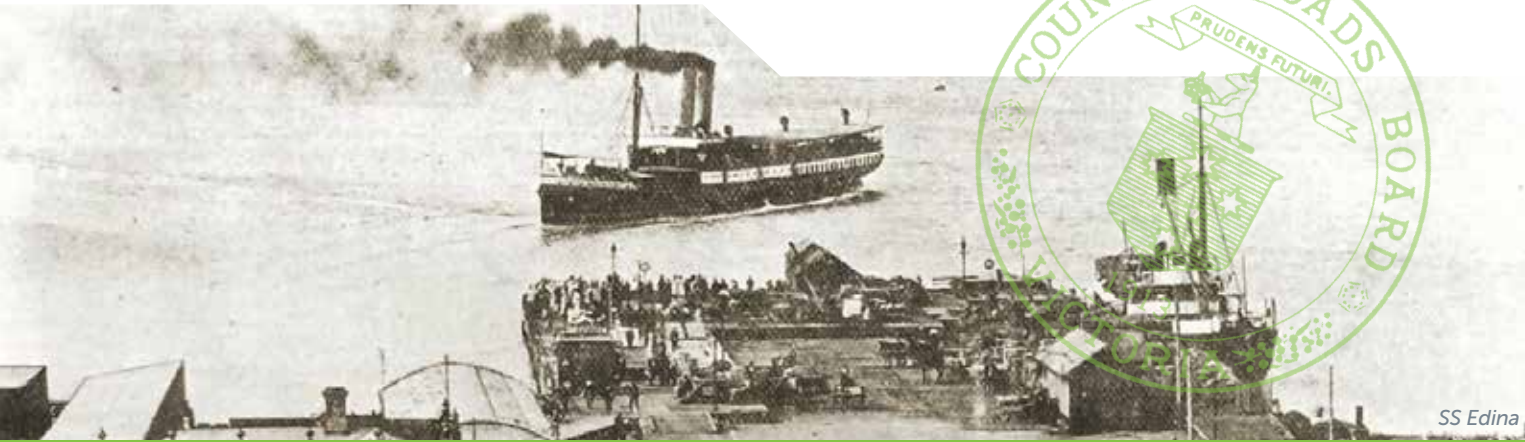


VicRoads Association

Newsletter No. 244



SS Edina

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. Cost of membership is a once only fee of \$50. Enquiries about membership or receipt of the Newsletter by e-mail should be directed to the Secretary, VicRoads Association, PO Box 80, Kew 3101 or by phone or e-mail as shown in the footer below. Visit our website at vicroadsassociation.org

Dear Members,

In the last few newsletters, my introduction have been pretty cerebral. I talked about referendums, social cohesion in society, Christmas reflections, Latvia, Lithuania, immigration and democracies - to name a few. This month I have decided to give you a rest and talk about barber poles. I bet you didn't expect that!

The barber's trade has been around since the start of history. Razors have been found among relics from the Bronze Age (circa 3500 B). The Bible mentions shaving hair and beards in Ezekiel 27:16-17 which says *"And take thee a sickle, even Thou shall pass upon thine head"* plus other passages mentioning things like razors or scythes being used as weapons during conflicts.

Barbering was introduced in Rome around 300 B.C. and barbers quickly became both popular and prosperous. Their shops were centres for daily news and gossip. All free men of Rome were clean-shaven, while slaves were forced to wear beards. It is from the Roman (Latin) word Barba, meaning beard, that the word "barber" is derived.

At around the same time, Alexander the Great made his soldiers shave regularly for the purpose of gaining an advantage in hand-to-hand combat. His warriors were able to grasp an enemy by the beard, while they were safeguarded in this method of fighting.

Barber poles are so common in our streetscapes that they are scarcely noticeable – although I now see a lot of bespoke cutters are eschewing the custom. A barber pole is a visual prompt to signify the place where barbers perform their craft. I have seen them in streets in India as well as outside the Army and Navy store in London where I used to have my hair cut in the 1960s – on the third floor - but the sign was outside the main door in Victoria Street. At my barber shop in Kew, the pole is inside beside the mirror.



Pall Mall Barbers in London with their barber poles on display.

The trade sign is, by a tradition dating back to the Middle Ages, a staff or pole with a helix of coloured stripes - usually red and white, but red, white and blue in the United States.

The barber pole's colour is a legacy of a past era when people went to barbers not only for a shave or a haircut but for bloodletting and other medical (and dental) procedures. During the Middle Ages bloodletting – which involves cutting open a vein and allowing blood to drain was a common treatment for a wide variety of afflictions from a sore throat to the plague.

Initially, it was monks who carried out this treatment with the assistance of barbers and their sharp instruments. However, in 1163, Pope Alexander III banned clergymen from the practice and so the duty passed on to the barbers. Often, physicians ordered the procedure but they thought themselves to be too important to carry out these grisly tasks. They became known as barber-surgeons and their skills expanded to pulling out teeth, leeching, cupping, setting broken bones and treating wounds. A 16th Century Frenchman, Ambrose Pare, considered by many as the father of modern surgery, started his career as a barber-surgeon. The look of the pole is linked to bloodletting. The red represents the blood and the white represents the bandages used to stem the bleeding. One theory goes the bandages would be hung out to dry after washing on a pole and the wind would blow and twist them together forming the spiral pattern similar to the modern-day barber pole.

The pole itself is said to represent the stick that the patient gripped tightly to make the veins stand out to facilitate the

Introduction continued

bloodletting. In early days there was a brass basin at the top of the pole in which leeches were kept – they being used to extract and thin the blood of patients. Leeches are still used today. They're mostly used in plastic surgery and other microsurgery. This is because leeches secrete peptides and proteins that work to prevent blood clots.

By the mid-1500s, barbers were banned from surgical treatments but they still pulled teeth. Despite this edict, barbers and surgeons remained members of the same trade guild until 1745.



An American barber pole.

In America, the poles are red, white and blue. One theory is that the blue is symbolic of the veins before they are cut during bloodletting and another is that it was a symbol of patriotism replicating the colours on their national flag. There have been court cases in America about the use of barber poles. Many beauty parlours hi-jacked them and a law was passed in Michigan in 2012 mandating that they can only be used outside barber shops.

There is another problem - in South Korea. Barber's poles are used for barbershops and brothels, so I am told. Brothels disguised as barbershops, are more likely to use two poles next to each other, often spinning in opposite directions, though the use of a single pole for the same reason is also quite common. Actual barbershops, are more likely to be hair salons; to avoid confusion, they will usually use a pole that shows a picture of a woman with flowing hair on it with the words hair salon written on the pole.

Now if you think this is a bit grisly it bears no comparison to a book launch I attended recently at Readings in Carlton. The book is called *The Great Dead Body Teachers* by Jackie Dent. Jackie is the daughter of dear friends of ours who live in Sydney. A few members might remember Jackie's father, Des, who worked on traffic systems both in Australia and overseas. Jackie was recently interviewed by Richard Fidler in *Conversations on Radio National* about her book. It is about the history of anatomy and dissection and explores the world of whole body donation to scientific institutions. Jackie interviewed me during the writing because she knew that I propose to donate my body to the University of Melbourne. The Professor in charge of dissection at the university was at the book launch and I told him that I hope it will be a considerable time before we meet again.

David Jellie,
Chairman and Editor

What's been happening

Occasional Lunch at Doncaster Monday 3 April

We had another good attendance with 25 people turning up. This is becoming a very popular event. It was great to welcome a new member, David Austin, and to see Merv Williams in fighting fitness at 92 years of age. However Merv has made one concession in that, unlike previous years, he won't drive to Far North Queensland this year.

What's coming up

Briefing on Victoria's Transport Policy - successes and failures

Friday 26 May 2023 at 1.15 pm in the Phyllis Hore Room at the Kew Library

This lecture will be delivered by Bernard Shepherd. He completed his engineering studies in New Zealand and France and worked in the Paris Office of Europe Etudes Gecti (EEG) with its principal, Jean Muller, who was the inventor of match-cast segmental construction of concrete bridges.

Bernard is a good friend of VicRoads. EEG which was engaged by VicRoads to provide services in the construction phase of the elevated section of the West Gate Freeway for which I was VicRoads' Project Manager. Bernard returned to the antipodes from Paris to carry out this task. His expertise in match cast segmental construction also involved projects in France, USA, UK, the Middle East, and New Zealand – as well as Australia.

Bernard is the former Global Technical Leader – Transportation for GHD involving transport planning, rail and road transport infrastructure, and bridge design and construction. He is the former Public Officer of the Australian French Association for Science and Technology (AFAS), a recent Victorian Committee member of the Railway Technical Society of Australasia (RTSA) and a Past Chairman of the Victorian Branch of the Association of Consulting Engineers Australia (Consult Australia). Bernard is also a former Director on the Federal Board of the French Australian Chamber of Commerce and Industry (FACCI) and a former GHD representative on the FACCI Victorian State Chapter Council.

Bernard is also a member of the Rail Futures Institute. Rail Futures is an independent, non-partisan group formed to advocate sustainable rail solutions for public transport and freight problems. Its membership includes experienced rail professionals, engineers, and economists. The Institute believes the case for rail solutions needs to be argued with sound commercial, economic, and social reasoning, and it contributes to better public debate on transport problems from a rail perspective.

Bernard's talk will concentrate mainly on urban and regional railways in Victoria. The session will finish sharp on 3.00pm.

The Kew Library is in Cotham Road, Kew, next door to the campus of Trinity Grammar School to the east and Alexandra Gardens to the west. It is a couple of hundred metres east of the junction of Cotham Road and High Street. The 109 tram to Box Hill stops opposite the library at the corner of Cotham Road and Charles Street. There is plenty of street parking in the area. The Phyllis Hore Room is at the south end of the building and can be accessed from the car park.

If you wish to attend, please register with me by email only on pdjellie@hotmail.com

Occasional Lunches at Shoppingtown Hotel 12 noon

Our next lunch will be held on Monday 19 June 2023. Others are scheduled for 7 August, 9 October, and 6 November. There is no longer a requirement to contact Kelvin York – just turn up. Please note that in the last newsletter, I nominated 5 October but the correct date is 9 October.

Dinner and drinks at Glen Waverley RSL Thursday 5 October at 6pm

We will provide details closer to the date.

Annual Golf Day

Our Golf Day will be held on Friday 10 November 2023. Details will be provided later in the year.

Other events

We are currently negotiating a visit to Anzac Station on the Metropolitan Rail Project. Dates have not yet been finalised but we will let you know once arrangements have been fixed.

Ballarat/Bendigo Trip

We are planning a trip later in the year – November 14 to November 17. We will keep you informed on the progress of details – but we will be seeking a briefing on Regional Roads Victoria's approach to road maintenance and the planning for the 2026 Commonwealth Games in Ballarat and Bendigo.

Vale

We send our most sincere sympathy to families and friends of the following members who have died.

Stewart Keith Gavin

Stewart was our oldest member. He was born on 12 June 1916 and died on 1 March 2023 – a life span of 106 years and 8 months. The memoir below was written by Stewart's daughter, Debra.

Stewart's life began in Geelong, Victoria. He was born to parents, Arthur and Amy Gavin. He was their third son in a family of four boys. He was born just one month before the Battle of the Somme in World War 1. He lived as a teenager through the Great Depression, and he served with the RAAF in World War II. He survived two pandemics – the Spanish Flu in 1918 (when he was just 2 years old) and then Covid in 2020 (when he was 103).

As a lad, Stewart loved playing cricket and he was quite talented. He was even good enough to play, as a 14 year old, for the Yarra Street Men's B Grade Team, and he developed his lifelong love of cricket during these years.

In those days most people left school at age 14 after completing what was called Elementary School (which went up to Grade 8). But as Stewart had completed these studies by age 12, he was too young to go to work, so he was sent to High School, instead. Having completed High School at age 16 he began his working life as a clerk for a real estate agent. At age 19 Stewart decided on a career in accounting, so he returned to study, via correspondence. He completed his studies in 1939, at age 23, and qualified as an Accountant. This was the beginning of eighty years membership with CPA Australia. Stewart worked as a clerk with D.O McIntyre Pty Ltd and Homebuilders Pty Ltd in Geelong.



Stewart Gavin's paybook photograph and a studio portrait in RAAF uniform – 1941.

When World War II broke out in 1939, Stewart enlisted in the RAAF soon after - in 1940. He was called up in April 1941, and served as Paymaster for various Squadrons around the country.

In 1945, he was transferred to 82 Wing Command (incorporating 21, 22 and 24 Squadrons), and was sent to Morotai in the Netherlands East Indies (now in Indonesia). This force built another air strip there in order to intensify the Allies capability against the Japanese forces in the closing stages of the war. When the war finished in August 1945, Stewart remained behind, as his accounting skills were required to dismantle the war effort. He was discharged on 4 July 1946.



Gavin and Thelma on their wedding day – 1942.

Gavin and Thelma in Sydney – 1948.

He had met his wife to be, Thelma Brady, in 1940. They were both lovers of music and old-time dancing, and when they met at the Palais Old Time Dance Hall, in Geelong, it was 'love at first sight'. This was the beginning of a romance that would last for over 50 years. In 1942, he and Thelma married – a typical war time wedding, paid for with ration coupons. They honeymooned for 10 days at Mount Martha afterwards. Thelma then joined the Australian Women's Army Service in 1943, and worked as a Driver/Mechanic. With them both serving during the war years, they only saw each other whenever they could arrange for leave at the same time.

After his discharge from the Air Force in 1946, Stewart returned to Geelong, and gained employment with Eno's Fruit Salts, in Melbourne. Eno's moved their Head Office to Sydney but Stewart couldn't find suitable housing for he and Thelma to move there. So, he applied for a position

as Divisional Accountant for the Geelong Division of the Country Roads Board in 1948 and was successful.

He worked for the CRB in Geelong until 1962, when he was transferred to Head Office in Kew. He was allocated the task of installing the first computer in Head Office and was sent to Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology two nights a week to learn about Data Processing. He was actually on the very first course that was introduced for this new technology. It also meant packing up the family and moving to a new home in North Balwyn. During this hectic time, which meant very long hours for Stewart, his wife Thelma, had commenced breeding Corgi dogs and showing them at dog shows around the state. Her new hobby resulted in complaints from the neighbours and Stewart was forced to move the family again, in 1969, to Mt Eliza. From here, he commuted daily to Kew in the company of Peter McCullough, and Des Chapple. They all had VW Beetle cars, at that time, and they shared the driving and the commute together. Apparently there were some momentous times especially when Des was driving. On the other hand, Peter reported that Gavin very rarely reached top gear.

Stewart retired from the CRB in July 1976, at age 60, and became more involved in Thelma's dog showing exploits. He served as an auditor for numerous dog clubs, and served on various committees as Treasurer. They became grey nomads well before that term was coined, travelling all over the country for dog shows.

Tragedy struck in 1992 when Thelma died suddenly, but Stewart lived out his remaining years continuing his long association with the dog world, and looking after his $\frac{3}{4}$ acre property pretty much by himself up until the age 101. He remained in his own home until the end. He embraced the new technology of the times and taught himself how to use Word and Excel in his 80s. He also used this time to educate himself in Quantum Physics. He was always trying to equate science with religion. He was born with an enquiring mind, and that continued all throughout his life.



Stewart aboard the QE2 (85 years old) and cutting his 100th birthday cake.

This photograph was taken in 1966 and shows senior officers of the CRB at a meeting. Stewart Gavin is standing third from the right. I need assistance from readers for the full roll call but Doug Thomson and I have identified the following:



Standing (left to right): Unknown, Bill Porritt, David Proudfoot, Reg Holt, Neil Guerin, Stewart Gavin, Unknown and Unknown. Seated (left to right): Keith Moody and three Unknowns.

Sándor Mokos



Sándor as a student at university.

Sándor died on 19 April 2023 aged 92. He was born in Kiszvárd, Hungary in 1930 and was the second child in a family of five. He is survived by his younger brother, Dénes, and youngest sister, Erszerbet. The family eventually shifted to Gödölőso so that Sándor could attend high school. His education was interrupted by the war in 1943 and his home was bombed by the invading Russian Army but, fortunately, the family survived.

After the war, Sándor moved to Budapest to study civil engineering. His studies were further interrupted when complications from a ruptured appendix nearly took his life. It took him a year to recuperate but he returned to university and took his degree in 1953. During his studies he met Eva at a University Ball and they married in 1952. He became a lecturer at a Technical College in Budapest.

In 1956, the Hungarian Revolution began when Russian forces again invaded Hungary. He and Eva decided that life in Hungary under the yoke of Russia was not what they wanted and they decided to escape and suffer the consequences of the risks involved. By this time they had one infant son, Robert. In a conversation I had with Sándor, he would not tell me how they got out. He said he would tell no one. He said they told no one of their intentions – not even family. They simply disappeared.

Vale continued

About the escape, Sándor wrote:

"We crossed the border from Hungary to Austria on the 6th December 1956. On the 8th December, at the Austrian border we were transferred by Swiss Red Cross buses to a larger in an outer suburb of Vienna. We stayed in the larger for nearly a month in which time we enquired about the possibilities of immigrating out of Europe to a politically safer country. Within a few days, we found out that our best chance was Australia which still had its migrant intake open and accepted applications from Hungarian refugees.

So, within a few days we went to the immigration office in Vienna and asked for an interview which was granted within two days. This was within 10 days of Christmas and we were anxious to hear from the immigration office whether our application was successful or not. Luckily, we got the notice between Christmas and New Year that we were successful, subject to satisfactory medical examinations.

In the first week of January 1957, we got the notice from the immigration office to be ready to move to another immigration centre in Weiner-Neustadt, Austria, where we were accommodated in more comfortable circumstances for approximately a fortnight. We were asked to be ready for another shift to Salzburg. We spent three nights there in a very uncomfortable barracks/larger, until we were ready for yet another transfer by special train from Salzburg to Innsbruck then to Brenner Pass into Italy then down to Milano and finally, Genoa. Our ship was waiting in the harbour to take us to Australia.

It was the 16th of January 1957 when we left Genoa on the good ship MS Flaminia. We went from Genoa through to Gibraltar then to Dakar in Africa, Cape Town, South Africa to replenish supplies and then to Fremantle, Western Australia. MS Flaminia broke down so we waited on the ship at Fremantle until the much bigger MS Roma arrived to take us to Melbourne where we arrived on 1st March."

They completely lost contact with their families in Hungary. As far as their families were concerned, they would not have known which country they settled in, or indeed, whether they were alive or not. It was Sándor's sister, Erszike, who tracked them down in Melbourne 23 years later – in 1979. Hungary was still under Russian control at this time. It was the recommencement of regular reconnection with their families. Up until his death, Sándor communicated daily via Skype with his many friends and family in Hungary. He spoke to his sister every day. Because of the time difference, Sándor often didn't go to bed until five or six o'clock in the morning and I found it best to contact him in the afternoon. There were several trips back to his homeland – to introduce his Australian family to his Hungarian family – and there were many visits to Australia by their Hungarian cousins.

When Sandor and Eva arrived in Australia with their young son, Robert, they stayed at the Bonegilla Army Barracks near Lake Hume at Wodonga. They started to learn English and Sándor got a job at Bosch in Melbourne where he worked as a labourer. Once his engineering qualifications were recognized in Australia, he sought work as an engineer and was taken on strength at the MMBW as a bridge engineer. He moved to the CRB when the two organisations were merged in 1974. He retired early – at age 55 – but he took on a post with the Cement and Concrete Association where he worked for another ten years.



Sándor had a great love of music and was a supporter of his beloved Melbourne Symphony Orchestra. He encouraged his four children to play an instrument. Robert and Peter played the trumpet, Rick the French horn and Carolyn the classical guitar.

He loved the bush and the wilderness of Australia's high country – taking many photographs and he especially loved mountain skiing. He joined the Highway Alpine Club at Perisher Valley in 1970 and he enjoyed back country skiing while his children hit the downhill slopes. He hiked extensively through Papua New Guinea and with local guides and hiking friends he completed the Kokoda Track, the Black Cat Track and he reached the top of Mt Wilhelm – all before these walks became popular destinations. Being a keen photographer he captured many images of the country, documenting the culture of the people living there.

Between 1996 and 2000, Sándor became involved with the Sail Training Ship Leeuwin II in Fremantle, Western Australia. Initially as a passenger, he returned as a volunteer in the role of ship's purser, completing several ocean voyages between Albany and Darwin. Eva joined him on one voyage and together they enjoyed other trips to Europe, Canada, USA, Bali, Singapore, Malaysia, Antarctica, South America and the Galapagos Islands. They also did many road trips in Australia.

But like many of you, my overpowering memories of Sándor are his impeccable manners, his gentlemanly demeanour, his gentleness and his generosity. He made everyone feel important. I have received many messages of sorrow and all of them pointed out these qualities. He was warm, easy-going and took a great interest in people, no matter their age and background and he loved good conversation. He was held in great esteem by his bridge design fraternity,

He was the epitome of a true gentleman.

Barry Fielding and Ian Gardner

I have just been informed that Barry and Ian died early in May. I will include an obituary for them in the next newsletter.

LEST WE FORGET



I thought this month we would feature some of our Vietnam veterans.

Craftsman Kenneth (Ken) Peter Arthur 3795113



Ken Arthur outside his tent in Vung Tau – 1969/70.

Ken was born in Hamilton in 1946 and served with the Royal Corps of Australian Electrical and Mechanical Engineers (RAEME). More specifically, he served with 106 Field Workshop in Vietnam from November 1969 to August 1970.

In November 1968, the Australian Army established 106 Field Workshop to improve the battle worthiness and damage recovery of its fighting equipment of the 1st Australian Task Force operating from their forward operational base at Nui Dat. The workshop was located in Vung Tau on Cape Saint Jacques about 40 kilometres south of Nui Dat. The unit comprised regular soldiers and national servicemen. Most of the unit's soldiers were from the RAEME but these men were supported by soldiers from the Royal Australian Army Ordnance Corps, the Royal Australian Army Medical Corps, the Australian Army Catering Corps and other miscellaneous Army Corps personnel from time to time.

106 Field Workshop repaired damaged vehicles such as tanks and Armoured Personnel Carriers (APCs), often under extreme conditions, as well as making improvements to existing equipment. Concern about casualties caused by vehicles hitting mines led to 106 Field Workshop being commissioned to design and construct armour kits. After a number of trials using Viet Cong mines and damaged APCs, their modifications were approved. This additional armour became a universal modification for Australian APCs and proved so effective that it saved many soldiers from death and serious injuries.

On one occasion, a Centurion tank was badly damaged when it struck a Viet Cong mine during clearing operations near Nui Dat. It was essential that the tank be back in operation as soon as possible. Following closely behind the tank were members of the 106 Field Workshop, travelling in their specially adapted armoured mobile repair unit. The tank's track assembly was a complete write-off but the team managed to repair the tank, replacing the complete front suspension unit, front idler wheels and track in only eight hours.



AUSTRALIAN WAR MEMORIAL

BEL/69/0826/VN

Members of 106 Field Workshop and two of the tank's crew replace a track on a Centurion tank.

Ken deferred his army service until he completed his mechanical apprenticeship. This was a great advantage as the men posted to the 106 Field Workshop were selected from the ones who had the highest marks at the end of the six week training at Puckapunyal. This created a corps of men who were similar in their abilities and attitude. Ken arrived in Vietnam on 26 November 1969. He was 22 years old.

Ken (KA) talked of the cohesiveness of how they lived together and worked together in an oral history undertaken by his wife, Gwen (GA), for the University of Tasmania. He said:

"I have never worked with a better team of fellows. You never needed to check on any one of them, on any job – you just knew they would do it right! They were just so good!"

Below is an excerpt describing the camaraderie of the unit.

KA: *Oh yes a good team of blokes. The army is a great leveller of personalities seeing all you have got is each other – everyone has the same amount of clothing and gear and bedding, so there is no distinction amongst the lower ranks and it works out really well.*

GA: *You talked about how it pulled some people into line and you were too busy for petty squabbles.*

KA: *Oh yes, there's no fighting. Everybody is really busy.*

GA: *You talked about how it was great to work with those fellows. They were efficient and expert at their jobs.*

KA: *Yes, the fellow mechanics were all very good to work with. They were all efficient workers and you could trust what they had done was correct and you could trust that when using a crane or*



LEST WE FORGET



something, that it was not going to come whizzing down on top of you. So there was a lot of trust and there has to be in the army. The army is made up of trust and everybody watching out for everybody else.

Ken served under two Commanding Officers' (COs). Their different styles for handling the soldiers was apparent in Ken's interview. One CO was focused on producing the best working environment and the other was intent on upholding the army's regulations and rituals.

KA: was the first one and his instructions were that "I don't care how you live as long as you work," and he wanted to get some accolade for having turned out the most work of any unit. So, we never had tent inspections or suchlike but he did achieve his aim.

The other one was an army man through and through. He thrived on cleanliness and presentation and doing the right thing.

On the very first day just after the morning parade (which was a pill parade) at the end of it ... we fell out and just wandered off, but later, with the second CO there was a special procedure. No one knew what to do at first so we had to learn from scratch and the very first morning set the scene for lots of argy bargy. For the tent inspections, he would run his fingers along the top of the cupboards in the tent. He soon found out there were a lot of rat traps.

Another excerpt described some of Ken's experiences.

GA: Do you have a very vivid memory of one experience you could share?

KA: Well our unit was a forward repair team which consisted of three mechanics and one electrical fitter – we were on call 24 hours a day to go out at a moment's notice and fix a broken down engine or tank, sometimes guard duty on something that had blown up.

GA: Tell me what is mine sweeping?

KA: You sit on top of the tank and pray that nothing happens (laugh) while the engineers walked in front sweeping the road – at a very slow pace – a slow process.

GA: Do you remember the incident in the photo? Do you remember how this came about? (*Image bottom left)

KA: Yes, that was an operation that we were asked to do – following the tanks into the rubber plantation. It was in the dry season and I asked what I had to do being the driver. He said, "Just stay with your right hand track in the path of the tank in front".

GA: I am not sure of the difference between a tank and an APC.

KA: The tank is the big one with the gun and ours (the APC) is just the little sports car.

KA: Ours is an APC with a small unit... had a crane on it. We slept in the back. It had two hammocks.



Ken and partner at home in their APC.

It was very hard to keep up to a tank which spewed out heaps of dust. You couldn't see two metres in front of you. We would get up in the morning, have breakfast and then move the tanks to a new holding position for the day.

GA: How did you have a shower?

KA: We had a bucket.

KA: Then, about 2 o'clock in the afternoon, the tanks were started up but they were not moved. The engines were revved up as if you were moving. This was all designed to confuse the enemy because they could hear for miles that tanks were in the area. It was not a quiet mission.

Ken said that despite his experience in a warzone and the upheaval to his life as a young man, he came back and put all of it behind him and didn't dwell on it too much.

In the oral history he said, "I think everybody is changed by it. Yeah some more than others. No more than other experiences in life."

Ken joined VicRoads in 1983 and worked in Warrnambool Division's pre-cast concrete yard. In 1992 he transferred to the Divisional laboratory and he retired, due to ill health, in 2010.



Corporal Michael (Mick) John Hoare

3797900



Michael Hoare –
2021

Mick was born in Geelong in 1945. He was an accountant at the CRB before being called up for National Service in January 1970. Prior to this, he had been granted four years deferment to enable him to complete part-time accounting studies. He did ten weeks Recruit Training at Puckapunyal followed by another ten weeks Infantry Corps training at Singleton, NSW. He was then posted to the 4th Royal Australian Regiment (4RAR) in Townsville and joined the

Battalion in June 1970 as it was building up for its second tour of Vietnam.

This was a period of intense training in 4RAR. The new arrivals were allocated to Companies and placed on training courses. Mick completed a five week signals course in July, followed by a ten week administration course in Brisbane between September and November 1970. Many days of this course were spent learning to touch type on manual typewriters. Jungle warfare training at Canungra occupied the remainder of November, after which he returned home for four weeks leave.

On his return to Townsville he was posted to Battalion Headquarters as Operations Clerk. This position involved recording of operational radio traffic, deciphering coded messages, typing and duplication of Operation Orders, After Action Reports and Command Post log sheets, and compilation of the Commander's Diaries.

After the annual leave break the Battalion conducted a series of exercises to test its efficiency at Platoon, Company and Battalion level, culminating in its departure for Vietnam in May 1971. Mick was part of the Advance Party which flew out of Townsville on 1 May on a Qantas Boeing 707. The main body followed on the HMAS *Sydney*, arriving in Vung Tau on 13 May. The rear party followed via a Qantas 707 about two weeks later.

The Battalion was joined at Nui Dat by a New Zealand complement and became 4RAR/NZ (ANZAC) Battalion. They had arrived in Vietnam at the start of the wet season – heat, rain, humidity and malaria.

But there are memories of Vietnam that rest very heavily on Mick. He and Ralph Niblett met in the same platoon at Puckapunyal during recruit training. They used to meet up for a coffee during their weekends off. However, Ralph was killed in Vietnam. He was shot in the chest on 21 September 1971, during the Battle of Núi Lẻ, the last major engagement by Australian soldiers in Vietnam. Ralph was 22 years old. He and his girlfriend proposed to get married after his return from Vietnam. Mick described the circumstances thus:

"Our boys were patrolling and they came across a bunker system and got into a bit of strife. He (Ralph) turned out to be one of the last Australian killed in action over there. We lost five killed and 24 wounded. They were all well trained soldiers with similar plans."



Ralph Niblett

Ralph came from Cobden in Western Victoria and he is buried in the cemetery of his home town. He was the eighth last Australian soldier to be killed in action in the Vietnam War.

In Nui Dat, Mick recorded radio messages and disseminated orders. Three or four nights a week, he manned an M60 machine gun at a sentry point behind claymore anti-personnel mines. He said that at

night, he could see the glare and hear all the bombing in the distance. He and his comrades were overjoyed in August 1971 when the Australian Government announced it was withdrawing from this unpopular war. They all kept a calendar and every day they crossed out another square. Mick said he thought the Viet Cong were pretty happy to hear the news too.

After returning to Australia in October 1971, Mick resumed his accounting career in the CRB.

But he has never forgotten those that were lost, and the veterans who survived with the physical and mental scars of war. He said:

"We lost nine all up while we were there, but you don't hear so much about the ones that were wounded. It was more about the body count, as the Americans called it."

Mick enjoys the reunions with his mates but the recent COVID-19 outbreak put paid to the proposed 50th anniversary of the end of the war which was to be held in Canberra in 2021. However, on Vietnam Veteran's Day, Mick flew the flag at half-mast and quietly contemplated the fallen.

"For me, Ralph is always front of mind of those we lost. The spirit lives on. We'll carry on, keep in touch and open up when we can."



LEST WE FORGET



Captain Peter Mervyn Robinson OBE

340180

Peter was not a National Service recruit. He was a permanent member of the Australian Army. He was Chief Mechanical Engineer in VicRoads during the 1980s and '90s and was involved in the privatisation of its functions. He was born in Melbourne in 1938 and died in 2004 after a long illness.

He was a Captain in the Royal Corps of Australian Electrical and Mechanical Engineers (RAEME) and was attached to the 161 (Independent) Reconnaissance Flight unit. He became a Member of the Order of the British Empire (OBE) in 1968. The information below is a summary of his citation for the award of the OBE.

Peter was commissioned in the Australian Regular Army in 1959 and from March 1967 he served with 161st (Independent) Reconnaissance Flight as the Flight Engineer. On his arrival in Vietnam, 161st (Independent) Reconnaissance Flight was preparing to move from its location at Vung Tau airfield to Nui Dat. Captain Robinson, as the first Engineering Officer posted to the Flight, was confronted with the move of the Flight as well as maintaining the serviceability of the unit aircraft which were carrying out daily observation and reconnaissance duties. Under his supervision the move to Nui Dat was efficiently carried out and the serviceability of the unit aircraft was increased, allowing the aircraft to fly 881 hours during the month of March.

By his insistence on the highest engineering standards and close supervision of all technical work on aircraft he maintained the availability of aircraft between 90 and 96. His high standards are further reflected in the aircraft safety record with only three technical defects in over 8,000 flying hours. His workshop has always been able to respond to demands for support and his technical advice has been consistently sound and always given in sufficient time to maintain the operational efficiency of his unit.

By his skill, determined leadership and willingness to work extremely long hours he has supervised the building of suitable workshop facilities, aircraft protection bays and stores facilities and has increased the serviceability rate of the unit aircraft, thereby allowing them to fly an average 825 hours per month during the period March to November 1967.



Captain Peter Robinson (left) at Nui Dat airfield.

News from members

Peter Lowe

Peter is unwell and will be shifting into respite care fairly soon. He is currently in St George's Hospital in Kew.

Reg Marslen

Reg wrote to me as follows:

'Hi David,

Ian Goldie says it all for us about the state of our roads. I saw it all on two recent trips, one to Bendigo to a grandson's wedding and to the opening of the Victorian Parliament to see my grand-daughter, Dr. Renee Heath, inducted into the Victorian Legislative Council as the Liberal Member for Eastern Victoria Region, and make her maiden speech. A wonderful occasion.

We encountered all the things that Ian highlighted. My own gripe is the amount of water pooled on unsealed shoulders and in clogged table drains - a recipe for disaster. The first Board Members were correct in highlighting maintenance of roads as their first response on their appointment - firstly, maintain the asset. The patrol system developed over the early years was a magnificent system. These dedicated patrolmen kept our roads in pristine order.

But times have changed. Roads are much wider, traffic volumes are horrific, heavy freight has moved from rail to road, prime movers have grown in size and horsepower and the trailers being hauled are many-axled and huge, e.g. B doubles. I no longer drive but get taken for drives by family over all road categories. The minor country roads were never built for the massive fuel, milk and fodder transports that now use them, consequently they are gradually breaking up and becoming dangerous to drive on. There seems to be no funds for their repair or replacement.

On my visit to Melbourne, for convenience, I stayed at the Windsor Hotel. A bit posh for me, and not handicapped person friendly, nor is Parliament House easy to enter for wheelchairs. We had to gain access towards the rear of the building and then had to be guided through a maze of passageways to gain access to the chamber of the Upper House. I used a wheelchair for the trip as I am now very restricted with mobility. I use a wheely walker full time around the house and on my tri weekly trips to hospital for dialysis treatment.

I must give you a report on my dialysis journey, I may have told you that a couple of years ago, but if I manage to make it to ten years in four months' time I may do so.

Kind regards - Reg Marslen'

And now for something beautiful

What could be more beautiful and awe-inspiring than the moons of our planets? Here are just a few of them.

Moons orbit their planet in the same way that the planets orbit the Sun. Our solar system contains hundreds of moons and astronomers are still finding moons – especially around Jupiter and Saturn. The moons vary in size – the smaller ones are more closely related to asteroids and meteors and some are so large, that if they were orbiting the sun, they would be classed as planets.

Callisto



Gallileo discovered Callisto in 1610. It orbits Jupiter and it is that planet's most distant moon. It is the second largest of Jupiter's moons with a diameter of nearly 5,000 kilometres making it the third largest moon in our solar system. Its surface is heavily cratered and it is the least active body in the solar system. It has not changed in its 4.5 billion year existence. It has not experienced volcanic activity and geologically it has the oldest unchanged surface. It is nearly two million kilometres distant from Jupiter and takes 17 Earth days to complete its orbit.

Titan

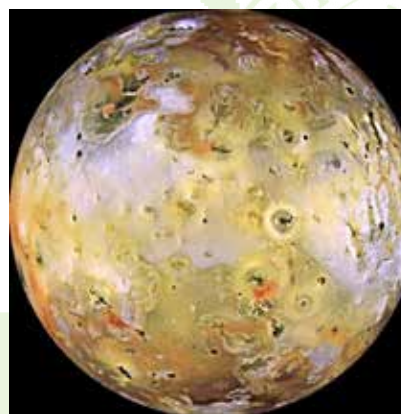


Titan orbits Saturn and is the second largest of our system's moons – second only to Ganymede which orbits Jupiter. Its diameter is 5,150 kilometres (c.f. Ganymede 5,270 kilometres). It is Saturn's largest moon. Both moons are larger than the planet Mercury which is 4,879 kilometres in diameter. Titan has a significant, dense atmosphere of nitrogen (like Earth) and an intriguing surface.

The Cassini space mission (launched in 1997) penetrated the atmosphere in 2004 revealing a surface resembling Earth. It was covered in rivers, lakes and seas however it is far too cold for water to exist in liquid form. Instead, the liquid on Titan is liquid hydrocarbons such as methane and ethane and it even rains liquid methane on the surface. However, 200 kilometres below its surface there exists a liquid water ocean.

The image above is a natural colour view of the planet Saturn created from images collected from the Cassini Mission. The barely discernible dot in the lower left hand corner below the edge of the ring is Titan.

Io



Jupiter's moon, Io, is the most volcanically active world in the solar system, with hundreds of volcanoes, some erupting lava fountains dozens of kilometres high. Io is caught in a tug-of-war between Jupiter's massive gravity and the smaller but precisely timed pulls from two neighbouring moons that orbit farther from Jupiter - Europa and Ganymede

The image above is from NASA's Galileo spacecraft. There are rugged mountains several miles high, layered materials forming plateaus, and many irregular depressions called volcanic calderas. Several of the dark, flow-like features correspond to hot spots, and may be active lava flows. There are no landforms resembling impact craters, as the volcanism covers the surface with new deposits much more rapidly than the flux of comets and asteroids can create large impact craters. The picture is taken on the side of Io that always faces away from Jupiter.

Some unusual bridges

France

Pont Jacques Chaban-Delmas

This is a vertical lift bridge in Bordeaux. It carries four traffic lanes, a footpath and a bicycle lane. The towers support the weight of the bridge and they can hoist the deck up to a height of 50 metres to allow ships to pass underneath.



England

Gateshead Millennium Bridge

This bridge spans the River Tyne and is nicknamed the Winking Eye Bridge because of its eye-shaped motion when it is moved. The bridge is used by pedestrians and cyclists. The bridge rotates as a single structure with the supporting arch and the deck counterbalancing each other.





Greece

Corinth Canal

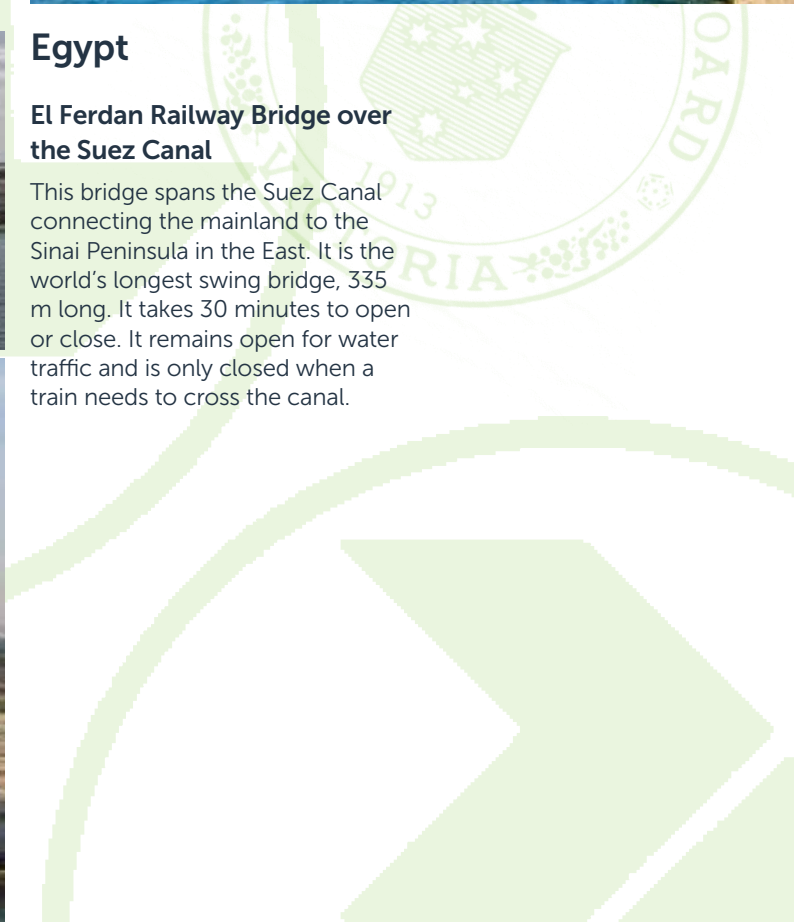
There are a number of these bridges along the canal. The canal was built between 1881 and 1893 and saved ships a distance of 700 km travelling around the Peloponnesian Peninsula. The canal is quite narrow and can only accommodate one ship at a time. In 1988, submersible bridges like this one were built and their decks are submersed eight metres below water level to enable tall ships to pass through unhindered.



Egypt

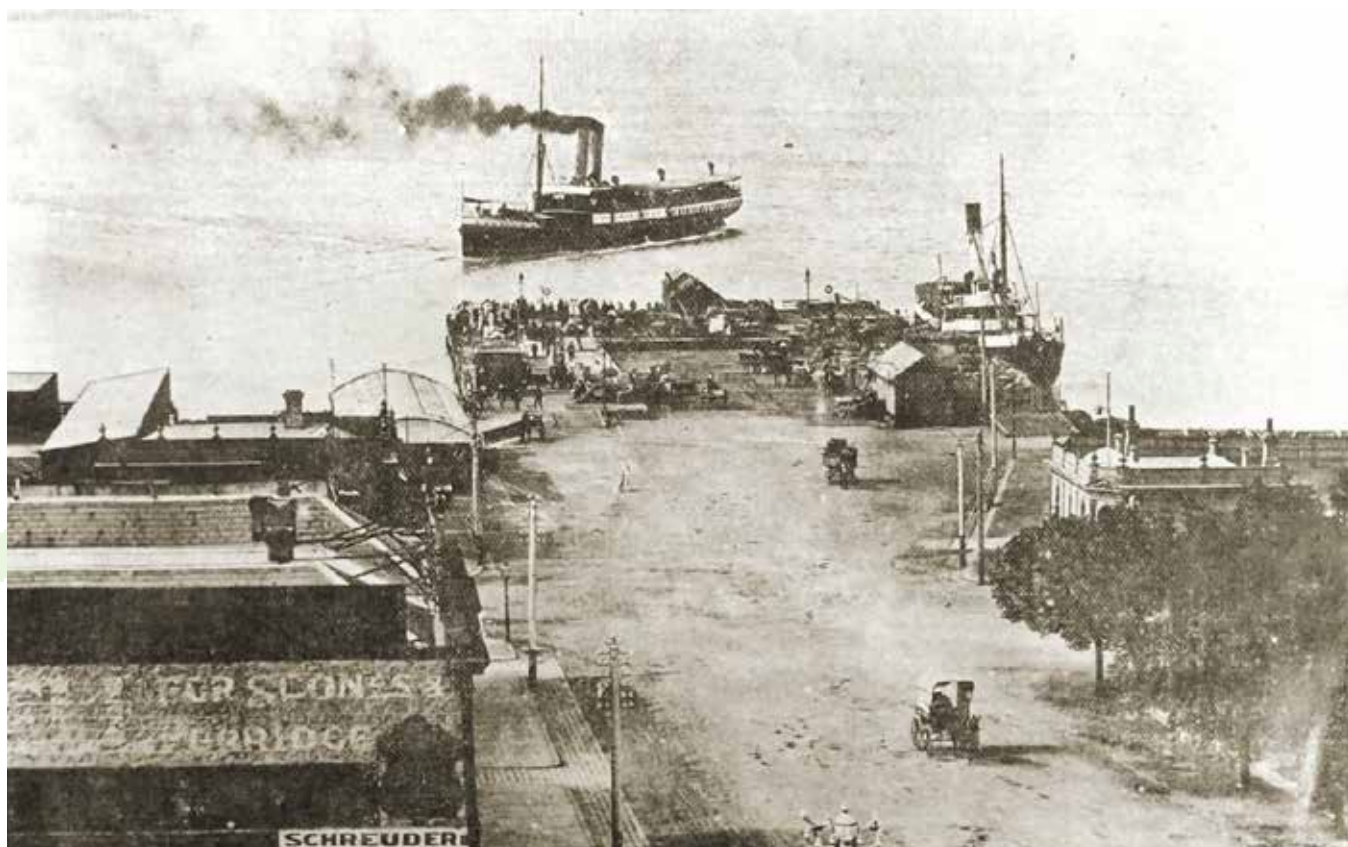
El Ferdan Railway Bridge over the Suez Canal

This bridge spans the Suez Canal connecting the mainland to the Sinai Peninsula in the East. It is the world's longest swing bridge, 335 m long. It takes 30 minutes to open or close. It remains open for water traffic and is only closed when a train needs to cross the canal.



From the archives

I am not sure of the date of this wonderful photograph but I would hazard a guess of sometime between the 1880s to the 1890s. It is taken at Geelong and it is the Moorabool Street Wharf Steamer leaving for Melbourne.



After a bit of detective work, I have come to the conclusion that the steamer at the wharf is likely to be the SS *Edina*. If it isn't, *Edina's* story is worth telling at any rate. The following story is from Victorian Collections and is from the collection of Flagstaff Hill Maritime Museum in Warrnambool.



The three masted iron screw steamer SS *Edina* was built in Glasgow, Scotland, in 1854 by Barclay and Curle. She was adorned with the figurehead of 'Fair Maid of Judea'. Her many years of service made SS *Edina* famous world-wide as the longest serving screw steamer. (The term screw steamer comes from the ship being driven by a single propeller, sometimes called a screw, driven by a steam engine.)

SS *Edina's* interesting history includes English Channel runs, serving in the Crimean War carrying ammunition, horses and stores to the Black Sea, and further service in the American Civil War. Later, she served in the western district of Victoria as well as in Queensland. SS *Edina* was given the privilege of being an escort vessel to H.R.H. the Duke of Edinburgh during his visit to Australia in 1867.

In March 1863, SS *Edina* arrived in Port Phillip Bay, Melbourne and was bought by Stephen Henty, of Portland fame, to work the cargo and passenger run from Melbourne – Warrnambool – Port Fairy – Portland. After a short time of working the run from Australia to New Zealand, with passengers and cargo that included gold and currency, she

returned to her Melbourne - Warrnambool – Port Fairy run, with cargo including bales of wool produced in the western district of Victoria.

The Warrnambool Steam Packet Company purchased SS *Edina* in 1867; she was now commanded by Captain John Thompson and Chief Engineer John Davies. She survived several mishaps at sea, and had a complete service and overhaul and several changes of commanders.

In 1870 SS *Edina* was in Lady Bay, Warrnambool, when a gale sprung up and caused a collision with the iron screw steamer SS *Dandenong*. SS *Edina*'s figurehead was broken into pieces and it was never replaced.

SS *Edina* was re-fitted in 1870 used as a coastal trader in Queensland for a period. She was then brought to

Melbourne to carry cargo and passengers between Melbourne and Geelong and performed this service between 1880 and 1938. During this time (1917) she was again refitted with a new mast, funnel, bridge and promenade deck, altering her appearance.

In 1938, after more collisions, SS *Edina* was taken out of service. However she was later renamed *Dinah* and used as a 'lighter' (a vessel without engine or superstructure) to be towed carrying wool and general cargo between Melbourne and Geelong.

In 1957, after 104 years, the SS *Edina* was broken up at Footscray, Melbourne. Remains of SS *Edina*'s hull can be found in the Maribyrnong River, Port Phillip Bay.

Trivia and didactic whimsies

Apologies

I sincerely apologise for these puns but some of you like them – I think.

My friend said he didn't understand cloning.
I said, "That makes two of us".

I used to be a banker, but then I lost interest.

Haunted 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.

Jokes about German sausage are the wurst.

I stayed up all night to see where the sun went,
and then it dawned on me.

When chemists die, they barium.

I'm reading a book about anti-gravity.
I just can't put it down.

*I did a theatrical performance about puns.
It was a play on words.*

Why are your fingers the most reliable part of your body?
You can always count on them.

Paraprosdokians

John Clark has introduced me to paraprosdokians. A 'paraprosdokian' is a figure of speech in which the latter part of a sentence or phrase is surprising or unexpected in a way that causes the reader or listener to reframe or reinterpret the first part. It is frequently used for humorous or dramatic effect. So, we have:

I want to die peacefully in my sleep, like my grandfather.
Not screaming and yelling like the passengers in his car.

*The last thing I want to do is hurt you.
But it's still on the list.*

Light travels faster than sound. This is why some people appear bright until you hear them speak.

If I agreed with you, we'd both be wrong.

War does not determine who is right -- only who is left.

*Knowledge is knowing a tomato is a fruit;
Wisdom is not putting it in a fruit salad.*

The early bird might get the worm, but the second mouse gets the cheese.

*Evening news is where they begin with "Good evening",
and then proceed to tell you why it isn't.*

To steal ideas from one person is plagiarism.
To steal from many is research.

*A bus station is where a bus stops.
A train station is where a train stops.
My desk is a work station.*

How is it one careless match can start a forest fire,
but it takes a whole box to start a campfire?

Trivia and didactic whimsies continued

Dolphins are so smart that within a few weeks of captivity, they can train people to stand on the very edge of the pool and throw them fish.

A bank is a place that will lend you money if you can prove that you don't need it.

Whenever I fill out an application, in the part that says "If an emergency, notify:" I put "DOCTOR."

I didn't say it was your fault, I said I was blaming you.

Why does someone believe you when you say there are four billion stars, but checks when you say the paint is wet?

A clear conscience is usually the sign of a bad memory.

*You do not need a parachute to skydive.
You only need a parachute to skydive twice.*

The voices in my head may not be real, but they have some good ideas!

*Always borrow money from a pessimist.
He won't expect it back.*

A diplomat is someone who can tell you to go to hell in such a way that you will look forward to the trip.

Hospitality: making your guests feel like they're at home, even if you wish they were.

I discovered I scream the same way whether I'm about to be devoured by a great white shark or if a piece of seaweed touches my foot.

*Some cause happiness wherever they go.
Others whenever they go.*

I used to be indecisive. Now I'm not sure.

When tempted to fight fire with fire, remember that the Fire Department usually uses water.

You're never too old to learn something stupid.

Nostalgia isn't what it used to be.

A bus is a vehicle that runs twice as fast when you are after it as when you are in it.

Change is inevitable, except from a vending machine.

He can do anything

A young man on a construction site was bragging that he could outdo anyone in a feat of strength.

He made a special case of making fun of Morris, one of the older workmen. After several minutes, Morris had enough.

"Why don't you put your money where your mouth is?" he said. "I will bet a week's wages that I can haul something in a wheelbarrow over to that outbuilding that you won't be able to wheel back."

"You're on, old man," the braggart replied. "It's a bet! Let's see what you've got."

Morris reached out and grabbed the wheelbarrow by the handles.

Then, nodding to the young man, he said, *"All right. Get in."*

Healthy diet

A Professor of Medicine was addressing a large audience.

"The food that we put into our stomachs is enough to have killed most of us sitting here, years ago. Red meat is awful. Soft drinks corrode your stomach lining. Chinese food is loaded with MSG. High fat diets can be disastrous, and none of us realise the long-term harm caused by the bacteria in our drinking water.

But there is one thing that is the most dangerous of all. Can anyone here tell me what food it is that causes the most grief and suffering for years after eating it?"

After several seconds of silence, a 75-year-old woman in the front row raised her hand, and softly said, *"I believe it's Wedding Cake?"*

David Jellie
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