

February 2023

RAAV Ravings



Volume 10, Issue 1

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With many apologies we acknowledge the lack of information and District Reports.

These issues are due to me having a sudden reoccurrence of a previous back injury which left me almost unable to walk any distance for several weeks prior to and during the Christmas / New Year period.

I am now well on the road to recovery and able to get most things finalised.

Also a close member of Ian Donaldson's family has suffered a very serious medical issue and is still in hospital.

This has left us with little room to move and to locate and or provide the information you expect from us.

We will endeavour to provide all the necessary Reports and other information in our next issue.

We regret that there is no report from AV CEO as there is a change over taking place this next week.

Vice President Report



Well, here we are into a New Year and I hope that 2023 is both positive and safe for you all. I am writing this message to you all as our Ian Donaldson (Our president) is currently experiencing a family crisis. I am sure we all extend to Ian our sincere thoughts and hope that there is a successful outcome for Ian and his family.

AV have had a new appointee to the position of Chief Executive Officer, we extend to her a cordial welcome and the executive of our association are hoping to arrange a meeting with the CEO. The aim of this meeting will be to establish a positive dialogue along the lines of our relationship with the previous CEO; Tony Walker.

I am really pleased to let you know that your association is continuing to develop in ever increasing ways. With the help of our members, we are exploring new and initiative ways to further support our increasing membership. East Gippsland branch has now been established and others are in the pipeline.

In order to offer further support to our members and their families, we are promoting welfare support to any member, experiencing difficulties. The committee would be grateful if you could please let the committee (Your region co-ordinator or your committee) know if you are aware of any member who would benefit from support, in order that we can extend a helping hand and or an ear to listen.

As Ambulance Officers/ Paramedics or family members we do share a particular bond and I would hope that we can help others in times of stress. The executive are working towards extending our welfare system to meet this need. In the meantime, if you are struggling and would appreciate someone wanting to listen and offer support, please contact your committee or co-ordinator. Please know that we want to ensure you are NOT alone in times of stress.

Now that region lunches are commencing again in 2023, I would hope that we can further increase numbers at these events. I know that my region (Latrobe) has increased the number of participants markedly. I find these lunches a time to meet others, some I have not had the pleasure to meet before. Their stories can be informative, entertaining, humorous, and occasionally ribald.

Finally, to all of our new members we extend to you all a hearty welcome, and please note that we hope you find support from other members. I encourage you to take the time to offer objective suggestions as to how we (the organisation) can develop further.

Greg Wood
Vice President

With sadness we record the passing of:

Don Pollard
Edward (Ed) Kay
John De Boer
Stan Madew
Michael Knight

We Honour their Service
to Ambulance
May they rest in peace



Committee Matters

Welcome to 2023 and as we look back on last year we not only realise the impact of the number of our "family" we have lost either through their passing to the big Ambulance Station or because they felt that their did not fit. I feel, in part, responsible for some of the members who have left because they were not happy with the Association.

However I can only say I tried and if any of these former Members wish to return we will welcome them as if they never left.

Despite these losses we have gained a considerable number of new Members and we look forward to their involvement within the Association as we commence the now very familiar lunches in the various Districts of the state.

Our Committee has been discussing the continued development of our Meeting bases and late last year we commenced a new District in East Gippsland based in Bairnsdale. It is hoped that we can advance our progress to other areas within the state commencing with Echuca, Swan Hill and Shepparton for a start.

One of the objectives for this year is to ask each and every Member to encourage any former colleagues to come to any of our functions and or lunches with the idea of gaining their support and involvement within the Association as Members and supporters.

Finally we, as a Committee, are very conscious of our funding and expenditure. A special panel has been looking at the financial position and there will be more information in the future.

I, and the Committee look forward to a full and enjoyable years and hope to catch-up at a lunch soon.

Ian Cameron
Secretary

New Members

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

Stephen Moody - Anglesea
Keith Payne - Cawwarr
Dale Prentice - White Hills
Graham Fary - Maryborough
Steve Walsh - Briar Hill
Wayne Watson - Teesdale
Stephen Hollowood - Clonbinane
Hugh Dougan - Oakleigh East
Geoffrey Lamb - Narree Warren

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

Victorian towns welcome more than 150 heart starters



Twenty locations are now official [Heart Safe Communities](#) in Victoria, thanks to a program that has upskilled locals to save the life of someone having a cardiac arrest. Ambulance Victoria (AV) Manager of Operational Improvement David Shearer said that over the last two years, the Heart Safe Community program in 17 towns across Victoria, has been vital in building community resilience and improving out-

-of-hospital cardiac arrest survival rates.

The program was launched in 2019 as a pilot program with three Victorian towns selected to take part before the program expanding state-wide.

"The expansion of the Heart Safe Community program, a joint initiative between AV and the Heart Foundation, has built the confidence and skills in local communities so that they can step in and provide life-saving assistance if someone is in cardiac arrest." David said.

"The program aims to raise community awareness of cardiac arrest, promote the role of Triple Zero (000) in a cardiac emergency, teach people cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) skills, how to use an automated external defibrillator (AED), identify and register existing defibrillators, install and register new defibrillators and promote and educate on the use of smart phone technologies, like [GoodSAM](#) (Smartphone Activated Medic) App."

Cardiac arrest happens when a person's heart suddenly stops beating and stops pumping blood effectively around the body; it can happen to anyone, anytime, anywhere.

"While bystanders alone will never replace an ambulance service, equipping people with skills to start the chain of survival; starting chest compressions or CPR and using an AED does save lives," David said.

"Anyone can save a life in three simple steps. [Call, Push, Shock](#): Call Triple Zero (000), Push hard and fast on the middle of the chest, and Shock using an AED."

Did you know there are 20 Heart Safe Communities across Victoria

In July 2022, 12 new communities joined the Heart Safe Community program: Bacchus Marsh, Kinglake, Coleraine, Lismore, Trentham, Hopetoun, Dunolly, Stanhope, Chiltern, Violet Town, Longwarry and Yallourn North.



District Meeting Dates

Our next District Meetings for 2022 are:

Metro - North District - Wednesday 1st February 12noon at Darebin RSL 402 Bell Street Preston

Geelong & Surf Coast - Wednesday 8th February noon at Gee-
long RSL, 55 Barwon Heads Road Belmont

Central & Northern Victoria - Tuesday 14th February 12noon at Bendigo RSL 73 Havilah Road Long Gully

Wimmera & Grampians District - Thursday 16th February 12noon at White Hart Hotel, 55 Firebrace Street Horsham

Metro East District - Thursday 23rd February 12noon at Wheeler's Hill Hotel, 871 Ferntree Gully Road Wheelers Hill

North East Victoria - Saturday 25th February 12noon at Benalla Bowls Club, 25 Arundel Street Benalla

Metro - West District - Friday 3rd March at Kealba Hotel, Cnr. Sunshine Ave, & Main Rd East, Kealba

South West Victoria - Monday 6th March 12noon at Warrnambool Football Club

North West Victoria - Tuesday 7th March at Mildura RSL, 130 Madden Avenue Mildura

East Gippsland Region - Thursday 9th March 12noon Venue TBA

Central & South Gippsland Region - Thursday 16th March 12noon at Morwell Golf Club, Fairway Drive Morwell

Ballarat & Central West - Monday 20th March at the Golf House Hotel 920 Doveton St North Ballarat

Metro - South District - Tuesday 28th March Steeple's Restaurant Cnr Race-course and Tyabb Rds Mornongton



Birthday Greetings

February:

Peter Dent 1st
Colin Hicks 3rd
Alfred Monk 3rd
Bruce Hyatt 4th
Colin Gaskell 5th
Linton Johnstone 6th
Lindsay Mc Coy 8th
Peter Gregory 12th
Danny Lumby 13th
Terry Taylor 14th
Neil Hall 15th
Rhonda Oliver 16th
Roger Vidler 16th
Graham McRae 17th
Ian Martin 19th
Warren Moulton 20th
Malcolm Zadow 20th
Arthur Manning 21st
Anthony O'Sullivan 21st
Bill Briggs 22nd
Wendy Barry 22nd
Glenn Solomano 25th
Les Wiles 25th
Ian Mc Phail 27th
Joseph Spronken 27th
Leanne Russell-Jones 28th

March:

John Blotsfelds 1st
Trevor Dennis 2nd
Ian Donaldson 4th
Stephen Mc Fadyen 6th
Andrew Pipkorn 7th
Stephen Hutchins 8th
Gary Curnow 13th
Anthony Deenen 13th

Bernie Morrellini 13th
Daniel O'Connor 15th
Kevin Poole 15th
Stan Sandford 18th
Tony Davis 19th
Howard Smith 19th
Len Starkey 20th
John Faulkner 23rd
Paul Chase 23rd
Maureen King 23rd
Eric Schanessma 23rd
Ray Tringham 23rd
Jon Edwards 24th
Ross Eastwood 25th
Ted Giddings 25th
Graham Ryan 25th
Glenn Solomano 25th
Chris Varley 25th
John C Clancy 26th
Robert Hood 27th
George Hood 28th
Jim Yandle 29th
John Brown 30th
David Cooper 30th
David Gawne 30th
Stewart Blackburn 31st

April:

Peter Watts 2nd
Shane Edwards 3rd
Lindsay O'Brien 3rd
Paul O'Toole 3rd
Kevin Carter 4th
Karen Young 4th
Peter Croker 5th
Bob Curzon-Siggers 5th
Wayne Brooks 7th
Ian Cameron 7th



Lisa Binns 8th
Mal Campbell 8th
Stephen Hall 10th
Tim Kay 10th
Pauline Leask 11th
Frank Bonser 12th
Gavin Hall 12th
Keith Lloyd 12th
Ted Mawby 14th
Harry Berns 15th
Peter Moroney 15th
Allan Jackson 16th
Geoffrey Lamb 16th
Michael Mc Grath 16th
Neil Barrett 17th

Neale Johnson 19th
Gregory Taylor 19th
Merilyn Raft 20th
John Allen 22nd
Kevin Carter 22nd
Michael Lewis 23rd
Keith Humpfrey 24th
Pat Kelly 24th
Alf Greeves 27th
Paul Lodder 28th
Frank Abela 30th
Laurie Campbell 30th

Members not in good health

Howard Smith

We wish all Members a speedy recovery

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

Warrnambool FC

5th September 2022

A meeting was attempted between the SW and Geelong but, unfortunately, it didn't come to fruition so the September meeting returned to home base, so as to speak.

We had 10 Members in attendance with some of those travelling from Hamilton and Casterton, there were 11 apologies, a Guest Speaker and Assistant Secretary of the Association, Jim Ballard and his wife. Jim brought people up to date with operations of the State Committee.

Bob Reilly was able to organise a Guest Speaker at short notice, thanks Bob, and all present were bought up to date with the Operations of Wannon Water by the Manager of Asset Planning, Brad Clingin. His speech was very interesting and elicited many questions from Members.

Two of our Members are on the sick list, Terry Baker and Norm Burville, but are currently recovering and hopefully will be feeling better soon. We wish them all the best.

A good day was enjoyed by all present and a number of car stickers were purchased by Members. Let's promote the organisation wide and far.

Ray Loughheed
Convenor

Ballarat & Central West

At our usual venue of the Golf House Hotel we hosted 7 Members and partners with a number of apologies for the day. As usual we all enjoyed the company and, of course, the food and gossip.

Still looking for a Member to step up to the plate and take on the role of Coordinator of this important District. Any takers?

Metro South District

The September luncheon went well with 30 attending and because we

decided to go back to Steeples it proved a great success.

As we are starting to return to some form of normal I believe we will have an increase of numbers at our Tuesday December 6th. Luncheon which will be held at Steeples in Mornington.

Bryan Cass
Coordinator

Metro West District

We had our lunch at the Kealba on the 2nd of September and 30 members and partners attended.

It was a lovely afternoon where everyone got to catch up and discuss the holidays they had just recently been on or the ones coming up in the future.

We are growing slowly as paramedics are retiring and they hear about us. I have attached some photos of our lunch.

Our next lunch will be on the 2nd of December 2022 at the Kealba Hotel around midday.

Everyone is welcome and please bring your partners as they are welcome.

Georgie Hall
Coordinator

Central & Northern Victoria

Peter Briscoe
Convenor

North East Victoria

The NE luncheon meeting was a great afternoon for all of the 29 members and wives who attended. This has been one of the best turn-outs I've enjoyed since being a member, with a few members joining us after a long absence.

We have a new Associate Member following Roger Vidler bringing along Kerry Cursons, Dick's wife, and it was good to have Barb Osmotherly join us.

We had a moment of silence for Chas Martin and Jim Osmotherly before the awarding of Life Memberships to Jon Edwards & Eddie Kay. We were gladened to hear that both of these guys had enjoyed their time with Ambulance, as varied as their experiences have been in, and out, of "the job".

We send our regards to Don & Shirley Pollard, Don has been in hospital again & not travelling well.

Leanne Russell-Jones
Convenor

Geelong and Surf Coast District

At our lunch we have 16 Members attend. One being a phone call apology while proceeding in a cab to the RSL & one via an attending member - both due to sudden illness. One other absentee being a known dicky attender. Overall, we had that 16 which included John & Judy H. I had sought the opinion of Andrew Pipkorn some months ago & with a chat to John H, today, agreed to initially support then adopt the role so sought to keep this Branch operative.. The new form of Name Badges were spoken about, Kevin Cannon asked me if I had received my two, then explained his pathway of ordering. John advised me to contact Jim Ballard. I will so do, providing this is in line with your agreement.

Ben Wright
Convenor

Quick Quiz:

Q1: How many stars are on the Australian Flag?

Q2: What famous company invented the moving assembly line?

Q3: What type of animal is seen on the Lamborghini?

Q4: Who plays Ray Charles in the film "Ray"?

Q5: Who wrote the classic book "Cloudstreet"?

Q6: The dollar sign is above which number on a keyboard?

Q7: What is the National Animal of Canada?

Q8: What is Australia's largest bird of prey?

Q9: In what sport could you play at "Shortstop"?

Q10: What type of vehicles are Vespa's?

Ambulance Victoria Needs a Performance Review

Ambulance Employees Australia Victoria (AEAV) is calling for an independent review of the ambulance sector’s performance following the seventh Code Red of 2022.

During a Code Red, the Melbourne metropolitan area is often left without any ambulances available to attend the most critical cases and patients are asked to find their own way to hospital.

AEAV is calling for a wide-ranging review of ambulance services performance by the Victorian Ombudsman, with the focus on the historical issues that led to the current crisis.

AEAV Secretary Brett Adie said the ambulance system is continuing to fail the Victorian community.

“We can’t just keep blaming COVID for the woes in the sector. There is no doubt that COVID has been the catalyst, but the root cause of the current issues is far more insidious,” Mr Adie said.

“If we don’t understand the underlying issues that led to the current crisis then how can the public or paramedics have any confidence that things will improve.

“Since 2015 Ambulance Victoria have driven their staff into the ground to achieve KPI’s and used these KPI’s to hide their failures.

“Whether it was single officer responding to “Stop the clock” – whereby an ambulance responds to a patient regardless of it being the most appropriate resource or not – or manipulating welfare stats to make things look better than they were, the responsibility sits with those who let the sector be driven into the ground and kept ignoring or hiding the undeniable indicators.

“The government and Ambulance Victoria cannot be trusted to be honest about the cause of the crisis. Critical eyes need to look through the COVID smokescreen to find the real cause,” Mr Adie said.

The Union is calling for a review similar to the one recently conducted at Emergency Services Telecommunications Authority (ESTA), which found significant historical issues that led to the crisis there.

Victoria’s ambulance crisis sparks warning due to ‘extremely high demand

Ambulance records have been smashed in Victoria for the third quarter running, data released on Saturday reveals.

In a statement Ambulance Victoria said Covid, sicker patients resulting from deferred care and staff furloughing had created the record demand for ambulances, which they said had increased 16 per cent from the previous quarter.

The data revealed that from April to June this year ambulances responded to 97,928 ‘code one’ cases across the state – an astonishing increase of more than 13,000 from the same time last year.

Ambulance Victoria has responded to a record number of calls from April to June this year, new data reveals.

Ambulance Victoria said the number was also nearly 5000 more than from January to March this year.

The average response rate across the state was 15 minutes and 49 seconds, the data reveals.

Felicity Topp, the interim chief executive at Ambulance Victoria, said Covid continued to present a risk.

“There are no signs of demand slowing down through winter. Covid-19 continues to pose a high risk to Victorians and will continue to do so for some time,” Ms Topp said on Saturday.

Ambulance Victoria said Covid showed no sign of slowing down throughout the winter.

To cope with the demand Ms Topp said Ambulance Victoria had overseen a huge expansion of their number of paramedics and triage services, as well as encouraging the use of the Victorian Virtual Emergency Department.

She said a record 700 paramedics were recruited last year, while 400 have already been recruited so far this year.

From April to June, more than 8000 patients were referred to the virtual emergency department, the data showed.

“If the patient does not appear to require immediate transport to the ED, paramedics are able to arrange a video consultation with an emergency physician or nurse practitioner to determine if care can be safely and effectively provided at home,” Ms Topp said.

She said that “thousands of patients” had been treated at home from this method.



Some very happy faces at the Metro - West lunch held on Friday 2nd September at the Kealba Hotel



Retired and Former Employee (RAFE) Peer Support Program

Ambulance Victoria (AV) are committed to improving the mental health of its people, even after they have left the organisation. Whilst working for an emergency service is rewarding, it also comes with a range of unique challenges.

In 2018, AV in collaboration with the Retired Ambulance Association of Victoria (RAAV) introduced a Peer Support Program for retired and former AV employees which provides access to:

- Peer Support (1800 626 377, option 1)
- 24/7 phone counselling line* (1800 626 377, option 2)
- Chaplaincy (1800 626 377, option 3)
- VACU clinician network appointment*
- Other services readily available in the community

** Available to former employees for the first 12 months following separation from AV*

The RAFE Peer Support team are not counsellors and do not make psychological assessments. They are trained to deliver psychological first aid and have excellent listening skills.

The RAFE program is designed to facilitate connection, opportunities for social support and access to community support services. Access to the RAFE program is free of charge and any retired or former AV employee who feels they require support is encouraged to do so.

The RAFE volunteer Peers are available to provide support seven days a week, 7am-5pm.

You can contact our RAFE volunteer Peers by emailing RAFEpeersupport@ambulance.vic.gov.au

Committee Matters

Welcome all to this, the last newsletter of the year, and hasn't this year passed quickly.

With the Association not only increasing with new Members we are also increasing our meeting bases and are looking forward to 2023 to see an even bigger push to continue to expand.

It is with pleasure that we have been honoured with 3 new Members to the Committee being David Hadj, Graham Douglas and Julianne Casey. Graham has also taken on the role as Membership Officer and has already made several changes to the structure of the portfolio. Both David and Julianne bring much new advise and we look forward to their involvement and expertise.

The inaugural Meeting of a secondary base in Gippsland will be conducted on Thursday 17th November, a time and place will be circulated very shortly.

As we strive to engage with more former Ambulance Staff and Paramedics we ask you to encourage any or our former colleagues to consider joining in the ever positive association of friendship and co-operation. As mentioned both by Tony Walker and Ian Donaldson we all wish Tony a restful retirement and I know he is willing to join us and we will be most grateful for any ongoing contribution he may be able to offer us in our continuing development.

Finally may I, on behalf of the Executive and Committee wish each and everyone of you all the very best for the Festive Season and trust that 2023 will bring you the joy and happiness you wish for.

Ian Cameron
Secretary

District Reports

Metro East District

Whealers Hill Hotel saw 11 Members and Partners attend our lunch on the 18th August. The usual banter and frivolity made for a very successful day. Unfortunately several member were unable to attend due to other matters. We look forward to seeing many members attend our final function for the year on the 17th November at the Wheelers Hill Hotel.

North West Victoria

Allan Cooksley
Coordinator

Central & South Gippsland District

The Central and Southern Gippsland Group met today for our luncheon at the Morwell Bowling Club. It was very pleasing to welcome 28 members today along with our Vice President Greg Wood, for some it was their first encounter with RAAV and we hope they found it enjoyable. We talked briefly about RAAV merchandise and as a result we sold over \$100 worth of apparel. Through our Merchandise Officer, Les Wood, we announced a new style of car-coat/windbreaker jacket which has just been approved and this notion received some interest for future purchase.

Some of our members took advantage of attending both the Bairnsdale and Morwell gatherings, this support is greatly appreciated and we hope to foster good inter area relationships. We still seem to be having some difficulty with informing everyone in a timely manner of an impending meeting due to the conflict between our Gmail and Bigpond, I must apologise if you wished to come along but didn't receive sufficient notice, rest assured we're working on it and we hope to do better next year.

As our next meetings will be advertised in forthcoming newsletters but we're looking at March, May, August and November 2023. We may not meet up again until the New Year so I'd like to wish you all a joyous Christmas with family and

friends and a safe and healthy New Year

Jim Ballard
Interim Convener

Metro North District

Metro North members met on September 21st at the Darebin RSL. 12 Members and partners attended. It's great to see our numbers increasing. Thanks to Ian Cameron for starting the group before handing over to me, and to our "West brothers and sisters" for their support and guidance. Our next meeting will be on Wednesday 14th December at 12.00 at the Darebin RSL, (Bistro), 402 Bell St Preston. It would be fantastic to see a further increase in attendance. Col Evans
Coordinator

Wimmera & Grampians District

With 8 Members and partners attending the White Hart Hotel on the 11th August and several apologies we enjoyed the companionship and gossip of the day as well as the well presented lunch.

It would be nice to see a Member take on the role of Convenor of the District and we encourage any member to consider the role.

East Gippsland District

Well we kicked off our inaugural retired ambulance luncheon meetings in Bairnsdale today on the 17th November 2022 at the Bairnsdale Convention Centre with an initial 8 members attending and their partners. It was great to see some new faces and some people who we haven't see for some time. We all enjoyed some good fellowship and a tasty meal before concluding at 1345 hrs.

For an initial meeting it was pleasing to welcome some locals, along with thanks for those that travelled from as far away as Rosedale and the Latrobe Valley. We're hopeful that more can attend at our subsequent gatherings next year.

Jim Ballard
Convener.

Retired Ambulance Association of Victoria Inc.



Committee of Management

President: Ian Donaldson
Vice President: Greg Wood
Secretary: Ian Cameron
Assistant Secretary: Jim Ballard
Treasurer: Ben Ellis

Committee Members:

Les Wood
John Clancy
John Head
David Hadj
Graham Douglas
Julianne Casey
Andrew Wilson

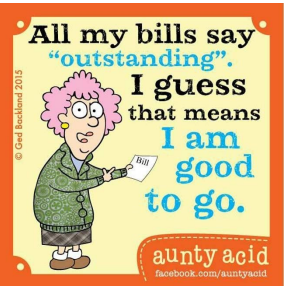
www.retiredambulacevictoria.org.au

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The Back Page

Police arrested two kids yesterday, one was drinking battery acid, the other was eating fireworks. They charged one – and let the other one off.



A group of chess enthusiasts checked into a hotel and were standing in the lobby discussing their recent tournament victories. After about an hour, the manager came out of the office and asked them to disperse. "But why?" they asked, as they moved off. "because," he said "I can't stand chess nuts boasting in an open foyer."

Facebook: Retired Ambulance Association of Victoria Inc.

