National Volunteer Week 2018

To celebrate National Volunteer week Volunteering Tasmania showcased some amazing Tasmanian volunteers & why they volunteer.

Sorell VAO Suzie Smith featured in one video: “I have been volunteering with AT for 12 years and at the Royal Hobart Hospital for 2½ yrs. After my daughters left home I wanted to do some volunteering. I have met many caring people and made many good friends. ...volunteers make the world go round really, if we didn't have volunteers a lot of things wouldn't happen.”

See Suzie’s interview: https://www.facebook.com/volunteeringtas/videos/1710040882406558/

For more Volunteer Week stories go to pages 8-9
From the President’s desk...

Firstly, I would like to farewell Sue George and Jack Spinks from the Board. Both Sue and Jack have decided to leave the Board and I wish them well. You will be missed by everyone from the Board and on behalf of the Board, I thank you for all you have put into the Board, and the support you have both shown to all Volunteer Ambulance Officers across Tasmania.

G18 is in full swing, and this year will see the gathering held in Scamander. Thank you to the East Coast Community for hosting the gathering. Registration will open as per normal in September and is limited to numbers, but the Saturday program will be open to VAOs that wish to attend. If you would like to attend part of the gathering (regardless if you are an active member or not) you will be welcome on the Saturday to attend, but as per normal, VAOAT will accommodate up to 100 volunteers, more information will be shared in due course. This year the program will be published so you will have an idea on what to expect. Please keep 30th November to the 2nd December free.

In June, Sue George from Port Sorell, Christina Boonstra from South Arm, and myself attended the 2018 National Volunteer Conference in Sydney, and what an eye opener it was. There was a massive Volunteer stream as part of the AEMVF, and it was a great 3 days meeting other volunteers from across Australia and New Zealand, and as we prepare a report to Ambulance Tasmania, we have been asked to present something at the gathering to you all.

I wish you all a safe winter and I look forward to seeing some old and new faces at the 2018 Gathering on the East Coast in December.

Leith McHarry
President VAOAT

ON MY SOAPBOX

I hope you are all managing to keep warm through these winter days & nights, I have bought myself a new “winter-weight” doona that is so cosy.

Many of you will remember Colin and Robyn Dell who worked so hard to start the VAOAT and were our inaugural President & Treasurer respectively. They recently enjoyed a few months travelling on the north island and sending back their news, a snapshot of their “diary” is included in this edition.

Congratulations to Police officers Nigel Housego and Damian Bidgood who were joint winners of the Rotary Tasmania Police Excellence awards. Many VAOs will have met these two officers on the road and can confirm their skill in what is usually a challenging situation.

I am currently waging war on capeweed, aided by recent rain that has softened the ground. I admit that this weed is quite attractive but it spreads at an alarming rate and my garden prong has been working overtime.

Bye for now, MARGARET

TANIA RATTRAY MLC
Independent Member for McIntyre
Legislative Council

Proudly assisting the production of the newsletter for the Volunteer Ambulance Officers Association of Tasmania.

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A man goes to the doctor for a check up. The doctor checks him out thoroughly doing various tests. He then goes back to his table and sits down. "I'm prescribing these pills for you," he says.

Noting the weird name of the prescription, the man asks, "What am I taking now?"

"Oh, I don't want you to swallow them. Just spill them on the floor twice a day and pick them up, one at a time."
This could be the view from your room at this year’s Gathering!

VOLUNTEER AMBULANCE OFFICERS ASSOCIATION OF TASMANIA
2018 GATHERING

Where? Scamander Beach Hotel Motel, Scamander
When: Saturday & Sunday 1st & 2nd December
Registration: From 1st September as usual and registration remains free to all VAOs (for this year)! We even provide some subsidy towards your fuel bill.
What: We are preparing a new look program! We want you & your friends to get involved.

Car pool  Learn new skills  Be entertained  Great Food
Beach Party theme  Be challenged  Retain and regain your Authority to Practise
Have your say  See new equipment  Be the Change!
Have fun  Get it off your chest  Make new friends
Learn new things  What has the Association been up to?
Like to see the new equipment available or under consideration?
My new logbook!  My role in the training program  Is training fixed?

We have 100 places available within our budget
Let us push the boundaries & come mob handed!!

We will advise you when registrations are open via Vgate and an email to your coordinators.

Coordinators please confirm your email address by text to Jack’s Mobile 0467 546 865
Summary of Minutes
from
VAOAT Board meeting held on 26th May 2018

Present: Jack Spinks, Jack van Tatenhove, Cheryl Wilson, Jan Gursanscky, Wayne Doran,
Leith McHarry, Keith Parker attended via phone.

Apologies: Sue George, Phil Dickinson, Neil Kirby

Matters discussed:
• Considerable time was devoted to the discussion of the current situation of VAO training –
  → Lack of structured training for 2018. Some units not aware of their training modules in
  advance
  → There is a legal obligation for AT to provide training to VAOs to ensure they operate within
  their protocols and their authority to practice
  → Some BSOs not providing training within their unit and little or no consultation with VAOs
  about the training. Overall the majority of BSOs are very supportive of their VAOs
  → Some information on vGate indicates training TBA
  → Investigate extended skills for VAOs e.g. – drawing up drugs; using the AED feature on the
    Zoll monitor
  → Unit training has been decreased from 44 hours over 11 months to 33 hours. This loss has
    an impact on rural/remote VAOs more than BSO VAOs; because rural/remote VAOs have
    limited opportunities to catch up on training
  → What type of training environment are we inviting new VAOs into? Some members have
    spoken with new VAOs who are disappointed about the lack of structured training
  → All aspects of being a VAO need to be a part of the AT business plan

• Members agreed to prepare a document outlining our concerns to be sent to Neil Kirby – CE of
  Ambulance Tasmania
• Meal allowance – to be discussed at the monthly meeting with the CE. We agreed that we need
  to keep onto AT about how the systems are working.
• Code of Conduct – no update from Phil. Still a work in progress.
• Update of Constitution – due to Phil’s absence there was no update.
• Jenny Cross – CVS; Emma Davidson - Project Officer Volunteer Education; Jonathon Field –
  Manager, Education & Professional Development joined the meeting to hear of our concerns
  regarding VAO training and recruitment. It was agreed the recruitment process is too slow.
  Distance education was being considered with flexible learning and a possible restructure to the
  VIP program.
• Gathering – seek EOI from VAO units to organize G18 from 10:00 Saturday until Sunday 13:00.
  Proposed budget $25,000.00. Jack van Tatenhove to organize contact with units.
• AT committees – determine which have VAOAT representation and what other committees we
  can join within AT.
• Develop SoDs for VAOs at BSO; rural/remote and CERT stations.
• The VAOAT Board does not support any VAO wearing any insignia on their uniform which is
  prohibited under the AT Uniform Policy.

Next Meeting: Saturday 25th August, 2018 at 10:00. Site: A.T. - TBA

Wayne Doran
VAOAT Board member
Recognition of Prior Learning against Provide Advanced First Aid

The Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) framework that enables the issuance of a Statement of Attainment against the nationally accredited Provide Advanced First Aid (HLTAID006) to eligible VAOs, is now 'in action'. Guidelines and forms for completion were circulated to all Volunteers via email and uploaded to vGate during May.

As a reminder, there is no deadline to apply for a Statement of Attainment. The process will be available on an ongoing basis, so don't worry if you are not in a position to complete and submit the required forms immediately. There is also no requirement to undertake this process; it is each individual's decision as to whether they wish to or not.

Jennifer Cross
Coordinator Volunteer Strategy

Jack van Tatenhove (VAO 3, Port Sorell) was the first recipient of a Statement of Attainment. Jack received his certificate from Jonathon Field, Manager Education and Professional Development Unit at the recent VAOAT Board Meeting in Hobart.

Jack stated that with his years of service and the fact that vGate records both his 'on call' and case history coupled with the RPL questionnaire, it took about 4 hours to gather all the information and confirmation and sign off with his unit Volunteer Coordinator confirming his experience and history.

He also recommends that you only send the completed questionnaire to AT as per the instructions but that you keep a copy of the document and a copy of your supporting evidence within your unit.

"I found the process to be simpler than I originally thought as an active 'on call' & case load history provides strong proof that your skills are current and relevant." Jack stated.
Coordinator Volunteer Strategy - Update

King Island Awards and Recognition Ceremony

Congratulations to these North West region VAOs who were recognised at an Awards Ceremony held on July 5 in Currie, King Island.

Five Year Service Pins were also presented to Christopher Green and Kathleen Hunter.

Thank you to the North West Regional Office, King Island Volunteer Coordinator Robert Jordan and the local King Island hotel who collaborated so well to organise a lovely evening for all attendees.

Chief Executive Neil Kirby, North West Regional Manager Paul Templar and Coordinator Volunteer Strategy Jenny Cross also valued the opportunity for discussions with King Island VAOs.
Coordinator Volunteer Strategy - Update

First Response Newsletter, Edition - August 2018
Update from the Volunteer unit, written 12 July 2018

National Volunteer Week, May 21-27

The fantastic work of AT’s Volunteer Ambulance Officers received well-deserved public recognition during National Volunteer Week in May. With the support of a DHHS Media and Communications Advisor, we were able to implement an expanded program of initiatives this year. These included a volunteer recognition media event in Launceston with the Minister for Health which generated print and television coverage, articles and photos profiling VAOs in The Examiner and The Mercury, a Thank You banner on AT’s public website, a Thank You message in the DHHS weekly email broadcast that reaches all staff across the Department, and daily content on AT’s Facebook page profiling a range of Volunteers and their stories. Concerning Facebook, our Media and Communications Advisor tells us that we almost matched NSW Ambulance and we out-performed Ambulance Victoria in terms of Likes, Page Views and overall engagement rates, all with a smaller audience base.

Each of these initiatives contributed to raising the profile of the contribution you make; the work you do is absolutely recognised and valued both within AT and within the community. AT is glad to have a dedicated Media and Communications resource to support us moving forward in our continued efforts to raise the Volunteer profile and increase public recognition.

CPR/AED – Reminder to reaccredit

A reminder that all VAOs need to reaccredit each year for CPR and AED competency. CPR/AED was the training focus in April. If you missed the CPR/AED session at your station, be sure to speak with your BSO or a visiting Clinical Support Officer and arrange a time for some practice and assessment. We’re also looking into provision of additional opportunities for practice and assessment and relevant information will be circulated via vGate moving forward.

Farewell and Thanks - John Edelsten (Beaconsfield station) – retiring VAO

Monday July 2 marked the last shift for VAO John Edelsten at Beaconsfield station. After five years on the job, John has officially retired. A well-deserved retirement indeed; John consistently contributed around 5 shifts each month during his time with AT. We believe John, who turned 80 in June, was Tasmania’s oldest active VAO.

John was recognised in a presentation from Northern Regional Manager, Lynden Ferguson. He received further recognition via an article and wonderful front page photo in The Examiner newspaper.

AT passes on its very best wishes to John and his wife Meg.

Building their Knowledge and Experience – and Sharing It

Margaret Bricknell (Sheffield station) and Kaleb Milner (St Helens home station; also works at various other stations in Northern region from time to time) were hosted by Ambulance Victoria in May, as participants in the annual Tri State Exchange Program. They were ‘guinea pigs’ in using a new template reporting tool (referenced in the May edition of “First Response”) and through this tool and follow-up discussions with Margaret and Kaleb, AT has gathered useful insights that can inform Volunteer strategy development moving forward. Margaret and Kaleb have also been sharing their experiences with colleagues at their stations. It was clear from speaking with each of them, just how much they enjoyed the experience, and how it has enhanced their motivation and confidence in their VAO work back home in Tasmania.

Sue George (Port Sorell station), Christine Boonstra (South Arm station) and Leith McHarry (New Norfolk station) attended the National Volunteering Conference in Sydney in late June. This conference included a specific stream for emergency services volunteering. We look forward to receiving feedback from Sue, Christine and Leith in due course.
Coordinator Volunteer Strategy - Update

A quick summary of recent activities*:

- Wet weather jacket and pants will become part of the standard uniform issued when an individual is officially appointed as a Volunteer Ambulance Officer Level 1. Implementation will occur in coming months as part of the broader AT uniform project.

- The framework for Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) for the Provide Advanced First Aid qualification was implemented in May. As a reminder, you can find all the information and associated forms on the Downloads tab in vGate.

- Volunteer Tasmania has completed its research and review of Volunteer Recruitment & Retention. At the time of writing this content, AT has not yet received the final report however we will receive it in the coming days. We look forward to seeing VT’s recommendations and commencing discussions re priorities and next steps.

- Work is underway on elements of the Volunteer Support Package within the Tasmanian Government’s “Investment in Ambulance Services” Policy. The current focus is on improving frameworks related to reimbursement of expenses and developing priorities for provision of training equipment for stations; consultation will take place on both topics. Formal recognition of skills developed is another element articulated in the Package; this has been addressed via the RPL framework for PAFA. Other units may be added to AT’s RTO scope in future, after a thorough assessment of their overall value to both AT and our VAOs.

(* a reminder to take a look at the Noticeboard on vGate from time to time to keep yourself up to date)

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Coordinator Volunteer Strategy
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CISM

Critical Incident Stress Management
Helping normal people get over normal reactions to abnormal events.

24 Hour Contact: 0427 181 207

Services:
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- Defusung & on scene support
- Group debriefing
- Individual debriefing
- Follow-up assistance
- Advice to partners, families & friends

3 Ways to Activate the Team:
- Contact your communications/control room and request the CISM Programme
- Contact a Programme member who is known to you
- Phone 0427 181 207 direct

Tasmanian Emergency Services
As a volunteer ambulance officer, John Edelsten is older than the majority of his patients.

After five years on the job, the 80-year-old has officially retired as Tasmania’s oldest volunteer ambulance officer.

Based at Beaconsfield, Mr Edelsten said the role had brought him an incredible sense of purpose, but it wasn't something he went looking for.

“I stumbled upon it, quite literally one day” he said. “I was walking with my wife and we came across a recruitment ambulance. I was a bit nosy and stuck my head in, but I just thought I would be too old. I remember the young lady saying – well if you are older than 18 you can drive an ambulance. So I laughed and agreed to do so.”

Mr Edelsten moved to Tasmania with his wife, Meg, about 15 years ago, after a long career as a chartered accountant in the UK.

At the time, Mrs Edelsten was recovering from treatment for lung cancer.

Mr Edelsten said her “miraculous” recovery inspired him to give back to the community.

“She was only given two years, but she beat it against all the odds,” he said. “I definitely developed a new appreciation for health professionals. I wanted to give back in a healthy way. Early on I realised that I was very fortunate to be so healthy and that many patients were younger than I. These experiences contributed directly to my desire to help the community for as long as I could.”

Ambulance Tasmania regional manager Lynden Ferguson said Mr Edelsten has been an outstanding volunteer and team member.

“My experience is that he has been an extremely polite and considerate gentleman,” he said.

“As our volunteer ambulance officers’ backgrounds and ages are very diverse, we appreciate having the life experience and insights of our older volunteers. In that vein, we really would welcome retirees that are looking for a new challenge.”

Mr Edelston said he hoped to serve as an example for “older” people considering taking up a volunteer position.

“I think 80 is a respectable age to hang up the cap, so to speak,” he said.

“I now appeal to the more elder section of our community, the 50s and 60s, to contact the Launceston ambulance head office and become a volunteer. You won’t regret it”

Jessica Willard
*The Examiner*, July 9 2018
Picture: Scott Gelston
Ambulance Tasmania funding for volunteers confirmed

An $800,000 a year election promise to Ambulance Tasmania has been confirmed just in time for National Volunteer Week.

Details of the state government’s pledge to increase training and support to Ambulance Tasmania volunteers were revealed by Health Minister Michael Ferguson on Sunday morning.

Ambulance Tasmania’s 500 volunteers will benefit from increased reimbursement for out of pocket expenses, formal recognition within Ambulance Tasmania’s corporate structure, a superintendent of volunteer support and all volunteer stations will gain support from a branch station officer.

Three regional volunteer training coordinators will also come on-board to increase training opportunities.

“It’s a good indication of how the system needs to come together to work.”

Volunteers will also have their first aid training certified by the government under the new funding.

Mr Ferguson said it was a commitment that Ambulance Tasmania had raised in the past numerous times.

“We want to strengthen our volunteer base, we want to grow it, and encourage more Tasmanians to put up their hand up,” he said.

The thing volunteers want most is recognition for their service.

The funding will be included in next month’s budget as a four-year commitment by the state government.

Volunteer Tasmania chief executive Alison Lai said it was encouraging to see the commitment.

“We applaud the government’s involvement in funding volunteers and especially when it is a government service that affects a lot of people,” she said. “The thing volunteers want most is recognition for their service.”

The Examiner, May 20 2018
Volunteer ambulance officers are often the first on the scene of a medical emergency in rural and remote areas of Tasmania.

Margaret Chilcott has served as a volunteer ambulance officer at Poatina since 2012. Previously working in humanitarian aid in Africa, the Middle East and Asia, when Margaret relocated to Tasmania she was on the lookout for a way to help her community.

“It’s not an altruistic thing for me where I think ‘I’m going out to save lives’, or anything. I just have the ability to get out there and help in that way, so I do,” Margaret said.

Margaret is one of four volunteers in Poatina’s community emergency response team, who speedily respond to medical emergencies in their Subaru Forrester, which is kitted out with all the gear to save a life.

“Because we’re so far out from Launceston or anywhere, if there is a medical emergency then we’re first on the scene, while we wait for the ambulance and paramedics.”

You don’t need any experience to volunteer with Ambulance Tasmania, but Margaret says a love of learning is a must.

“You’re dealing with a completely different situation every time you get called out, so every time you’re learning something new,” she said.

“When it’s the middle of the night and its freezing cold and you’ve got somebody lying on the ground, it’s a completely different experience from working from a text book or on a mannekin.”

Margaret said the reason she volunteers, in addition to serving her community and her passion for learning, is the people she gets to meet. “I would definitely recommend volunteering to everyone.”

Ambulance Tasmania volunteer ambulance officers dedicate more than 25,000 hours each month to supporting medical emergency response needs across the State.

Ambulance Tasmania is always looking for committed, caring people join their team of Volunteer Ambulance Officers, especially in rural communities.

If you would like to join Ambulance Tasmania’s wonderful volunteers and gain valuable skills that will stay with you for life, learn more at www.dhhs.tas.gov.au/ambulance/volunteers

The Examiner, May 18 2018

Barry is a volunteer ambulance officer for Ambulance Tasmania supporting the Nubeena ambulance station. Contributing an estimated 18,000 hours of service over the past nine years, Barry has assisted countless sick and injured people across the Tasman Peninsula.

As someone who will be the first to volunteer for a shift or to step in when others cannot, Barry is a hardworking and dedicated volunteer inspiring others to also become volunteer ambulance officers.

Congratulations to AT volunteer, Barry who was one of three finalists for the Lifeline Tasmania Emergency Services Award earlier this week at the Southern Cross Television Tasmania Volunteering Awards.

Barry is thanked personally by Neil Kirby, Chief Executive of Ambulance Tasmania.
Five Ways To Well Being

The Five Ways to Wellbeing are a set of evidence-based actions which promote people’s wellbeing. They are: Connect, Be Active, Take Notice, Keep Learning and Give. These activities are simple things individuals can do in their everyday lives.

The Five Ways to Wellbeing were developed by New Economics Foundation from evidence gathered in the UK government’s Foresight Project on Mental Capital and Wellbeing. The project, published in 2008, drew on state-of-the-art research about mental capital and mental wellbeing through life. The Five Ways to Wellbeing were developed to communicate its key findings.

The Five Ways have been used by health organisations, schools and community projects across the UK and around the world to help people take action to improve their wellbeing. They’ve been used in lots of different ways, for example to get people to start thinking about wellbeing, to develop organisational strategy, to measure impact, to assess need, for staff development, and to help people to incorporate more wellbeing-promoting activities into their lives.

Why not put some of the Five Ways to Wellbeing into your life today?

Five ways to wellbeing
A review of the most up-to-date evidence suggests that building the following five actions into our day-to-day lives is important for wellbeing:

Connect...

Be active...

Take notice...

Keep learning...

Give...

Connect

With the people around you. With family, friends, colleagues and neighbours. At home, work, school or in your local community. Think of these as the cornerstones of your life and invest time in developing them, building these connections will support and enrich you every day.

Be active

Go for a walk or run. Step outside. Cycle. Play a game. Garden. Dance. Exercising makes you feel good. Most importantly, discover a physical activity you enjoy and one that suits your level of mobility and fitness.

Take notice

Be curious. Catch sight of the beautiful. Remark on the unusual. Notice the changing seasons. Savour the moment, whether you are walking to work, eating lunch or talking to friends. Be aware of the world around you and what you are feeling. Reflecting on your experiences will help you appreciate what matters to you.

Keep learning

Try something new. Rediscover an old interest. Sign up for that course. Take on a different responsibility at work. Fix a bike. Learn to play an instrument or how to cook your favourite food. Set a challenge you will enjoy achieving. Learning new things will make you more confident as well as being fun.

Give

Do something nice for a friend, or a stranger. Thank someone. Smile. Volunteer your time. Join a community group. Look out as well as in. Seeing yourself, and your happiness, linked to the wider community can be incredibly rewarding and creates connections with the people around you.

https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/five-ways-to-mental-wellbeing

You can keep in touch with Ambulance Tasmania on social media:

Ambulance Tasmania  @AmbulanceTas  Ambulance Tasmania
Officers Honoured

Tasmania Police officers Nigel Housego and Damian Bidgood were ‘humbled’ to receive this year’s Rotary Tasmania Police Excellence awards.

Launcestoon-based First Class Constable Nigel Housego has investigated hundreds of fatal and serious crashes.

His hard work was recognised when he received the 2018 award from Rotary Tasmania, alongside Westpac Rescue Helicopter crew chief Sergeant Damian Bidgood.

First Class Constable Housego has been with Tasmania Police for more than two decades and spent more than 10 years as an investigator.

Senior Sergeant Jason Jones from Northern Road and Public Order Safety said “First Class Constable Housego is highly regarded by both his peers and the wider judiciary as extremely motivated, thorough and a skilled crash investigator with an exceptional work ethic.”

Both Sergeant Bidgood and First Class Constable Housego have received official honours from Tasmania Police throughout their careers, but agreed being recognised directly by the community they work in was an even greater honour.

For Sergeant Bidgood in particular, who has worked in search and rescue for more than 24 years, the award came as a surprise. “I wasn’t expecting it, it is definitely an honour,” he said.

The award was something his entire team should be proud of, Sergeant Bidgood said. “In search and rescue it is a combination of police, ambulance and Rotorlift pilots, which is three organisations working well together,” he said.

“arre’s also the volunteers, SES and caverneers.”

He recalled a recent cave rescue, which involved a range of search and rescue workers as well as volunteers. “Everybody, including the helicopter, SES, ambulance and bushwalkers worked together. In my entire career I haven’t seen such a well-oiled machine.”

Beyond his love for flying, Sergeant Bidgood said saving people’s lives was the most satisfying part of the job. “We are helping people that are in trouble, it’s very rewarding,” he said.

“Helicopter work is challenging and demanding at times, but it is very enjoyable work”

To be considered for the Rotary Tasmania Police Excellence Award, an officer must “demonstrate excellence in a particular policing discipline, role or duty, exemplify the core departmental values of equity, integrity and accountability and ease the public’s confidence in Tasmania Police”.

Chair of the Rotary Tasmania police awards committee Glen Woolley said there had been a long list of nominees this year, but First Class Constable Housego and Sergeant Bidgood were the two standouts.

“Damian and Nigel were the standouts but, we couldn’t split them so this year we decided to award two people. They both work in such different fields and the impact their work has had on Tasmanians and making them feel safer is what made them stand out.

The selection committee was made up of two members from Rotary Tasmania and two from Tasmania Police.

“I think it is important to recognise police because of the work they do,” Mr Woolley said. “Police officers do extraordinary work under extraordinary circumstances, work that some people wouldn’t be able to do.”

Next year, Rotary Tasmania plans to extend the award to all emergency service workers including Tasmania Fire Service, Ambulance Tasmania and SES Tasmania. “We want to be able to recognise both full-time and volunteer emergency service workers,” Mr Woolley said.

Melissa Mobbs

Sunday Examiner, July 1 2018
Ladies who lunch - the Amb-belles at Beauty Point

Back L-R: Dianne Coon, Lorraine Gardiner, author Ro Evelyn
Front: Marg Dennis (not in pain, just looking into bright sunshine)

The Volunteer – a Novel
by Ro Evelyn

General Adult Fiction
Published by Heirloom Publications 2016

**Copies now available to purchase through book stores and online, and to borrow through the Tasmanian library system.**

An isolated seaport in Tasmania, the local ambulance crew and one plan to destroy them both...

‘A ripping good read’ - Rohan Wilson

Dedicated to those who volunteer their time and skills - get your copy & enjoy the adventure!
Gold Coast ambulance bicycle trial so successful it will roll out in Brisbane

The Queensland Ambulance Bicycle Response Team trial began in November and sees cyclists hit the pavement to pedal to emergency calls in the busy Surfers Paradise and Broadbeach tourist zones.

The program aims to ease the load during the 2018 Gold Coast Commonwealth Games.

Former Australian elite cyclist Jane McDonald was one of the paramedics in the trial. She said the bikes had been so successful they would be extended to Brisbane.

“I’m not sure that anyone quite predicted the success of the program,” Ms McDonald said.

“Our response times on average are eight minutes quicker than an ambulance (vehicle).”

The paramedics carry cannulas, defibrillator, as well as burns, haemorrhage and airway kits.

They have responded to a variety of calls during the trial: paediatric near-drownings, cardiac arrests and anaphylaxis.

“Within four minutes of the (anaphylaxis) patient making the phone call, we had a bicycle response team member arrive… which is astounding” Ms McDonald said.

“We’re able to get our medical equipment through tight pedestrian areas, we’re able to respond quickly and we’re able to provide that life-saving intervention.”

The teams can give the ambulance vehicle a situation report and advise them whether to downgrade or upgrade the response.

Ms McDonald admitted it was a tough job. “It depends on the amount of work that we have but generally 20 kilometres for the day would be considered a quiet day on the bikes,” she said. “But our record so far has been about 63 (kilometres).”

The trial is due to roll out in the Brisbane CBD and Southbank in the new year.

Damien Larkins and Cathy Border
ABC Gold Coast
Tue 19 Dec 2017

Thanks to Ron Jones for sending this article
We are camped tonight just west of Orroroo, where we camped 3 years ago.

03/05/18: Before we left Orroroo this morning we stopped off to have a look at The Giant Gum Tree. Its height was not what made it a giant but its girth was quite spectacular.

Then on out of Orroroo toward Hawker. Here we found an art gallery that is very difficult to describe. There are the usual size of paintings of Australian (especially South Australian) scenery along with jewellery, all made by the artist, but what is so special is the murals further inside the building. It was well worth the $10 cost to go in. Then after lunch we continued north towards Marree, hoping to find a camp spot at Leigh Creek but to no avail so we kept going north. It had started to rain while we were in the gallery (it doesn’t rain very much in this area so we couldn’t begrudge the people). As we travelled there were so many kangaroos at the side of the road trying to get a little drink. After leaving Leigh Creek the rain soon stopped and so did the kangaroos.

We are now camped about 60 kms south of Marree so will get there in the morning.

07/05/18: It’s been a few days since I’ve done any journaling, no excuses. We rolled into Marree about 1000 on Friday and booked into the Hotel caravan park. The stay is free, showers cost $2 and they appreciate it if you eat (or drink) at the hotel. We had a very nice meal at the pub and met a young couple from WA who were very interested to learn of our travels.

Headed out of Marree on Saturday morning and saw many rail siding ruins, sculptures, rail bridges (ruined). We came upon Lake Eyre South, the shore appeared to be only about 200
metres away but in reality was more likely to be 2 kilometres. I was quite satisfied as that was one thing I wanted to see on this trip. We were driving behind Lyn and Denis (some way behind so we didn’t cop all their dust). Saw a small willi willi and managed to get a photo of it as it crossed the road. On into William Creek which is a very small settlement – 1 hotel, 1 caravan park, about 6 other buildings and lots of small aircraft. We didn’t stay at the caravan park at $24 a night but instead stayed in a car park just off the road.

Before we left William Creek on Sunday Colin discovered that one of our tyres was going flat so that had to be changed. We then travelled on through countryside much the same all the way. Then – another flat tyre. Fortunately we had 2 spares with us so after changing it we moved on. Then a bit further on and Denis had a flat. It is good to be travelling with companions who can help at times like this.

There was quite a long distance of roadworks being carried out as we neared Algebuckina, pronounced Algeybukner, so we had to creep along at about 40kms for a while. Algebuckina spans the Neales River and was built in 1890-91 as part of the Great Northern Railway which was seen as a means of opening up the northern part of the state. The bridge spans 1,922’3” (over ½ kilometre). Up to 350 people were working on it at any one stage. The magnificent ironwork was forged in Scotland and shipped to Adelaide from where it was transported to this remote area. It was the only river crossing on the Central Australian line which could be counted on to withstand a flood. We camped underneath for the night. There is no water in the river.

This morning our goal was to reach Oodnadatta which meant we only had about 60kms to travel. The road, although unsealed, was so smooth it was like driving on bitumen.

Arrived in Oodnadatta and arranged to have our 3 tyres repaired. The man at the servo suggested we drop the pressure to 30psi, this nearly caused Colin apoplexy, but we did it anyway. We are now sitting in the Pink Roadhouse caravan park.

11/05/18: A very pleasant meal at the Pink Roadhouse on Monday night. There are basic facilities in the caravan park and the showers, although clean, leave a lot to be desired. We moseyed on down the track towards Coober Pedy.

After seeing the Painted Desert we headed east towards Marree and camped again under the Algebuckina Bridge. The next day, Wednesday, we continued eastward and arrived in Marree at about 1500 hours. Had a lovely hot, comfortable shower without having to try to organise taps etc.

Left Marree at 1000 yesterday and sustained another puncture, or should I say shredded tyre, so the lowered psi didn’t help.

We passed a cyclist coming north, we had been following his track for a long while. I certainly don’t envy him. Sometime he passed us while we slept as we passed him again this morning.

We are now in Birdsville and camped beside the Birdsville Billabong which is a tributary of the Diamantina River which this year has water in it. Tomorrow we plan to go west to have a look at Big Red which is a very large sand dune on the eastern edge of the Simpson Desert.

13/05/18: We slept well on Friday night, didn’t wake till 0730 yesterday (Saturday) morning. After a leisurely breakfast we headed west 38 kms to look at Big Red. We came to Little Red first and Bosun and I climbed to the top. Since our vehicle is not a 4WD we didn’t attempt to drive up. Then we went north for a couple of kms to Big Red which didn’t appear to be much higher than Little Red. The 3 of us climbed to the top, taking our time. There were vehicles going up while we were climbing. It is not so easy to climb in sand, you don’t make a lot of progress. I was really pleased that Colin was able to achieve the climb. The reason it is called Big is that it is far wider than Little. What a spectacular view from up there. That is another thing ticked off our bucket list.

Then back to Birdsville again where we had steak sandwiches at the famous Birdsville hotel. The steaks were about 2 cms thick! And very tasty. Then a drive round town to see what else there is, it is only a small town, not sure of the population, then back to our campsite at the billabong. A restful afternoon followed.

Then we started our journey eastward towards Windorah. Most of the road is unsealed and in places it is very rough. We have seen 2 young dingoes in our travels, they slink off as our vehicle gets closer to them. I haven’t been able to get a photo.

Without actually realising it we were gradually climbing up a hill to a plateau. On top was a lookout, Deon’s Lookout, and from there we could see for miles where we had come and also where we were going. Such a speccy view. We are now 109 kms west of Windorah where we are camped for the night. We think we will be
on sealed roads from now on. I don’t mind the gravel roads but I don’t like all the dust which comes into the bus.

14/05/18: A quiet night. Eastward to Windorah this morning where we re-fuelled and bought a couple of groceries. We paid 166 c/l for diesel at the main bowser then along the road about 100 metres there were more bowser at a little shop with diesel for 157 c/l. Oh well, you can’t always be a winner.

There has been a lot of road-kill today in varying stages of decomposing, but one advantage is that we saw 3 eagles feasting on a carcass. Today we have seen a couple dozen emus, several kangaroos of different types and ages, 6 brolgas and 1 goanna.

The road from last night’s camp site is sealed but most of it is only one lane wide so when you meet an oncoming vehicle both vehicles have to get halfway off the road.

The weather so far has been really great, nice warm days about 22 - 28 deg with the nights quite chilly. There was only rain for part of one day. I’m a bit pleased that we aren’t in Hobart currently, I remember the 1960 floods that as a school girl, I made my way through swirling water to my Nan’s house in Sandy Bay.

Tonight we are camped 1 km east of Quilpie next to the Bulloo River. Will probably stay here for a couple days.

15/05/18: Today we went nowhere. We decided that it would be a good idea to take everything out of the bus and get rid of the accumulated dust. In doing this I discovered about 6 holes in the floor which I guess were put there when the man (or woman) converted the bus into a motor home. The holes are now plugged. Also, Colin discovered that the back door was not closing properly so was letting in a lot of dust. This has now been rectified. There is only the middle section of the bus underneath our armchairs that need attention. That can wait till tomorrow morning. We will go back into Quilpie for a bit of a look-see before heading further east.

17/05/18: We left Quilpie yesterday after a good look round. I got accused of being a Victorian when I went into the supermarket. When I asked why I was told it was because I was wearing shorts and a short sleeved top. I denied the Victorian part then informed them that I am from Tassie.

Due to the amount of dust which had got into our bus my hair was nearly standing up on end. We do have a shower in the bus but we didn’t want to use our good water. Baby wipes are pretty good for hygiene but don’t help the hair situation. When we got to Charleville we booked into the same caravan park where we stayed 3 years ago. Laundry was done first then the shower. I had to shampoo twice and there were brown rivulets running down the shower wall!

Today we travelled 180 kms to Mitchell, a lovely little town. There is a free campsite about 3 kms west of the town at a weir. There are about 30 caravans and motor homes here in a very large area. Very peaceful.

18/05/18: After a good night we departed Mitchell and headed eastward. Just as we were entering Roma we heard a bang and then flap, flap, flap. Uh oh, another puncture. It was the rear left inside tyre. We carefully drove into Roma to have it removed. It only took about ½ hour for the men to change the tyre, a bit different from when we did it ourselves on the Oodnadatta and Birdsville Tracks. There are now only 2 more tyres to get punctures for all to have been affected.

There are kilometres and kilometres of roadworks being done between Mitchell and Dalby, repairing, resurfacing, widening. It will be a great improvement for the highway.

19/05/18: We camped last night at Cecil Plains Apex Park, another free site. It was a good spot, we were the only campers there. It is right beside the Condamine River which has little or no water. We found out yesterday afternoon that Simon & Liz would be away today until late so we decided to spend the night at the Ipswich Showgrounds. When we got there the Ipswich Show was in full progress so no camping. We have ended up in the Church car park, not seen from the road so should be OK.

As we came south from Dalby yesterday and again east from Cecil Plains today we passed large acreages of cotton, sorghum and maize. The soil looks almost so good you could eat it. When we passed through that area 3 years ago we saw signs stating “no fracking”. This year we saw no signs. I can’t imagine why anyone would want to risk the viability of such great agricultural land. I hope they never are permitted to drill for gas in that region.

Today we are having a lazy day. Probably won’t have any updates for a while now.

01/06/18: After about 3 days of not feeling on top of the world I felt better yesterday so we decided to go train tripping. This time we went from Ipswich Central to Roma Street, then caught another train going to Cleveland. That is the train to catch if you want to get the ferry to
North Stradbroke Island. We didn’t go to Straddie yesterday but the plan is to go one day before leaving Ipswich to go home. We travelled about 60kms each way, taking about 1¼ hours each way.

This afternoon we needed to do a bit of supermarket shopping so went to a new centre at Ripley. It was only opened a couple of weeks ago. Most of the shopping centres in Queensland have shade covers in the car parks and the ones at Ripley also have solar panels on them. I reckon there must be about 2000 panels. What a great idea.

9/6/18: We’re on the road again, this time for about a fortnight, till we go back to Liz & Simon to celebrate 4 birthdays. We left Ipswich on Tuesday morning planning to drive only short (er) distances. We had planned to spend the night at O’Shea’s Crossing at the southern end of Somerset Dam. According to our Camps book it was a good spot but when we got there the signs advised that is only for day use and dogs are not permitted. Our Camps book is a 2013 edition so we may need to upgrade. We drove on to Kilcoy and found the spot where we had previously stayed, near the High School. It was a good spot but rather crowded, otherwise we may have stayed a couple of nights. On Wednesday we headed north again and instead of taking the route which would have led through Kingaroy we decided to take a gravel road which turned out to be a bonus. We drove through kilometres of forest smelling so good after having been in the city for a while. We came into civilisation again at Goomeri and found a camp at Kinbombi Falls, about 11 kms east of Goomeri. There were only a few other campers there. After lunch we decided we should have a look at the falls so down, down, down, about 500 steps (I didn’t count them). The falls were a bit of a disappointment, only a trickle down about 10 metres. Then we had to up, up, up to get back to camp. We did it in very slow stages.

Thursday saw us heading north/northwest to arrive at Gayndah which advertises itself as the oldest town in Queensland. It is on the Burnett River. There is evidence of a great flood having been through, don’t know how long ago, as we saw a chair and a 44 gallon drum way up in the trees. There is not a lot of water flowing at the moment. Colin bought a bag of mandarins, not sure which variety but he said they started with “n”. Very juicy but don’t taste like any mandarin I have ever had before. There are (were) about 3 dozen mandarins in the bag and cost $5.

Friday morning I went to have a shower. Now remember that this is a free campsite. There was no water coming out of the hot tap and I didn’t fancy having a cold shower so I only washed my hair. Brrr. We then went and had a look at the Claude Wharton Weir which the Camps book also said was a free camp but it is now only day use. So on then to Mundubbera where we restocked with groceries, then on to Eidsvold where we thought we may stop for the night. No good sport there so on a little further for a lunch stop. After talking with a few people at the lunch stop we thought we may camp at Cracow (no we are not in Poland), but that was a really small village and didn’t look inviting. So another 50 kms saw us at Theodore. What great fortune that we hadn’t stopped at Cracow. In Theodore we found a free (they do like to have a donation) at Junction Park. It is where 2 rivers meet. One is the Dawson and until I check Google I won’t know the name of the other. The park was very crowded but we were able to find a slot to back into. There are toilets, showers ($1), picnic tables in a fenced park setting, with the campers round the perimeter. Such a lovely quiet area. We are planning to stay here a few nights.

13/06/18: What a lovely few days we have had at Theodore. There are quite a few campers there, many from southern states who stay for several months each year, despite it only being a 48 hour site. The townspeople don’t seem to worry about the length people stay as it brings more money into their town. There is a good walking track, concrete, from the park into town, so the 3 of us walked in to get more groceries on Monday morning, very pleasant along the Castle Creek way. Sunday night we walked into town along the boulevard to the pub for dinner, along with another couple who live in Geelong. The Geelong couple have a small fluffy dog, I think it is a Pomeranian, a very barking, nasty little dog. They said it is the 7th one of that breed which they’ve had and the only one with this nasty nature. Bosun steered well clear of her. I can understand why people keep returning, the town caters for just about everything – it has a hotel/motel, supermarket, service station x 2, hardware, post office, hospital, ambulance, vet, laundromat, school, plus many more.

Because there was a lot of cloud cover yesterday our solar panel wasn’t able to capture a lot of power for us and it was still cloudy this...
morning so we decided to move on. The excess power from the bus battery will flow into the house batteries so top them up for us. We have travelled in a southerly direction today and ended up at Wandoan. Our Camping Club book told us there was a caravan park here but we couldn’t find it. As we were driving round we came across another park welcoming caravans and motor homes. It is run by volunteers at the heritage site. There is power, toilets and showers, all for $15 per night. There are only 2 campers here, including us. The caretaker told me that the caravan park was taken over by the mining people so the Heritage people decided to open up their paddock for campers. She said that many caravan parks in the area have been taken over by the mines. We have booked in for 1 night but as we are in no hurry we may stay a bit longer on the power.

There have been a couple of showers of rain, just enough to cause annoyance, not enough to do any good for the farms. We passed 2 lots of cattle on the “long paddock” as we drove down the Leichhardt Highway, along with a truck with water for them.

18/06/18: Well, here we are back in Ipswich.

There were more showers overnight and after we got up at Wandoan so we decided to move on. We took a minor sealed road down to Yuleba. We camped there at Judd’s Lagoon last year. There is much less water in the lagoon this year and only one Muscovy drake left. At about 4 pm a man came down in his car to feed the drake who was waiting in the appointed spot. The camp site wasn’t as crowded as it was last year. On Friday we drove round Yuleba then headed towards St George, via Surat. There was a nice camp site about 14 kms north of St George, beside a river which looked to be covered with blue/green algae. Several other campers came into the site for the night. Then on Saturday we drove into St George for fuel and groceries. It is a tidy well organised town, as are many that we have driven through. Then another new road for us as we drove toward Dalby. By the time we reached Moonie it was still a bit early for camping so we continued on to Kumbarilla. It is a very large camp site with many trees and also many wide open spaces. The only draw-back there was that soon after we settled, sitting on our chairs outside, Colin discovered that the left rear tyre was gradually going flat. It takes at least ½ hour to change tyres, maybe even 1 hour. That makes number 5 for this trip.

Yesterday (Sunday) morning we drove on into Dalby which currently has a lot of roadworks taking place. Then eastward towards Bowenville. There is a camp site 5 kms south of Bowenville where we stopped to have a cuppa. It is situated on the Oakey Creek. Unfortunately a very cold wind was blowing from the south so instead of staying the night there we decided to come on in to Ipswich. We have had a lovely couple of weeks visiting new places and meeting new people. We are back in Ipswich till next Monday (25th) when we will start making our way south towards Melbourne.

28/06/18: We had a lovely relaxing week with Liz & Simon. We took them all out for birthday dinner on Friday night (22nd). On Saturday Liz & Simon had an appointment at Robina on the Gold Coast so we went with them and wandered round the shopping centre till they were finished. We only got lost a couple of times. Then on Sunday 24th, Liz’s birthday, in the afternoon we went to Eat Street on the northern side of the Brisbane River east of Brisbane. Eat Street is a mainly food market set up in painted shipping containers where you can buy food from many countries. There were also a couple of bands playing in different locations. What a great experience. There is a $3 admission fee, dogs on leashes are permitted. Everyone seemed to be having a great time.

We left the house at about 0830, got groceries and fuel and pumped up the tyres. One of the inner tyres had had an extension replaced last week but apparently it was faulty so we had to go back to the tyre shop to have it fixed. They only took about 10 minutes to fix it, then we were on our way. I am always amazed at the forests we climb up Cunninghams Pass, it is a fairly high climb and thickly forested. On to Warwick where we turned south onto the New England Highway. We spent the night at the showgrounds at Tenterfield. Oh, how cold it was overnight, although we have plenty of bedding we were still cold. I think Tenterfield is one of the coldest places in NSW. When I went into the newsagent on Tuesday morning the lady serving was wearing a coat, scarf and woolly hat. She said it is always colder at the showgrounds because it is down in a dip. So, on down the highway through Glen Innes, Armidale where we stopped for lunch, then towards Tamworth. When we were visiting our friends at Tamworth 3 years ago they took us SE to Chaffey Dam where camping is permitted so we headed out there. We took a detour and went down on the western side of the dam. There were so many kangaroos in the paddocks and at the dam shore drinking. We ended up
circumnavigating the dam and eventually got back to the camping site. There were only about 6 other campers there in a very large area so we certainly weren’t crowded.

Then yesterday morning we headed into Tamworth. After lunch we headed to our friend’s home at Moore Creek which is only about 10 kms from Tamworth. We will stay here till tomorrow then continue south.

06/07/18: We left Tamworth on Friday morning (29th). We had to buy a new O ring for the gas bottle, I guess the one that had just disintegrated had done a good job. We were planning to spend the night at Wallabadah but decided to go a bit further so headed west to Quirindi. Still a bit early to stop so went on to Premer to a Rotary Club camp site. After a good night’s sleep we continued on to Coonabarabran to restock groceries, then southward to Gulgong where we stayed in the showgrounds. By this time we realised we were going to be in Melbourne within only a few more days so we managed to change our booking on the Spirit from 12th to 4th. So now we were in “transport” mode.

On southward through Wellington, Molong, Canowindra, Cowra, Cootamundra, to spend the night at Bethungra Dam which is just a few kms north of Junee. An early start on Monday morning saw us making good time towards the NSW/Vic border. We generally like to stay away from major highways but this trip saw us using the Hume. We made really good time south and I remembered a camp site where we had stopped for morning tea 3 years ago so we aimed to get there. It is about half way between Seymour and Yea – King Parrot River Camp Area. There was mist hanging in the trees as we set up camp but with our little diesel heater in the bus we were snuggly warm. A fog surrounded us when we woke on Tuesday but had lifted by the time we had organised ourselves. It was now an easy drive into Melbourne to get to our young friends’ home.

An easy day getting ready to board the Spirit on Wed and we were set. We had a really good sail from Melbourne and arrived home at about 11 am yesterday. Bosun is so happy to be home. So are we but we have had a most enjoyable time catching up with friends, seeing new sights and catching up with family.

So till next time we take to the tracks I’ll say farewell. Hope you’ve enjoyed the trip with us.

Robyn & Colin Dell
Following a Triple Zero call (000), the app alerts nearby trusted responders, giving them the location of the patient and also the location of the nearest available defibrillator (AED).

The closest available ambulance is simultaneously sent to the patient, and in some parts of Victoria the fire brigade is also dispatched. Meanwhile, the GoodSAM responder can provide CPR and, if possible, make use of the nearest available defibrillator – giving the patient a greater chance of survival.

Ambulance Victoria first introduced the GoodSAM app, which originated in the UK, to Victoria in January 2018 through a small pilot with off-duty paramedics. Already at least two lives have been saved.

The statewide roll-out means that appropriately trained and qualified off-duty firefighters, lifesavers, doctors, nurses and other health professionals from engaged partner organisations can now join as GoodSAM responders.

Other members of the community can still play an important role in saving lives by registering defibrillators in Ambulance Victoria’s online registry. This information is linked with GoodSAM and provided through the app when a responder is alerted that someone nearby is in cardiac arrest.

Find out more about how GoodSAM is saving lives worldwide at goodsamapp.org

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About NURSES

Somebody asked: “You’re a nurse?!? That’s cool, I wanted to do that when I was a kid. How much do you make?”

The nurse replied: “How much do I make? I can make holding your hand seem like the most important thing in the world when you’re scared. I can make your child breathe when they stop. I can help your father survive a heart attack. I can help your father survive a heart attack. I can help your father survive a heart attack. I can make myself get up at 5am to make sure your mother has the medicine she needs to live. I work all day to save the lives of strangers. I make my family wait for dinner until I know your family member is taken care of. I make myself skip lunch so that I can make sure that everything I did for your wife today is charted. I make myself work weekends and holidays because people don’t just get sick Monday to Friday. Today I might save your life.

How much do I make? All I know is, I make a difference.”

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PICNIC:
Problem in Chair, Not in Computer

“I wouldn’t get lost all the time if the shepherd would let me use his GPS navigator.”

K. Spear
Ciao Bella

We were dispatched to a road traffic crash for a pedestrian down. On the way to the call the radio crackled with an update – the victim was a seven-year-old male trapped beneath a car.

We hadn’t even made the intersection before we were flagged by people on the street. There was a woman wailing in the middle of the road. Three men were pointing under a car stopped atop the crosswalk painted on the street.

“Ohmygawd he’s under there,” The woman was sobbing.

An engine, truck, and manpower squad pulled up behind us. We all made our way over to the car.

I peered into the shadows. There was a black lab trapped under the chassis. He had a broken leg and big sad eyes. He was quiet and looking right through me.

The decision to proceed with the rescue came as a simultaneous murmur of assent that rippled through the combined crews.

“We’re here. Let’s help. Otherwise she’s liable to have a heart attack,” said the fire officer motioning to the crying woman still standing in the street.

The firefighters did a masterful job with the extrication. We transferred the dog to our backboard, splinted his leg, bandaged some cuts and then loaded the board onto the stretcher and into the rig.

I called it in on the radio. “En route to CV Victoria.” CH was the abbreviation for Centre Hospitalier.

CV? The dispatcher didn’t miss a beat. “Does your patient have two legs or four?”

“Four.”

“10-4. A supervisor will meet you at the CV. I’ll chat with you when you get back from uh-vacation in a few days. And by the way, everyone here wants to tell you guys – good job!”

***

Bella the Office Hamster and treasured house pet died this week.

She was old for a hamster. She lived and loved quietly. Bella passed peacefully in the place that she called home.

I provided gentle palliative care. Bella munched on warm oatmeal served up on a spoon.

Scary Old School Surgical Tools

Skull Saw (1830s-60s)

This hand-cranked saw’s blades were used to cut through sections of the skull, allowing for access by other instruments.


This article is taken from a Canadian website (http://bigmedicine.ca) and are the views of the author and not endorsed by VAOAT or AT.
Crosswords are 'better than sex' due to a flood of dopamine that is released when a puzzle is finished

Even the biggest crossword fanatic would find it hard to argue that solving puzzles is better than sex.

But scientists have said just that – after finding out that the 'aha!' moment when we work out an answer has the same effect on our brains.

A flood of dopamine is released at that point – the 'reward' chemical that makes sex, eating or winning money enjoyable.

A team at Goldsmiths, University of London, used MRI brain scans to study what happens when we solve a clue. This feeling is defined as the moment of transition from being completely dark about the solution to suddenly 'seeing it'.

Study co-author Professor Joydeep Bhattacharya said: 'Dopamine is the brain reward you might get from having sex or winning the lottery.

'We also saw it being released in the brain during someone's 'aha!' moment where they solved a puzzle, which brings a feeling of relief, ease, joy and confidence.'

He even argued: 'If anything, solving a puzzle may be even better than sex or money, because it has further implications for memory and people are learning from the experience.'

The study, led by the Medical University of Vienna and published in the journal Human Brain Imaging, scanned the brains of 29 volunteers as they solved 48 puzzles.

They were given three words, such as stick, reading and service, and asked to find a linking word – in this case, lip.

Professor Bhattacharya added: 'By using the state-of-the-art functional magnetic resonance imaging we were able to peer deep into the brain and study in detail which areas are active during creative problem-solving.

'For the first time we have shown that the hub of the brain's reward system, the nucleus accumbens, 'lit up' with increased activation both when problems were solved and when people reported a strong 'aha!' experience.'

Dr Martin Tik, of the MVU, said: 'This area of the brain is closely associated with a flash of insight or moment of sudden enlightenment and can explain the ecstatic joy that goes with solving a creative problem.'

Read more: [http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-5662905/Crosswords-better-sex-flood-dopamine-released-puzzle-finished.html#ixzz5GZnJ1jsR](http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-5662905/Crosswords-better-sex-flood-dopamine-released-puzzle-finished.html#ixzz5GZnJ1jsR)

Here’s a bright idea...

Attach a Velcro strip to the wall to store soft toys.

"My dad’s GPS says I don’t need to learn how to read maps."
POET'S CORNER

Sat Nav

I have a little Satnav, It sits there in my car
A Satnav is a driver's friend, it tells you where you are.
I have a little Satnav, I've had most my life
It's better than the normal ones, my Satnav is my wife.

It gives me full instructions, especially how to drive
"It's sixty Ks an hour", it says, "You're doing sixty five".
It tells me when to stop and start, and when to use the brake
And tells me that it's never ever, safe to overtake.

It tells me when a light is red, and when it goes to green
It seems to know instinctively, just when to intervene.
It lists the vehicles just in front, and all those to the rear
And taking this into account, it specifies my gear.

I'm sure no other driver, has so helpful a device
For when we leave and lock the car, it still gives me advice.
It fills me up with counselling, each journey's pretty fraught
So why don't I exchange it, and get a quieter sort?

Ah well, you see, it cleans the house, makes sure I'm properly fed
It washes all my shirts and things, and keeps me warm in bed!
Despite all these advantages, and my tendency to scoff,
I only wish that now and then, I could turn the b****r off.

Pam Ayres

...and Marg's thought

I had a little sat nav,
it ruined every trip,
so now I use an atlas,
and the sat nav's on the tip.

VAOAT Board 2017/18

Any concerns? - we're here to help, but before approaching the Association please try to resolve problems first, via the correct chain of command in your region.

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Meatloaf with Barbecue Sauce

INGREDIENTS
500g sausage mince
500g beef mince
1 cup fresh breadcrumbs
2 onions, finely chopped
2 teaspoons curry powder
salt & pepper
1 tablespoon chopped parsley
1 egg
½ cup milk
½ cup water

SAUCE
½ cup water
½ cup tomato sauce
¼ cup Worcestershire sauce or HP sauce
2 tablespoons vinegar
¼ cup brown sugar
1 teaspoon instant coffee powder
30g butter
2 tablespoons lemon juice

Combine all ingredients in saucepan, bring slowly to the boil, reduce heat & simmer for 5 minutes.

METHOD
1) Combine meat, breadcrumbs, onions, curry powder, salt, pepper, parsley, and lightly-beaten egg in a bowl. Beat until mixture is well combined. Gradually add milk and water, continue beating until mixture is very smooth.
2) Shape mixture into a loaf, place in greased baking dish. Bake in moderate oven for 30 minutes. Remove from oven, carefully pour off any surplus fat.
3) Pour sauce over meatloaf, return to oven, bake for a further 45 minutes, basting frequently with sauce.

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Cook’s Tip: Need fresh breadcrumbs? - keep a few bread rolls in the freezer for when fresh breadcrumbs are needed. Grate finely while still frozen.

Occupational Hazards

- Violinists are unstrung.
- Bankers are disinterested.
- Butchers are delivered.
- Models are denuded.
- Songwriters are decomposed.
- Castle owners are demoted.
- Surveyors are dislocated.
- Accountants are disfigured.
- Witch doctors are dispelled.
- Train drivers are derailed.
- Symphony conductors are disconcerted.
- Orchestra leaders are disbanded.
- Diplomats are disconsolate.
- Cannibal victims are disheartened.
- Winemakers are deported.
- Mathematicians are discounted.
- Advertisers are declasified.
- Admirals are abridged.
- Tailors are unsuited.
- Neurologists are unnerved.
- Brides are dismissed.
- Committee members are disappointed.
- Electricians get discharged.
- Choristers are unsung.
- Politicians are devoted.
- Hairdressers are distressed.

from Word Play by Gyles Brandreth

REBUS

Decipher the rebus to find a word.
GEGS
GGSE
EGSG

Answer - The Back Page
The subject is Proverbs (in other words), as written by Sir Humphrey Appleby. Each question is a clue to a well known proverb or saying. A few "big" words have been used to disguise the proverb/saying. For example, if the clue was "Rap upon timber", you might think of the saying "Knock on wood." Good luck!

1. Scintillate, scintillate, asteroid minific.
2. Members of an avian species of identical plumage congregate.
3. Pulchritude possesses solely cutaneous profundity.
4. It is fruitless to become lacrymose over precipitately departed lacteal fluid.
5. Freedom from incrustations of grime is contiguous to rectitude.
6. The stylus is more potent than the claymore.
7. It is fruitless to attempt to indoctrinate a superannuated canine with innovative manoevres.
8. Eschew the implement of correction and vitiate the scion.
9. The temperature of the aqueous content of an unremittingly ogled saucepan does not reach 100 degrees C.
10. All articles that coruscate with resplendence are not truly auriferous.
11. Where there are visible vapors having their provenance in ignited carbonaceous materials, there is conflagration.
12. Sorting on the part of mendicants must be interdicted.
13. A plethora of individuals with expertise in culinary techniques vitiate the potable concoction produced by steeping certain comestibles.
14. Eleemosynary deeds have their incipience intramurally.
15. Male cadavers are incapable of yielding any testimony.
16. Individuals who make their abode in vitreous edifices would be advised to refrain from catapulting petrous projectiles.
17. Neophyte's serendipity.
18. Exclusive dedication to necessitous chores without interludes of hedonistic diversion renders Jacques a hebetudinous fellow.
19. A revolving lithic conglomerate accumulates no congeries of a small green bryophytic plant.
20. Missiles of ligneous or oterous consistency have the potential of fracturing my osseous structure, but appellations will eternally remain innocuous.

Answers - The Back Page

**10 KWIK KWESTIONS**

1) To which section of the orchestra does the cornet belong?
2) Who wrote The Merry Wives of Windsor?
3) What are counted to assess the age of a tree once it is felled?
4) In which American state is the Pentagon?
5) What colour is Oxford Street on a Monopoly board?
6) Seth was the third son of which Biblical couple?
7) In which state or territory would you find the municipality of Gundagai?
8) What is the main ingredient of the dish biryani?
9) What is the name for a very large zucchini?
10) Which planet spins on its side?

Answers - The Back Page

**WORD SEARCH**

How many words of 4 letters or more can you make from the given letters?

In making a word, each letter may be used once only. Each word must contain the centre letter & there must be at least one 9-letter word in the list. No plurals or verb forms ending in “s”, no words with initial capitals and no words with a hyphen or apostrophe are permitted.

The first word of a phrase is permitted (eg inkjet in inkjet printer).

Target - 24 words

Solution - The Back Page
WISE PEOPLE TALK BECAUSE THEY HAVE SOMETHING TO SAY,
FOOLS BECAUSE THEY HAVE TO SAY SOMETHING. - Plato

Answers to 10 KWIK KWESTIONS
1) Brass
2) William Shakespeare
3) Growth rings
4) Virginia
5) Green
6) Adam and Eve
7) New South Wales
8) Rice
9) Marrow
10) Uranus

Solution to WORD SEARCH
fake, flak, flake, flask, kale, kata, kelt, lake, laksa, lasket, LEAFSTALK, leak, sake, skat, skate, slake, stake, stalk, steak, taka, talk, task, teak.

Solution to KWIK KWIZ
PLAYING WORD GAMES
1) Twinkle, twinkle, little star.
2) Birds of a feather flock together.
3) Beauty is only skin deep.
4) No use crying over spilt milk.
5) Cleanliness is next to Godliness.
6) The pen is mightier than the sword.
7) No good trying to teach an old dog new tricks.
8) Spare the rod and spoil the child.
9) A watched pot never boils.
10) All that glitters is not gold.
11) There’s no smoke without fire.
12) Beggars can’t be choosers.
13) Too many cooks spoil the broth.
14) Charity begins at home.
15) Dead men tell no tales.
16) People living in glass houses should not throw stones.
17) Beginner’s luck.
18) All work and no play makes Jack a dull boy.
19) A rolling stone gathers no moss.
20) Sticks and stones may break my bones but words will never hurt me.

Answer to REBUS
Scrambled eggs

Any medical information provided in First Response must be considered general in nature and not a substitute for the advice of a medical professional. No warranty whatsoever is made that the content is accurate or up-to-date, and even if it were it may not apply to individual cases.