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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, by phone or e-mail as shown above. Visit our website at <https://vicroadsassociation.org>



A NOTE FROM OUR NEW EDITOR



As a 17-year-old joining the CRB in 1958 I was intrigued to discover that engineers began their reports with the words “*I have the honour*”, leading me to believe, at the time, that being permitted to write reports was in fact a very special privilege.

I must confess to feeling similarly honoured, if not a little apprehensive, in accepting David Jellie’s invitation to follow in his substantial footsteps and continue producing this important social connection for our members.

David has been at the helm of the Newsletter for more than 20 years, and along with some excellent contributors and a talented support team he has consistently produced an outstanding reading experience.

His stewardship of the Association and its Newsletter has contributed greatly to the group spirit of our members, which was very much in evidence at our successful 2024 Christmas luncheon. David will be stepping down from his role as President in early 2025 to devote more time to his artwork and other long neglected personal interests. Nevertheless, we look forward to publishing future articles from him, including his excellent *Lest We Forget* series.

In my first action as Editor, I would like to wish you all a very happy New Year, in which I look forward to producing the Newsletter and delivering worthwhile news, comments and articles. Revisiting our past Newsletters I was particularly taken with David’s words in the January 2023 edition, which beautifully capture the essence of our group:

For many people, social networks shrink with age, but in our case, the value of friendship increases with age. We may not be best friends but we are ‘glued’ together because of our shared history and our tolerance towards each other. The people I know now are pretty much the same as the people I knew then. This leads to the inevitable conclusion that our personalities are formed in our childhood. I think it is one of the strengths of organisations like the VicRoads Association.

A little about myself. The youngest of three and a policeman's son, my early years were spent in Warrnambool, Bendigo and Bairnsdale before my parents settled in Melbourne. Dad's Victorian odyssey mirrored the multi-regional experiences of many of our members. As a child in Bairnsdale, I was an unwitting neighbour to one of the CRB's more famous alumni, Bill Brake, who I later discovered had lived just across the road from me.

Commencing as a draftsman with the Public Works Department in 1957, I joined the CRB's Dandenong Division in Carlton a year later. In 1963 I married and left the CRB to work with engineering consultants in Brisbane and Port Moresby.

Returning to the CRB in 1967, I briefly worked under Noel Anderson in Plans and Surveys before moving to Dandenong Division's Design Section. In 1970, after years of night school at RMIT, I graduated as an engineer and, with the blessing of Frank Docking, moved from the Division's design office under Bill Kendall, to the Municipal Section under John Glenn.

I worked under Noel McFadyen in Statutory Planning, and then with Don Peckham, David Anderson and Peter Ransom on the Hampton Park Project before becoming responsible for land acquisition and service relocation on the Berwick, Pakenham and Longwarry sections of the Princes Freeway, when I worked with Ted Goddard at the Pakenham site office.

In 1989 I joined Jim Webber's team in Corporate Development to assist Rob Aitken, Joan Gilmer, and others preparing the *VicRoads 2000* report on future regional road needs.

In 1991 I moved into John Gaffney's position of Austroads Program Assistant for the Road Use Management Program, working for Colin Jordan and later Rob McQuillen while also serving as Reg Patterson's Technical Aide – a position previously held by Jill Earnshaw.

In my last 4 years with VicRoads, I worked with Warwick Bull under Geoff Chambers, Peter Balfe and others in Vehicle Registration to draft new laws and train VicRoads business office staff for the introduction of the National Heavy Vehicle Registration Scheme.

Leaving VicRoads in 1998, I established my own consulting company and spent the next 12 years working with state and national bodies to harmonise Australia's disparate road transport laws and combat nationwide vehicle theft and rebirthing activities.

WHAT'S COMING UP

Now is the time to open up your brand new diary and/or your smartphone to set aside some important dates for our 2025 outings.

One of the easiest ways to catch up with former workmates is to simply turn up to our occasional lunches at the Doncaster Shoppingtown Hotel, which is just across Williamsons Road from Westfield Doncaster. Their meals are reasonably priced and Kel York always ensures we have several tables reserved for our members in a quiet area. And please remember that partners and friends are always welcome to attend this and all our other events.

We would love to see more people attending our excellent regional technical visits, which usually involve one or more overnight stays and presentations by local authorities. Attendees use their own vehicles and travel in their own time to meet at a specified location, which might be a venue for a presentation, a luncheon, or a dinner. Attendees arrange their own accommodation and are not required to commit to attending subsequent tour events.

The whole process is very relaxed and we try to ensure there is more than sufficient driving time, including pit stops and coffee breaks, to reach the more distant places of interest. It is a great opportunity to meet fellow members, and the evening dinners are always enjoyable.

The following table shows our tentative program for 2025. The dates for the occasional lunches are fixed as are the dates for most other activities

Our 2025 event calendar

Date	Event	Contact Person
Monday 3 February	12 noon Occasional Lunch, Doncaster Shoppingtown Hotel	Just turn up
Wednesday 19 February	10.30 am Presentation by William Tieppo, Deputy Secretary, Network Design and Integration, Department of Transport and Planning (DTP) covering the transition from VicRoads to the current arrangements. DTP, 1 Spring Street Melbourne followed by lunch at a local venue.	Jill Earnshaw
Tuesday 4 March to Thursday 7 March	Road trip to Cooma to visit Snowy Hydro 2 Project	Jim Webber
Tuesday 25 March	12 noon Annual General Meeting at Waverley RSL followed by lunch at 1.00 pm.	Ken Vickery
Monday 7 April	12 noon for 12.30 pm Occasional Lunch, Doncaster Shoppingtown Hotel	Just turn up
Tuesday 15 April	10.30 am Presentation by Mark Trajcevski on the National Broadband Network at their Operations and Management Centre, 1010 Latrobe Street, followed by a light lunch onsite.	David Jellie
May	Presentation by Major Road Projects Victoria.	TBA
Monday 2 June	12 noon for 12.30 pm Occasional Lunch, Doncaster Shoppingtown Hotel	Just turn up
Monday 30 June	12 noon for 12.30 pm Mid-year lunch at Waverley RSL	Ken Vickery
Monday 14 July	10 am TAC presentation on road behaviour and tour of Road to Zero Education Centre at Melbourne Museum followed by lunch at on-site restaurant.	Jill Earnshaw
Monday 4 August	12 noon for 12.30 pm Occasional Lunch, Doncaster Shoppingtown Hotel	Just turn up
September	Possibly a visit to Major Projects Victoria.	TBA
Monday 6 October	12 noon for 12.30 pm Occasional Lunch, Doncaster Shoppingtown Hotel	Just turn up
October	Visit to the Alston (Metro Trains) Facility in Ballarat to see the building of world class trains. Could be linked to a regional visit.	Jill Earnshaw
Monday 3 November	12 noon for 12.30 pm Occasional Lunch, Doncaster Shoppingtown Hotel	Just turn up
Thursday 11 December	12 noon for 12.30 pm Christmas lunch at Waverley RSL	Ken Vickery

We are investigating a few more options with a view to having one more technical visit and will keep you posted. The visits to other authorities and organisations are being finalised and we will let you know in future newsletters once they have been confirmed.

Post-VicRoads Road Management – Wednesday 19 February

The presentation by William Tieppo will be held in the DTP Theatre. It will also cover the current Department's organization structure and some of its ongoing challenges. Will's considerable work history with VicRoads will ensure this is an insightful presentation and an update for us all. The venue is easily accessed by public transport and lunch will be close by. More details will follow. Please email Jill if interested in attending.

Road Trip to Snowy Hydro 2 – Tuesday 4 March to Thursday 7 March.

As far as I am aware, this will be our first technical visit across the Victorian border. We will stay the first night at Orbost where David will give a talk on the Snowy River Crossing Project before dinner.

On the following day we will drive to Cooma where we will have an afternoon presentation about the construction of the massive Snowy 2 pumped storage scheme. As a special treat, participants will be able to attend the colourful Cooma Show at the conclusion of our activities. We will let you know the details once they have been finalised.

Annual General Meeting – 25 March at 12 noon at Waverley RSL followed by lunch at 1.00 pm.

The business of the meeting will be to present our Annual Report and elect committee members for the next 12 months. If you would like to nominate for the committee, please contact our Secretary Jill Earnshaw on 0438 777 352 or jillmearnshaw@gmail.com

We will also receive the Treasurer's report, confirm our auditor for 2025 and confirm our fees – all as required by our Rules of Association. We will also introduce changes to our Rules of Association to update them and align them with the new Consumer Affairs Victoria Model Rules. Following the meeting, we will have lunch in the RSL's dining area. More details later.

MEMBER COMMENTS AND NEWS

From Nick Szwed:

John, in your report on the Great Alpine Road Trip, you say: The original Alpine Road between Harrietville and Omeo started life as a packhorse track servicing the 1860's gold fields of Dargo, Omeo and Cobungra.

I'd like to suggest a correction to that statement. If you have a look at this article and the map in it, I think there would have been an earlier track there before the packhorse track:

<https://vicroadsassociation.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/01/Australia-First-Roads-2023-01-09.pdf>

My understanding is that the First Nations would have had a couple of tracks over the mountains and they would have shown the early explorers the best way to go.

The first tracks would most likely have been First Nation tracks, which were then turned into packhorse tracks, then coach tracks and so on.

Nick

From Norm Butler:

Hi John,

Congratulations on becoming editor of the VicRoads Association Newsletter. You have big boots to fill, following David, but judging from your Alpine Road report, you are well on the way. Your Alpine Road report was a very nostalgic piece for me. I was the Sector Engineer for the Alpine Road section from Omeo to Hotham Heights from 1964 to 1966.

I had just taken over the section in 1964 when we (CRB Bairnsdale Division) cleared Mt Kosciuszko Lookout site for our construction camp to build the Mountain Maid to Powerline

Gully deviation - a 3km length of new road to bypass a very steep section of the then Alpine Road. It was only when we cleared the site that we realised that it gave a view to Mt Kosciuszko.

We built the construction camp on the site which is now the Mt Kosciuszko lookout. The men lived in tents and the buildings were a mess hut and ablution block. The food was prepared in a mobile kitchen. The job lasted for about 4 months, then all was dismantled. This was before permanent camps and before minibuses were provided to take men to the worksite. Men travelled to the job sitting under canopies in the trays of trucks in those days - very basic indeed.

The Mountain Maid to Powerline Gully job was my first rural road construction job with the CRB. At that stage I had been a Bridge Design Engineer on secondment to Bairnsdale Division, but the Divisional Engineer Bill Dolamore convinced me to stay. I never went back to Bridge, much to the annoyance of the Deputy Chief Engineer Bridges Bas Abery.

My overseer on this job was Jack O'Keefe who was one of the most senior overseers in the division. He taught me a lot about how to get the job going. Also the ganger on the job was young Ted Schache. Ted would go on to become the Senior Overseer and Superintendent of Works in later years.

Conservation was not a big issue in the 1960s. The new deviation was through snow gum and peppermint forest. To commence the job, all trees on the 3 chain wide new road reserve were pushed over and heaped into windrows beside the new alignment. It seemed that at that time tree clearing was a favourite pastime - "Ah, the smell of crushed gum leaves and diesel smoke!" The clear-felling was apparently to let the land dry out before the earthworks. The windrows remained there for many years with gum trees growing up through it. It was an unsightly mess and probably a harbour for vermin. No wonder roadworks stirred the ire of conservationists.

The new formation was through hilly country with significant cuts and fills. We used dozer-drawn scrapers for cutting and filling. The scrapers were cable operated through a power control unit on the dozers. It was tough going at times. Soft rock sections were ripped using a blade ripper as the dozers in those days did not have hydraulics. The work was pretty hard on the machines with one of the scrapers being basically pulled in half at the gooseneck.

Ron Angus was the Assistant Divisional Engineer at that time. He insisted that, to save money, rollers not be used on the fills, but to rely on track rolling of the grader, scrapers and dozers. After a while, my overseer, Jack O'Keefe became concerned at the lack of compaction, so an old sheepsfoot roller was spirited onto the job (It was a 1940s model formerly used by the Allied Works Council - still had AWC branded on the drum.) When Ron came to inspect the job, he did not say a word.

We got gravel from a pit beside the old road. It was a soft, ripped shale and we put it down with the sheepsfoot roller, the grader wheels and traffic too. The old pit soon became worked out, but my trusty overseer soon found a new site in the paddock nearby. Jack negotiated with the landowner and I paid the compensation at the set CRB rate.

The plans were lacking at the powerline end on the job with little detail of the tie-in to the old road. It was a bit rough and ready, but with Ted Schache we ranged in a tie-in with a tape and some ranging poles. On reflection, the curve we put in was a parabola, but it worked OK.

As my first rural road job, I learned a lot - in the management of works and people and finances and how to get things done unconventionally. It was about 30 years later that I was again back to the Alpine Road, this time as Regional Manager and it was my pleasure to see the seal go down on the Mountain Maid to Powerline Gully deviation, with Ted Schache managing the work. So whenever I travel the Great Alpine Road out from Omeo, the Kosciuszko lookout reminds me of the camp and the great job done on the Mountain Maid to Powerline Gully deviation.

Cheers, Norm Butler

From David Simpson

Hi David

Just read the September newsletter that Mervyn Seeney sent me, that you were after some photographs of old staff for Lance's paper. Not sure if it is too late. (Mervyn Seeney's wife sadly passed away this year).

Was sorry to see that Lance had an accident, I think of him always when I look at my 35 year Commendation Service Award at Materials Research Department which hangs in my study.



The picture is of me (David Simpson with the beard) and David Tilley in the Pavement Design Section in the old MRD building Kew in 1993.

Also sad to hear about Colin Kosky, who I worked with many years ago. Saw him about 2008 at the Tullamarine Airport conference rooms when I gave a talk on 'Trench Patching', used in Metro North West, for Colin who was facilitating a State wide conference on pavements.

It was ironic that just last year in a cleanup, I threw Colin's safety boots out. As he had not worn them he gave them to me when he left for Geelong Division. I wore them out. Love your stories and to see old photos of people I worked with at Kew, Burwood and Metro North West and in my travels throughout Victoria.

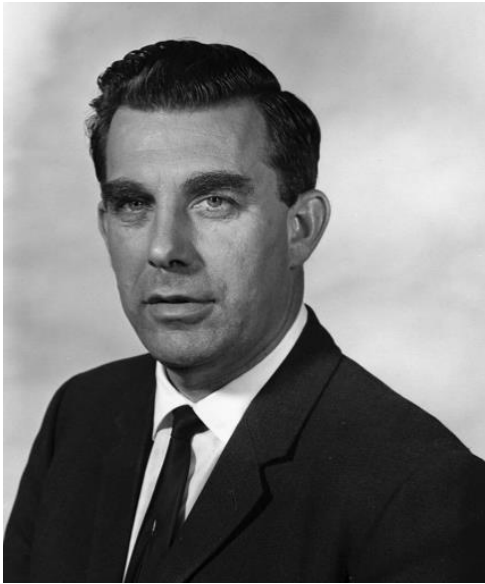
Regards, David Simpson

From Laurie Jones. [Laurie was Chief Works Engineer when he retired in 1987]

Dear David

Yes thanks, I received this newsletter, and still find them interesting to read even though nowadays I see increasingly few names of people I remember – but that's to be expected because I retired 37 years ago – at age 60.

You might wonder why so early, but at the time I wasn't particularly well, and I had other irons in the fire – my father died eight weeks later and because I was the eldest and my twin sister was overseas, my life resumed a fairly hectic pace for another ten years or so interspersed with extensive intervals of travelling.



Laurie Jones in 1970

No more of that now though, at 97 I am fully retired. I lost my wife six years ago after 68 happy years together, and although I still keep well and live alone next door to my daughter, I no longer do any travelling.

I still have family come to visit – my son lives in Mildura and I only see him yearly, but there are others – I've got six grandchildren and 14 great grandchildren – and more than half of them live in North Queensland (particularly near Mackay).

I noticed the note from John Liddell. I remember when he started with me in Metropolitan Division and made contact with him briefly perhaps 20 years ago after he'd retired out from Geelong – I presume he's still in the same place – but there's few other names I remember.

The other thing I noticed in that latest newsletter was your apparent despondency regarding the condition of Victoria's roads these days – but perhaps that's to be expected because we've retired – and I rather imagine they're still much better than the roads in Far North Queensland.

Regards, Laurie

[Laurie has sent David further interesting details of his career, which I propose to include in our next Newsletter]

From Harry Kruize

I recently received an email from Harry, who knew me from my time in Dandenong Division at Nunawading. Harry said:



A recent picture of Harry

Congratulations on accepting David Jellie's role for VicRoads Retirees newsletter. Like you, I know many ex VicRoads members but have not attended any of the functions. I know Kel York (former boss), and Ken Vickery (car sharing) very well, but I am not in contact with them.

After leaving VicRoads, Camberwell in 1993 I specialised in quality management and was a quality auditor with Davis Langdon, and a quality manager for several years with John Holland and Citywide.

I also worked from home as a consultant for four years, retiring eleven years ago at 70. It took me a long time to accept retirement, missing working with team members.

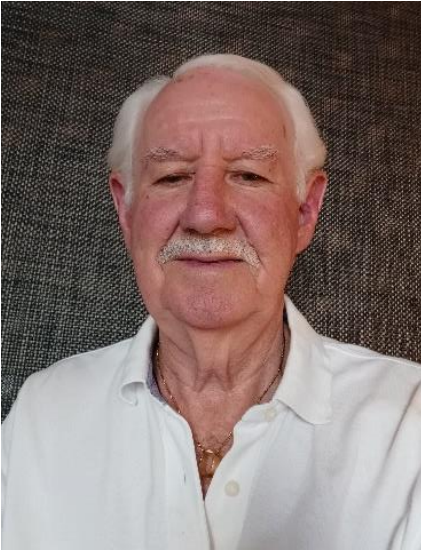
We are keeping healthy and enjoying life in Wandin North where lots of native birds visit our place, including King Parrots, Galahs, Crimson and Eastern Rosellas, Sulphur Crested Cockatoos, Magpies, Kookaburras, Rainbow Lorikeets, Wattle birds, Honeyeaters, and many more.

I am part of a music band in U3A Mount Dandenong, playing the piano keyboard.

Regards, Harry

From Bill Turner. His memories of 60 Denmark Street Kew (the home of a once great organisation).

My memories are almost entirely of the main building as I had little to do with the Materials Research function.



Bill Turner

My first real visit (as an employee) was in early 1969 where I started in the Administration Section on Floor 5 under Morrie Clarke, one of many ex-service people who brought tried and true policies, processes and systems to the CRB.

Others on the South wing of Floor 5 included Cliff Liddell and Ted Howlett while the north wing was the reserve of the upper echelon and the Board Room where I was later to spend considerable time during the Board's consideration of municipal allocations (often in the company of the late Jeff Briggs). Virtually the whole building was segregated into functions by floor.

At various times I worked on the Ground Floor (with the Traffic Section but later with the inimitable Daryl Carty Salmon, the Legal Officer and the son of Charles Carty Salmon, the second Speaker of the House of Representatives.

I was tasked with cataloguing all of the Legal Officer's opinions). Later I worked briefly on the Fourth Floor but the majority of my time was spent on the Sixth Floor which was largely the province of the Chief Accountant, although for a period the Engineer in Charge of the Computer Section (Dan Linsten) was located there as well. It was there that first I became aware of the existence of the Caretaker's unit on the "Seventh" Floor with Bert Ginn in residence.

Other areas which I remember well are the Printing (Russ Sheldrick) and Stationery (John Kelly) sections, all on the Lower Ground Floor, and the Archives area.

Some major memories include an extraordinary dust storm which came in from the Wimmera, totalling blanketing the sun and preventing occupants from seeing the ground beneath. All windows were closed which, given that the building was not air conditioned, made for a more than usual uncomfortable existence.

A second significant memory related to the pay section which was located opposite the Chief Accountant's Office which had a secret button under the CA's desk to alert police in the case of a holdup, not that any holdup ever occurred.

The closest we came is told on pages 194-198 of the book "Underbelly, A Tale of Two Cities" by John Silvester and Andrew Rule, where they reveal that the gang who undertook the Great Bookie Robbery in Melbourne, had chosen their next target as the Mayne Nickless van delivering the payroll to the CRB office in Kew on 4 May 1978. The van was estimated to be carrying about \$900,000 (an increased amount due to some back pay).

As it happened, the gang became suspicious and called off the robbery at the last moment however I well remember walking down the roadway at the back of the building and seeing heavily armed police waiting in cars (in vain as it happened).

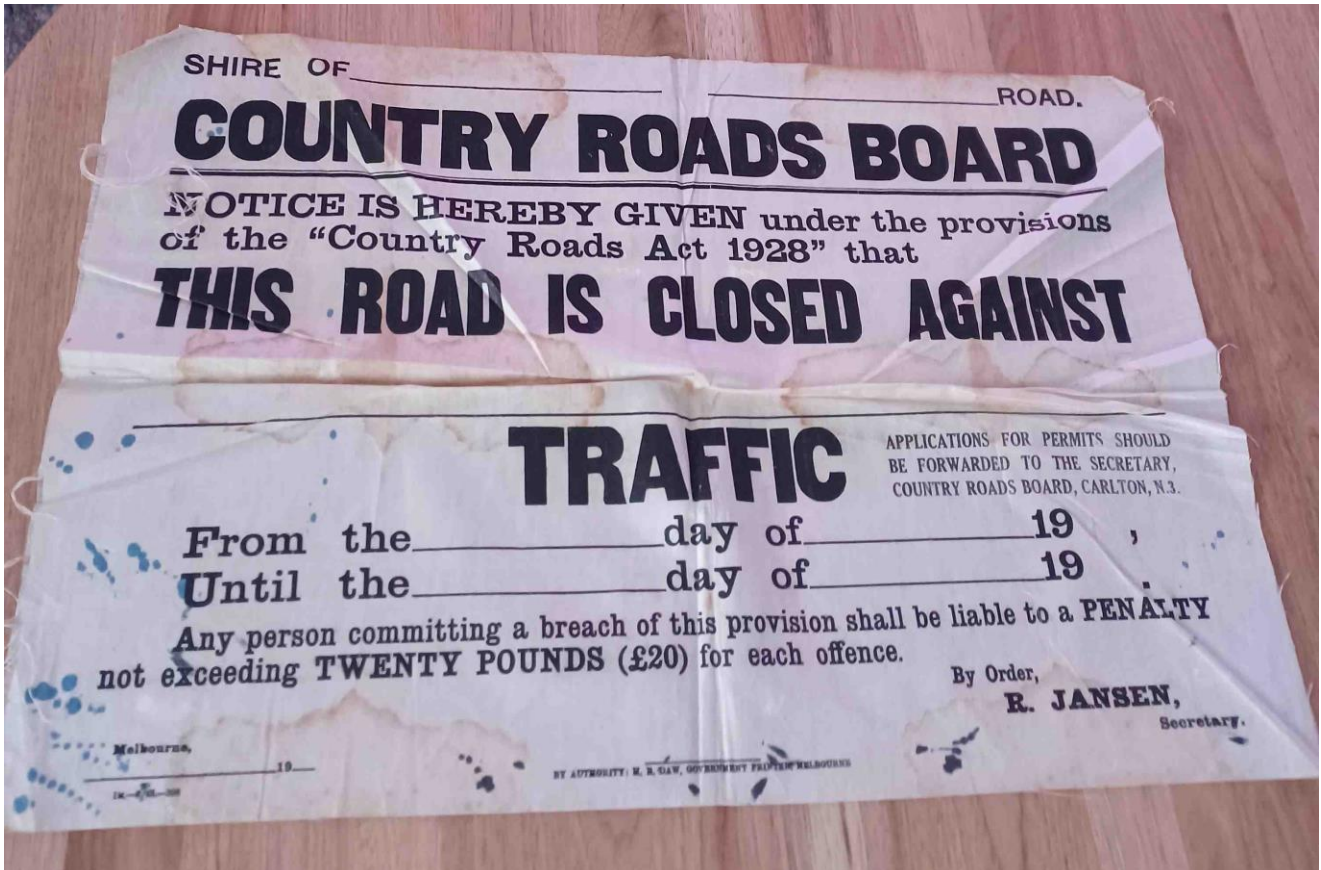
Some other memorable matters include:

- Christmas parties spilling over from the cafeteria onto the volleyball court
- The Moon landing – everyone gathering around a TV in the correspondence registry although Cliff Liddell was not convinced that this was appropriate
- Tea ladies visiting every area at morning teatime

- The ledger rooms with banks of ledger machines recording accounts transaction and earnings and tax records
- Gatherings of staff at lunchtime to play euchre (Peter Fletcher, Peter Hosking, John Butcher. Lachie Harper) and solo (me, Doug Thompson, Lin Peterson, David Utting, Andrew Gee, Allan Fler, and the late Jack Foster and Phil Roscoe)

Finally, who could forget the car park/cutting where many fine vehicles were parked:

The magnificent Studebaker of the late Harold Kress, Phil Roscoe's British Racing Green Bristol and then the yellow beach buggy of Tony Tipping (son of E W Tipping of Herald fame). A trip with Tony in the beach buggy was an experience one never forgot.



From Bill Turner. These cloth printed banners often announced Government proclamations in the distant past and were sometimes nailed to large gum trees along our country roads.

From Alastair Robinson

I still have my 1968 CRB embossed brown leather satchel which was obtained from in a small shop in Collingwood (I was sent there from Metropolitan Division (Howard Hobbs/Stan Hodgson). It's in pretty reasonable condition.

Do you know of anyone who would want it? Otherwise I will have to dispose of it.

Alastair

From Tracee Piper

Tracee Piper, a new member, has sent us this picture of her wonderful retirement cake. It was presented to her on 8 November 2024 after 41 years, 9 months and 5 days of service.

Tracee spent time in areas including Bridge branch, Finance (PARMS implementation - the financial and payroll system), Traffic and Road Use Management and R&L (developing and implementing regulatory policy and system design changes at a state and national level).



TOM GLAZEBROOK

[David Jellie has provided this interesting article about one of our most senior members.]

Late Last November, I went up to Bendigo to have lunch with Tom Glazebrook and Mal Kersting.



Mal, Tom and David

Tom was the Divisional Engineer of Bendigo in the CRB/RCA/VicRoads eras and Mal was Regional Manager (later renamed Regional Director) up to the end of the VicRoads era. Both looked in rude good health and we enjoyed a very nice lunch - courtesy of Tom – in the dining room at his nursing home.

Tom is nearly 99 and I noticed in the Scotch College magazine that he is one of the oldest old boys in their records. There are a few older than him – one of whom is a bloke called Bill Brake (101 and ex-Board member). Is there something in the water at Scotch College and the CRB that produces such longevity?

I saw the magazine at Peter Roberts' house. Peter is the son of Caleb Roberts (ex-Chairman of the Board) and he just crept on to the list at 96 years of age. I hasten to add that my *alma mater*, Colac High School, does not keep such records.

Tom was his usual, irrepressible self. We talked about his career which was spent entirely working in the regional divisions of the CRB, RCA and VicRoads, except for a short stint in the Shire of Horsham. Many of you will remember Tom's impromptu talk at the closure of Head Office when he said that the best view of Head Office was in the rear vision mirror of his car as he returned home.

His service spanned 38 years and for 11 years following his retirement, he managed 57 two-day courses/seminars for the Local Government Engineers Association (L.G.E.A.).



Tom and his wife Patricia

One night, when Tom was working in Horsham Division he attended a Presbyterian Fellowship Association function when an attractive young woman walked past him and she immediately attracted Tom's attention.

He said that even then, he thought she was the person he wanted to marry. Her name was Patricia Hill and, after an engagement of 12 months, they were married.

They had a very happy life together and were married for 61 years before Patricia died 12 years ago.

Tom said that he served Victoria in an organisation - the CRB - which was highly respected by the community and also by Municipal Councils and their staff.

As a senior officer, i.e. Divisional Engineer, in his last 16 years with the CRB, he also received this respect. In the rural Divisions, people had the feeling that you were part of a large family.

He encountered a number of problems, both technical and political, in the course of his professional employment. He said that an honest discussion with appropriate fellow officers always resulted in an acceptable solution.

Tom also commented that, in rural Victoria, the CRB used a great many different materials for highway pavement construction. They varied from sands, sandstone, limestone, river gravel, naturally occurring ironstone, gravel, basalt, and other material in quarries which were crushed. The engineers of the CRB learned to use these various materials through the research

and study of soil mechanics, physics and chemistry, and he added, the organisation's experience in their use.

Tom was very proud of his contribution with respect to construction and sealing of Alpine Roads above the snow line – in Victoria, an elevation above 1000 metres. In particular, these roads serviced Mount Buffalo, Mount Buller, Mount Hotham and Falls Creek Snow Village.

Pavements in these regions must be able to withstand the effects of frost heave and thawing without breaking up or losing shape in order to provide safe operating conditions for traffic.

Tom's research and its consequent recommendations resulted in him being awarded a Master of Engineering degree. The title of the thesis was: *The design and construction of flexible pavements for roads in the Victorian Alps which are subject to damage by frost and snow.*

In the process of the above, he read many research papers on similar work carried out here in Australia and the USA. After six months of reading, he developed a theoretical solution linking soil mechanics, physics and chemistry of the pavement material. He was then able to put his theory in to practice and it is still in use today. Tom gave me a copy of his thesis to ensure that it can be kept in safe keeping.

Tom also shared a passion with me – philately. He has a large collection of Australian stamps including all of the King George V issues between 1914 and 1936 – except one.

I have let my own stamp collection lapse but I recall as Project Manager of the West Gate Freeway project, I would absent myself from the office to go to the Post Office and buy a sheet of stamps for every new issue.

David

VALE

Kay Webber

We are very saddened to inform you of the recent death of Kay Webber – the wife of committee member and ex-Secretary, Jim Webber. Kay attended many of our functions and was loved and respected by all those who knew her.

Kay was an infant teacher at Fintona Girl's School and was a champion tennis player in her youth – as well as an ardent follower of St Kilda Football Club. We extend our sincere condolences to Jim and his family.

David Rowland



We were advised of David's passing by Brian Head, who had worked with him at Nunawading and had kept in touch with him in his retirement.

Brian said that David had been ill with heart problems for some years and had passed away on 21 December, just 2 days before his 85th birthday.

David was not a member of the Association but was well known in Dandenong Division at Nunawading where he managed its design section over a long period.

Like many engineers, David commenced work with the CRB in Plans and Surveys before moving to Dandenong Division in 1971.

OUR CHRISTMAS LUNCHEON. 10 DECEMBER 2024

Held in a private room at the Glen Waverley RSL the luncheon was a grand occasion with a record 110 people attending - up from 95 in the previous year and 70 in 2021. It was our fourth Christmas at Glen Waverley RSL, where the meals and service are consistently first class.

The President, David Jellie, said this level of attendance was a testament to the camaraderie of the people within VicRoads and its predecessors, and showed their respect for the wonderful organisations that we worked for.



David especially welcomed members and guests who had travelled from country regions to join in the celebrations. He named John Allen, Ric Anderson, John Baldock, Gary Edwards, Joan Gilmer, Geoff Lawrence, John Liddell, Peter McCulloch, Peter McCullough, Lance Midgley, Kevin Rhodes and Evelyn Ferris, Andrew and Nola Ricketson, Lloyd Rowe, Paul and Nola Tucker, and Lester and Gail Watt, and hoped he had not left anyone out.



Amongst the nonagenarians present (from L to R above) were Peter Hosking, Jim Winnett, Stan Hodgson, and John Clark.

David reminded the above group that they were chickens compared to Bill Brake (101+), Jack Waters (99+), Tom Glazebrook (98+) and Laurie Jones (97+). Also present was another nonagenarian, Margaret Anderson, the widow of our beloved Noel Anderson and the mother of Ric who was her chaperone for the day. It was wonderful to see her.



From L to R going anticlockwise. Joan Gilmer, Patsy Kennedy, Allison Pinto, Martin Habgood, Julie Cooper (obscured), Paul Cooper, Asha Jamini and Bob Body.



From front L to R going anticlockwise. John Ford, Jan Weinberg, Geoff Lawrence, Fred Davenport, John Liddell, Kevin Mintern-Lane, David Williamson, Tracee Piper, Richard Bortko and Bruce Thompson



Clockwise from the lower right. Graeme Newman, John Rebbechi, Brian Negus, Brian Fitts, Geoff Symons and David Veith



Nearest table. Anti-clockwise from the left. Linda Kent (obscured), Doug Thompson, Lyn Briggs, Bill Turner, Peter McCullough, Brian Head and Graeme Stone



Clockwise from the top left. Tricia Collins, Iris Whittaker, Simon Eggleston, Ian Thiele and Neil Tull



Clockwise from the bottom right: Ross Paul, Pam Paul, David Miles, Jill Miles, Gary Veith and Glenys Veith



Anti-clockwise from the front left. Robin Schubert (obscured), Alan Mackinley, Gary Edwards (obscured), Kevin Rhodes, Evelyn Ferris, John Wright and Rosslyn Wright

We were pleased to once again welcome Lance Midgley who travelled from Whittlesea and continues to inspire us with his positive attitude.



Jill Earnshaw and Jill Miles

David also welcomed four new members to the lunch – Brian Head, Allison Pinto, Tracee Piper and Sybil Yardin who quite appropriately won the lucky draw prize of a Christmas hamper. We are sure she will come along next year.

We were pleased to see Jill Earnshaw and Jill Miles, who wore identical dresses at the 2023 luncheon. This year they wore different dresses but still managed to look like sisters.

Special thanks were given to Ken Vickery and the RSL staff who provided us with an excellent lunch and to Jill Earnshaw for assembling the festive Christmas hamper and Iris Whittaker for ensuring everybody had a name tag.

Thanks also to David Jellie, who took most of these photos.

If you haven't found yourself yet, please visit our Website at <https://vicroadsassociation.org/2024-vra-eoy-lunch/> where Nick Swed has posted a great collection of pictures he took at the luncheon.

LEST WE FORGET

Continuing David Jellie's epic *Roads to War* series, honouring former colleagues who served their country.



Corporal Robert Arthur Stewart MacDowell, VX15747

Known as Arthur, he enlisted on 20 May 1940. He was married to Ada Lilian. Arthur was born in Kensington on 23 December 1899 so he was over 40 years old when he joined up.

He listed his occupation as Surveyor's Assistant at the State Rivers and Water Supply Commission. He joined the 2/8 Field Company (Engineers).

After his initial training at Puckapunyal, he embarked from Melbourne on HMT S1 on 15 September 1940 and disembarked in Palestine a month later.

On 30 March 1941 he left Egypt for Greece and in the following June he was 'reported missing believed to be a prisoner of war.' Although not mentioned in his archive, it is probable that Arthur was deployed in Crete where so many Australians were captured.

Arthur's enlistment photo. 1940 Australian forces were sent to Greece – especially Crete – to defend against German forces in May and June 1941. They were overrun and over a thousand of the Allied forces – including the Australians – surrendered to the Germans.

Arthur was, probably, one of these men. I say 'probably' because there is no mention in the archive of his precise location. He may have been somewhere else in Greece but it is definite that he was captured.

Over a year after him being reported missing, on 14 September 1942, it was reported that he was a Prisoner of War. According to his archive, he was interned in three camps - Oflag 111C – as P.O.W. No 222 and Stalags 13C and 383 as P.O.W. No 10478. However, these entries are misleading.

Oflag 111C was located in Hohenfels in Bavaria and used for Allied NCOs but it was later named Stalag 383. So, they were the same camp. Stalag XIII-C was also in Bavaria.

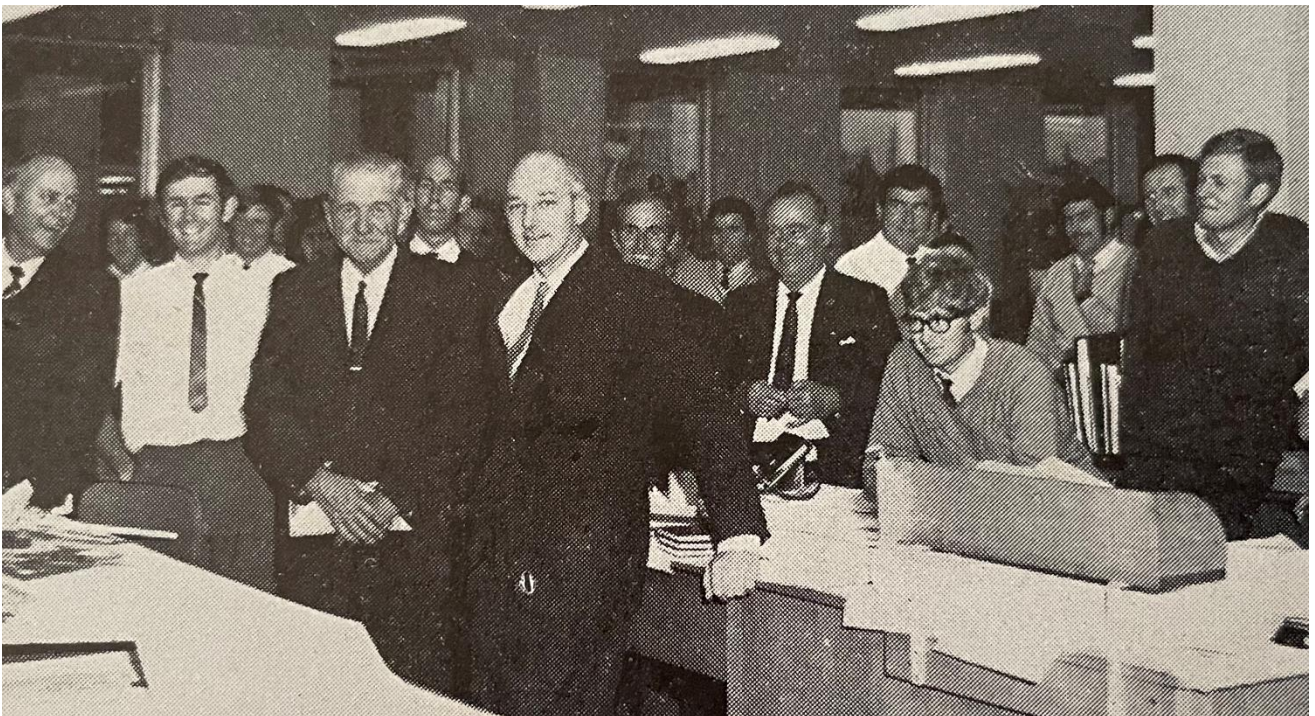
In May–June 1941 Yugoslavian, predominantly Serbian prisoners arrived from the Balkan campaign, and soon after in June–July 1941 Australian and other British Commonwealth soldiers arrived, captured during the Battle of Crete. I suspect that Arthur first arrived here and was later transferred to Stalag 383.

He was recovered after the war and arrived back in the UK on 11 May 1945 and back in Australia on 8 August 1945. He was discharged in November 1945.



Further portraits of Arthur MacDowell – dates unknown.

Arthur joined the CRB in March 1946 and was attached to Keith Yard's survey party where most of the work was done in rural Victoria, particularly in Benalla and Bairnsdale Divisions. He retired in May 1970 after 24 years of service with the Board. A report in the *Roadlines* magazine (Spring 1970) described his farewell from the Plans and Survey Section, referring to him as Mr. A. MacDowell – probably in deference to his age.



Arthur MacDowell (third from left) being farewelled by Neil Guerin at his farewell function. The man on the extreme left is Charlie Robertson who is also mentioned in *Roads to War* along with Mac Wilkinson, just to the right of Neil Guerin. Robin White is standing behind Arthur and Neil.

CONTINUING JOHN WRIGHT'S WORK ODESSEY ...

Our Newsletters between July 2018 and November 2019 included instalments of my story of leaving the CRB in October 1963, living in Brisbane and Port Moresby and returning to Melbourne in May 1967. Since then I have been approached by members asking when I was going to continue my story.

Very briefly recapping the end of the November 2019 instalment: It was May 1967; I was 26 years old and I had just returned to Melbourne with my family after working 2½ years in Port Moresby as a design draftsman. Officially I was on annual leave but we had secretly packed everything before we left and we weren't going back.

Back in Australia, Harold Holt was still Prime Minister and Henry Bolte had just been re-elected as Victoria's Premier despite hanging Ronald Ryan earlier that year. *Light My Fire* by the Doors was on the radio and Australian actor Tony Ward in the TV spy drama *Hunter* was keeping us safe from sneaky commie infiltrators.

I was on my way into the City for an interview with Conzinc Rio Tinto and had briefly called into Kew to catch up with friends when David Hewson asked me if I'd like a job there. A week later I was working in Plans and Surveys as a Grade 1 Draftsman. Sylvia managed to find a flat in Princes Street, Kew, meaning I could walk to work. Our elderly landlords, Mr and Mrs Batagol, told us they had been successful merchants in Russia before the Bolsheviks dispossessed them in 1917. They fled for their lives to China but in the late 1940's they were dispossessed again when Mao Tse Tung rose to power.

Plans and Surveys

Plans and Surveys, on the 3rd floor of the South wing, was populated by draftsmen, their supervisors, and senior surveyors. I was greeted by Noel Anderson who allocated me a desk in his section at the western end of the South wing. Near me were Norm Bettess, Steve Graham, Robin White, John Bruhn, Giulio Borroni, John Alcorn and David Miles. Mac Wilkinson, a senior draftsman and serious train enthusiast, and Frank Edwards, a senior design engineer, sat near the windows overlooking the City.

At the Xavier College end was the venerable senior draftsman Dick Coulter, along with Les Kovacs, Peter Metzner, Gordon Hiscock and many other people I can no longer remember. The entire South wing was buzzing with activity as plans were being prepared for the long-overdue duplication of the City's clogged outer urban highways.

My first task was to prepare plans for a deviation of the Warburton Highway at Launching Place that would eliminate two level crossings on the long-closed Warburton railway line – should it ever be re-opened again.



Launching Place. The proposed deviation would have been in the hills behind the Pub.

Passing through the hills behind the small township, the new route would create significant cuts and fills through some quite pretty bushland and fern gullies. The engineer in charge of this project was John Glenn from Dandenong Division on the fourth floor— my job location back in 1963.

I accompanied John Glenn and Frank Edwards on a walk along the pegged alignment. Trudging through thick bush we encountered a deep gully that was conveniently spanned by a large fallen eucalypt. John Glenn boldly led the way along its trunk, followed by Frank with me in the rear. The tree wasn't all that wide, and half-way across, Frank started to get the wobbles. It was quite a long way down, so I gently grabbed him and we managed to reach the other side. As it turned out, the deviation was never built, because the railway was unlikely to ever be opened again

Frank told me he'd worked as an engineer in Port Moresby during the War. Amazingly, he was familiar with where we had lived off Ela Beach because he had been involved in reconstructing nearby Lawes Road, which rose up very steeply from Ela Beach. His group had laid a considerable length of crushed rock pavement by the time they knocked off for the day. During the night, there was a heavy downpour and the next morning they arrived to find that much of the material had slid down the hill to create a small mountain on Ela Beach Road.

Dandenong Division

Several months later I was appointed as a Draftsman Class 2 in John Glenn's Design section. A member of the Christadelphian Church, which supports biblical prophecy, John was an interesting man and we sometimes discussed the Bible and his church's view that the Middle East was on the verge of Armageddon.

Some things had changed. The previous Divisional Engineer, Harry George, was now the Deputy Chief Engineer with Frank Docking from Traralgon taking his place. Bill Brake had become Deputy Chief Engineer Road Design, and Ron Angus, who had come from Bairnsdale Division, was Assistant Divisional Engineer. There was also a new Divisional Clerk, Vic Lawther, who had come from Benalla.

Other 'new' faces included Mac Macpherson, Alan Lade, John Gattorna, Barry Munce, David Shrimpton, Chris Reseigh, David Jellie, Bill Peyton, Don Peckham and Raleigh Robinson, to name a few.



Some big things had been happening while I had been away. I discovered that the Mornington Peninsula and in particular, Westernport Bay was to become a new industrial powerhouse on a scale to dwarf the Latrobe Valley.

At the heart of the Bolte Government's plan was a belief that a new generation of super container ships would be too large to pass through Port Phillip Heads into the Bay¹, and would bypass Melbourne for other States unless an alternative Victorian port was available.

Westernport was a natural deep-water harbour with easy shipping access and would replace Melbourne as Victoria's premier port.

¹ In the 1980's Brian Harper, CEO of the Westernport Development Corporation, told me that these new ships, called Panamax for their ability to pass through the Panama Canal, would become the standard for container ships.

In John's glassed-in office behind my desk was a huge, coloured plan marked *Secret and Confidential* showing a vast port development project in Westernport Bay, centred around Hastings. French Island was to be part of the port and would be joined to the mainland by a causeway to Tooradin, and amongst other things was to be the site of a nuclear power station. A new freeway and railway linking Westernport to Dandenong was to be constructed.

Much of the area around Hastings was to be rezoned heavy industrial to accommodate a massive expansion of the steel industry. Main roads connecting Hastings to the other side of the Peninsula were to be widened to handle flows of commuter traffic from Mornington and Mt Eliza, which were going to be massively expanded as dormitory towns. It was all very exciting.

The major stumbling block was (and maybe still is) the ability to efficiently move freight by rail from Westernport to Melbourne. For the freight volumes envisaged, simply building a new rail line from Westernport to Dandenong would not work, because of the long morning and afternoon freight curfews on the line from Dandenong to Melbourne. For similar reasons, using the Stony Point – Frankston – Melbourne line was also out of the question. Without an efficient rail freight connection, the Port would not work.

The cost of building a new, dedicated freight line from Hastings to Melbourne would be enormous and politically fraught – as would be the abandonment of the huge capital investment in Melbourne's existing container port and the continuing need to dredge the shipping channel from the Port Phillip Heads to Geelong for the export of grain.

Notwithstanding these issues, the Scheme remained at the heart of the State Government's future plans for the area and I was to be involved in implementing related road network improvements right up into the mid to late 1970s. This included planning and constructing part of the South Gippsland Freeway at Hampton Park (which was pointing directly towards Hastings instead of towards Cranbourne). On the planning side, I was involved in securing land in planning schemes for the future route of this freeway all the way to Hastings, and also defining and reserving land needed to widen the major roads between Hastings and the towns along the eastern side of Port Phillip Bay from 20 metres to 60 metres.

At the time, I heard a rumour that friends and families of certain Bolte government ministers owned huge landholdings around Hastings and made a fortune with the sudden increase in land value. Not surprisingly, some insiders believed it was all a gigantic land sale scam.

Wally Alschinger

When I arrived in the Division, the resident draftsman was Walter Alschinger, an Austrian man in his sixties with a thick accent. Wally, as I came to know him, was a fascinating man. After qualifying in Austria as a welding engineer, he worked in Turkey in the late 1920s, when Kemal Atatürk was rebuilding a new, secular country from the post-WW1 ruins of the Ottoman Empire. There was a lot of resistance to Atatürk's rule in the rural areas, where the old ways held sway.

Walter told me about a pair of German honeymooners who vanished during a motoring holiday in the country. Perhaps their western manners had offended age-old Muslim sensibilities somewhere along the way. Atatürk's police tracked the couple's progress and quickly finding the village where they had vanished, established they had been murdered. The young men of the village were promptly lined up and shot. The word went right around Turkey and no more visiting foreigners were murdered. Wally also worked in India and still had vivid memories of dead people (usually from starvation) lying beside the main roads where they had fallen in their last steps.

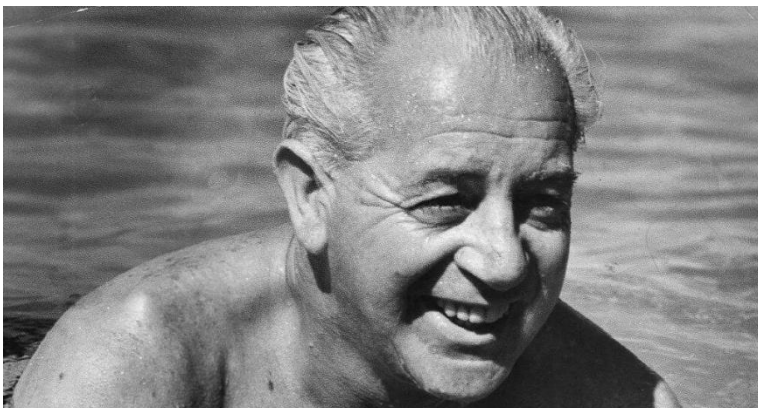
During WW2, Wally worked in Germany as a welder, fabricating Panzer tanks for the Wehrmacht. He told me what it was like to be in the streets when Hitler and his entourage roared past in their motorcades. People were terrified not to salute and cheer. In the darkness of the theatres, when propaganda newsreels were played, it was a different matter.

We became good friends and worked together surveying and setting out works on the Hume Highway at Kal Kallo, Kilcunda in South Gippsland and Tremont in the Dandenongs. Wally lived in a flat somewhere close to Kew with his lovely wife Elfie, who worked in the City.

Wally and Elfie were desperate to buy a house while they were still able to work. When Dandenong Division moved to Nunawading in 1969, Wally took out a personal loan with a local finance company and used this money to place a deposit on a new home at Melton – way out on the Western side of Melbourne. Every day, he would drive all the way out to Nunawading, firstly dropping his wife off at her work in the city – about 2 hours each way. He was a big man and because every cent they earned was going into the house, all he could afford to eat for lunch was a small tin of sardines.

Wally left Nunawading to work in the Plans and Survey Annexe in Hawthorn West, to reduce daily travel in his old VW. After retiring from the CRB, Wally and Elfie briefly ran a milk bar in Darling. We later heard that they had returned to Austria in the early 1980's.

Harold Holt's death



December 1967 was marked by the disappearance of Prime Minister Harold Holt when he was swimming at Cheviot Beach near Point Nepean. There were fanciful stories he'd been kidnapped off the beach by the crew of a Chinese submarine.

Harold Holt was only the second Prime Minister I could remember from the time I was old enough to vote, having taken over from Sir Robert Menzies, who resigned in 1966.

Holt's name would forever be associated with his fawning behaviour towards US President Lyndon Johnson during his Australian visit when he uttered the infamous, grovelling phrase "All the way with LBJ".

The Craigieburn report

This was my very first report to the CRB, and I still have a copy of it. In October 1968, John Glenn asked me to investigate possible improvements to the Hume Highway railway overpass at Craigieburn following a recent succession of high speed fatal car accidents.

Given that I was a draftsman and such reports were usually prepared by engineers, it was an exciting challenge. With help from John Glenn I ordered a complete site survey; skid resistance tests; ball bank tests (to measure sideways acceleration) and finally, photographs to capture the drivers' viewpoint.

Frank Butorac's survey and the ball-bank tests revealed that the banking on the curves did not support the road's horizontal design speed. Worse, the skid resistance tests showed that the road surface had become highly polished due to the softer, newer basalt used. Then, Tom Scott's photos revealed a curious optical illusion that only came into play at night. It was created by the road geometry, which brought the two widely separated carriageways quite close together at the railway overpass.

At night, the lights of a northbound vehicle suddenly appearing over the crest of the overpass could feasibly spook an approaching southbound driver into believing a head-on collision was imminent. All these factors, coupled with cold, frosty conditions that accompanied several of the accidents, could feasibly have acted together to cause them.

Ron Angus supported my conclusions and provided valuable assistance in framing the recommendations of the report. As a result, paving and sealing works were carried out to correct the poor crossfall and improve the skid resistance, and guardrails were erected to prevent median crossings and better delineate the curves to counter the optical illusion.

To be continued ...

WHAT'S HAPPENING WITH VICTORIA'S ROAD SYSTEM MANAGEMENT

Responsibility for roads and transport

Members may be interested to know of recent changes in Government portfolios relating to transport issues in Victoria.

As widely reported in the press, Jaclyn Symes MP is our new State Treasurer.

The Public and Active Transport Minister Gabrielle Williams MP has been promoted to lead a merged transport portfolio, picking up Transport Infrastructure from Danny Pearson MP.

In related portfolios, Planning remains with Sonya Kilkenny MP and Roads and Road Safety stays with Melissa Horne MP.

The Housing Minister Harriet Shing MP picks up the Suburban Rail Loop while Ben Carroll MP adds responsibility for the Transport Accident Commission.

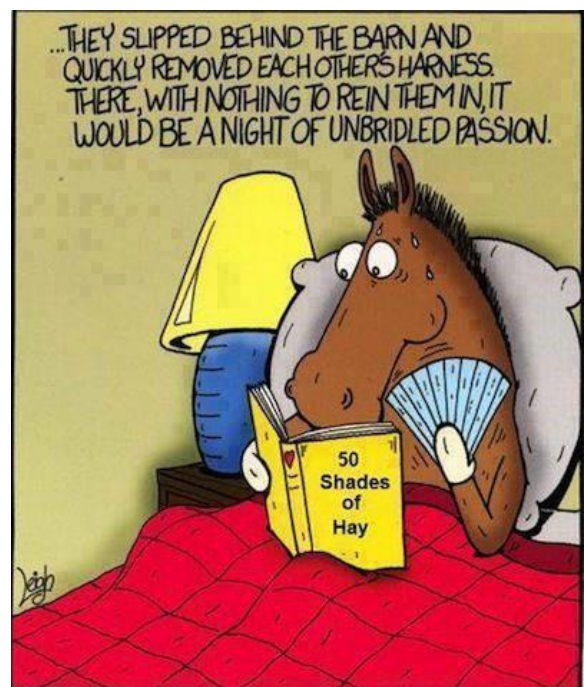
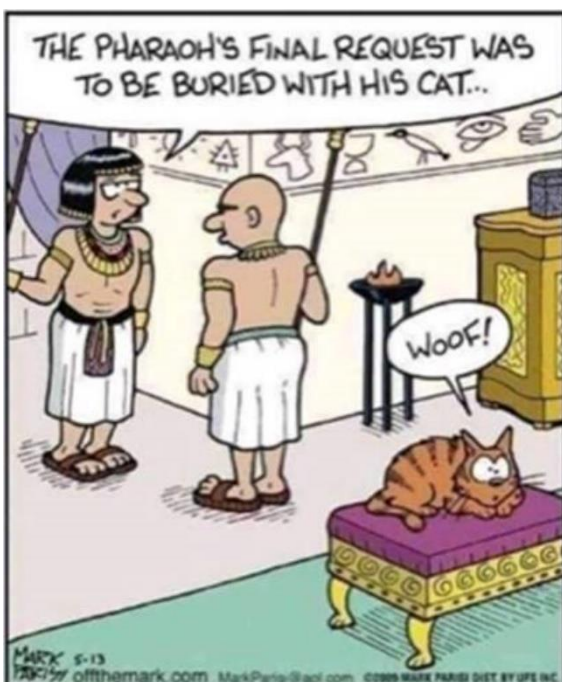
The Parliamentary Secretary for transport is Josh Bull MP.

BLYTHEWOOD GRANGE PHOTO

In our last newsletter we published a photo of attendees at a Blythewood Grange Advanced Management Course. I would like to thank David Nash for dating the photo as May 1991 and Lance Midgley who responded with some of the names of those who were present.

Nick Szwed advises that Lloyd Rowe has sent him a photo of that group, which has the names of some of the other attendees on the back. You can view the picture and the list of names at <https://vicroadsassociation.org/vicroads/>

SUNDRY AMUSEMENTS



The Donation

Father O'Malley answered the phone.

'Hello, is this Father O'Malley?'

'It is!'

'This is the IRS. Can you help us?'

'I can!'

'Do you know a Ted Houlihan?'

'I do!'

'Is he a member of your congregation?'

'He is!'

'Did he donate £10,000 to the church?'

'He will.'



Why science teachers should not be given playground duty

Two policemen (Constable Ken and Bob) call the station on the radio.

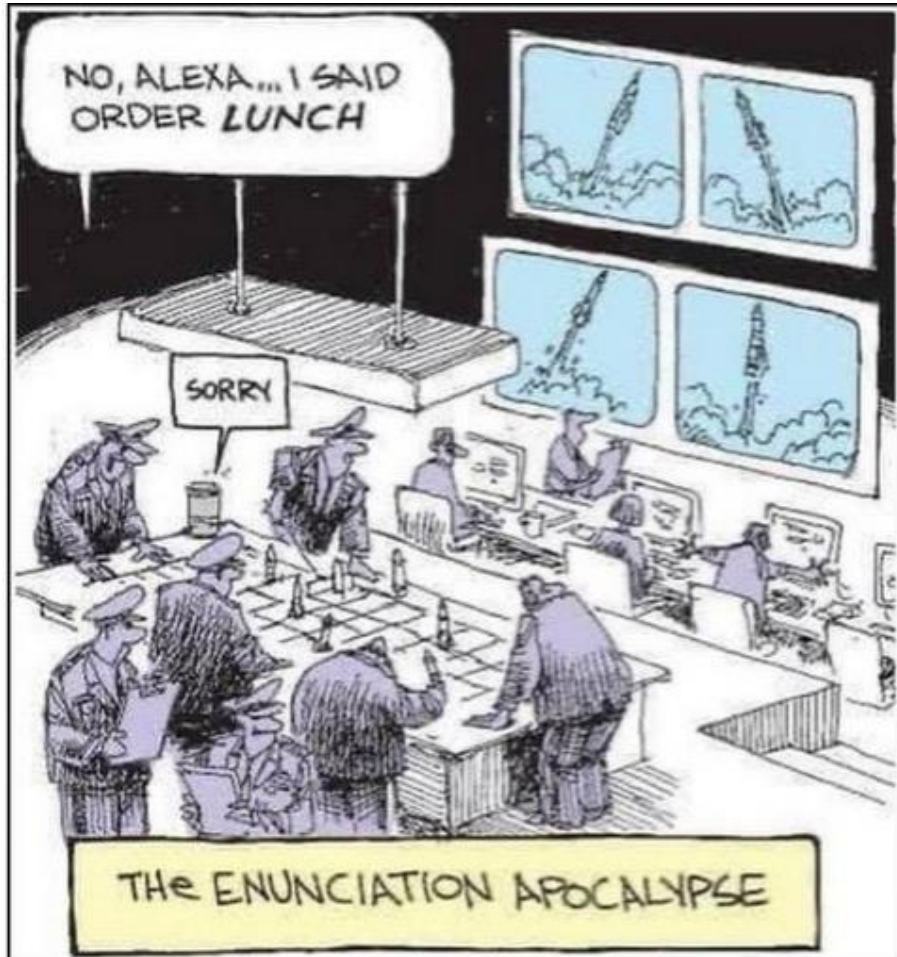
"Hello. Is that the Sarge?"

"Yes?"

"We have a case here. A woman has shot her husband for stepping on the floor she had just mopped clean."

"Have you arrested the woman?"

"No sir. The floor is still wet."



1. Dad, are we pyromaniacs? Yes, we arson.
2. What do you call a pig with laryngitis ? Disgruntled.
3. Writing my name in cursive is my signature move.
4. Why do bees stay in their hives during winter ? Swarm.
5. If you're bad at haggling, you'll end up paying the price.
6. Just so everyone is clear, I'm going to put my glasses on.
7. A commander walks into a bar and orders everyone around.
8. I lost my job as a stage designer. I left without making a scene.
9. Never buy flowers from a monk. Only you can prevent florist friars.
10. How much did the pirate pay to get his ears pierced? A buccaneer.
11. I once worked at a cheap pizza shop to get by. I kneaded the dough.
12. My friends and I have named our band 'Duvet'. It's a cover band.
13. I lost my girlfriend's audio book, and now I'll never hear the end of it.
14. Why is 'dark' spelled with a k and not c? Because you can't see in the dark.
15. Why is it unwise to share your secrets with a clock? Well, time will tell.
16. When I told my contractors I didn't want carpeted steps, they gave me a blank stare.
18. Prison is just one word to you, but for some people, it's a whole sentence.
19. Scientists got together to study the effects of alcohol on a person's walk ...the result was staggering.
20. I'm trying to organize a hide-and-seek tournament, but good players are really hard to find.
21. I got over my addiction to chocolate, marshmallows, and nuts. I won't lie, it was a rocky road.
22. What do you say to comfort a friend who's struggling with grammar? There, their, they're.
23. I went to the toy store and asked the assistant where the Schwarzenegger dolls are and he replied, "Aisle B, back."