not to use large diameter hose at small fires. Also in addition they would be paid 5 shillings per man for the first hour and 2 shillings and 6 pence for subsequent hours, only when requested by the Insurance Companies Superintendent to work outside their areas. (It was an effort by the Insurance Companies to restrict the number of volunteer brigades attending and congesting fires in the city.)

On the 24th May 1883 Captain M. Kelly of the Prahran Municipal Brigade called a meeting of interested firefighters and they formed the Metropolitan Fire Brigades Association, whose main objective was to unite all brigades in Melbourne under the control of one Officer and eventually into one brigade. As the volunteer brigades in and around Melbourne increased and became affiliated with the Association it progressively went from strength to strength and became a major rival to the Insurance Brigades authority, by now there were 50 or more volunteer brigades operating in Melbourne and its suburbs. Overall many volunteers spent their time around their fire stations having a drink and playing card's, waiting for calls, fire stations became a place for social gatherings, it was unlikely that professional firemen met there.

In the meantime in 1885 Supt. Hoad was waiting for the arrival of his first Steam Engine Pumper, it was a medium size Shand Mason Pumper with a capacity of 500 G.P.M. at 100 – 120 psi. It cost approximately 650 Pounds. When the engine arrived a trial was arranged for it and it was found it could easily deliver water through 2 – 2 ½ inch dia. hose lines of 200 feet allowing for 10 psi friction loss for every 100 feet. He found that it could easily do the equivalent work of 4 old manual pumpers with a good steady stream of water being delivered. It cost only 2 shillings per hour for coal to run it, as against the payment of 2 shillings per man per hour with the average of 30 men per manual pumper would cost 3 pounds, over a ten hour duration of a large city fire the cost would be 120 pounds plus costs for food and beer. The steam engine working continuously for the same time would cost 20 shillings. Hoad recommended that 2 more steam pumpers be purchased, the insurance companies approved and placed a further order with Shand Mason Fire Engineering Co. in England.

Hoad considered that manual pumpers were adequate for fires in 1 and 2 storey buildings as they could be on scene very quickly and got to work containing the fire before the steamers arrived. They were to remain in commission until the early 1900's, as were the hand pulled hose reels particularly in the outer suburbs. The Steam Pumpers solved the problem of how to deliver water to upper floor levels of



The Carlton & District Volunteer Fire Brigade's hose cart and crew, (Circa 1880's)

Image; Fire Services Museum Victoria

the buildings now being constructed, several were 90 – 100 ft. tall. Hoad again advised that he needed 1 more Steam Pumper and recommended that it be purchased, the Insurance Co's. approved and placed a further order with Shand Mason. In 1887 the Melbourne City Council bought a 600 GPM Steam Pumper for 880 Pounds (the Lady Benjamin) named after the Lord Mayor's wife. The engine was loaned to the Insurance Companies Brigade and by January 1889 Supt. Hoad had four Steam Pumps including the Lady Benjamin under his command.

In the late 1880's Hoad's worry now was how to cope with removing people quickly in the event of a fire in the new taller buildings which merchants were now constructing. In those days very little thought was given to fire protection being built into them, (as it was to prove a decade later with the serious loss of property and lives - mainly firefighters). The need now was for larger and higher extension ladders and had become a major priority.

The Melbourne City Council Corporation Brigade, the Insurance Companies Brigade, the Melbourne Fire Brigades Associations Volunteers and the Carlton Brewery Brigade between them had 3 extension ladders, all horse drawn and manually operated, 2 of the ladders could reach a height of 56 feet, one of which was a manually operated Shand Mason ladder drawn by 2 horses abreast, the City Council had an old Italian ladder which could reach a theoretical height of 72 feet. This ladder was seldom taken onto fires, if it was it was only used as a water tower, Supt. Hoad had reservations about it's safety. Supt. Hoad also had at his disposal several 2 wheeled horse drawn ladder carts carrying 30 ft., 20 ft., & 12 ft. ladders and 2 hook scaling pompier ladders, also these carts carried hose lengths, stand pipes, branches and sundry items.

Circa 1889, the Insurance Companies were also concerned at the lack of extension ladders, they placed an order and purchased from the La France Engineering Company, San Francisco, a Hayes Hook and Ladder combined fire escape. It also carried on the floor of the wagon several 30 ft. and 20 ft. manual extension ladders, and 4 Pompier hook scaling ladders, these ladders allowed firemen to climb from window sill to window sill up the face of the building, and then lower down rope lines and haul hose lines and other gear aloft. The cost of the ladder was approximately 4,500 American dollars landed in Melbourne.

Daniel Hayes who was a trained engineer and at one time

was a Superintendent of the San Francisco Fire Department, in charge of the Steam Engine Pumpers, for some time had witnessed fire fighters roping together 3 or 4 lengths of 20 foot wooden ladders in order to gain access to upper floors of taller buildings. As a result he started working on the concept of an aerial ladder to reach greater heights than could be reached by the conventional hand ladders, by 1868 he had designed and constructed the worlds first successful aerial ladder, several years later he sold his patent rights to La France Fire Equipment Manufacturing Co., he joined the company and over the next 24 years the company made further improvements on his original ladder.

Hayes original ladder was said to be ingeniously constructed and simple to operate, records indicate that there was little known about his first ladder, of how it functioned, however it is known that it consisted of 3 wooden ladder lengths and when fully raised (elevated) and the fly length extended that it could allow fire fighters to climb to a height of 50 odd ft. The ladders were carried on the chassis of a wooden wagon supported on 4 artillery iron shod wooden wheels, it was drawn by two horses abreast, fixed at the front of the wagon was a pulling pole fitted at rear with 2 out riding swingle bars (one for each horse) the horses were attached to the pole and swingle bars by either leather traces or chains from their quick snap on collars, the pulling pole in turn was fixed to a turn table at the front of the wagon allowing the front wagon wheels to turn in the direction that the driver required.

Situated at the centre front of the wagon directly behind the drivers seat was a turntable that was bolted to the floor of the wagon carrying an inverted V shaped metal fulcrum frame, the fulcrum frame housed all of the operational mechanisms of the ladder, a series of intermeshing reduction gears when engaged controlled all of the movements of the ladder via the manually winched cable drum.

It appears that the original drawings and specifications of the ladder have been lost over time, there is very little information to be found, only a few tantalizing facts. I was fortunate to locate a fairly clear photograph of the original ladder, after studying it for some time I believe I have come up with a reasonable idea of how the ladder was operated? There is one integral function that is unknown, is how the bottom and top lengths of the ladder were joined together (married up) when they were raised. It is not known if the 2 lengths were raised simultaneously or individually. (I believe it was simultaneously). However the design of the ladder was that the bottom length of the ladder was carried on its metal support frame horizontally approximately 4 feet directly above the top length of the ladder which was carried horizontally on the floor of the wagon directly below, and it had another length of ladder called "the fly length" fixed to it. The bottom length was attached approximately 3 feet back from its heel to the cable drum winding shaft situated on top of the metal fulcrum frame, this allowed for the raising and lowering of the bottom length off its bed. When both the bottom and top lengths were raised up vertically, and over the front of the wagon to approximately 70 degs. of inclination, the fly length could now be hand winched and extended allowing for the final adjustments to be made, and trained around allowing for the head of the ladder to meet it's intended objective i.e. window sill or roof parapet.

(Continued on page 10)

(Continued from page 9)

What is known is that the top length was winched off its bed on the floor of the wagon by engaging a set of bevel gears which were fixed to a long metal threaded drive shaft, when activated by the winching drum, the action was as the winching handles were turned around the long threaded shaft moved through a large nut fixed to the top length near its heel, it appears that the heel was attached to a sliding metal housing and a pivotal shaft that passed through the ladder above its heel allowing for the length to be raised or lowered as the shaft turned through the nut it moved the ladder forward, subsequently as it was winched around the ladders heel was pushed outwards finally matching up with the inclination of the bottom ladder. The way in which Hayes designed and calculated the ladders length when attached to their pivotal shafts determined the amount of overlap of the top length had when it rested on top of the bottom length when joined for safety reasons, now as the ladder came together the conundrum was how they were connected up, it appears that today know one knows how this was achieved. The ladder now being joined, by selecting the appropriate gearing the fly length could now be extended out by hand winching of the cable drum, via the cable and pulley's fixed to the length, the ladder being fixed to the fulcrum frame could be trained around on the turntable, he also incorporated side support frames of the ladders against collapse from pressure and tension.

To make up and house the ladders the appropriate reduction gears had to be engaged and the cable drum was winched around extending the fly length allowing for the 2 rung pawls near the heel of the length to clear the rung below, now the hand pawls on either side of the cable winding drum were disengaged and the drum could be reverse wound, allowing for the spring loaded clearing tongues on the rung pawls to clear the lower rungs on the way down returning the ladder to its original position, once this was carried out the top and bottom lengths could be hand winched and lowered to their road travelling position, then the hand pawls on the winding drum were re engaged and the slack of the cable was wound up onto the cable drum.

Daniel Hayes' ladder was the worlds first successful aerial ladder, it was the modest forerunner of the modern all steel welded six section turntable extension ladders being built in the 1960's. being combined with light weight high tensile strength steel to give high transverse strength and twisting resistance to the ladder lengths when fully extended to unprecedented heights of a 146 feet against both pressure and tension. Maybe today's turn table extension ladders (50 years later) go higher?

The Hayes-La France turntable extension ladder (The American Ladder) which Supt. Stein received in Melbourne in 1892 was a very much improved version of Hayes' first



The MFB's Hayes-LaFrance turntable ladder drill in Victoria Parade, (Circa 1904).

Image: MFB Media & Communication.

aerial ladder invented 24 years before, it was still manually operated and designed to be drawn by 3 horses, more like the modern extension ladders in action, it was positioned and then elevated, the top length was now extended, winched out via cables and pulleys on rollers and guides built into the top and sides of the bottom length, the ladder was also trained and plumbed by hand. Both lengths were still designed and fitted with larger side metal frames diagonally braced to prevent collapsing of the ladder against pressure and tension when extended. The ladder now could reach a height of 65 ft. some years later they were designed to reach a height of 75 feet.

In late 1885 Supt. Hoad due to ill health was contemplating his retirement, this caused consternation with the Insurance Companies and they decided it was unwise considering the existing bad relations between the brigades in Melbourne to appoint a new Superintendent from their ranks and subsequently in mid 1886 they started advertising throughout their London Offices for a replacement and begun interviewing prospective candidates.

The successful candidate was Superintendent David Stein of London's Margate Fire Brigade. David Stein had an advantage over the other applicants as he had in his records of saving the Insurance Co's. large amounts of money in attempted fraudulent claims.

David Steins background:- he was born in 1853 in London, as a boy he served in the Royal Navy as an apprentice at sea for 5 years, in 1873 at the age of 20 he joined the London Fire Brigade and during his years there he was suspended twice for bad behaviour and for fighting, drinking and having women on the fire station premises. Capt. Eyre Massey Shaw was a full of life and vigour Irishman who had previously been Chief Constable and Chief Fire Officer of Belfast, who on the 1st. January 1866 was appointed Chief Officer of London's revamped Metropolitan Fire Brigades, Massey Shaw being a kind and fair minded person after some consideration transferred Fireman David Stein to London's River Thames fire fighting boats. These boats had large 1,000, G.P.M. Shand Mason steam engine pumpers installed in them, fitted up with a large manoeuvrable monitor branch and if required could be changed over to supply 4 – 2 1/2" dia. hose lines. These fire boats protected a complex of wharves, large warehouses, ships chandlers stores, and berthed ships from fire. At any one time there could be up to 100 large ocean going wooden cargo and passenger sailing ships tied up along both sides of the Thames. It was one of Britain's main ports for the importation and the exporting of goods.

Whilst serving with the River Thames Fire Boats it appeared that Stein had settled down, his behaviour and fire fighting capabilities had improved, impressing his superior officer who noted this on his service record. In 1883 a

vacancy became available for a Superintendent in Charge of London's Margate Fire Brigade, Stein approached the now Capt. Sir Eyre Massey Shaw, for a character reference for the position, he was successful and was promoted Superintendent in Charge. Four years later in 1886 he became aware that in Melbourne in the Colony of Victoria, Australia, the Insurance Companies were looking for an experienced Superintendent to take charge of their Brigade. Again he approached Massey Shaw for a reference and arranged for an interview with the Insurance Companies representative, he was successful and in late 1886 he wound up his affairs and set sail for Melbourne arriving in May 1887 and took up his appointment as Superintendent in charge of the Insurance Companies Fire Brigade.

He would have been forewarned of the state of affairs in Melbourne, the disunity and hostility between the existing fire brigades. Stein took up residence in the Insurance Companies Headquarters Station located at Law Courts Place, Little Bourke Street. He now assumed the role of overall Chief as his predecessor had been, being unknown and coming in with an excellent record he probably would have been accepted by most of the volunteer brigades, but he set about very quickly making himself unpopular with the volunteers as Dalton and Hoad had been before him. In late December 1887 whilst invited to attend a Suburban Fire Brigades demonstration and meeting, he fell out of line with the Melbourne Fire Brigades Association and the Suburban Volunteer Union when in reply to a speech he was asked to respond to, he said that since arriving and taking up his position he had found that it was almost impossible for genuine brigades to co-operate with larrikin brigades and he thought that there were larrikins in both the Melbourne Fire Brigades Association and the Suburban Volunteer Fire Brigades Union. To make matters worse he said that some association brigades were very useful but their numbers had increased to such an extent that they had become a perfect curse!!! It's no surprise that he had trouble in gaining respect and having command at fires in Melbourne.

Some days later Supt. Mauger of the Clifton Hill Temperance Volunteer Brigade made a public speech condemning Stein, Supt. James Ballinger of the Carlton Brewery Brigade believed that Stein should be recognised as Chief of the Melbourne Volunteer Brigades, as a result of a difference of opinion he tendered his resignation as President of the Melbourne Fire Brigades Association. Supt Mauger replaced Ballinger as President. This was the best thing possible as under Mauger's control of the Melbourne Fire Brigades Association their outlook changed and they became more amenable with the Insurance Companies Brigade, but there were still differences in the ranks between them and the Insurance Companies Brigade.

More on volunteer brigades :- In 1886 there were many private fire brigades, formed by or associated with companies, the Yorkshire, Albion and Shamrock breweries had their own brigades. In Richmond a volunteer brigade was formed and they called themselves the Yarra Berg Volunteer Brigade No. 1, they met at Mitchells Timber Yard, Burnley, they had a rival the Yarra Berg Volunteer Brigade No. 2. and they met in Cremean's Timber Yard, Corner of Swan & Mary Sts., Richmond, the reason that I am mentioning this is that there is a tie in later on in the series re the two Cremean Brothers who I believe were sons of the founder of Cremean's Timber Yard, who were to play a significant role in the management of the Melbourne Fire

Brigades Employees Union in 1935 until the late 1940's.

By May 1888 sensible efforts were made to restrict the number of Volunteer Brigades and no new ones were to be admitted to the association in areas already well covered by existing brigades. The Associations President Mauger sent a letter to all of the Municipal Councils asking them to not allow unauthorised brigades to use their fire plugs as they were paid for by the councils for the use of authorised fire brigades only.

On the 28th. Dec. 1888 tensions were simmering and there was an argument at a small fire in Russel Street, Stein ordered a small hose line to be run out by his own men and no water from any other brigades present to be used, unfortunately one of the Association Brigades had arrived on scene first and had already shipped a standpipe and had run a line of hose out, Stein ordered his men to take over the water resulting in an angry and heated exchange of words. The brigades had only just returned to their stations when they were called out again, this time to a fire in Swanston Street, once again members of the Association disagreed with Stein by refusing to take his orders in regard to how many lines of hose and water were to be used here and there. An all in brawl broke out involving approximately 50 opposing firefighters, they fought over fire plugs and hose lines, several lengths were cut to pieces with axes as the fire burnt on unchecked. The crowds looking on were treated to an unbelievable sight, they barracked and cheered on the antagonists, both Supt. Mauger of the Association Brigades and Supt. Stein of the Insurance Co's Brigade appealed to police for intervention, the result was that one of Stein's men was charged with rioting and was bailed out to appear in the Melbourne Magistrates Court next day.

The brawl over fire plugs and water finally made the Mayor Benjamin Benjamin next day to issue an official Melbourne City Council public directive that in future fire plugs and water were to be used only under the direction of Mr. David Stein. It answered the question of who was to be in command of fires within the cities boundaries, but it did not solve the problems of whether Stein was in command of brigades in Melbourne's Suburbs.

By now 1888 the George Angus Co. Ltd., of Highbentham, Lancaster, England had developed a durable fire hose made from a seamless woven canvas which provided for high burst pressure characteristics along with flexibility. It proved to have a longer service capability than any other types of hoses previously in use by the brigades throughout the world (Many readers will recall that during the second world war the Angus Co., invented a reinforced rubber lined hose, which became the new standard for fire fighting hoses). By the mid 1960's the company had developed a plastic type covering for their hoses which now made them water tight and negated the need for drying, it also gave the hose lengths suitable abrasion protection.

Circa 1885 a select committee of 5 of Melbourne's most experienced Fire Officers were commissioned to work on a proposed Bill to be presented to parliament for the amalgamation of all the brigades in Melbourne into one organisation and placed under the control of a Fire Brigades Board and Chief Officer. The selected men were Supt. William Hoad, (after he retired Supt. Stein took his place), Insurance Company Brigade, Supt. Samuel Mauger, Clifton Hill Temperance Brigade, Supt. James Ballinger, Carlton

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Breweries Brigade, Capt. Sir Hendry de Kellett, Kew Municipal Brigade, and Lt Col. T.S. Marshall, Melbourne Fire Brigades Association.

1889 proved to be a disastrous and tragic year for the brigades of Melbourne when at various fires an unprecedented loss of firefighter and civilian lives were lost, and many were injured. The first major fire of the year was when an alarm of fire was raised at 1700 hours on Easter Monday 22nd. April. It involved the Bijou Theatre and spread into adjoining buildings, one on the West side was Marshalls & Co., printing works containing highly combustible contents such as reams of paper, cardboards and flammable ink thinners, another was the Palace Hotel, it became involved when fire penetrated through into the Lift Well machinery winding gear room situated on top of the roof structure, firemen were fighting the fire from this lift when the rope and mild steel cables supporting the lift and

woodwork caught on fire. Enormous damage was done by excessive use of water, many firemen got drunk and would not take orders from the Insurance Co's Deputy Supt. A. Mc Dowell, and only did so if they felt like it. (Supt. Stein was on leave). As the oncoming brigades arrived on scene there was no system in place by which they automatically reported to Mc Dowell, they got work wherever they liked.

During the fire a wall collapsed killing Captain Parsons of the East Melbourne Brigade and Thomas Williams a civilian was injured and he later died in hospital. Lieutenant Scott of the Albion Brigade, Lieut. Thomas of the Carlton Brigade, and another unknown fireman and a civilian were injured, they were all removed to the Melbourne Hospital. It took until 0700 hours the following day to bring the fire under control. The Bijou Theatre and Marshall's printing works were gutted and the Palace Hotel was severely damaged by heat, smoke and water.

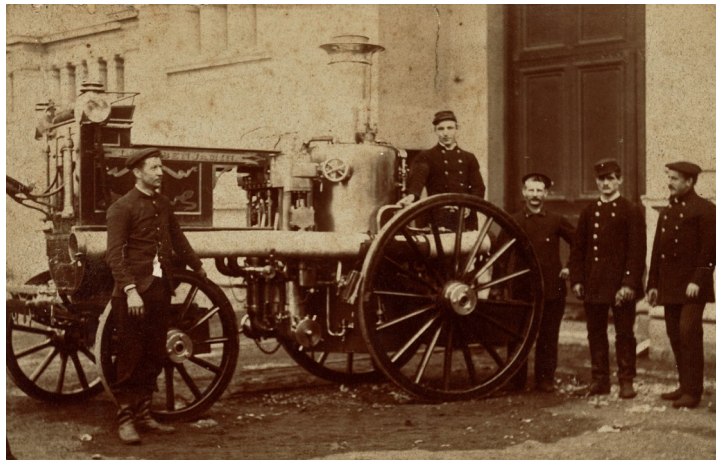
An Inquest was held some time later and found that current Fire Brigades organisation was totally unsatisfactory, one of the findings was that there was no overall command and control over the brigades attending the fire, it was virtually non-existent. As a result all of the brigades got together realizing that the time had come for chaotic ways of the past to end and they agreed to take Supt. Steins orders, at last common sense prevailed.

On the 10th. August at a fire at Robb's Building in Collins Street West, Fire Fighter Joseph Fox of the Carlton Brewery Brigade was killed when he fell from the building.

On 13th. Sept, fire destroyed George & George, 5 storey Dept. Store along with Allan's Music Store and several adjacent buildings in Collins Street, Firefighters Earnest Johnson and Thomas Laite both of the Insurance Co.'s Brigade and John Mc Leod of the South Melbourne Brigade

were killed at the fire. Police had trouble controlling the large numbers of onlookers.

The Shand Mason Steamer, the Lady Benjamin the largest at the time of Melbourne's Steamers was used for the first time at the fire. The Steamers carried in their side compartments bags of coal, enough for approximately 10 hours of operation, plus oil for lubricating the pumps bearings and other moving parts. Stein was very pleased with it's performance. The Steamers and Extension Ladders being second line appliances were held back and on receiving word back for assistance were turned out. The steamers Firemen Boiler Operators made sure that the ash pan and fire box had been cleaned out and that a fire had been set i.e. oily rags were piled up in the fire box and small split kindling and larger pieces were placed over and around them with a good supply of coal. On receipt of a call the first action was to light the fire up, by the time the horses were fitted with their quick acting snap collars and harness and yoked into the steamer and the time taken in arriving on scene the engine had attained a good working head of steam.



The Shand Mason "Lady Benjamin" the largest of Melbourne's steamers outside the Royal Exhibition Building, (Circa 1889)
Image; Fire Services Museum Victoria.

In the meantime firemen from the horse drawn hose carts and large hose reels had set up a canvas dam or dams supplied with water from nearby fire plugs or ground ball hydrants for the steamers to drop in their suction hoses and get to work. It did not take the firemen long to run out delivery hoses where required or enter buildings and find the fire and get to work, or set up the ladders as water towers and for

rescue operations or taking hose lines aloft etc. All of the brigades, whether full time or volunteer, took pride in being efficient and probably tried to outdo one another, this may be one of the reasons why so many men were killed and injured at fires?

The 65ft American Hayes-LaFrance Turntable extension ladder when returning from a fire in Collins Street in late 1889, was making a left hand turn around a corner, a young boy stepped out from the curbing and the near side rear wheel ran over him, killing him instantly. The driver up front in the drivers seat didn't know anything about it for some time, there was nothing that he could do, it was indeed a very sad unfortunate accident. (I believe the fire that the ladder was returning to station from could have been the George & George and Allans Music Stores fire on 13th. Sept.) The final tragedy of the year occurred on the 23rd. Oct. when Firefighter John Box's clothing caught fire from a flaming torch he was carrying in a Brigades night procession.

The government became alarmed at the number of deaths and injuries and of the public hue and cry, knowing that the proposed draft bill was imminent to be presented to parliament for ratification, when presented it quickly passed into law in almost in its entirety with a few amendments.

“ The Last Hurrah” All of the old inner city volunteer brigades, and some of the outer suburban brigades including the Insurance Co. Brigade fought their last major fire together on January 1st. 1891, at approximately 0400 hours a passerby noticed smoke coming out of a rear window on the East side of the 5 storey Mutual Store building in Flinders Street, he ran off and raised the alarm of fire. By the time the first hose cart had arrived on scene flames were issuing from most of the rear ground floor windows, firemen proceeded by using axes, sledge hammers and hand saws to cut and break down the heavy burglar proof wooden doors, they were unaware that after hours the keys were kept at the Police Watch-house in Russel Street.

Gaining entry into the building took some time to achieve and by the time firemen did the whole ground floor was heavily smoke logged. Windows were broken on the First and Second floors in an effort to vent the building as a result of this there was an in rush of air causing strong upward drafts, the oxygen in the air supporting the combustion of the fire further increased its intensity and spread rapidly, the buildings fate was now sealed and as the fire raced from floor level to floor level via open stairways and lift wells and through any wall and floor cavities, an hour later the Mutual Store roof imploded in, taking the top floor with it.

Supt. Stein realised it was now a matter of containment, he ordered the old Italian antiquated 72ft. Ladder (as you have previously read) and in this case it took firemen 15 minutes to position and erect it as a water tower. Because of the fierce flames and radiant heat it was very difficult for firemen to operate it effectively as a water tower.

The Mutual Store was gutted, several fire fighters were injured, another was trapped under rubble and was rescued, the men were removed to the Melbourne Hospital and treated for minor injuries.

The Mutual Store was situated in Flinders Street in a city block bounded by Elizabeth, Swanston and Collins Streets with Flinders Lane in between. This block of software, retail buildings and merchants warehouses in the 1890's was the Insurance companies **Nightmare**. Stein whilst attending the Mutual Building Fire had a premonition about the fire dangers of the area, he quoted in the Argus Newspaper on the next day the 2nd Jan. 1891. “I might say the whole of this block is one which the Insurance Companies are very careful about, the stock's are so enormous and valuable and the risk of fire is so great. There is scarcely what we call a proven fire break in the whole block, that is a wall built up and finished in a parapet without any windows or openings in it. If a fire were to break out in Craig Williamson and Thomas's stores in Elizabeth Street, might if a strong wind was blowing sweep the whole block right through to Swanston Street” Nearly six years later his premonition proved to be right.

It is interesting to note in the records of how many volunteer brigades were operating in Melbourne and its suburbs i.e.- between 1889 and 1891, mentioned in the Insurance Companies reports to the Victorian Government covering the above period that there were 68 different brigades attending fires in Melbourne. Other reports indicate that on the 30th. April 1891 at 2400 hours that all of the 55 Volunteer Brigades in the Melbourne Metropolitan area were disbanded !!!

It is also recorded that the Chief Officer David Stein of the

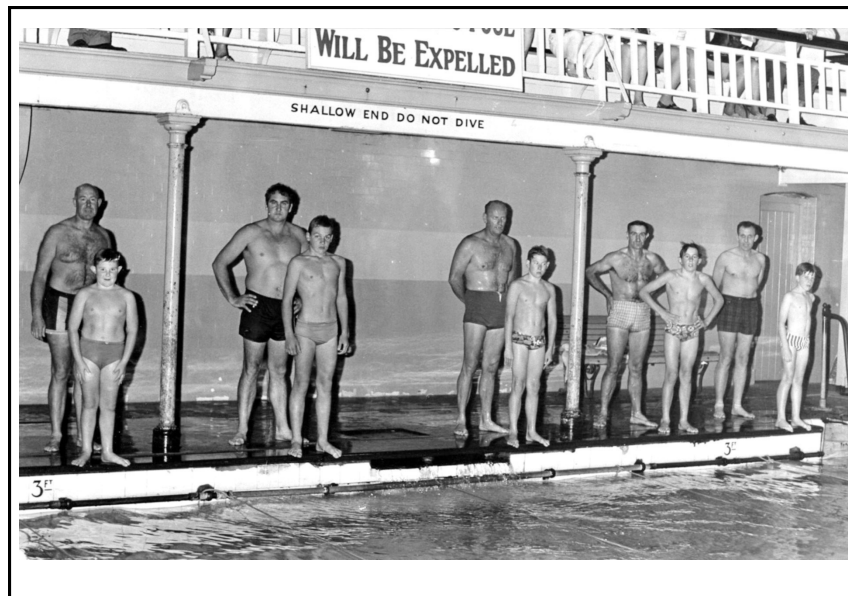
new M.F.B. took over most of the volunteer firemen, their stations and equipment and that he absorbed them into the Melbourne Metropolitan Fire Brigades. Maybe it could have only been 13 volunteer brigades disbanded because they did not come up to Steins standards? It appears that the records are far from accurate, it's my view Stein had the timeframe between the Metropolitan Fire Brigades Act being passed on the 18th. Dec.1890 and the M.F.B. Boards first meeting in Melbourne's Town Hall on March 6th. 1891 where the nine board members appointed him as the Chief Officer of the imminent new M.F.B. Stein had in these 2½ months or maybe 12 months prior to decide what volunteer brigades would be taken into the M.F.B., as he was one of the five officers working on the draft bill and would have had inside information giving him plenty of time to inspect, sum up and advise the Governor in Council prior to the Fire Brigade Act being made into law. On the 30th. April 1891 at precisely 2400 hours and a second later it was the 1st. May and the Metropolitan Fire Brigades came into being and David Stein became it's first Chief Officer.

The population of Melbourne was now nearly 500,000 and the great building and land boom bubble had burst, Victoria was suffering from its first major economic depression, speculators who had borrowed money believing that the good times would continue, found it hard to repay their debts, banks and businesses failed, and employment was steadily getting hard to come by. As the gold run out so did the easy times come to an end, these hard times more or less lasted for another 54 years, through the Great World War and the Great Depression that followed until the 1950's after the Second World War, when once again good times slowly appeared.

A little on Stein's former fire fighting colleagues. Those who worked on the draft bill for the M.F.B. Act, through their expertise and efforts, were promoted to higher levels of management within the M.F.B. Board structure. The three men concerned because of their professionalism, fire fighting experience and organising acumen were held in high esteem by the other members of the first M.F.B. Board.

You are well aware of Chief Officer Stein's abilities, he proved to be a very capable administrator and moulded the Melbourne Fire Brigade on the London Brigade, another achiever was Supt. Samuel Mauger, he was born at Newtown Geelong in 1857 and as a young boy was promoted to assist the Captain of the Newtown-Chilwell Volunteer Fire Brigade, as a young man he moved to Melbourne where he was to form the Fitzroy Municipal Volunteer Fire Brigade and later the Clifton Hill Temperance Volunteer Fire Brigade and was elected Superintendent of same, he furthered his career when he replaced Supt. James Ballenger in Dec. 1887 when he resigned as President of the Melbourne Fire Brigades Association. Both Supt. James Ballinger and Supt. Samuel Mauger were appointed to the M.F.B. Board as Government representatives by the Governor in Council. Capt. Sir Henry de Kellett (an ex President of the Melbourne Fire Brigades Association) was appointed to the Board as the Southern Municipalities representative. Another member of the select committee of five was Lt-Colonel T. S. Marshall of the Melbourne Fire Brigades Association who in 1894 was appointed by the Governor in Council as Chief Officer of the Country Fire Brigades.

To be continued.
Les Gray



GUESS WHO?

This photograph was taken a number of years ago and it involved the MFB swimming club, the event was a father & son race (I will admit the dads were a lot of posers)

The answers we are looking for;

1. Where was the picture taken?
2. The names of the fathers competing?
3. Was the start at the deep or shallow end?

First correct answer will receive a towel left behind in one of the change cubicles, it of course has been washed and stored in moth balls.

“GUESS WHO”

From Last Issue

1. The Football Team

We had two members ring with the correct answers, Kevin Tait & John Howe.

The answers are as follows, The picture was taken of the team at the front of the pavilion of the Richmond Football ground after they had won the 1963 premiership.

Neither member attended the AGM, therefore the historical prize of the chipped 7ozs glass from Jack Titus’s Pub has been forwarded to the glass recyclers. (What a Shame)



2. The Fishermen

This picture, that was not as clear as we would have liked, came up with some strange answers.

The one holding the fish was correctly named Cappy (short for Captain), the nickname occurred when a female thought that he was such a distinguished looking gentleman when a group of firies were gaining knowledge in the best way to handle rowing boats, I believe it was boats.

The wild looking one who is still in the fire service obviously must have everyone too scared to give us the answer. Or no-one wanted the washed socks on offer. (Pity)



Seen at a pokies venue recently, the ninety something widow of a long passed member who had the reputation of being a little on the tight side with his money.

It’s good to see the lady still out and about, and without the worry of breaking the strict budget” which the “**Stingy Member**” imposed on the household over the years.

WHERE DO THE PILLS GO?

A row of bottles on my shelf
 Caused me to analyse myself.
 One yellow pill I have to pop
 Goes to my heart so it won’t stop.
 A little white one that I take

Goes to my hands so they won’t shake.
 The blue one that I use a lot
 Tells me I’m happy when I’m not.
 The purple pill goes to my brain
 And tells me I have no pain.
 The capsule tells me not to wheeze
 Or cough or sneeze.

The red one, the smallest of them all,
 Goes to my head so I won’t fall.
 Such an array of brilliant pills,
 Helping cure all kinds of ills.
 But what I’d really like to know
 Is what tells each pill where to go!

Poem shared by Silver.



24 Roditis Drive, Ocean Grove, 3226

Your hosts: retired firefighter
Lin Bell and wife Jan Bell

Week days or weekends, for 2 or 4 nights or whatever takes your fancy...

- Fully self contained 3BR house, close to shops, cafes and beach
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Balls And Brass Monkeys

It was necessary to keep a good supply of cannon balls near the cannon on old war ships. But how to prevent them from rolling about the deck was the problem. The storage method devised was to stack them as a square based pyramid, with one ball on top resting on four, resting on nine, which rested on sixteen.

Thus, a supply of 30 cannon balls could be stacked in a small area right next to the cannon. There was only one problem -- how to prevent the bottom layer from sliding/rolling from under the others.

The solution was a metal plate with 16 round indentations, called, for reasons unknown, a Monkey. But if this plate were made of iron, the iron balls would quickly rust to it. The solution to the rusting problem was to make them of brass— hence, Brass Monkeys.

Few landlubbers realise that brass contracts much more and much faster than iron when chilled. Consequently, when the temperature dropped too far, the brass indentations would shrink so much that the iron cannon balls would come right off the monkey.

Thus, it was quite literally, cold enough to freeze the balls off a brass monkey. And all this time, folks thought that was just a vulgar expression?

Fabulous bit of historical knowledge for you.

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Before you send your email, click on 'tools' at top and click on 'request receipt'. This will reply to you and verify both email addresses are working correctly.

Revenge!

Four Canberra youths gained revenge on a speed camera van operating in the area.

Three of the group approached the van and distracted the operator's attention by asking a series of questions about how the equipment worked and how many cars the operator could catch a day. Meanwhile, the fourth sneaked around and unscrewed a number plate from the van. After bidding the van operator goodbye, the friends returned home, fixed the number plate to their car and drove through the camera's radar at high speed seventeen times. As a result, the automated billing system issued seventeen speeding tickets to itself.



Image; MFB Media & Communications

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Saturday June 18, 2011**

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