

Welcome to your March 2021 Newsletter

John Lane

IN FEBRUARY, WE HELD BOTH THE ANNUAL (AGM) AND THE FEBRUARY GENERAL MEETINGS. THE AGM SAW THE ELECTION OF THE EXECUTIVE AND COMMITTEE FOR 2021. I WILL TALK ABOUT CHANGES WITHIN THE COMMITTEE LATER. THE AGM ALSO RECEIVED THE TREASURER'S REPORT, A REMINDER, YOU CAN READ THE TREASURER'S REPORT IN THE FEBRUARY NEWSLETTER.

The regular monthly meeting immediately followed the AGM. You may recall that last month; mentioned the executive and committee would recommend specific changes to our constitution, particularly the filling of casual vacancies on executive and committee and an improved presentation of the constitution document.

Membership Approves Constitution Revisions

Colin McQueen and Warren Morley undertook the painstaking work of revisions to get the precise wording within the constitution document. Thanks to Chris Cartledge for his review of the final draft; sometimes, you need the perspective of someone outside of the review and editorial process. Thanks to the committee members, who all showed a keen interest in the project. Our members passed the constitution amendments unanimously. I thank the members for their support. A copy of the constitution is available on our website.

Zoom Video Conferencing Here to Stay

Before moving on from the AGM and February meetings, these were the first we have held via both Zoom video conferencing together and with a significant number of members physically in attendance. I am keen to see our Association continue with Zoom video conferencing beyond the lifting of COVID restrictions. I know we need to improve our use of Zoom video conferencing.

The mix of physical attendance and the use via Zoom has its challenges. Briefly, the challenges are:

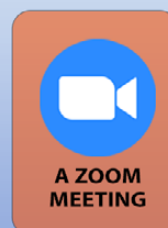
- *We need those attending via Zoom to have the ability to take part fully.*
- *Members on Zoom need to see those present at the meeting venue, especially when they speak.*
- *The audio quality must improve. We have gone part of the way with a remote microphone.*

The committee will continue to address the above concerns. I cannot say we will have solved all the problems for the next meeting. We aim to come up with an effective but inexpensive solution.

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MARCH 2021 GENERAL MEETING OF THE RETIRED MEMBERS ASSOCIATION

**Thursday, 25TH March 2021
Meeting Commences at 10.30 am**



See inside the newsletter for details about the arrangements for either attending the meeting either in person or via Zoom Video Conference

**IMPORTANT NOTICE****MARCH 2021
GENERAL MEETING**OF THE
RETIREED MEMBERS ASSOCIATION**Thursday, 25TH March 2021
Meeting Commences at 10.30 am***

* The new start time for the General Meeting is now 10.30 am. The Zoom Video Conference will open at 10.15 am. Allowing members attending via Zoom the opportunity to set-up their Zoom connection and also the opportunity to chat with other members. The Zoom connection will remain up for a short time after the meeting; another opportunity to meet and greet fellow members.

**A ZOOM
MEETING**

Due to the NSW Government's health regulations, only 20 persons can attend our General Meetings. Details on how to attend in person are on page 5 of this newsletter.

The General Meeting will also take place via a Zoom Video Conference. Members will receive a invitation to attend on the prior Monday.


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Welcome to your March 2021 Newsletter (cont'd)

Zoom Video Conferencing Here to Stay (cont'd)

I encourage members to attend the March 2021 General Meeting via Zoom, even if they cannot take part in person. Unfortunately, today, this applies to most members because of COVID-19 health restrictions. Zoom has served us well, and now I consider we can further utilise the Zoom technology to involve members as participants instead as spectators or viewers.

At the meeting's commencement, I will show you a few Zoom features to ensure you can attract my attention when you wish to speak. Also, another feature is the use of Zoom gesture feature to ensure we acknowledge your vote.

A reminder, if you want to raise a subject at the meeting, you can contact me before the meeting. I will reserve time on the meeting's agenda for you to present your topic. Therefore, next time you receive an invitation to join via Zoom, please respond, mainly if this is your first meeting. The Zoom video conference commences at 10.15 am (fifteen minutes before the meeting's commencement). The earlier start will allow us to assist members with their connection and go over some Zoom features.

Incorporation of our Association

Finally, I would like to introduce another proposed change for Association. Namely, incorporating our Association under the NSW Fair Trading Act. Many social clubs, like my local soccer club, are incorporated entities. Incorporation will give legal protection to individual members, for example, our newsletter editor or webmaster. Should someone take exception to something written, they could prosecute taking legal action against the individual. Incorporation means their recourse is now to take legal action against our Association, not the individual.

Also, being a legal entity is an advantage when dealing with public and private organisations. For example, a local council may require an organisation to be an incorporated entity before hiring a hall. If the Association is applying for a grant, our incorporation would be a distinct advantage. You will find the "Notice of Motion" for our Association's incorporation for a decision at our March 2021 General Meeting inside this month's newsletter.

Last month, I announced that trip away would be a package tour of the Murray and Darling region. We are now taking bookings; full details are inside this month's newsletter.

Guided Tour of Sydney Trades Hall

Also, this month's newsletter publishes our social functions for 2021. Let us hope we have better success than we had last year. Please have a look at the social calendar and mark them in your calendar. **I would like to mention our April function, a guided tour of the Sydney Trades Hall.** The Sydney Trades Hall has significant historical significance and the building itself heritage value. **The tour is on Wednesday, 14TH April beginning at 10.30 am.** After the tour, we will have lunch at the City Tattersalls Club. Again, you will find more information inside this month's newsletter. Bookings are essential; please contact me if you would like to join the tour. My contact details are on page 2 of the newsletter and there is a notice on page 6.

May General Meeting to go ahead at Woy Woy

Returning once again to the subject of general meetings to let you know we will have our May General Meeting at Woy Woy for our members who live on the Central Coast and Newcastle. We have a new venue, the Woy Woy Hotel. I understand the hotel is closer to the Railway Station than our former venue. **The meeting is on Thursday, 27TH May 2021 and begins at 10.30 am.** I would urge our Central Coast and Newcastle members to attend the meeting. I would also welcome our Sydney members to show their support and travel to Woy Woy. Next month's newsletter will publish the train timetable and directions to Woy Woy Hotel. Remember, once the meeting is over, we have a get together over a beer and lunch.

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Welcome to your March 2021 Newsletter (cont'd)

Changes on Committee

At the start of my article, I mentioned the executive and committee elections held at the recent AGM. I am privileged to receive another term as President of our great organisation. I know my fellow committee members feel the same.

Now I must pay tribute to two members who leave the committee this year.

Alan Stevens

Alan Stevens has served on the committee for the past five years and serves as our Returning Officer on several occasions. Alan has retired to tackle many of his medical conditions. Alan was a valued contributor on the committee, both in debate and ideas. I take this moment to thank Alan for his service and wish him well in his quest to improve his overall health.

I look forward to seeing Alan at our general meetings and social functions.

Jim Spencer

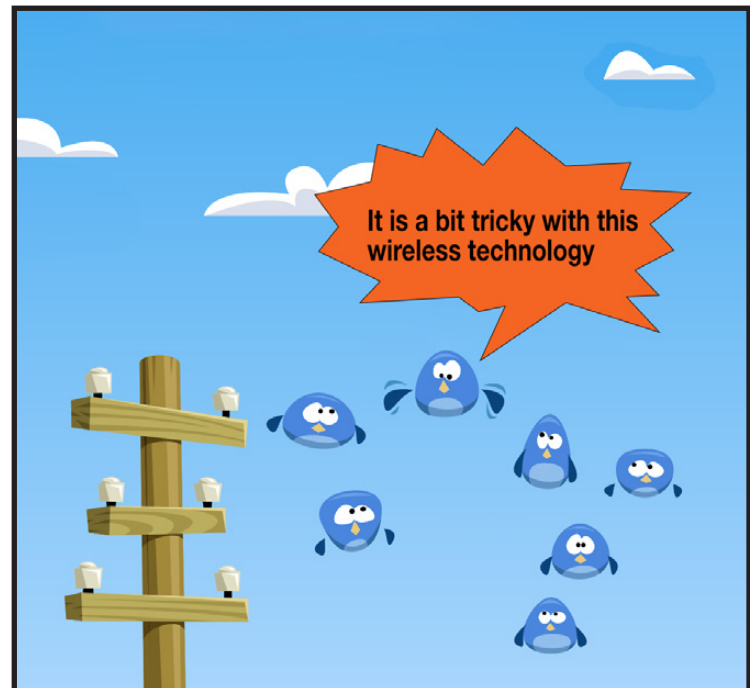
Now I come to Jim Spencer, who is retiring from the committee this year. Jim has been a committee member for over twenty years. Jim has had to curtail his activity on the committee over the past two years; this has not boded well for Jim. Poor health has seen Jim unable to travel to meetings. A personal computer problem in the same period has prevented Jim from joining us via Zoom. Hence, Jim has told me of his wish to retire from committee duties.

Jim is a Life Member of our Association and has served as a Vice President for several years. Many members will remember a popular agenda item at our general meetings, namely the "Spencer Report". Jim would talk on a wide range of topics, especially on issues that affected our age group. Jim was always informative and entertaining. Jim always did his research. We have missed Jim at our general meetings over the past two to three years. We wish him well and hope to see him again from time to time.

Arthur McCarroll

So, there was the sad news. We have lost two exemplary members on the committee. Now the good news, we have Arthur McCarroll on the committee. I have known Arthur for many years. We were both 1958 trainees and both served together on the Branch Council of the Union. Arthur has the experience that will bring value to the committee and our Association. Arthur likes to write poetry relating to his time in PMG/Telecom/Telstra. Hopefully, we will publish some of his poems in a future issue of the newsletter.

I am looking forward to seeing you at our March General Meeting via Zoom or in person at the Petersham RSL. The meeting begins at 10.30 am on Thursday, 25TH March 2021. If you would like to attend in person at the Petersham RSL, remember that COVID health regulations limit our number to twenty persons; therefore, you need to contact Colin McQueen in advance. Colin's contact details on a notice (see page 5) of the newsletter.





Retired Members Association

Notice of Motion

March 2021 General Meeting

The following notice of motion is listed for membership consideration at the Association's March 2021 General Meeting:

"The Retired Members Association's Executive and Committee may proceed with the necessary steps for the Incorporation of the Retired Members Association subject to the NSW Fair Trading Act."

Proposed: Col McQueen Seconded: Warren Morley

This month's newsletter (on page 1) has an explanation of the reasons for the incorporation of our Association.

Retired Members Association

March 2021 General Meeting

Members requesting attendance in Person

Due to COVID-19 health restrictions, attendance in person at the Annual/General Meetings is limited to twenty people only.

Should you wish to attend in person, you will need to contact Col McQueen to make a reservation. Contact details are: **colin.mcqueen@bigpond.com** or mobile **0429 151 209**. Please make sure you have your reservation confirmed before attending. The meeting will be held at the Petersham RSL, 7 Regent Street, Petersham (located 200 metres from Petersham Railway Station).

The meeting will be held over ZOOM. Members will receive an email invitation on the Monday, prior to the General Meeting.



Tour of Sydney Trades Hall



**Wednesday, 14th April 2021
Commences at 10.30 am**

4-10 Goulburn Street, Sydney

The Sydney Trades Hall is a heritage-listed trade Union Building located in the Sydney CBD. The Trades Hall was conceived in December 1882 and completed in 1895.

The Sydney Trades Hall is linked with the history of the union movement in NSW, one of the first formalised union movements in the world.

The tour will have a guide and commences at 10.30 am. Following the tour, we will have lunch at the City Tattersalls Club. Note this is a Wednesday function.

**REMINDER
Central Coast
Members**

Retired Members Association

**The May 2021 General Meeting will
be held on the Central Coast at the
Woy Woy Hotel**



**Thursday, 27TH May 2021
Meeting starts at 10.30 am**



**Woy Woy Hotel
33 The Boulevard,
Woy Woy**

*More details including Train timetables
will be in the April 2021 Newsletter*



Kevin Phillip (Lofty) Parish.



The Retired Members Association is sad to report that member Kevin Parish passed away on Friday, 19TH February 2021. On Friday, 5TH March 2021, Kevin's funeral service was at St Patrick's Catholic Church, East Gosford.

Kevin was 89 years of age. He was a member of our Association close on twenty-three years.

Kevin is survived by his six children, ten grandchildren and eighteen great-grandchildren. Kevin completed his technician training with PMG in Sydney, where he met and married Marie Day.

Mr Parish worked tirelessly for many years to improve conditions for Central Coast commuters. He achieved many accomplishments for commuters including better services and timetables.

Kevin was also a volunteer with the St Vincent de Paul Society and an active Labour Party member. Kevin was awarded a Member of Order of Australia (OAM) in 2005 for his services to the community.

Member Bob Speer writes the following tribute to Kevin Parish.

Members of the RMA, I would like to pay tribute to member Kevin Parish.

A Kempsey Technician makes good in the "Big Smoke".

I first had contact with Kevin in the early 1960s while a Senior Technician (acting) maintaining the Sydney–Canberra–Melbourne broadband radio systems. Kevin had been promoted from Supervising Technician (Shift) at Kempsey to Supervising Technician (Inspections) - North Radio Branch, Sydney. These contacts arose when the Supervising Technician (South) was unavailable and I needed guidance of some kind at Mt. Gibraltar repeater near Bowral. I found him very helpful, knowledgeable and caring.

Kevin was a Supervising Technician (Inspections), one of three sidekicks to the Divisional Engineer Radio NSW. Kevin was the inspector for North; the two others were South and West.

Kevin's parents lived at Herons Creek, where his father was a timber worker, and his mother was the Post Office keeper. He was educated at Taree High School, travelling daily by train (steam) from Herons Creek.

Kevin received his appointment to a Technician-in-Training position on the 11TH August 1949; his seniority date preceded that by one month as 11TH July 1949. He likely completed four years of training before being advanced as a Technician and promoted to Kempsey. On arrival at the Kempsey Telephone Exchange, he soon went to Wauchope; this was convenient for him as his parents were a lot closer to Wauchope as he had a wife and child to support. He later moved back to Kempsey and purchased a house in Edinburgh lane not far from the West Kempsey Telephone Exchange.

While at Kempsey, he took a keen interest in the Postal Institute, often attending functions with his wife and family. He became an adept motor mechanic. On one occasion, he replaced the radiator of his 1920's canvas topped tourer with a second-hand one which was much too big for the car.

He modified the bonnet allowing the radiator to protrude above it, making his car look unbalanced and readily identifiable. On another occasion, he attached a dry cell from a magneto telephone to the tail shaft, maintaining it removed the vibrations making the ride for his family more comfortable.



After moving back to Kempsey, Kevin received a promotion as an Acting Supervising Technician Grade 1 (Shifts) at Kempsey. One of two such positions rotating as early and late shifts. Because Kempsey was a repeater station on the aerial route between Maitland and Brisbane, one of the pairs of wires that carried the ABC radio broadcast from Sydney to Brisbane with splits to the various ABC transmitters as the line progressed up the coast.

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Vale Kevin Parish (cont'd)

Their primary function was to align the ABC broadcast line from Sydney to Brisbane each morning before the Programs started for the day at 6 am and attend as early as possible to any line faults affecting the many carrier systems between the coastal towns.

He passed the 1954 Senior Technician's Examination. He studied for and passed specialist papers in later years, one such paper being the Radio Equipment Examination. On passing this examination, he was offered a position in the Radio Engineering Branch in Sydney, which he accepted. From where he retired, achieving the position of Principal Telecommunications Technical Officer.

When I moved to Kempsey in 1984, it soon became apparent to me that Kevin had left his mark. On many occasions, Lofty's (as he was affectionately known) staff would quote his name. Yes, Lofty designed and built that, or Lofty acquired the parts for that and we built it. For example, he connected the PMG mobile radios to a subscriber's line to allow direct calls to and from the vehicles. Kevin was a resourceful, tenacious and clever technician. I believe his pseudonym "Lofty" not only reflected his physical size as he was a big man; it was also a reflection of his technical ability.

Kevin (Lofty) was a regular attendee at the regular Port Macquarie get-together held at the West Port Bowling club each August. He invariably was driven from Gosford to Port by a Grandson. Everybody in attendance knew of his arrival when the room became hushed, and "Lofty is here" was uttered between those gathered there. Two years ago, I had lunch with him and Ted Martin; he was showing his age, communication with him was trying, but he still had a deep interest in his old district.

Vale Kevin Phillip Parish truly left his imprint on the Mid North Coast of NSW.

Acknowledgement: Bob Speer and Supervising Technician (shifts) Kempsey Graham Wilson.

The Retired Members Association extends its sympathy and sincere condolences to Kevin's family, former workmates and friends.



Retired Members Association

2021 TripAway

10th to 16th October 2021



MURRAY DARLING TOUR *Wentworth - Mildura - Riverland*

\$950 per Person
7 Days/6 Nights
Twin Share Price
Single supplement is \$192

Tour Includes

Accommodation Twin Share
Two Course Dinner each
night
Daily Cooked Breakfast
All admissions as per
itinerary (See February 2021
Newsletter)
Bus Charter
One Light Lunch

Bookings are now open

Deposit is \$100 per person

You can make your deposit payment as follows:

In person at a general meeting

Post a cheque (payable to the Retired Members Association) to the Secretary.

address shown on page 2 of the newsletter

Electronic transfer - Credit Union Australia (CUA) BSB 814-282, eSaver Account No: 10642769.

Make sure you add your surname as a reference.

Please contact John Lane to confirm your payment.

Contact details are on page 2 of the newsletter



2021 SOCIAL FUNCTIONS

APRIL

Wednesday

14

A Guided Tour of Sydney Trades Hall

The Sydney Trades Hall is a heritage-listed trade Union Building located in the Sydney CBD. The Trades Hall was conceived in December 1882

The Sydney Trades Hall is linked with the history of the union movement in NSW, one of the first formalised union movements in the world.

This is a guided tour and will commence at 10.30 am. Following the tour, we will have lunch nearby at the City Tattersalls Club. **Note this is a Wednesday function**

May

THURSDAY

20

Autumn Leaves Lunch at the Springwood Sports Club

The Autumn Leaves lunch has a long tradition for the *Retired Members Association*. The lunch gives our members in west of Sydney and Blue Mountains to catchup over drinks and a meal. For Sydney members there is the fast train service from Central Station and along the rail line to Springwood Station. The venue is the Springwood Sports Club.

The April Newsletter will have a reminder along with train timetable information.

June

THURSDAY

17

Lunch at the Manly Wharf Hotel

This lunch was very popular last year. The day starts with ferry trip from Circular Quay to Manly. The Manly Wharf Hotel is a short walk from the Manly Ferry Terminal. Ferry timetables will be published in the May 2020 newsletter.

The lunch will commence around 12.30 pm

July

THURSDAY

15

Lunch at the Sydney Rowers Club

Our lunch at the Sydney Rowers Club will end the trilogy of our harbourside dining for 2021. The club has great seafood and there are great views from the club's dining room. For our members coming by train, there is a 30 minute Rivercat service from Circular Quay to Abbotsfort. The club is just 100m from the Abbotsfort Wharf.

Starts around 12.30 pm (Ferry Timetable will appear in the June 2021 newsletter)

August / September: Social Functions to be advised

October: Murray Darling Trip Away

November

THURSDAY

18

Christmas Lunch

The Christmas Lunch will be at the Petersham RSL



IR Omnibus Bill

Paul Rewhorn

While I was writing this article about the IR Omnibus Bill, events for the legislation in federal parliament changed dramatically. After months of working parties' studies comprising Unions, employer organisations and government, the federal government withdrew its legislation except for the part relating to casual work.

The government established the working parties to study various aspects of industrial relations at the height of the COVID-19 pandemic. The working parties examined casual work and a pathway to a permanent position, wage theft, enterprise bargaining. For the Unions was the concern that the federal government and employer organisation would use the pandemic's impact on employment to weaken employees' bargaining power for better pay and conditions.

When the government revealed their IR Omnibus Bill, the contents showed the Bill would make it easier for employers to casualise jobs that would have otherwise have been permanent, making bargaining for better pay and conditions more complicated than it already is the case.

The Bill would also allow the Fair Work Commission to approve agreements that do not pass the Better Off Overall Test (BOOT), meaning workers could be significantly worse off, even though exemptions for exceptional circumstances already exist for businesses that are struggling to recover from the pandemic-related recession.

ACTU Secretary Sally McManus pointed out that ***the IR Omnibus Bill would hurt most of the very workers that helped get this country through the pandemic crisis: cleaners, delivery drivers, supermarket workers. Their efforts through the crisis deserved job security and respect.***

Faced with opposition in the Senate, Prime Minister Morrison has indicated he was done with industrial relations reform for now. The government withdrew the IR Omnibus Bill except for the casual work part. What you can only describe as vindictive move, the government decided not to progress the improved protections against wage theft in the remaining parts of the legislation.

Unfortunately, along with major employer organisations, the federal government seems to focus on one reform: industrial reform to make progress. Here is just a sample of the reforms that failed to progress even beyond the government's party room:

- *A national energy plan—to lower power prices and provide an energy plan.*
- *A plan to reduce carbon emissions*
- *A water conservation plan for the Murray Darling.*
- *Implementation of the Royal Commission's recommendation for Banking and Financial Services*
- *Reform of Age Care*
- *Manufacturing Plan to decrease reliance on overseas imports. The need was apparent during the pandemic.*
- *Infrastructure and I could go on.*