

May 2023

RAAV Ravings



Volume 10, Issue 2

ABN: 77 829 511 359

Registered No: A00214235

A Brief History of Ambulance

"Ever since man, woman or child became sick or injured there has always been a mode of transport no matter how basic to convey them to hospital - from man carrying man, push, horse or motor vehicles through disasters, wars, plagues, sickness and accidents."



History

The Beginning (1880-1890)

In 1883, ambulance services began in Melbourne following a public meeting which decided to form a branch of St John Ambulance Association. Humble transport methods would see patients carried on removed wooden doors or bundled into a hansom cab to be taken to hospital. In 1887 sufficient funds were raised by St John's Ambulance to purchase six Ashford litters which were placed at police stations. In 1899 the first horse drawn ambulance began operation. The first Melbourne ambulance station was a stable complex off Bourke Street at the rear of the Windsor Hotel.

In 1910, the first motor vehicle ambulance began operation, responding to 700 of the 4000 ambulance calls in the first year. 1916 saw St John Ambulance split its function and the Victorian Civil Ambulance Service (VCAS) was formed, solely relying on public donations and municipal council financial support as the then state government refused to subsidise the ambulance service, unlike the state wide police and fire brigades.

By 1916 the Service was insolvent and its closure contemplated despite transporting 5600 patients a year and travelling 60,000 miles. However in 1918 a serious outbreak of influenza in Victoria made the ambulance service essential and, with Public Health Department funding the epidemic, staff rose to 85 drivers and attendants and the fleet increased to 16 cars and horse drawn vehicles

The Era (1920-2000+)

In 1923, the fleet comprised six motor vehicles, a motor cycle and sidecar, three horse drawn ambulances and 27 operational staff. Country services at Yarram, Yarra Junction and Rushworth began. 1925 saw the end of the horse drawn ambulance era. In 1944 some ambulances received one way radio transmissions. 1946 saw the entire fleet of 27 vehicles fitted with radio receivers. In 1954 two way radios were fitted to the fleet and the first communications centre began operation. 1962 brought the beginning of air ambulance.

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Welfare Update

At the last Committee meeting it was decided to revamp our welfare Program.

The main changes are to request a Member become a Welfare contact person within each District and to attempt to contact Members, their Partners and Family to ensure that all is ok and to be able to suggest actions to assist as and/or when these may be required.

It is not intended to replace Peer Support in any way but a means to ensure all our Members and families are able to reach out if necessary and provide guidance when needed.

President Report



Greetings to all our members and I trust this newsletter finds you all ok and in good health.

As you are aware a Special General Meeting was held on Tuesday 18th April 2023.

Future membership fees for the association to be \$30 per year without any joining fee, and that meal payments will be \$10 per head at the Christmas end of year meeting. These changes have been implemented due to the lack of backing from

AV. The financial position of the Association is precarious in this very difficult economic time, unless we make changes. The commencement date will be 1st July 2023

We are still looking for any interested members who could help with our Peer Support group. We are particularly interested in someone being a retirement coach for transitioning AV workers, if interested please contact myself or Ian Cameron.

Christine and I would like to say thank you to all who gave us support and helped us through our grieving due to our sons passing. We appreciate your kind thoughts and it has helped us enormously.

With dealing with this tragedy

Looking forward to catching up with you all at our gatherings and grateful that we have seen our way through all the endless Covid restrictions.

Please take care and enjoy your freedom.

Ian Donaldson
President



South West Members enjoying lunch at their meeting on Monday 5th March at Warrnambool Football Club Bistro

With sadness we record the passing of:

George Gallagher

We Honour His Service
to Ambulance
May He rest in peace



Committee Matters

Welcome to our May Newsletter and I trust you can gain some laughs and updates from it.

During the past 3 months we have been very much involved with the Peer Support Coordinator's role and the upcoming advertising for the position. However the position was advertised before we were given a chance to view the document, although assured, that it was the same as the previous position guide. Following a bit of angst I received a phone call from AV and after lengthy discussion it is hoped that a similar situation will not arise again.

You will also note that we are reinvigorating our Welfare Portfolio in order to gain a better knowledge of the needs of ALL our Members and their families. This will involve an appointment of a Welfare Person into each District and it is hoped that we, via them, can give a much coverage of the welfare needs of all. As we roll out this new initiative we ask that any Member who feels they could fulfil the role please get in touch with me or any of the Committee members to offer assistance or ask for more details.

With a third of the year already passed we are still hopeful of commencing more Districts during the rest of the year. I have to date found that time has not been on my side to conduct the necessary engagement to attempt to contact or commence the now 4 Districts we hope to organise and create. The only exception being East Gippsland which has commenced and, although short on numbers at present, we know that time will allow more Members to either come to this District or join the Association.

The Committee is very keen to ensure that all Members and their families are the prime target of our work and hope that each of you can support us in gaining more Members and assistance in the future.

Ian Cameron
Secretary

New Members

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

Ivano Forte - Greensborough
Paul Robertson - Grovedale
Gerry Cahill - Warrnambool
Wally Mayski - Glenroy
Wayne Barnes - Bacchus Marsh
Barry Graham - Lakes Entrance

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

District Meeting Dates

Our next District Meetings for 2023 are:

Metro - North District - Wednesday 3rd May 12noon at Darebin RSL 402 Bell Street Preston

Geelong & Surf Coast - Wednesday 10th May noon at Geelong RSL, 55 Barwon Heads Road Belmont

Wimmera & Grampians District - Thursday 11th May 12noon at White Hart Hotel, 55 Firebrace Street Horsham

Central & Northern Victoria - Tuesday 16th May 12noon at Bendigo RSL 73 Havilah Road Long Gully

East Gippsland Region - Thursday 16th May 12noon Bairnsdale RSL 2 Forge Creek Road Bairnsdale

Metro East District - Thursday 18th May 12noon at Whealers Hill Hotel, 871 Ferntree Gully Road Wheelers Hill

Central & South Gippsland Region - Thursday 25th May 12noon at Invy Espy Hotel, 1 Abeckett St, Inverloch

North East Victoria - Saturday 27th May 12noon at Benalla Bowls Club, 25 Arundel Street Benalla

Metro - West District - Friday 2nd June at Kealba Hotel, Cnr. Sunshine Ave, & Main Rd East, Kealba

South West Victoria - Monday 5th June 12noon at Alexandra House 815 Franklin Street Hamilton

North West Victoria - Tuesday 13th June at Mildura RSL, 130 Madden Avenue Mildura

Ballarat & Central West - Monday 19th June at the Golf House Hotel 920 Doveton St North Ballarat

Metro - South District - Tuesday 27th June Steeple Restaurant Cnr Racecourse and Tyabb Rds Mornington



Birthday Greetings

May:

Trevor Martin 1st
Laurie Spelling 1st
Wayne Watson 1st
George Jackson 2nd
Raymond Harris 5th
Denis Rowe 6th
Peter Cain 7th
Garry Cassells 8th
Bruce Westerland 8th
John Lacey 9th
Trevor Greay 10th
John Head 10th
Allan Oakes 10th
Kenneth Laycock 11th
Geoffrey Williams 12th
Bob Boucher 14th
Greame Mant-Old 14th
Stephen Nangle 14th
Coi Bowden 16th
Darryl Wells 16th
Sandra Johns 18th
Ross Smith 20th
Bryce Lindermann 21st
David Boyd 24th
Gary Mason 24th
Alan Ray 25th
Dave Talbot 25th
John Waters 27th
Norman Burville 28th
Heath Gangell 28th
Michael Wilson 28th
Daryl Anderson 29th
George Gallagher 29th
Peter Donovan 31st

June:

Robert Fletcher 1st
Douglas Martin 1st
Graham Carpenter 3rd
Richard Prigrove 3rd
Bill Atkinson 6th
Michael Collins 6th
Peter Butcher 9th
Brett Ckark 12th
Hugh Esler 12th
Tom Reakes 12th
Bruce Timms 12th
Stehpen Williams 12th
Robert Adams 13th
Dale Gibbons 13th
Bill Mc Cleish 14th
Dianne Rock 15th
Keith Payne 16th
Georgie Hall 19th
Alan Cooksley 21st
Barb Matson 23rd
Clive Wawn 23rd
David Boyd 24th
Ian Mc Pherson 24th
William Van Den Akker 24th
Barry Nicholls 25th
Bob Gilmour 25th
Terry Courtney 26th
Robert Mercer 26th
David Shugg 26th
Barry Piez 27th
Roy Ryder 27th
Ian Rowed 28th
Trevor Abbott 30th



July:

Frank Gaylard 1st
Mick Hill 1st
Allan Simons 3rd
Wayne Simmons 3rd
Frank Fordham 4th
Thomas Chapman 7th
Samual Hadden 7th
Graeme Parker 7th
Rob Phillips 7th
John Engledow 9th
Ian Gardner 10th
Michael Higgins 10th
Tony Walker 11th
Jock Purves 12th

Phillip Worboys 12th
Trevor Davies 13th
Anna Murphy 13th
Roslyn Berns 15th
Don Tippett 15th
David Skinner 16th
Ted VanDyken 16th
Michael Williams 20th
Raymond Churches 22nd
Peter Leek 22nd
Neil Carolan 25th
Darryl Tinker 25th
Jeffrey Allan 26th
Stephen Ford 28th
Peter O'Meara 28th
Ian Gedge 30th
Colin Arscott 31st
John Baldiston 31st

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

The first meeting for the year in the South West was held in Warrnambool on Monday the 6th March at Rafferty's Hotel, at 1200 hrs.

The meeting was attended by 13 Members plus the State President, Ian Donaldson, and AV Chaplain, Lynne Carter. There were also 13 apologies.

There was a very rocky beginning for the meeting with the original booking at the Warrnambool Football Club being cancelled by staff on the Saturday before the meeting, very short notice. I immediately rang Rafferty's Hotel and they were able to accommodate us. All Members then had to be notified of the change of venue and I then notified the Club of my displeasure and that I will have reservations about booking in the future.

Ian Donaldson bought all Members up to date with the latest news from the Executive and Lynne Carter explained her work as a volunteer AV Chaplain and how she could be of assistance to the Retired Members.

All Members present enjoyed a good lunch and conversation.

The next meeting will be held in Hamilton on Monday 5th June at 1200 hrs.

Ray Lougheed
Convener

Ballarat & Central West

With 11 Members and partners present we had an enjoyable lunch and many chats about the upcoming holidays some of our Members are about to undertake. And the various plans for this year whether they be holidays or house building or just relaxing.

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

Central & Northern Victoria

North East Victoria

Geelong and Surf Coast District

Metro East District

Lunch meeting Thursday 23/0202023
Whealers Hill Hotel 12 Noon

Today we had 11 members gather together for a very nice lunch. Amongst us was Greg Wood who is vice president of our association and we also had a special guest, that being Tom Rose who is a Chaplain associated with AV. Tom has a wealth of experience in Chaplaincy within the Hospital and Emergency Services sectors and, is well aware of the issues that face workers across all these sectors. It is hoped that a Chaplain will be able to attend our gatherings and become a regular contributor to our discussions. It was fabulous to meet him.

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.

David Hadj
Convener

North West Victoria

Mildura RSL provided our usual meeting hope and with 17 Members and Partners in attendance we enjoyed a very pleasant lunch and many stories and tails of adventures that have or are about to occur within our ranks as well as the usual questions about the Association and various actions the Association is undertaking, particularly in the area of increasing our Membership with new areas of inclusion within the State. We are hoping to commence a base in Swan Hill during this year for Members in that area.

Allan Cooksley
Coordinator

Central & South Gippsland

District

The Central/South Gippsland group met at the Morwell Bowls Club on the 16th March with 17 attendees. Once again we had a pleasant day out with lots of friendly exchange. Our Secretary Ben Ellis addressed the group with regard to the Committee's forthcoming AGM and he received some proxy votes. Ben also spoke about the financial situation of the Association and the various options of obtaining an increase in revenue.

Jim Ballard
Interim Convener

Metro North District

Wimmera & Grampians District

The White Hart hotel again made us welcome and with only 6 Members in attendance we still enjoyed a fine meal and much chatter around the table. We are still looking for more retired Ambulance personnel to join us and contribute to the welfare of us all as well as being part of the Association and all activities.

Quick Quiz:

- Q1: A Winchester is what type of weapon?
Q2: What does SBS stand for?
Q3: Farrokh Bulsara was better known by what Name?
Q4: What animal is the symbol of the WWF?
Q5: What Australian Musician sings "Riptide"?
Q6: Which Grand Slam did Sam Stosur win in 2011?
Q7: To the nearest kilometer, how long is the Olympic Marathon?
Q8: what is the most Malleable Metal?
Q9: Which Iconic Australian was named "Moonface"?
Q10: What are the only two Marsupials to lay eggs?

Inside The Ambulance: Paramedics Stories Should Always Be Told



Paramedics stories rarely turn out to be told. Many prefer to avoid expressing their feelings after ambulance shifts, while others feel the necessity of pouring them out.

We've listened to many different paramedics stories, and all of them deserve to be heard. When first responders jump on [board the ambulance](#), they never know what they could find on the emergency site. Dispatchers always try to get as many information as possible, but they are not always clear. [The Guardian](#) reported a [paramedic](#) experience who expresses his state of mind after many years of dispatching. Ambulances reach anyone, but many times their availability is used in too many exaggerated ways.

The cases are several and even absurd sometimes. They go from the desperate drug addict who urinates on the ambulance floor, to the woman who would rather call an ambulance than read the back of a packet of paracetamol. Then there is someone as a frail and disabled 46-year-old man, lying in the dark on his bathroom floor for two hours after a fall which needs the ambulance but there is another one who calls an ambulance because he/she is incredibly lonely. Many times, the ambulances are busy because of reasons that could be avoided. On the other hand, isolated people like a lonely elder woman or a disables man left on his own, often on the margins of society, have voices that we seldom hear. Paramedics spend shifts along streets, up through blocks of flats, down into the dark, and their stories are many times ignored. But what many do not understand is that they dedicate their entire life to others. Even when they got kicked or assaulted, they still are dedicating their time and efforts to improve other lives. That's why paramedics stories should always be told.

Nicki's Story



Nicki's decision to support Ambulance Victoria as well as have complete peace of mind for her family proved to be a smart one. She's needed to call an ambulance several times and on more than one occasion her private health insurance wouldn't have covered the emergency attendance fees.

Samuel had a seizure because of meningitis. He aspirated and his lungs collapsed. We didn't hesitate to ring an ambulance.

On the way to hospital the paramedics, stabilised him until he received the treatment he required in hospital.

The paramedics had done an extraordinary job and been through a difficult experience but then didn't just leave me in emergency when my son was taken to be treated immediately. They assisted the medical staff and were also keeping an eye on me to make sure I was OK and fully aware of what was going on.

The individual paramedics checked on his progress in hospital and a week later contacted me to ask about him. This frightening journey was made so much easier knowing that the ambulance service had the resources to save my son and the bonus was the feeling that they cared.

We've saved over \$2000 by being members of Ambulance Victoria. Yes, we have private health insurance but we wouldn't be without Ambulance Victoria cover as it gives my family complete peace of mind.

Eating for Good Mental Health

Having grown up exposed to both Western and Complementary Medicine intertwined with Māori customs and culture, I have maintained an interest complementary therapies. After leaving ambulance thanks to the proverbial back injury, I went on the study Western Herbal Medical, nutrition and other complementary modalities.

Over the past twenty odd years research into all medical modalities has grown exponentially. Certainly, something we have well recognised with the advancement with Paramedic practice worldwide.

The same can be said for Herbal Medicine, Complementary Medicine and modalities, Traditional Chinese Medicine, Ayurvedic Medicine (India) and practices.

Over this period, I have had the opportunity to review a vast number of articles form a wide range of modalities including drug and herbal monographs including patient information handouts from reputable sources.

I recently stumbled into a patient handout from Eagle Clinical aptly named "Eating for Good Mental Health" dated April 2022. Whilst most of the information was stored somewhere in the "grey matter" it proved to be a simple useful and beneficial reference to fresh the memory.

A pertinent and topical article with the ongoing reviews linked to mental health including the post traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), acquired brain injuries be they medical or traumatic in origin and of course we are all slowly entering or going through the aging process.

For those so inclined, a list of the references are being obtained for those people who like to view. Please contact my directly if you require a copy or have any further questions of concerns.

Steve MULLIGAN. 0418 331 984.



Ambulance Victoria



Peer Support

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

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

You can contact our RAFF volunteer Peers by emailing RAFFpeersupport@ambulance.vic.gov.au

Grateful father reunited with off-duty paramedic who saved his life

A Carrum Downs man who survived a cardiac arrest last year has thanked the GoodSAM responder and Ambulance Victoria paramedics who saved his life.

On 25th September, Melita heard a loud crash to discover her husband Brett collapsed on

Brett, 61, had suffered a cardiac arrest. Melita immediately called Triple Zero (000) suscitation (CPR) under the guidance of an

A few streets away, off-duty paramedic Laura-Jane alerted to the cardiac arrest on her GoodSAM. Within minutes, Laura-Jane was able to re-husband.



in the backyard of her home and rushed the floor and wasn't breathing.

and commenced cardiopulmonary re-ESTA call-taker.

Jane was visiting a friend when she was app. lieve Melita from performing CPR on her

Soon after, the first ambulance arrived and after two shocks from a defibrillator (AED), Brett was successfully revived.

Three months on, Brett and Melita were able to meet the team who saved Brett's life.

GoodSAM responder Laura-Jane signed up for the app when she commenced her paramedicine degree in the hope that she might be able to make a difference to someone's life.

"It's an incredible feeling and meeting Brett puts it into perspective – what we did together as a team helped keep him alive," she said.

Continued next page

District Reports

East Gippsland District

East Gippsland group meeting on the 9th March at the Bairnsdale RSL with eight members attending (two apologies), this was a pleasant day and meal albeit a little noisy with background music as relayed to me by some. The meeting concluded at 13:45. We are hopeful of boosting our numbers with a larger turnout expected in future gatherings.

Jim Ballard
Interim Convener.

Special General Meeting

I am sure that you all know the outcome of the SGM held on 18th April.

It was pleasing to have a good gathering of Member attending and several via Video Link. There were over 80 Proxy votes for all of the Motions and these, too, were mostly in favour of the suggested increase.

Following a discussion the recommendation was made to alter Motion 3 to be the annual fee be \$30.00 with no joining fee and that only the last function of the year be covered by the \$10 lunch rebate.

The outcome was overwhelming and as such will be actioned on the 1st July 2023.

Quick Quiz Answers:

- A1: Riffle
- A2: Special Broadcasting Service
- A3: Freddie Mercury
- A4: Panda
- A5: Vance Joy
- A6: US Open
- A7: 42 KI
- A8: Gold
- A9: Bert Newton
- A10: Platypus & Echidna

A Brief History of Ambulance contd.

1969 saw the first specifically developed ambulance, the Ford F100 Series, go into service. In October 1970 Melbourne experienced Australia's worst bridge disaster – the collapse of the huge Westgate Bridge under construction. 37 men lost their lives. The VCAS played the major medical role in this disaster and many attending officers can still recount this tragic event today.

In 1971 the MICA (Mobile Intensive Care Ambulance) concept was trialled successfully. Helicopter retrieval of trauma and time critical patients began in 1986. The 1990s heralded the division of non-emergency patient transport services and MICA paramedics increased from 75 to 126 with 12 new emergency ambulance stations; computer assisted dispatch and advanced medical priority and communication systems and the Victorian ambulance clinical information system rolled out statewide.

In 2016, from humble beginnings Ambulance Victoria has continued to expand. Its medical care and technological expertise development equals any ambulance service in the world.

Reprinted from The Ambulance Historical Society, with Thanks



Grateful father reunited with off-duty paramedic who saved his life



For Melita, having Laura-Jane arrive to take over compressions – an experience Melita found hugely traumatic – was a welcome relief. "I didn't know how much longer I could keep going and she was here within a minute – it was so quick," Melita said. "Brett's with me, and if it wasn't for her, he might not be." MICA paramedic Ryan said that early intervention was critical in saving a life.

"It could be your neighbour having a cardiac arrest and the app will alert you. Being able to provide that early CPR will make a huge difference."

Ryan said you don't need to have a first aid qualification to join GoodSAM.

"If you know CPR, it's as simple as signing up to save a life."

Since his cardiac arrest, Brett has made a remarkable recovery and now has an internal defibrillator in his chest.

After being given a second chance at life, Brett and Melita are moving interstate to be closer to family.

Melita said she will never forget the efforts of those who helped bring her husband back to life.

"I've since talked to other people who are trained in CPR and now I always say 'download the app'."

For more information, visit www.ambulance.vic.gov.au/goodSAM

Members not in good health

Chris Coucill
Carole Brisbane (wife of Howard Smith)
Ted VanDyken

We wish all Members a speedy recovery

When you start taking care of yourself, you start feeling better, you start looking better, and you even start to attract better. It always starts with you.

Uki Ahmed

The Back Page

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

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

Motivational Speaker: "You can do anything, you just have to wake up the lion inside of you."

The Lion inside me:



Facebook: Retired Ambulance
Association of Victoria Inc.

ONE BEER



A COUPLE
BEERS



A FEW
BEERS



Why do women not understand beer
maths?

COFFEE

The most
important
meal
of the
day!



aunty acid

www.facebook.com/auntyacid

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www.retiredambulacevictoria.org.au

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Too often we
underestimate the power
of a touch, a smile, a kind
word, a listening ear, an
honest compliment, or the
smallest act of caring, all
of which have the potential
to turn a life around.

— Leo Buscaglia