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VicRoads Association

Newsletter No 202



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Dear Members,

I am well entrenched in my life story. I have been writing fairly seriously since last July but I have found that a lot of the historical research takes much time and cross-checking. Even now, close to completion, I find I am still revising facts. But I have found it very exhilarating and I recommend you give it a try. Below I have included the first page of my introduction.

I was born in Colac in August 1941 when the world was in turmoil. Japan was to enter the Second World War a few months later when it raided Pearl Harbour. All over Europe, the German war machine was grinding on with scant resistance on land, in the air and on the sea. The mood in Australia must have been at its lowest ebb. It was probably raining on my birthday. It always rains for my birthday, but on that day I would have been blissfully unaware of all this tension.

Many of the kids born at that time were not to see their fathers for years, and for some, not at all. I was lucky. My father was too young for the Great War and too old for the Second War even though he enlisted for the latter. The only danger he faced at that time was fighting bushfires on the outskirts of town. So compared to others I had great advantages. I was also lucky living in the country. I was born surrounded by a loving extended family, which I assumed was everyone's right. And I had the freedom of space. There were lots of places around Colac where I could roam by foot or by bike and let my imagination run riot. We swam in waterholes in Barongarook Creek – in the pool at the bottom of the paddock of our second house in Wilson Street and another opposite the Botanic Gardens. Further out were the canyons where Barongarook Creek cut deep into the earth making it a haven for lizards and snakes and wild-west dreams. We also swam in the lake about two kilometres away from the sewerage treatment plant. Local wags termed this as

swimming through the motions. And I once got stuck in a small cave on the bank of the lake at a place we called the Fox Caves. It was only for a couple of minutes but it seemed like an eternity.

I have a brother John – five years older – and a sister Mary – two years younger. I was always closer to Mary probably because we were closer in age. The five years between John and I was a bit much but he had plenty of friends of a similar age with whom he used to gallivant. In fact the five-year gap between John and me was considerable. I can't really remember doing anything with John even in our teenage years. Once Mum insisted that he take me to the pictures with him one Saturday afternoon. I reckon I was about five so that he would have been ten at the time. He fought tooth and nail not to take me but Mum persisted. We walked up to the Regent Cinema and once inside, John pointed to the light shades in the ceiling. They were large circular discs about 300 mm deep and two metres diameter. John told me that the actors lived in the lights and when the lights dimmed they came out on the screen. I believed him and every time I went to the pictures I could swear that I could see movement in the light shades until the day that someone enlightened me that it was just a story.

John also broke my heart when he told me that the world was going to end. We were lying in bed in the dark and he very matter-of-factly said that one day the world was going to blow up and everybody would be killed. I pleaded with him to assure me that he was only making it up but he was quite adamant and persuasive. I cried myself to sleep. I couldn't bear the thought that everyone I loved was going to die and I thought about it for weeks before the terror of what he described wore off on me.

I am also writing a chapter about my experiences working at VicRoads but that is still a work in progress.

David Jellie
Editor

Dates for your diary

| DATE | TIME | EVENT | |
|-------------|-------------|---------|---|
| April | Monday 9 | 12 noon | Occasional lunch, Shoppingtown Hotel |
| May | Monday 7 | TBA | Visit to Melbourne Level Crossing Removal Authority |
| June | Monday 4 | 12 noon | Occasional lunch, Shoppingtown Hotel |
| | Monday 18 | TBA | Visit to Office of Projects Victoria |
| July | Monday 30 | 2.00 pm | Visit to VicRoads R & L, Traffic Centre and Road Safety |
| August | Monday 13 | 12 noon | Occasional lunch, Shoppingtown Hotel |
| September | 12 and 13 | TBA | Visit to Bendigo Regional office and attractions |
| October | Monday 8 | 12 noon | Occasional lunch, Shoppingtown Hotel |
| | Thursday 11 | 6.00 pm | Drinks and dinner at Waverley RSL |
| | Monday 29 | TBA | Visit to Melbourne Metro Rail Project |
| November | Monday 26 | 12 noon | Occasional lunch, Shoppingtown Hotel |
| December | Monday 3 | 12 noon | Christmas luncheon |
| 2019 | | | |
| February | Monday 11 | 12 noon | Occasional Lunch, Doncaster Shoppingtown |



What's coming up

Occasional Lunches – Shoppingtown Hotel – Monday 9th April 2018 and Monday 4th June 2018

Bookings are not essential, but it would help with arrangements if you can let Kelvin York know on 9438 1028 if you can attend. We hope to see you there.

Visit to the Level Crossing Removal Authority (LXRA) – Monday 7 May at 9.45 am

We had a very interesting visit to the LXRA last year and this visit will follow up on the progress of work and any new issues. It will also provide us with information of other projects in the pipeline. I have included a bit of the latest news from the LXRA later in this newsletter – just to whet your appetite.

We propose to meet in the foyer of the Authority at 121 Exhibition Street at 9.45 am. Please contact Jim Webber before 3 May if you propose to come – so that he can arrange security passes to enter the office. Friends and partners are welcome to come along. We will also send out a reminder to all those on our email list.

Afterwards, there are plenty of lunch venues in the area where you can get together for a coffee and sandwiches or more.

One of the Projects currently in the planning stage is the new Frankston Station.

The LXRA will be overseeing the new Frankston Station at the same time as working to remove the dangerous Skye/Overton Road level crossing just down the road.

Running these two projects at the same time will minimise disruption to rail users. Work on the new Frankston station has begun and it is expected to be completed by the end of 2018. Works within the station precinct began in February while the trains are still running. The station will remain open during this time, but there will be some changes to the way travellers access the station.

The Victorian Government has awarded the project contract to an alliance led by John Holland and KBR. The new station is part of the government's \$63 million Frankston Station Precinct Redevelopment. Genton Architecture emerged from a field of 39 to unanimously win the architectural design competition. The firm has been working with government to develop and refine the design, which includes a distinctive new canopy and buildings, upgrades to the entrance and passenger facilities.

Other improvements to the area, include new public plazas and walkways, aimed at creating a thriving, modern shopping and transport hub. The result will be a safe, modern and welcoming gateway to a revitalised Frankston and the Mornington Peninsula.

Utility service relocation and technical surveys are underway and major construction and a temporary station closure will occur from mid-year. Temporary station facilities and rail replacement buses will transport commuters along the line while the station is demolished and rebuilt.





WHAT'S BEEN HAPPENING

Dinner at Waverley RSL – Thursday 1 March

We had a record attendance of 28 people and here are some of them. I am afraid that many of the pictures, taken on my phone, came out too dark to publish. Sorry!



Jim and Kay Webber



Ted Barton, Iris Whittaker and Sara Jellie



John Wright, David Miles and Rosslyn Wright



John and Eunice Rebbechi

I cannot report on the AGM and the visit to the North East Link project in this newsletter because this one has to go to printing before those events. However I will include them in the next one.

NEWS FROM VICROADS

The major news from VicRoads is the resignation of the CEO, John Merrit, and the appointment of a new Acting Chief Executive, Kerry Thompson.

Back on the 16th October John Merritt made the following announcement to staff.

Over the last couple of months I have been reflecting on my work and leadership at VicRoads, and my working life generally. Our recent OCI results give us a picture of where we are at as a place to work, and they add to my overall sense that we are heading in the right direction, our foundations are stronger, and that our people are in good hands.

Whilst there is never a good or easy time to leave a role like mine, I feel the time is right for me to move on. Our Minister, Luke Donnellan, has, as always, been incredibly supportive of me, and I have agreed to stay on until December 20, and help as best I can in the transition to the next leader.

There will be plenty of opportunities between now and then to discuss what worked and what didn't, where VicRoads is at and what's next.

For now, can I simply say that I could not have asked for more support in my role from you. Individually and collectively you have been wonderful to me, and I will be forever grateful for the fantastic life experience of working in this great organisation.

Peter Todd was appointed Acting Chief Executive, but on 27 February he announced his resignation as follows:

This morning I have announced to my Executive Leadership Team (ELT) colleagues my departure on Friday March 9 from VicRoads after six fantastic years here and that Transport for Victoria Deputy Secretary Kerry Thompson will step in as VicRoads Acting CEO while the recruitment process for a permanent CEO is underway.

I came to VicRoads in 2012 after nearly 25 years working here in Victoria, in Tasmania and in South Australia in the area of roads and infrastructure. I feel that after some 30 years in government, I would like to take the next step in my own career and head into the private sector.

VicRoads is one of the most supportive, community focused organisations I have ever worked for and I know I will miss this organisation and all of you enormously, but as I'm sure many of you can appreciate, sometimes an opportunity presents itself and you know you need to grab it.

I want to acknowledge that some of you may find John's recent departure, and now mine, to be a little unsettling. I want to assure you all that you have strong leadership in your ELT, all of whom are strongly committed to working hard to drive this organisation into the future as a high performing business that delivers for the Victorian community and cares about its employees. ELT is committed to achieving this and more and while the

recruitment for a permanent CEO continues, the leadership of Acting CEO Kerry Thompson will bring an enormous amount to the organisation in the pursuit of these goals.

Currently Deputy Secretary for Investment and Business with Transport for Victoria (TFV), Kerry is a powerhouse with significant CEO experience and a strong understanding of the world of transport. Kerry has been Acting CEO of the City of Melbourne, the City of Geelong, CEO of the City of Maribyrnong and CEO of the City of Wyndham, one of the fastest growing populations in Australia.

Kerry was also Chair of the Western Region Transport Alliance from 2009 to 2015, during which time she worked closely with VicRoads, industry and multiple councils to develop the Western Region Transport Strategy. Kerry also played a key role in harnessing transport to create communities in growth areas in the west.

Kerry is also a strong proponent of the importance of good workplace culture and has already indicated her commitment to building on the work that has already been done at VicRoads and continuing the cultural journey that we are on to be a supportive, open and transparent, high performing organisation that is committed to delivering on our priorities and connecting Victorian communities.

TFV, DPC and our Ministers Office are all excited, as am I, about the value that Kerry will bring to the role in her time as Acting CEO. She is very well placed to lead VicRoads in the coming months as it works to deliver major projects, major road maintenance work, connect with our outer suburbs and country Victoria and meet the challenge of population growth on our road network.

Kerry commenced her new role on 3 March and we wish her well in her new role.



Kerry Thompson



Country Roads Program

VicRoads has developed a new tool on its website to keep everyone informed about its current (and future) country roads program. It covers the following regions:

- Loddon Mallee
- Grampians
- Barwon South West
- Hume, Goulburn and Ovens Murray
- Gippsland

Taking Gippsland as an example, it provides the following information about current projects.

Over \$400 million will be spent on major upgrades, such as:

- Princes Highway East
- South Gippsland Highway
- Princes Highway, Bairnsdale to New South Wales border
- Monaro Highway
- Hyland Highway
- Phillip Island Road roundabout

\$46 million will be spent on road maintenance and repair along:

- Valley Road
- Tyers-Thompson Road
- Korumburra-Wonthaggi Road
- Princes Highway East
- Stratford-Maffra Road
- Meeniyan-Promontory Road
- Great Alpine Road
- Bruthen-Nowa Nowa Road
- Hyland Highway, Traralgon

Significant safety upgrades will be undertaken along:

- Paynesville Road, Bairnsdale to Paynesville
- Princes Highway East
- Maffra-Sale Road, Sale to Maffra
- South Gippsland Highway, Leongatha to Meeniyan
- Bass Highway, Lang Lang to San Remo
- A new bike path between Morwell and Traralgon

To help improve freight efficiency, there will be upgrades to:

- Bass Highway
- Princes Highway East
- Great Alpine Road
- Omeo Highway

Bridge strengthening will be carried out along Tyers Road and the Princes Highway East at Little Moe River, Morwell River floodplain and Loy Yang-Morwell Road.

Planning is underway for a number of upgrades including the Traralgon bypass, Bass Highway, South Gippsland Highway, an alternative truck route for Sale and network improvements in Warragul, Drouin and Bairnsdale.

And then it shows the works currently in hand so that the public can see first hand what is being done.



What we're doing now

Major upgrades

- 1 \$260m Princes Highway East duplication, Traralgon East, Nambrok and Fulham
- 2 \$51.5m safety upgrades between Sale and Bairnsdale
- 3 \$50m South Gippsland Highway upgrade, Koonwarra
- 4 \$50m on Princes Highway, Bairnsdale to New South Wales border
- 5 \$10.6m on two overtaking lanes at Thurra and Bellbird on Princes Highway
- 6 \$10m on Monaro Highway
- 7 \$10m on Hyland Highway
- 8 \$7m Phillip Island Road, roundabout

\$46m road maintenance and repair, including:

- 9 Tyers-Thompson Valley Road
- 10 Korumburra-Wonthaggi Road
- 11 Princes Highway East
- 12 Stratford-Maffra Road
- 13 Meeniyah-Promontory Road
- 14 Great Alpine Road
- 15 Bruthen-Nowa Nowa Road
- 16 Hyland Highway, Traralgon

Safety upgrades

- 17 Paynesville Road, Bairnsdale to Paynesville, centre-line widening and barriers

- 18 Princes Highway East, Sale to Bairnsdale, centre-line barriers
- 19 Maffra-Sale Road, Sale to Maffra, centre-line widening
- 20 Princes Highway East, Longwarry to Traralgon, barriers both sides
- 21 Princes Highway East, Traralgon to Sale
- 22 South Gippsland Highway, Leongatha to Meeniyah, centre-line barriers
- 23 Bass Highway, Lang Lang to San Remo
- 24 Shared bike path between Morwell and Traralgon

Freight upgrades

- 25 Princes Highway East, Lloyd Street off-ramp
- 26 Princes Highway East/Bank Street, traffic signals
- 27 Princes Highway East, roundabout improvement
- 28 Princes Highway East, truck rest area signage
- 29 Bass Highway/Korumburra-Wonthaggi Road, intersection signals
- 30 Moe West, new truck stop and freeway ramp upgrades
- 31 Bass Highway/Korumburra-Wonthaggi Road, traffic lights*
- 32 Great Alpine Road, Licola to Heyfield, improvements for motorcycle riders

- 33 Omeo Highway, Bogong High Plains Road to Anglers Rest, improvements for motorcyclists

Bridge strengthening and replacement

- 34 \$8.6m on Tyers Road, Latrobe River bridge replacement
- 35 Princes Highway East, Little Moe River, Darnum
- 36 Princes Highway East, Morwell River floodplain, Hernes Oak
- 37 Princes Highway East, Loy Yang-Morwell Road, Morwell

Planning underway

- 38 \$10m upgrade of the Great Alpine Road from Bruthen to Cobungra is being planned with communities and will include safety barriers, road widening and six slow-vehicle pullover areas.*
- 39 Princes Highway East - Traralgon Bypass
- 40 Warragul and Drouin network improvements
- 41 Bass Highway - Anderson to Leongatha (corridor planning)
- 42 Princes Highway east - Sale alternative truck route
- 43 Princes Highway East network improvements (Bairnsdale)
- 44 South Gippsland Highway, Korumburra

*Joint Federal and State funding

*Joint Federal and State funding, in conjunction with Bass Coast Shire Council

VALE

It is my sad duty to announce the death of some highly respected friends and colleagues.

Frank Geoffrey Lodge

17 April 1925 – 30 December 2017



Frank Lodge Drive at Deakin University; the Frank Lodge Monument at Bolwarra and the Frank Lodge Conference Room at the Warrnambool Base Hospital are just a hint of the legacies from a life of service and commitment by Frank.

Born in 1925, Frank was one of seven children. He completed primary education at Our Lady of Victories in Camberwell and attended St Kevin's College in Toorak to complete Leaving Honours at age 16 in 1941. He was the first senior swimming champion of the school and inter-school diving champion.

Frank completed a Bachelor of Engineering at Melbourne University in December 1946. He was the captain of the engineering football team. He had tried to enlist in the war effort, but engineers were in short supply and he was required to complete his engineering degree.

Frank commenced work with the Country Roads Board at the Exhibition Building, Carlton in January 1947. He transferred to Warrnambool Division in March 1947, where he was the only supervising engineer for three construction gangs, three bridge gangs and two spray gangs.

He was promoted to Assistant Divisional Engineer (ADE) at Benalla in 1950 (the youngest ever). He transferred back to Warrnambool as ADE in 1958 and was further promoted to senior ADE at Bendigo in September 1963. He returned

to Warrnambool again as Divisional Engineer in January 1966 and remained there until his retirement in September 1985. Frank understood the need for an effective road network to assist in community development and during his tenure duplications were built along the Henty, Glenelg and Princes Highways. Significant bridge works were also undertaken, together with improvements to tourist routes along the Great Ocean Road and in the Grampians. He also managed the substantial road infrastructure development in the opening up of the Heytesbury Settlement area. A lookout on the Princes Highway at Bolwarra, near Portland, named The Frank Lodge Lookout, was officially opened by the then VicRoads chairman in November 1991. VicRoads, Portland City and Portland Shire jointly financed the project.

Family was of paramount importance to Frank. Caring for his father after the war years and nurturing his siblings, he was selfless and compassionate throughout his life. Frank married Hilary Hammond from Warrnambool in 1951. Their very devoted family includes two daughters and two sons, ten grandchildren and one great grandchild. He was adored by his family, for whom his love and support was unconditional.

He was a Member of the Warrnambool Rotary Club 1966 – 1975, Member of the Warrnambool Technical College Council 1967 – 1969, instrumental in the establishment of the Warrnambool Institute of Advanced Education (now a Deakin University campus). Frank was a member of that council for 16 years, including time as Vice President, President and chairman of various committees. He was also a Board Member of the Warrnambool Base Hospital (South West Healthcare) Board from 1977 – 1999, holding the position of President 1985 – 1987.

In addition to his swimming prowess, Frank was an accomplished footballer. He played for Auburn (hence a keen Hawthorn supporter) and later with Warrnambool Football Club, resigning to relocate to Benalla. He returned to the club in 1959 as a member of the selection panel, but then resigned to transfer to Bendigo in 1963. He was also a member of the Warrnambool Golf Club from 1960 to 2000.

Frank was an inspirational leader. Frank engendered an environment of camaraderie and respect with field and office staff alike and promoted a true team spirit. During his stint at Warrnambool, the CRB/RCA was directly responsible for the planning, survey, design, construction and maintenance of road and bridge infrastructure for the declared road network and all government controlled roads. He was highly respected by his local colleagues, by municipal staff and by CRB/RCA employees statewide. He was a staunch supporter of southwest Victoria - and Warrnambool in particular - and he is missed greatly.

Gerard (Gerry) Sharkey



Gerry died on 12 January 2018 after a long illness. Gerry was a quiet and humble man not given in any way to blowing his own trumpet and yet his life's achievements were formidable – as a loving and caring family man, as an engineer, as an army officer and as a planner and VCAT member.

Gerry was born on 11 September 1941. When he was young, his family moved to Mansfield where his father, Frank, was the Shire Engineer. They eventually moved to Heidelberg and Gerry attended the Christian Brothers in Clifton Hill from 1951-52, and then Parade College in East Melbourne in 1953 from where he matriculated in 1959. He studied Civil Engineering at RMIT and on graduation went to work at the Country Roads Board. Whilst studying, he worked as a tram conductor, a postman and at Buckley and Nunn.

Gerry met Susan who was to become his wife in 1964 and they married in 1971. Following their wedding, Gerry was transferred to Traralgon where their two eldest sons, Daniel and Joshua were born. Naomi, Michael and Benjamin were born in Melbourne after their return to the Burke Road house in 1977.

Gerry continued to study. In addition to his Fellowship Diploma in Civil Engineering from RMIT, he obtained a Bachelor of Commerce degree from the University of Melbourne, a Graduate Diploma in Urban Policy and Planning from RMIT, a Master of Social Science majoring in environment and planning from RMIT and a Masters in Theology from the University of Divinity. He was also an accredited mediator and a CPA.

When Gerry died, he was three years into research of the Irish Catholic Church in Australia for his PhD. His PhD supervisor observed that he was, "a very diligent and conscientious researcher, (even through illness), with a great love of Australian history. He wrote elegantly and with insight".

Gerry's engineering career spanned from the Country Roads Board and the Road Construction Authority to VicRoads. He was involved in the planning, design and construction of many freeways, roads and bridges Victoria especially in Gippsland. He eventually became the Right of Way Engineer managing the acquisition of property for all the organisation's road projects. Whenever he knew of someone whose land was being compulsorily acquired, Gerry always made himself available to personally talk to the people affected.

Gerry also worked in the Department of Premier and Cabinet for a period.

He also had a long association with the Royal Australian Engineers, reaching the rank of Major before he transferred across to the Pay Corps where he attained the rank of Lieutenant Colonel. Some of the RAE Squadrons that Gerry served in were 104, 107 (where he was OC), 203 and 22 Regiment. In all he contributed over 30 years to his military career most of which was as an Engineer.

After he retired from VicRoads, he was appointed to the Administrative Appeals Tribunal, later the Victorian Civil and Administrative Tribunal. He commenced as a member and later rose to senior member. In his time at VCAT, Gerry predominantly heard planning cases, but sat on multiple lists. He said that his time at VCAT was the highlight of his professional life. During his time at VCAT, and after, Gerry mentored and supported lawyers and barristers who appeared before him. Because of the many fine barristers he met, he was proud to see his son, Michael, called to the Bar. He had great pleasure in giving him his robes at his signing of the Bar Roll.

Gerry enjoyed travel in Australia and abroad – especially to Ireland to trace the Sharkey family roots. He once had a tour through the Vatican with Tim Fisher, the former Deputy Prime Minister of Australia and the Ambassador to the Holy See at the time. On one of his many trips to Ireland 20 years ago Gerry took it upon himself to visit An Bord Pleanála, an Irish institution like VCAT – a statutory, quasi-judicial planning appeals tribunal. According to the then Chief Officer of the Board, Paul Mullally, Gerry simply called into the offices, unannounced, and asked to meet someone there. Paul says that fortunately it was him. Paul and Gerry became great friends and corresponded regularly, and Paul said that some planning provisions and procedures in Ireland were amended as a result of Gerry's advice.

Gerry was diagnosed with a serious form of Amyloidosis almost 15 years ago, and was given four months to a year to live. 2017 was a difficult year for Gerry's health. He was hospitalized six times and his health gradually deteriorated. Over the last two years his illness progressed to the extent that Susan devoted herself to caring for and nursing him on a 24-hour basis at home or at their house at Rosebrook near Port Fairy. The Sharkey family has a long history in Rosebrook going back over one hundred and fifty years. Gerry's grandparents settled there in the road that now bears the family name.

We were incredibly privileged to have him as a friend and colleague.

Helen Williams

We were saddened also to learn of the death of Helen Williams and we extend our sincere sympathy to Merv and his family.

Athol Russell

Leo Russell rang me from Queensland to inform me that his wife, Athol, died a few months ago at the age of 88. They had been married for 64 years. We extend our kindest thoughts to Leo.

NEWS FROM OUR MEMBERS

Robin Underwood has a passion for road safety and, although he is seriously ill, he recently wrote this article for our newsletter about Victoria's road deaths beyond 2017. The views he expresses are his own.

1. Background

Motorcars first appeared on Victorian roads in about 1900. The first known motorcar road death in Melbourne (and probably in Victoria) was in the winter of 1905. A car driven by Macpherson Robertson (a confection millionaire and creator of the Freddo Frog and Cherry Ripe brands) hit a pedestrian, Thomas Hall, at the intersection of Nicholson and Gertrude Streets. He was taken to hospital in Robertson's car, but was declared dead on arrival.

Soon after their introduction, the number of motor vehicles on Victorian roads increased quite quickly and at the same time the number of motorcar deaths also increased. By 1960, road deaths had reached 760 per annum and continued to increase to a maximum of 1,061 in 1970.

In 1970, the State's population was about 3.5 million and there were about 1.3 million registered motor vehicles, i.e. about 1 registered motor vehicle per 2.7 persons. There were about 8.1 deaths per 10,000 registered motor vehicles or 30.8 deaths per 100,000 population on Victorian roads.

Since 1970, improved and safer roads and traffic facilities, improved vehicle standards, improved and better observed legislation and road rules, coupled with more intensive road safety publicity, education training, licensing and enforcement, and a more safety conscious community, have contributed to a significant reduction in the annual number of deaths on Victorian roads.

By 1992 the annual road deaths had reduced to 400. Over the last 10 years, annual road deaths have ranged from 282 in 2008 to 255 in 2017, but there have been significant variations in between – down to 242 in 2013 and up to 291 in 2016.

In 2017, the State's population had grown to about 6.2 million and there were about 5.3 million registered motor vehicles i.e. about 1 registered motor vehicle per 1.2 persons. There were 255 deaths on Victorian roads, i.e. about 0.5 deaths per 10,000 registered motor vehicles or 4.0 deaths per 100,000 population.

2. Looking beyond 2017 (significant factors)

2.1 Future population.

The State's population is expected to continue to increase well into the future and to reach close to about 10 million by 2050.

2.2 Future motor vehicle registrations.

The number of registered motor vehicles is expected to continue to increase well into the future although the rate of increase may slightly reduce, but possibly reaching close to 9 million in 2050. Some slight reduction in the annual kms of travel per vehicle could be expected

2.3 Automated vehicles.

The introduction of automated vehicles is now receiving increasing attention. They may range from partly automated, in which one or a few functions are automated, to those in which all functions are fully automated (i.e. they can operate without a driver).

Partly automated vehicles, in which one or a few control mechanisms are automated (such as cruise control, parking assistance, braking and lane changing) are already using Melbourne's roads to a limited extent. They are likely to become increasingly present within the next five to ten years.

Fully automated vehicles (without a driver) are likely to become available from about 2020 onwards. Some relevant considerations with their introduction in Melbourne (and Victoria) include:

- Initially at least (say up to 2025 or 2030), fully automated vehicles are likely to be limited to selected freeways and some selected arterial roads.
- It is difficult to see them being used on local, sub-arterial and even on some arterial roads, in the foreseeable future because of a presence of a range of traffic types (cars, trucks of all sizes and purposes, buses, trams, motor-cyclists, bicyclists and pedestrians), access to and from abutting property, and the like.
- It would seem probable, that at least initially, fully automated (driverless) vehicles could act as a hybrid, i.e. they could act as fully automated vehicles on selected high quality roads, and then revert to driver control on lesser standard roads.
- How would truck (freight) traffic be catered for?
- The availability and cost of fully automated vehicles and the rate at which existing conventional vehicles might be replaced by them.
- The extent, cost and availability of supporting infrastructure involved.
- The extent of public acceptance of their widespread use.

2.4 Application of intelligent transport systems (ITS.)

Over the last few years, an emerging development has been the application of intelligent transport systems. ITS covers any technology applied to transport and infrastructure to transfer information between systems for improved safety, productivity and environmental performance. It includes stand-alone applications such as traffic management systems, information and warning systems installed in individual systems, as well as applications involving vehicle-to-infrastructure and vehicle-to-vehicle communications.

Applications of ITS include:

- Provision of traveller information both on, and prior to, reaching the particular facility.
- Smart roads that manage competing interests for limited road space by giving priority to different transport modes at particular times and places.
- Managing freeways to optimise the performance of these facilities, while maximising safety, using some or all of variable speed limit signs, flexible lane control, ramp metering, travel time signing, electronic message signs and roadway data systems.
- Improved safety at road-rail level crossings.

2.5 Reducing the default speed limit in rural Victoria.

A disproportionate number of road deaths occur on rural roads and many of these involve single vehicles running off the road. Many sections of rural roads are either unsealed or have narrow sealed pavements and minimal shoulders, and a blanket speed limit of 100km/h is quite inappropriate on them. Consideration should be given to a maximum speed limit of 80 km/h, (or even a little less), on these roads. In this respect, a reduced maximum speed from 100 km/h to 80 km/h would increase the travel time per km of travel from 36 to 45 seconds for vehicles travelling at the speed limit (a difference of 9 seconds per km of travel, or 90 seconds for a 10 km trip), and would reduce the impact of a crash for a vehicle travelling at the speed limit by about 36% to about 64 %.

If this suggestion were to be considered, it could be implemented simply by:

- changing the default speed-limit outside urban areas from 100 km/h to 80 km/h in Rule 25(3) of the Road Safety Road Rules, and
- checking to ensure that all higher volume sealed rural roads (particularly State Highways and Main Roads) of appropriate geometric standard are signposted as having a 100 km/h limit (and it is likely that most, if not all, are already so signed).

The change to the definition of the default speed-limit outside urban areas would require effective education and positive publicity programs to explain the change and reasons for it, and appropriate signing facing traffic entering the State at the significant State border crossings.

2.6 Victoria's Safety Strategy Action Plan 2016-2020 Towards Zero

This plan aims to reduce the number of road fatalities to 200 or less by 2020 and to reduce the number of serious injuries by 15 percent over the same period. This is a target that should be strongly pursued, but it is likely to be too optimistic. A figure somewhere closer to 230 to 240 road deaths by 2020 is likely to be more realistic.

3. Conclusions

Of the significant factors in Section 2, increasing population and increasing numbers of motor vehicles could be expected to slightly increase deaths on the roads. On the other hand, continued development and application of ITS and adoption of a reduced default speed limit in rural Victoria could be expected to have a positive effect in reducing deaths.

At this stage, the likely effect of automated vehicles is difficult to assess. There is no doubt that their widespread use has potential for significant safety advantages in the longer term, but, at this stage, their availability and cost, and the rate at which they might replace existing vehicles, particularly over the next ten years or so, is unknown. I suspect that they will not have too much effect in Victoria until about 2030 at the earliest.

Victoria's Safety Strategy Action Plan 2016-2020 should be strongly pursued. However, based on road fatalities over the last ten years, a target of 200 annual road deaths is not likely to be achieved for at least some years beyond 2020 at the earliest.

Driving with Mr. Jones by Norm Butler

This story was submitted to me from Norm Butler.

Many stories of the Country Roads Board in Regional Victoria revolve around cars. Cars were our main means of communication. They were often our office. There was much pride invested in having a Board Car. There was always some contention about cars. So here is a story about a car and the CRB.

It would have been in the late 60s when Laurie Jones, then Road Construction and Maintenance Engineer for the Country Roads Board came to visit the office in Benalla. With Laurie came his assistant, Edgar Bartrop.

All of the Engineers were assembled in the big open office upstairs in Benalla Divisional Office and we had the usual discussions about "Proper and Economical Use of Plant in the Field" and complaints (from us) about how clapped out the Board's mechanical plant was at that time.

Tom Glazebrook, the Assistant Divisional Engineer, then asked Alwyn Hyman and me to take Laurie on an inspection of works in progress. Alwyn and I were sector Engineers for the Keiwa Valley Highway and Ovens Highway respectively and it was our job to show works in progress to Laurie and Edgar. From memory these were

jobs at Dederang and Myrtleford. It was to be a two-day trip as we had started out after lunch.

Our trip was fairly uneventful. I drove Laurie's Board's Car, an HR Holden, with Alwyn in the front seat and Laurie and Edgar in the back. After inspecting the Dederang job, we drove to Tawonga and headed to Bright over the Tawonga Gap. I was explaining to Laurie that we had a CRB scratch gang working with the Shire in widening works on Tawonga Gap when I heard the distinctive note of a chainsaw as it finished cutting through timber. I looked out to see where the tree was being fallen when –

"LOOK OUT" came loudly from above.

I braked.

The Voice then said "GET OUT OF THERE"

I revved the motor, slipped the clutch and kangaroo hopped a few yards when - THUMP, a tree landed on the boot of the car.

After driving forward a bit we then went back to the tree, where the Chainsaw Man stood on the top of the batter above the road.

The Chainsaw Man said. "What were you doing there? You know that you are not allowed past the ROADWORKS sign". Edgar and I then said that this was not so and that we should know, as we were from the Country Roads Board.

"OH, YEAH", said the man on the batter, "AND I AM THE KING OF ENGLAND"

Laurie then interceded and convinced our man that we were truly CRB men.

"WELL YOU CAN'T SACK ME" said the Chainsaw Man, "BECAUSE I HAVE JUST SNATCHED IT"

We then drove up the road (fortunately the car was still driveable) and met the CRB Overseer Tom "Governor" Beggs. Tom was dressed as usual in his grey dustcoat with a half a stick of gelignite in one pocket and a detonator and safety fuse in the other. I explained what had happened. "You can't sack that man, Son, said Tom, "he works for the Shire"

As it happened, Laurie was a good friend with the Bright Shire Engineer, Roy Lew Ton, so he decided that we should go straight to the Shire Office and sort it out with Roy. Unexpectedly Roy thought that it was a great joke that the CRB had had a tree dropped on them by their own gang. Roy roared with laughter and after a while we were all having a laugh about the turn of events too. In truth we were all relieved that no one was hurt.

I never found out exactly how the chainsaw man came to be cutting trees without a flagman to protect traffic, but there was a fair chance that "Governor" had been flagging and when the chainsaw man had to knock off to sharpen his saw, Tom had moved up the road to check on other work.

A week later I received a Pink Accident form on my desk. "You were the driver, so you fill out the form". I think that Laurie had collected enough pink forms and the Chief Engineer, Hubert Gibbs, did not look kindly on those who bent the Board's Cars.

Years later, Laurie became Chief Works Engineer and I inspected many, many miles of roads in Benalla then Horsham divisions with him. When we were inspecting, it was all work, but at lunchtime we had many interesting discussions – birdwatching (feathered variety) and Laurie's involvement in Church building for the Seventh Day Adventist Church amongst others, but we never ever again discussed meeting the King of England on Tawonga Gap.

Alan Mackinlay

Alan sent this marvellous photograph of the huge load being transported from the Latrobe Valley to Melbourne port. I think it had a gross mass of 750 tonnes. The monster is resting on the Dingley Bypass just east of Warrigal Road.

It reminds me of my days working with Norm Haylock and others checking the capacity of the bridges to carry such loads in the early 1960s.





NEWS FROM THE LEVEL CROSSING REMOVAL AUTHORITY (LXRA)



A date has now been set for the opening of Clayton’s brand new station, with the facility to open on 16 April when trains begin to run on a new 1.4-kilometre stretch of elevated track. The milestone will see two level crossings removed at Clayton and Centre roads, and follow an intensive 17-day construction blitz to connect wiring, install signalling, and ready the new station for passengers.

Buses will replace trains between Oakleigh and Dandenong from Friday 30 March and Tuesday 2 April, then between Caulfield to Westall from Tuesday 3 April to Sunday 15 April.

When complete, Clayton’s rebuilt station will be far better suited to the busy suburb, a major employment, study and healthcare hub home to Monash Hospital, Monash University and thriving shopping precinct.

Around 80 parking spaces will be added around the station, while new taxi bays, drop-off zones and bike parking facilities will also make it easier to get to the station and hop on a train.

The station design will also better cater for passengers with a disability, disability permit parking, accessible toilets, and hearing loops in waiting rooms and on platforms,

Level crossings across Melbourne are gradually disappearing, with 15 already removed and four more to be removed by the end of April following the Autumn construction blitz, which includes a 44-day shutdown of the Hurstbridge line.

The extensive period of works follows the successful opening of new, elevated rail through Noble Park, where three level crossings were removed in February. Boom gates at Centre and Clayton roads are down for the majority of each morning peak, halting cars for 75 and 82 minutes respectively during each two-hour morning peak.

While Clayton Station will open for passengers on 16 April, works will continue over coming months to put final touches on the station facilities including a ground

level waiting room and ticket office. During April, work will also start to rip up old tracks and remove stony ballast in readiness for landscaping works to begin on the open space set to replace the old ground level rail line.

At Clayton, the space will encompass a landscaped station forecourt – the largest of the five new stations – that will link on to the new open space and recreation facilities. The station’s original timber station waiting room, built in 1891 and now heritage-listed, will feature in the new forecourt and bring a sense of history to the design.



Expressions of Interest have been invited for a public artwork to be installed under a new road bridge in Sydenham, as part of the Melton Highway level crossing removal project. The commissioned artwork will be installed in the under-croft space beneath the eastern side of the new Melton Highway road bridge, which was designed to remove the former level crossing. The LXRA wants to support local communities around Melbourne to be prosperous, safe and vibrant – great places to be and commissioning public art contributes to this legacy.

Trivia and didactic whimsies



This is actually a speed camera incorporated into a guardrail. This new style speed camera is on the highway leading into Maryborough in Queensland and it is one of many that will be installed over the next 12 months throughout the State.

Why men shouldn't write advice columns

Dear John,

I hope you can help me. The other day I set off for work, leaving my husband in the house watching TV. My car stalled, and then it broke down about a mile down the road, and I had to walk back to get my husband's help. When I got home I couldn't believe my eyes. He was in our bedroom with the neighbour's daughter!

I am 32, my husband is 34 and the neighbour's daughter is 19. We have been married for 10 years. When I confronted him, he broke down and admitted they had been having an affair for the last six months. He won't go to counselling, and I am afraid I am a wreck and need advice urgently. Can you please help?

Sincerely, Sheila.

Dear Sheila,

A car stalling after being driven a small distance can be caused by a variety of faults with the engine. Start by checking that there is no debris in the fuel line. If it is clear, check the vacuum pipes and hoses on the intake manifold and also check all grounding wires. If none of these approaches solves the problem, it could be that the fuel pump itself is faulty, causing low delivery pressure to the injectors.

I hope this helps.

John

A Moral Tale

Murphy showed up at Mass one Sunday and the priest almost fell down when he saw him. He'd never been to church in his life. After Mass, the priest caught up with him and said, "Murphy, I am so glad you decided to come to Mass. What made you come?"

Murphy said, "I've got to be honest with you Father, a while back, I misplaced me hat and I really, really love that hat. I know that McGlynn had a hat just like mine and I knew he came to church every Sunday. I also knew that he had to take off his hat during Mass and figured he would leave it in the back of the church. So, I was going to leave after Communion and steal McGlynn's hat."

The priest said, "Well, Murphy, I notice that you didn't steal McGlynn's hat. What changed your mind?"

Murphy replied, "Well, after I heard your sermon on the Ten Commandments I decided that I didn't need to steal McGlynn's hat after all."

With a tear in his eye the priest gave Murphy a big smile and said; "After I talked about 'Thou Shalt Not Steal' you decided you would rather do without your hat than burn in Hell, eh?"

Murphy slowly shook his head. "No, Father, after ya talked about 'Thou Shalt Not Commit Adultery' I remembered where I left me hat."

Shameful Puns

I once went to a performance about puns but I found it was just a play on words. I am really a bit ashamed to include these but here goes. No! Why should I take the rap! Blame Jeff Briggs. He sent them to me.

- How did Moses make tea? Hebrewed it.
- Venison for dinner again? Oh deer!
- A cartoonist was found dead in his home. Details are sketchy.
- I used to be a banker, but then I lost interest.
- French pancakes give me the crêpes.
- England has no kidney bank, but it does have a Liverpool.
- I tried to catch some fog, but I mist.
- They told me I had type-A blood, but it was a typo.
- changed my iPod's name to Titanic. It's syncing now.
- Jokes about German sausage are the wurst.
- I know a guy who's addicted to brake fluid, but he says he can stop any time.
- I stayed up all night to see where the sun went, and then it dawned on me.
- This girl said she recognized me from the vegetarian club, but I'd never met herbivore.
- When chemists die, they barium.
- I'm reading a book about anti-gravity. I can't put it down.
- I didn't like my beard at first. Then it grew on me.
- A cross-eyed teacher lost her job because she couldn't control her pupils?
- When you get a bladder infection, urine trouble.
- Broken pencils are pointless.
- What do you call a dinosaur with an extensive vocabulary? A thesaurus.
- I dropped out of communism class because of lousy Marx.
- All the toilets in New York's police stations have been stolen. The police have nothing to go on.
- I got a job at a bakery because I kneaded dough.
- Velcro - what a rip off!



A Few Signs of the Times



Big Brother is watching

Is this Gordon's Pizza?

No sir, it is Google Pizza.

I must have dialed the wrong number. Sorry.

No sir. Google bought Gordon's Pizza last month.

OK. I would like to order a pizza.

Do you want your usual sir?

My usual? Do you know me?

According to our caller ID data sheet, the last twelve times you called you ordered an extra large pizza with three cheeses, sausage, pepperoni, mushrooms and meatballs on a thick crust.

OK! That's what I want ...

May I suggest that this time you order a pizza with ricotta, arugula, sun-dried tomatoes and olives on a whole-wheat, gluten-free, thin crust?

What? I detest vegetables.

Your cholesterol is not good sir.

How the hell do you know?

Well, we cross-referenced your home phone number with your medical records. We have the results of your blood tests for the last seven years.

But I do not want your rotten vegetable pizza! And I already take medication for my cholesterol.

Excuse me sir, but you have not taken your medication regularly. According to our database, you only purchased a box of 30 cholesterol tablets once, at Chemists Warehouse and that was four months ago.

I bought more from another pharmacy.

That doesn't show on your credit card statement.

What? You've got that too? Anyway I paid in cash.

But you did not withdraw enough cash according to your bank statement.

I have other sources of cash.

That doesn't show on your last tax return, unless you bought them using an undeclared income source, which is against the law.

What?

I'm sorry sir. We use such information only with the sole intention of helping you.

Enough! I'm sick to death of Google, Facebook, Twitter, WhatsApp and all the other *****. I am going to an island without Internet, TV, where there is no iphone service and no one to watch me or spy on me.

I understand sir, but you may need to renew your passport first. It expired six weeks ago.



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Artist's impressions of the new Swan Street Bridge on completion of the widening

