

February 2020



VicRoads Association Newsletter No.213



Membership of the Association is available to all who have been members of VicRoads or forerunner organisations or the spouse of deceased members and bestows on them all the rights of the Rules of Association. Current cost of membership is a once only fee of \$30 plus a joining fee of \$5. Enquiries about membership or receipt of the Newsletter by e-mail should be directed to the Secretary, Jim Webber, c/o Iris Whittaker at VicRoads, 60 Denmark Street Kew 3101 or by phone or e-mail as shown in the footer below.

Dear Members,

I wish to thank three people for their assistance in preparing and posting out our last newsletter.

I wanted this issue to be early as it contained all the details for our Christmas lunch but a delay in the design meant that it wasn't ready for printing and distribution until late in November. To make matters worse, it was printed during a week when I was on a painting excursion up on the Bogong High Plains – out of range for all purposes. So Iris Whittaker had to vet it for the Design Studio and then send it to Lyn Parker in the Printing Section. Lyn gave us priority in printing. Iris picked up the hard copies and delivered them to my daughter, Sara, who addressed them (with labels printed by Iris) and enveloped them. Iris picked them up the following morning and delivered them to the mailroom. And I relaxed on the top of Victoria!

Our thanks go to Iris, Lyn and Sara and I apologise for any inconvenience to the readers.

As I write this newsletter, fires are raging in all states of Australia. East Gippsland has been especially hard hit and my heart breaks at the thought of all the pain and suffering of the residents there, the catastrophic damage to wildlife and farming stock, and the release of millions of tonnes of carbon dioxide into the atmosphere. According to NASA's Space Flight Centre in Maryland, the fires that blighted New South Wales and Queensland to 1 August 2019 emitted a combined 306 million tons of carbon dioxide which is more than half of Australia's total greenhouse gas footprint last year. The fires since then would have easily doubled that number.

It further alarms me that we are not yet into our normal fire season so that we can expect more. Most of our deadliest fires, including Black Saturday and Ash Wednesday, occurred in February. It is an over-simplification to blame drought as a major cause of this inferno as it is only one of many issues contributing to it – not the least of which is human activity. And our Victorian (and Australian) climate, topography and

the nature of our ground cover makes us one of the most vulnerable places on Earth to wildfire. Some fires burn for months because we can't get at them and eucalyptus trees are highly flammable in all weather conditions. In extreme events of conflagration, fires generate their own climate. Control burns may assist in reducing the intensity of some fires, but only to a limited extent. Factors such as ambient temperature, fuel load, fuel dryness, wind speed and topography (such as slope of land) all contribute to the intensity of fires.

There has been much talk about 'cultural' burning as practised by aborigines for thousands of years. They preserved their hunting grounds by judiciously burning ground cover. However this would only have been done in areas they inhabited and used for hunting. The relatively low population and the huge expanse of forests – and of course, a lack of fire-fighting resources – would have meant that there were, from time to time, huge fires in inaccessible areas that burnt for months on end.

I know East Gippsland moderately well having lived in Orbost for two and a half years in the 1970s and I have happy memories of places like Buchan, Bruthen, Mallacoota, and Nowa Nowa and to see them under threat is devastating. And of course, our favourite camping spot in Ben Boyd National Park has also been burnt in part but we don't know to what extent because no one can get in there to see what has happened. But the general store at Kiah has been razed and Eden has been evacuated. It is truly Hell.

My sister and brother in law at Camperdown have had their best year on record in terms of rainfall and the yield of grass hay was phenomenal – but once we have a week of hot weather, it will quickly dry off to become a tinder box. So far the Otway Forest has escaped but it has the potential to explode.

I won't mention our political leadership for fear of offending some of you – but surely a national plan for our environment and land management is the least we could expect from government. Currently, they are not seen to be even trying and half of them don't believe it at any rate! If only recognition of climate change transcended politics.

Woe is me!

David Jellie

President and Editor

Dates for your diary

I want to heap praise on our Secretary, Jim Webber, for all the work he puts in developing our annual program. Last year one of the authorities we visited changed the date four times and one cancelled altogether, but Jim handled it all with grace and patience, and most of the authorities later express their appreciation for the interest we take in their projects. Our visits are well attended and this is due, in no small part, to the effort Jim puts into the arrangements.

Our proposed program of visits for 2020 will be based on the following:

April – Metro Rail Tunnel

May – Regional Rail Revival

July – Road Safety Strategy

September – Royal Botanic Gardens, Cranbourne

September – Regional visit to Geelong & Warrnambool (3 Days, 2 nights)

October – Port of Melbourne, Planning and Operations

2020			
February	Monday 10	12 noon	Occasional Lunch, Shoppingtown Hotel
March	Thursday 12	6.00 pm	Drinks and Dinner Waverley RSL
	Monday 16	11.30 am	Buffet Lunch AGM Theatre
April	Friday 3		Golf Day at Greenacres Golf Club, East Kew
	Monday 13	12 noon	Occasional Lunch, Shoppingtown Hotel
June	Monday 15	12 noon	Occasional Lunch, Shoppingtown Hotel
August	Monday 10	12 noon	Christmas luncheon at Kew HO
October	Monday 12	12 noon	Occasional Lunch, Shoppingtown Hotel
	Thursday 8	6.00 pm	Drinks and Dinner Waverley RSL
November	Monday 9	12 noon	Occasional Lunch, Shoppingtown Hotel
December	Monday 7		Christmas Lunch, Venue (TBA)

Full details of forthcoming functions are provided on the next page

What's coming up

Occasional Lunch – Shoppingtown Hotel – Monday 10 February and Monday 13 April 2020

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.

Drinks and Dinner at Waverley RSL – Thursday 12th March

This is an opportunity for old friends and colleagues and their partners to get together in very pleasant circumstances to enjoy dinner together – at a very reasonable price. It is a good opportunity to get your old work groups together for a bit of fun. If you can make it, please contact Ken Vickery on 0409 561 618 or kenvickery@tpg.com.au so that we can arrange the catering. We always have a good attendance at these – so if you haven't been before come and join us. It is a great night.

Annual General Meeting – Monday 16th March at 11.30 am

The AGM will be held in the Cafeteria at Head Office between 11.30 a.m. and 12 noon on 16th March. It will be followed by a buffet lunch in the Cafeteria on the first floor.

At the AGM the General Committee for the next twelve months will be elected – six office bearers; President, Vice President, Hon. Secretary, Hon. Asst Secretary, Hon. Treasurer and Hon. Asst Treasurer, and six ordinary members. Nominations are to be submitted in writing by the proposer, include the consent of the nominee, and lodged with the Secretary by Tuesday 10th March. A nomination form is included.

The business of the meeting will be to confirm the minutes of the 2019 Annual General Meeting, receive the Annual Report, receive the Financial Statement, consider any Notice of Motion, elect Committee members, appoint an Auditor, confirm or amend the joining fee and annual subscription, and any general business. Any Notice of Motion proposed is to be received in writing by the Hon. Secretary no later than Tuesday 10th March. A form for this purpose is provided on the insert.

We are always keen to find new committee members so if you are interested – or know of someone else who may be interested – please don't hesitate to fill out a nomination form.

**Jim Webber, c/o Iris Whittaker,
VicRoads,
60 Denmark Street,
Kew 3101**

Golf Day at Green Acres Golf Club – Friday 3 April 2020

Our annual golf day will be at Green Acres Golf Club starting at noon.

Please contact Jim Webber on 9817 4182 or 0412 064 527 or jimwebber@optusnet.com.au if you want to come along. Partners and friends are very welcome.

Visit to metro Rail Tunnel – April 2020

Details for this visit have not been finalized but we will email details to members when they are available.

Website for VicRoads Association

Thanks to the expertise and energy of Nick Szwed, we now have our own website. Its address is:

<https://vicroadsassociation.org/>



Nick has been loading data on to the webpage and he will become our webmaster so that if you have something that you would like to put on to the site, then you should send it to Nick.

Nick will put up a method for contacting him via the website. The enquirer would provide name, email address and comment. Nick can then contact them back via the website.

NEW MEMBERS

I wish to welcome the following new members to our association:

Peter Ryan, Richard Bortko, Joe Black, Ray Brindle and Bruce Van Every.

Vale

We have lost some wonderful supporters and friends in the last few months and it is my sad duty to inform you of the death of the following members. We extend our sympathies to all their families and friends.

John Bethune

John Duncan Bethune died on 25 October 2019, after a year-long battle with throat cancer. He was born in 1932 in Kooweerup in Gippsland where his parents were dairy farmers. They lived in Bethune's Road. The family shifted to another farm at Creswick where John grew up. He attended Ballarat Junior Technical School and later the Ballarat School of Mines where he gained his Diploma of Civil Engineering.

In 1952, after graduation, he commenced his career with Hamilton City Council but after three years he joined the Country Roads Board and initially worked in Ballarat, Horsham and Bendigo Divisions. This experience developed his all-round expertise in road/bridge design, construction and maintenance but it was his interest in materials, asphalt and pavements which was to distinguish his career. He spent 33 years with VicRoads – in his later career serving as the Materials Research Engineer, Asphalt Engineer and as Major Works Engineer, responsible for program coordination, pre-construction planning and implementation of all major works.

After his retirement from VicRoads he joined the Australian Asphalt Pavement Association (AAPA) as Technical Director where he was responsible for asphalt pavement design and construction. Throughout his career, he was actively involved in a number of ARRB and AUSTRROADS committees, a member of various Standards Association Australia committees and he undertook a number of successful overseas study tours.

In late 1992, as AAPA Technical Director, John led a Study Tour to Europe taking in the International Society of Asphalt Pavements (ISAP) 7th International Conference at Nottingham, and the European Asphalt Pavement Association (EAPA) 5th Eurasphalt Congress in The Hague, The Netherlands. The tour involved technical visits, inspections and discussions in the United Kingdom, The Netherlands, France, Germany and Italy. In 1993 he attended an Association of Asphalt Paving Technologists meeting in Austin, Texas, and undertook a Study Tour of the United States.

John was also the Director of the Centre for Pavement Engineering Education (CPEE) and a Member of the International Society for Asphalt Pavements (ISAP). He was a member of the Technical Advisory Committee for the 1997 ISAP International Conference in Seattle.



A fantastic supporter and servant of VicRoads, AAPA and CPEE where he was a passionate advocate for technical excellence in the design and construction of roads and pavements and their longevity. This was especially so in

his home State of Victoria, and in later years he was a driving force for harmony between road agencies and industry on a national basis.

In this regard John played a massive role in pushing the Australian industry and clients to new ways of working, thinking and delivering flexible pavements.

The technical research and development program he steered for AAPA brought new products, new equipment, new design systems and shared and developed a high-level understanding of bitumen, seals and asphalt in Australia. Through his open, professional and diplomatic skills he enhanced the links between road authority clients, ARRB and Austroads with many of the AAPA initiatives becoming embedded in the standards, guidelines and work tips that have formed the shared environment we work in today.

John gained many recognitions from various bodies and was most proud of being Awarded the Roads Australia John Shaw Medal, which honours an industry champion who has made a lasting contribution to Australia's roads.

John was a thorough gentleman, quietly spoken, always respectful of other views and never lost his temper. However he was never afraid to speak out for what he thought was the best course of action and behind his smiling manner, he had a steely resolve. He commanded great respect from all he dealt with.

One of his colleagues said that the pavements In Heaven will be greatly improved on John's arrival.



Marje Addis

Marge died in December 2019, just short of her 101st birthday. Bruce asked me to give the eulogy at her funeral – which I was honoured to accept – and below is an abridged version of what I said. Marje’s daughter, Wendy, and Bruce, assisted me in compiling the eulogy.

Marjorie Australie Gilbert was born on the 17th January 1919 in Battersea, London, to Mabel and Charles Web Gilbert. Gilbert was always called Web – rather than Charles. Marge had identical twin brothers who were born 18 months before her.

Web was an Australian sculptor who went to London in 1914 to make his mark in the European art world. It was there in this Bohemian world that he met Mabel, an artist and artist’s model. Web wanted to go to France to meet the great French sculptor, Auguste Rodin, but the outbreak of World War 1 soon after his arrival meant he had to remain in England. Too old to enlist, he nonetheless joined the Australian Imperial Force as a war artist and he travelled through France to gather information for the accurate representations of the battlegrounds for the dioramas he created – as displayed in the Australian War Memorial in Canberra. This work continued after the War and Mabel had to manage the three little ones on her own.

The Gilbert family remained in England until 1921 at which time Web returned to Australia with his family. Returning to Melbourne, they were able to move back to Web’s home in Gore Street, East Melbourne where he had his studio. Marje remembered fondly her life there. It was rich and



Web’s memorial to Mathew Flinders

full of interesting happenings. She often talked about the large house, stables and studio where she watched her Dad work. Most of you will know of the Matthew Flinders statue outside St. Paul’s Cathedral. She saw it being created as she did his other pieces. Unfortunately, Web didn’t live to see the installation of the work as he died a few days before its unveiling.



Marje as a young woman

Marje began school at St. Peter’s Church of England in Albert St. and she walked through the Fitzroy Gardens each day to get there. It was a place she loved all her life.

Web had created bronze sculptured heads of his two sons but he died before he

completed the head of Marje. It is a family legend that one of the boys poked his little fingers into the clay model of Marje. Ola Cohn, a sculptor and friend, felt so sad for Marje she created a head of her in “Web’s style” when Marje was 13. Marje said she liked to go with Ola and watch her carve “The Fairy Tree” in the Fitzroy Gardens.

Sadly, her Dad died when she was only six years old – an incredibly difficult time which had a huge impact on all their lives. The family remained in East Melbourne until she was about 14 after which they moved to Malvern. Marje went on to Prahran Technical College where she trained to become a commercial artist. After graduating, she applied her artistic skills with a milliner of the time.

During the Second World War she met Rob Robertson, who was training to be a pilot in the RAAF. Marje and Rob married in 1944. While training in an American bomber at Tocumwal he had a crash landing due to a mechanical problem with the plane. This resulted in a long stay in Heidelberg Repatriation Hospital with a badly broken leg and it was not easy for Marje to obtain time-off to visit him. He was discharged from the Air Force, and went to work in the Drawing Office at Victoria Barracks where Marje was already working as a Tracer.

Marje and Rob went to live in Kew, where her daughter, Wendy, was born. When Wendy was about five Marje contracted TB and after an operation, spent a year recovering and convalescing in three different hospitals. Marje’s mother came to help out looking after family. Wendy was not allowed to visit Marje and she remembers waving to her mother through the window of the hospital.

When Wendy commenced school she recalled another manifestation of Marje's artistic skills. She always painted a face on the hard-boiled egg in her lunch box.

The family moved to a new home in North Balwyn. Rob remained working at the Victoria Barracks as Chief Draughtsman and in 1954, Marje started work at the Country Roads Board as a tracer. She was initially located in the SEC Building in South Melbourne. On Christmas Eve, 1969, Rob passed away at home after several years of heart trouble. He was only 55. Marje continued working in the Bridge Branch at the Country Roads Board where she met Bruce Addis. Marje became the personal aide to the Chief Bridge Engineer and worked closely with Bruce when he was the Bridge Design Engineer in programming and scheduling bridge design works for the division.

Marje was also very involved in the Social Club at the CRB. The club organised various functions throughout the year including the annual ball, the children's Christmas party, the staff Christmas party and various fund-raising activities for charities. When she retired she became an inaugural member of the VicRoads Association and she was the second President. She remained a loyal member to the last.

Marje married Bruce in 1975 and they had a wonderful life together. They built a house at Merimbula and spent all their spare time there. They also travelled extensively – in Asia and Europe. Marje fell in love with Paris – just as you would expect. Bruce said that on every trip to Europe they somehow ended up in Paris.



Noel McFadyen, Marje and Bruce.



Bruce and Marje

In the late 1990s Marje was diagnosed with macular degeneration. Bruce became her eyes and her carer – a task he carried with great affection and dedication, beyond the call of duty. She continued to attend the functions held by the VicRoads Association where she was much loved and respected. Her blindness did not prevent her from finding a glass of champagne when placed before her.

I last saw Marje not long after her 100th birthday. She was thrilled with all the messages she received from the Queen, politicians of federal, state and local government even though Wendy said that before the birthday she didn't want any fuss.

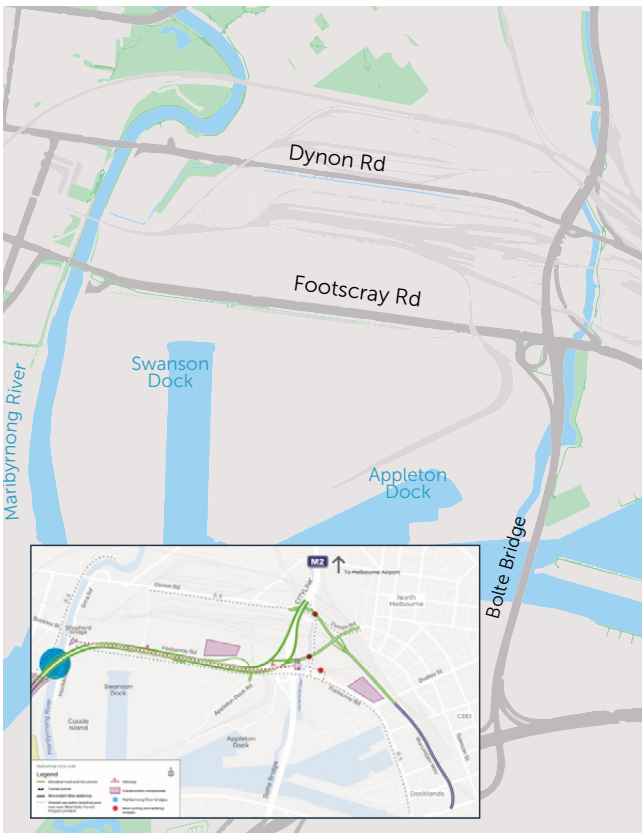
Rod Proposch

Rod has died recently at the age of 83. I worked at a desk behind Rod when I first started at the Country Roads Board's Bridge Division. I was pretty wet behind the ears and Rod provided a lot of patient mentoring to me. We worked on the design of the San Remo Bridge. He did all the major tasks and I did the more routine tasks but it was very valuable experience for me.

We visited the site a couple of times and Rod insisted that I drive the car – which was pretty exciting because I did not own a car at the time. Rod was a modest man and was very polite and I think he thought I was a bit of hillbilly but we were a good team and we got on well.

What's been happening

Visit to West Gate Tunnel Project – 14 October 2019



Visit to West Gate Tunnel Project on 14 October 2019

35 members attended this function which was a bus trip around the site.

The West Gate Tunnel team was led by Liz Evans, Deputy Director Engagement. Others involved were Peter Petoto - Project Manager East Zone, Sharon Shabaan - Project Manager West Zone, Gayan Seneviratae - Project Manager Tunnels, and Taylor Cations, Communications Engagement Graduate.

The trip took three hours and we stopped at three locations. These were the interchange with City Link, Maribyrnong River crossing and the site office in Yarraville.

Discussions were wide-ranging including interchange layouts, construction methods, tunneling machines, ground water, the massive soil shed, method of ventilation and employee numbers and recruitment difficulties.



Merv Williams on the right explaining to Graham Gilpin how Mulgrave Freeway was built.

Christmas Lunch – 2 December 2019

We had an excellent attendance of 55 people to our lunch including new members Richard Bortko, Peter Ryan, Julie Cooper, Peter McDonald, Lance Midgely, David Tilley and Bruce Van Every. It was also great to see Noel Hoitinga again. I'm not quite sure but I think Noel might have been our first Librarian. She was accompanied by her daughter Kathy Cameron.

It was also great to see some of our regional members – Paul and Noela Tucker from Wangaratta, Lance Midgely from Ballarat and John Baldock from Harcourt.



Jan Cahill, Lance Midgely, Gerry Turner and Roger Thorpe.



Kay and Jim Webber on their 53rd wedding anniversary.



Ray Bridger and Peter Ryan.



Noel Hoitinga, Joan Gilmer and Kathy Cameron.



Peter McDonald and David Tilley.



News from Regional Roads Victoria (RRV)

Regional Roads Victoria (RRV) – Preparations for fire danger period in North Eastern Region

A full program of works including roadside inspections and mowing is underway to ensure the arterial road network is safe in the event of an emergency. RRV is inspecting the region's 4000-kilometre network to ensure detour routes are in good condition and clear of obstacles.

Major roadside mowing program started in October 2019 on the Hume at Euroa and Goulburn Valley Freeway heading north from Seymour, before working its way through north east Victoria over the next few months. The aim is to ensure that if there is an emergency situation, people are able to leave an affected area quickly and safely.

RRV's roadside maintenance activities also aim to efficiently and effectively control the spread of noxious weeds and limit the risk of roadside vegetation. Timing the grass cutting season is crucial, which is why RRV started this work in October to make sure they're on top of spring growth and ahead of the peak fire danger period.

RRV is working in close consultation with CFA vegetation officers, Victoria Police and the Department of Environment, Land, Planning and Water to determine timing and to coordinate mitigation works. Crews also work alongside arborists to assess roadside trees to determine the risk they present to detour routes in the event of a fire.

Other mitigation works include roadside weed spraying, inspecting static detour signage and routine maintenance, while assessments are undertaken of road surfaces, roadside reserves and surrounding infrastructure.

Emergency management preparation is a year-round process for RRV's North Eastern Region to ensure staff are prepared for any emergency situation that may arise.

They support emergency services by coordinating traffic management and detours throughout the course of any emergency and recovery, actively seeking ways to minimise community disruptions. This information is shared through regional media networks, VicTraffic and social media platforms.

RRV also plays a role in the follow-up to any emergency situations, assessing and repairing affected road infrastructure to ensure the network is safe for all road users.

Recycling Plastic on the Great Ocean Road

A section of Victoria's iconic Great Ocean Road has been resurfaced using thousands of kilograms of recycled plastic car components as part of a ground-breaking new trial for Regional Roads Victoria.

More than three tonnes of recycled plastic – the equivalent of around 730,000 plastic bags – is being incorporated into a new asphalt mix in order to resurface a 1.5-kilometre section of the route near Lorne.

It is the first time RRV has used the PlastiPhalt mix, which serves as a more environmentally-friendly alternative to traditional asphalt, on any of Victoria's arterial roads.

The plastic used in the new asphalt mix had been sourced from Geelong-based company, GT Recycling, diverting a significant amount of plastic from being sent to landfill, while the asphalt mix is blended locally at contractor Fulton Hogan's Lara asphalt plant. The project saved an amount of plastic equal to about 300,000 plastic bottles from entering landfill.

In order to further reduce the carbon footprint of the trial, the existing road surface in Lorne was also recycled back into the new surface after being dug up, forming close to 10 percent of the new surface. The new asphalt was laid at a slightly lower temperature as a 'warm mix' rather than a 'hot mix', which further reduced the carbon emissions of the trial.

The resurfacing works, which took four days to complete, created a safer, more durable road surface along this section of the Great Ocean Road, which caters for 1600 vehicles per day.

News from registration and licensing

We don't write much about Registration and Licensing so I thought it was high time that should be rectified.

Ajay Ravindran is Director – Solution Design Delivery (SDD) in the Investment and Technology Division. He has kindly consented to provide us with a few of the 54 Information Management and Technology projects that were completed in 2019. These give you an idea on the scope and variety of work in this area.

Drink, Drug and Drive package:

This initiative operationalised complex legislation and regulations to deliver tougher penalties for drink and drug drivers in Victoria. The program was a collaboration with R&L, VicPol and the Magistrates' Court that delivered significant changes to ICT systems and business operating processes that will result in significant changes to driver behaviour in line with the government's Towards Zero strategy.

Sunsetting regulations:

Regulations under the Road Safety Act 1986 are automatically revoked on the 10th anniversary of their making. In order to deliver on the government's commitment to reduce unnecessary regulatory burden, including red tape, SDD partnered with R&L to review and justify six sets of registration and licensing regulations for vehicles and drivers to ensure they are still required and that they address community and business needs.

Luxury Car Tax:

The 2019–20 Victorian Budget, included an increase in motor vehicle duty rates for luxury passenger cars valued over \$100,000. SDD updated revenue collecting systems, within an aggressive timeframe, to accommodate legislative changes in the Stamp Duty Act to include a luxury tax on used vehicles.

SCATS:

Traffic signals across Victoria use the Sydney Coordinated Adaptive Traffic System (SCATS), software to manage traffic flow and safety for all road users. The SCATS project involved updating the way DoT manages communications with traffic signals for more reliable management of the flow of traffic in Victoria to keep people moving.

vPlates:

vPlates is the Victorian standard, custom or special interest number plates on-line ordering system. SDD worked with R&L to expand and fully automate the system for improved user experience. This expansion opened new marketing opportunities.

National Facial Recognition – technical:

The Commonwealth Department of Home Affairs (DHA) engaged VicRoads (R&L) to provide facial images from its Driver Licence System (DLS) to support the National Driver Licence Facial Recognition (NDLF) project. SDD has been working closely with R&L to successfully deliver this project despite some major security challenges.

Security Uplift:

The 2018–19 Victorian Protective Data Security Framework (VPDSF) encompasses 20 initiatives ranging from process changes to complex system upgrades including Network Access Control, Data Loss Prevention, Role-based access control, security internet, systems whitelisting and multifactor authentication. A number of these initiatives have been successfully implemented in 2019. SDD continues to implement this program of works.

Disability Parking Permits (DPP) project:

The Disability Parking Permit project team in SDD centralised and digitised the existing disability parking permit system. The project resulted in an easier to use application and renewal process, simpler to understand and fairer for people with significant mobility impairments. It gives them more opportunities to access facilities and services throughout the state.

Blue Connect:

VicPol's Blue Connect initiative enables front-line members to perform identity checks using mobile devices in real-time. VicPol engaged with VicRoads to gain access to this data and information. SDD was tasked with enabling that integration. The ultimate goal is to reduce crime and provide efficient policing to the state of Victoria.

Victorian Alcohol Interlock Program:

This initiative is part of the Victorian Government's plan to toughen penalties associated with alcohol-related incidents on Victoria's roads. VicRoads (DoT) administers the Victorian Alcohol Interlock Program. SDD's work involved implementing the technical changes associated with introducing the new penalties.

vProject:

Further development of this in-house designed project/portfolio management reporting tool that streamlines the management of and reporting on projects and programs at both a portfolio, program and project level. vProject enables project teams to track and report on project-related risks, issues, actions, resources, fixed costs and financials, providing a "single source of truth" for projects/programs. It is being deployed to other business areas.

National Heavy Vehicle Regulator (NHVR) Initiatives:

The NHVR Initiatives project, sponsored by the Commonwealth Transport Infrastructure Council, aligned jurisdictions under the direction of the NHVR. SDD (ET) was engaged to manage the changes to the technical components of Victoria's Vehicle Registration Information System (VRIS).



Outdoor furniture mystery solved

Both Ian Goldie and Lindsay Clay provided their knowledge about the picnic tables on the Hamilton Highway at Inverleigh, pictured below.

Lindsay Clay was involved in management of the CRB/RCA/VicRoads precast yard in Bendigo from 1970 through to its closure in the 1990s.

Up to the early 1970s these "mushroom & toadstool" settings were made by a small private company. He thought they were located around Essendon somewhere – but that could be incorrect. It was a long time ago and he couldn't recall the company's name, but they ceased production about 1970 when the company closed down.

As there was a demand for this product, the Bendigo Precast Yard copied the design and made a small number exactly as per the unit in the photograph. However the design was quickly modified by making both the "mushroom" and the "toadstools" with exposed aggregate stems. These picnic tables then complemented the exposed aggregate toilet blocks and the CFA approved Barbeque/fireplaces that the Bendigo Precast Yard also manufactured.

For the next 20 years, hundreds of these picnic table units were supplied to wayside stops, municipal parks and Rural Water Commission picnic sites throughout Victoria.

So, the ones in the photo may have been made in the Bendigo Precast Yard in the mid 1970s. However they may also have been supplied by the previous manufacturer.



From the Archives

The photograph below was taken about 1921. Do any of you know any names? If so, I would be grateful if you could let me know.



Staff of the Country Roads Board – circa 1921

NEWS FROM OUR MEMBERS

Louise Kloot Traffic Analyst CRB (1971–1973) – partner of Geoff

I joined the then CRB in Kew in 1971, as a traffic analyst. At the time, I was the only woman to hold a professional position. There were many other women working for the CRB, but they were confined to administrative ranks. Joining the CRB resulted in a hefty pay rise for me – around 25% – as I was one of the first women to benefit from equal pay in the public sector. I had come from an insurance company which quite openly paid women 25–30% less than men, and restricted women to lower level positions, further reducing their pay.

That I was the only woman in professional ranks was brought home early on, when I needed to attend staff induction sessions. I was offered a choice – attend the sessions for engineers and technical officers, where I would be the only woman, or attend the sessions for administrative staff, which had no men. Being young and not so confident, I chose the women's induction session. This necessitated a visit from the "Senior Female Officer". Yes, the CRB had a position called senior female officer, whose role it was to look after the female staff. The SFO duly came and provided me with the Typing Manual, essential for induction. I couldn't type – I had a degree majoring in mathematics and statistics, and this was in the days before everyone (anyone) used computers. The typing manual provided a wealth of useful(less?) information, including such gems as how to address an archbishop when writing to him (the salutation is "Your Grace", not "Dear Grace"). I did in fact need to use this salutation 30 years later in a private letter to an archbishop, so I suppose it was of use.

During induction, we learned that women who had worked for at least five years for the CRB and then married could resign on marriage, to be re-employed the next day, but the resignation triggered the payment of pro-rata long service leave. This was not available to the men. There was superannuation for women – but married women had to join the Married Women's Superannuation Fund, which on resignation returned your own contributions plus 3% interest. I don't know what happened on retirement.

When the time came for performance reviews, my colleagues – all male technical staff – were reviewed by our manager in his office. I asked when my performance review would take place, only to be informed women were not given formal reviews. It appeared there was a fear that we weaklings may become upset if anything negative

was said, so I wasn't given the opportunity to discuss my performance, although I am sure an informal review was placed on my personnel file. The female administration staff who were managed by a woman may have had performance reviews, but I don't know. There were no other women in my section.

There was a full-time nurse employed at Kew, and one of her roles was to police pregnant women. When she found I was five months pregnant, I was admonished for not informing her, and told I would have to leave when six months pregnant. If I could get a medical certificate from my doctor, I could stay until I was seven months, but absolutely not a day longer. Protestations that my sister-in-law worked as a GP until a week before her baby was born fell on deaf ears. There was no paid maternity leave – I could take up to a year's leave without pay, but had to return full-time.

I look at the roles filled by women now, and I'm so pleased they can aspire to the highest ranks of government organisations.

I worked in the Schlumberger building annex, which was in High St, Kew. My job included programing analyses of traffic data, and I needed to carry boxes of 80 column punched cards containing traffic census data to and from the computing centre in Denmark St. The computing centre had a large area given over to the mainframe, which had a capacity of 40K (I do have that capacity right). I would program in Fortran, writing the program on 80 column sheets, converted to punched cards in the computing centre. Fortran was a mathematical language which I found intuitive, but caused me problems later when I studied business and we used Cobol – not mathematical, not intuitive and quite convoluted in my view as I had to 'unlearn' Fortran.

The traffic analysis area where I worked had an amazing electronic calculator. Just one – we shared it. It was about the size of a notebook computer, and could add, subtract, multiply and divide. It had four memories. It was kept on a trolley and was never to be taken off the trolley in case it was dropped and damaged. I was told it cost around \$1,000 in 1971, around \$11,000 today, for a calculator whose equivalent I could buy for \$10 in the Reject Store today.

I left the CRB in 1973 for the birth of my first child, and didn't return. I went on to retrain as an accountant, becoming an academic and professor of accounting and finance. Moulded by my experience at the CRB, my research area for was for many years the public sector, particularly local government. The public sector is undervalued by too many people, despite its contribution to this country. The CRB I worked for showed me how an efficient organisation should function.

I was already married to Geoff when I started working at the CRB. I was very young when we married (just coming up to anniversary 51), still at university. Therein lies another story

– the lecturer who did not want a married woman in his class. There were only three women in a Pure Mathematics Honours class of 50 third year students.

Don Jordan

I had the bright idea of getting 76 trombone players together to play the song "76 Trombones" from The Music Man musical at Federation Square on Thursday 12th December between 5.30 and 6.15pm. The Fed Square people loved the idea, so guess who's got the job of organising it?! However, it's all coming together and we may have nearer 100 trombones playing than 76. Someone said it must be harder than herding cats but I'm not finding it so. All the players are really enthusiastic about it – and so they should be, especially seeing they're not required to do any of the organising.

Best wishes to all for the coming season of fun. Don.

Ray Brindle

Hello David. I was fascinated to see the item in the last newsletter about the current design and construction of the Mordialloc Freeway from Dingley Bypass to Springvale Road.

They say it takes a person of vision and patience to plant a tree. In my experience, the same applies to being a planner. This project is the southern end of a route location and assessment study made by Loder and Bayly more than 45 years ago (1973–5) of what we used to call F6. We knew even back then that the northern part would be problematic. I am delighted to see that the route finally adopted seems to have been more or less in accord with L&B's advice.

Having been blooded in Freeway Location under Don Pritchard in what some were wont to call "Fantasyland", I was in my element as part of the team. The strongest memory I have of that project is my encounter with the benevolent dictator of the MMBW, Alan Croxford, who was described in the Sydney Morning Herald as "a gruff bull of a man who seemed almost as powerful as the premier". Wags called him the "Lord of Works". In the early seventies, Croxford was at his zenith and possibly his most infamous. It was the time when "Croxford's Castle", the new MMBW headquarters in Spencer Street, was built, with his opulent office on the top floor. Bits kept falling off the building, not adding to the MMBW's reputation.

There were probably apocryphal stories of him telling off a young man in the lift for not wearing a tie, the poor lad spluttering that he didn't work there – but he just delivering something. This was also the period when Croxford was under fire in Parliament and the media for his ill-advised involvement in buying, rezoning and subdividing land while employed as the man in charge of planning and zoning in Melbourne. Not a good look, but I'm sure he meant well

and it was, after all, in the grand Land Boomer Melbourne tradition.

Anyway, back to F6. The route alternatives resolved into two broad bands: east or west of Moorabbin Airport. East won out, but there remained a few land-use factors to balance up. One of these was the Board's Braeside sewage treatment area and how it could most properly be used for passive recreation, industry and/or housing. Being a fledgling greenie working with a bunch of left-leaning idealists (God bless us), I was of course concerned to keep the bird sanctuary role of Braeside high on the agenda. We knew that the lagoons there were not particularly vital on the global scale, but they were known to serve an important role, not just for birds but also the people of that area.

We had done an appraisal of the consequences of various lines across or on the edge of Braeside, and it was clear that there were planning preferences but no clear conclusion based on what was known then. I went with John Bayly to meet with Alan Croxford in February 1975 to discuss these. John took most of the running, of course, and I sat there with increasing horror as I witnessed Croxford clearly indicating that his sole objective was to maximise economic return for the MMBW, as if a planning body could treat property as something from which it could profit as a private individual would. He was pushing for a line through Braeside that made nonsense of remnant lagoons and open space, and maximised land that could be sold for profit to the Board.

I forget which of them turned to me at that point (probably John) to ask me what I thought. I put my best Planning Institute face on and said (oh, foolish boy!) something like "I guess I'd have to think a bit more about the morality of a planning authority manipulating a decision for self-gain".

I hadn't appreciated how much under the pump Croxford must have been, with all the public and private criticism of his various misadventures. He went red and said: "I tell you what – I'll leave you to ruminate on morality and I'll get on with the business of running Melbourne". We beat a hasty retreat soon after that. Going down in the lift, John said "Well, that touched a nerve!" I think he admired me for it, but I never asked him.

There was still a lot more work to do, by the Joint Road Planning Group I presume, but it looks like the birds won. Alan Croxford survived as Chairman of the MMBW until he retired in 1982. He died three years later, aged 63.

Happy days, Ray Brindle

Peter Balfe

Peter wrote to Ted Barton as follows:

Dear Ted,

Thanks for persevering with the likes of me with these invitations. Anne and I are now living on Phillip Island and unfortunately we have a commitment here on 2 December. If not I certainly would have liked to attend and catch up with the group that I see on the attendees list.

You may be interested (David Jellie certainly would be) in articles in our local newspaper this week about 50 year celebrations for the Phillip Island bridge. David worked on the project during construction.

We are both well and enjoying life here. Please pass on my very best wishes to the group at the dinner, and I hope that I will be able to get to a function in the New Year.

Best regards, Peter

Tony Fry and the Scanlon Foundation's Annual Survey for 2019

Tony has been involved with the Scanlon Foundation for many years and was a past CEO. Each year, in conjunction with Monash University, the Foundation undertakes a survey mapping social cohesion. The most recent one has been completed and the key findings for 2019 are set out below.

Politics and priorities

When asked, 'What do you think is the most important problem facing Australia today?':

- Economic issues continued to rank as the top issue, reported by 28% in 2019.
- Concern over the environment and climate change jumped from 10% in 2018 to 19% in 2019, recording the equal largest annual increase since the surveys began.
- Concern over quality of government and political leadership was mentioned by just 6% in 2019, its lowest level since the question was first asked in 2010 (and compared to 13%–15% between 2011–14).
- A low 30% of respondents trust the federal government 'to do the right thing for the Australian people,' though trust has not further declined since 2010.
- The proportion who considered that Australian democracy 'works fine' or 'needs minor change' was 58% in 2019, while 38% considered that it needs 'major change' or 'replacement'.

Views on immigration

When asked, 'What do you think of the number of immigrants accepted into Australia at present?'

- 41% of respondents indicated 'too high'; while the proportion agreeing that the intake is 'about right' or 'too low' is at 53%.
- 68% agree that accepting immigrants from many different countries makes Australia stronger,' while 57% agree that migrants should change their behaviour to be more like Australians.

Multiculturalism

- 85% agree that multiculturalism has been good for Australia, however only 41% agree that ethnic minorities in Australia should be given Australian government assistance to maintain their customs and traditions.
- 81% disagreed with discrimination in immigration selection based on race or ethnicity.

Happiness and belonging

- In 2019, 90% of people in Australia indicated feeling a sense of belonging to a 'great' or 'moderate' extent; and 84% said they had been 'very happy' or 'happy' over the last year.

Globalisation

- 71% of respondents indicated the growing economic ties between Australia and other countries was good.
- From a list of four countries, China was seen as 'Australia's most important economic partner' today, indicated by 58% of respondents, ahead of the United States of America at 19%, the United Kingdom 7% and Japan at 4%.
- When asked 'which country will have the most influence in the Pacific region' 'ten years from now,' the expectation was of increasing Chinese influence, indicated by 67% of respondents
- Just 28% were confident that the Chinese government would do the right thing regarding Australia's economic interests, compared to the Japanese government (50%), and the United States (40%).

TRIVIA AND DIDACTIC WHIMSIES

When Scientists Do Battle

Priestley versus Lavoisier

We have to thank Joseph Priestley (b.1733) for soda water as a result of his experiments with gases – or as he put it “different kinds of air”. Priestley was somewhat of a polymath. He was a theologian, natural philosopher, chemist, innovative grammarian, multi-subject educator, and liberal political theorist.

Antoine-Laurent Lavoisier born in France in 1743 is sometimes described as the father of modern chemistry but he certainly was not involved in the fizzy drinks industry.

Priestley supported a theory, developed by others, that a substance called phlogiston was released into the air during combustion. Apparently, he killed many mice by asphyxiation to demonstrate his theory. In general, substances that burned in air were said to be rich in phlogiston; the fact that combustion soon ceased in an enclosed space was taken as clear-cut evidence that air had the capacity to absorb only a finite amount of phlogiston. When air had become completely phlogisticated it would no longer serve to support combustion of any material.

Lavoisier disputed this widely held theory and discovered the role that oxygen plays in combustion. He recognized and named oxygen (1778) and hydrogen (1783), opposed the phlogiston theory, helped construct the metric system, wrote the first extensive list of elements, and helped to reform chemical nomenclature.

Priestley refused to accept Lavoisier’s work despite demonstrable evidence, and his refusal led to his isolation in the scientific community and the unfortunate moniker of Dr. Phlogiston.



A Few Tall Stories

Fireworks

A husband and wife had a human cannonball act in the circus.

One day the wife ran off with the lion tamer. The husband was extremely dejected. The strong man asked him what he was going to do.

The husband answered, "This is a disaster. I don't know where I'm going to find another woman of her calibre."

More Fireworks

A lawyer purchased a box of very rare and expensive cigars, then insured them against, among other things, fire. Within a month, having smoked his entire stockpile of these great cigars, the lawyer filed a claim against the insurance company. In his claim, the lawyer stated the cigars were lost 'in a series of small fires.'

The insurance company refused to pay, citing the obvious reason, that the man had consumed the cigars in the normal fashion.

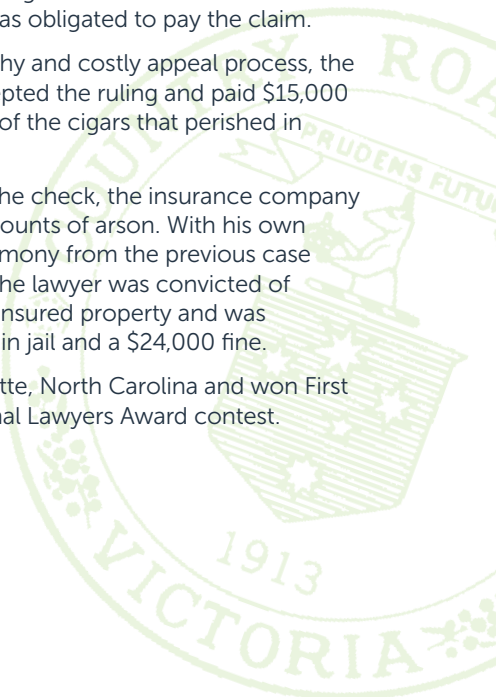
The lawyer sued and won.

Delivering the ruling, the judge agreed with the insurance company that the claim was frivolous. The judge stated nevertheless, that the lawyer held a policy from the company, in which it had warranted that the cigars were insurable and also guaranteed that it would insure them against fire, without defining what is considered to be unacceptable 'fire' and was obligated to pay the claim.

Rather than endure lengthy and costly appeal process, the insurance company accepted the ruling and paid \$15,000 to the lawyer for his loss of the cigars that perished in the 'fires'.

After the lawyer cashed the check, the insurance company had him arrested on 24 counts of arson. With his own insurance claim and testimony from the previous case being used against him, the lawyer was convicted of intentionally burning his insured property and was sentenced to 24 months in jail and a \$24,000 fine.

This took place in Charlotte, North Carolina and won First Place in last year's Criminal Lawyers Award contest.



Teacher Arrested at Sydney International Airport

A high school teacher was arrested today at Sydney's Kingsford-Smith International airport as he attempted to board a flight while in possession of a ruler, a protractor, a compass, a slide-rule and a calculator.

At the press conference, the Attorney General said he believed the man is a member of the notorious extremist Al-Gebra movement. He did not identify the man, who has been charged by the AFP with carrying weapons of maths instruction.

'Al-Gebra is a problem for us', the Attorney General said. 'They derive solutions by means and extremes, and sometimes go off on tangents in search of absolute values. They use secret code names like "X" and "Y" and refer to themselves as "unknowns;" but we have determined that they belong to a common denominator of the axis of medieval with coordinates in every country. As the Greek philosopher Isosceles used to say, "There are three sides to every triangle."

When asked to comment on the arrest, the Prime Minister at the time, Tony Abbott, said, "If God had wanted us to have better weapons of maths instruction, He would have given us more fingers and toes." Colleagues told reporters they could not recall a more intelligent or profound statement by the Prime Minister.

Tribulations of being the Queen

The Queen visited an Edinburgh hospital. She entered a ward full of patients, and noticed that they were all dressed in street clothes and had no obvious signs of injury or illness.

She approached a patient and greeted him. The patient replied:

"My heart's in the Highlands, my heart is not here, my heart's in the Highlands, a-chasing the deer."

The Queen was confused, but she smiled and moved on to greet the next patient. The patient responded:

"Some hae meat an' canna eat, and some wad eat tha' want it, but we hae meat an' we can eat, so let the Lord be thankit."

Even more confused, and smiling even more broadly, the Queen moved on to the next patient who immediately began to chant:

"My love is like a red, red rose that's newly sprung in June; my love is like the melody that's sweetly played in tune."

Now very confused, the Queen turned to the accompanying doctor and asked, "Is this a psychiatric ward?"

"No, Your Majesty," replied the doctor. "This is the serious Burns unit."

Rugby Union Football

A German was in Cork during the World Cup and he wrote to the local newspaper for an explanation of the rules. This is what the sports editor wrote:

'Here is my understanding of how it works. The fat guys all run into each other, while the slightly slimmer guys stand in a line watching them. Eventually the fat guys get tired and have a lie down on top of each other. The ball comes out the back of this lie down and the skinnier guys kick it back and forward to each other for half an hour.

Then the fat guys wake up and start running into each other again. Every now and again the referee stops play because someone dropped the ball. That's the only thing you are not allowed to do in rugby. Everything else would appear to be OK. Sometimes one group of fat guys pushes the other group over the line and there is some manly hugging.

After 80 minutes the scores are added up and New Zealand wins.'

Religious teachings

These responses have been attributed to a survey in a Catholic elementary school – in which children were asked questions about the Old and New Testaments. I can't verify the truth of this. Apparently the answers have not been retouched or corrected i.e. incorrect spelling has been left in.

1. Adam and Eve were created from an apple tree. Noah's wife was called Joan of Ark. Noah built an ark, which the animals come on to in pears.
2. Lot's wife was a pillar of salt by day, but a ball of fire by night.
3. Moses led the hebrews to the Red Sea, where they made unleavened bread which is bread without any ingredients.
4. The Egyptians were all drowned in the dessert. Afterwards, Moses went up on Mount Cyanide to get the ten ammendments.
5. The first commandment was when Eve told Adam to eat the apple.
6. The seventh commandment is thou shalt not admit adultery.