

The Victorian Bush Fires. – Rick Toholka



Rick was right in the middle of those recent terrible fires, here is his account of those terrifying moments.

By some miracle, my property survived the firestorm on Saturday evening (Feb 7). At one stage the fire was racing towards my western and southern boundaries when three events occurred almost simultaneously:

1. Four CFA fire trucks arrived,
2. Elvis unleashed 9,000 litres of H₂O, and,
3. We experienced a sudden wind change which turned the fire front back on itself.

I attended the CFA briefing in the Jindivick Community Hall on the Friday night and, along with my neighbours, agreed that we would stay and defend our properties. Well that didn't eventuate as we (sensibly) reassessed the conditions on Saturday. One next door neighbour did chose to stay however, hence the detailed account of what actually occurred. He admitted to being frightened and traumatized by the experience.

I was allowed to return to my property on Sunday at noon and the random but complete destruction from the Princes Freeway at Longwarry, Robin Hood, Drouin West, and Glen Cromie Caravan Park and north to my property was devastating and eerie. My house roof was covered in ash and the whole property was saturated in embers of burnt leaf and bark. Why these embers failed to ignite I will never know.



But that was not the end of it as another wind change on Monday, about noon, saw the fire just south of Neerim South (5kms north of my property) break control lines and the Police and CFA advised us to activate our fire plans. I evacuated again. Nothing eventuated but the amount of forest fuel to my north remains a concern. Last night at 7.00pm we were put on notice again but I chose to stay and nothing eventuated.

This last week has been one emotional roller coaster but given the huge tragedy and loss of life one almost feels ashamed to recount one's own story. I am helping some of my neighbours to repair fencing. I am OK.

Just tuning in to ABC I find that Jindivick residents are again on notice from controlled burning in the Neerim South area. I will be glad when we get some soaking rains.

Our thoughts and best wishes are with you Rick – and we are thankful that you got through that terrifying time unscathed – tb

Why Dogs and Men Are Alike.

Both keep moving...even when they are lost.
Both have irrational fears about the vacuum cleaner.
Neither understands what you see in cats.
Both do the dishes by licking them clean.

The Old AN/CPN-4

Terry Waters says:- In [Vol26, page 7](#) Ken Hunt was asking about the CPN-4. The RAAF only ever had four AN/CPN-4 Ground Controlled Approach Radars, with three in Australia, at Amberley, Williamtown, and Pearce, and the fourth at Butterworth. I believe the CPN-4 was not introduced into the RAAF until 1958.



The Butterworth unit was unique, in that it had a third, Australian designed, trailer which contained two rotary frequency converters which allowed the radar to be operated off 50Hz Mains Power (the CPN-4s normally operated off two 60Hz generators). After its return to Australia, in early 1969, the two radar trailers ended up at Radschool as a training aid, and the third trailer ended up in use with the Amberley CPN-4.

The AF/FPN-802 Precision Approach Radar (PAR), was replaced in the mid 90s with the civilian Instrument Landing System (ILS).

So you think you're smart?

Have a look at this and let us know how they do it, if you can.....click [Here](#)

Barra fishing.

These are a couple of the Barra that are being washed over the spillway at [Lake Moondarra](#) in Mt Isa after all the heavy rain. They smash into the rocks at the bottom and die.



The locals just sit and wait and 'dinner' is delivered with a minimum of fuss. The picture was taken by an Ambo in the Isa. How does one get out there????

A blonde said that she was getting tired of men telling DUMB Blonde jokes, and promised to give the next man telling a dumb blond joke a piece of her mind. At lunch time she went to a restaurant with a friend of hers and as they sat waiting to be served they heard some men at the next table telling dumb blonde jokes. Immediately she stood up and yelled at the two men, "I will have you blokes know, that all blondes are not dumb, as a matter of fact I am a very well educated blond and have even received an arts degree from Sydney Uni."

Oh is that so, one of the men replied. "Then why don't you tell us the capital of Victoria?"

She replied immediately, " That's easy...V

A new approach to recruiting?

The retirement age for people in the Services is 60 – that is, no matter what your job or rank, once you hit 60 you're out. We think they've got it wrong. Instead of sending 18-year olds off to fight wars, they ought to take us old guys. You shouldn't be able to join a military unit until you're at least 55

Why??

- Researchers say 18-year-olds think about sex every 10 seconds. Old guys only think about sex a couple of times a day, leaving us more than 28,000 additional seconds per day to concentrate on the enemy.
- Young guys haven't lived long enough to be cranky, and a cranky soldier is a dangerous soldier. My back hurts! I can't sleep, I'm tired and I'm hungry. We are impatient and maybe letting us kill some mongrel that desperately needs killing will make us feel better and shut us up for a while.
- An 18-year-old doesn't even like to get out of bed before 10 a.m. Old guys always get up early to pee so what the hell. Besides, like I said, I'm tired and can't sleep and since I'm already up, I may as well be up killing some fanatical boof-head.
- If captured we couldn't spill the beans because we'd forget where we put them. In fact, name, rank, and serial number would be a real brain-teaser.
- Rookies would be easier for old guys. We're used to getting screamed and yelled at, and we're used to soft food.
- They could lighten up on the obstacle course. I've been in combat and I've never seen a 20-foot wooden wall with rope ladder hanging over the side, nor did I ever do any pushups after returning from a patrol. Actually, the running part is kind of a waste of energy, too. I've never seen anyone outrun a bullet.



An 18-year-old has the whole world ahead of him. He's still learning to shave, to start up a conversation with a pretty girl. He still hasn't figured out that a baseball cap has a brim to shade his eyes, not the back of his head. These are all great reasons to keep our kids at home to learn a little more about life before sending them off into harm's way.

Let us old guys track down those dirty rotten coward terrorists. The last thing an enemy would want to see right now is a couple of million pissed-off old bastards with attitude and automatic weapons who know that their best years are already behind them.

My short term memory is not as good as it used to be.
Also, my short term memory is not as good as it used to be.