

President: David Jellie – Mob: 0418 105 276 pdjellie@hotmail.com
Secretary: Jill Earnshaw – Mob: 0438 777 352 jillmearnshaw@gmail.com
Editor: John Wright – Mob: 0408 593 570 ananasw@gmail.com

Membership of the Association is available to all who have been members of VicRoads or predecessor 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>

Dear members

Welcome to our second Newsletter for 2025.

Our first major activity, on 19 February 2025 was a presentation to our members by three senior managers of the Department of Transport and Planning (DTP). The presentations, led by William Tieppo, Deputy Secretary, Network Design and Integration, described how VicRoads' previous role had been integrated into the much wider scope of the Department's planning and management activities. Jill Earnshaw's report in the March Newsletter will cover the issues discussed by the three speakers.

Our next outing will be a 3-day trip to Orbost, Cooma, and Canberra as discussed in the following preview prepared by David Jellie. It will feature an unmissable presentation about the construction of the massive Snowy 2 pumped storage scheme and will conclude with a farewell dinner at the Ainslie Football Club in the ACT.

On 25 March we will be holding an important Annual General Meeting at Waverley. It will honour the outstanding service of three of our Committee members, elect new Committee members, seek Member endorsement of our new Rules of Association and present our Program of Events for 2025. We look forward to your participation, and to catching up at the following luncheon.

WHAT'S COMING UP

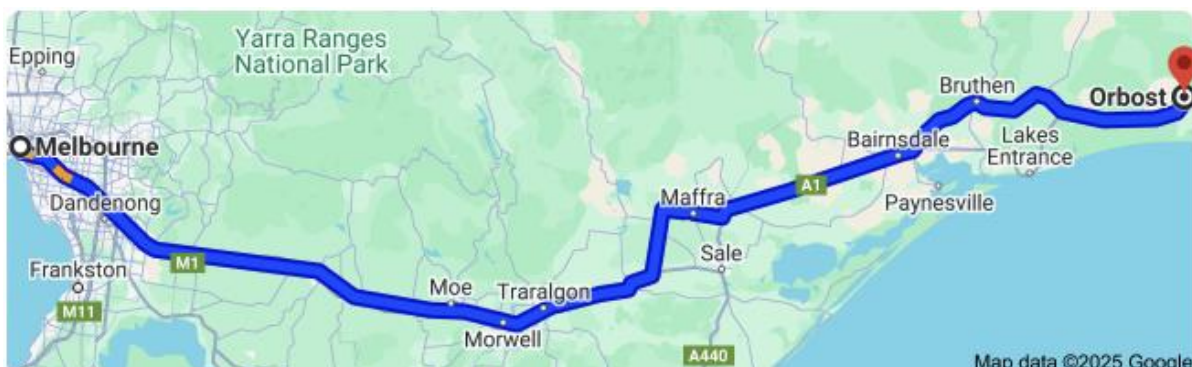
Road Trip to Snowy Hydro 2 – Tuesday 4 March to Thursday 6 March.

[Itinerary prepared by David Jellie]

Please note that we have extended this trip by a day – on the basis that it would be easier to return to Melbourne via Canberra rather than backtrack via the Princes Highway.

Our proposed itinerary is as follows:

On the first day, Tuesday 4 March, we will meet at the Orbost library at 3.30 pm.



Orbost is quite a drive. It is 375 km and 4.5 to 5 hours of driving so you will need to leave Melbourne by 9 am or earlier – allowing for lunch and driving breaks.

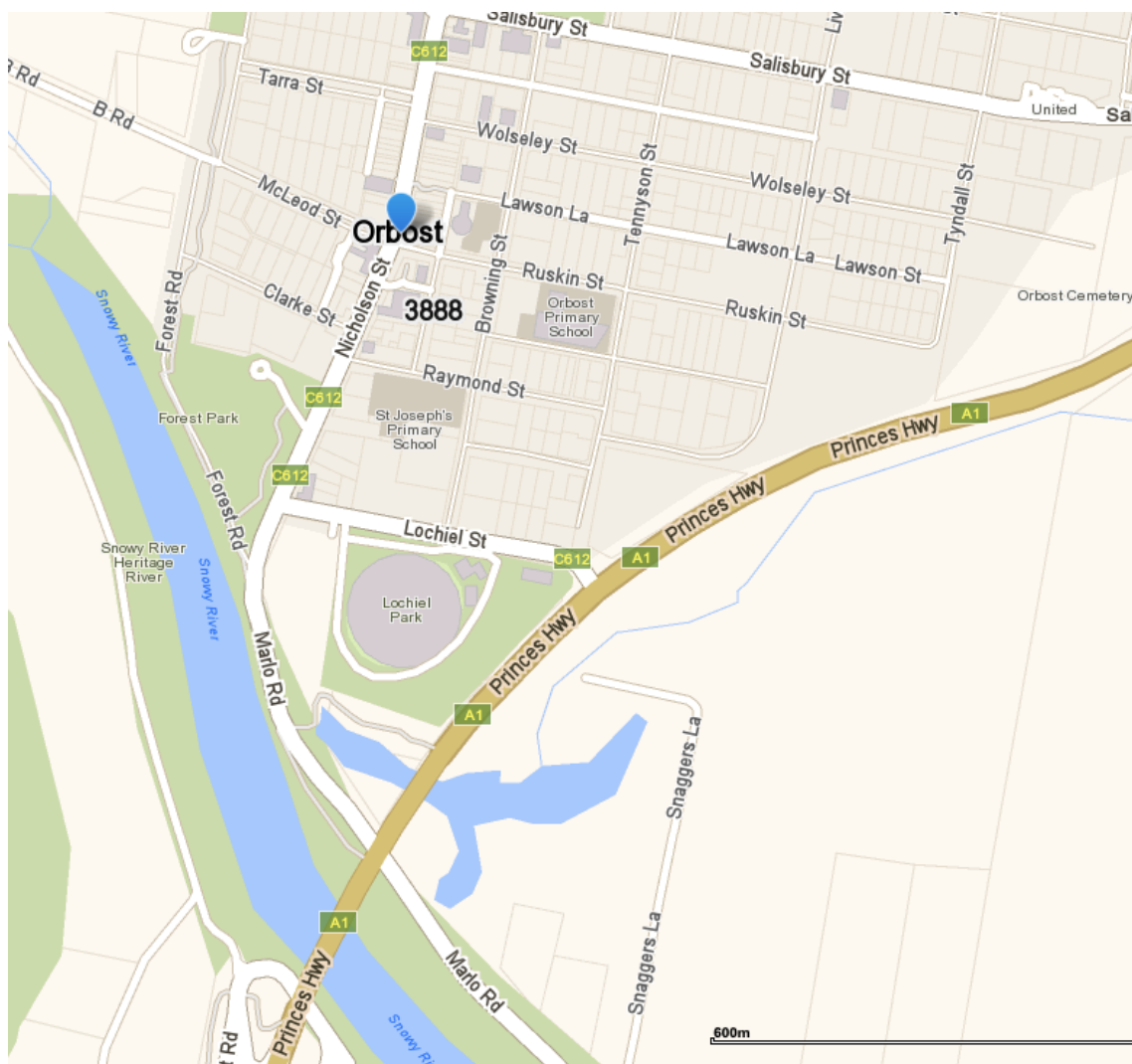
The preceding map shows the recommended route along the Princes Highway East. It will take us through Maffra rather than Sale, mainly to avoid Sale's larger built up area and the current roadworks on the highway. It also passes through Bruthen rather than Lakes Entrance for much the same reasons. The turn-off to Bruthen is at the roundabout on the eastern side of Bairnsdale.

The Orbost library is at 1 Ruskin Street – refer to the map below. After crossing the Snowy River, turn left for the town centre into Lochiel Street and then right into Nicholson Street. Ruskin Street is a few blocks up, on the right, where the blue marker is on the map.

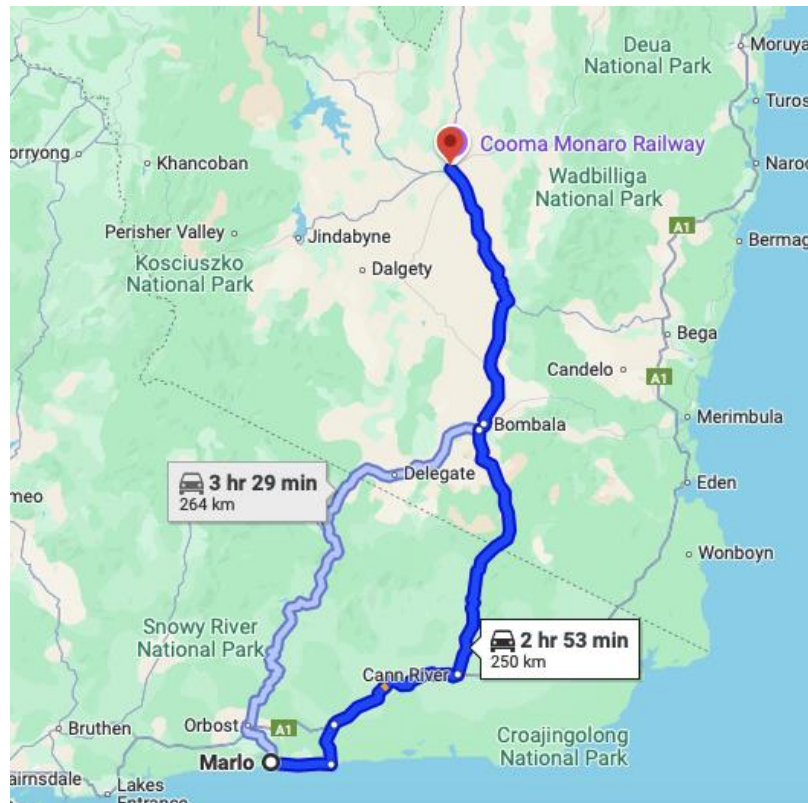
At the library, David Jellie will give a PowerPoint presentation on the construction of the bridges across the Snowy River flood plain. You will have crossed them in getting to Orbost. The Orbost Historical Society is inviting local residents to come along to the presentation.

We are meeting at 3.30 pm because the library closes at 5.00 pm, so we have to be cleaned up and cleared out before then.

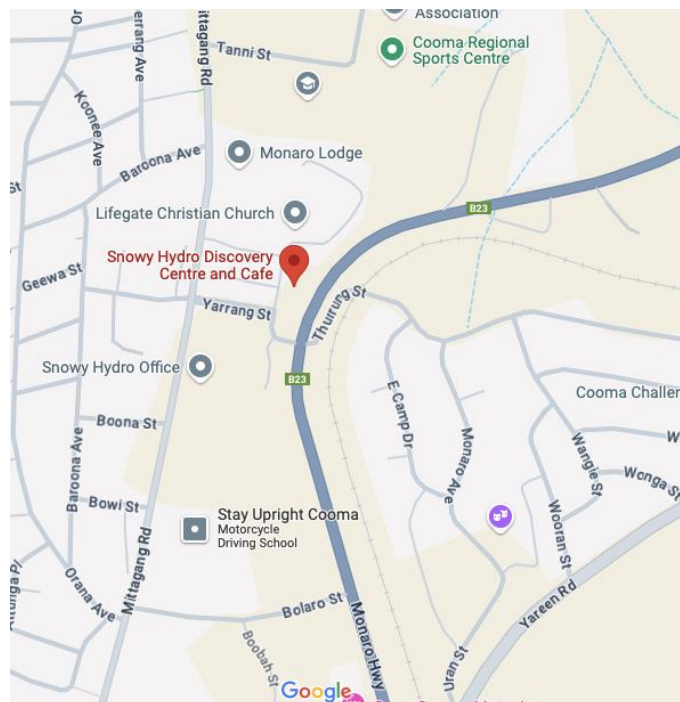
In the evening, we propose to have dinner at the Marlo Hotel. Marlo is a 15 km drive along the Snowy River to the beach where the Snowy River breaks out into Bass Strait. The Marlo Hotel has plenty of accommodation and it may be convenient if we were all to book in there. Booking can be made via the internet or you can call the hotel direct on 5154 8201. At the moment, bookings are fairly light for 4 March. There are also cabins available in the Camping park opposite the hotel. There are also a couple of motels in Orbost if you prefer to stay there.



The following day (Wednesday 5 March) we will drive to Cooma, where we will have a presentation in the afternoon.



This is about a three-hour drive – along the Princes Highway to Cann River and then up the Cann Valley Highway to Bombala and then Cooma.



The presentation about the construction of the massive Snowy 2 pumped storage scheme is scheduled for 2.00 pm at the Snowy Hydro Discovery Centre - shown on the map above.

The Snowy Hydro Discovery Centre is located on the left-hand side of the Monaro Highway which is the road we will be travelling on from Bombala.

On Thursday 6 March, we will travel north to Canberra. It is a journey of about an hour. People are free to do their own thing in Canberra but I will be certainly visiting the National War Memorial and the National Gallery. In the evening, we propose to dine at the Ainslie Football Club – in Ainslie – and Essendon supporters can pay homage to James Hird who started his football career here.

This will end our trip and people are free to return back to Melbourne on Friday 7 March or linger in Canberra or go elsewhere.

If you wish to join us on this venture, please register with Jim Webber on 0412 064 527 or jameswebber1717@gmail.com

2025 Annual General Meeting and luncheon. Waverly RSL

Our 2025 Annual General Meeting (AGM) will take place on Tuesday 25 March at Waverley RSL. All members are invited to attend. Please note that the meeting will commence upstairs at **11.30 am** - not 12 noon as reported in our previous newsletter. The meeting will be followed by lunch in the RSL's dining room.

As many of you will be aware, this will be the last AGM chaired by our current President, David Jellie and the last annual report he will present. Why not come along and toast his exceptional service to the Association, and his leadership over many years.

Members are welcome to email the Secretary (jillmearnshaw@gmail.com) and submit items of business for consideration.

The AGM will discuss the following important matters:

2025 Committee

Any member interested in joining the Association's Committee for 2025 or in the future should contact the Secretary, Jill Earnshaw (jillmearnshaw@gmail.com) who will email you a nomination form which would need to be completed and returned to Jill before 14 March.

Should the number of nominations exceed the number of Committee positions available an election may be required.

Recognition of exceptional service to the Association

The exceptional service given to the Association by David Jellie (current President), Jim Webber (former Secretary) and Ken Vickery (current Treasurer) will be recognized at the meeting.

David, Jim and Ken have all declared their intention to remain on the Committee for 2025. We are very grateful for their generous, ongoing commitment and interest in the Association and its members.

Updating our current rules of incorporation

A motion will be put to the Meeting to update our current, outdated 2009 rules of incorporation.

This change is fully explained in a separate article in this newsletter as well as in an email all members will receive from the President.

Other matters

As required, the annual audited accounts will be presented, the Honorary Auditor will be appointed for 2025, and a motion will be put to members to fix the joining fee and membership subscription (currently and recommended to continue to remain at \$50 once only) for the upcoming year.

The 2025 Program of Events will be presented at the meeting, so get those pens and diaries out.

OUR RULES ARE CHANGING

Our current rules of association were last redrafted 16 years ago and will be non-compliant with new government legislation for incorporated bodies. Unless we amend them, our Association will be unable to continue operating as a legally incorporated body.

The need to update our rules has been anticipated by the Committee for some time, with a motion being passed at our 2023 Annual General Meeting (AGM) to review them. A sub-committee led by Graham Gilpin determined that the Victorian Department of Consumer Affairs was developing a set of Model Rules for all incorporated associations. Our Committee sought and obtained legal advice supporting its view that, given its activities, the Association needed to remain incorporated. Subsequently, a motion will be put to members at the 2025 AGM to upgrade our rules to comply with the now-finalised Victorian Model Rules.

The upgraded rules will ensure our governing document complies with current legislation, provides a standardized framework for operations, simplifies management by addressing key areas like conflict of interest and dispute resolution, and save time by utilizing a pre-written set of rules that already meet Victoria legal requirements, particularly the 23 mandatory matters outlined in the *Associations Incorporation Reform Act 2012*.

Key benefits of using the Victorian model rules:

Legal compliance:

The model rules are designed to comply with all relevant Victorian legislation, ensuring the Association operates within legal boundaries. This will provide legal cover for the Association and its members.

Modernized practices:

The model rules are regularly updated to reflect current best practices, including flexible technology usage for online meetings and membership management.

Improved governance:

The model rules outline clear guidelines for committee member responsibilities, conflict of interest management, and financial reporting.

Reduced administrative burden:

By utilizing the pre-written model rules, the Association can save time, effort and money needed to draft and maintain our own constitution.

Clear dispute resolution processes:

The model rules include detailed procedures for handling any potential member grievances and disciplinary appeals, promoting fair and transparent dispute resolution.

Our current rules are located on our website at <https://vicroadsassociation.org/join/>
Information on the new model rules can be found at:
<https://www.consumer.vic.gov.au/clubs-and-fundraising>

While the model rules provide a solid foundation, our Association is still able to customize certain aspects to align with our specific needs and activities. At the upcoming Annual General Meeting on Tuesday 25 March a motion will be put to members that the VicRoads Association adopt the Consumer Affairs Victoria Model Rules for an Incorporated Association dated 2023 including the wording for proposed rules 1, 2 and 3 as follows:

Rule 1 – Name

The name of the incorporated association is VicRoads Association Incorporated.

Rule 2 – Purposes

The purposes of the association are to provide an organization for former employees of the Roads Corporation and its predecessor organisations to:

- [i] Maintain and foster friendship among members
- [ii] Keep members informed of developments in the road sector
- [iii] Do any such things as, in the opinion of the committee, will assist in the welfare and benefit of members.

Rule 3 – Financial Year

The financial year of the Association is each period of 12 months ending on 31st December.

The proposed revision of the rules will make, and have, very little effect on the general membership.

Next steps:

The motion outlined will be put to members at the AGM, where it must be passed by not less than three quarters of the members present. The AGM will need to satisfy our current quorum of 15 financial members, so it is important that as many members as possible attend the meeting.

Following the AGM, all members will be informed of the outcome of the motion via an article in the next Newsletter.

Should the motion be passed by members, the Association would then notify Consumer Affairs Victoria of the result and pay the associated fee.

Work is well under way on drafting procedures to ensure compliance with the new rules.

VALE BIRUTE DON

We were saddened to hear of the sudden death of our member Birute Don, who died on Thursday 20 February. Apparently she was on a walk with friends and collapsed at the end of it, subsequently dying in hospital.

Our deepest sympathies go to Peter Don and the family.

Our 2025 event calendar

Date	Event	Contact Person
Tuesday 4 March to Thursday 7 March	Road trip to Cooma to visit Snowy Hydro 2 Project (See David's itinerary on Page 1)	Jim Webber
Tuesday 25 March	11.30 am Annual General Meeting at Waverley RSL followed by lunch at 12.30 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's at its Operations and Management Centre, 1010 Latrobe Street, followed by a light lunch onsite.	David Jellie
Monday 2 June	12 noon for 12.30 pm Occasional Lunch, Doncaster Shoppingtown Hotel	Just turn up
Wednesday 11 June	Presentation by Sebastian Motta - Director, Delivery NorthEast Link Program at Koonung Project Office followed by lunch at the Manningham Hotel	Jill Earnshaw
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 La Spaghettata restaurant in Lygon Street	Jill Earnshaw
Monday 4 August	12 noon for 12.30 pm Occasional Lunch, Doncaster Shoppingtown Hotel	Just turn up
Monday 25 August	Guided tour of the Hellenic Museum at 280 William Street in the city followed by lunch at the Mint Hotel	Patsy Kennedy
Monday 6 October	12 noon for 12.30 pm Occasional Lunch, Doncaster Shoppingtown Hotel	Just turn up
Thursday 9 October - Friday 10 October	Regional Visit to Ballarat with a roads presentation on Thursday afternoon followed by dinner at the Ballarat Leagues Club. Friday presentation and tour of Alstom Train factory in Ballarat followed by dinner at the Ballarat Golf Club.	Jill Earnshaw
Monday 3 November	12 noon for 12.30 pm Occasional Lunch, Doncaster Shoppingtown Hotel	Just turn up
Thursday 11 December	Arrive 11.45 am for 12.30 pm Christmas lunch at Waverley RSL	Ken Vickery

Please note that the dates and times for events in the calendar are necessarily subject to change. Members interested in attending events should check Newsletters closer to the advertised date, and our emails providing event details.

MEMBER COMMENTS AND NEWS

From Eddie Schubert

Hi John,

Congratulations on your new role. I look forward in reading more tales from your past too. It was fascinating to read about your post New Guinea moves. I used to know people like Mr and Mrs Batagol.

This was in the 1970s. For example, one of our neighbours knew Tito personally. I worked with people in survey (CRB) who got their engineering qualifications from Belgrade university - Igor Manujlenko (hopefully correct spelling).

I hope to see you at the DTP presentation. Yes, still working full time. I hope to reduce my working hours this year.

Keep up the good editing!

Eddie

From Bill Saggars

[Bill recently captured this amazing incident on his car's dashcam]

I was travelling inbound on the Eastern Fwy at the posted 80 km/hr speed limit when this happened a couple of weeks back.

As you will see, fortunately, the dog finally sprang away from our car for I feared that the following traffic may not have seen what had occurred ahead of me and if I took some evasive action or braking to avoid the dog, I could have had a vehicle in the boot. The dog was last seen scampering along the emergency stopping lane to rejoin its owner in the red car.

Regards, Bill Saggars

[The attached screenshots from Bill's dashcam video tell the story]



The dog is about to bail out of the red car



It hits the road. Its owner is already braking



The dog picks itself up. Its owner is already pulling over



The dog trots off to safely rejoin its anxious owner

From Raoul Casagrande

In the article *Vale Armando Guifre* (Newsletter-256V2) the spelling of Armando's surname was incorrect. The correct spelling is *Giufre*.

Laurie Jones (continued)

[Our last Newsletter featured a letter from Laurie. He has since sent David Jellie this interesting 'potted history' of his most distinguished career.]

Hello David,

You suggested I write you a potted history of my career – and I presume by that you were referring to my career with the CRB/RCA. However, because I 'retired' 37 years ago at age 60, I might also mention a bit from more recent times.

After four years at Melbourne High, I did four years at Melbourne University (1945 - 48) and worked for the Irrigation and Water Supply Commission Qld for nearly two years. Then in December 1950, I joined the CRB in Warrnambool Division. Bill Pascoe was the Divisional Engineer (DE) and Howard Hobbs the Assistant Divisional Engineer (ADE). In my first few days Howard showed me the current road projects, introduced me to the overseers, and then left me to it.

From December 1950 to April 1956 I was in charge of virtually all of the Division's roadworks, including the reconstruction of a lot of the Princes Highway west of Port Fairy, the Henty Highway north of Cavendish, and much of the Glenelg Highway west of Hamilton, as well as quite a lot of new Soldier Settlement access roads.

My greatest satisfaction came from constructing and sealing the previously unsealed, scenic part of the Great Ocean Road between Peterborough and Princetown.

Another interesting project I got involved in at that time was constructing 1.5 miles of railway line formation and an adjoining access road for the Portland Harbour Trust. The new line ran from Portland station through deep swamps to the new Portland breakwater, which was built to establish Portland as a new port for overseas shipping.

In April 1956 I transferred to Ballarat Division as ADE and was involved in a number of highway re-alignment projects. The most important of these was re-aligning the Western Highway at Pykes Creek Reservoir in the late 1960's. Geelong Division were duplicating the Highway west of Bacchus Marsh, and together we realigned the Western Highway to by-pass the township of Myrning.

By-passing Myrning was simple enough, but it prompted our chaps to suggest a cross-country deviation to eliminate the winding 30 mph alignment along the east bank of the reservoir. That idea was attractive in itself but was complicated because the highway then ran along the top of the reservoir embankment, with two 20 mph reverse curves onto a relatively narrow bridge above the reservoir spillway.

That situation prompted me to discuss with the Chief Engineer of the State Rivers and Water Supply Commission (SRWSC) the possibility of widening their reservoir embankment on its downstream side above their outlet control tunnel to provide a much safer alignment. Fortunately the SRWSC was able to see the good sense of this. In time, Myrning was bypassed and a second bridge was built, and we have today's much safer crossing of Pykes Creek, where there had really been no other feasible alternative in the 1960s.

Part way through my term as ADE Ballarat, I was sent to England as an *Independent Research Fellowship* (IRF) student at Durham University at Newcastle on Tyne. Without doubt this course enlarged my vision and helped my career. The IRF and a parallel course at Birmingham, run at the same time, were I think, the first such courses run in England, and in a way were perhaps a bit longer than similar courses in the U.S.A because they added several

weeks in London on the topic of bitumen, and also arranged a few short project visits on the continent for those who could arrange it.

Taking extended leave, I had six weeks on the continent with my family, followed by four weeks in the U.S.A. With help from Dad's uncle I crossed America by road, visited the AASHO (American Association of State Highway Officials)¹ Road Test project, and spent time with Californian Highways Department engineers.

Leaving Ballarat Division in 1963 I became Road Construction & Maintenance Engineer for seven years, which taught me about the use of local materials and the need for wider training of field engineers working in restricted local areas. I was also involved with the National Association of Australian State Road Authorities' (NAASRA) in developing its *General Conditions of Contract* and its later adoption by the CRB.

When I joined Metropolitan Division as its DE, it had the smallest number of engineering staff of any Division. Within five years it was much enlarged and was actively involved in major projects across metropolitan Melbourne. One early project was the widening of the Nepean Highway reserve from 20 metres to 60 metres, which I think cost us about \$28 million. Also, there was the construction of the approaches to the West Gate Bridge – and later, its extension through to St Kilda.

Then I became Chief Works Engineer – and one of my first jobs was to open the Eastern Freeway with the help of 400 police. Other jobs included the Tullamarine Freeway and the Western Ring Road. In country Victoria I more or less completed the Hume Freeway duplication before I retired (the Wodonga By-pass was the only bit left to finish - the land was acquired and work was under way).

For my part, there was little let-up initially because my father died eight weeks after I retired. He'd been a real estate agent, and although he'd sold his business 10 years before, he was still caring for flats and a couple of houses he owned, and others owned by my sister in England, and other relatives. So instead of holiday touring I suddenly found myself with 70 flats and houses to look after. Over time, we reduced that number substantially but I built a few flats up here [in Queensland] myself, and nowadays my son in Victoria, and my daughter up here still have a few flats to look after for me.

Now for myself – I'm 97 and lost my wife six years ago, so I batch alone and live quietly in a house next door to my daughter. I'm still moderately fit, but I've a BAD left knee and have trouble walking. Except for the effects of infrequent cyclones, our climate on the Atherton Tableland, where I live, is usually quite pleasant (and very different from Cairns, which is terrible at this time of year) because it is about 750 metres above sea level.

Regards and best wishes,

Laurie Jones

[Editor's note: Laurie's story about Pykes Creek recalled memories of returning to Melbourne from a Ball at Ballarat with fellow draftsman Bruce Hamilton in 1962. It was late at night. Bruce was driving his FJ Holden, and we were halfway along the dam wall doing 60 mph, when I remembered the 15-mph curve at the far end and screamed out to Bruce to *Brake! Brake! Brake!* I recall that we stopped about 10 feet short of the timber fence, which might otherwise have delayed our descent into the abyss by about 3 microseconds.]

¹ AASHO was the American equivalent of Australia's National Road Transport Commission, which later became the National Transport Commission (NTC). Similarly, AASHO later became AASHTO when its name was changed to incorporate the word 'Transport' to include non-road transport systems.

WHAT'S BEEN HAPPENING

Occasional Luncheon

Following its meeting on 3 February, the Executive Committee joined other members for an enjoyable lunch at the Doncaster Shopping Town Hotel, hosted by Kelvin York. Close to 30 members were present.



Attendees at the Doncaster Shoppingtown luncheon, 3 February 2025

New members

The following new members have joined the Association since March 2024.

Robert	Steel OAM	Geoff	Chambers
George	Mavroyeni	Kerry	Willis
Allan	Bowman	Bruce	La'Brooy
Clive	Mottram	Liz	Pollock
Brian	Head	Allison	Pinto
Shelley	Marcus	David	Challman
Sybil	Yardin	Keven	Urbancic
Sri	Thangarajah	Tracee	Piper
Bruce	Wood	Chris	Boardman
John	Lewis	David	Harris
Jeanny	Griek	Peter	Newitt
Martin	Boyd	Klaus	Kiesel
Jacqui	Sampson	Brian	Fitts

A complete list of members will be provided in the Newsletter following the March AGM.

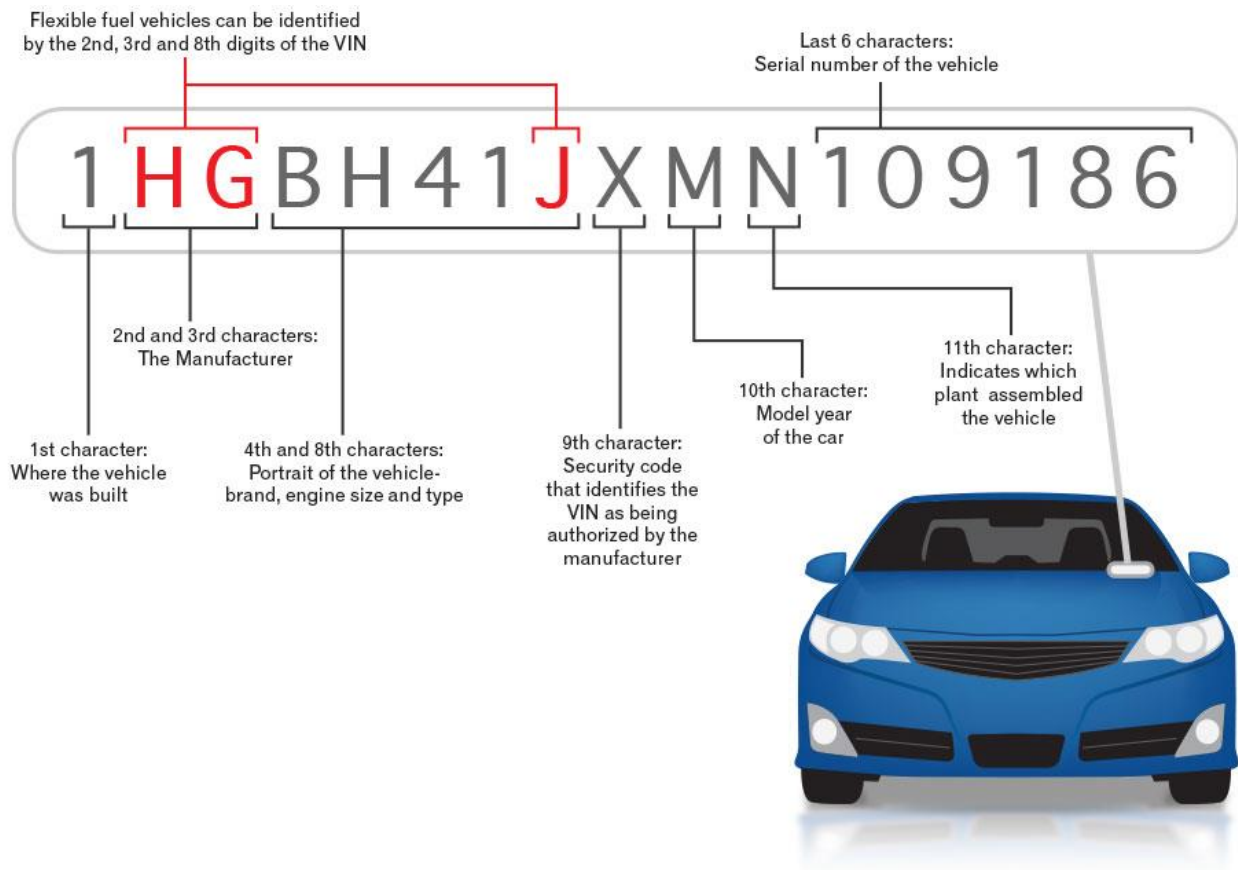
Born Again. The story of vehicle rebirthing

My journey into the dark world of car theft began late in 1989 when our ageing Holden HK was stolen from a car park in Olinda. It was a disturbing experience that made me appreciate the upset that thousands of other Australian car owners suffer each year.

The thieves were almost certainly joyriders, and our vehicle was soon found trashed and abandoned on a back street in Research. In 2000, working as a consultant to the newly created National Motor Vehicle Theft Reduction Council (NMVTRC), I was staggered to discover that in the previous 12 months, 145,000 vehicles had been stolen nationally and 25,000 of them had not been recovered.

While some of these unrecovered vehicles would have been dumped, the NMVTRC believed that around 15,000 would have been stolen by professional thieves and stripped for parts for sale on the black market. At least 5,000 vehicles stolen by professional thieves were thought to have been rebirthed.

A stolen car can be 'reborn' using the identity of another, identical legitimate vehicle. Since 1989, vehicle manufacturers have been required to assign each motor vehicle a 17-character Vehicle Identification Number (VIN), which is usually stamped on its compliance plate, and/or into the body of the vehicle itself.



In the simplest form of rebirthing, a thief would steal a car and buy (or already possess) an identical wreck from an insurance auction. The wreck's compliance plate bearing the VIN would be removed and transferred to the stolen car. In cars with the VIN stamped on the firewall, skilled mechanics would cut out a wreck's entire firewall and almost undetectably weld it into a stolen car.

Once the stolen car was reidentified, it would be re-registered and sold as the repaired matching wreck. Buyers of these cars, who often lost their entire investment following

subsequent police investigations, tended to be victims of their own greed/naivety for buying a car priced well below its true market value.

In the early 2000s a favourite method of re-registering rebirthed vehicles was one in which the thief, or a member of the thief's family, would attend a registration office claiming to be acting as an agent on behalf of the vehicle owner. In most cases the vehicle owner nominated by the agent would have no idea that a vehicle was being registered in their name because the bogus agent would then immediately transfer it into the name of the person buying the vehicle.

I was told about a case in Dandenong where a criminal had registered 20 vehicles in the name of a disabled woman over a period of time by acting as her 'agent'. He had obtained copies of her identity and pension documents and had even changed her address on the VicRoads registry to that of a vacant lot. She was so badly disabled she was unable to speak but later indicated to investigators she that she had no knowledge of the vehicles or the 'agent'.

For a while in NSW, thieves using stolen personal papers were able to assume the identity of a vehicle owner by attending a registration office and applying for a replacement licence – only now it would have their image on it instead of that of the real licence holder. However, once the RTA upgraded its office terminals to show driver images, the scheme rapidly fell out of favour. I heard of one case where a Caucasian applicant bolted after a service officer checked her terminal screen and realised that the real licence holder was an Asian.

In November 2000 the NSW Independent Commission Against Corruption (ICAC) estimated that about 70% of professional car thieves were of Middle Eastern origin and/or descent and were often assisted by the covert actions of family members, who worked in local registration offices. Police told me that these highly organised gangs had learnt their skills stealing high-end cars in Europe and rebirthing them for sale in Russia.

High-end wrecks were in such demand for rebirthing identities that criminals were observed at NSW insurance auctions showing concealed firearms to legitimate repairers to discourage them from bidding. Eventually, metal detectors were installed at these auctions in an effort to prevent this form of intimidation.

In conducting these auctions, car insurers had a huge conflict of interest because they were effectively profiting from the sale of vehicle identities to professional car thieves. Not all of their criminal clients were car thieves. Individuals who imported cars on the strict proviso they be broken down and used for parts, would also purchase wrecks at auctions to rebirth look-alike and potentially unsafe overseas vehicles for use on Australian roads.

Some owners of high-value cars had the undersides of their cars sprayed with thousands of tiny microdots bearing the vehicles' VIN. It was an expensive treatment, but it allowed police, using an endoscope, to search hard-to-reach crannies to identify otherwise immaculately rebirthed cars. One thief was brought undone when a single microdot was found on the spare wheel of a suspicious vehicle he was selling.

In 1991 South Australia set up its own register to record the actual nature and location of damage to written-off vehicles and made write-off notifications by insurers and others compulsory. New South Wales followed suit in 1996. Both jurisdictions banned obviously unrepairable wrecks from being re-registered, but allowed repaired, less damaged vehicles to be re-registered subject to a strict inspection based on the details recorded in the written-off register.

Some very clever thieves tried to get around the new registers by making the stolen vehicle become the written-off vehicle. They would steal an expensive, late model Mercedes or BMW and carefully strip it using padded tools and gently disconnect wiring instead of cutting it. The parts would be stored, and the stripped car body dumped in the street to be found and impounded by the owner's insurer.

The thieves would then attend the subsequent insurance auction, intimidate other buyers and purchase the wreck for a fraction of its original value. They would then reassemble the vehicle and legally re-register it with its original identifiers. Eventually NSW and South Australia banned the re-registration of any stripped written-off car.

Undeterred, professional car thieves, mainly in NSW, increasingly sent their rebirthed cars to adjoining states, where they could be re-registered and sold with little risk of being checked against a written-off vehicle register. While interstate phone checks occasionally exposed these cars as stolen, many were successfully re-registered.

In 1999 Australia's Transport Ministers voted to support the urgent development of written-off vehicle registers (WOVRs) with consistent laws and business rules in every jurisdiction, and their data shared via NEVDIS (the National Exchange of Vehicle and Driver Information System). The eventual adoption of these measures along with the ability of car buyers to check a car's history via the Personal Properties Security Register has greatly reduced rebirthing activities.

It is interesting to note that while the total number of stolen motor vehicles dropped from 145,000 in 1999-2000 to 47,803 in 2020-2021, there has only been a small reduction in the level of professional vehicle theft. Ever adaptive, many rebirthers returned to stripping stolen cars and selling their parts to unscrupulous repairers, who used forged receipts in the names of legitimate suppliers. This practice became so prevalent in NSW that re-registration of repaired written-off vehicles was banned. However, these re-registrations are still permitted in many other jurisdictions.

LEST WE FORGET

In this newsletter we have included David Jellie's stories of two men who worked for the CRB – one in the First World War and the other in the Second World War.

Captain Alfred Vernon Galbraith

Alfred Vernon Galbraith was born in Geelong and was nearly 26 when he enlisted in 1916. He was married to Elsie Maud. He was appointed Assistant Town Clerk of Geelong when only 21 years old and then he joined the newly formed CRB as Chief Clerk around 1913-14.

Alfred's archive is hard to read but the gist of it is as follows. He had previously served in the Militia where he was promoted to 2nd Lieutenant in July 1913. Alfred enlisted in the Australian Imperial Force (AIF) on 18 February 1916 and embarked on H.M.A.T A34 *Persio* for active service overseas on 30 May 1916. A month prior to embarkation, he was promoted to Lieutenant. He was attached to the 24th Company 3rd Divisional Train of the Australian Service Corps (ASC). Division (and Brigade) Trains were logistic support and supply units under the command of the Division to which its numeric designator corresponded. In Alfred's case, he was attached to the 3rd Division of the AIF. The task of a Divisional Train was to supply ammunition, food, water and equipment to the frontline troops under fire from the enemy. The ability to do this effectively was a vital component of the combat power of the AIF.

Alfred disembarked in Plymouth. He was hospitalised in Salisbury on 5 August 1916 with an unnamed sickness. He was discharged on 28 August and returned to duty.

He transferred to France in November 1916 and, on 6 March 1917, he was promoted to Captain. Later that month, he was transferred to become Officer in Charge of 868th Company.



1940 - Alfred Galbraith, Chairman, Forest Commission Victoria from 1927 to 1949

But he was dogged by illness and an entry in his file entitled Medical Report on an Invalid, includes the following history. He was gassed in July 1917 at the Battle of Messines but he was not hospitalised. He was hospitalised in France twice (Rouen and Havre) in late September and early October 1918 where he was diagnosed with glycosuria (diabetes). He transferred to England on 6 October 1918 where he was admitted to 3rd London General Hospital suffering from diabetes.

One report, in October 1918 said that 'He looks rather pallid. He has been up for 12 days. He coughs at night and in the mornings. He has walked half a mile. Heart rather rapid after slight exertion'.

I suspect Alfred's war extended well beyond Armistice Day in 1918.

He left England bound for Australia in February 1919 aboard the Hospital Transport *Lancashire* and arrived in Melbourne on 24 March where his illness was described as 'Influenza and Pneumonia.' He was hospitalised again when he got home. In July 1919, the Medical Board considered his disability was due to service but did not deem it to be permanent. It

said that "It is much better for him to be away from Hospital without treatment and in a northern climate." It also recommended that he was to be discharged from the AIF to undertake vocational training work.

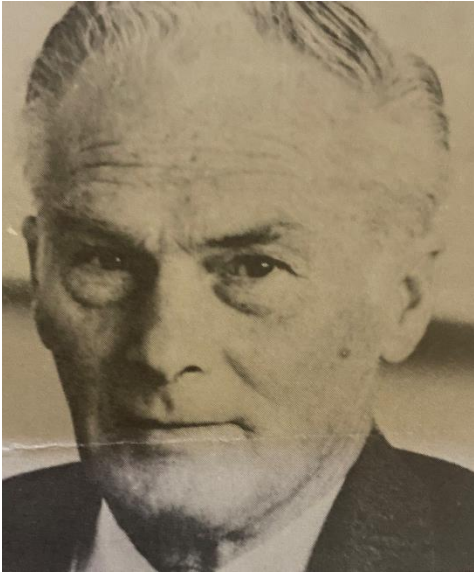
Alfred did not return to the CRB but was recruited as the Secretary to the newly established three-person Forests Commission Victoria. In 1927, Galbraith was elevated to Chairman, a position he held until his death in 1949. He was Chairman throughout the worst fires in the Department's history in the late 1930s, the Great Depression, World War 2 and the civil rehabilitation period which followed it.

Although revenue from timber sales declined during the Depression, Galbraith channelled substantial government funds for unemployment relief works which were well suited to unskilled manual labour such as firebreak slashing, silvicultural thinning, weed spraying and rabbit control. By 1935-36 the Forests Commission was employing almost 9,000 men in relief works and a further 1,200 boys under a "Youth for Conservation Plan".

Galbraith was widely known throughout Australia and overseas. He organised the 1928 British Empire Forestry Conference in Australia and represented Victoria at a similar conference in 1935. He planned to attend the 1947 conference in England but was forced to withdraw due to failing health.

Alfred was an Australian Rules Football enthusiast. He supported Essendon and was a member of the Victorian Football League Tribunal for many years. He died in 1949 at the age of 59.

Sapper John William Heid, VX120894 (V165669)



John Heid on his retirement in 1982.

John was a third-year engineering student when he enlisted in the Citizen Military Forces (CMF) in Geelong on 3 February 1942. He was born in December 1923 meaning he had just turned 19 at the time of his enlistment.

He was born in Sunshine according to his Attestation Form but at the time of enlistment his address was in Geelong. Presumably, he was studying engineering at the Gordon Institute of Technology.

He was deployed to the 3rd Field Survey Company. He undertook training at Yarram and Colac after which he was transferred to Townsville in Queensland where he joined the AIF on 28 July 1942.

On 30 February 1943 he embarked in Townsville on the SS *Swarthenhout*² bound for New Guinea where he disembarked at Oro Bay on 8 March. In September, he was evacuated for four days to a Casualty Clearing Station with a fever but he rejoined his unit four days later.

On 22 July 1944, he returned to Brisbane aboard SS *Lurline*. It appears that he remained in Queensland until 26 May 1945 when he embarked for Morotai on the USAT *Mau*. He remained there for a month before boarding LST 753 for Balikpapan in Borneo. On 25 January 1946 he returned to Brisbane on the HMAS *Kanimbla* arriving there on 4 February. He was discharged on 9 April 1946.

John completed his engineering studies and then joined the Shire of Portland where he became the Deputy Engineer. In 1949, he joined the CRB and commenced work in Geelong Division as a Grade 3 Engineer supervising works in the Division – including the Great Ocean Road. In 1966, he was promoted to Bairnsdale Division as Assistant Divisional Engineer under W. H. (Bill) Dolamore. In Bairnsdale, he quickly established himself as a mountain road engineer.

In 1971, John became Divisional Engineer in Horsham – a position he held until his retirement in 1982. During his career, John won the respect of many people in and outside the Road Construction Authority. John died in Horsham on 7 July 1996.

MEMBERSHIP OF THE ASSOCIATION

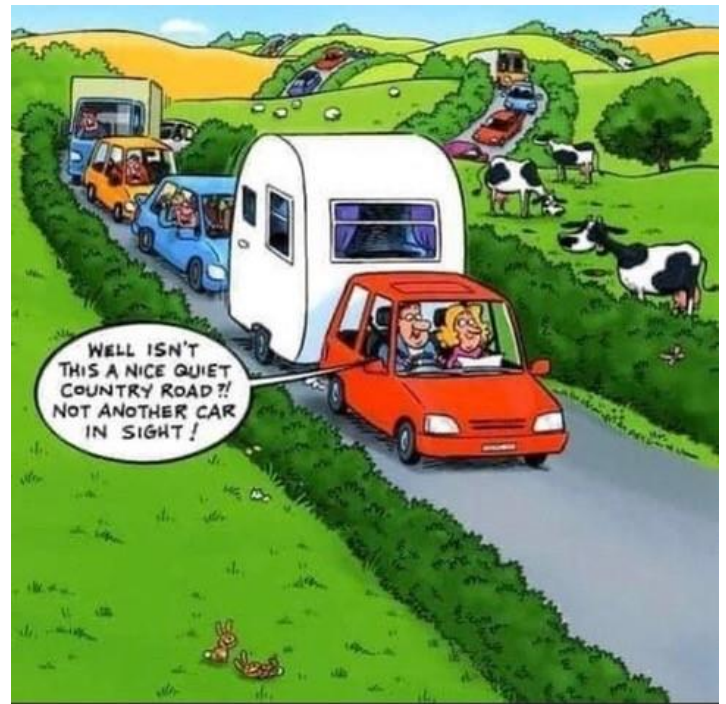
If you are not already a member and would like to join our Association or have a friend who is an ex-employee of VicRoads or one of its predecessor organisations, I have provided a membership Application Form at the end of this Newsletter.

Our Association is very much a social organisation that strives to maintain and foster friendship among its members while keeping them informed of developments in the road sector. Membership provides an opportunity to catch up with old associates and meet with them at regular intervals to enjoy interesting technical outings, dinners and luncheons.

And remember, partners and friends are welcome to attend all our functions and do not need to be members of the Association.

² This name is doubtful. The handwriting in his Service and Casualty Form is illegible and I have done my best to interpret it. I could find no record of a ship bearing this name.

FUNNIES



Great Puns for Educated Minds

How does Moses make his tea? Hebrews it.

Venison for dinner again? Oh deer!

A cartoonist was found dead in his home. Details are sketchy.

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

Haunted French pancakes give me the crepes.

England has no kidney bank, but it does have a Liverpool.

I tried to catch some fog, but I mist.

They told me I had type-A blood, but it was a Type-O.

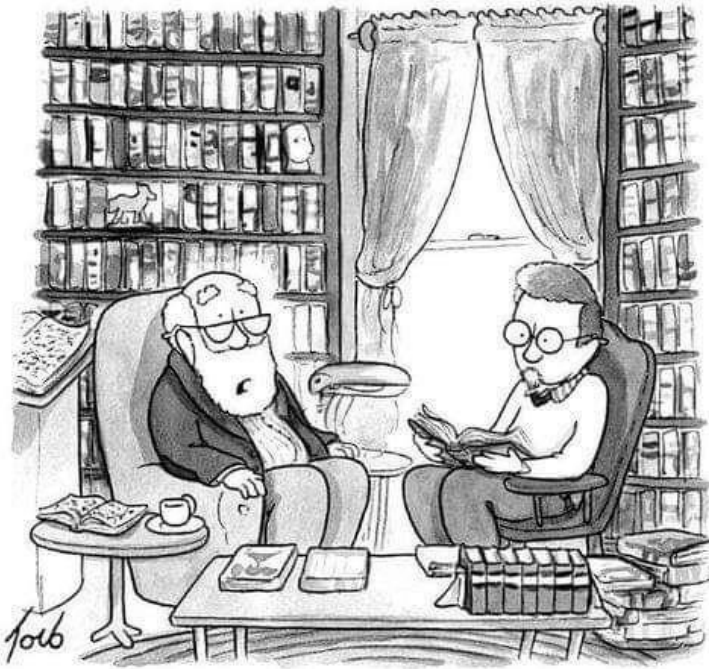
I changed my iPod's name to Titanic. It's syncing now.

Jokes about German sausages are the wurst.

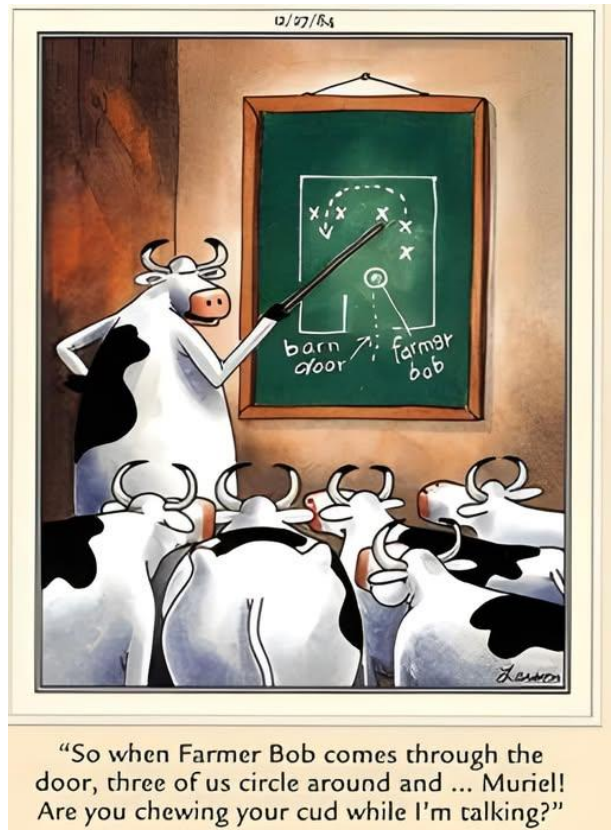
I know a guy who's addicted to brake fluid, but he says he can stop any time.

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

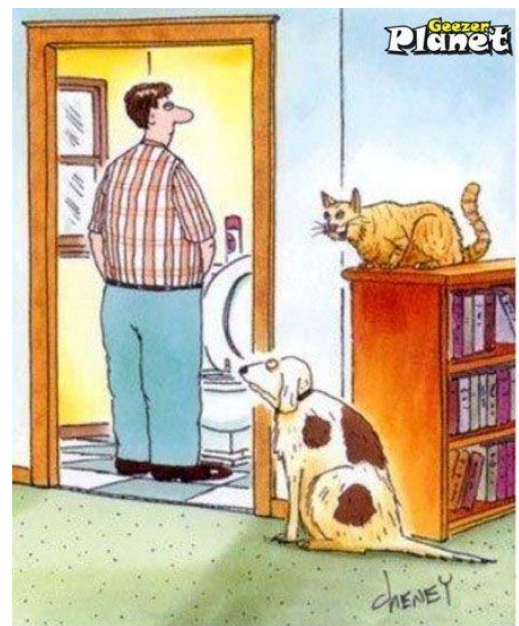
This girl said she recognized me from the vegetarian club, but I'd never met herbivore.



"Those who don't study history are doomed to repeat it. Yet those who *do* study history are doomed to stand by helplessly while everyone else repeats it."



"So when Farmer Bob comes through the door, three of us circle around and ... Muriel! Are you chewing your cud while I'm talking?"



"So, if you're his best friend, then why is he always peeing in your drinking water?"

John Wright- Editor. ananasw@gmail.com

VicRoads Association Inc
Registration No A0022250S

Membership Application Form

Email completed form to:
Membership Secretary, VicRoads Association Inc
Email Address: irisw25@bigpond.com

First Name **Surname**

Address

Postcode

Telephone Number **Mobile Number**

E-mail address *Nominate an email address if you don't personally have your own*

Emergency Contact Name

Emergency Contact Number

Employment in VicRoads and antecedent\previous organisations:

Date From **Until To**

Organisation/s

Paid Direct Transfer.
Your payment of **\$50.00** by electronic transfer should be made into the Association's NAB bank account, details as follow:

VICROADS ASSOCIATION
BSB 083-323
ACC 170934017

Reference - Please ensure that you include your name in the "online" transaction details so that the subscription can be attributed to you.

The information collected from members will be used solely for the purposes of managing the Association and its activities.

I agree to be bound by the Rules of the Association.

Signed

Date

For more information on VicRoads Association see our website vicroadsassociation.org