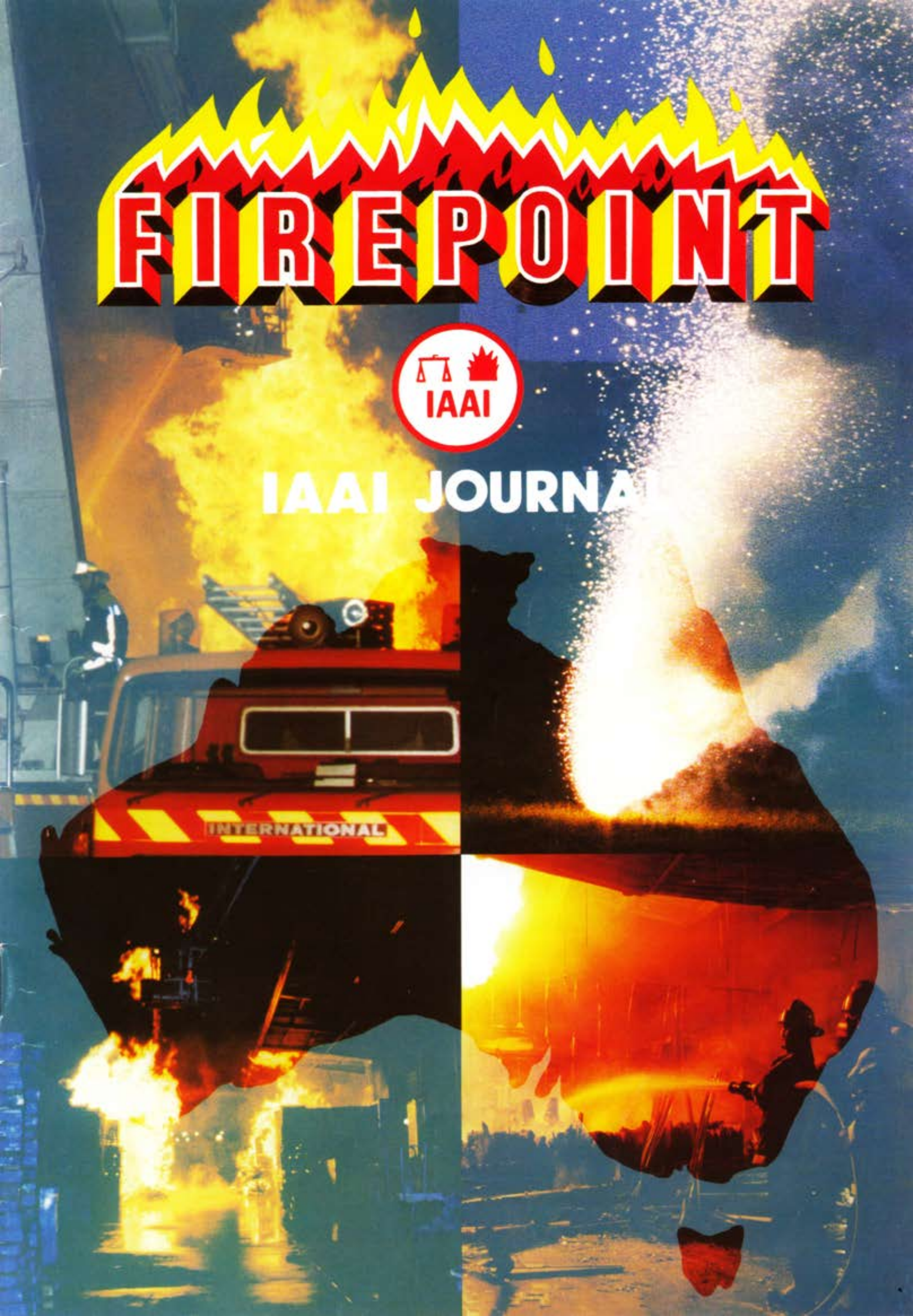


FIREPOINT



IAAI JOURNAL



Firepoint

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FIREPOINT: IF YOU HAVEN'T PAID YOUR FEES FOR THE CURRENT YEAR, PLEASE DO SO NOW.

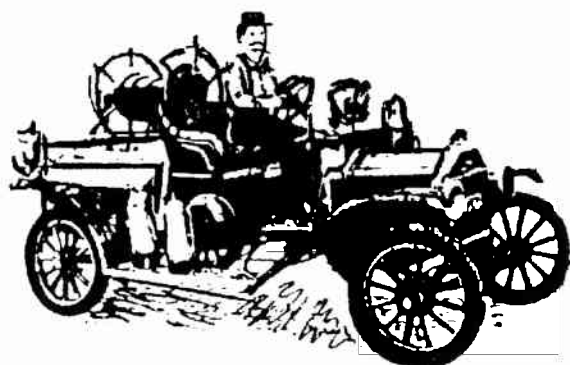
EDITORIAL

In this issue, the founding Editor of this magazine, Ross Brogan, reviews the history of "Firepoint", and coincidentally another former Editor, John Boath, can be seen to be honoured by the inauguration of a room named in his honour.

Articles in this issue feature childhood fire play, and controversy over the role of fire experts.

An interesting mix.

Wal Stern



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Victorian Association of Fire Investigators Inc. (IAAI Chapter 58)

Website www.vicfire.com

The Committee has been very busy in the last months preparing for the major seminar and preparing for the next AGM.

Unfortunately President Bob Hetherington had to have surgery on his knee which has had complications and everyone wishes him a speedy recovery.

Now that the Commonwealth Games and the Grand Prix aftermath have settled down the committee will be planning training sessions for the rest of the year. Any members with suggestions can register them on the website or contact a committee member.

Membership

The Chapter welcomes two new members Anthony Miles and

Russell Slater. This brings the membership of the Chapter to 208, but we still have some unfinancial members. Any members not sure of their status can contact Chapter Membership Registrar Alex Conway on 9420 3884. It should also be noted that membership fees will be due from 1 July 2006 at a cost of \$40.00.

Chapter Merchandise

Any member needing any of the Chapter merchandise can contact John Lording through the website and arrange purchase of any of the items. Currently there is a sale on White polo shirts at a reduced price of \$20.00 and a new item Stubby Holders at \$5.00.

Training Session: Cases from Down South

On Friday 7th April, Craig Maxwell District Officer from Tasmania Fire Service presented various case studies from his investigation duties in Tasmania. Craig is based in Launceston and his presentations were very well received. Our thanks to Craig for his time and well done. Thanks to the committee members who looked after the day and Craig.

OH&S Seminar – Are YOU at Risk at Fire Investigations

On Friday 19th May 2006 the Victorian Chapter held a one day Seminar on OH&S and how it affects fire investigators in their job. The seminar was held at the Green

Acres Private Golf Club Rooms in East Kew.

The day started with a presentation by the State Coroner Graeme Johnstone who set the scene with his phrase that you should go to work to return home in the same condition. He also mentioned apart from the immediate hazards we have there are also others that effect us long term and not only physically but also mentally.

Susan Allen was the next speaker from the Victorian Workcover Authority who lead us through the OH&S Act, changes to the Act and the responsibilities. Although a normally dry subject, with her experience and examples of situations and problems, it was informative and gave the up to date situation.

Next followed a barrage of short presentations on the hazards we face as fire investigators. The subjects covered were structural fires by Trevor Pillinger, Explosions by George Xydias, Electrical Hazards by Russell Lee, Vehicle Fires by Alex Conway, Clandestine Labs by Ian Hunter, Wildfires by

Brian Neal and Gas Fires by Norm Jackson.

Our thanks to each of the presenters whose individual approach to each of these subjects provided some amusement and entertainment. After lunch there was a boisterous presentation by Noel Desair on the 5X5 Risk Management Plan, being identify, analyse, develop, control & monitor.

Warren Glover MFB Scientific Officer and Craig Tonks CFA Scientific Officer presented a post fire scene scenario and the different equipment available in each service for monitoring scenes and their uses.

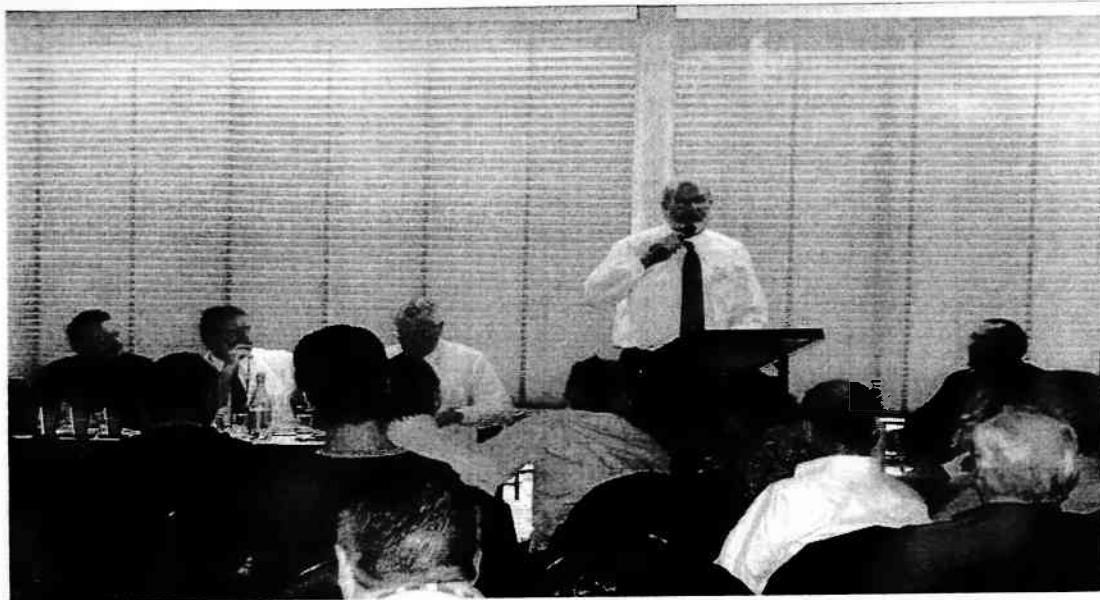
In the last session we heard from Andrew McKay MFB OH&S Co-Ordinator who talked on health issues arising from working at fire scenes and current trends of injuries. This was followed by Dr Barry Gilbert MFB Medical Officer on the accumulative effects of contaminates on the body and how the body reacts to many different chemicals including asbestos.

This last session highlighted the need for health monitoring and the use of protective equipment of persons involved in fire scenes.

Refreshments were then available and everyone was able to mix and review the days events.

The Seminar was successful in many ways. The inclusion of trade displays was informative and of interest to participants. Thanks to Stewar & Heaton and Safety Equipment Australia.

The passing of important information and awareness of the hazards we work in, the networking between people and the enjoyable surroundings of the venue was vitally important. The Seminar was attended by 134 participants and the Committee recognizes the efforts of the sub committee of Alex, Rod, Trevor, Nicole and Brian for a great seminar. The success of any seminar is reflected by the support from our sponsors, Energy Safe Victoria, Insurance Manufactures Australia, RACV, Russell Lee P/L, MFB and CFA. Thanks for their support.



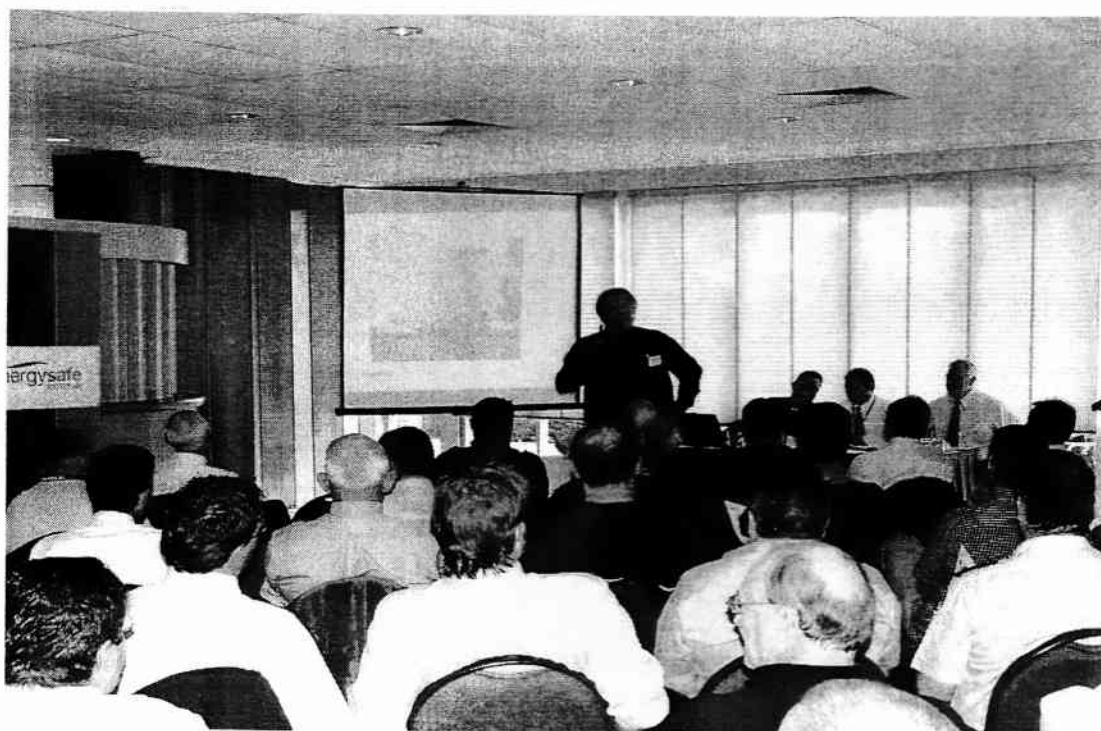
President Bob Hetherington



George Cooney and Graeme Johnstone



Karen Ireland and John Lording



Noel Desair



NSW ASSOCIATION OF FIRE INVESTIGATORS INC
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President's report

It is hard to believe that half the year has already gone. It seems like only yesterday that we were celebrating Christmas. Where does the time go?

Our Association has indeed been busy in this first half of the year. The committee organized another FREE information seminar on the 25th May and it attracted one of the largest audiences we have ever had, from increasingly diverse backgrounds.

The theme of the night was getting **Back-to-Basics** and focused on the fundamental elements of any fire investigation from the perspective of the Police, Insurance Industry and the Fire Service. We were extremely fortunate to have some of the

most experienced people in each of the industries providing the audience with invaluable information that would surely benefit any investigator.

Following the presentation we asked those who attended to provide us with some feedback on what topics or events you, the Association's membership, would like to attend.

The feedback provided to the committee has inspired us to schedule more of these type of evenings that will cater for those entering the industry or those wanting to hone their skills.

I would like to make the same offer to any of our members. If you have any suggestions on how best to provide you with the services you need

please do not hesitate to contact us through the web site.

Staying on the theme of training, we are scheduling our one day conference for early August. At this stage we are securing our speakers and fine tuning the presentations. I can assure you that the day will provide the membership with both valuable information and a great day out. Stay tuned to our web site for more details as they evolve.

I should also inform you all that we are currently updating and revamping our website so that we can provide the membership with up-to-date services and information. It is planned that we will have credit card facilities connected to the site to make your payments for conferences and

membership only a click away. We envisage that the site when complete will contain the latest articles and publications relating to fire investigation as well as a forum section where all members can discuss topics and ask advice.

I would like to congratulate the Victorian AFI for their most informative Occupational Health and Safety Conference held on the 19th May.

I attended the conference and found all the speakers to be excellent with some very valuable information for all working investigators. Nothing is more important than the safety of our people and I encourage you all to stay as safe as you can.

In other news Station Officer Phil Etienne of the NSW Fire Brigades has returned from the Annual IAAI Conference in Denver Colorado. You may recall that the NSW Association sponsored Station

Officer Etienne to attend and present at the conference on the recent scientific studies of the NSW Fire Brigades Accelerant Detection Canine.

By all accounts the presentation was well received and caused a flurry of interest in canine detection. Phil met and trained with members of the Alcohol Tobacco, Fire Arms and Explosives (ATFE) and the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI). Phil will provide and report on his trip in the next "Firepoint" and we are scheduling a FREE presentation for members to hear Phil detail his findings.

All in all this year has been and will continue to be very busy. The committee continues to work tirelessly to bring you the best the industry has to offer. We hope that thus far we have succeeded and that the second half will be just as protective

Stay safe

Paul Bailey
President

A Request from Sunny Scotland.

Fire Investigators in Scotland are seeking to produce guidelines and possibly a template to be used by police, fire brigade and forensic investigators in a consistent format.

They seek to find out practices in other parts of the world. Specifically they want to know if it is common practice for all suspicious fires to be investigated by forensic labs and Brigades, and if not what criteria dictates who carries out such investigations, whether all fire investigators are attached to a fire investigation unit, whether joint reports are ever presented by labs and fire brigade officers, and to what extent Fire Service investigators attend court.

Celia Dyke would like to hear from anybody who can pass on such information. Her contact details are:

Phone: 01382596575
Fax: 01382596579

John Boath Tribute

On Wednesday 3rd May, the Risk Management Directorate of the NSW Fire Brigades at Greenacre dedicated a new meeting room to John Boath AFSM during a small ceremony & morning tea.

John retired from the NSWFB as Manager of the Fire Investigation Unit (now the Fire Investigation and Research Unit) in 1989 after 35 years of inspirational service.

During his career he was highly respected as a fire service innovator having pioneered break throughs in the areas of fire investigation, fire safety, and media liaison. As the Unit's founder, he built a robust platform for the development of a professional fire investigation unit.

The ceremony was attended by past and

present members of FIRU & included John and his wife Gloria, as well as industry representatives, who were welcomed in an opening address by the Director of Risk Management, Assistant Commissioner Ken Thompson.

Inspector Bill Powell described how John shaped a lasting legacy as the founding manager of FIRU. John is considered the founder and pioneer of the Unit, which commenced operation in August 1987.

John was an officer whose professionalism, diligence, determination & passion for fire investigation created a unit both nationally and internationally recognised as being of the highest standards.

John himself has always been highly respected

by all those within the various authorities working in the fire investigation field.

In the 1989 Queens Birthday Honors List, John was awarded with the Australian Fire Service Medal, for services to Fire Investigation & Building Fire Safety.

John responded by saying that he was extremely honoured to be remembered in such a way by an organisation he considers to be the epitome of quality public service in NSW. He went on to say that he had treasured memories of his career.

John and FIRU Inspector Bill Powell unveiled a framed photograph and biography which has pride of place at the front of the room.

Story by Inspector Bill Powell, photos by Paul Bailey.



(Left to Right) Keith Eadie, Ross Brogan, Alan Davies, John Boath, Bill Powell, Jim Swaisland, Bruce Johnson



Bill Powell and John Boath

QUEENSLAND CHAPTER REPORT

Welcome

Unfortunately the QAFI's Annual General Meeting set down for the 30th March 2006 was adjourned due to not meeting the quorum requirements detailed in the Constitution.

The rescheduled AGM will proceed on the 30th May 2006. Nominations have been received from 12 members for executive positions. We will then be in a position to formally advise details of our 2006 Executive committee.

Conference 2006

"Gas Explosion Investigation" 4-5 August - Brisbane

The QAFI are starting the financial year with a Bang. The Gas Explosion Investigation conference to be held on the 4th and 5th August at The Hotel Grand Chancellor is shaping up to be a real blast. The conference will start with one day of lectures and case studies in the conference centre, followed by a day of practical demonstrations at the Boral Quarry, Redbank Plains near Ipswich.

The guest key presenter is Jamie Novak from the USA. Jamie is currently a full time 24 hour shift Fire Investigator with the St. Paul Fire Department in Minnesota and has been for the past 10 years. He was the Deputy State Fire Marshall for 11 years and has been an Investigator for 22 years. He has served on the board of the IAAI and is currently the President of the Minnesota Chapter of the IAAI.

Jamie has conducted over 700 test burns in houses and commercial buildings and conducted 7 gas explosions of houses over the past 20 years. Jamie is a wealth of knowledge and will speak on Gas Explosion and Mitigation Investigation.

The subjects covered by other guest speakers will be Petroleum and Gas Regulations, Gas Hardware, Ignition Sources and Upper and Lower limits of Flammability.

Case Study Presentations will include Domestic Suicide by LPG, Gas Tradesman Neglect, Roach Bomb Accidental, Fuel Vapour Explosions and LPG cylinder explosion inside a vehicle. Day one will conclude with a dinner and entertainment at the Hotel Grand Chancellor.

On Day 2 we will travel by chartered coach to the Boral Quarry near Ipswich where we will carry out various test explosions. On arrival delegates will firstly view two motor vehicles that were exploded prior, one with a gas cylinder in the luggage compartment and the other with high explosive also in the luggage compartment. Actual explosions on the day will include a Tradesman's Van with an Acetylene bottle leak, caravans assimilating both LPG and natural gas leaks and a Cubicle that will demonstrate upper and lower explosion limits..

A detailed registration brochure will be distributed shortly; to ensure you are on the e-mail distribution list, please send an email to jfoley@bigpond.net.au with Conference 2006 Distribution List in the subject area.

If you have any queries in relation to the upcoming Conference, please do not hesitate in contacting Julianne direct on 07 3822 4700.

Membership

Un-financial Members – A number of members have not renewed their membership for the period 1 January through to 31 December 2006. Final reminder invoices have now been issued. If you are unsure of your membership status, please contact Julianne on (07) 3822 4700 or e-mail jfoley@bigpond.net.au

Not sure if you have advised your current e-mail address? Send a quick e-mail to Julianne anyway.

Childhood Fire Play To Adult Arson: Is There A Progression?¹

Rebekah Doley BA(Hons) Grad Dip App Psych MSc(Inv Psy) MAPS²

Introduction

Child fire setting is generally not referred to as “arson” because in a legal context it is considered that children as young as 10 years cannot form an “intention” to commit a crime. However, many child development specialists and educators openly object to the use of the word “play” in describing a child’s negative behaviour, or misuse of fire and fire tools. According to these professionals, the word “play” should only be associated with positive, learning activities. Alternative, perhaps more appropriate terms have been proposed and include “fire-starting” or (more formally) “experimentation with fire and/or fire tools” (NFPA 1035 Standard).

Stages

It is widely accepted that fire behaviour follows a naturally occurring developmental sequence in children, with at least three distinct phases: fire interest; fire-starting; fire-setting. The labels used for these stages differ across different researchers, and some authors have divided these categories up further to provide more descriptive classification system. At the end of the day, however, there are similar underlying general principles across these systems that can be neatly expressed in these three stages.

Fire interest

Most children experience fire interest between ages of 3 years to 5 years. This interest can be expressed in a number of ways, for example, asking questions about fire or incorporating fire-related themes in play. The questions often focus on the physical properties of fire, such as how hot a fire is or what makes a fire burn. The

¹ The author would like to acknowledge with thanks the assistance provided by Andy Braig, New Jersey Fire Department, in the preparation of this manuscript.

² Correspondence may be addressed to the author by email to info@firefocus.net.

fire play frequently involves wearing fire hats, playing with toy fire trucks, and cooking food on toy stoves.

These activities are healthy and provide children with ways to explore and understand fire as a productive and useful part of their lives. However, younger children have a limited understanding of cause and effect and are therefore more at risk of fire with limited supervision and fire safety skills at their disposal.

Fire-starting

Fire starting occurs when children experiment with ignition sources such as matches and lighters. A majority of children will engage in at least one unsupervised fire-start. Most of these unsupervised fire-starts are single episodes motivated primarily by curiosity. This can involve experimenting with matches and burning pieces of paper - often hiding in bedrooms or cupboards. In general, fires resulting from these incidents are accidental or unintentional. They are started with available ignition sources and there is no typical target for these fires. If these fires get out of control, often children will make an attempt either to put the fire out or to go for help. But not always.

Usually fire starting drops off during the early primary school years with fire education, then resurfaces in late primary / early secondary school through carelessness or delinquency. If children continue to participate in more than one supervised fire-start, the probability of starting a significant fire increases dramatically. It is, therefore, very important not only to discourage unsupervised fire-starts, but also to provide a solid education in fire safety to children to prevent unsupervised experimentation.

Fire-setting

The shift in the pattern of fire-setting from fire-start to fire-setting is associated with a variety of other changes that accompany adolescence: increasing independence, greater freedom from parental involvement; greater reliance on peer-group. Repeated fire-setting is seen in children aged between 7 years and 10 years who

understand the rules of fire safety but continue to light fires, mainly in secret. These children are likely to have difficulties in regulating intense emotions, such as anger and frustration, and are more impulsive. This type of fire-setting can lead to more serious problems if ignored.

It can be motivated by psychological or social problems, but not in all cases. The fires tend to be planned, take place over several weeks, months or even years and, the severity of the fires varies. The primary motivation is boredom, anger, attention seeking, or revenge. Once the fire is started, the fire-setter will rarely make an attempt to extinguish it. If the child is lighting fires repeatedly, alone, and in secret, this should serve as a red flag for involved professionals that further investigation of the child's situation / behaviour is required.

One of the most important points arising from the literature is the notion that any professional dealing with behaviourally disturbed children needs to ask the child questions about their involvement with fire and fire-related tools. Serial arson is frequently overlooked in child populations where professionals are focused on treating different types of problems (Dittmann, 2004).

References

Please contact the author for references at www.firefocus.net.

About The Author

Rebekah Doley is a psychologist specialising in the behavioural analysis of arson. Rebekah has a history of researching and lecturing in the psychology of serial firesetting in the UK, USA, NZ and Australia. As a result of her work in this area she has been awarded the Queens Trust Award in 1995 and CFS/S.A. Great Training and Research Award in 1995, 1998, 1999, and 2000. Rebekah's background is in human resource management where she has had extensive experience in the areas of recruitment, selection, training and personnel development. Currently she is also a lecturer in psychological aspects of arson with Charles Sturt University (Goulburn, Australia) and consults to organisations on the issue of serial arson and firefighter selection.

Experts Question Arson Convictions

We hear it after a smoky blaze that destroys a house, or an all-night warehouse inferno: The cause of the fire is under investigation.

Now those investigations are themselves getting a hard look, including the case of a Texas man executed two years ago for a house fire that killed his three little girls.

Fire experts say he was wrongfully convicted because junk science was accepted as expert testimony.

The implications go far beyond Texas. More than 5,000 people are imprisoned nationwide in the USA for arson, and at least some are likely to have been wrongfully convicted, said five experts who analyzed testimony in the Texas case.

The experts included veteran arson investigators and people with backgrounds in science and engineering and who have taught other investigators.

"It's an unspeakable error and people don't want to admit they made that error," said John Lentini, one of the arson experts. "It means you might've sent someone to prison based on bad science. It means you might've

caused a family to lose their life savings, based on bad science."

Lentini and his colleagues concluded that bad science was at the heart of the testimony that led to Cameron Todd Willingham's conviction for a 1991 fire in Corsicana, Texas. Willingham maintained his innocence up to his execution in 2004.

The expert panel, along with The Innocence Project, a New York-based group that seeks to uncover wrongful convictions, presented their study on Tuesday to a special Texas commission set up to examine forensic misconduct.

The problems with arson convictions could be huge. The Innocence Project commissioned the panel to study Willingham's case, but said its network of state projects around the country has already begun to review other arson convictions.

"It's really hard to get a number of how many people have been falsely accused, falsely convicted, falsely excluded from insurance payment," Lentini said. A hundred? A few hundred? Impossible to guess, without study of

the evidence that convicted them.

Willingham's case stands out because he was executed. A few others are now on death row for arson murders, but the majority are serving prison terms. The Bureau of Justice Statistics counted 5,405 people imprisoned as of 2002 for arson, but that collected data from just over half the states.

Among the reportedly flawed ideas that were part of the testimony against Willingham:

a.. Gasoline-fueled fires burn hotter than wood fires, and melted aluminum in the house proved it was intentionally set. Wrong, gas blazes aren't necessarily hotter, the experts said.

b. "Crazed" glass, a spidery cracking of glass, which investigators testified proved the presence of a hotter fire caused by an accelerant like gasoline. Experts now believe that cracking may take place when water is sprayed during firefighting, or if the glass is struck.

c. Investigators testified that the fire had "multiple origins," which would imply that it was intentionally set. The experts who reviewed the

testimony said there was no credible way to determine that.

Those ideas were "a hodgepodge of old wives' tales" accepted as fact without any scientific support, said Gerald Hurst, a private arson investigator trained as a chemist.

"Reading fire patterns the way they did it is like tea-reading," Hurst said. "It's no better than witch-hunting."

Slow progress on standards

The fire investigation mindset began to change with a study of investigations by a federal panel in 1977.

But the real revolution came in 1992, when the National Fire Protection Association -- a nonprofit organization of insurers, businesses, firefighters, builders and others issued a consensus document on fire investigations that discredited many long-accepted techniques, said Lentini, Hurst and others.

Still, it took years before the community of fire investigators accepted it. The International Association of Arson Investigators finally endorsed the findings of the 1992 document, known as NFPA 921, in 2000.

Even so, reluctance to embrace the modern

approach persists, said David M. Smith, a fire investigator in Tucson, Arizona, who retired to start his own investigation firm. That means a lot of investigations may have been built on shoddy science, said Smith, who helped study the Willingham case.

"It's not a joke, though my colleagues kid about it," Smith said. "If there is a fire and you get out and the rest of your family perishes, there's a pretty darn good chance you'll be arrested for arson and murder."

Although few would defend the old ways, Robert Duval, a senior fire investigator at the NFPA who didn't take part in the Texas reinvestigation, said the criticism is a bit too harsh. Like other forensic sciences, fire investigations grew out of experience.

"The investigators that were in the business 20, 30 years ago had what information was available to them, and what was being taught was what was being passed on from investigator to investigator," he said. "A lot of the stuff that was being taught wasn't necessarily true."

Since then, acceptance has been gradual but steady. But since the document is simply a guide, rather than a formal standard, not all have embraced it, Duval

acknowledged.

"There may have been some that haven't read it, or been reluctant to take a look at it," he said.

Adding more scientific rigor to their work has helped, but new techniques are still being learned and mistakes uncovered, Duval said. "There's nothing absolute in this sort of business."

Jerry Rudden, an arson and bomb investigator for Tennessee, said the checks and balances of the criminal justice system should protect against convictions based on misguided testimony.

Meanwhile, investigators are determined to improve the state of knowledge. "There is a sustained effort on the part of folks in the business to raise the bar," said Rudden, who heads the IAAI's fire investigation committee.

At The Innocence Project, which has relied on DNA to exonerate some 175 people of the crimes that put them in prison, questions about arson add greater urgency to their call for state-by-state commissions to examine forensic problems in all criminal cases.

A federal law tied to funding for crime labs requires such commissions, but so far only a few states -- like Texas -- have put them in place.

The History of the "FIREPOINT" Magazine

In March 2006 the "Firepoint" magazine was sixteen years of age, the inaugural magazine being published in March 1990, as the magazine of the NSW Chapter of the International Association of Arson Investigators, Chapter No. 47.

Having some time to reflect on the origins of the magazine in April this year, due to recuperating from an operation, and recovery at home, I was able to review all of the magazines since the first publication, and, hopefully can give an interesting précis of what was reported in the magazine over those sixteen years.

March 1990

Inaugural Issue
Editor Ross Brogan

Owing to delays in publication the first issue contained the names of the committee for the previous year, which had initiated the magazine.

1989 Committee

President Bruce Sainsbury,
Greg Dawson,
Greg

Hancock, Dennis Barrett, Steve Grandidge, John Boath, Ross Brogan, Alan MacFarlane, Peter Mann.

The 1990 committee consisted of President Greg Dawson [the above members] + new members Alan Easy, Roger Bucholtz, and Robert King.

The first issue - contained an article reporting the retirement, on November 14th 1989, of Inspector John Boath from the NSW Fire Brigades. "Who's Who in the Investigation World" informed readers about the NSWFB Fire Investigation Unit.

John DeHaan provided an article entitled "Quality control of fire investigations".

The legal ramifications of the court battle between QBE Insurance and RAMA Furniture were detailed for readers to ponder, by author Maxwell J. Connerly.

September 1990

Roger Bucholtz detailed fires and

problems associated with methylamphetamine drug laboratories in NSW.

December 1990

Contained a report on the 2nd Australian Arson Seminar, "Quo Vadis - Arson in the 90's" held in Sydney.

March 1991

Contained a piece from the archives of the NSW chapter. A report on the formation steering committee that was instrumental in starting the NSW Chapter of the IAAI.

The meeting was held on 30th November 1984 at NRMA House and the committee consisted of President A. Parker, NRMA, 1stVP I. Beckett, NZI, 2ndVP B. Sainsbury, MBS Loss Adjusters, Secretary L. Monaghan, NRMA + R. MacMillan, NSW Inst. Technology; D. Barrett, Uni NSW, F. Ashton, American Int'l Underwriting, D. Nicol, NZI, G. Peckitt, GPI Comm. Services. Fees were \$5 joining fee and \$25 per year.

March 1991 - the committee consisted of

President John Boath, Snr. VP A. Macfarlane, Jr. VP S. Grandidge, Sec. Ross Blowers [Ross who?], Treas. R. Bucholtz, Past Pres. G. Dawson, committee, A. Easy, Carl Cameron, Warren Day, Bob King, Nick Matkovitch, Vicki Crawshaw, Peter Mann, Wal Stern.

September 1991

This issue contained an article detailing the basics of fire science and fire investigation (we had to start somewhere!)

December 1991

An interesting and informative article detailing the risks and dangers associated with investigation of burnt motor vehicles. Plus an article by John Lentini regarding "Flashover" for fire investigators.

In 1992 the committee of NSW consisted of President A. Macfarlane, Peter Cox, N. Matkovitch, R. Blowers, R. Bucholtz, Warren Derkenne, Barry Jack, C. Cameron, R. Brogan, W. Stern, R. Cameron.

September 1992

Contained a letter from the IAAI (NSW Chapter) to the ICA regarding "Arson Reporting Immunity Legislation" and a

discussion paper on the B. subject. A very hot topic at the time, which has completely disappeared since. Also in this issue a case study from Michael Maher on "A Fire at Coolabah".

September 1992

Contained a booklet detailing the upcoming IAAI International conference "Fire Down Under" to be held in Auckland, New Zealand in May of 1993.

March/June 1992

Contained a report by Ross Brogan on the IAAI conference in Auckland.

A further report congratulated Bruce Sainsbury on his election to the International Board of the IAAI, at the Auckland conference. Bruce was the first Australian elected to the IAAI Board.

Over the years "Firepoint" included jokes and humour in its pages. Here are a few from insurance claims reports:

A. "I had been driving for forty years when I fell asleep at the wheel and had an accident".

B. "The accident occurred when I was attempting to bring it out of a skid, by steering it into the other vehicle".

C. I had been shopping for plants all day, and was on my way home. I pulled away from the side of the road, glanced at my mother-in-law and headed over the embankment".

September 1993

Contained an article about Barbara Bailey, one of the first female fire investigators. Barbara was ex West Yorkshire Police and had recently moved to Australia to resume her career, and joined the IAAI.

December 1993

Contained an article that was a real event, about "the Big Fella", Greg Hancock. Greg had recently been awarded the qualification of CFI (Certified Fire Investigator) by the IAAI International, the first in Australia. Greg had the distinction of having the designation for his CFI, 47/001.

The photo caption asked if you could guess why?

March 1994

The first time that all of the IAAI Chapters in Australia had been recognised as being sister organizations, and showed committee memberships and contained reports from all chapters. "Firepoint" became the magazine representing all of Australia.

June 1994

Contained advertising for the coming 1994 IAAI conference, in Sydney, "New approaches to Fighting Arson" with speakers, from the UK, Roger Ide, and from the USA, John DeHaan.

In 1995 the committees consisted of:

NSW

Pres. R. Bucholtz, Sec. R. Cameron, SVP. R. Blowers, JVP Mitch Parish, Treas. Claire Wivell, B. Bailey, C. Cameron, Martin Green, R. King and B. Sainsbury.

Victoria

Pres. Garry Martin, Sec. Phil Harris, Editor Brian Neal.

W.A.

Pres. Bill Mansas.

Qld

Pres. Peter Thomas, Sec. Andrew Buchanan.

** On 7th April 1995 the NSW IAAI officially changed names to reflect concerns regarding the wording "Arson" in the IAAI name, and became 'The Association of Fire Investigators - NSW'. Other chapters in Australia were to follow this lead. **

June 1995

The magazine contained a separate list of all members of the NSW chapter, with contact details. The aggregate number was 192 members.

December 1995

Contained an interesting article from Paul Bahr, Sth. Australian Police Fire Investigation Unit, with discussion on the "Ethics" of fire investigators. This article generated some interesting comments in following issues.

September 1996

Contained an article from Mr. J. Munday, of the Metropolitan Police, London UK, regarding "Health and Safety of Investigators at Fire Scenes". This was a copy of the paper presented at the 1996 arson conference held in Sydney, by the NSWAFI chapter. {I seem to remember a book with a similar title??}

September 1996

The Victorian chapter reported that membership had exceeded 200, plus members from Tasmania.

The state committees were:

Victoria

Pres. A. Edward, VP Brian Neal, Sec. Terry McCabe, Treas. Peter Hawkins, Legal Scott Staunton, Admin. Phil Harris, Committee: Alex Conway, Neil Barnes, Colin Cortous, R. Mitchelson, John Kelleher, Bob Hetherington & Garry Nealon.

The Presidents report from NSW was from newly elected President, Ross Blowers.

December 1996 showed the Queensland chapter with newly elected President Terry Casey and Secretary Charles Foley.

September 1997

An article by Robert Cameron detailed the fire and subsequent court case revolving around the Bankstown Football Club. Robert informed the readers of the significance of the court decision to insurers.

In early 1999 the Chapter committees included:

NSW

Pres. Mitch Parish, Sec. Bob King, Editor Wal Stern.

W.A.

Pres, Bill Mansas.

Victoria

Pres. Gerry Nealon, VP B. Neal, Sec. T. McCabe.

Qld.

Pres. Tom Dawson, Sec. Geoff Nufer, Admin. Julianne Foley.

September 2000

Contained a report by Richard Woods, of the RFS Shoalhaven, on the QAFI investigation workshop in March 2000.

March 2001

Indicated the list of chapter committee executives:

NSW

Pres. Don Walshe, Sec. Bob King.

Qld.

Pres. Charles Foley, Admin. J. Foley.

Vic.

Pres. Alex Conway, VP B. Neal, Sec. T. McCabe. (** No mention of WA and has not been mentioned since this time)

September 2001

Contained a congratulatory message to Queensland for winning the "Outstanding Chapter Award 2000" from the IAAI, award accepted by Michael Holohan at the IAAI AGM.

March 2002

An excellent article appeared, by Chris Day of the Melbourne Metropolitan Fire Brigades, on "Digital Photography for Fire Investigation".

June 2002

Contained reports from Victoria, where

membership was 187. QAFI reported attendance at their recent conference, in Brisbane, of over 100 people.

September 2002

The "Firepoint" Editor, Wal Stern, reported (with a smile no doubt) on the awarding of the IAAI "Outstanding Chapter Newsletter Award" to Firepoint at the IAAI AGM.

A very prestigious award for an international association that has in excess of sixty-five chapters around the world.

September 2003

Reports on the committee structures:

NSW

Pres. Richard Woods, Sec. Norm Hewins.

Vic.

Pres. A. Conway, VP B. Neal, Sec. Trevor Pillinger, Treas. Bob Hetherington.

Qld

Pres. Kate Ridgway, Admin. Julianne Foley.

March 2004

The NSWAFI donated a cheque for \$2,000 to the Westmead Children's hospital, NSW Severe Burn Injury Service, through Dr. Hugh Martin. The donation was to assist with burn injury treatment and research on burn injury treatment in NSW. The cheque was presented by Pres. Richard Woods and

committee member Barbara Bailey.

June 2004

Garry Nash addressed the Qld. members to thank them for his election to the position of QAFI President for 2004/05.

September 2005

NSWAFI President was Paul Bailey and Secretary Belinda Jones [BJ]. In Victoria Alex Conway made it known that after an extended stay as President in Victoria he would be standing down at the end of 2005. Bob Hetherington was elected as the new VAFI President.

And so, 2005 ended and we entered 2006, the sixteenth year of the "Firepoint" magazine.

Hopefully it will continue for another sixteen, at least, with many more interesting articles and movements of members through the chapters.

Thanks to the Editors of Firepoint over the years: I was followed by Barry Jack, John Boath and Wal Stern. An excellent job. Keep Up the Great Work!!

*Ross Brogan AFSM,
CFI - NSW Fire
Brigades- Operational
Commander
IAAI International
Liaison for Australia
(NSW & Vic.)*