

SEPTEMBER 2018

WELCOME TO YOUR SEPTEMBER 2018 NEWSLETTER. UNFORTUNATELY, I WAS UNABLE TO ATTEND THE AUGUST GENERAL MEETING. I WAS ON GRANDPARENT DUTY ON THE DAY OF THE MEETING. MY GRANDSON WAS IN A PUBLIC SPEAKING COMPETITION HELD IN THE BLUE MOUNTAINS. HE DID WELL IN THE COMPETITION, BOTH GLENDA AND I ARE VERY PROUD OF HIM. I UNDERSTAND THE MEETING WAS WELL ATTENDED. AGAIN, I HAVE TO THANK JOHN LANE FOR CHAIRING THE MEETING IN MY **absence.**

Before the general meeting were two motions for consideration. The first motion was on was dividend imputation. The motion called for Commonwealth Senior Health Card Holders to be among the exemption groups such as those on a Part and Full Pensions. Part of Labor's proposed changes to the Tax Dividend Imputation system. The motion was not carried. The second motion for our Association to join ABC Friends (previously known as Friends of the ABC). The meeting endorsed this motion.

**Welcome to your
September 2018 Newsletter**

Vince Haywood

Vale Bob Mason and Bill Richards

In the past few weeks, we learned of the passing of two long-term members, Bill Richards and Bob Mason. Bill Richards was the 105TH member of the *Retired Members Association*, he was short by a few months of thirty years membership. I was fortunate to have known Bill when he was a Training School Instructor. This was in my fourth year at the Annandale Training School. Bill was everything an Instructor should be; knowledgeable, patient with excellent communications skills which he delivered with good humour. Bill had been looking forward to attending our Christmas Party this year with his daughter Amanda. Sadly, this will not be.

Bob Mason like Bill was a long-term member of our Association, Bob became a member in August 1989. Bob was also on the Branch Council of our Union then known as the Postal and Telecommunications Technicians Association (PTTA). He would often meet with Retired Members for lunch until prevented by poor health. I am sure all members will join me in extending our condolences and sympathy to the families and friends of Bill Richards and Bob Mason. This month's newsletter has tributes to both Bob and Bill.

Continued on Page 5

September General Meeting
Thursday, 27th September at 10.15 am

**The venue for the General Meeting is the Financial Sector Union (FSU),
Level 2, 321 Pitt Street, Sydney.**

Members are most welcomed to attend, especially members who may not have attended a general meeting. It is great opportunity to catch-up with former workmates.



Retired Members Association

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Terry Livingstone, Col McQueen,
Paul Rewhorn, Jim Spencer, Ron Milosh,
Warren Morley, Alan Stevens.**

**Welfare Report**Peter Hack

I would like to start my welfare report this month by making my own small tribute to **Bob Mason**. I have Bob to thank for my career in the PMG/Telecom/Telstra. It has been a wonderful experience, it was great job and I made many friends with wonderful people. Bob was a senior technician at Gloucester Exchange back in 1956. The exchange was a common battery exchange. Bob visited my local high school at Gloucester on a recruitment drive. I took the bait.

Also, I would like acknowledge **Bill Richards** a wonderful instructor.

Vince mentioned **John Baron** in his article this month. John is one of the Association's earliest members, he joined our Association way back in 1985. Because of mobility problems, John has moved into a nursing home, the Kullaroo Gardens Nursing Home at Forster. **I am sure that John would appreciate a call, you can contact John on 0407 249 423.**

I have spoken to **John and Cath Hickey**, while they have their medical problems, they are travelling OK.

This October, I will see some of you on the Moree trip away, I am looking forward to it.

Social Function NewsJohn Lane

This September we have something different, a tour of the Sydney Bus Museum. Please note, this tour is on Wednesday, 19th September 2018 and starts at 10 am. You will find in this month's newsletter has full details as well as bus times from Railway Square to the museum. After the tour, we take a bus ride

to the Petersham RSL for lunch. Lunches at the club are inexpensive and the food quality is excellent.

This month's newsletter has our first notice for this year's **Christmas Party at Petersham RSL**. It is early notice, but time can go fast. The party, a lunch is on Thursday, 29th November 2018. For now, please mark this date in your diary or for the gadget people your smart phone.

This October we are off to Moree and surrounding districts for the annual trip-away. It is getting very late, but there still an opportunity for you to join us. You will need to book fast. So, if you have been sitting on the fence, now is the time to act. Give me call or email (my contact details are on page 2 of the newsletter). I am sure you will have an enjoyable time.



Retired Members Association Tour of the Sydney Bus Museum

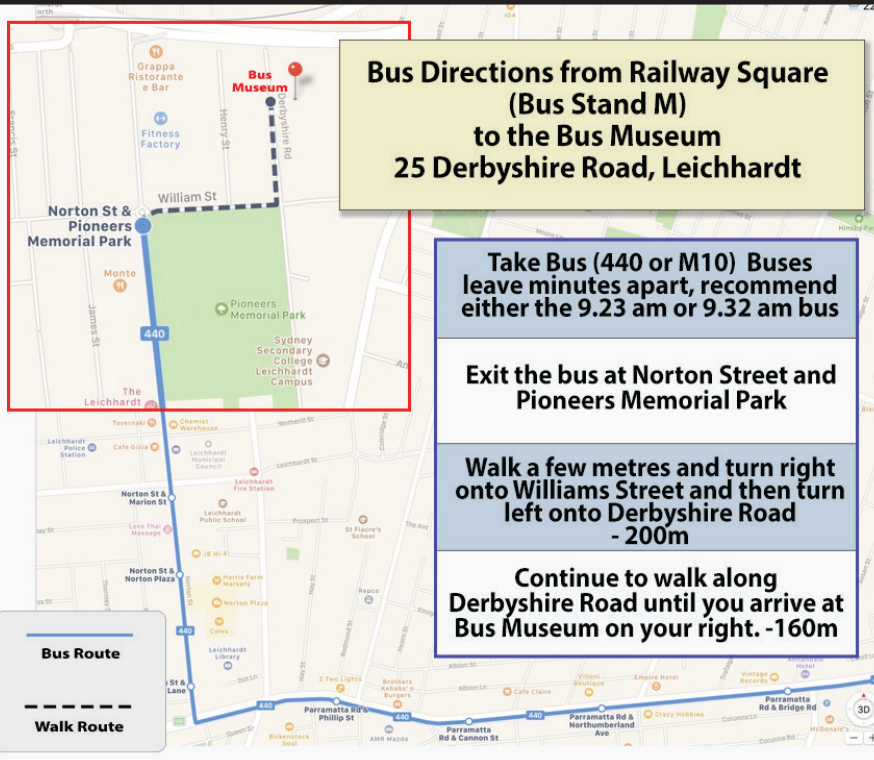
Wednesday, 19th September 2018

The tour of the museum starts at 10 am.

After the tour, the museum will take us via a bus
to Petersham RSL for lunch.

Cost for the museum tour is \$10 per Person

**25 Derbyshire Road
Leichhardt**





Bob Mason



Bob had experienced kidney problems over the past couple of years and succumbed to the disease on the 10th August 2018. A funeral service for Bob was held at the Port Macquarie Crematorium on the 15th August 2018.

Bob commenced in the Postmaster General Department (PMG) as a Technician in Training (TIT) in 1946, a boy from Gloucester. Where he returned on completion of his training. Whilst there he visited schools in the district and extolled the availability of a technical career path for students in the PMG. Bob recruited our own Peter Hack at the Gloucester High School in 1956.

After about five years, Bob married Elaine and they moved to Elanora Heights and then Narrabeen. Bob had an interest in social affairs, people's welfare and politics. He was on the Branch Council of the PTTA (later the ATEA) in the 1960s. He was also a member of the ALP and was extremely proud when he was made a Life Member.

During his career in Sydney Bob worked on installation and maintenance in the Eastern Suburbs and the Sydney CBD. Working in the City allowed Bob to follow up his investment interests on a daily basis and he formed some very strong friendships at the stock exchange.

He still visited the stock exchange, on a daily basis after he retired and on Thursdays, about noon he would join us at the Catholic/Castlereagh Club for a few social drinks.

He enjoyed making home brews of beer and red wine, and of an evening would settle back and listen to classical music. His favourite composer Gustav Mahler and conductors, Georg Solti and Leonard Bernstein.

Bob and Elaine moved to Lake Cathie about ten years ago and settled into a nice friendly welcoming community.

Many family and friends and workmates attended Bob's funeral.

Bob is survived by his wife Elaine, and his daughters Trudi, Wendy and Robyn and their families to whom we extend our condolences and sympathy.

The above tribute to Bob Mason was written by Tod Mirgis

Bill Richards



The Association is sad to report the passing of Bill Richards on Wednesday, 29th August 2018. A funeral service for Bill was held at the Chapel of Saint Michael, the Archangel, Rookwood on Thursday, 6th September 2018.

Bill was 89 years of age.

Bill was a member of the *Retired Members Association* for close on thirty years.

I was fortunate to have Bill as an Instructor in my fourth year of training at the Annandale Training School. Bill was everything an Instructor should be. He was knowledgeable, patient and possessed excellent communications skills, delivered with good humour. When trainees needed that extra help to get them across the line, Bill would help them, often in his own personal time.

Earlier this year, I had the privilege of a long telephone chat with Bill. We recalled our past times at the Annandale Training School. I enjoyed listening to Bill's training school reminiscences.

Bill had been looking forward to attending our Christmas Party this year with his daughter Amanda. Sadly, this will not be.

On behalf of the *Retired Members Association*, I would like to extend condolences and sympathy to Bill Richards's daughter Amanda, other family members and his many friends.

The above tribute to Bill Richards was written by Vince Haywood



A Message from the President *(cont'd)*

John Baron

During the past month, I contacted John Baron. I worked with John at Lidcombe. John was an active member of our Union and honoured with a Life Membership of the ATEA. John also spent a big part of his time as a Welfare Officer at Ingleburn RSL. John transferred to the Kullaroo Gardens Nursing Home at Forster due to his lack of mobility. If you would like to speak with John, you can contact him on 0407 249 423.

67 is the New 70

The past month has seen a change of prime minister in Canberra. For Mr Turnbull, triggered by an energy policy. The same policy issue that seen him lose leadership before. I suspect it was more than energy policy that brought about the leadership change. I will spare you any further discussion on the leadership change. Except to comment on two outcomes for seniors and pensioners.

First, the government has dropped its plan to withdraw the energy supplement payment for pensioners. Since the disastrous 2014 budget, the abolition of the energy supplement has been government policy. The second outcome was the abandonment of a plan for the gradual increase the retirement age to 70 before a person could receive a pension. This would have given Australia the highest retirement age among developed nations. This was another policy introduced in the 2014 federal budget. Mr Hockey, then treasurer preceded the announcement of this measure in his 2014 budget speech with the words "the age of entitlement is over".

It is remarkable how a government can abandon their long-held policies and principles when they perceive they need to win favour with the electorate.

Outsourcing

I read that Centrelink has outsourced its call centre to a private company called Serco.

Serco is a British based organisation known in Australia for its association with offshore detention. The company has roots in many countries. It offers privatised services to immigration detention centres, prisons, defence assets and welfare. Serco will accept anything on offer.

Also, NDIA (National Disability Insurance Agency) has taken on inexperienced labour hire staff.

The current government in 2014, placed a staffing cap limit of 3000 people in the NDIA.

The NDIA will need 7000 positions as the NDIA approaches full rollout. NDIA will have no option other than to outsource and rely on contract staff because of this arbitrary staff cap. The NDIA has a budget of \$8 billion dollars this financial year. The budget will be \$22 billion dollars in 2021-22 when fully rolled out.

Both disability advocates and the Productivity Commission said the staff cap will lead to poor outcomes. Especially, in the early stage, when the agency is building capacity and institutional knowledge and developing first plans for many participants.

Another example is the federal government decision to award a \$444 million dollar grant to a NGO, the Great Barrier Reef Foundation. The decision was taken without a public tender or reference to its Federal Environment Department. A Senate Inquiry has found the Great Barrier Reef Foundation did not table a plan for the barrier reef or indeed seek a grant from the government. The agency currently has about ten employees. Government departments such as the CSIRO and Reef Marine Park will need to make applications to the Foundation for any of their initiatives to save the reef.

Despite public scepticism when it comes to privatisation and outsourcing, governments have pushed-on. It seems the Public Service is being privatised by stealth.

Continued on Page 6



A Message from the President *(cont'd)*

The theory is that the private sector is always more efficient (read cheaper) than the Public Service. The public realises that outsourcing has delivered no actual savings, indeed the opposite might be the case.

Britain realised it had a massive problem when a private company Carillion collapsed. The company held about 450 British Government contracts. This left a totally deskilled Public Service to try to sort out the mess. A mess that encompassed provision of school meals, hospital beds, military accommodation, library services, prisons and railways. It also left tens of thousands of employees and sub-contractors out of work.

Fortunately, here in Australia, there is a current Senate inquiry into the use of outside "experts". Labor MP Julian Hill is deputy chair of parliament's committee of public accounts and audit. Mr Hill maintains that the notion that the private sector can do a better job cheaper is a myth. He offers the example of the Bureau of Statistics and the 2016 census disaster. The bureau admitted that the cost of a labour-hire contractor to do the IT work was 200 per cent more than employing a person as a public servant.

Nadine Flood, National Secretary of the CPSU (Community and Public Sector Union) claims the outsourcing in Centrelink was a result of an earlier government decision. The government had reduced Centrelink staff numbers in the hope that people would use the Internet for their claims and inquires. However, this proved not to be the case.

The Public Service is there to give honest and accurate advice to both the public and the Government. This allows governments to make correct decisions. Privatisation has done away with a wealth of knowledge. It has not proved to be cheaper and has thrown many hard-working public servants out of work.

Well, I think have said enough. I look forward to seeing you at our next general meeting.

Bye for now,

Vince

Retired Members Association

Trip-away
Moree and Surrounding Districts

**Bus Coach
Tour: 6 Days**

**14th October (Sunday)
to 20th October 2018**

The cost of the trip is \$ 890 per person. The cost includes coach travel, motel accommodation and all meals (the exception is for meals while travelling to and from Moree).

The trip's itinerary can be found in the March 2018 newsletter

We are just short by just two people to obtain a group concession, reducing the price to \$ 820 person. If you would like to join us on the trip, please call or email John Lane (contact details are on page 2 of this month's newsletter).



Retired Members Association

**Christmas is nearly upon us,
make a diary entry now for our
Retired Members' Christmas Lunch**

12 pm, Thursday, 29th November 2018

Petersham RSL, 7 Regent Street, Petersham
(Just a 200m walk from Petersham Station)

The cost is \$45 per person.
Includes a three-course meal
and lucky door prizes.

Payment can be made at a General Meeting or you can
post a cheque to the Secretary,
(address shown on page 2 of the newsletter)
or via electronic payment.

**Credit Union Australia (CUA) BSB 814-282,
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Early
REMINDER

1957 **TECHNICIAN IN TRAINING** **62 Year Reunion**

**To be held at the West Port Bowling Club
Buller Street, Port Macquarie.
On Wednesday 13th March 2019
10 am for 11 am Start**

**Further Information Bob Speer
email speer.r.65@gmail.com
or mobile 0408863900**



Photo from 2012 Reunion

Sponsored by Telstra Alumni