

President & Editor: John Wright – Mob: 0408 593 570 ananasw@gmail.com
Secretary: Jill Earnshaw – Mob: 0438 777 352 jillmearnshaw@gmail.com

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>



Dear Members

Regardless of our former roles in the various organisations that came together in VicRoads, I think it's fair to say that most of us have a secret admiration for very big bridges.

I still recall my awestruck first look at the Sydney Harbour Bridge when I was an 11-year old – and my disappointment at realising my Meccano set wouldn't have nearly enough pieces to construct a replica of it. In my late 60's, when I finally got to walk across the *Golden Gate Bridge*, I paused at its southern tower to read the weathered plaque commemorating its creator, Joseph Strauss, and admired the courage of those who'd strung the first cables across that broad, swirling gulf.

Which brings me to the magnificent *Huajiang Grand Canyon Bridge*, which recently opened in remote southwestern China. This is one bridge I'd certainly like to walk across – resplendent in its striking Ming Blue¹ livery and now holding the title of the world's tallest bridge² in terms of the height of its deck (625 metres) above the Beipan River. Equally impressive is the fact that it was constructed in just over 3½ years.

¹ Those readers who were teenagers in the late 1950's might remember the bright Ming Blue and Ming Green clothing that was then very popular with Rock 'n Roll fans. Depending on the light, the bridge colour could be either of these.

² In terms of total structural height, that honour is still held by the graceful, cable stayed Millau Viaduct, whose towers top out at a stunning 343 metres above the valley floor in southern France.

While its main span of 1,420 metres only makes it the world's 13th longest³, its proud builders are quick to point out that the other 12 bridges all span navigable waterways and that *their* bridge has the longest single span of any bridge built in a mountainous environment.

The *Huajiang Grand Canyon Bridge* is located in remote Guizhou province, whose economy has long suffered from the lack of decent road access. It is part of a new expressway connecting the coastal city of Shantou to Kunming, the capital of neighbouring Yunnan province and will reduce the time taken to cross the gorge by road from over two hours to 2 minutes.

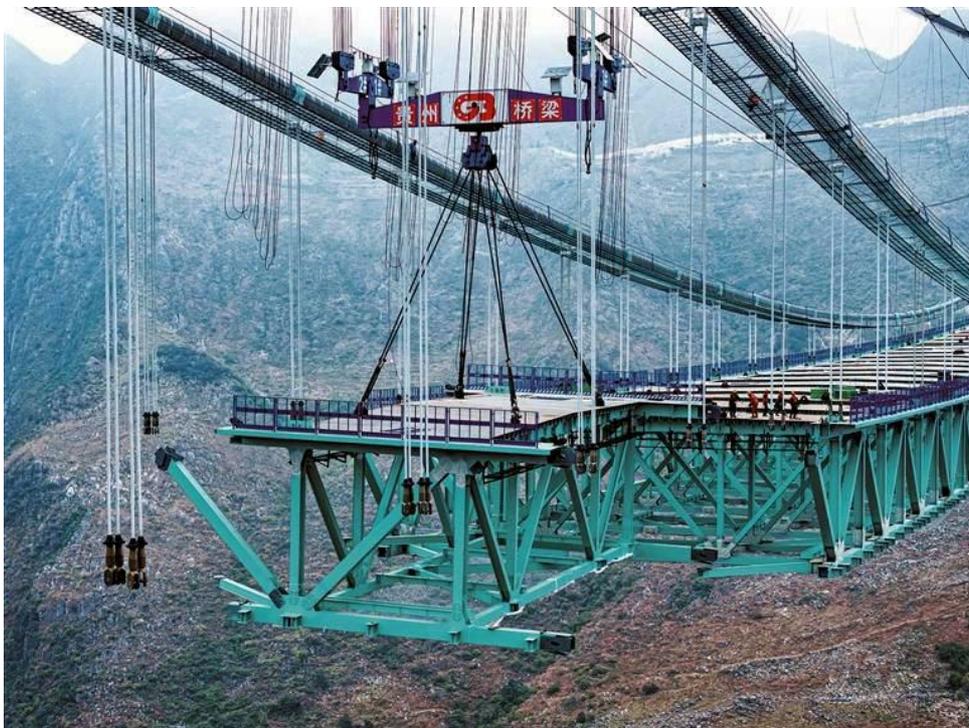
With tour companies advertising river cruises to see it, the bridge is already a major tourist attraction, which will further benefit the region's economy. Visitors can take a high-speed glass elevator to the *Stargazing Cafe* built into the top of one of the bridge's towers (see main picture) and take in the stunning view of the gorge from glass-sided walkways beneath the traffic lanes. Eventually, adventure seekers will be able to bungee and base jump from the bridge.

The project secured 21 patents, and its innovations in wind-resistant design and high-altitude construction have now become standards for future infrastructure projects across China. The bridge's steel truss deck structure was made up of 93 segments, weighing a total of 22,000 tons. Before its opening in September 2025 it was subjected to a five-day static load test of 96 heavy trucks weighing a total of 3,300 tonnes.

Modern technology played a crucial role in the bridge's construction. Advanced tools and techniques included:

- Doppler lidar detection for precise structural analysis
- BeiDou dynamic positioning⁴ for exact assembly
- Digital assembly systems and intelligent transportation management

Thanks to Nick Szwed for suggesting this article. For full details and some great construction pictures of the bridge, visit: [Huajiang Grand Canyon Bridge - HighestBridges.com](https://www.HighestBridges.com)



³ The 12 bridges with longer main spans include the *1915 Canakkale Bridge* over the Dardanelles in Turkey, which opened in 2022 and has the longest central span (2,023 m) of any suspension bridge.

⁴ The BeiDou navigation satellite system (BDS) developed by China provides users with high precision, as well as all-weather and real-time positioning and navigation. It was used on this project to position the 93 deck segments.

WHAT'S COMING UP?

Our 2025 event calendar

Date	Event	Contact Person
Monday 3 November	From 12 noon. Occasional Lunch, Doncaster Shoppingtown Hotel	Just turn up
Thursday 11 December	From 11.45 am. Christmas lunch at Waverley RSL	Ken Vickery kenvickery@tpg.com.au

Christmas Lunch at Glen Waverley – Thursday 11 December



This year's Association Christmas party will take place on Thursday 11 December. Please put this date in your diary now and RSVP early. This is our most popular function and is a great way to wind up the year's activities. Partners and friends are most welcome.

Our Christmas lunch will be held at the Waverley RSL Club which is located at the eastern end of Coleman Parade near the Glen Waverley Shopping Centre. For those wishing to travel by public transport, the RSL is opposite Glen Waverley Station which is the end of the line. There is off-street parking adjacent to the centre but we recommend coming early to secure your spot.

We are planning to start at 11.45 am and we will sit down to lunch at around 12.30 pm. We have a separate room on the first floor with access via the lift.

The cost of the lunch will be \$50 per head which is payable in advance. This cost covers a two course lunch (main and dessert) with two options for each course with alternating serves. Tea and coffee will also be available. Drinks, at bar prices, will be available at the bar, located in the room. It is easier if you have photo ID for entry to the club. Your driver licence will do.

Guests will also have a chance of taking home one of the two Christmas hampers on offer to attendees.

If you wish to attend, please contact Ken Vickery on 0409 561 618 or kenvickery@tpg.com.au

Payment should be made in advance via electronic transfer to the VicRoads Association account as follows:

BSB: 083323

Account number: 170934017

Please make sure when paying that you include your name as the transaction reference so that the payment can be attributed to you. Also, if you have any special dietary requirements, please advise Ken when you make your booking.

This is an excellent venue and last year's lunch was the most successful ever. It would be wonderful to catch up with many of you then to celebrate Christmas and friendships.

NTRO Heritage Day



The Australian Road Research Board (ARRB) was established in 1960 by the National Association of Australian State Road Authorities (NAASRA) to conduct and promote road research.

In 2022, ARRB evolved into the National Transport Research Organisation (NTRO), expanding its scope beyond roads to cover all transport modes. Each year NTRO celebrates its establishment on the first Friday of December, as Heritage Day.

This year its Heritage Day will spotlight the evolution of its Infrastructure Measurement heritage, highlighting its progression from early improvised equipment to today's advanced machines, and offering insights into the future legacy being built by its Data Reform project.

NTRO has contacted us, and we would like to warmly invite members of the VicRoads Association who have significantly contributed to the organisation's history, to reconnect and reminisce on the legacy we have built together at ARRB and NTRO and celebrate NTRO's more recent journey to the present.

Due to the limited number of spots available, please indicate your interest in attending this event [here](#) or by contacting Nicole Carter on 0499 942175.

WHAT'S BEEN HAPPENING?

Our Ballarat Outing. 9th and 10th October – by Jill Earnshaw

On Thursday 9 October 20 of us gathered at the relatively new Government Hub in Ballarat to receive a presentation from representatives of the Department of Transport and Planning (DTP):

- Director Regional Operations – Development (Sarah O'Dwyer)
- A/Director Regional Operations – Planning (Linda Schefferle -nee Oman). Some of our members may remember Linda, who joined VicRoads as a graduate over 30 years ago and spent quite a bit of time working out of the Horsham office, and
- Director Maintenance Operations (Liam Butcher)

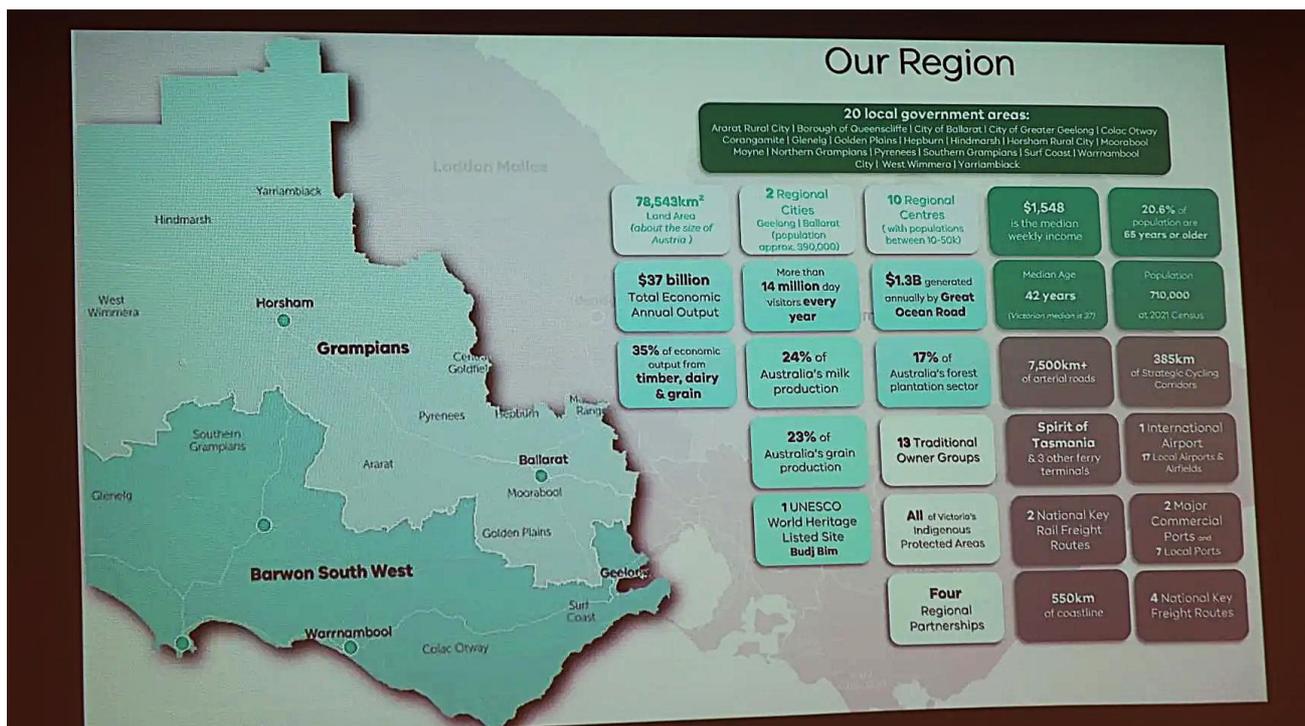
We learnt that the new public facing name for the Department is *Transport Victoria* and that the Department's regional boundaries have now been aligned (both geographically and in name) across all Government agencies. There are now only five regions across the State, with the Grampians Region covering 20 Local Government Areas. In area, the region is about the same size as the Czech Republic i.e. over 75,000 sq. kilometres. That's certainly a challenge to manage.

I think we were all struck by the breadth of challenges affecting this region and others across the State. Traffic volumes and increased axle loads are now at the upper limits for flexible pavements; many of which are now reaching the end of their life.



From L to R. Jill Earnshaw, DTP officers Liam Butcher, Linda Schefferle and Sarah O'Dwyer

Government-owned *Sprayline Road Services* is expected to be sold to a private operator or operators by July 1 next year. Maintenance services will be “re-tendered” to private contractors and *Sprayline’s* spray sealing operations will be sold through a bidding process. *Sprayline* employees are expected to be offered employment with the private contractors who take over the maintenance services in their respective regions. We were also told that the KPIs (Key



Performance Indicators) for maintenance contracts are not inconsiderable, with work being reallocated for significant breaches.

On a more positive note, there seems to be some good news on the planning front. From 1 January 2025 the Victorian Planning Authority (founded in 2006 as the Growth Areas Authority) has now come into the DTP. We were advised this is facilitating better, and early, alignment of views and requirements than was experienced in the past.



Dinner at the Ballarat Leagues Club. From L to R. Jill Earnshaw, John Wright, Elaine Head, Philip McCarron, Patsy Kennedy, Joan Gilmer, Mary Lydon, Brian Head, Rosslyn Wright, Noel Osborne



From L to R. Jim Kierce, Jim Webber, David Jellie, Iris Whittaker, Tricia Collins, Bill Collins, Jutta Szwed, Stephen Collins, Nick Szwed

On Friday 10 October, 29 Association members and friends visited the Alstom factory in Ballarat. Alstom is the French company that was awarded the contract to build 25 *Extrapolis 2.0* trains for Victoria. These will replace the oldest trains currently operating on the Craigieburn, Upfield and Frankston lines in metropolitan Melbourne.

At Alstom we were given a number of extremely interesting presentations by the Site Director and several other senior managers.



At the Alstom plant in Creswick Road, Ballarat

Then we got ‘suited and booted” (fluorescent vests, caps, goggles and steel-capped boots) and headed off the factory. Interestingly, the Ballarat site was originally built in 1917 and has always been involved in producing rail stock. Alstom bought the facility in 1999 when it was producing the *Extrapolis 1* trains. Whilst the site closed in 2019 it reopened in 2022 to produce the *XT 2.0* trains with an on-site, permanent workforce of around 130 people. Approximately \$20 million has been spent there on infrastructure, machinery, tools, etc. with a bit more to come. The original cranes, for example, had to be upgraded to take the weight of the new trains and components, and special facilities built to manage those tasks that required temperature control.

The members and guests who attended this fascinating visit had plenty of interesting questions during the presentation and factory visit. We were all very impressed with the time spent with the group, the number of senior staff involved in our visit and the level of explanation given to answering all questions asked.

Alstom has around 84,700 employees worldwide in 254 sites. One of its main design centres is in India. Alstom has 2,500 employees in Australia. It started in Sydney in 2016. In 2022 it merged with Bombardier. Its main customer in Victoria is the DTP and its Victorian team is spread across the State. In September 2021 Alstom was awarded a contract to build 25 *XT 2.0* trains. In December 2023 the final design was completed following extensive consultation with drivers, users, etc. The initial work on the train sets takes place in Dandenong before works are completed in Ballarat. In December 2024 the first train was produced. In March 2025 the dynamic testing commenced of the 6-car train set on the Werribee line and that testing has continued on other parts of the network. The first train is expected to be put forward for acceptance in 2026.

The Alstom Ballarat site is currently producing one 'car' every 5 days. It's aim is to reach one 'car' every 3 days.

Interestingly, it is expected that the 6-car set will be maintained as a whole throughout its life, rather than the 'cars' being separated and placed in other train sets.



Dinner at the Ballarat Golf Club. From L to R. Jutta Szwed, Geoff Lawrence, Jim Webber, Graham Stone, Glenys Veith, Jill Earnshaw, Bill Collins, Gary Veith, Graham Freestone, Nick Szwed, Mary Lydon

For those who missed out on attending this fascinating visit, keep an eye out for our 2026 program of activities as we are already attempting to arrange a visit, in the second half of the year, to Alstom's Dandenong factory which is involved in the manufacture of both trains and trams.

We were not able to take photos on the day but the designs and the anti-graffiti livery are quite impressive. For further information on the new trains we suggest looking online at articles and photos taken by keen train spotters across the network.

Our regional visits/road trips, which tend to take place each year, are a great opportunity for a few days away and a great chance to socialise with new and old friends. On this trip, dinners at the Ballarat Leagues Club and the Golf Club certainly offered those opportunities. Why not consider joining us next year.



Dinner at the Ballarat Golf Club. From L to R. Joan Gilmer, Rosslyn Wright, John Wright, David Jellie, Elaine Head, Brian Head, Tricia Collins, Bill Collins, Patsy Kennedy

Annual Golf Day Green Acres Golf Club, East Kew – by Jim Webber

Four members participated in this year's golf day at Green Acres Golf Club on 24 October.

This year's event, based on Stapleford points, was the closest ever. On the 18th tee, the 4 players were within one point of each other. The winner was Roy Gilmour with 30 points, ahead of Howard Hughes and Jim Webber on 29 and Bruce Thompson on 28. This was Roy's 4th win.

Six Green Acres members also played. Lance Rimes was the winner with 38 points, followed by Ted Smith on 36 and Peter Lucas on 34.



Roy Gilmour being presented the VRA Golf Award by Jim Webber

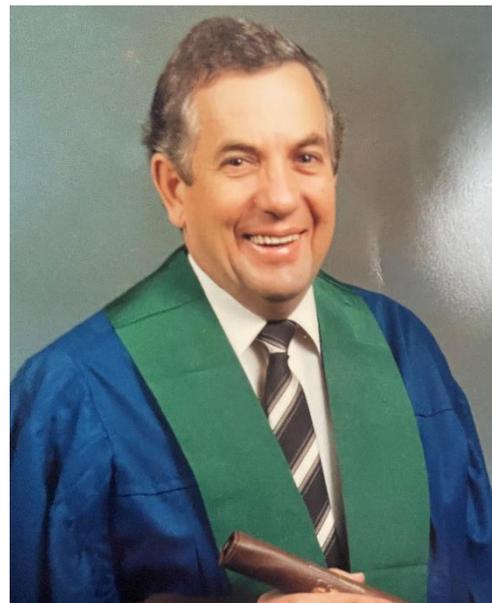
MEMBER COMMENT AND NEWS

Vale Vic Asher - by David Jellie

Vic Asher died on 18 August 2025, four days after his 91st birthday. His wife, Barbara, died two months earlier. They had five children and shared 70 years of marriage.

Vic was the HR and Training Manager at VicRoads during the 1980s. It is no secret that he did not see eye to eye with the CEO, Ian Stoney, and his section was relocated from Head Office in Kew to the old office of the West Gate Bridge Authority in Port Melbourne. It was also the office where I was located during the construction of the elevated section of the West Gate Freeway across South Melbourne.

So, Vic and I got to know each other quite well and I came to admire his training skills acquired through his teaching at TAFE colleges, adult education institutions, the Australian Army, Victoria State Corrections and the Australian Institute of Management before arriving at VicRoads. Later, he went on to teach at universities in China.



Vic on his graduation day. Date unknown

Vic was born in Port Augusta in South Australia but his family moved to Adelaide when he was a teenager. He attended Adelaide High School but left school when he was 15 to help support his family. He had a few jobs starting off as a telegram delivery boy and then graduating to a meter reader for the electricity authority. Dodging dogs on his errands may have contributed to his running skills which helped him to become a state representative in middle distance events. He once competed against Herb Elliot. When he got his driver's licence, he doubled up driving taxis at night.

He couldn't swim, so he taught himself and he became involved in surf lifesaving, swimming and water polo – all at elite level. Water polo was a passion and during his career he became a coach, referee and administrator in Bendigo, the University of Melbourne, and the Australian Capital Territory. His youngest son, Simon, was captain of the Australian water polo team which competed in the Olympic Games in Seoul and Barcelona.

He also represented South Australia in baseball and played top grade table tennis. It was at his swimming club that he met Barbara. When they were married, he was still working two jobs which wasn't enough to meet the bills for his ever-expanding family. Barbara also lost her job because she was married and pregnant, and so Vic decided to join the Australian Army to provide a better life for his family.

Initially, he was trained in the Army in lithography as a map etcher but he also obtained his matriculation and then the Army sponsored him to attend Bendigo Teachers College. It was this that developed his passion for training and adult education.

He had a 21-year engagement with the Army rising from Private to Major in charge of the Army Training Corps. Apart from being a qualified Litho Artist and Dot Etcher, Vic gained a Diploma of Teaching, Bachelor of Arts, Bachelor of Education, Graduate Diploma of Education Administration, and a Certificate IV in Training and Assessment, Curriculum and Management. He attended the Universities of Canberra, Melbourne and LaTrobe.

When he left the Army, he joined the Victorian State Corrections as the head of training for prison guards, after which he joined VicRoads.



Private Vic Asher - circa 1950s.

Vic and I both left VicRoads at about the same time – in the late 1980s. I was seconded to the fledgling Overseas Projects Corporation of Victoria (OPCV) and Vic was recruited by the Snowy Mountains Engineering Corporation to work on a project in Indonesia. Later, I also recruited Vic to work on some of our projects. He worked on a number of projects in Indonesia, Sri Lanka, Samoa and China. Ironically, he loved travel but had a fear of flying.

Vic had a great interest in politics and world affairs which stood him in great stead when working in international aid projects. At his funeral, his son said that he used to watch the early news bulletin at 5.00 pm, then the 6.00 pm news, then *A Current Affair* or *The 7.30 Report*. He acquired a great knowledge of the politics and cultures of the countries he worked in and tailored his training strategies and designs to fit local needs.

He also had a great awareness of the methodologies and pace of training in countries with immature government agencies and went to great trouble to ensure that all trainees were supported regardless of the disparity of their skills and experience. He respected their cultures and made sure that training strategies were built around them.

In his first stint in Sri Lanka in 2004, he came home to Australia on Christmas eve. On Boxing Day, a tsunami was triggered by an earthquake off the coast of Sumatra.

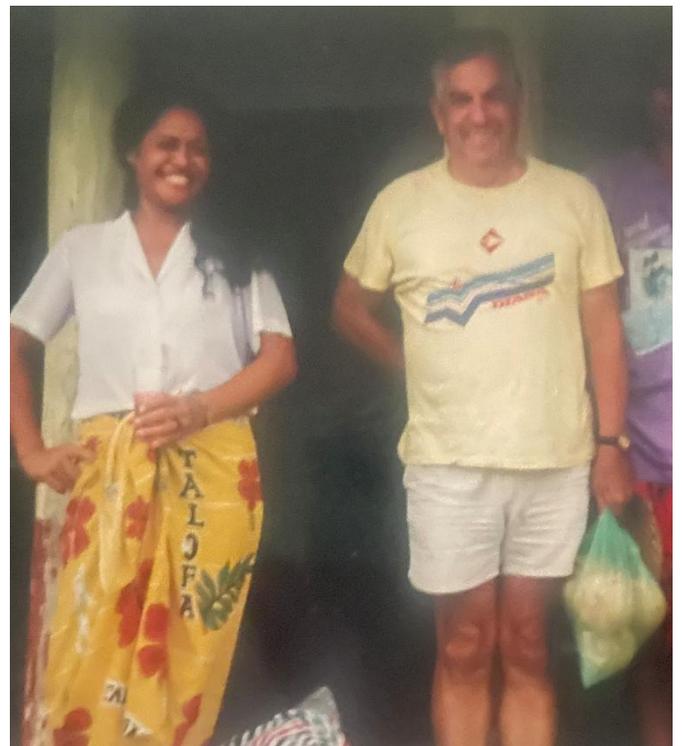
It travelled across the Indian Ocean and about 40,000 Sri Lankans living on the south and east coast perished. It took two hours from its source to reach Sri Lanka. It also caused the worst train disaster in history when the crowded Ocean Queen Express was swept off its tracks in Peraliya, killing over 1,700 people. Over half a million people were displaced from their homes. This completely altered the project that Vic was working on but he went back to join the team to assist with the rehabilitation.

He also worked through difficult times in Indonesia. There was political unrest due to changes in the Presidency and crime was increasing. There were protests and public demonstrations often ending in violence. To make matters worse, Australian troops had entered East Timor so there was a palpable anti-Australian feeling in Indonesia.

He remained there through these troubled times. He understood what was happening and kept his head down. He changed his place of residence to an outer suburb where the atmosphere was less volatile and used a local driver as a chauffeur.

Samoa was a far more peaceful environment but the heat and humidity were palpable. I think the photo captures it.

Vic's work colleague in the photo opposite lived about three kilometres outside Apia. When we got there, she got her 15-year-old brother to shimmy up a palm tree – which he did without



The lady on Vic's right worked in our office and she invited Vic and me to visit her house at the weekend to get some coconuts.

the aid of ropes at a breakneck speed – and you can see the result in Vic’s hand.

I visited Vic a number of times in his retirement home in Geelong but with the onset of Parkinson’s Disease, it became increasingly difficult to communicate. His mind was always sharp, his wit was always quick and his tears were always filled with memories of good times.

Vic was a good friend to me and pretty remarkable bloke.

David Jellie

Dementia: An Overview – by Nick Szwed

[Nick has provided this important article using information from authoritative sources, including Dementia Australia’s website: <https://www.dementia.org.au>. – The Editor]

Recently, I was having lunch with some friends in their 70s and 80s and one of them got confused about the meal they had ordered. A couple of people laughed and someone said, “having another senior’s moment?” This person then looked more confused and very sad - clearly hurt by the attention drawn.

I’ve seen this sort of response many times and realized that we don’t talk about dementia, just like we avoid talking about death. I realized that even though I’d learnt a lot about dementia from my 99-year-old mother-in-law, I never understood it well.

So, I decided to do some research and found it very enlightening. I’d like to share it because I think we all could benefit from a better understanding.

What is Dementia?

Dementia is not a single disease but a syndrome—a collection of symptoms caused by disorders affecting the brain. It leads to a decline in memory, thinking, behaviour, and the ability to perform everyday activities. Alzheimer’s disease is the most common cause, followed by vascular dementia, Lewy body dementia, and frontotemporal dementia.

Early Signs & Symptoms

Recognizing dementia early allows for better management and planning. Key early signs include:

- Memory loss (forgetting recent events, names, or places)
- Difficulty communicating (finding words, following conversations)
- Confusion (with time, place, or familiar tasks)
- Poor judgment (unsafe decisions, money mishandling)
- Changes in mood/behaviour (irritability, anxiety, withdrawal)
- Difficulty with daily activities (cooking, driving, managing medications)

Treatment & Management

Currently, there is no cure for most types of dementia, but treatments can slow progression and improve quality of life.

- **Medications:**
 - Cholinesterase inhibitors (donepezil, rivastigmine) for Alzheimer’s symptoms.
 - Memantine for moderate to severe dementia.
- **Therapies & Lifestyle:**

- Cognitive stimulation (memory exercises, puzzles, music therapy).
- Regular exercise, balanced diet, good sleep.
- Managing other health issues (blood pressure, diabetes, depression).

Supporting Someone with Dementia

Support is about care, dignity, and safety:

- Communication: Use short, clear sentences; be patient; avoid correcting harshly.
- Routine: Keep daily structure predictable to reduce confusion.
- Environment: Ensure safety—good lighting, remove trip hazards, label important items.
- Emotional Support: Offer reassurance, kindness and social interaction.
- Caregiver Support: Caregiving can be stressful—seek respite care, support groups and professional help when needed.

Key Takeaway

Dementia is a progressive condition that affects memory, thinking, and independence. While there is no cure, early recognition, medical care, healthy living and compassionate support can significantly improve the lives of people with dementia and their families.

Nick Szwed

[Editor's note. Mental health professionals stress that all of us, at any stage of our lives, encounter periods where we can't remember certain things, for perfectly innocent reasons.]

Re Tom Glazebrook – from Reg Marslen

Hi John

I was greatly saddened the day my son in Bendigo rang to say Tom Glazebrook had died. It was a shock as I had expected Tom to breeze through to 100 plus years.

I worked closely with him, firstly for 11 years when he was ADE and I was the D/Es Clerk in Benalla and then 9 years at Bendigo when he was the D/E and I was the D/Es Clerk. He was a wonderful person to work for once you got to know how to handle the rapid fire requests for a dozen or so things at once and could decipher the atrocious handwriting in the copious memos he produced.

I got to know Tom on a personal level driving him on the many municipal inspections, especially the long hauls to Swan Hill and Kerang and on overnight stays when we discussed personal matters and solved all the world's problems.

Tom rang me several years ago to see how I was going health wise, having heard of my chronic illness and was doing it a bit tough. Our last contact was sometime in 2024 when he telephoned for a chat. I happened to be in hospital having a dialysis treatment so it was a pleasant half hour relief from the monotony of sitting in a lounge chair for almost 5 hours attached to a machine, unable to move. Many people may not know that Tom lost a kidney when in Benalla, and for the last 60 years or so, he survived on one kidney. He was his usual ebullient self; I managed to get a few words in now and then. At the time he was a bit annoyed at being confined to his room due to an outbreak of COVID at his care facility in Bendigo.

He was a wonderful, caring, thoughtful and generous person, true to his religion, family, profession and community. I am sure he will be missed by all who remain of his generation, and younger, who had the privilege of working with him.

Reg Marslen

David Jellie remembers Peter McDonald

Peter died of cancer on 1 October 2025. He was 76.

Peter obtained a cadetship with the Country Roads Board and was awarded a Diploma of Civil Engineering from RMIT, after which he completed a Bachelor of Engineering at the University of Melbourne. He then completed a Master of Engineering Science in Soil Mechanics.

After completing his studies, Peter commenced his career with the Materials Research Division of the CRB. I can't remember when I first met Peter but it would have been in the early 1970s.

We seemed to hit it off together and we became friends - although I did make a grave mistake when I invited him to have a game of squash one night. I thought it was quite rude of him not to warn me that he was an A Pennant player. He wiped me off the court and with his quiet sense of humour and cheeky grin he made rude remarks about melting jellies.

I can recall him coming down to Orbost in 1974 to help me out with some foundation problems on the bridge across the Snowy River. Even at this early stage of his career, Peter was developing expertise in piles socketed into rock. The piers for the Snowy River Bridge were supported on two piles socketed into very hard metamorphosed sandstone – known as greywacke.

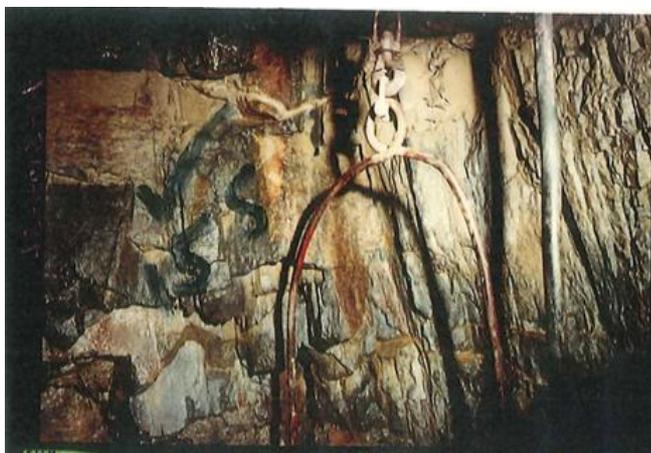
The piles were 4 ft 6 inches in diameter and the design required them to be socketed for a depth of 9 ft in the base rock. The pile casings comprised half inch thick steel plate with an additional inch thick tapered base to resist the high driving forces required to seal the casings into the base rock. The piles penetrated the river and overlying silt and other material before encountering the sandstone at depth. The deepest pile was 62 ft below the normal water level of the river.

I should remind alert readers, that the construction of the Snowy River bridges used imperial units even though the CRB had converted to metric units some years earlier. The design had been completed before metrication and it would have been a very large task to convert the drawings and specifications to metric units – as well as delaying the project.

The rock was extremely hard - so much so that it continually broke the 2.5 tonne rock chisels used to fracture the rock. In some piles, a miner was sent down to drill holes in which explosives were placed and discharged. Before casting the concrete, I had to inspect the socket of each pile to ensure that it met the design assumptions.

This involved lowering me down to the base to inspect the quality of the rock and to ensure all detritus on the base was removed. It was a very wet and noisy task. Water squirted out from fissures in the rock and pumps were continuously screaming as they pumped the water out. I had a whistle which I used to instruct the workman at the surface who controlled the bosun's chair.

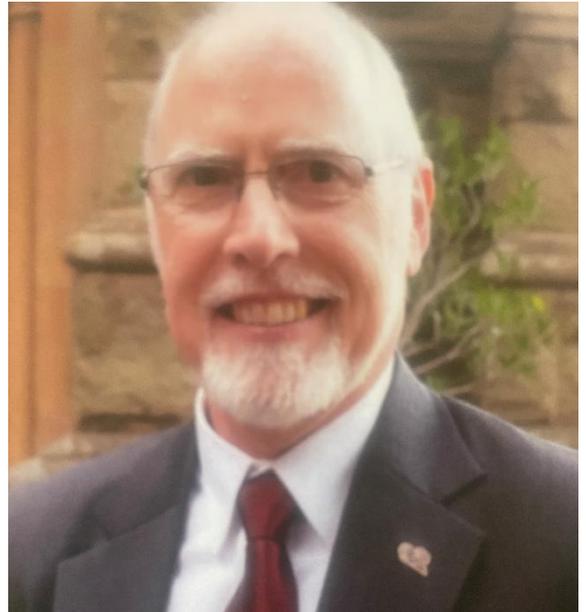
The photographs below show typical conditions in the sockets.



This inspection work went without a hitch, but in one pile, I discovered a large intrusion of clay on one wall of the socket. I suspended work and rang Peter - who had become our expert in socketed piles – to seek advice on what to do to ensure the integrity of the pile.

I rang him in the morning and he arrived in Orbost early that afternoon. He had flown down to Marlo which is only 15 km or so from Orbost.

I went down the pile and sent the bosun's chair back to the surface to collect Peter. As you can imagine, it was a bit of a squeeze for two fairly big blokes in such a confined space. Because of the noise of the pumps, we had to scream at each other and I guess we were down there for about a quarter of an hour before returning to the surface.



Once back on the surface, we discussed various options to ensure the design capacity of the pile. It was one of the piles located on land – and not the river – and I guess we were standing about five metres from the pile, when we heard a loud thump and the pumps were instantly silenced. We looked down the pile and saw that the socket had completely collapsed. Peter and I looked at each other – silently and ashen-faced – each realising that we had escaped death by about 10 minutes.

Peter stayed overnight in Orbost in our house out on the Snowy River flats. If I remember, we both drank a good bit of wine over dinner that night. The upshot of this experience was that manual inspection of the bases of large diameter piles was banned and other procedures were introduced.

Peter continued his work on the design of socketed piles in hard rock, and with assistance of Richard Evans, they developed design methods used for the piling of the elevated section of the West Gate Freeway in South Melbourne - for which I was the Project Manager. This time, we did not go down any of the piles! We worked very closely on this project in the construction and test loading of piles for axial loads and lateral loads to meet the tight design tolerances for the superstructures of the elevated structures.

Peter also conducted research on the approach embankments of the elevated bridges. The extremely poor ground conditions led to a limiting height of embankment of 1.5 metres. The embankments were built on soft silty clays known locally as Coode Island Silt. This material, up to 20 m deep, is highly compressible and settles considerably under constant load. It was decided to surcharge the road embankment to accelerate settling and minimize long-term movement. This surcharge was 2 to 2.5 m high above pavement level. This research directly influenced the length form of the elevated bridges. Approach structures were designed as a transition between the bridges and the approach embankments.

Peter also investigated improved methods for the design of laterally loaded piles which lead to significant savings for foundations for noise attenuation walls subject to wind loading.

In the early 1990s, we wrote two papers on the West Gate Freeway for the Institution of Civil Engineers in the UK. The first one was co-authored by Peter and myself, and the second one by Bernard Shepherd and myself. Bernard was the Principal of Europe Etude Gecti – a French firm contracted by the CRB to provide expert technical advice over the period of construction. The first paper was on the design and construction of the foundations and the second one was on the design of the substructure and the superstructure. Their papers were delivered in London in August 1991.

Bernard and Peter flew across to Paris (where Bernard had worked for about 20 years) but they only stayed for about eight hours. They landed at about 7 am on a Sunday and Bernard had arranged with one of his colleagues to pick them up to give them a six-hour motor tour of Paris. The two of them cackled about this experience for years after. They then flew across to London where I met them. I was working with the Overseas Projects Corporation at that time and I flew in from Thailand. We spent a couple of days knocking around and drinking Guinness stout at the Westminster Arms.

The papers were very well received and there was a considerable amount of correspondence after their presentation. Peter and Bernard flew back to France and I returned to Asia. Peter had been corresponding with people working in the French national materials laboratory on soil mechanics located in Rouen. They went there for a couple of days and then spent a few days in Paris before returning to Australia.

Peter and I were very pleasantly surprised to receive a letter from The Institution of Civil Engineers in July 1992 saying that the Council had awarded us the Baker Medal for our paper on the foundations. It said:

The medal was founded in 1934 in memory of Sir Benjamin Baker, a past President of the Institution, and is awarded triennially in recognition of services for the promotion of or otherwise in connection with the development of engineering practice or investigation into problems with which Sir Benjamin Baker was specially identified.

Sir Benjamin Baker KCB KCMG FRS FRSE (31 March 1840 – 19 May 1907) was an English civil engineer who worked in mid to late Victorian era. He helped develop the early underground railways in London with Sir John Fowler, but he is best known for his work on the Forth Bridge. He made many other notable contributions to civil engineering, including his work as an expert witness at the public inquiry into the Tay Bridge disaster. Later, he helped design and build the first Aswan Dam.



The Baker Medal

I went over to London to the Award Ceremony to receive our medals in November 1992.

By this time, Peter was the Manager of the Geotechnical Group at VicRoads but he was soon to join the Melbourne office of Douglas Partners. This was a company founded by Don Douglas in the early 1960s to provide geotechnical engineering and testing services. It provided specialist disciplines in all aspects of geotechnical engineering including g rock mechanics, contaminated land, groundwater, geophysics and earthworks. Peter became the Manager of the Victorian office.

Since our days at West Gate, Peter, Bernard and myself caught up for lunch every four or five months – even though we all had separated from CRB/VicRoads. We were bonded together through our various contributions to the project and enjoyed the gossip and scuttlebutt of what was going on - as well as good food and wine. Because of Bernard's Francophilia we usually patronised French restaurants – although we did find a couple of Irish pubs where we imbibed Guinness stout as we did in the heady days in London. They were very happy times and I will miss Peter's company. I am sure Bernard and I will continue with the tradition and Peter will be a great part of our conversation.

Peter was a great colleague and friend. He was calm and logical in his thinking and listened and gathered data with great attention. He inspired confidence in his colleagues and I never heard him speak ill of anyone. He was a gentleman.

I extend my sincere condolences to Sue and her family.

David Jellie

Vale David Williams (Follow-up)

[In Newsletter 272 we published some brief details about David's passing. His son, Michael has kindly provided this additional information]

David attended De La Salle Malvern and upon matriculation went to the RMIT to study Civil Engineering. After graduating he started his employment at the CRB, primarily in the High Street Building near the frequently visited watering hole, the Junction Hotel.

He worked on the design of the Mulgrave freeway, parts of the Hume Freeway, town bypasses and other projects. Around this time the family moved from Blackburn North to East Malvern where David lived until moving into medical care prior to his passing.

When the High Street building was vacated, David moved to 60 Denmark Street and later worked for a short period at the Prospect Hill Road outpost in Camberwell. In the mid 1980's David left the RCA to join the RACV at Noble Park, where he worked for many years on local issues and supporting the RACV view on road and parking initiatives. In the late 90's David suffered some minor health issues and took some time away from work at the RACV.

In the early 2000's David returned to VicRoads doing contract work, mainly in Bendigo, and travelled between there and Melbourne weekly. He continued with contracting until his ultimate retirement just before 2010. From then on, his health was not the best and spent his time mainly at home from this time on.

Apart from work, David umpired cricket for many years after his playing days ceased. He is survived by his wife Mary, who is in permanent care in Noel Miller Centre, Glen Iris. He had 3 children, Michael, Paul and Kate and 4 grandchildren - Nicholas, Sarah, Olivia and Jack.

Vale Joan Tucker - by John Wright

Joan passed away on 26 October 2025, aged 96. She joined the CRB in 1943 as a comptometrist. After she retired in 1988, Joan spent much of her time caring for her parents and later, working for the Uniting Church.

In 2016, when Joan was 87, she contacted David Jellie and later wrote him a letter, which formed the basis of an article he wrote about her in the June Newsletter of that year. Nine years later, Stan Hodgson alerted me to an article about Joan in the Uniting Church Newsletter *Crosslight* and I subsequently interviewed Joan in her Uniting AgeWell unit at Pascoe Vale. I published her updated story in the June Newsletter this year.

John Wright's work odyssey continued...

In early 1977, after years of office-based work I was eased into a supervision role, managing minor day-labour intersection improvements around Dandenong, such as new turn lanes and traffic islands. The small team of salaried CRB field personnel included an overseer, a pit builder, several labourers and a leading hand who could act as a temporary overseer.

While these men also operated hired pedestrian rollers and small compactors, larger mobile equipment, owned and operated by small contractors, were hired as needed. These included a front-end loader/backhoe, often a small grader for trimming pavement widening trenches, and at least one tip truck for re moving or delivering materials. The backhoe also functioned as a small mobile crane, lifting drainage pipes and heavy items.

Operators of specialist kerb and channel laying machines, pavement/concrete cutting gear, asphalt machines and under-road service duct installers were employed as needed on a contract basis. The jobs weren't big enough to have their own cost clerk, and day-to-day costing relied on information provided by the overseer to a cost clerk who might be costing several small projects in the area from a local office.

For a lot of my work then, I was effectively the fetch-it person for the overseer. I would come away from my initial on-site meetings with a notebook full of dictated needs, including site facilities like a lunch caravan, portable toilet, elevated fuel tank, signs, lights and barriers.

Many of these items came from the Syndal Depot, a huge CRB warehouse between Glen Waverley and Syndal, and it was my responsibility to order them from a thick manual. I learned about all sorts of sundry field equipment, like bass brooms, LHSM shovels (long-handled, square mouth), RMSH shovels (round mouth short handled); drums of 'Comprox' detergent (for washing signs), RRPMs (retro-reflective pavement markers) and so forth that were commonly used by road patrols and Day-Labour teams.

Often, I would liaise with local councils to arrange tipping facilities for unwanted excavated materials. I would also arrange supplies of fine crushed rock, asphalt, sand and cement, concrete pipes, reinforcing steel etc.

The overseers

Over the years, I met many of the CRB's front-line construction supervisors and always admired their abilities and expertise. They were the true road builders - hard men who led and were respected by tough crews. Some were hard drinkers as this was part and parcel of bonding with their men. Often away from their wives and children for long periods and living in isolated camps in country Victoria, many suffered from health problems, alcoholism and marriage breakups.

Not all of the heavy drinkers were construction workers. I heard several stories about camp cooks who came to the attention of Divisional Accountants after placing successive orders for cartons of lemon essence, which is mostly alcohol, ostensibly as an ingredient for cakes and desserts.

Joe Dean

The first overseer I remember meeting was Joe Dean, who was supervising the reconstruction of Kilmore's ancient main street back in 1958 when it was then part of the Hume Highway. At the time I was an 18-year-old draftsman accompanying Ray Adams, the Hume and Northern Highway sector engineer. Joe was a big, tall man with a deep voice, quietly confident in his ability to execute roadworks and manage men and equipment. Over the years I encountered him again, supervising works on the Maroondah Highway at North Croydon, and later at Narbethong.

Len Smith

I met Len when I was briefly staying in a construction camp on the Acheron Way at Warburton in the late 1950's. I was helping him set to out works while simultaneously preparing the plans of the major realignment he was constructing between Warburton and Cement Creek - barely managing to keep a step ahead of his advancing earthmoving equipment.

Len was an enormously capable, lively guy in his 40's whose face was lined with deep furrows. He told me it had got that way from being a 'trailblazer' dozer driver building new roads in the high country. This was always a very dangerous operation, which involved driving a bulldozer on steep side slopes, using a corner of the blade to make the beginning of a cut and fill road cross section. Some dozer operators had been killed when their dozer either toppled over or slid down the mountainside.

Rade

The first overseer under my control as an engineer was Rade. He was a highly experienced, older Yugoslavian man whose crew thought the world of him and regularly joined him after work at the Bridge Hotel in Dandenong. I was immediately impressed with Rade's ability to get things done with a minimum of fuss, and simultaneously grateful that he didn't ask me for advice that, given my inexperience, I was in no position to provide. I was happy to be his messenger boy.

Rade's favourite tippie was whiskey with beer chasers and when I joined him at the Bridge Hotel after work one afternoon, I noticed that within 15 minutes of his first drink, his speech became

unintelligible. When he occasionally phoned me at home after work, Sylvia would instantly know who he was. One morning I entered the lunch hut at a Dandenong jobsite to chat with him over a cup of tea. He had just opened a small briefcase and taken out an unlabelled bottle filled with clear fluid, which he was drinking. When I asked him what it was, he replied “medicine”.

Rade was driving home from the Bridge Hotel one evening when he collided with another car. Although he believed he was clearly in the right, only he was charged - for being over 0.05. He lost his licence and then became dependent upon his close friend and pit builder, Peter to drive him to work. Peter was then busted for being over 0.05 in a random breath test, and both of them had problems getting to and from the worksite in Dandenong.

A few years later, when Rade was supervising work on a new climbing lane at Garfield, I was asked by the Divisional accountant to deliver a pay packet to one of his workers who was about to go on leave. Rade’s team was due to knock off at 4 pm. Arriving at the site around 2.30 pm I inspected the works, spoke to Rade and left to return to the office. I was somewhere near Officer when I realised I had not given Rade’s worker his pay envelope. I sped back out to Garfield, arriving just after 3 pm and was stunned to see the site closed down, with all the lights, signs and barriers in place and no sign of the workers. As soon as I’d left, they had packed up.

I knew exactly where they were, and when I entered the Bridge Hotel in Dandenong, I found Rade and some of his crew, including the person going on leave. Halfway through giving Rade a huge serve for leaving early, I realised that he was already so far gone that my words were going straight over his head.

It seemed only a short while later that Rade had died (from liver failure, I recall) and I was attending his funeral in a little chapel on the western approach to Dandenong.

Don 1

I inherited Don from another engineer. He was overseeing a small project on a Monash Freeway off-ramp and told me at length of his belief that various engineering and supervisory staff were undermining and betraying him. Believing I was the only person he could trust, he subsequently bombarded me with notes and phone calls updating the latest, monstrous conspiracy against him.

Don’s signature (which is a strong indicator of a person’s subconscious self-image) on the notes he would send me, visibly and rapidly deteriorated. He was increasingly away sick, and I received letters explaining his absences – ostensibly from his wife, that I could see from the handwriting were actually from him (I was told by others that his wife had left him some time back). Not long afterwards, Don was superannuated out. Very sad.

Don Hughan

Don was the son of former VicRoads Superintendent of Works, Cyril, whom I had met when I was a draftsman in the late 1950’s. They both shared the same middle name, Sylvester.

Near Garfield on the Princes Highway was a hill where slow, westbound heavy vehicles often held up traffic. Like other jobs I was given, I was told just before the end of the financial year that funds were available to construct a climbing lane and that the work would need to be completed before the onset of winter. It was already the last month in summer.

Don was my overseer and we set up a small construction compound on the highway verge at the top of the hill. On our first walkthrough, Don took me into the heavily timbered verge and showed me a sad little grave and a neatly lettered cross he had made when his dog died here when he was working on a job, many years ago.

The pavement of the new lane was to be constructed from granitic sand, the same reasonably priced, natural material used in 1974 for the South Gippsland Highway works between Hampton Park and Cranbourne. The difference was that this time, the sand would be coming from a quarry on a large, rural property at Tynong, instead of Lyndhurst.

We were enjoying a cup of tea in the lunch hut one morning when a terrifying visitor arrived, screeching to a halt outside in his 4WD and storming in through the doorway. It was Graham, the owner of a large apple orchard across the road from us. Graham was a big man, well over 6 feet with hands like dinner plates and he was hopping mad. He told us our trucks delivering granitic sand were illegally using an unsealed back road that adjoined his property, and the dust was getting all over his apple trees, ruining his apples for sale to his biggest customer, Safeway. After we realised he wasn't going to kill us with his bare hands, I managed to promise that this practice would cease forthwith.

Not long afterwards, Don left to supervise another job and was replaced by Rade.

Granitic sand needs to have some fine, clayey material in it for it to stick together and work as a pavement. However, if there is too much 'sticky' (as the overseers called it), the pavement will deform under load when it is wet. Our laboratory was regularly testing the sand's Plasticity Index (PI), which should have been around 7 and certainly no more than 8. We hadn't experienced any problems with the granitic sand on the Cranbourne job and I wasn't expecting any here.

Most of the new pavement had been laid when I received a call from the lab tech that the PI of recent samples was somewhere above 11. Way too high. When I asked him how long the PI had been this high, he told me that it had been like this for a few weeks. It was my fault. I had been receiving his reports all along and had failed to notice the recent increase in the material's PI.

My boss John Glenn took my news of this major stuff-up calmly but said there was no question of removing the poor material. The solution would be to plough it all up and mix it in situ with a suitably graded crushed rock. However, before we could do this, winter rains set in and we had to barricade off the entire works and postpone the mixing operation until next spring.

While my lapse in attention probably didn't do wonders for my reputation as a construction engineer, I probably got off lightly in view of what had happened to a fellow engineer, Paul, who had been supervising paving works a few kilometres further east on the Princes Highway near the Bunyip River. I don't recall the exact details, but I gathered that like me, Paul had lost track of the PI of the granitic sand paving material being used on his job. He later received a chillingly formal letter from the *Board* expressing its Members' clear displeasure at the poor outcome of his supervision.

Sometime later, perhaps feeling his career prospects were circling the plughole, Paul left the CRB to take up a very successful career with Local Government. His lunchtime sendoff at the Beaconsfield pub was attended by most of the Division's engineering staff, who arrived back at the Nunawading Office around 3 pm, feeling no pain. They were greeted by a very angry Assistant Divisional Engineer, Raleigh Robinson, who had earlier been hard pressed to explain to the Chief Engineer, who'd called on some urgent matter, where all of his engineering staff were. I recall we were all subjected to an appropriate sanction but I can't remember what it was.

When the weather finally improved, the Garfield Hill job was re-started and successfully completed under the supervision of John Cunningham.

In early 1982 Don was working for me again, supervising a job near the GMH plant in Dandenong. I can't recall if, like his late father, Don had been a heavy smoker but he suffered badly from asthma and emphysema. The weather was very windy, blowing clouds of dust over the site. The dust proved to be the last straw for Don, who was admitted to hospital and placed on oxygen. I later heard that he had called in his family to say goodbye because the sheer effort of trying to breathe – even with medical help, was more than he could cope with. He asked for the oxygen supply to be removed and quietly slipped away. He was 45.

Delivering tenders

Most intersection jobs involved laying concrete kerb and channel on a levelled bed of compacted crushed rock. It required the use of a special, wheeled, concrete extruding machine with a hopper

at one end, a pump in the middle and a vibrating extrusion gate matching the desired kerb and channel profile at the other. It also required a skilled operator.

Well before these machines were needed on the job, I would prepare tender documents for the work and personally deliver them to each of the two known contractors in the Dandenong area. I think they decided amongst themselves who would get the job. One of these guys, Tony, was rumoured to be the head of the Mafia around Dandenong. He was a big, watchful man of few words and certainly looked like a person not to be trifled with. His crew were very respectful around him.

When I knocked on the door of his magnificent house in Scoresby to hand-deliver some tender documents, Tony was not at home and his lovely wife answered the door. She insisted I come in for a cup of coffee. I could hardly refuse and soon discovered that what she really wanted was to show me a beautiful ceramic tiled passage floor that had just been laid and that she was obviously delighted with. I uttered some appropriate words of admiration, but it was not enough.

She wanted me to take my shoes off and walk on the tiles to experience the warmth that was coming through them. I was walking around in my socks on the surprisingly warm floor when it occurred to me that this would not be a good look if big Tony should suddenly come through the front door (Honey, I'm home) and catch me with his wife, holding my shoes. I had this sudden vision of my shoes being encased in concrete while my feet were still in them and being lowered into the waters of Port Phillip Bay. I have never been so glad to walk out of a house.

The union rep.

We were working at the intersection of Princes Highway and Dandenong-Frankston Road, where much of a large, grassed island was being replaced with new turning lanes. Beneath the new pavement area, we encountered a deep layer of soft soil that seemed to go down forever (probably part of the original Dandenong Creek). It all had to be dug out and replaced with wet mixed crushed rock to a depth of nearly 2 metres instead of 500 mm design depth. The cost of this blew the budget for the job.

I arrived one morning as the crew were preparing to lay some kerb and channel. Big Tony was there with his machine, truck and crew, and there was an owner-operated grader, a pedestrian roller and a backhoe working along with Tony Amor's tip truck.

Suddenly a shortish fellow in a cardigan appeared onsite, announced himself as a membership officer for the AWU and strode around demanding to see proof of union membership. Most of the people working onsite were owner operators, not employees, and at least one refused to join the union, saying that it was pointless. It was straight extortion.

He then strode up to a tip truck from Pakenham Blue Metal, which had just arrived with a load of wet mix crushed rock for the next length of kerb and channel bedding. He told the driver that the job was 'black' and if he unloaded his truck the union would black ban his quarry. The driver asked me to who was going to pay for the load. I suggested that, as it was the AWU that was turning his truck away, the bill should be sent to them. While the union rep. was walking along the job site, our contract backhoe owner/operator came up to me and offered to 'accidentally' nudge the union rep. out into the oncoming traffic with his excavator bucket as he went by.

I reluctantly declined his thoughtful offer. As it turned out, the contractors reluctantly paid to join the union and I saw the guy collecting the fees in cash from Big Tony. I thought at the time that the union rep. was going to end up in Port Phillip Bay wearing new, somewhat heavier boots. But it was not to be. About 6 months later, the same AWU rep. turned up at our construction compound near Officer. He asked me if he could use the office phone. I had great pleasure in impolitely declining his request.

John Wright

Exploring the VRA Website – from the Editor

Back in the 70s, a historical TV show I enjoyed watching was called ‘Time to Remember’. It opened with a clock face and a metronome sound, with a very English voice slowly saying, *Things, places, people, faces – memories are made of this*. I think it perfectly sums up our website, which is already in demand from researchers as a valuable repository of Victoria’s road history.

For our members, the website is something else again. It represents a big part of our lives. The great things we helped make happen and the friends and colleagues who came into and out of our lives as we moved through the many branches of VicRoads and its predecessors.

In reading this Newsletter, you are either doing so via the VicRoads Association Website – where our Newsletters live, or because somebody has been kind enough to print it out for you.

For those who haven’t really explored the VRA site, I strongly recommend doing so each time you log in to read the latest Newsletter. It is a unique treasure trove of images and documents stretching back in time to our beginnings in 1913 and forward to our most recent social and technical outings. Thanks to ongoing member contributions, it is growing all the time.

Under the headings of the various bodies that came together as VicRoads in 1989 you will find a wonderful collection of faces, events, personal stories, newsletters, organisation charts, and even internal telephone directories from different periods. Below is an example, which is part of a page in the February 1979 Interchange magazine, which you can find in the CRB section.

Looking through the site, you will also appreciate that, despite the great work that has been done by Nick Szwed and also more recently, Patsy Kennedy to develop and populate the site, there are still many gaps yet to be filled in our collective history. If you have any photos, mementos, stories or documents that you think your fellow members would find interesting, please contact Nick or Patsy on nszwed@bigpond.net.au or Kennedp54@hotmail.com.



● After the speeches at the Christmas luncheon, HOSA President Robyn Martin gives the Chairman, Tom Russell, a Christmas kiss.



CHRISTMAS, WAY ...

CRB Head Office staff and their families started celebrating Christmas on Sunday, December 10, at the HO Children's Christmas party at Syndal.

On Friday, December 22, there were further celebrations for staff at the HO Christmas Luncheon.



LEST WE FORGET - by David Jellie

Below are the Second World War stories of two men who worked for the CRB.

Corporal James (Scotty) Allan, VX20555

James was the genial Depot Foreman at the Geelong Division of the CRB and was a beloved identity within the Board. He was born in January 1912 in a small town called Coaltown by Wemyes in Fifeshire, Scotland – hence his soubriquet, ‘Scotty’.

As a young man, he worked in a coalmine and in 1928, he emigrated to Australia and settled in the Kyabram district, working on the land and gaining a keen interest in agriculture. He even played a few years of Australian Rules football for Tongala.



Scotty Allan's paybook photograph – 1940.

He joined the army in June 1940 and saw service in Syria, New Guinea and Borneo (Balikpapan) with the Royal Australian Engineers, and it was in the service that he first gained his knowledge of dozer driving and construction and demolition work.

He enlisted at Wyuna (near Kyabram) in Northern Victoria and on his Attestation Form it states his occupation as bridge construction. He was posted to the 2nd/8th Field Company Engineers.

He undertook initial training at Puckapunyal and about a month after his enlistment he was admitted to the camp hospital with an injured right hand. He was discharged a week later but it must have been pretty serious as he was soon admitted to the Australian General Hospital in Caulfield where he received treatment for another three weeks.

In September 1940, he was appointed a Trade Specialist Group II Carpenter in Brighton. In February 1941, he embarked from Melbourne for the Middle East. Although the file gives no indication of his location, we know from his own anecdotes that he was in Syria. He spent a few days in hospital there with sandfly fever.⁵ Scotty spent three weeks recuperating before returning to his unit. On 11 March 1942, Scotty embarked on the USS *Westpoint* for Sydney.

He spent time in NSW, Victoria, Queensland and the Northern Territory (to what they describe as Lines of Communications Areas). He embarked from Townsville in May 1943 aboard the SS *Taroona* and landed in Port Moresby in New Guinea. In March 1944, he injured his right hand again. The report stated that he accidentally crushed his right hand while engaged as a member of a pile driving team when moving a hessian pad on top of a pile when the monkey dropped, crushing his hand.

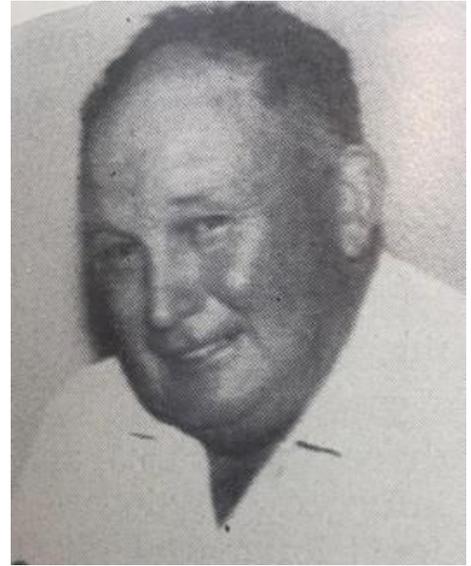
The report said *'The injury sustained is likely to cause permanent ill effects but not likely impair his future efficiency as a soldier. Corporal Allan was on duty at the time he sustained the said injury and there was no negligence, misconduct or failure to observe any act or regulation on the part of Corporal Allan.'*

⁵ Sandfly fever is a viral infection spread by mosquitoes. Most infected persons are asymptomatic. Small papules appear on the skin and persist for four or five days. Severe cases experience recurring bouts of fever. Recovery is slow and no specific treatment is available.

He arrived back in Australia not long after this incident and he was hospitalized in Sydney with malaria. In October 1944, Scotty relinquished his Group II Carpenter status and became a Grade I Operator Excavator and was appointed an unpaid Lance Corporal. He embarked from Cairns in May 1945 on LST 777 bound for Morotai and three weeks later he landed in Borneo. He embarked from Balikpapan in August 1945 and was discharged later in the year.

Following his discharge from the army in October 1945, Scotty joined the CRB as a grader driver in Benalla Division working in the Mt Hotham area on snow roads. Shortly after the formation of Geelong Division, he joined another CRB stalwart in Paddy Watts, and together they constituted the Geelong Divisional Depot staff. Under Scotty's leadership, the depot grew from humble beginnings to one of the largest in Victoria.

Scotty married Edna Pearl Stott in 1946, and he died in July 1991.



Scotty Allan on his retirement in 1965.

Craftsman Ronald (Ron) Ralph Arkley, TX8483



Ron started work at the CRB as a labourer on the Phillip Island suspension bridge at San Remo. He claimed that he was the first person to have reached the island by the suspension cable bridge in July 1940.

Ron was born in Launceston, Tasmania in February 1918 and enlisted in December 1941. There is confusion in the archives about the place of his enlistment. Some papers say Brighton in Tasmania and others say Euroa in Victoria. I think the former is correct because of his service number. His occupation was cited as 'winch driver with the CRB'. He was allocated to the 6th Field Regiment.

Ron's army career got off to a bad start in that he was fined twice for being absent without leave within the first three months of service. In March 1942, he was transferred to 110th Anti-Tank Regiment.

Ron Arkley's paybook photograph – 1941. His file continued to be littered with entries in red ink – indicating disobedience. Another four entries for absent without leave and one for disobeying an order from Sergeant Gray to stop throwing a medicine ball. He also failed to appear on parade one day. However, his last misdemeanor was in September 1942, and he did not infringe again during the rest of his service.

He undertook extensive trade training and did well as he continued to be recommended for further advanced training. From December 1942 to February 1943, he attended Adelaide Technical College after which he did another 12 weeks of training in motor vehicle mechanics. In May 1943, he qualified as 'Mechanic MT (presumably Motor Transport) Grade 2. His rank was Craftsman. This rank applies to any soldier who has a particular trade skill.

All of his service was in Australia – mostly in Victoria, but from March to October 1945, Ron served north of parallel 14.5 deg. south latitude in the Northern Territory. He was transferred to the 10th Australian Base Workshop AEMA and discharged from the Army in late 1945.

Ron married Mart Ellen McNamara in 1949.

After the war, Ron returned to the Board to carry out bridge works at Yinnar, Wye River, Swan Street, Richmond, and various other construction projects in Benalla, Horsham and Dandenong Divisions – before taking a temporary posting to Bairnsdale Division in 1953. For the next 30 years, Ron constructed, repaired and inspected every bridge and culvert structure in Bairnsdale Division.

His work took him from Bendoc to Marlo, Licola to Wallagaraugh and all places in between. His duties were not confined to CRB projects. All the shires in Bairnsdale Division sought his expertise and services to manage their bridge assets.

Ron's wealth of experience was used over the years in the training of supervising engineers in the practical aspects of bridge construction. He also trained many bridge contractors with mutual benefit to the contractor and the Board.

Ron died on 25 February 2008.



Ron Arkley being farewelled on his retirement by Bairnsdale Divisional Engineer, Neil Jephcott - 1983

David Jellie

New Members

The following new members have joined us since March 2025:

Tuan Hoang	Christina Koh	Melissa Ong	David Ryan	Ossie Martinz
Chris Parker	Jim Kierce	Sue Grosman		





"Oh, and that makes me feel even worse! ... I laughed at Dinkins when he said his new lenses were indestructible."



"Spider in the shower. Spider in the shower. Drama, drama, drama."



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	<input type="text"/>	Surname	<input type="text"/>
Address	<input type="text"/>		
<input type="text"/>	Postcode	<input type="text"/>	
Telephone Number	<input type="text"/>	Mobile Number	<input type="text"/>
E-mail address	<input type="text"/>	<i>Nominate an email address if you don't personally have your own</i>	
Emergency Contact Name	<input type="text"/>		
Emergency Contact Number	<input type="text"/>		

Employment in VicRoads and antecedent/previous organisations:

Date From	<input type="text"/>	Until To	<input type="text"/>
Organisation/s	<input type="text"/>		
	<input type="text"/>		
	<input type="text"/>		

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 support the purposes of the Association and comply with its rules of the association.

Signed

Date

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