

"WATER OFF"

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



Feb 2023 Vol 28 No 1
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**GENERAL MEETING
WEDNESDAY 15th
FEBRUARY, 2023 at
GLASS HOUSE -
CAULFIELD
RACECOURSE 10:30am.**

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MFB Chief Fire Officer Neville Edward Van Every, QFSM

Born in 1924, Neville Van Every made a significant contribution to the former Metropolitan Fire Brigade (MFB), and his legacy lives on in FRV today.

Neville joined MFB in 1947, having already accomplished a distinguished naval career.

In 1950, Neville married Shirley Aldridge, the daughter of former MFB Chief Officer, Bill Aldridge.

Neville was promoted to MFB Chief Fire Officer in 1974. At this time, MFB had grown to include 1,430 firefighters, 86 mechanical, electrical and building maintenance staff, 60 clerical staff, 14 tailors, 9 stores staff and 2 printing staff.

Under Chief Van Every's leadership, the MFB Workshops and Mechanical Engineering Department built a number of new equipment and vehicles, such as the 50ft 'Wheeled Escape'.

Chief Van Every was an early advocate for the 10/14 hour shift roster, oversaw the implementation of equal pay for women clerical staff, and was Chief when the decision was made to remove all street fire alarms in 1977.

Chief Van Every oversaw the tender for the supply and installation of MFB's Computer Assisted Command and Control System (Metcom), estimated to be operational late in 1979.

Chief Van Every opened the Wheelers Hill and Laverton fire stations, as well as the Training College in Abbotsford. He also oversaw the reconstruction of MFB Headquarters and FS01 at Eastern Hill, which was opened in March 1979.

During his career, Chief Van Every was recognised for distinguished service in the Royal Australian Navy during the Second World War and was awarded five (5) medals. He also received the National Medal and MFB's Long Service Medal.

Chief Van Every retired in November 1979, after 32 years' service.

Ken G. Block, Fire Rescue Commissioner



**CFO Neville Edward Van Every
16 June 1924—10 January 2023**

“GENERAL MEETING”

**WEDNESDAY, 15th FEBRUARY, 2023 at GLASS HOUSE
CAULFIELD RACECOURSE 10:30am.**

Volunteers Required
**The Fire Services Museum needs past
fire service members to assist on an
occasional basis at the Museum**
Please contact
Bryan Robertson
0418 129 252

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

Non financial Members

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

OFFICE BEARERS

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

General Committee:

Col Harris
Len Manning
Mike McCumisky
Ian Geddes
Kevin Hede

Social Secretary:

Brian Jackson

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

Valē

Harold Kiernan, Geoff Waller, Gerritt Kienus, Alan Boyd, Ken Wilson, John Cockburn, Jack Forde, Brian McCarthy, Mathew Hunt, Edward Audsley, Alan Eley, Jack Hillbrick, Neville Van Every, LFF Paul Jones (FRV), Maurice Kane.

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

Sick List * In Care Facility

Gary Devereaux,	Ian Hockey*,
Ian Munroe,	Archie McLachlan,
Bruce Petrie,	Bob Burrows,
John Brown*,	Trevor Reed,
Stan Cameron,	Gary Spicer,
Geoff Cuzac,	John Williams
Jack Etherington*,	

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

Diary Dates

UFU Family Picnic Day
Sunday 12th March 2023.
11am—4pm
Moonee Valley Racecourse.
RSVP UFU Reception
9419 8811 or
RECEPTION@UFUVIC.ASN.AU

PRESIDENT'S REPORT



Hello all,

What a crazy year 2020 has been. Firstly, we had bush fires all over Australia, we worried for the heroes who rushed to help their fellow Australians and mourned for the families of heroes who lost their lives. We came together and thanked all who put their lives on the line to save lives and property at that devastating time.

Then, when we just about returning to some normal times Covid 19 snuck up on us and hit Australia very hard destroying jobs, businesses and lives in more ways than the fires and we are seeing lock-downs and we are asked not to visit loved ones and give hugs to them when we do see them. And worse of all when we lose a loved one or a friend we cannot attend a funeral.

We then had the floods in Queensland, New South Wales, and now along the Murray River in both Victoria and N.S.W.

Give thanks to all the front-line people and the many volunteers who again are putting their lives on the line for us and are doing so unselfishly. But remember it won't last we will come together again and we will again have good times. FAMILY and FRIENDS ALWAYS!

Alex Shepherd - President

SECRETARY/TREASURER'S REPORT



Hi all,

Well, 2023 here we come!

Sadly, we have had a few members pass away since 1st of January 2023.

Our condolences to the families and friends.

Our next meeting is on Wednesday 15th of February 2023 at the Glasshouse, Caulfield Racecourse. This venue will suit our Southern members.

We are shopping around at different venues because we can't use Burnley anymore.

The May meeting will be back at the Glenroy RSL which will suit the Northerners.

Our November meeting will be at Frog Hollow Park Camberwell, This has a BBQ facility, Meeting room with a fully functional kitchen and disable toilets.

This is a great spot for our Annual and Christmas Meeting.

That's all folks!

Hope to see you at the Glasshouse Caulfield. PS "Happy New Year" to you all!

Regards RFA Secretary Phil Cleary

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



Today, Friday the 20/1/2023 we said goodbye to our Brother Retired Chief Fire Officer Neville Van Every at the age of 98.

Neville, like many young men of the day, served his country. Enlisting in the Royal Australian Navy when war was declared, his five service medals clearly show the different areas of battle he would have been involved in during the Second World War.

Neville Van Every was the MFB's 9th Chief Fire Officer. Adding to the tradition of the MFB with ex servicemen being in the top job.

He joined the MFB in 1947 and in 1950 married Shirley Aldridge, daughter of former MFB Chief Fire Officer. Neville aspired for great things and started his progression through the ranks first it was substation officer then Station Officer. In 1961 he was promoted to District Officer, then Assistant Chief Fire Officer in 1963. Then on to Deputy Chief 1970 before becoming Chief Fire Officer in 1974. A position he held for the next 5 years before his retirement in 1979.

It can be said that Neville Van Every made a significant contribution to the MFB. His Queen's Fire Service Medal clearly shows the Crown was more than pleased with his commitment. At the time he was responsible for over 1400 firefighters and almost 200 support staff.

Neville Van Every was a man who had a vision for a greater brigade and he was instrumental in equal pay for women within the Brigade. He was also an advocate for the new 10/14-hour shift roster.

He was also involved in the introduction of the MFB Computer Assisted Control system. Along with the MFB workshops and Mechanical Engineering department building a number of specialized appliances. Chief Van Every opened the new Wheelers Hill and Laverton Fire Stations, as well as the Training College in Abbotsford and reconstruction of Eastern Hill. MFB Headquarters.

He was also a driving force behind Strategic location of Fire stations that was implemented in the early 1980's

As the chief he would be seen at many of the larger fire's where he took the time to speak to as many of the crew as possible.

A keen athlete Neville was a member of the Gym team in the early 50's a great supporter of all the MFB sports teams he would attend many of the matches. A keen golfer he continued to play with and for the Brigade Golf club.

Also, a member of the Royal Humane Society. Neville Van Every always sort to assist others, in as many ways possible. A humble but inspirational leader, a man that many would argue that he was one of the best Chief Fire Officer of the Metropolitan Fire Brigade.

Rest in Peace Mr Van Every.

Fire Services Museum of Victoria—
Russell Hawthorn.

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 Colin Harris. "Water Off" will be sent out in a PDF format.

retiredfirenews@gmail.com

Peer support is available to Retired Firefighters and Associated Members

FRV

Employee Assistance Coordinator

Irina Tchernitskaia – PH: 0407 665 174

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

Peer Coordinators

Chloe Henderson PH: 0417 538 289

Scott Darcy PH: 0429 771 849

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

Retirees

John Howe PH: 9729 0984

CFA

Career Peer Coordinator Trent Egan

PH: 0448 071 299

RETIRED FIRIES LUNCHEON GOLD COAST CSI - CLUB SOUTHPORT 28TH JULY 2022

RETIRED FIRIES LUNCHEON ATTENDING LIST 28 TH JULY 2022	
Allan Burrows	Keith & Jan Brinin
Allison Harris (QLD)	Glen & Linda Marks
Arthur Deans	Dick Vincent (QLD)
Brian Hobley	Adrian O'Keefe
Fred & Janene Koolstra	Geoff & Lou Linley
Gary Schiele	Stephen & Jenny Jameson
Geoff & Jan Setford	Peter Deans
Gerry & Betty Tilker	Keith Lyon
Graeme Hobley	Roy Norris
Ian & Cheryl Cobble	Peter & Gwen Tracey
Ian & Gail Fagernes	Eddie McMullen
Ian Geddes	Travis Kerrigan (QLD) Acting Inspector
Ken & Penny Everden (QLD)	Barry & Hannah Stevens
Laurie & Suzette Christensen	Peter & Marilyn Dawson (QLD)
Lyn Coleman (QLD)	Dick & Bernice Grant
Peter & Glenda Shanahan	Russell Hawthorn
Rob & Lorraine Paterson (QLD)	Marcia Warren
Rob O'Conner (QLD) Treasurer RFA	Peter Pendlebury
Rose Marshall (QLD)	Pam Turnbridge (QLD)
Tony Hynson	Stephen Garbett

Apologies:

Fred Laverick who is waiting patiently for the skin on his head to heal. He will be getting treatment soon for the cancer that had to be removed.

Gary Wright is going to have hip replacement.

Bill Pearce contacted us to say he and his partner were coming - but a couple of days before the luncheon he phoned again and apologized and said he couldn't due to doctor's orders. Bill had taken a spill off his bike and an ulcer had formed. Doctor told him he was going nowhere!

Reg Christensen was sailing further up north.

Allan Young QFS just to name a few.

As usual Ian & I were waiting for the doors to open at 10.00am to quickly set up for the day.

The RFA, MFB UFU flags were flying high (waiting for a QLD flag), the hamper of goodies and the silly door prizes were in place before members came.

This year Carmen (our co-coordinator at CSI) had set up tables for approximately 70 people but alas only 52 actually came.

Once everyone grabbed their name badges (even if their names were spelt incorrectly sorry again - I won't trust my husband ever again), we all sat down to commence the day.

Some of the girls Marcia Warren, Cheryl Cobble and Linda Marks took up the challenge of selling raffle tickets for me and did a spectacular job. Thank you all very much. We earned \$265.00 for the day which will go towards gifts for next year.

Once all were seated Ian gave each attendee a little brown envelope. It consisted of 1 x \$1.00 scratchy, a ticket for the silly door prizes and a piece of chocolate. I had made up 74 with only 52 attending I gave out the remaining. I was going to ask our people that the first one that wins a \$1000 could they buy me a glass of wine.....would you believe the highest win was \$3.00!!!!

Just a little after 11.30am Russell Hawthorn held our 1 minute silence. After this he then read the 'Fireman's Prayer' to all. I asked Russell to also explain the new Retired Members Division (RMD) 'Outreach' program that has commenced. In a nutshell people like myself will be contacting members by phone who are unwell or in need of support or just for a chat. The RMD certainly has a vast array of services available for anyone who may be in need of a little help - even down to the writing of your will.

Apart from Eddie McMullen & Russell Hawthorn!! Travis Kerrigan QFS, Acting Inspector (normally stationed at Surfers) dropped in. We also had Rob O'Conner QFS Retired members (treasurer). Of course we had Rob Paterson Retired QFS. Rob organizes our South East attendees and is also the Chaplain for the SE.

I phoned Peter Coulson the day before to give him the numbers attending (on paper). He was pleased. He said that he had booked a flight for himself and June but had to cancel it at the last minute due to June's health. He also informed me that his son aged only 60 had died only a couple of weeks ago. Peter was intending to walk in to surprise us all but as we say the 'best made plans'! Maybe next year. Pete is 89 years young.

The winner of the food hamper was Glen Marks and Simon Bryrell won the beautiful book 'Life Beyond the bells' which was donated by the RMD. Thank you!

While I have you, if anyone knows the following members could you ask them to send a 'hello' to me fagernes@bigpond.com I would appreciate it. I just want their correct addresses so they don't miss out. John Richo, Sam Slaviero, Sammy R, Paul Marshall, Rob Ashton, HS Trickey.

Around 2.00 pm - 3.00 pm the Qld crew started to head off home. Some Vic's also started to leave. All the 'westies' gathered together at a couple of tables away from us 'normal' folks. I wanted to be a fly!!!

The only bit of gossip I have was when Russ, Eddie, Ian and I were chatting. Something came up about the next Fire & Police games. Eddie said that he had won a gold medal when in China!! He explained that he signed up for a running event. When enlisting and after he gave his age he found that he was only one in the race. So he said he walked and then received his medal. Only Eddie eh!

Russ left around 6pm and did a slight 'crawl' on the way back to his accommodation. Got in at 1.00am of course he was with Allan Thompson - I think he wants to blame Allan but these old buggars.....

Now it is a milestone next year **35 years** that this great luncheon has been going. I will try to get lots of things together for a good raffle and I will 'drop' the food hamper idea. My neighbour next door owns a Liquor Store so I will ask if I can get some discount! I would also like donations pleeeeeeassee from the RFA & RMD please. If anyone else out there would like to offer suggestions please do.

I delivered continental chocolates with an appreciation certificate to Carmen who organizes the seating for us and we wandered home.

Thanks to all once again it was great to catch up with so many - it's all about catching up with old friends.

That's it from Queensland for another year. Cheers to all and look after yourselves.

Gail: 0431 485 141, Home: 07 5522 4321 Ian: 0417 382 935 Ian

fagernes@bigpond.com

Please be sure to log into our 'facebook' page under the heading of - RFA Queensland - become a member and this will give you access to all the photos Russ & I took on the day.

Retired Firefighters Reunion - Queensland 2022



The Adamson Family

(Part 2)

Keith Adamson (retired Deputy Chief Officer AFSM Reg No. 2687) was appointed to the MFB in 1973 at the age of 22. He graduated from Recruit course 6 with 22 other firefighters.

Keith was a reliever most of the time from mid-1980's and worked at several fire stations and day work positions as a Senior Firefighter, SO, SSO and DO (1982 aged 31 y.o.). Then followed Superintendent and Chief Superintendent. This rank was later changed to A.C.F.O. In 1991 he was appointed to Director of Human Resources.

In 1991, Keith was involved with managing a major incident at Coode Island, which went up to an unprecedented 9th alarm and would have gone to a 14th alarm, however the computer system only accepted single digits. At times, he was a sector controller and at other times, Keith was the Incident Controller. The damage was over \$190 million dollars, yet fortunately no serious injuries. The fire continued for 2 days and the clean-up for weeks. Foam tenders even came from Melbourne Airport to assist the MFB at the time. Due to the exposure of over 150 firefighters to the varied chemicals on site at Coode Island, Keith pushed for comprehensive health monitoring for firefighters and officers and eventually for all staff who attended major fires and chemical incidents. Keith was disappointed that it was never made compulsory at the time, as he believed that some firefighters may still be alive and or healthier today, if there had been compulsory monitoring of firefighters health.

From 1996 to 1998 Keith was Director Emergency Response (later called Operations). Around 2007, all of the Operational Directors were given the rank of DCFO except for the Director Operations who was made Chief Fire Officer (Tony Murphy at the time).

In 2009, as DCFO, Keith was the senior duty officer at the Victorian Black Saturday bushfires. On this disastrous day, he was coordinating support to the CFA for two days. He reflected on how difficult it was to manage such a large incident (wildfire), attempting to coordinate the many services required and also to manage media requests from all over the world.

In his final year of service, Keith was involved in the development of and transition to the new MFB structure being developed by Chief/CEO Graham Fountain.

Keith retired in 2012 after 39 years of service.

Paul James Adamson (L/FF retired), Reg No. 3320 was appointed to the MFB on 6th April 1979 following his two brothers. Paul was a fitter and turner by trade and a keen bass player.

There were 36 recruits on Paul's course. Former CFO Tony Murphy was on Paul's recruit course. After some years of shift, Paul spent 11 years on day work in Fire Prevention, Fire Investigation and working with the fire Vision Dep't. for 6 years with the late Phil Lewis and Denis Rich. Paul was fortunate to receive training at the ABC and Channel Seven television studios and recorded and edited live incidents and shows (FireVision). Paul was a member of the MFB band "Muster Busters" that played at MFB and UFU Balls. Paul was also a member of the MFB Cycling club.

These days, Paul lives on a boat in the northern Gold Coast area of Queensland and plays in bands at RSL and Rugby League clubs for the older gentle generation (50+).



This is a photograph of the 1989 Charity Bicentennial 200km Team Run. This photo was taken by Frank Ward recently and he wants to know the names of the MFB runners who participated. A bottle of lovely wine to the first person who contacts the editor with the correct names.

Gone But Not Forgotten Alan Eley



Jodie Griffin, Alan Eley and Sal Spark at the 2022 Echuca CFA open day. Photo by Martin Flanagan

Today, Tuesday the 17/1/2023 we said goodbye to Retired District Officer Alan Eley, Reg No 957. Alan was born on the 2nd October 1929 in a house at the Echuca Fire Station. His father was in the Brigade. Being a Volunteer Brigade then, Alan followed in his father's footsteps in joining the Brigade.

Alan joined the MFB in 1953 after several attempts. Once he joined, he moved down from Echuca. In the early days he was stationed at Brunswick (No. 4) as a Firefighter. Alan completed the SO's course in 1959 and was Stationed at Surrey Hills, where he also lived.

Alan continued to seek advancement in the Brigade, becoming an SSO in 1969 before being promoted to District Officer in 1972. During this period, he served at Windsor (35) & again at Brunswick (4)

Alan retired in 1984 after serving the Brigade and Community for over 30 years. This service was not to stop. Alan moved back to Echuca, the town he loved. He joined the CFA brigade and served as Secretary for 21 years and as a Fire Investigator. Alan was still working on Fire Investigation jobs in his last few days. He continued to impart his knowledge to all, with his brigade and fire investigation knowledge.

Alan also received the Order of Australia medal in the Australia Day Honours.

Retirement is about leisure time also and Alan has enjoyed travelling within Australia and overseas, including several trips to the UK, Scotland, Ireland and America.

Alan has been part of the fabric of Echuca and "THE FIRE BRIGADE" for more than 7 decades. A gentleman with a kind heart and guiding word.

Gone but not forgotten.

RIP Alan Ely (Pa)

A heartfelt letter from Pat Dingey to the R.F.A. Secretary



The editor received a letter from Pat Dingey about her husband Robert “Bob” Dingey - his life!

(ROBERT DINGEY Reg No. 2364)

Bob was born in 1937 in Carlton, Victoria to Ruby and Charles Dingey. Bob was the fourth child in a family of six. Bob grew up in Newport, attending Newport State School and North Williamstown Modern Boys school. He left school at 15 and learnt the trade of engraving, making brass name plates for doctors, dentists etc. At age 27, with 3 young children, he decided to join the MFB. He had 2 older brothers in the brigade at this time. After Bob joined, his younger brother joined up. Now there were four Dingey brothers in the job – Ray, Allan, Bob and Ron. (this must be a record). The Chief Fire Officer was Jack Patterson, followed by Frank Tueno and Neville Van Every. After recruits, Bob was stationed at Eastern hill, Spotswood, Altona, Footscray, Deer Park – Western District. Bob eventually became a Sub Station Officer (S.O.). Bob enjoyed his job and helping people in need. He enjoyed the friendships he made over the years, the likes of Kevin Roderick, Ian Fowler (Mr. Chook), Brian Thompson and Bob Wells. There were many happy times with these men and their families including camping at Torquay. Bob was pensioned out of the MFB in 1981. Our family had 2 grown up daughters and one son. At this time, Bob and I moved from North Altona to Sarsfield, near Bairnsdale, Eastern Victoria. We bought land and started breeding cattle with the help of Bob’s cousin Valerie and Bill Pilgrim (ex-MFB), who were beef and dairy farmers in Bruthen. Bob really enjoyed life on the land. He enjoyed ballroom dancing and the many friends he made in East Gippsland. Bob had Diabetes and Parkinson’s for many years and we decided to move into Eastwood Retirement Village in 2016. In 2017, Bob had bladder cancer. He had treatment for 5 years being cared for at home. Bob passed away on Sunday, 6th February, 2022 at Bairnsdale Regional Hospital with his family at his bedside. He is sadly missed by his family.

Thank you for everything, yours truly, PAT DINGEY.

U.F.U. Retired Member's Xmas Luncheon

It was in November, a day to remember
There were so many people
It was like being in a crowded church without its steeple
There was Normie Crosland and Mick Whiteoak
Col Matheson, Eileen & Rodney Rudd were there
Ian Fagenes from Queensland far up north
Peter Ward was there and so was Bob and Beryl
Kevin Roberts from Kyneton
Old mate Steve Clark and Freddy Laverick
Peter Rowan and Barry Beer and Dave Lawrence
There was Leo Dowling and Arthur Mears
John Berry and his side-kick Johnny Howe were there
Peter Marshall and Dave Hamilton had their say
And a presentation of UFU Life Membership
To Russell Hawthorn & Eddie McMullen on this day
Food and drinks were great and comradery to remember
This day was in November, not in December
Steve and Paul Hudson – we had a chat, also with Dave and Pam
Alan Deans and Trevor Lynch-Whild I saw just passing
Mal Owen (sorry Mal) I had a senior's moment and forgot your name
Many of your old faces are just the same
Trevor Watson was there and he had a great union story to tell
Time was running out and there were still so many to see
And then it was raffle time, I'm sure the prize will be fine
The day was finished. Time to go home. Great time was had
Thanks UFU, organisers and helpers – couldn't be done without you!





The Health Report - Shingles: Don't risk it!

Imagine agonizing, scream out loud, 10 out of 10 pain for 24 hours a day for weeks on end. That is what Bernie Blackall of Bayside experienced when he was stricken with a bout of shingles. The high school teacher's battle with shingles began with a sharp pain in his kidney area and a red, blistering rash...then the agony began. "I'd wake up screaming because of the pain. I was desperate, at my wits end," he said. "The pain was unbelievable." Bernie's doctor told him he would have to ride out the agony. "The pain became so bad, I couldn't function. I couldn't go to work for three weeks. I eventually went to the hospital in desperation and they gave me a dose of morphine which gave me a few hours' sleep."

Interrupted by Shingles is a campaign to educate people about the signs, symptoms and risk factors. Shingles is caused by a reactivation of the varicella-zoster virus which causes chickenpox. You can only get shingles if you have had chickenpox in the past, however, most older Australians would have had the virus.

Shingles causes a blistering rash, usually on one side of the body, either on the face, chest, back, abdomen or pelvis, which can take weeks to settle.

One in ten people will develop post-herpetic neuralgia where the pain and tingling can last for months or even years. A number of symptoms can arise before the rash, including burning, tingling or itching, a stabbing sensation, and sensitivity to touch and/or light fever and/or headache and fatigue. In a few cases, shingles will affect the eyes and can cause vision loss.

Shingles costs the health system more than \$310 million annually, including \$47 million in hospitalisations and \$5.8 million in GP costs.

If you think you might have shingles, it's important to see your GP quickly, as antiviral drugs can be given within the first three days of the rash appearing, which may lessen the symptoms. There are two vaccines available. **Zostavax** is currently free under the National Immunization Program for immunocompetent adults aged 70, with a catch-up vaccination available for those aged 71-79 until October 2023. For everyone else, there is a cost. **Shingrix** is a more modern vaccine only available on a private

Hey Older Fellas, it's Time To Talk

Forward planning for men has come under COTA Victoria's spotlight, with two of its programs – Senior Rights Victoria and Older Men: New Ideas (OM-NI) – planning a forum for men.

COTA Victoria chief executive Tina Hogarth-Clarke said that through OM:NI and the estimated 400 members across 24 groups, it emerged that a surprising number had not attended to future planning. "If you don't have the capacity to express your desires or make your own decisions because of dementia, stroke or something else, who knows what your wishes are? If they're not clearly known, the decisions are made by other people."

Seniors Rights Victoria education coordinator Gary Ferguson said that through the organisation's helpline, it is known that men make up one in four cases of elder abuse. "We want to provide a forum with an inviting and relaxed environment, so participants are confident about asking questions and discussing options with legal experts present, to better equip them to make informed decisions and protect their future," he said.

Ms. Hogarth-Clarke said Seniors Rights Victoria had done a lot of work in raising awareness of advance care plans. **OM:NI: cotavic.org.au and click Our Programs. **advancecareplanning.org.au or 1300 208 582.

Thanks to: www.thesenior.com.au

Retired Firefighter's Association Meeting
Wednesday, 15th February at 10.30am
"Glass House" – Caulfield Racecourse
(REMEMBER, LIFE IS SHORT!)

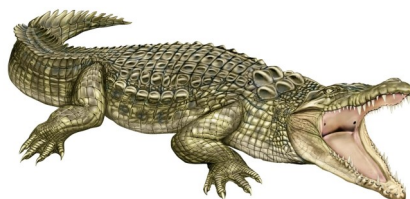
~~~~~

Our members are what we are all about  
 We are the Retired Firefighters Association  
 We have common interests, comradery and mate-ship  
 We have lost many mates over the last few years  
 Some have died young, some will die old and some were very bold  
 We saved lives and property  
 And we all have many sad and happy memories  
 Some stories we will share  
 You can drive your car or catch a train  
 We'll have an indoor meeting & tick all the relevant boxes  
 We can then have lunch (at a modest cost to you)  
 A few drinks and have a catchup with your friends and mates  
 Just be on time if you're travelling by car (parking available)  
 And if you come by train, it's the Caulfield Station stop  
 So come along, we might even sing the "fire brigade song"  
 We have lost so many members in such a short time  
 Just find the time, I'm sure the weather will be fine  
 And bring your wife, partner, relation or mate  
 Check Google maps or the old Melways map  
 Come along and we'll all have a mighty fine time! I'm sure of that!

~~~~~

YOU JUST WOULDN'T BELIEVE IT! CROCODILE
ATTACK IN DARWIN

Absolutely amazing and deeply moving story of an Aussie woman's bravery with a tiny .22 calibre pistol yet. They are like a mosquito bite to a big croc. A Darwin woman, Beverly Thompson, 38, has stopped a crocodile attack using a small .22 calibre Ruger pistol. This is a story of self-control and marksmanship by a brave, cool-headed woman with a small pistol against a fierce predator. Here's her story in her own words: "While walking along the edge of a lake near my house in the Zuccoli Village Estate near Darwin discussing a property settlement with my soon-to-be ex-husband, and other divorce issues, we were surprised by a huge 3.5metre crocodile which suddenly emerged from the murky water. It began charging us with its large jaws wide open. She must have been protecting her nest because she was extremely aggressive. If I had not had my little Ruger .22 calibre pistol with me, I wouldn't be here today!" said Beverly. "Just one shot to my estranged husband's kneecap was all it took. The croc got him easily, and I was able to escape by just walking away at a brisk pace. The amount I saved in lawyer's fees was really incredible - and his life insurance was also a big bonus!



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Phil Cleary
RFAV Secretary
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