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VICTORIAN INSTITUTE of RATE ADMINISTRATORS

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Vol XVIII No 6

VIRA NEWS

MARCH, 1995

"Articles and advertisements are for the information of members only, legal advice should be sought from your own solicitors in regard to any legal matters."

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Well the changes continue! The final order restructuring municipalities have been made and the Local Government (Amendment) Act 1994 received assent on 13 December 1994.

In relation to the Act, Rob Smart and I attended a meeting with the MAV's Finance and Legal Committee in early November. The meeting was to discuss the potential efforts of the change in financial year as a result of the Local Government (Amendment) Bill. While supporting the change in financial year the MAV were concerned about the complication that may be caused by changing the year part way through the financial year but retaining the same due dates for rates. The MAV were particularly concerned about the political implications of a nine month rate notice (probably without the State Deficit Levy) being issued by Commissioners followed by a twelve month notice being issued by the newly elected Councillors.

The Office of Local Government have held further discussions with the MAV after the Bill was passed and it has been decided to establish a representative short term working party convened by Helen Proctor to look at the effects of the change in financial year and to ensure some consistency of information to rate payers.

It is hoped the working party will also be able to look at differential rating and the budget process and provide some possible legislative amendments to resolve any remaining problems with the Local Government Act.

I am also pleased to report that the annual country conference and general meeting held at Pinnacle Valley was very successful. The session on Friday conducted by Noel McInnes which had participants preparing a draft specification and a draft tender bid for a Rate Department under CCT was not only very informative but also extremely entertaining. (Lets hope Terry Everett's bruises have faded).

The Saturday session involved a computerised mapping demonstration by Anne Patch and Darren Evans from W.C.S. which generated a lot of questions and obviously showed the members present the benefits that can be obtained from a properly integrated Land Information System that includes textual and graphical data.

The general meeting included discussions on the Amendment Act and the options regarding instalments and issue of notices, pensioner claims and new pensioner numbers and the future directions for V.I.R. A. and the regions after the completion of municipal restructure. Our thanks to Peter Lucas from Price Brent for his information.

As we continue into 1995 it may be easy to become depressed with the continual change we are experiencing but it is important to remain positive and to keep your head because if all others are losing their heads you will be the tallest person in the room!

Brian Hall
PRESIDENT

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VIRA COUNTRY CONFERENCE REPORT

The Country Conference was again an outstanding success.

For those that attended the session on CCT, they found **Noel McInnes** not only informative but entertaining. His session was thought provoking, challenging and educational. Everyone from that session is now better prepared to undertake the daunting task of bidding for and winning their own jobs.

The Saturday session and general meeting also provided members with information on digital mapping and decisions were also made about our future in these times of change. One member also used the opportunity to vilify her husbands profession. Fortunately **David** was not there to hear what **Kerrie Corrigan** had to say. **Robert Smart** had to rush home for the birth of his first child after the session on CCT so he missed the general meeting. What did he and **Ros** have you ask? We don't know yet, the child is not due until the end of February (not the end of January).

Not all the time however was spent in work.

Pinnacle Valley, the place were the Country Conference was held, allowed for plenty of recreational facilities. These included Sauna, Spa, horse riding, pool table, table tennis, swimming pool and cards.

A number of members played a card game known as 500 on the Saturday afternoon. The pack was obtained from reception. All through the early part of the game all who passed asked the same question;

"Where did you get the cards from?"

the reply on each occasion was the same;

"From reception"

You can imagine that it became rather tedious after a while. It seems though that after about 4 hours of playing, that right 4 hours, one of the players (who will remain nameless for fear of embarrassing **Murray Hockey**) asked;

"Where did the cards come from?"

His partner had been wondering why they were not winning. **Brain Hall**, one of the opponents until then thought it was his good play. Witnesses were sure it was the advice of onlookers (**Dale** and **Lorraine Muir** sw **Courtney** did not say a word).

Other members had a table tennis competition. It appears there was a knock out competition similar to the Australian Open. Those included to be "knocked out" were **Shane Hinchcliffe**, **Peter Lucas** (from Price Brent), **Fiona King** and **Gerry Pekin**. The finalists were **Julie Wise** and **Clare Bowkett** in a final more entertaining and closely fought than **Aggasie** and **Samprass**. **Allan Wise** was very vocal in his support for the players. Unfortunately his wife **Julie** did hear his barracking against her so perhaps the last has not been seen of that competition. Who won? Ask **Allan**.

Tennis players of the calibre of **Ray** and **Julie Pritchett** and **Ian** and **Willie Holland** made Wimbledon seem like the other side of the world (which it is). **Norm Mathews** (from Debt Clet.) took defeat graciously although in private he said he "laid down".

Sunday saw members participate in the gruelling exercise of climbing to the peak of **Mount Bulla**. It was such an effort that **Martin King** decided to stop way (**Geoff Fleming** was proud to announce he made it to the top, although rumour has it **Gerry Pekin** told him that is where the **MICR** ambulance was). Unfortunately the view was clouded and therefore all they saw was fog.

Carl Surreto, who is currently landscaping his property, which is a new home on an acre (OOPS! that is some part of a hectare) said the view was just like from his front door on a foggy day. Well done from our newest committee member.

The only complaint from the weekend was the food. How did they expect everyone to eat so much?

PENSION CLAIMS

There has been a change of procedure for the payment of pension claims by the Office of Local Government. The claims will now be paid as soon as they are received and it will NOT include any interest component. So if your haven't got your first claim in for the year I suggest you do so as soon as possible.

If you have any further queries please contact Penny Doumis at the Office of Local Government.

SECTION 167 (1) (b)

"If the person liable to pay the rate or charge elects to pay by instalments — by the date on which the instalment is due."

As this Section currently reads, any person can formally elect to pay by instalments by the due date without being required to actually pay the instalment amount.

Perhaps this Section should be amended to read as follows:

If the person liable to pay the rate or charge elects to pay by instalments, that person must have paid the first instalment, which would include any arrears and interest, by the date on which the instalment is due. Late payments will not be deemed to be an instalment application.

Ian Smithwick
WONDONGA RURAL CITY COUNCIL

CONGRATULATIONS!

Congratulations to Mike and Faye Perititsas on their marriage in December, 1994.

WELCOME to new MEMBERS

NORM MATHEWS

Det. Clet. Mercantile Services

RHONDA LIVINGSTON

Central Goldfields Shire Council

ELIZABETH ROWAN

Shire of Yarra Ranges

DANIEL CURTIN

Shire of Newham & Woodend

ELLEN PATON-ELLIS

City of Sandringham

ADRIAN VAN SANTROORT

City of Sunshine

TRACEY HEHIR

WCS Local Government Systems

GAVIN NAPIER

Moirra Shire Council

Stone the Crows

The following letter was received by the Shire of Kowree.

Dear Sir,

Would you please fax me another copy of my rates notice.

The situation arises because I have a pet crow, (named Martin of course), who picked up my notice and flew off with it, never to be seen again. Luckily, I saw where the letter came from or you would be charging me for back rates next year!

Thanking you in anticipation.

Now we all know where all the lost rate notices go each year.

REGION NEWS

BALLARAT REGION REPORT

The Ballarat Region held a meeting at the Town Hall, Sturt Street, Ballarat, on Wednesday 14 December, 1994. Unfortunately there were only 5 members present, however, this is indicative of the pressures that members are under in their new municipalities. Our appreciation to Julie Pritchard for her time and effort in attending the meeting.

Julie gave an informative talk on matters of interest that were under consideration by the State Executive.

General discussion took place on the progress of restructure within the new municipalities of each attendee.

The Region had one representative at the Annual Conference held at Pinnacle Valley in January.

Due to the uncertainty with in the Local Government industry, the Ballarat Region has decided to place any further meeting on hold until a new Region can be established. It is suggested that telephone contact be continued amongst the members of the Region so that personal contact is maintained.

Ian Effrett
CONVENOR

NORTH CENTRAL REGION REPORT

I feel as though I am making this report under false pretences as there has not been a meeting of members in our Region since the last issue of the VIRA newsletter. I was fortunate to attend the Annual Institute Conference

and although I paid the Conference fees and accommodation costs myself as well as taking a RDO, I found the Conference well worthwhile, and now feel much better informed and prepared for the inevitable changes which will effect us all under Compulsory Competitive Tendering. I urge each and every employee in Local Government to make the effort to participate in the training sessions being offered in CCT, as it is our jobs that are being subject to open tender. If we don't understand how to prepare a competitive tender then we won't be working in the industry for very much longer.

With the restructure of Councils now a fact, we have felt excited at the challenge ahead, and frustrated at the lack of progress in achieving a consolidated and reconciled property data base as early as we would have liked. I have experienced the transfer of part of the property records to another municipality, but I have not experienced the transfer of property records from another municipality. I endeavoured to do my best to provide all the reports and record to enable a successful transition.

I look forward to the next meeting of the North Central Region, planned to be held on Thursday 4th May 1995 to discuss our experiences and consider how best to meet the ongoing needs of rate staff in this area.

Graeme Tindle
CONVENOR

CONGRATULATIONS!!

Congratulations to Carl Serreto of Moreland City Council,
on his election to the committee of V.I.R.A.



LETS KEEP TRACK



In these changing times it is going to become increasingly difficult to keep track of members who perhaps will leave the industry or be appointed to bigger and better things. If members will let me know of new appointments or new career decisions I can include the moves in the next newsletter.

Clare Bowkett, Newsletter Co-Ordinator
Telephone: 490 4213



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Burton, Kenneth	28/04/76	Phillips, Peter	10/08/77
Dearricott, Kenneth	28/04/76	Wapling, Dennis	31/01/79
Emmett, Trevor	28/04/76	Grant, Noel	28/02/79
Ferguson, Vern	28/04/76	Exton, Gregory	12/06/79
French, Desmond	28/04/76	London, Stephen	12/06/79
Hockey, Murray	28/04/76	Coleman, Stephen	31/10/80
Kennedy, James	28/04/76	Holland, Ian	20/03/80
Kerrs, Allan	28/04/76	Ireland, Ian	10/11/80
Marshall, Robyn	28/04/76	Adams, Barry	22/05/81
Patterson, Robert	28/04/76	Lobascher, Michael	22/07/81
Smith, Bruce	28/04/76	McInnes, Floretta	10/08/81
Trainer, John	28/04/76	King, Martin	27/05/82
Woods, Geoffery	28/04/76	Middleton, William	30/07/82
Forbes, Trevor	16/07/76	Powell, Alan	09/12/82
Rye, John	16/07/76	Olney, Julie	10/12/82
Smith, Francis	16/07/76	Buck, Noel	14/07/83
Waldon, Rosalyn	16/07/76	Everett, Terry	04/09/84
Wenlock, Clifford	16/07/76	Murphy, Shane	29/10/84
Fleming, Geoffrey	08/12/76	McCabe, Anthony	19/11/84

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Victorian Institute of Rate Administrators

The newsletter is published four times yearly, it is a great way to have your say on any issues or let others know about particular problems you've experienced and how you dealt with them; OR perhaps ask for advice on issues you have not come across before.

Information or articles on topics such as:

Changing Legislation and its effects

Regional News

Faces Going Places

Welcome to New Members

Odd Spots

Events/Seminars

Professional Development

Relevant Cartoon Strips

would all be appreciated.

If you have any contributions or articles contact Clare Bowkett at the Banyule City Council.

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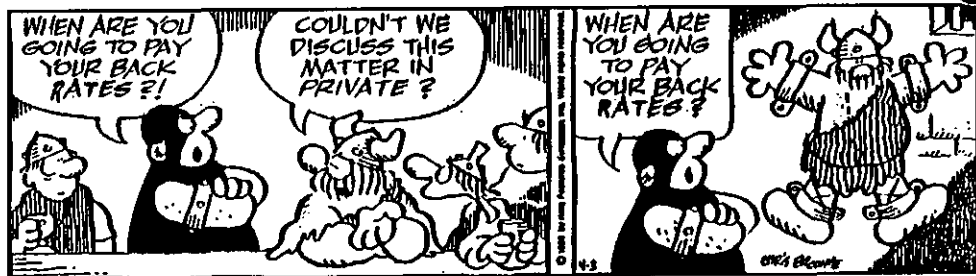
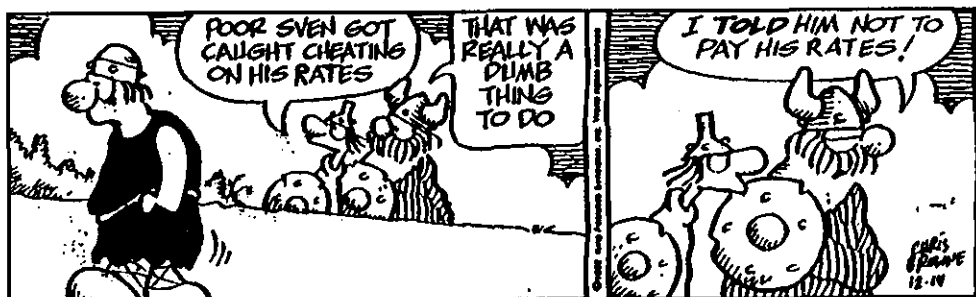
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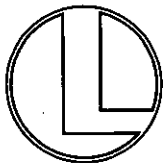
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