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## *Retired Ambulance Association Victoria Inc.*

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# RAAV Ravings

December 2023 Vol. 4



### *President's introduction and welcome*

I take this time to thank my fellow members for their trust in appointing me to the position of President of the Retired Ambulance Association of Victoria.

My name is Greg Wood and I was first employed in the Ambulance Service in January 1978. I was one of the first ambulance officers to be trained under a Certificate of Applied Science and my group was given the designation of '1C'.

I have served at many locations during my ambulance life. I was appointed as Station Officer in the Ambulance Communication Section located in Latrobe Street Melbourne. I spent some 13 years in this area and was on duty at the time of the Russell Street bombing.

With the closure of this section and the move to Intergraph I was moved back to 'on-road' operations at the Springvale Branch.

Due to an injury, I spent my last 7 years with the Driving Standards Team, a position I thoroughly enjoyed.

Due to unplanned circumstances, I retired from the Ambulance Service in 2012.

I am passionate in maintaining a program of service to my esteemed colleagues, particularly but not limited to welfare and well-being and as such, we the Committee of the RAAV, are continuing to implement further services to others in this area.

## **An Introduction to your Committee.**

So, you've just met our new President, now in no particular order here's the rest of the gang supporting his vision.

### **Secretary**

We thought that as your new committee we should introduce ourselves to you. We have a new direction which we hope that you will participate in. First and foremost, this is your Association so we would encourage our members to speak up and be a part of the running and guide us with our direction. First of all, we'd like to hear from you regarding our newsletter's title. Do you like "Ravings" or would you like to see something different to represent our information carrier? Please let us know either a yes or no or even a suggestion. Please email me on raav.secretary@gmail.au and we'll let you know by the next newsletter in March.

### ***Jim Ballard - Secretary***

Hi, My name is Jim Ballard, I am part of an ambulance dynasty with my father (John Sr), my brothers (Pete and John) and my brother-in-law Darrell Douglas all having worked in the Victorian ambulance industry. My Uncle Chas was an ambulance officer in London, as was my father before we emigrated to Australia, and my sister Jackie was a registered nurse.

I started work in 1974 at age 17 as a cadet ambulance officer at the then Peninsula Ambulance Service. My introduction to ambulance was with Senior Station Officer Peter Watson walking into the boardroom and giving us the rounds of the kitchen and frightening the heck out of us as young kids. It obviously didn't work as my association with ambulance lasted 42 years.

I stayed at 'PY' for 10 years before moving to Sale in East Gippsland. During my time in Gippsland I worked mainly in Sale. I was appointed as SO Comms in 1986 and during the 'Kennett' years the control rooms were amalgamated, from this our Sale Comms was closed and I was subsequently appointed Station Officer at Sale an on-road position I shared with Ken Curtis.

Due to government initiatives a push was on for Ambulance to become involved in Quality Assurance, each region required a representative on a VASA committee and I was Gippsland's representative. I went on to study Business Management at Monash and QA at RMIT becoming RAV's Quality Manager in Ballarat after the regional ambulance services were amalgamated in 1998.

In 2003 I returned to Gippsland as the Team Manager at Maffra, this was a single officer response branch with ACO accompaniment and a real learning curve for me. After many years of pushing, we finally achieved more staff which blossomed from initially myself as the only permanently appointed officer at the branch to the present day where 10 is the minimum and many more attached to the branch on admin status.

I retired in 2016 and look back on my career with fondness and some of the characters I have met along the way, in particular those at 'PY'.

My current position with RAAV is as Secretary. I have taken over the mantle from Ian Cameron who did a sterling job for so many years, he truly is a hard act to follow. Our new committee is focused on delivering a service for our members, that is, democratic, supportive and reactive to our members' needs. This means that we need everyone in our organisation to participate in making our Association great.

As a by-line, like many of our members I couldn't have achieve any of this without the support of my wife and family, this is why I place great value in our spouses coming along with us to our luncheon meetings, they truly deserve our adoration as they've been there with us and they understand the foibles, hardships and intricacies of the job.

### ***Graham Douglas - Membership Officer***

Having completed General Nursing at the Western General Hospital in August 1977, I joined Ambulance Service-Melbourne as a 1C "Bionic" early the following year. I graduated after spending the obligatory time at HQ in LaTrobe St and at City Branch. Most of my shifts were spent at Altona, Sunshine & Footscray branches and at MICA 3 from 1982 until I went into Rosters in LaTrobe St. I resigned for reasons of the heart in late 1989.

I moved to Sydney and back into nursing in the O.R Anaesthetics & Recovery for 12 month, this was long enough.

Donna and I married in August 1991 raising two boys, one of whom is in the W.A Police, our eldest is a free spirit to date.

I worked in real estate for 18 months until Medtronic realised they wanted me to sell and assist in the implantation of pacemakers and defibrillators. From there I worked in Medical Sales and Marketing for the remainder of my working life.

I've started the Cardiology Division in Australia for the world's largest privately owned medical company, and was the "clinical interface" for a technology company developing the first electronic medication management systems for the aged care industry.

I had an unproductive year nursing the "black dog". I went back to working where I taught aged care staff to use client management software until a diagnosis of multiple myeloma in 2017 ended my working life. I'm fortunate in that it's been dormant since my transplant in 2018.

We moved back to Victoria that year and we are both enjoying the regional lifestyle.

Since taking on the role of RAAV Membership Officer I have been able to reconnect with guys I hadn't seen for 30 odd years, once an ambo always an ambo, it doesn't leave you when you leave the job. Just ask Donna next time you see her!!

With my technology background I'd like the organisation to be more technology savvy and to use it to make administrative processes more efficient for the benefit of the membership. To bring all Ambulance employees into the organisation is a goal of mine, it's not a group just for old men, there are local Men's Sheds if people want that.

I look forward to meeting more of you younger people in the not too distant future.  
Cheers!!

### ***Ben Ellis - Treasurer***

My name is Ben Ellis, I have been RAAV Treasurer since October 2019.

Prior to joining Ambulance Service Melbourne (ASM) in 1981 I'd spent 20 years in the Banking Industry to Accountant level.

My Ambulance career has been as follows:-

I had 15 years working with ASM/MAS as an Ambulance Officer/ Clinical Instructor, I then transferred to the Ambulance Officers' Training Centre for 2 years teaching under the Advanced Diploma of Health Science programme

I also worked for 10 years as a Lecturer in the DAPS & Bachelor programmes at Monash University.

After leaving emergency ambulance work/teaching I then worked for 5 years as a casual in Non - Emergency Patient Transport (PSV).

I am a keen supporter of the direction our new committee is moving which is to serve our members in the best possible way.

### ***David Hadj - Assistant Secretary***

I am married have 4 children and 6 grandchildren

I believe the RAAV is an important forum for ambulance personnel, families and other associated people as it helps maintain contact with like-minded people, it assists in the welfare and well-being of those within our membership that need assistance and it provides an outlet for social activities when the career has ended.

Here is a brief history of some of my achievements. Between 1989 until 1992 I was the Assistant Station Officer at Lilydale. From 1992-1993 I was the Station Officer at Cranbourne branch.

I was the appointed Team Manager at Lilydale from 1993-2002.

From 2002-Sept 2020 I was Duty Manager in the Communications Centre at Tally Ho Burwood (I also worked at BALSECC at Ballarat when that facility was first opened)

During my employment I also had the opportunity to work in other areas such as Clinic Transport, project work and in higher duties such as Group Manager and within the Emergency Management Unit.

### ***Les Wood - Purchasing Officer***

My name is Les Wood, I'm married to my wife Barbara, and we have one daughter Lauren who is an Occupational Therapist.

I worked in the Stockbroking Industry for 9 years before I joined the then ASV in June 1977. I did my basic training at Vale St in Richmond and had approximately 2 years at HQ in Latrobe St Melbourne. Along the way I had various stints at Caulfield, Waverley and Northcote branches before gaining a permanent spot at Camberwell branch. In the early 80s I transferred to a newly opened branch at Nunawading.

I retired in 2012 as an ALS qualified officer. I'm pleased that I have worked with a real mix of personalities! There was always great camaraderie, which has made it so enjoyable catching up at our lunches along with fellow retirees within the RAAV Caravan Club.

My position on the RAAV committee sees me handling our extensive range of quality merchandise which I encourage you to check out on our web page!

***Steve Mulligan - Vice President (Wellbeing & Welfare)***

I arrived in Melbourne on Cup Day 1978 from NZ. With a 10-year history of involvement both as a competitor and lifeguard with NZ Surf Lifesaving.

I was recruited into Ambulance Service Melbourne (ASM) in 1981 with the 16C intake, worked mainly at City Branch and Caulfield. I was fortunately selected for the 1986 MICA intake which saw me working mainly south of the Yarra, predominately at MICA 2. I helped to establish the MICA Paramedic Response Unit at Moorabbin which became MICA 10.

I was appointed as Team Manager at MICA 7 before working at Doncaster Communications Centre as a Clinician. Relocated the Richmond Team to Epworth Hospital. With the support of Central & Windsor MICA Team Managers we were able to establish and consolidate the MICA SRU response for Melbourne City and surrounding suburbs.

One of the early Duty Team Manager at Tally Ho (Intergraph) Communications Centre was part of the AV team that established the clinical audit process for the recently implemented ProQA call taking and dispatch system.

After returning to Richmond, succumbed to a work-related back injury, a curse for many who have worked in the medical field. Injurie did not allow for on-road work therefore escaped MAS in 1999.

Spent the next 20 plus years developing and providing emergency medical training programs for Medical Practices be they BLS, ALS or scenario-based courses &/or workshops.

A key goal is to build upon the work of previous Committee members and develop the RAAV Wellbeing & Welfare Program to benefit of all our members.

***Julianne Casey - Committee person***

I'm Julianne

I'm excited to be on the Committee and am hoping that we can bring RAAV into a new and rewarding direction. A direction where we can provide members with access to a range of resources and opportunities they may find beneficial. There is also an importance that members feel they are in a relaxed and inclusive atmosphere.

A little about me:

I served in the Army Reserve for 8 years filling Reserve obligations as well as Full Time duty. My Unit was Catering and on loan to Ordnance. When not cooking I was Recruiting. During this time I had 2 children.

In 1999 I attended AOTC to be able to work in the Non Emergency Ambulance and in 2006 went to MUCAPs for extra study. I worked with Ambikab, VPT, Wilsons and finally NPT until I became severely injured.

After many surgeries and unable to return to work, I decided to study. I was extremely keen in gaining medical knowledge wherever I could find it

I gained qualifications in Massage Therapy, Dip Community Services, Cert 4 Pathology Collection, Training and Assessment and Dip Paramedical Science Anaesthesia.

I volunteer as a Legatee with Mornington Peninsula Legacy Club and have War Widows under my care. I also belong to a Veterans group which I find extremely rewarding. I was studying to become a Veterans Advocate but unfortunately have put this on hold for the moment.

My interests are Gardening and Complementary Therapies.

### ***John Head - Committee person***

I started with Victorian Civil Ambulance Service on November 10, 1975 at the Mayfield Training Centre.

After the initial 3 weeks of training, I was posted to Headquarters for 3 months with SO1 John DeBoer as my training officer, from there I was posted to Preston Branch for the next 3 months.

After my initial postings I was fortunate enough to have 12 years at Broadmeadows Branch. I worked a further 5 years at City Branch, which also included taking on Communications Training.

After HQ moved from Latrobe Street to Doncaster, I was posted to on a full time basis in Communications. I worked in Comms for approximately 6 years until the arrival of Intergraph when I was placed back on the reserve roster, this entailed working most of the Metropolitan area until late 1998 when I was seconded by a senior officer to the position of Equipment Officer which I held until my retirement in 2016.

### ***Gary Grant - Senior Chaplain AV***

AV Senior Chaplain Gary Grant has been seconded to assist the RAAV Committee

To date, he has been 'observing' at meetings over a number of months and recently became a member of RAAV, being the very first serving member of Ambulance Victoria to do so.

Gary's involvement highlights the refocused direction of the organisation under a rejuvenated Executive and the wider Committee.

Gary brings a wealth of experience from the pastoral care and welfare sectors. He will assist and provide advice to the Committee as we develop our Wellbeing and Welfare Support programme.

Gary particularly enjoys Ambulance humor and the 'tall tales'.

Please welcome him to the RAAV organisation.

### **Secretary's Brief.**

This is a special edition of our newsletter which will evolve over time. The Committee are keen for all of our members to be involved in aspects of your association, as such we'd like to run a competition for the most inventive and pertinent name for our newsletter, there will be a prize which we will announce soon. I guess we also need some feedback as to the formatting and content; future copies are expected to expand as we develop. I'd like to acknowledge Peter Dent who has been a great support with assistance for this fledgling edition.

Lastly, on behalf of the RAAV Committee we would like to wish every one of you a joyous Christmas and a safe and happy New Year. Please don't forget to reach out to us if there is any assistance that we can help you with. We also have a developing network of welfare assistance and our AV supported chaplains' are also available.

We will be out and about in the New Year and we hope that we can catch up at one of the lunches in 2024. Please stay safe, and for our men folk - stay off of ladders.

### **RAAV Feedback**

Members' comments, suggestions and enquiries are encouraged, please send them in to [raav.secretary@gmail.com](mailto:raav.secretary@gmail.com) and we will endeavor to forward a direct reply or with permission print enquiries in the next newsletter.

### **What's happening around RAAV**

A great many things have been occurring since the investiture of our new Committee. Communication with our members is key to us and our membership and one of the hardest hurdles to jump is the email system. As many of you will know we have great difficulty sending email to @bigpond addresses. We are trying to overcome this but there is a significant impediment between our gmail and bigpond. We are looking at ways to address this and this may be resolved with us changing away from our gmail provider. We'll let everyone know when we have some firm changes to announce.

Ron Arbon



Congratulations to Ron Arbon on being awarded RAAV Life Membership in November 2023. Ron is being awarded his certificate by RAAV Secretary Jim Ballard. Ron was unable to make it to his regular Bendigo luncheon due to ill health so we proudly made the presentation at Ron's home with his wife Pam witnessing the event.

Kevin Sadler

Former Station Officer, 90 y.o, Kevin Sadler attended his first RAAV luncheon on Tuesday Dec 5th, accompanied by his son, Michael.

Some two hours of reminiscing later, a good portion of that time with his first training officer, one Russell "Mr. Melways" King, Kevin was presented with his Lifetime Membership Award by the RAAV President Greg Wood.



Bryan & Dawn Cass also received awards for outstanding & dedicated service to RAAV over the past 8 years. Their awards being presented by Ben Ellis, RAAV Treasurer.

Bryan is the Coordinator for RAAV's Metro-South District, today's luncheon was attended by over 44 local members.

Thanks for hosting a great luncheon Bryan, the Committee appreciates all your efforts.



## **Wellness and Wellbeing**

The incoming RAAV committee have engaged in considerable discussion on how we can improve upon RAAV's current welfare program.

Previous Committees and individuals have laid a solid foundation of welfare support which currently exists of;

- Welfare Officer and a small number of Welfare Liaison people providing support in times of need.
- RAFF Peer Support Program. Implemented following an approach from RAAV to AV to support Members requiring psychological support from work-related traumatic and non-traumatic injuries and/or critical incidents. RAFF is an integral component of AV's Mental Health and Wellbeing Action Plan 2022-2025.
- Chaplaincy and Pastoral Care which includes both AV appointed and volunteer Chaplains representing a broad range of denominations and multi-faith.

The core of these discussions focused on *“what are the key needs of RAAV Members in addition to on-going Mental Health and Wellbeing support?”*

Two key points became obvious, we are an aging group, initially formed to maintain an on-going *“social connection”* with our work colleagues and our *“wellbeing”* as we navigate the inevitable aging process.

Hence the terms *“Wellbeing and Welfare”* and *“Mates looking after Mates”* evolved. A quick review of support programs that target for first responders across all emergency services, focuses on the mental health aspect of wellbeing and quite rightly so.

There does not appear to be any programs that caters for aged related medical conditions be they chronic or acute situations.

What is being proposed with the term “Wellbeing and Welfare” is aimed at more encompassing of the type of support we would like to offer to RAAV members and their families.

“Mates looking after Mates”.

The vision/plan being formed is a network of members in every RAAV district supporting/working with District Coordinators and the members of that district. This support could simply be catching up for a coffee and chat, getting older members to district lunches. Assisting a member to attend medical appointments and the like.

With the assistance of the Welfare Coordinator organising chaplaincy and pastoral care support, being able to provide a list of Clinical Psychologist linked to AV VACU network to whom our members may wish to seek a referral to when the need arises.

Obtain/compile useful information to assist with navigating the likes of *MyAged Care* (personal experience with immediate family members, demonstrated it’s a frustrating and time consuming process). Overtime the plan is to prepare a list of different medical specialists such as Gerontologists etc. to support our members should the need arise, especially for our regional members.

Importantly we will be sourcing training programs which will support those members who chose to undertake the role of Welfare Liaison. There are number of providers other than AV such as Phoenix, Beyond Blue plus the private training providers for Mental Health &/or Psychological first aid.

This is not going to happen overnight, and we need your input to assist with developing this program. We have received positive feedback so far when discussing our plans, both from within and external to ambulance.

If you are interested being involved, or if you have any questions or concerns, please contact Steve MULLIGAN on 0418 331 984 to discuss.

### **New Members**

Anthony Balm	Ron Lazones	Brenda White	Ian Jones
Jeanette Higgins	Gary Grant	Kathryn Segrave	Michael Dunn
Mark Wingfield	Peter Collins	Stephen Wood	Ian Ramsdale

We very much welcome our new members and we hope their time with us is a happy one.

### **RAAV Infirmary.**

We’re wishing Joan Lee of Kilmore a speedy recovery after her recent operation and rehab.

### **Departed Colleagues.**

The following retired personnel or spouse passed away during the last quarter

Michael (Mick) Higgins

Don White	Ian Nagle
Shirley James	Wendy Barry

We pay homage to their dedication to ambulance and we send our sincere condolences to their family and friends. May they all rest in peace.

**Wanted – Buy – Sell –Swap –Give Away.**

Do you have that special item which you feel could be repurposed? If you answered yes, then send it in to us at [raav.secretary@gmail](mailto:raav.secretary@gmail.com) and we'll include it in our next edition

**Regional Reports.**

*Metro East*

The Metro East District Meeting was very well attended and all that were there had a great catch up. It was also good to see a new member and a prospective member turn up and enjoy the day. A special welcome was extended to RAAV President Greg Wood and Chaplain Tom Rose. Another special mention and acknowledgement was extended to a long standing member, that being Don White who, unfortunately passed away recently. He was a very strong supporter of the RAAV and was laid to rest last week. It was fantastic to see his wife Brenda attend and enjoy the day and Brenda surprised us all by donating an amount of money to the RAAV on behalf of Don and herself. This was very much appreciated.

On behalf of everyone at Metro East I would like to wish everyone a Merry Christmas and Happy New Year. Please stay safe and well.

If anyone knows of any members that do not attend these luncheons or, know of recent retirees who have not joined the RAAV, I commend these functions to them as they continue the fantastic camaraderie that was prevalent in the ambulance service.

Please remember if you, or anyone you know is struggling in any way, shape, or form, please let someone know so we can try to assist. RAAV have a peer support program and now also connections to the Chaplaincy.

Our next meeting is in February 2024.

Regards            David Hadj

*Metro North*

The final Metro North meeting for 2023 was held on Wednesday 1<sup>st</sup> November at the Darebin RSL.

14 Members and partners attended, along with Chaplains Robyn Ferroff and Jenny McGuirk.

Judging by the noise level and laughter it was a successful meeting.

We hope more Members and friends can join us in 2024.

Our next meeting will be on Wednesday 7<sup>th</sup> February 2024 at 12.00 at the Darebin RSL, (Bistro), 402 Bell St Preston.

Take care over the holiday season.

Col Evans - Coordinator

### *Gippsland East*

We had a great turn out for our last meeting of the year with some new faces joining in, we welcome Paul Lodder, Steve Wood and a potential newbie in Jackie Harrap, in all we had 14 guests and our President Greg Wood joined in for our last meeting of the year. I would like to thank my wife Chris who brought in the Christmas spirit and table decorations. Greg addressed the meeting to fill us in on the new direction of the Committee.

Chris and I would like to wish one and all a safe and Merry Christmas and we hope to catch up with everyone again in the New Year.



### *Metro South*

Well when 50 Members turn up to a Luncheon how could you not have a special day. Contributing to this day was our President and the committee who presented life membership to Kevin Sadler accompanied by his son Mike also present was Russell King who was Kevin's training officer; then there was Ian Gardner who recently made contact with fellow mechanics Ian Lighthouse and Bruce Edwards along with their wives.

This day was made successful due to our members that attended also a great venue, meal, table setting and help from my wife Dawn along with Tracey Calder for donating Christmas cakes for our raffle also our helper on the day Margaret Boucher.

Dawn and I wish all a special Christmas and only the best for 2024. Bryan.



### *Metro West*

Metro West had our lunch on the 1st December at the Kealba Hotel.

We had 35 attend and its great seeing partners coming as well.

Gave everyone a bookmark with our planned lunches for 2024.

Wishing everyone a safe Christmas 🎄 and a Happy New Year 🎉.

Looking forward to seeing everyone in 2024.

Georgie



### *North West District*

Instead of our usual meeting we enjoyed a wonderful river cruise dinner on the PS Rothbury out of the Port of Mildura tonight.

Great to catch up just prior to Xmas in 2023.

Just a special mention about Doug & Elaine getting hitched in January.

Best wishes to everyone for a joyful festive season into 2024.

I think you'll know the fellas in the pic but special thanks to all our wives/partners just out of shot



Peter Kent (Sig 8)

### **South West District**

The last SW RAAV meeting of the year, was held at Rafferty's Tavern in Warnambool on Monday 4th December.

14 members, including partners, attended. We were fortunate to have our newly appointed RAAV Secretary, Jim Ballard and his lovely wife, Chris, join us along with our volunteer chaplain, Lynne Carter.

We discussed a number of issues, including the South West's need for a Welfare Officer. I'm pleased to say that Ray Lougheed stepped up to the plate. Thank you Ray.

The next meeting of the SW RAAV will be held on Monday, 4th March 2024 at Mac's Hotel, Mortlake. Details will be provided at a later date.

I would like to wish all members, a safe and very Merry Christmas.

Rhonda Oliver - SW Convenor.

### **Ambo Tattle Tales.**

I can recall one of our own recanting a story of being dispatched to a farmer who had sustained a head injury.

On arrival the crew are met by a well-dressed gentleman who was covering a head wound which was sustained when he struck his head while pounding a star picket into the ground. Of course typical of some of our farmer friends he had to shower before he called the ambulance.

Our crew duly treated the patient and began to move off towards the local hospital when an innocuous comment by the crew member to the patient about how nice his sheep looked in the paddock nearby.

The farmer instantly broke down crying and said, "I'm sorry, it gets lonely out here!"

To which our 'driver' began singing "Ewe made me love ewe" and "There never be another ewe"

### **Member Discounts.**

We are trying to source some key sponsors who can provide discounts when shopping in their stores. More to come on this later.





## Ambulance Victoria Museum

From The Museum.

1/55 Barry Street, Bayswater, VIC. 3153

### About Your Ambulance Museum Heritage.

**The Ambulance Historical Society Victoria Inc.** was originally incepted in the early 1980s by **Neale Johnson**, **Ron Jacobs**, and **Pam Smith** together with a small group of retired Ambulance personnel. However, due to



funding cuts in the Firman era, the AHSV became redundant. The 5 vintage vehicles previously purchased lay in storage around Melbourne until 2006 when then AV CEO **Greg Sassella** became aware of a vacant AV leased building at Thomastown. It was then he approached retired Ambo **Chas Martin (OAM)** to create an **Ambulance Victoria Museum** at this location. At the time, Chas was President of RAAV and in the process of developing this organisation. However, Chas took on this museum request with vigor as well as maintaining the RAAV presidency and development. With very limited assistance by 2012 Chas had increased the vintage fleet to 12 vehicles, a host of equipment and memorabilia, and the Thomastown premises were completely outgrown. In an AV CEO change in 2014, Acting CEO **Tony Walker** quickly secured a larger 3 section commercial building in Bayswater, and the Museum re-located to this area for Chas to develop, often working 24/7.



Sadly, Chas Martin passed away after a short illness in May 2022 leaving his colleagues and people of Victoria a proud and

incredible legacy of our Victorian Ambulance History. This features twenty-five immaculately restored vintage ambulances, including our full size 12-Bed Leyland Disaster bus, a magnificent collection of vintage ambulance equipment, memorabilia, and much more. The museum holds regular group tours for organisations, external display events locally, and regionally, and external speakers, of our history for various meetings. Our Museum is operated solely by dedicated volunteers, a great bunch of friendly blokes, which we are keen to expand upon to meet our charter for the Victorian public. We welcome anyone who would like to spend even a couple of pleasant hours a day, a week, or a month, amongst former colleagues and others. Tasks range particularly for upstairs computer recording, archive, and inventory of museum items, to the essential regular requirements of "Smoko and a yarn". The museum also supports the quarterly publication for members "**The Beacon**" The hard copy is an A4 quality, 24 PP satin page print with colour and B&W plates. It features our history, facts, personal accounts, information, A.V. news, humour and much more, and of recent times we offer an **electronic** version. Our membership is a friendly group with locals often calling in and also our remote members dropping in for a look, cuppa, and chat when in the Metro. Area.



Although our membership subscriptions are currently under review for **2024**, we are still offering membership which includes: a quarterly **email** version of The Beacon, free family, and friend admission (unlimited), discount merchandise and gifts. (Hard copy posted Beacon subscriptions **TBC**.)

This Membership is just **\$15.00 Per Year**, (*great Christmas gift*) and it is a simple email transaction. Email **Barb**: [vintambos@bigpond.com](mailto:vintambos@bigpond.com)

**This is your ambulance heritage!** Without you, our predecessors, and those serving today, there would be no proud history to preserve. Won't you join in and support it?

**Museum Bayswater. Phone: 0419 619430**

## **Around A.V.**

We are scouring AV for the latest happenings which might interest our readership. If you have any snippets please send them along to [raav.secretary@gmail.com](mailto:raav.secretary@gmail.com) and we'll put them in the next edition.

## **Caravan and Motorhome Club.**



Hello one and all,  
I would like to introduce myself to you.

My name is Anne Akers, I have been married to retired Paramedic, Neil Akers for nearly 29 years. On Sunday 22<sup>nd</sup> October 2023, I took over the position of co-ordinator for the RAAV Caravan group for retired AV personnel.

I would like to extend an invitation to you, to join us at our next get together. It will be from at Phillip Island. At this stage there will only be 10 sites prearranged.

From Group Bookings NRMA

*I can confirm that we have your group booking in our system at the NRMA Phillip Island Holiday Park for **Monday 15<sup>th</sup> – Monday 22<sup>nd</sup> April 2024.***

*We are happy to provide a **tentative hold for 4 weeks**, as I understand that Christmas is right around the corner, and it should allow enough time for your members to secure their accommodation.*

*On **Monday 8<sup>th</sup> January 2024 at 4pm**, all unsold accommodation will be released back into sale. After this time, members are still welcome to call and secure accommodation within the group, but it would be subject to availability.*

*Members of the group, are also welcome to apply, either their current **My NRMA** membership to their individual booking to receive the 4<sup>th</sup> night free (if they stay a minimum of 4 nights), or they can use their current **RACV** membership to receive the applicable discount off their own accommodation. Please note that only one discount can be applied to a booking.*

*Please provide the following information to your members, so they can either call or email the park to secure their individual booking.*

*Thank you for your interest in booking our **NRMA Phillip Island Holiday Park.***

*Your group organiser has held accommodation for your group.*

*This accommodation can be held until **Monday 8<sup>th</sup> January 2024** which then will be released for resale.*

*If you would like to secure your booking, please complete, and return the below information to: [phillipisland@nrmaparksandresorts.com.au](mailto:phillipisland@nrmaparksandresorts.com.au) or call 03 5952 2211.*

I have 10 caravan sites on hold, plus 3 cabins on hold. If you would like a different type of site as in an en-suite site or an ordinary Powered site, then you will have to change with the caravan park, directly.

There are cheaper cabins available, but they do not have a stove top, nor oven, only a microwave oven.

<b><u>Accommodation</u></b> <b><u>Type</u></b>	<b><u>Date in</u></b>	<b><u>Date Out</u></b>	<b><u>Perso</u></b> <b><u>ns</u></b>	<b><u>Price for</u></b> <b><u>week</u></b>
Sheerwater Cabin - Pet Friendly	Mon 15 Apr 2024	Mon 22 Apr 2024	2	\$985.00
Ibis - Pet Friendly Cabin	Mon 15 Apr 2024	Mon 22 Apr 2024	2	\$775.00
Ibis - Pet Friendly Cabin	Mon 15 Apr 2024	Mon 22 Apr 2024	2	\$775.00
Premium Powered Sites	Mon 15 Apr 2024	Mon 22 Apr 2024	2	\$329.00
Premium Powered Sites	Mon 15 Apr 2024	Mon 22 Apr 2024	2	\$329.00
Premium Powered Sites	Mon 15 Apr 2024	Mon 22 Apr 2024	2	\$329.00
Premium Powered Sites	Mon 15 Apr 2024	Mon 22 Apr 2024	2	\$329.00
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Premium Powered Sites	Mon 15 Apr 2024	Mon 22 Apr 2024	2	\$329.00
Premium Powered Sites	Mon 15 Apr 2024	Mon 22 Apr 2024	2	\$329.00
Premium Powered Sites	Mon 15 Apr 2024	Mon 22 Apr 2024	2	\$329.00
Powered Site	Mon 15 Apr 2024	Mon 22 Apr 2024	2	\$308.00

Please contact me on 0409521003 or email [anne.akers@bigpond.com](mailto:anne.akers@bigpond.com) if you would like further details or if you want to let me know your intentions of attending

We also have a Facebook page which I encourage you to follow at RAAV Caravan & Motor Home Club or you could go to [www.retiredambulancevictoria.org.au](http://www.retiredambulancevictoria.org.au) and scroll through to the caravan club page.

I look forward in being able to meet and catch up with as many of you as possible.

Thanking you and happy caravanning.

Cheers

Anne Akers.

*Home is where my caravan takes me.*



### **One from the History Books.**

*A bloke calls for an ambulance because his mate has just been hit by a car. The call taker responds, "Ambulance, how can I help you?" "Hi, yes, get an ambulance here quick" the panicked man screams. My mate's been hit by a car and he's bleeding from his ear and nose, and I think both of his legs are broken."*

*The call taker, being very professional tries to calm the man down. "Now, can you tell me your location?"*

*"Yes, yes" says the man, "We're in Eucalyptus Street". The operator asks the man to repeat the street name as she hasn't heard it properly. "Eucalyptus Street" the man screams. "I'm sorry" says the call taker, "Can you spell the street name for me please?"*

*There's silence on the phone followed by heavy breathing. "Are you still there Sir?" Again she hears heavy breathing. "Sir, can you hear me?" This goes on for several minutes.*

*"Sir, I'm going to need you to answer me" Can you please spell out the street name?" Suddenly, from silence the man begins to speak again.*

*"Sorry about that," says the man I couldn't spell Eucalyptus Street so I've dragged my mate to Oak Street, that's O.A.K. Street."*

### **Central/South Gippsland**

We met today 14<sup>th</sup> December at the Morwell Bowling Club for our end of year get together. We were fortunate to have our new president Greg Wood come along and join us, along with Ben Ellis our treasurer. There was a reasonably good turn up with 21 in for lunch which was followed by Jim Ballard opening the floor and letting the group know the direction of the new committee. This was

followed by a short address from Ben Ellis where commemorative coins were awarded to Suzanne and Neil Hall for their long standing commitment to RAAV and their coordination roles. Our welfare liaison officer, Frank Abela outlined the direction of Welfare and Welbeing, although he was drowned out somewhat by a noisy Christmas crowd in the premises.



Neil and Suzanne Hall receiving their commemorative coins from Ben Ellis



A good Christmas Lunch.

### **Email Network.**

As we have mentioned earlier, we're looking to upgrade our email system. Look out for the new email address for us coming soon. Can we also ask that you see your district coordinator and confirm your email address please, we get an awful lot of 'bounce back' mail due to people not being accurate when they tell us their email address This is an important medium and it saves our organisation a lot in financial outlays for 'snail mail' postage and it's our preferred method of communicating with you.

### **Humor Time**

*I pulled up at a shopping centre to go to the shops and I had my newly purchased pup with me.*

*I rolled down the windows for some fresh air for him and noticed that my pup was stretched out on the back seat.*

*I walked around to the left back window, looking in my dog looked up at me, I said in a firm voice, "Stay" and I began to walk backwards slowly saying "Stay" several times with the appropriate hand gestures.*

*As I turned to walk towards the shops a young Irishman was standing there with his mouth open. He looked at me and said, "It's sure to be there if you put it in park!"*



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