

February 2020

RAAV Ravings



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Peer Dogs Take the Lead



Ambulance Victoria's newest recruits have been unveiled – 10 additional Peer Support Dogs to help with the mental health and wellbeing of employees.

They include three Golden Retrievers (Daisy, Chomp and Ted), two Labradors (Gracie and Angus), an Australian Shepherd (Skye), a Standard Poodle (Anna), an English Staffordshire Bull Terrier (Cash), an Old English Sheepdog (Millie) and a Groodle (Boomer).

Ambulance Victoria's first Peer Support Dog, Labrador Bruce (now seven years old), and his handler paramedic and peer support coordinator Ken Whittle, have visited hundreds of locations as part of the pilot program and helped nearly 3,000 paramedics.

The program started in May 2018 and is now being rolled out across the state with 12 dogs and handlers.

Ambulance Victoria Chief Executive Officer Tony Walker said the expansion was a significant milestone.

"Spending time with a peer support dog can help break down barriers and start conversations with our peer support staff that may not otherwise happen," Associate Professor Walker said.

Research shows emergency service workers report higher levels of depression, anxiety,

post-traumatic stress disorder and fatigue.

Bruce's handler Ken said since the introduction of the program, he had been "overwhelmed" by the "changes in people's faces" when they spent time with Bruce.

Each accredited peer support dog will work up to four shifts per month as requests for support are received.

Their handlers will return to their regular jobs when their dogs are not engaged in sanctioned "work" activities.

Peer dogs and responders are extensively trained for their roles and undergo regular supervision, assessment and refresher courses.

Any AV staff member who owns a dog and meets the criteria can apply to be part of the program

Take Care in the Smoke

Paramedics are urging people to take care with much of the state blanketed in smoke from bushfires.

Acting Director of Emergency Management Justin Dunlop said paramedics have seen a big increase in Triple Zero (000) calls to people with breathing problems.

"Last week we saw a 51 per cent increase in the number of people reporting breathing problems, and we think that's largely due to smoke," Mr Dunlop said.

"Breathing problems calls increased from an average of 187 per day to 282 yesterday, with a spike in the evening.

"Most of that increase was in Melbourne where there's a bigger population. Many of those we were called to were taken to hospital.

Children and people with pre-existing health conditions are at greatest risk.

"The children, the elderly, people with asthma, emphysema and heart disease are at a greater risk of being affected by smoke," Mr Dunlop said.

"If you have asthma or a lung condition and you develop symptoms such as shortness of breath, coughing or

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A Message from AV CEO Assoc. Prof. Tony Walker ASM



Hi everyone,

As I write this contribution, Victoria has been declared a State of Disaster for six Local Government Areas and Alpine Resorts with, multiple fires ongoing across the state. Needless to say, it has been a busy and confronting time for all emergency services and the impact for our communities is far reaching. Smoke haze continues to impact a number of communities statewide which leads me to remind anyone with a respiratory condition to take care, ensure you have a plan and access to medication.

Our Board Chair, Ken Lay will serve as the Bushfire Recovery Victoria (BRV) Chair as this new agency works directly with local communities to rebuild and recover from these devastating bushfires. AV will be undertaking a number of fund raising initiatives in support of those affected by the bushfires and we have launched our statewide Fire Recovery and Support Plan for our staff who are affected either professionally or personally.

Such events, whilst tragic also give us the opportunity to see stories highlighting the best of human nature, bravery and resilience. My personal gratitude and thoughts are with all emergency services workers on the frontline today.

Back In July last year I let you know about the TLC Ambulance project that will be supporting children with terminal illness, and their families, to participate in last wish activities such as a trip to the zoo or the beach, in a safe and supported environment. I am pleased to announce that the inaugural trip will be made this month. We have a great team of paramedic volunteers who will support this project and crew the ambulance for these outings which will mean so much to the children and their families/caregivers.

You might start seeing some promotion on Channel 9 for Season 2 of the TV show Paramedics due to air in February depicting a snapshot of what it's like working on the frontline and helps us get vital healthcare messages out to the community. The first season last year reached more than a million viewers a week. You will see some new faces in this next series and they do our profession proud.

Just a reminder of the Retired and Former Employee (RAFE) Peer Support program which is available to you should you need assistance at this time. you can continue to contact the RAFE on mobile 0428 332 418 or via email RAFEpeersupport@ambulance.vic.gov.au.

Your welfare is important to us.

Take care and stay safe.

Tony

We honour the following Ambulance Victoria Members who were awarded the Ambulance Service Medal on Australia Day:

Mr. William A BRIGGS, MS> Rain HISTEN, Mr. Terrence P MARSHALL,, MRS> Gail SHARP, MR> Lance F. SIMMONS, MS> Susan J WALSH, and MR, Kenneth J WHITTLE

Presidents Report



Welcome all members to another year and hope all enjoyed Christmas and the

New year. It's hard to believe that we are already close to the end of January.

We hope 2020 will be as good as previous years and that our membership continues to flourish.

Many thanks for your attendance at our final meeting of the year which was held at the Museum. We had 75 members present and also including Life membership presentations. The Museum captivated our interests especially the collection of vintage Ambulances and memorabilia, thank you to all that made this event very special to all.

The recent bushfires have seen much devastation throughout our regions and we have been in contact with many members that have been impacted with warnings of evacuations. We are pleased to say that every one of our members appears to be safe. If anyone knows of any of our members who need help please let us know.

We look forward to a good year ahead and continuing fellowship amongst our members.

Will try and meet up with you all at our regional meetings

Ian Donaldson
President

Take Care in the Smoke

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wheezing please follow your asthma action plan.

'If you are showing signs of a serious smoke inhalation injury you should be assessed immediately by a medical professional such as a paramedic or a GP,' Mr Dunlop said.

'Anyone with less urgent concerns about their health should seek medical advice or call NURSE-ON-CALL on 1300 60 60 24.

'Symptoms can include itchy eyes, sore throat and runny nose through to shortness of breath, coughing, vomiting, nausea, and confusion.'

People should guard against exposure to smoke by taking some simple precautions:

Stay inside your house if possible; close all windows and doors

If you use an air conditioner switch it to "recycle" or "recirculate"

Avoid exercise.

Ordinary paper dust masks and handkerchiefs won't filter out fine particles from bushfire smoke – use a special 'P2/N95' filter mask, which you can get at a hardware store but be sure they fit properly and you have no medical issues that would prevent use

District Meeting Dates

Our first District Meetings for 2020 are:

Geelong & Surf Coast - Wednesday 5th February 12 noon at Geelong RSL Belmont

Gippsland Region - Thursday 13th February 12noon at The Esplanade Hotel, 1 A'Beckett Street Inverloch

Central & Northern Victoria - Tuesday 18th February at Bendigo RSL commencing at 12 noon.

North East Victoria - Saturday 22nd February 12noon at Benalla Bowls Club

Metro North & East - Thursday 27th February 12noon at Wheeler's Hill Hotel, 871 Ferntree Gully Road Wheeler's Hill

South West Victoria - Monday 2nd March 12noon at Portland?

Ballarat & Central West - Wednesday 11th March 12noon at the Golf House Hotel

Metro - West District - Friday 13th March 12noon at Sunshine RSL

North West Victoria - Tuesday 17th March 12noon at Mildura RSL

Metro - South District - Tuesday 31st March 12noon at Frankston RSL, 183 Cranbourne Road Frankston



Birthday Greetings

February:

Peter Dent	1 st
Alfred Monk	3 rd
Bruce Hyatt	4 th
Colin Gaskell	5 th
Linton Johnstone	6 th
Lindsay Mc Coy	8 th
Peter Gregory	12 th
Danny Lumby	13 th
Alison Campbell	14 th
Terry Taylor	14 th
Neil Hall	15 th
Rhonda Oliver	16 th
Roger Vidler	16 th
Graham McRae	17 th
Ian Martin	19 th
Warren Moulton	20 th
Malcolm Zadow	20 th
Arthur Manning	21 st
Anthony O'Sullivan	21 st
Wendy Barry	22 nd
Gunther Moses	23 rd
Goffrey Cousins	24 th
Glenn Solomano	25 th
Les Wiles	25 th
John Ellerton	26 th
John Moss	27 th
Ian Mc Phail	27 th



Joseph Spronken	27 th
Leanne Russell-Jones	28 th
Max Brooker	29 th

March:

John Bosfelds	1 st
Eddy Kay	1 st
Bill Streegstra	1 st
Charles Mc Lean	2 nd
Ian Donaldson	4 th
John Parkinson	5 th
Stephen Mc Fadyen	6 th
Stephen Hutchins	8 th
George Prolongue	8 th
Anthony Deenen	13 th
Bernie Morrellini	13 th
Daniel O'Connor	15 th
Kevin Poole	15 th
Stan Sandford	18 th
Tony Davis	19 th

Howard Smith	19 th
Ray Neil	20 th
Len Starkey	20 th
Paul Chase	23 rd
Eric Schanessma	23 rd
Ray Tringham	23 rd
Jon Edwards	24 th
Ross Eastwood	25 th
Ted Giddings	25 th
Graham Ryan	25 th
Glenn Solomano	25 th
Chris Varley	25 th
John C Clancy	26 th
Robert Hood	27 th
George Hood	28 th
Charles Martin	28 th
Jim Yandle	29 th
John Brown	30 th
David Cooper	30 th
David Gawne	30 th
Stewart Blackburn	31 st

April:

Paul O'Toole	3 rd
Karen Young	4 th

Peter Croker	5 th
Bob Curzon-Siggers	5 th
Ian Cameron	7 th
Tim Kay	10 th
Pauline Leask	11 th
Frank Bonser	12 th
Gavin Hall	12 th
Keith Lloyd	12 th
Ted Mawby	14 th
Peter Moroney	15 th
Allan Jackson	16 th
Michael Mc Grath	16 th
Neil Barrett	17 th
Neale Johnson	19 th
Gregory Taylor	19 th
Merilyn Raft	20 th
John Allen	22 nd
Keith Humpfrey	24 th
Pat Kelly	24 th
James Osmotherly	26 th
Alf Greeves	27 th
Robert Gosden	28 th
Paul Lodder	28 th
Frank Abela	30 th
Laurie Campbell	30 th

With sadness we record the passing of:

Eric Edwards
Norma Gauhl (Wife of our late Member Ernie)

Payments to the Association

Please be aware that any payment made to the Association **MUST** have either your **NAME, INVOICE NUMBER** or **MEMBER NUMBER** for us to allocate the received amount. Failure to do so may render the sender to receive a reminder invoice which could be an embarrassment to both yourself and our accounts department.

Several payments have been made to our account with no idea who sent them To the Members who sent these payments please contact our Secretary to ensure the correct details are recorded and you are correctly credited with the payment.

District Reports

South West Victoria

The Christmas meeting of the RAAV in the SW was held at the Warrnambool Football Club rooms on Monday 2nd December with 19 people in attendance. There were 14 apologies.

It was good to see 5 prospective Members sign on the dotted line during the get together and I'd like to welcome Bill Atkinson, Tony O'Sullivan, Noel Brebner, Graeme Williams, and Ian McPhail to the RAAV.

Unfortunately Santa was not able to attend but Christmas wishes were passed on to all present and Members were alerted to the latest news from Melbourne. Now it's on to 2020 and next Christmas.

A good day was had by all.

Ray Loughheed
Convenor

Gippsland District

On Thursday 14th November we met at the Bairnsdale RSL for our final meeting of the year, with 16 Members present and several apologies. Those present were mostly regular attendees and we welcomed them along with those who took the opportunity to join us in Bairnsdale and a thank you to the Acting Team Leader, Jamie Watkinson, for spreading the word around the area. Information was distributed from the Museum to those interested.

Suzanne reported on the next Caravan Club for their upcoming trip to Bright at the end of April.

As this meeting was a success away from Morwell we are looking forward to next meeting in Inverloch.

We hope to see some Members from the West of the District.

Neil Hall
Convenor

Ballarat & Central West

On Wednesday 27th November at the Golf House Hotel we enjoyed the company of 8 Members and guests to the usual enjoyable meal and Christmas festivities. It was pleasing to have George and Joy Prolongue in attendance for our final lunch of the year.

We look forward to seeing all Members on Wednesday 11th March to celebrate Les Hotchin's Life Membership Award.

South Metro District

We had a very successful Christmas

Luncheon with 43 Members attending. The day started well with Ian Donaldson and Christine joining us along with Laurie and Janice Henry who had three of their family with them to see Laurie receive his Life Membership.

The day created a record with seven Members receiving Life Membership which were presented by Doug Quilliam representing Ambulance Victoria.

I need to congratulate Doug on the manner he presented each award he recalled his first meeting with each recipient some 30 or 35 years when he joined the Ambulance Service well done Doug.

I wish to inform Metro South Members of the change of venue of our next Meeting it will be held at the Frankston R.S.L. in the Four Seasons Bistro on the 31st March 2020.

Bryan Cass Metro – South, Convener

West Metro District

Friday 22nd November at the Sunshine RSL saw 12 members and guests attend for our final lunch of the year. We were also fortunate to accept two new members into our Association on the day and look forward to gaining more members as our network expands in the West of the Metro area.

Central & Northern Victoria

The November meeting was held on Wed 18/11/19 at the Bendigo RSL. The meeting was again well supported with 24 members and partners attending. Of special importance was the presentation of yet another Life Membership. This time to Jock McRae. That makes five Life Memberships presented in the past 12 months. Must be something in the water here in Bendigo. Nothing else to report from this meeting but as always, the day was enjoyed by all.

Peter Briscoe
Convenor

North East Victoria

Saturday 23 saw us meet at the Benalla Bowls Club for our usual lunch.

How quickly do those 3 months go! We had a slightly smaller group this time around, but everyone had an enjoyable couple of hours catching up.

Because of the bushfires that have been experienced around our Alpine regions I hope that the February meeting will see some more of our members attending, just to get away from it all and CHAT.

I was sad to receive a call from the daughter of Eric Edwards (ex-Moorabbin) in Euroa to tell me Eric had passed. I'm sure those who knew him will remember

Eric for his sense of humour, jokes, and some will be aware of his poetry! Take care everyone.

Leanne Russell-Jones
Convenor

Geelong and Surf Coast District

Our 4th. December luncheon was attended by some fourteen members & their partners. Visitors were Duncan Erwin Acting Regional Director Barwon South West & Vice President Mike Williams.

Ten apologies did show the Geelong flu season was at last beginning to wane, leaving some members currently seeing it off with GP support systems. One was heading up the Murray for Cod opening Season, annual holidays & cruises taking the rest.

Our thoughts on the day reflected among those members remaining yet to gain better health, along with those having had the bereavement of a loved one.

Duncan Erwin was in attendance to present a Life Membership Certificate to Peter Cain.

Peter having commenced his ambulance involvement as many of us had done, via the volunteer pathway. Mike Williams offered a valued line of communication from Committee.

Members welcomed & enjoyed the company of our latest member John Clancy. John having been well versed around the State over the years had much to recall or share, in bringing many recognised names of past peers into conversations.

This 2019 bi-monthly get together was for us the last of many years. It was agreed at this luncheon to the suggestion of President Ian Donaldson; we should now follow other State Branch's by switching to a quarterly time frame. *We will commence February 2020.*

Since our luncheon, 6 members travelled by bus to visit the Ambulance Museum. Again our appreciation is directed back to members of Committee President Ian Donaldson & Secretary Ian Cameron who between them, gained strong support backing from AV's CEO Tony Walker. Thanks Tony.

I was interesting to see Geelong members mingle among some seventy of their past peers, all wandering among the ancient chariots of old, one might believe if cameras had sound there would be many recorded stories shared from Mayfield onward.

I did hear one recall mentioning the vacant front row seat if Frank Archer was doing the lecture. Removing chalk dust from blue uniforms did bring about a quick learning.

District Reports

Chas Martin & his team must be acknowledged for the amount of solid work completed in past years, along with encouragement to the forward planning discussed at our visit. Inclusive appreciation of Home Made Scones [thanks ladies]. This G&SC Branch is looking for venues we might visit as a group between luncheons, or for peer groups we might host – Geelong RSL now having been remodeled well into their future planning.

Ben Wright
Coordinator G&SC Branch.

East & North Metro District

For the final meeting of the year of what was to be the Metro General Meeting we moved the venue to the Ambulance Historical Museum in Bayswater. With advising all Members of the change we were please to loose count of the attendees, which was over 65 in total. Many Members travelled from Regional area of the state to attend and we were well encourage by the feed back from all. During the proceedings we honoured 3 Members with Life Membership, Neale Johnson, Bill McNally, who travelled from Tasmania to attend, and John Brown. We also honoured Bill McKnight for his 12+ years service to the Committee. With the change to our format for 2020 our first lunch will be conducted at the Wheelers Hill Hotel on Thursday 27th February. During this lunch a discussion will be encouraged to establish if the North and East Metro Districts will stay as one or divide and have separate luncheon meeting spaces.

New Members

We are pleased to welcome the following New Members to our Association.

Gregory Bamford - Dimboola
Dianne Rock - Edithvale
Michael Hill - Wangaratta South
Graham Lewis - Cheshunt
Douglas Martin - Irymple
Stan Medew - Capel Sound
David Cooper - Frankston
William Atkinson - Warrnambool
Noel Brebner - Camperdown
Graeme Williams - Warrnambool
(Yes a second Graeme Williams)
Anthony O'Sullivan - Warrnambool
Ian Mc Phail - Warrnambool
Russell King - Pascoe Vale South

We look forward to welcoming all of you, our new Members, to a luncheon meeting soon.

RAAV Caravan & Motor Home Club



I hope everyone had a great Christmas and New Year and are looking forward to 2020.

I want to inform you of our next get away which is at Bright from the 30/4/20. The booking is for 7 days but people can decide how long they wish to stay

The park that has been booked is the Bright Pine Valley Tourist Park, 7-15 Churchill Avenue, Bright. The phone number is 0357551010.

Those who wish to attend will need to book themselves and then contact Suzanne Hall not me on 0413132967 to let her know if you have booked so that she can keep an eye on the numbers. Suzanne is organising this get away.

If you wish to stay in a cabin you will need to do that ASAP as we are attending Bright during the Bright Autumn Festival so cabins will be at a premium.

The cost of the park is \$40 per night and dogs are welcome and you will be required to pay a deposit on booking.

We are off to Daylesford in October but more of that getaway later in the year.

Anne and I look forward to seeing everyone at Bright.

Committee Matters

Welcome all to the 2020's . We, the committee, trust that this year and the rest of the decade is a successful time for each and everyone of you, your families and friends.

So far this year has not commenced as we would hope with raging bushfires engulfing various parts of the State and interstate. We have been following all our members in the effected areas and have offered assistance as and or when needed. To date we can say no Members have lost houses or property. However with the fire season still to reach its high point we are hoping all of you will be safe and secure.

Should any Member need assistance, our Peer Support and Welfare Liaison personnel are ready and willing to be available. Even if you just need someone to listen, a shoulder to cry on or someone to stand beside you in silence. - WE ARE HERE.

I, too, am feeling the burden of close family who have lost house, sheds and a business through these fires in the South Coast of NSW. I understand and yes we need each other at times.

On much brighter notes. You will read that we have had quite an influx of new Members over the past 3 months. This is very encouraging and with the continued growth of our Association we can expect to see many more joining our ranks throughout this year and beyond. If any Member knows of a former Ambulance employee PLEASE make contact and guide them towards joining and becoming part of our great "Family".

I would like to advise that for the lunches to be held during February and early March we may have difficulty in providing a Committee Member to attend and give advise due to two Committee Members undergoing health care and myself being in the USA for a short holiday with my son. We will endeavour to fill as many commitments as we can for these lunches.

Finally we will be following up on the hearing survey held late last year and we will be sending another form with more information requirements with names and addresses to be added so that we can commence a class action if required.

Ian Cameron, Secretary

Retired and Former Employee Peer Support Program

Although your direction has changed, we still share the same journey.

The Retired and Former Employee (RAFE) Peer Support Program is a new program available to all former employees of Ambulance Victoria.

The program allows volunteers to provide confidential support to previous employees who have retired or resigned and assist in linking them into appropriate support if requiring counselling or experiencing mental health issues.

RAFE volunteers are *not* qualified counsellors and are unable to make psychological assessments, but they do have great listening and communication skills that allow them to assist those who are seeking help.

Ambulance Victoria encourages all former employees to engage with this service – which is free – if they feel they require help. To contact the AV Retired and Former Employee Peer Support Program

Email: RAFEpeersupport@ambulance.vic.gov.au

Available 9am – 5pm daily.

Access FAQ'S [here](#)

The RAFE Program is not a crisis service. If you are in crisis please contact Lifeline on 13 11 14 or if there is an immediate risk, dial Triple Zero (000).

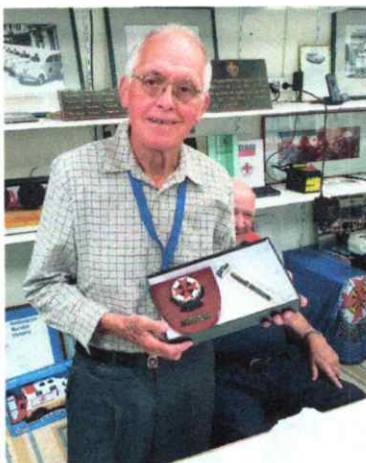
Feedback forms have been developed to collect information to assess the effectiveness and level of client satisfaction with AV's RAFE peer support services or to services you may be referred. The information you provide will be used to ensure that procedures, protocols and training are meeting the needs of previous AV employees and will help us to continue improving our services. The surveys are designed to be anonymous and individuals will not be identifiable through the responses they provide. Please select the relevant link below and tell us your latest experience with the services provided by the RAFE team OR other service you may have been referred to via RAFE peer support.

[2018/19 RAFE Peer Support Satisfaction Survey](#)

[2018/19 VACU Session Feedback Form](#)

[2018/19 Chaplaincy Satisfaction Survey](#)

Editors Note: The links may not work in this document - Please go to AV website or contact RAFE Co-Ordinator for assistance



At the final lunch held at the Ambulance Museum, Bayswater on the 11th December Bill McKnight was honored with a Special Award for his 12+ years service to the Committee



Tuesday 3rd September saw Laurie, his wife Janice and members of his family attend Steeples in Mornington.

His family enjoyed the pleasure of witnessing Laurie's Life membership presentation



The Tree Musketeers:
Neville Lloyd, Alf Greaves & Mike McGrath, all commenced their Ambulance careers on the same day.

Members not in good health

John Head
Ian Donaldson
Ray Neil

We wish all Members a speedy recovery

Life Members Awards - 2019



Graham (Jock) McRae receiving his Life Membership Award from Regional Director, Michael Georgiou (Loddon-Mallee) 13th November 2019 at Bendigo.



Neale Johnson receiving his Life Membership Award from Senior MICA Manager, Doug Quilliam on Wednesday 11th December



John Brown receiving his Life Membership Award from Senior MICA Manager, Doug Quilliam on Wednesday 11th December



Marion Ray, wife of Neil Ray accepting Neil's Life Membership award on his behalf due to ill health. Assisted by John Head, Committee Representative and Trevor Weston Acting Regional Manager Barwon South West.



Peter Cain receiving his Life Membership from Duncan Erwin Acting Regional Director - Barwon South West on Wednesday 4th December



William (Bill) McNally receiving his Life Membership Award from Senior MICA Manager, Doug Quilliam on Wednesday 11th December



On Tuesday 3rd December at Steeples In Mornington we were honored to have Doug Quilliam, Senior MICA Manager present the Life Membership awards to (Left to Right, top to bottom) Alfred Greaves, Laurie Henry, Peter Watson, Morrie Browne, Michael Mc Grath, Neville Lloyd and Stan Methers.

The Back Page

**Retired Ambulance Association
of Victoria Inc.**

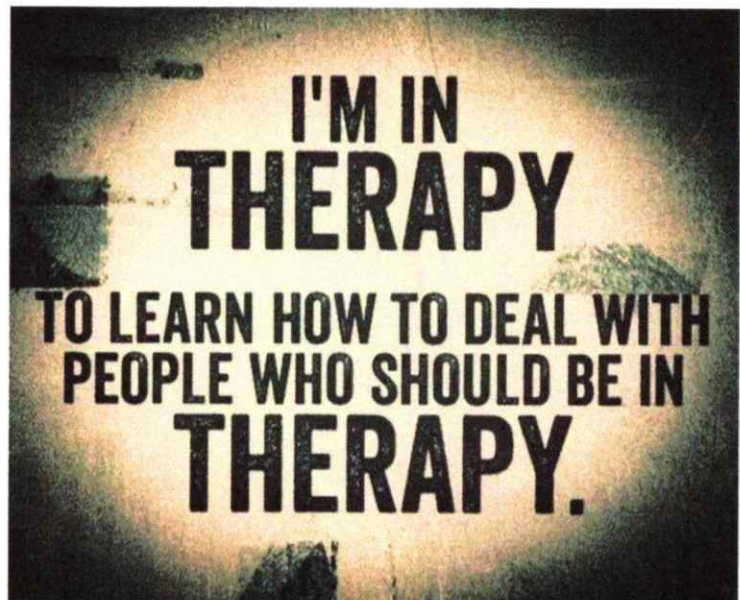


Committee of Management

President: Ian Donaldson
Vice President: Mike Williams
Secretary: Ian Cameron
Assistant Secretary: Jim Ballard
Treasurer: Ben Ellis

Committee Members:

Les Wood
John Clancy
Steve Mulligan
Greg Wood
John Head



**I got called 'pretty'
today!
Well actually the full
statement was
'you're pretty
annoying'
But I only focus on
positive things**

www.retiredambulancevictoria.org.au

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**Facebook: Retired Ambulance
Association of Victoria Inc.**