

# "WATER OFF"

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



May 2008 Vol 12 No 2  
Inc/No: A16839F

## THE SPECTACULAR INVICTA MILLS FIRE

### & THE EVENTFUL HOUR'S LEADING UP TO IT

It was Friday 26<sup>th</sup>. June 1987 and what a day it was!!

*Retired D.O. Les Gray continues his series on "A Day in the Life of a Firefighter" A perspective of fires and incidents that don't appear on the official "clinical" reports.*

You will note in the latter half of the story covering the Invicta Mills Fire showed up some shortcomings in our fire-fighting procedures, although being a well trained, managed service in some instances this fire left a lot to be desired. As I write this I will deal with the shortcomings as I go. It shows up how loyal and dedicated fire fighters and our back up people are.

Mr. Don Mc Intyre and his crew from the workshops staff, no doubt put themselves at risk to keep Pumpers from running out of petrol during the fire.

On the day of the fire there apparently were manpower problems at No. 1 Station, a lack of trained Main Control unit personnel, however the duration of this fire and bringing it under control the brigade personnel concerned did a magnificent job under very trying circumstances.

It was evident from the beginning that there was an acute shortage of water for fire fighting.

After the fire many decisions were made by our Executive Officers and changes to existing procedures were made accordingly.

It began at 0800 hours when we mustered, the week before I had arranged to inspect 3 or 4 stations in the district on this day, mainly to meet Officers and men to keep them up to date on recent happenings, and discuss and sort out a few minor problems that had cropped up. I had also to visit I.C.I.'s complex, Hyde Street, Yarraville and arrange a combined drill for the following week with their Fire Officer. I needed a driver/orderly for that day, if there was a



*Above: Aerial appliances played a large role in bringing the blaze under control.*

Photo Courtesy MFB archives

spare man in the district. Luckily we did have a spare one available at No. 40 Stn. Laverton. SO1 Bob Undy arranged for F/m. Trevor Peters to standby and dismiss at the District Station. Trevor at this stage did not know that he would be driving me for the day, when he was told, he said it would be different for a change and was looking forward to meeting some of his contemporaries in our travels around the district. At this time we did not know what was in store for us. Trevor arrived at No.44 Stn. at about 0845 hours and after a quick cup of tea, with our turn out gear, correspondence etc. loaded aboard the car we headed to I.C.I., Hyde Street, where I discussed and arranged with their Fire Officer a combined district drill for the first day shift the following week.

*(Continued on page 8)*

# “GENERAL MEETING”

**Notice is hereby given of our next General Meeting to be held at the Brunswick Campus R.M.I.T. 25 Dawson Street Brunswick, (Melway 29 F8) 1030 Hours, Wednesday 21st May 2008**

## **AGENDA ITEMS.**

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

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

Lunch and beverages available.

**JOHN BERRY**  
**ACTING SECRETARY/TREASURER**  
**Please Note;**  
**Until further notice address all correspondence to:**  
**The Acting Secretary,**  
**24 Lincoln Drive Lower Plenty 3093**  
**Ph. 9431 2880**

## **OFFICE BEARERS**

**President,** Mike McCumisky  
**Vice President,** Ian Fowler  
**Sec./Treasurer,** John Brown  
**Acting 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

## **Valě**

Albert Burt (MFB)                      Ed McDougal (MFB)  
Bruce Dicker (MFB)                     Alby Sixsmith (MFB)  
Lindsay Lyons (MFB)

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

## **SICK LIST**

John Brown                                Clarrie Hart  
Stan Cameron                             John (Jesse) James  
Jim Casley                                 Ron Kennedy  
Ron Cass                                    Phil Lewis  
Ken Clinkaberry                         Alan Lowe  
Ron (Sailor) Davies                      Alf Powell  
Ernie Goodall                              Basil Smith  
Terry Harman                               Ron Turner

We wish these members a speedy recovery

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

<b>Diary Dates 2008</b>	
May 21st	General Meeting
August 20th	General Meeting
November 15th	Luncheon, St Kilda Town Hall
November 19th	Annual General Meeting

## PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Welcome again to the RFA May Newsletter. To those on the sick list, we wish you a speedy recovery.

The first meeting for 2008 held at RMIT complex in Dawson Street, Brunswick was very well attended

### **MFB Running Club:**

Our Guest Speaker was Gordon Hill from the MFB Running Club to give us an outline of the coming marathon run starting from Gallipoli on 26th April and arriving on 17<sup>th</sup> May in London. Gordon gave the number of runners and support staff as well as a number of students from Christian Brothers College. Thanks Gordon for fitting us into your busy schedule.

Fred Kerr spoke about his crew and the Hotchkiss Hose Carriage going as well and some of the hurdles and paperwork involved in taking a heritage appliance overseas, the insurance minefield and transport. Thanks Fred.

We wish the whole team every success in this unusual adventure and look forward to keep in touch as the journey progresses on the web site at "The Great ANZAC Run" or at: [www.thegreatanzacrun.com](http://www.thegreatanzacrun.com).

### **Secretary / Treasurer:**

Just a reminder that we will be needing nominations for the position of Secretary / Treasurer at the Annual

General Meeting, so keep an eye out for someone with just a little spare time and good with paperwork.

### **Looking to the Future Membership of the RFA:**

Peter Lang raised this important issue at the February meeting. He moved that a sub committee be formed to look into future planning of the RFA and what processes we need to follow to encourage continued membership. Members with sales and marketing skills are most welcome to assist in the development of this project.

The advertising brochure for new members was passed around amongst the members and will require some adjustment to the wording.

The annual RFA luncheon held at the MFESB Training College on Sunday April 6, 2008 was well attended by over sixty members and guests. Our thanks to the staff at the College and crews from central zone, for bringing out the modern appliances for our members to see.

Don't forget any snippets of news and send them to our editor, John Laverick. He is always looking for copy and space fillers.

I look forward to seeing you at the next meeting. In the meantime, take care and stay safe.

Regards,

Mike



## ACTING SECRETARY/TREASURER'S REPORT

**IMPORTANT** All members of the RFA are advised that the label on the newsletter with your name and address is now also the vehicle for instant recognition of your financial status in the association. The expired date indicates when the fee is due for the proceeding year, any person that has the date 2/01/05 on it, means if no remuneration is received by the 30<sup>th</sup> June 2008, in accordance with the rules of the Committee, your name will be removed from the mailing list. If for whatever reason you are unable to comply with this rule and you would still like to receive the newsletter do not hesitate to contact the Acting Sec/Treasurer by phone or mail (confidentially is assured).

To insure I do not repeat the same information as the President, I will report only on the last meeting and general business.

### **MEETING 20<sup>th</sup> February 2008 RMIT Brunswick.**

Apologies/Sickness reported.

Recently deceased members not reported in newsletter ALBERT BURT, LINDSAY LYONS.

**ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING 07** Completed financial report presented and Carried.

No business arising from report.

Other item, Ian Geddes to become cheque signatory Moved J.Schintler, Seconded J.Wallace, Carried.

### **AGM. Meeting closed.**

Minutes from 15<sup>th</sup> August be accepted Moved J.Wallace, Seconded L.Manning Carried.

**Correspondence-In** J.Brown, T.Norwood, L. Sixsmith, Ruth. Shalders and Consumer Affairs re Overdue Annual Statement.

**Correspondence-Out** B. Neal, C.E.O M.F.B Ken Latta, J.Hudson, G.Setford, A. Buckley, T.Norwood.

Correspondence report be accepted, Moved W.Kelly, Seconded D.Brennan Carried.

**President Report.** Reunion Luncheon, Advertising brochure, MFB assistance with Newsletter, Upcoming retirements-L/F Denman No.11, S.O Ben Franklin No.39, S.O. P.Hill No28, S.S.O K. Lyon No 22.

RMIT, new menu supplied. Meeting to stay at current location for now.

**General Business-** I. Fowler reported on MFB Training College facilities, Don Brennan reported on UFU picnic and their specially built BBQ trailer, John Schintler reported on Fire museum facilities, Fred Kerr reported on Lincoln Hotel.

Peter Lang moved that a venue sub committee be established to investigate a suitable location to meet the needs of the RFA for the future, including transport,

Seconded J.Wallace

Carried.

*(Continued on page 4)*

(Continued from page 3)

Don Brennan- reported Mrs. Ellen Churchill's heartfelt thanks for the assistance afforded her by the Brigade, RFA and the many other people involved in Frank's Celebration of Life.

Len Manning- suggested we should create almoner/welfare position.

Bill Kelly- said J.Berry to be thanked for helping John Brown.

Meeting closed 11.30a.m

**Guest Speaker Gordon Hill** (F.E.S / M.F.B running club) whilst he was setting up his computer etc, Fred Kerr gave a report on the role he and his Hotchkiss will play in the run from Turkey to London. The guest speaker then gave his presentation of the MFB's

running club program in a visual/spoken format. **See President's report.**

**Post Presentation-** A motion was moved-Don Brennan, Seconded -Ian Fowler, to discuss the establishment of a new position on the Committee for an Assistant Sec/Treasurer Carried.

The meeting was advised it would mean a change to the constitution the Motion lapsed.

However it was decided that a Committee Member could assist as required, Ian Geddes to assist as required.

**Meeting Closed 1200hours.**

Current RFA financial status;

S.1 Account \$1643.94,

Term Deposit \$6127.91.

## A tribute to the late **LINDSAY GORDON LYONS**, 1923 - 2008.

*As told by John Berry, a shift mate and friend.*

### **TIGE'S SERVICE OF THANKSGIVING**

I know we normally do not write about celebration's of life or thanksgiving services but I came away from Tige's with a feeling that he and his close friend and shift mate Ross Medwin had some how orchestrated another practical JOKE on me.

For the ones who did not know Lindsay Gordon Lyons, with your indulgence, I will attempt to tell you about him. He was born in 1923 and left us on the 20/2/08 during his early years showed great promise as a swimmer in fact won many titles during the depression years. Then on the outbreak of war, like the many thousands of his contemporary, enlisted into the Army in defence of his country and was involved in some of the most hostile battles in the jungles of the pacific islands under Australian protection. At the end of the war and on return to Australia, like the other hundreds of thousand of military personnel were expected in fact, demanded by the Government of the day, to act as if everything was the same as when they left to go to war. Unfortunately the country had changed forever, he, like all his other mates was faced with massive unemployment and during all this hardship he never lost his sense of humour or smile.

I did not know him during this part of his life; the information was gained in discussion with one of the members of the family after the service. My first real contact with returned servicemen, apart from my father and his mates, was not until I did my national service and joined the MFB. I found while they were not big on conversation their actions spoke louder than words, they had enormous resilience, camaraderie, [as the French put it esprit de corps], they loved a joke and it was a privilege to work with them.

A number of our instructors over the years at the college were ex military, one in particular a person of very high standing in the service had a saying that really encapsulated what it was all about and I quote "you must sort the chaff out from the grain". I have no doubt the

MFB was greatly enriched because of the returned servicemen in the job and their input into the brigade.

Now getting back to why I think what happened at the service was a bit of déjà vu for me. About forty years ago as a hairy tailed Sub Station Officer I was relieving at an outer Metropolitan Fire Station where I came into operational contact with Tige and his close mate Ross Medwin including their best buddy BRT (Big Red Tanker) I have got to say they operated like a very well oiled team and with the little tanker and crew from the Epping volunteers formed a very formidable fire fighting group.

Well in the early hours one morning we were despatched to a large sawdust hopper fire at the rear of a joinery works, I must confess in my 7 year career & 4 years volunteer to that stage, the closest I had been to a fire of this type was a very informative lecture and a small practical demonstration on the subject, including the potential for dust explosions, from Jim Hunter MFB. I was very keen to show Tige and Ross I knew a bit about incidents of this type in the pre plan on the way to the job, of course I got the standard response, "yes boss." On arrival we found no internal fire service and the nearest hydrant many metres away, which was not unusual in those days. I requested hose lines with spray nozzles be made ready and proceeded back to the BRT to give word back when I hear this almighty sound as if a small explosion had occurred, (I am not saying I had to change my underpants but it was close) on doubling back to see the cause I find the to two of them having a great chuckle. Realizing I had been had, the incident turned into a real learning experience for me, they both showed me the best way to handle the incident with the minimum amount of damage and water. On return to station and completing the fire report, dressing and cleaning the appliance it was time for a cuppa, for me priceless times of camaraderie. Over the times I relieved there I found Tige's humour was one of the best antidotes when having a bad day. (The furies will know what I mean by a bad day).

Tige, in the last decade or so, suffered with that insidious condition dementia, yet when we did meet he would still hang it on me. Now I reckon Ross and him got together up there to devise a way to get me again. I arrived at the service just after everyone had entered the chapel and I noticed this chap looking a little bit concerned, I enquired if there was a problem, he immediately asked me if I was the person who was giving a tribute at the service. I said no but if in trouble it would be a privilege. The celebrant took up his position behind the podium gave his welcome and identified me as the person that would make a tribute. I was expecting to have a bit of time to gather my thoughts, instead all that was coming to me was, where am I, why am I here and what is my name, I make my way down the aisle to the front when I noticed Tige's photo and yes I am certain the smile on his face turned to laughter, I thought to myself he has got me again. Tige was a typical young Australian who went to war yet on his return gave another 35 years of his life to the protection of others. **WE AS A SOCIETY SHOULD NEVER FORGET WHAT THEY HAVE DONE FOR US.**

In closing I must say I am not sure what next they have planned for me.

ANT



P.S

*“Silver” Please note, yes they did have a stool for me behind the podium, however, I do believe that Godfrey, must have been standing on the seat as I could see him over the child sitting in front of him?*

## ***JOHN BROWN'S LETTER OF RESIGNATION***

As I am now 77 years of age and still have a tumour on the brain, on medical advice and my wife Jean's request, I regretfully tender my resignation as Secretary/Treasurer of the R.F.A.

I have enjoyed my time in the position and have great satisfaction in the production of Water Off. The R.F.A. is a great institution and it would be a shame if it folded due to lack of support from members not willing to take on positions of office.

All the hard work has been done by previous committee members. We have always had the support of senior M.F.B. staff, like our Patron, C.F.O. Tony Murphy, D.C.F.O. Keith Adamson who have given us every assistance and now the present C.O. and C.E.O. Ken Latta has declared that he considers the R.F.A. still part of the Fire Service Family and has instructed his staff to help with the printing of Water-Off, which they did with the last Issue.

So anyone willing to take on the Secretary/Treasurers job will have an easier task than when the R.F.A. first started.

Previous office bearers will attest to the pleasure of getting Water Off to Members with a certain amount of pride in being a part of it all and when I recover from my illness, I will certainly be a part of it again.

I admit there is a fair amount of time involved, but the satisfaction of putting it together more than makes up for it.

The R.F.A. cannot function without a Secretary/Treasurer and I thank John Berry who held the position for many years before me stepping in for me, during my absence again to support us.

So now it is time during my absence for someone to bite the bullet and take the position, I am sure you will get the same satisfaction that my wife Jean and I did..

I would like to thank John Laverick, for the great job that he does as Editor, also to Mike McCumisky for his support as a great President and my special thanks to my wife Jean, who has been behind me all the way.

**JOHN BROWN SECRETARY/TREASURER**

## **Smile**

Americans who travel abroad for the first time are often shocked to discover that, despite all the progress that has been made in the last 30 years, many foreign people still speak in foreign languages.

*You may live longer than you think. Before you retire and give up the regular income you get from your job, you probably need to think about this question.*

## WILL YOUR MONEY LAST AS LONG AS YOU DO?

Don't be too quick to write off planning for your 100th birthday. Are you likely to be living alone without any children or other close relatives to look after you in your old age? You might want to have some extra money to pay for help at home or a place in your preferred aged care home. Just to be on the safe side, you might want to plan for the 10% chance that you'll live past 100.

You may want to consider other probabilities or survival in the table below (We do emphasise that these are estimates, not certainties.)

Current age	Your chance of living to age				
	75	80	85	90	95
Women 55	89%	82%	71%	54%	35%
Women 60	89%	82%	70%	52%	32%
Women 65	90%	82%	69%	50%	30%
Men 55	82%	72%	58%	40%	24%
Men 60	82%	71%	56%	37%	21%
Men 65	84%	71%	54%	35%	19%

(Particular assumptions about future mortality rates may not be borne out in practice, and should not be taken to be forecasts.)

### What does this mean for your retirement plans?

We hope you've now taken on a new lease on life, and are looking forward to living longer and healthier. If you're concerned about how you'll support yourself, review your retirement plans, and consider these possibilities:

- Postpone your retirement for a few years. Use the [FIDO super calculator](#) (on the ASIC website) to see how even a few years more of making contributions can really boost your retirement nest egg. In any case, you may still enjoy your job or value regular contact with your work mates or colleagues.
- Work part-time and make a slower transition to retirement. Part-time work can help you save without all the demands of full-time work. The rules on super may allow you to work part-time and draw on some of your super if you need to.
- Remember the government age pension. About eight in ten Australians aged 65 or more get a full or part government means-tested age pension, that's indexed to average weekly earnings and gets paid as long as you live. You also get other valuable benefits if you're eligible for the age pension.

Keep your super and any other money invested for growth. Unless you definitely need your money now,

the longer you keep your money invested in growth assets like shares or property, the more money you're likely to save and the longer it's likely to last. With every chance of living another 25-35 years, you can probably afford to ride out the short-term ups and downs of investment markets. Putting most of your money into more secure but low-growth investments could be a mistake.

### Choosing a retirement income product

You can convert your super or other savings into a regular income stream. It's your choice how long you want that income to last. Make a choice based on your own needs, and with your eyes open.

- A pension to last for a term of your choosing. You can buy products that let you choose whatever term you like for a regular income stream. Using our estimates, you might prefer to choose a term that gives you income for a longer period, even if that means spending a little less in your early retirement years. (The Government's proposals for retirement incomes announced in the May 2006 budget, if implemented, will give most people much simpler and more flexible choices.)
- Life expectancy pensions or annuities. As you can guess, this product offers you an income stream only for your life expectancy, most probably based on the 2000-02 life tables, summarised in our Table 1. After that time, you'll have to rely on the age pension or any other money you may have set aside. Assuming that this means a reduced income, consider if you'll be content with that.

Lifetime pensions or annuities? If you want to be absolutely confident that your super or other savings will pay you a pension for the whole of your life, you can also buy a private 'lifetime pension'. The income is guaranteed by your super fund (as a 'pension'), or life insurance company (as an 'annuity'). However, the guarantee can be costly. To understand this cost, ask what the 'yield' is. The yield is a yearly percentage figure. It's similar to investing your savings in a term deposit. The term in this case is your lifetime, and the return on your money is the 'yield'. You will probably find that you could invest the same amount of money at a higher rate yourself, but the income won't be guaranteed.

*Source: Australian Securities & Investments Commission*

## Gallipoli to London - They're On Their Way

Whilst you are reading this the MFB Charity Running Club are making their way from Gallipoli to London.

The last two weeks before departure to Munich (16-4-08) have been hectic indeed with many shows and functions to attend. From my point of view with the Hotchkiss, only a couple of very important arrangements have to be finalized.

The Hotchkiss left Melbourne early March to go to Turkey (4 - 6 week trip) in a container arranged through Linfox.

When we leave (48 of us) on the 16th April, we fly to Munich and then pick up the camper vans, tilt tray and drive to Gallipoli.

There are several functions arranged for us to participate in on Anzac day but the most important task is to pick up the Hotchkiss in Istanbul, put it back together and clean all the brass for our big departure on the 26th.

Three members of the Retired Firefighters Association are members of the Hotchkiss crew, myself, John Schintler and Graham Edwards. The other members are Barney Dingle who owns a Military Museum at Nar Nar Goon and Peter Doody from the R.S.L.

The role of the Hotchkiss and crew in brass helmets etc. is to escort the runners through cities and towns, meet the local dignitaries and media. This will be carried out at least 3 times a day. The rest of the time the Hotchkiss will be on the back of a tilt tray.



**Above;** The Hotchkiss with Fred at the wheel. An epic journey for the old girl and a tribute to the runners and support crews who are living up to the ANZAC spirit.

This is just a brief appetizer for the story to come when the run is completed.

To conclude I must say that the MFB have been right behind this endeavor and given every encouragement, moral support and financial backing. We leave on Wednesday the 16th April and the MFB Board will provide a farewell luncheon at the Training College and 16 old fire engines from the Museum to take us to the airport.

So until I get back:

"It's the way we have in the Fire Brigade".

**F.C. Kerr**

### Ed's Note:

*Fred wrote this article on the 4th of April and by the time this publication reaches you the run will be well underway.*

*The distance is 4075 km over 22 days from Gallipoli through Turkey, Greece, Italy, France and Belgium finishing in London. Along the way they will visit W.W.I battle sites and war graves paying tribute to the ANZAC's.*

*There are 3 teams of 8 runners with each team running 6 hours each day then 12 hours every 3 days. Each team will run an 80 km stretch.*

*The Great ANZAC Run is raising money for the Alfred Hospital Burns Unit, Catherine Freeman Foundation and the Shrine of Remembrance Foundation.*

*We salute all those involved in this endeavour. We can only wonder at the logistics and hurdles they faced in putting this run together.*



**Above:** The Gallipoli Runners and support crew pose for photographs prior to their departure from the MFB Training College.

**Left:** Under police escort the team leave the Training College in 16 Museum vehicles for Melbourne Airport.

Photo's: Barbara McCumisky



*(Continued from page 1)*

About 1045 hrs. we left I.C.I. and proceeded to No.45 Stn. Yarraville, I asked Trevor did he bring his lunch with him, he replied “No, I’ll have to buy it”, likewise I also had to buy mine too so we stopped and bought some sandwiches and headed to No. 45 Stn. arriving about 1115 hr’s. Along with the Officer in Charge I inspected the station and gear for cleanliness, checked the Petty Cash and various record books, and then signed the occurrence book.

We were invited to have our lunch in the mess room with the men and at about 1315 hours left for Robert Street, West Footscray. I asked Trevor to proceed via Sunshine Road as I had to check out distances between some fire hydrants in order to ascertain if another was required for fire fighting purposes. If there are pillar or “L” type hydrants to be seen makes the job easy, but with ground ball hydrants buried (some covered with bitumen) or over grown makes the job difficult – more about these hydrants later.

We then continued down Sunshine Road, heading for No. 43 Station Deer Park, the time was now about 1425 hours, nearing the East side of Ashley Street corner looking up a head there appeared to be some sort of accident, as we approached we could see a motor car facing at right angles across the middle of the road. It had been flattened down to its wheels and was crushed sideways to about a metre in width, we could not see any other vehicle which had been involved, stopping I got out and made a quick investigation peering under the squashed roof at front off side I noticed a person, then went around to the near side and saw another. Apparently the accident had only just happened a minute or so before. Trevor and I were first on scene, I contacted VKN8 and informed them of the accident we had come across, requesting, No. 44 Stns. Pumper and No. 47 Stns. Road Rescue unit, Ambulance & Police to attend.

Road traffic at this time was spasmodic, there was nothing more we could do than wave down what traffic was coming both ways along the road around the wrecked car. No. 44 Stn’s. Pumper was on scene along with No. 47 Stn’s Road Rescue Unit in no time, followed shortly by the Police and Ambulance.

A hose line was run through the pump from the pumper, a feed was run from a near by hydrant. In no time the Road Rescue unit men had cut the roof from the car using the Jaws of Life. The police on scene asked that the bodies be left in the vehicle until the Accident Appreciation Squad from Dawson Street, Brunswick had arrived on scene and taken photographs and measurements. (Which necessitated a plastic tarpaulin being draped over the vehicle until this was achieved).

Earlier I had noticed about 100 meters away parked on the side of the road a tray body truck with about a 5000 litre tank bolted onto the tray. (It turned out to be carrying waste oil) there was a man standing nearby, I went up and asked him “Did he know anything about the accident?” He replied “Yes, I ran completely over the car”. I asked him how it happened and he stated that he was travelling East down Sunshine Road and as he was sitting high up in the cabin he could see down the road the on coming vehicles, a line of them with intermittent spaces between, he also saw a car weaving in and out of the line of traffic, i.e. coming out of the line

around a car or two then diving back in line behind another vehicle, this happened several times then all of a sudden the sedan pulled out again trying to pass another car, the driver was going so fast he could not get back in line again, being on the wrong side of the road, the result was that the truck with its load of waste oil completely ran over the sedan, there was nothing he could do to avoid the collision. The driver of the sedan in a last moments attempt to avoid a head on collision swung the sedan hard left making the sedan at about 30 degrees side on to the oncoming truck resulting in the sedan being crushed to about 1 meter wide and squashed hard down to its wheels.

Police believe the driver and his passenger were killed instantly, the truck driver was not injured but he was suffering from shock, later the Ambulance men checked him out thoroughly, he was found to be OK, the police eventually let him drive his truck back to the depot. He suffered no physical harm and his truck was only slightly damaged, no water or oil leaks – “**unbelievable**” –

*We could see a motor car facing at right angles across the middle of the road. It had been flattened down to it’s wheels and crushed sideways to about a metre. There were two bodies inside!*

At this stage No 47 Stns. Road Rescue Unit returned to station, No. 44 Stn’s. Pumper was on scene for some time cleaning up debris strewn 20 metres or so along the road and washing away spilt petrol and oil. They remained on scene until the police had finalised their investigations and the wrecked car was loaded onto a tow away vehicle.

Senior Constable Geoff Draper of the Brunswick Accident Appreciation Squad said the “High Impact” accident happened after the car pulled onto the wrong side of the road to overtake, he stated that the car might have been travelling at 120 kilometres per hour at time of impact with the truck. Both men Michael Scerri and Richard Farrugia both aged 19 years were from St. Albans.

In the meantime back to those Ground Ball Hydrants, finding I had correspondence for No. 47 Stn. I asked Trevor to turn around down Sunshine Road to Geelong Road to Droop Street. It was a brief visit, mainly to inform the Station Officer in charge re the buried Ground Ball Hydrants and their approximate location. I asked for them on the next day shift to turn out Hydrant inspecting, find and clean them out, ship a stand pipe, flush out and check the distances between them and re indicate same. It turned out that the distances were too great between them and I had to furnish an M.F.B. – M.M.B.W. report requesting an additional Hydrant, which in due course was fitted to the water main in the requested position.

It was now about 1620 hrs. when we left for No. 43 Stn. Deer Park, as we were travelling North West down Ballarat Road, Maidstone, just approaching Ashley Street on our left, Trevor said “ Mr. Gray have a look to your left”. (I was looking straight down the road contemplating the horrific accident we had attended thinking of the inexperience and naiveness of youth and tragic loss of life and heart break and sorrow of their parents and families when shortly the police would be knocking at their doors informing them of their sons’ accidental deaths). Turning my head to the left I could hardly believe what I was seeing. A huge column of black smoke billowing upwards about 100 meters high and moving slowly in a Northerly direction. My immediate reaction was we’ve found ourselves another job, turning left into Ashley Street I

radioed VKN8 and informed them that a large fire was showing up probably in Ashley Street in the vicinity of South Road, Braybrook and am proceeding on, will send word back shortly. A minute or so later VKN8 came on the air relaying a message that No's 44 and 47 Stns. Pumpers were turning out for an exchange telephone call for a fire in the Invicta Mills Carpet storage building, Ashley Street, Braybrook and are being followed by No. 44 Stns Aerial Appliances. Shortly after other Pumpers from Western District, Aerial Appliances and Pumpers from Central and other districts were on the road.

Proceeding down Ashley Street as we approached the fire we saw that the smoke was issuing from the roof at the centre of a large building. We entered the premises via Ashley Street, Hampden Street to Crothers Street which brought us to the Northern end of the building. I set up the Initial Control Point, leaving Trevor in charge of same. (The Initial Control did not function as it should have for a number of reasons, Trevor could monitor messages from VKN8 but had no way of relaying them on to me, he simply did not have a personal radio to contact me on Channel 9. VKN8 could have contacted me on my personal radio but they never did for additional information. Realizing this, there was no way I was just going to sit in the car listening to VKN8 turning out appliances etc., being District Officer I had a job to do especially when there was a fire gathering momentum in a large building. I told Trevor to remain in the car and monitor VKN8. If there were any pertinent messages requiring my attention come and find me on the fire ground and let me know. Eventually Trevor joined up with the crew of one of our Western District Pumpers and ended up on a Hose Line. Leaving Trevor at the car I ran down the West side of the building counting my steps as I ran to determine the size of the building (for my word back information) I counted about 135 paces and just as I came to the front of the building (South end) No. 44 Stns. Mk 111 Pumper with S01 Bob Undy and his men came roaring onto the scene.

Bob positioned the pumper on the South East end of the building between Stan Cash's Warehouse and Invicta Carpets storage building, whilst his crew ran out a feed from a nearby hydrant and a delivery line from the pumper. I asked him to pace out the front of the building, which he did and reported that it was about 134 metres (The measurements that Bob & I paced out made the building approximately 18,000 square metres. Bob and his men took their hose line into the building about 10 – 15 metres, he related later that the fire spread so fast he noticed a rollover of smoke and realised the possibility of a flash over behind them. He withdrew the men and hose line back to the main door, this was after 5 – 10 minutes, they then directed their stream of water into the advancing fire. He said later that initially they had problems finding enough water for the pumper. When No. 1 Stn's. Hose Layer arrived on scene they run out a 90mm dia. feed from South Road, which gave them ample water, by this time 7 hand lines were deployed on the South end of the building, a monitor and 3 hand lines on the East side.

As quickly as I could I sent word back that the fire was in a single storey building about 135 x 134 meters, constructed of concrete floor, steel framed walls – iron clad, with steel trussed roof – fibro and iron clad, containing rolls of carpet, the building is well alight, **“ASSISTANCE REQUIRED”**.

The West side of the building proved to be a serious problem

as there was insufficient distance between Invicta Mills carpet storage and their neighbouring buildings. One of the neighbours had bulk storage of 100's of compressed cylinders of various kinds of gases, which necessitated the deployment of a Mark 111. pumper with its monitor and hand lines run out from it and also a Magirus-Deutz Ladder set up as a water tower to protect this exposure. To complicate this there were a large number of 44 gallon drums of petrol stored along the South wall, these drums had to be man handled away to safety by firemen assisted by Invicta Mills employees. A number of LPG cylinders that were stored along the East side of the building also had to be removed.

The carpet was stacked 4 meters high from floor to roof void height, generally right throughout the building. The rolls of carpet had a rubber latex backing and they were wrapped in flat plastic sheeting, this proved to be quite a high fire load. There were 2 large Roller doors each end of the building and they were left open to allow for Fork Lifts and Trucks to move in and out. As the fire gained momentum the open doors acted as a wind tunnel allowing air to be inducted into the building feeding the fire, accelerating it as fast as man could walk

By this time with all the Exchange Telephone Calls coming into No. 1 Stn's Communications Centre, Control Superintendent Ken Wilson had despatched additional appliances and the Main control unit to the fire. All on call Executive Officers were notified and SO2 Geoff Hughes No.1 Stn. drove Deputy Chief Fire Officer Alan Richards and the C.E.O. of the Metropolitan Fire Brigades Board, President Mr. Brian Parry along with him (which no doubt enlightened him to the problems faced by fire fighters at large structure fires). SO2 Hughes' role at this fire was to be an M.F.B. liaison officer with the police concerning traffic control in Ashley Street, South Road and other streets, to have them blocked off to stop traffic running over the hose lines.

Control Superintendent Ken Wilson also turned out a short time later with his driver/orderly, on arrival he noticed that No. 45's Cranvel was not achieving anything where it was set up and had it made up and moved to the North end of the building.

Initially as the Western District Officers, men and appliances arrived on scene they set up their appliances around the perimeter of the building where ever they could see a hydrant and got to work.

We all realised from the beginning that there was no way of saving the building and its contents because of an acute shortage of water in the area, it was one of containment and protection of surrounding buildings, particularly houses in Hampden Street (on the East side of the storage building) from radiated heat, what saved the houses was that the wind was blowing directly from the South, taking most of the heat and smoke away from them, never the less we also had hand lines fed from pumpers set up at regular intervals along Hampden Street pouring water into the burning building and people were using garden hoses in an effort to dampen and cool down the front walls and roofs of their dwellings, it was a token effort as in a short time the water stream from their hoses dropped down to a trickle.

*(Continued on page 10)*

(Continued from page 9)

Meanwhile back to No.44 Stn's. Pumper, SO1 Bob Undy and his crew, set the pumper up on the South East corner of the building, a short time later it proved to be too close, Bob had a line of hose run out to protect it from radiated heat, rather than move it with all its feeds and deliveries, he considered that he would lose valuable fire fighting time in doing so. It was good thinking,, this little saga proved how fast the fire travelled, which in time totally destroyed the building and contents.

I will admit that my initial control point did not function as it should as previously stated, nor did the Main Control Point. Senior Communications Operator Wendy Charles who was in charge of the Main Control point, said later that on coming gear was arriving at short intervals, radio traffic became overloaded, it was impossible for the staff in the Main Control to keep up with arriving gear, particularly when Officers around the building were requesting special appliances and gear, also asking for additional water feeds to be run to their section of the building to supply their appliances. She had 2 Firefighters manning the Main Control Point with her who had never turned out in it before and did not know the radio procedures etc.

Wendy later stated that it was really hard to get set up and operate as she was the only one that had worked the radios or worked Main Control before or even knew how it all worked. She also said that just recently the Brigade had changed to 10 radio channels and had gone from U.H.F. to Microwave communications and up to date have no directives, with the changes no one knows what to do. It made things awkward as we had people operating on different channels, it was okay for personal radios as every one was operating on channel 9.

Main control had another problem because VKN8 wanted all appliances to change to Channel 6 to get them off Channel 2 so that anything else happening elsewhere were on Channel 2 and would not interfere with this job. Hopefully there will be a directive out soon defining which channels are for what use. Finally Wendy said we did not look up Microfiche for contact information to the M.M.B.W. or any other services required on scene because nobody else but herself knew how to work it. She did not have the time to spare being too busy overseeing the whole operation trying as best she could to help out her inexperienced staff. Taking everything into consideration we did a pretty good job of it.

Another problem with Main Control Unit was because of the inexperienced crew, the driver, once the unit was placed on site, switched off the ignition to the motor, not realizing that the motor was needed to charge the batteries to operate radio communications to VKN8, other emergency services and Officers on the fire ground. Mr. Don Mc Intyre (M.F.B. Wokshops) when arriving on scene at the Main Control Unit realized the motor was turned off and he restarted it. Despite all this no communications were lost.

This fire was so large that it tested out our procedures and found them to be lacking, maybe we could incorporate additional sub control points around the perimeters of large structure fires in the future to take some of the work load off the Main Control Point. To complicate things further the Police Main Control Point was set up at the opposite end of Hampden Street, to the M.F.B.'s which was located on the

corner of Hampden & Ashley Sts., and had no direct radio contact, the repercussions were when the Senior Police Officer contacted his men blocking off the roads to the fire and instructed them not to let any traffic down the roads and that is exactly what they did. Other services requested by the M.F.B. Main Control via VKN8 were not allowed down to the fire i.e. the local Electricity authority to cut off power to the building and its sub boards, the Gas & Fuel Corporation, M.M.B.W. (Water) and other services. These services were notified by No.1 Station to report to the M.F.B. Main Control point located on the corner of Ashley & Hampden Street, Braybrook.

On arrival these authorities told the Police manning the road blocks that they been contacted by exchange telephone from No. 1 Stn. to attend the fire, the Police manning the road blocks replied that they were instructed no to let any one pass and that was that, of course after quite a delay it was realised that some thing was amiss and a Brigade Liaison Firefighter

was sent down to the Main Police Control Point, explained to the Officer in Charge what was happening and asked that they move their Control Point alongside the M.F.B. Control Point for better liaison and also explained what was happening at the road blocks, the Police Officer in charge immediately radioed to his men to let these services through and when they eventually set up next to the M.F.B. Main control immediately there was co-ordination between the two services.

Also located at Main Control were 2 Ambulances and crews standing by in case they were required and fortunately they weren't.

Actually there were not enough Policemen available at the time and duration of the fire to direct traffic from running over our feed lines, many of them were 90mm and 65mm. dia. coming into the fire from many streets away. Many hoses were run over by passing traffic and burst disrupting the supply. They were also needed to control members of the public that were obstructing our operations.

The job was so enormous it taxed the procedures of all the emergency services concerned. I believe a lot of changes have been made enabling better liaison between services.

Getting back to the fire, later in the evening, Chief Superintendent Len Hubbard organised 150mm. dia. suction hoses to be lowered into a 60,000 litre static water tank to supply No. 47 Stns. Pumper. (This tank had no pump connections or quick fill valve, in fact it was not connected to a street mains supply, it was filled by water from the roof of the carpet storage building), eventually No. 1 Stn's Hose Layer supplied additional 90mm. dia. feeds to No. 47 Stn's. Pumper and other aerial appliances working on the Northern end of the building from hydrants further afield.

Water for fire fighting was obtained as far North from Churchill Av. and as far South as South Road, which had a 300mm. dia. main with plenty of volume, up as far as Melon Street in the West and several mains off Ashley Street, (Ashley Street had a 150mm. dia. main) and from various mains in between and other streets, which were 100mm. dia. very old and tuberculated up and no pressure. Thanks to the dedication and excellent work of No. 1 Stn's Hose Layer and its crew who laid many Kilometres of feed hoses to enable us to fight the fire and eventually bring it under control.

***There were not enough policemen at the time and duration of the fire to direct traffic from running over our feed lines  
The job was so enormous it taxed the procedures of all the emergency services concerned***

Getting sufficient water up to the pumpers on the West side of the building was an overall fire fighting problem right throughout the duration of the fire.

What most of us did not know at the time of the fire was the history of the Fire Protection of the building concerned which goes back to at least 1969. There had been numerous reports by the M.F.B. Fire Protection Dept., Council and discussions with the owners and Referees Board concerning same. One of the problems was that there were so many titles covering the Invicta Mills property that the owners were trying to consolidate them into 4 titles when the fire occurred. Each separate title would have allowed Council under Local government Act to have more fire protection for the buildings, i.e. adequate fully equipped private water mains, sprinklers, hose reels, hand chemical extinguishers, roof vents, and fire walls to protect adjacent buildings. In the interim as this was being done limiting from the fire fighting view that the existing factory, dye house and carpet storage buildings had very few equipped hydrants, no sprinklers, no hose reels, no roof vents, and not enough separation between neighbouring buildings and houses.

Later in the evening it was found that some of our petrol driven appliances were becoming very low on fuel, Don McIntyre and his crew was called to the fire (about 2 ½ hrs after it had started). He stated later that it was very hard to organise fuel at this time of night however after some time he was able to contact a Shell Oil Co. representative and organise a Petrol Tanker to come to the Main Control point. He said that when speaking with the driver of the tanker he said "No way would he transfer petrol from his tanker to any vehicle down in the fire area". Don then had to organise 20 litre drums which were filled from the tanker well away from the fire, then he and his men transferred it from the drums to the appliances. He and his men were a bit nervous doing this knowing how dangerous it was.

The Shell Oil Co. had no problem with delivering diesel fuel and would supply as much as required.

It is now time to give some thought to the clean up and demolition of the large burnt out building. It took many months for this to happen, fire duties went on for weeks, Fire Officers' in charge required rolls of carpet, imploded steel columns, beams, and roof trusses removed to enable fire fighters to get to the hot spots and extinguish them. This required outside contractors using Oxy-acetylene cutting torches.

In some sections of the building columns were still standing and portal frames and roof trusses were hanging down, the heat effect on the steel beams had sheered the bolts off the columns and roof trusses (lattice & triangular), had been sufficiently damaged by heat bringing them under stress (and reverse stress) compression and tension and if any workmen not knowing this were to cut them they could spring back and seriously injure or even kill them.

Permits for the clean up operations are issued by local council Building Inspectors, these inspectors can supervise the operations and if required can have buildings fenced off and walls shored up etc. to safeguard and protect the general public. If required outside structural engineers can be called in to supervise the demolition.

Assistant Chief Fire Officer Ted Harrison when being interviewed in his office by a Channel 9 reporter several days later re the fire protection of the building, said among other things, that had the building been sprinklered initially the fire would have been smaller as the sprinklers would have held it in check allowing fire fighters to bring it under control and save most of the building and contents.

The fire was deemed to have been started by an electrical fault, the building and contents, including fittings along with loss of production was estimated at \$14million.

Deputy Chief Fire Officer Alan Richards later in the night when being interviewed by a T.V. reporter said it was a substantial fire and one of the biggest in Melbourne for many years.

One hundred fire fighters and 30 units attended.

Readers here ends another day in the lives of fire fighters.

L. Gray,  
Retired District Officer  
Reg. No. 1538  
Kinglake Vic.  
Feb. 2008

Food for thought:- "Buildings that are meant not to burn are sprinklered"

## **Minute Silence at Retirement Events**

*An article published in the MFB'S "Firecall" Newsletter dated 10th April 2008*

SSO Eddie McMullen witnessed a moving tribute to firefighters who died before reaching retirement. While at a recent function, the retiring firefighter requested a minutes silence to remember colleagues who didn't make it to retirement.

"The venue was silent and a very reverent minute was spent by all in the room remembering fallen colleagues who had failed to reach retirement.

This was a very moving time and as the retiree continued on with his retirement speech I thought this was a great idea which should be included in all retirement functions. I hereby request that we publicise this and try to get it as a regular feature of all future retirement turns," said Eddie.

## RFA President's Reunion Luncheon Held at the MFB's Training Complex, April 6th 2008



**Left:** *Wally and Ann Steel catch up with old friends.*

Photo's  
Courtesy B.  
McCumisky

**Left:** *The Luncheon was held in one of the two mess rooms at the complex, thanks to the MFB. Members and partners were given the opportunity to have a look at the new facility and a display of the latest operational equipment*



*Jean Brown and Bruce Petrie share a few moments*

## TAX CUTS EXPLAINED

Because it is coming up to tax season. . . Let's put tax cuts in terms everyone can understand. Suppose that every day, ten men go out for beer and the bill for all ten comes to \$100.

If they paid their bill the way we pay our taxes, it would go something like this:

- The first four men (the poorest) would pay nothing.
- The fifth would pay \$1.
- The sixth would pay \$3.
- The seventh would pay \$7.
- The eighth would pay \$12.
- The ninth would pay \$18.
- The tenth man (the richest) would pay \$59.

So, that's what they decided to do.

The ten men drank in the bar every day and seemed quite happy with the arrangement, until one day, the owner threw them a curve. "Because you are all such good customers," he said, "I'm going to reduce the cost of your daily beer by \$20." Drinks for the ten now cost just \$80.

The group still wanted to pay their bill the way we pay our taxes so the first four men were unaffected. They would still drink for free. But what about the other six men - the paying customers? How could they divide the \$20 windfall so that everyone would get his 'fair share'?

They realized that \$20 divided by six is \$3.33. But if they subtracted that from everybody's share, then the fifth man and the sixth man would each end up being paid to drink his beer.

So, the bar owner suggested that it would be fair to reduce each man's bill by roughly the same amount, and he proceeded to work out the amounts each should pay.

And so:

The fifth man, like the first four, now paid nothing (100% savings).

The sixth now paid \$2 instead of \$3 (33% savings).

The seventh now pay \$5 instead of \$7 (28% savings).

The eighth now paid \$9 instead of \$12 (25% savings).

The ninth now paid \$14 instead of \$18 (22% savings).

The tenth now paid \$49 instead of \$59 (16% savings).

Each of the six was better off than before. And the first four continued to drink for free. But once outside the restaurant, the men began to compare their savings.

"I only got a dollar out of the \$20," declared the sixth man. He pointed to the tenth man, "but he got \$10!"

"Yeah, that's right," exclaimed the fifth man. "I only saved a dollar too. It's unfair that he got ten times more than I!"

"That's true!!" shouted the seventh man. "Why should he get \$10 back when I got only two? The wealthy get all the breaks!"

"Wait a minute," yelled the first four men in unison.

"We didn't get anything at all. The system exploits the poor!"

The nine men surrounded the tenth and beat him up.

The next night the tenth man didn't show up for drinks, so the nine sat down and had beers without him. But when it came time to pay the bill, they discovered something important. They didn't have enough money between all of them for even half of the bill!

And that, boys and girls, journalists and college professors, is how our tax system works. The people who pay the highest taxes get the most benefit from a tax reduction. Tax them too much, attack them for being wealthy, and they just may not show up anymore. In fact, they might start drinking overseas where the atmosphere is somewhat friendlier.

For those who understand, no explanation is needed.

For those who do not understand, no explanation is possible.

## UFU Picnic. A great day for all.

The picnic at Moonee Valley Racecourse had all the ingredients for a successful day with sunshine, rides for the kids and plenty of food. The BBQ ran hot all day supplying the kids and Mums and Dads with sausages, hamburgers and of course cool drinks and ice-creams. The



RFA was well represented again with the familiar faces of the committee members working to ensure the goodies were kept up to feed the hoard.

*The girls were no slouches in preparing the bread for the hamburgers with Doreen Schintler supervising.*



*Sausage trimming is an art form and the knives were flashing in the hands of the team above.*

Photo's courtesy E. McMullen

*Geelong Fire Brigade has a glorious history being one of the oldest brigades in Australia. The following amusing story is just one of the myriad that could be told about this historic brigade*

## Fire! Fire! The Mill's on Fire

By Lloyd Worthington

Many tales are told about the woollen mills in Geelong's history. Here is just one of them.

By 1912 electricity was taking over from steam to power industry. Excelsior Number One (part of the Godfrey Hirst complex) on the banks of the Barwon River was being converted.

In a dark corner a young electrician struck a match to light his lamp. Its flaming head flew off into a pile of greasy fluff on a greasy wooden shelf.

Soon the factory was well alight and the local fire brigade was called. On arrival the brigade chief decided that the hand pumps would not suffice.

Firemen were ordered to race back to the station and quickly bring the horse-drawn steam pump to the fire. A fiasco worthy of the Keystone cops now developed.

Back at the fire station the stable doors were open and the horses were half a mile away happily cropping grass.

By the time the flustered firemen caught the horses, arrived back at the mill with the steam pump, and got it working it was too late. The Excelsior Number One was totally destroyed.

Luckily, insurance covered the cost of rebuilding. However the matter of the fiasco was not so easily resolved.

After a most embarrassing public enquiry was held; an appeal was launched to buy a modern motorized fire engine for the brigade.

Source: Geelong Advertiser archives.

*Lloyd Worthington is a writer with the Scribes Writers Group, which meets at the South Barwon Community Centre.*

## More About P.P. Stations

When a fireman at Brunswick about 1959, I stood by at No1 Stn. and given the job of taking the petrol schooner around the stations, one of which was Croydon P.P. Had to go to Ringwood to pick up the key to Croydon, drive the Bedford out and fill it with petrol, put it back, lock up and return the key to Ringwood.

This (Croydon) is an additional P.P. station to those mentioned in the February "Water Off" article.

Alan Eley

## GEELONG REUNION

Dates For Your Diary

Monday 5th May 2008

Monday 24th November

Shell Club

Bacchus Marsh Rd.

Corio



Contact: Bill Icke 5244 1822  
John Wallace 5278 4734



## TRAVELLING WITH SILVER

Just to finish with Los Angeles (August 2007 edition), I left you at the Beverly Centre which is also the most famous eating area, but you don't have to spend your life's savings.

Man, can the Yanks eat! Giant pastrami sandwiches, hamburgers like you won't see anywhere else and several inexpensive Mexican, pasta and sushi houses.

Over this way is the worlds biggest municipal park. Most people go there for live entertainment in the Greek Theatre, it also has the L.A. Zoo, two 18 hole golf courses, a camping ground and nature trails through the woods. For those old enough to remember the famous TV series "Mr Ed", Mr Ed, after passing on, was cremated and his ashes are there. A lot of the TV scenes were shot there.

See the famous "Sunset Strip, Hollywood Boulevard", the footprints of stars at Grauman's Chinese Theatre and the Wax Museum.

Again, if you don't want to cab it the bus gets you there for 50c. Back to Wilshire Blvd, they have these huge department stores. Also of interest the LA area Tar Pits dating back to pre-historic mammals came here to

drink and got stuck for ever. Hundreds of skeletons have been dug up and the pick of them are at the George Page Museum just east of the tar pits.



**Above:** *Mr and Mrs Silver, assisted by Chico Marx, leave their footprints outside Grauman's Chinese Theatre in LA.*

A lot of the good stuff is free although official literature doesn't make a big deal of it. The J. Paul Getty Museum is free down on the coast but you must make a reservation. The Huntington Gallery, and the biggest Farmers Market are free. On top of all this is Disneyland, Knotts Berry Farm out in Orange County, Anaheim and Bueno Park.

Sure they are in Los Angeles but the reality of LA is the Beaches, Ethnic communities, Universities and much of the history is back amongst the new hi-rise and spaghetti tangle of freeways to the west.

Mrs. Silver says we will be back in 2009.

**Happy Travelling, Silver.**

**P.S. - Silverisms**

1/ Remember, if you lend someone \$50 and you never see that person again, it was probably worth it!

2/ On landing with United Airlines, the Stewardess said, "Please be sure to take all of your belongings. If you are going to leave anything, please make sure it's something we'd like to have!"

## The P.O. Worker's Gift

There was a man who worked for the Post Office whose job it was to process all the mail that had illegible addresses. One day, a letter came addressed in a shaky handwriting to God with no address. He thought he should open it to see what it was about. The letter read:

"Dear God,

I am an 83 year old widow, living on a very small pension. Yesterday someone stole my purse. It had \$100 in it, which was all the money I had until my next pension cheque. Next Sunday is Christmas, and I had invited two of my friends over for dinner. Without that money, I have nothing to buy food with. I have no family to turn to, and you are my only hope. Can you please help me?

Sincerely,  
Edna

The postal worker was touched. He showed the letter to all the other workers. Each one dug into his or her wallet and came up with a few dollars. By the time he made the rounds, he had collected \$96, which they put into an envelope and sent to the woman. The rest of the day, all the workers felt a warm glow thinking of Edna and the dinner she would be able to share with her friends.

Christmas came and went.

A few days later, another letter came from the same old lady to God. All the workers gathered around while the letter was opened.

It read,

"Dear God,

How can I ever thank you enough for what you did for me? Because of your gift of love, I was able to fix a glorious dinner for my friends. We had a very nice day and I told my friends of your wonderful gift.

By the way, there was \$4 missing.

I think it must have been those ba\*\*\*rds at the Post Office



**BELLS  
BY THE BEACH**  
HOLIDAY HOUSE • OCEAN GROVE

24 Roditis Drive, Ocean Grove

Phone: (03) 5255 5263

Mobile: 0403 221 737

email:

[bellsbythebeach@optusnet.com.au](mailto:bellsbythebeach@optusnet.com.au)

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### Welcome to our seaside holiday house, an ideal spot for Seniors and families.

- ☞ 3 bedrooms, sleeping up to six people, two toilets and a shower/spa bath, outdoor hot/cold 'after the beach' shower.
  - ☞ Self contained accommodation, TV, DVD, CD player, gas cooking, microwave, cutlery and crockery – all you could need!
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  - ☞ Two warm, snuggly QS beds, two comfortable single beds.
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  - ☞ Single garage car parking, ample off street parking.
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  - ☞ An easy drive to local shops, Ocean Grove Bowling club, golf clubs, wineries, Barwon Heads, Pt Lonsdale, Queenscliff and Portarlington.
- Vacancies available for week days and weekends throughout the year.

**PLUS: Queenscliffe Maritime Museum, Weeroona Parade, Queenscliff - *FREE* entry for One Adult when a second Adult or Concession admission is purchased for entry to the Museum. Valid any day of the week.**

Your hosts: Retired firefighter Lin Bell and wife Jan Bell  
24 Roditis Drive, Ocean Grove

## Don't Forget!

While on a road trip, a retired fireman and his wife stopped at a roadside restaurant for lunch. After finishing their meal, they left the restaurant and resumed their trip.

When leaving, the elderly wife unknowingly left her glasses on the table and she didn't miss them until they had been driving about twenty minutes. By then, to add to the aggravation, they had to travel quite a distance before they could find a place to turn around in order to return to the restaurant to retrieve her glasses.

All the way back, the retired fireman became the classic grouchy old man. He complained and scolded his wife relentlessly during the entire return drive. The more he chided her, the more agitated he became. He just wouldn't let up.

To her relief, they finally arrived at the restaurant. As the wife got out of the car and hurried inside to retrieve her glasses, the old geezer yelled to her, "While you're in there, you might as well get my hat and the credit card."

## Taste This!

When a man attempted to siphon gasoline from a motor home parked on a Seattle street, he got much more than he bargained for. Police arrived at the scene to find a very sick man curled up next to a motor home near spilled sewage. A police spokesman said that the man admitted to trying to steal gasoline and plugged his siphon hose into the motor home sewage tank by mistake.

The owner of the vehicle declined to press charges, saying that it was the best laugh he'd ever had.

## MEMBERS INTERESTED IN RECEIVING THEIR "WATER OFF" VIA EMAIL.

To those members with easy access to email and would like to have their copy sent by this system, please send your email address to our editor John Laverick. "Water Off" will be sent out in a PDF format.

John's address

- - [retfire@bigpond.net.au](mailto:retfire@bigpond.net.au)

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.

## RECENT RETIREMENTS

**Peter Denman**, (MFB) 7th March

**Ben Franklin**, (MFB) 4th April

**Jim Mellerick**, (MFB) 30th April

**Change of Venue for Retiree's Christmas Luncheon!  
RETURN TO ST. KILDA TOWN HALL  
11.30am Saturday 15th November 2008**

**The UFU Social Committee have successfully re-negotiated this popular venue after the recent refurbishment.**

The UFU Social Committee work hard to ensure the success of this function. It is costly to the UFU and it is up to us to support them by selling the raffle tickets. **PLEASE**, when you receive your raffle tickets, do endeavor sell them all and return them ASAP, along with your attendance reply. If you can't attend for whatever reason, please let the committee know. Invitation and tickets will be mailed to you later in the year.

**Note:** Those who do not reply for 2 years will be removed from the invitation list!

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Lower Plenty 3093

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