

Colinton Courier

Newsletter of the Colinton Rural Fire Brigade * No 136* March 2013



*And you thought it was done by the elves
... Molly assists with garbage collection*



**The Annual General Meeting
and Election of Office Bearers of
the Colinton Rural Fire Brigade
will be held on
Saturday May 11 2013.**

All members are urged to attend.

**The AGM will start at one
o'clock, after a noon meeting of
the outgoing Executive.**

**Following the AGM will be
refreshments, and some
dramatic demonstrations of
household and domestic fire
situations.**

**All members of the public are
welcome.**



Committee 2012-2013:

Fire Captain: Graham Povey
Senior Deputy: Nick Goldie
Deputies: Bob Morison, Jeremy Mears,
Barry Woolacott, Michael Burton
President: Nick Goldie
Secretary: Sandra Lauer
Treasurer: Bob Morison
Training Officer: Jeremy Mears
Equipment Officer: Michael Burton
Community Awareness: Nick Goldie
Fundraising: Jacqui Williams
Permits: Graham Povey

NSW RFSA Delegate: Jeremy Mears

Call out:

On *Monday 11 February*, after a drizzly night, *Alpha* (Tanya, Nick) carried out a short patrol on Ryrie Hill, and found a few smouldering tussocks and stumps which were extinguished. With a change of crew – Tanya off, Jeremy on – *Alpha* then proceeded to the Rock Forest fire near Burra, to join Michelago Seven *Alpha* and *Bravo*, and Smith's Road Seven *Alpha*. Crews from Michelago and Burra had been at the fire since Sunday afternoon, and it was well contained. The land-owner assisted, pushing down

problem trees with a back-hoe. *Alpha* was home by late afternoon.

On Tuesday, *Alpha* (Nick) returned for a final look at Ryrie Hill, where there was a single small tendril of smoke to be extinguished.

At around 2045 on *Monday 18 February*, a pager call alerted crews to a fire on Bumbalong Road. From his home on the west bank, brigade member Brian sighted a burning power pole across the river, which had ignited a paddock of love-grass. Seven *Charlie* (Graham) was first on scene, and had effectively put out the blaze by the time he was joined by *Bravo* (Bob M, Michael, Kieren) and *Alpha* (Jeremy, Sandra, Nick). Two energy company vehicles soon arrived, and with a very long ladder and a boat-hook, replaced the offending fuses at the top of the pole. *Alpha* was home by 2300.

On the evening of *Tuesday 26 February*, *Alpha* (Michael, Nick) and *Charlie* (Bob M, Graham) responded to a reported smoke sighting on Ingelara Hill. Rain had started falling and several grass fires were out by the time crews were on scene. Captain Graham reminded the land-holder of his responsibilities, and his obligation to inform his neighbours and the brigade if he intended to burn. ↪

Essential bushfire safety:

(A review of this book appeared in the Courier for October. We will publish excerpts.)

Most house ignitions occur when sparks or embers get into the ceiling space

- Through roofing gaps
- Under loose tiles or galvanized sheets
- From eave ignited by burning leaves in gutters

Embers enter rooms

- Through windows cracked by radiant heat

- Through windows crackewd by direct flame contact from nearby burning plants
- Through windows broken by hurtling debris

Sparks slip under doors.

Burning debris rolls into a subfloor space.

Shrubs grown against verandah posts or subfloor gap-boards burn.

Embers or smouldering rubbish ignite doormats.

Embers ignite fibrous hanging baskets and send flames to eaves.

Embers are caught in rough timber decks, cracks in cladding, or creepers on walls.

When an ember blown from a bushfire gets inside a house, the process is the same as when an unattended ember rolls from the hearth or a burning cigarette hgets lodged in an armchair. If the fire is not suppressed, the same total destruction results.

(Excerpts by permission of publisher. To be continued ...)

Essential Bushfire Safety Tips by Joan Webster (CSIRO 2012) is available in Cooma from Monaro Books and Music. ↪

Joan Webster – fighting words:

Author Joan Webster recently made some controversial statements about bushfire safety (note that “Code Red” in Victoria is equivalent to “Catastrophic” in NSW). Below is the text of Ms Webster’s Press release:

“Bushfire authorities in four states (CFA Victoria, NSW RFS, Tasmania FS and Queensland RFS) are promoting ‘safety’ information that has no basis in fact and despite research evidence to the contrary.

“Ms Webster challenges them to provide proof of their statements that in high-risk areas:

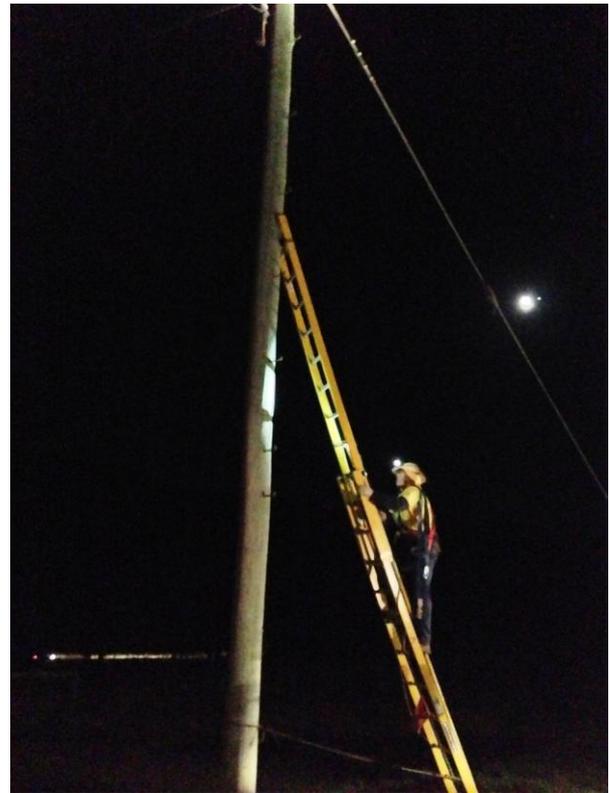
- No matter how well you prepare your home *will not* be defensible on a Code Red day.
- *No* house can withstand a fire on a Code Red day.
- Leaving early is your *only* safe option on Code Red days.

“To claim that no amount of preparation on or around the home can make any difference to its survival discourages householders from putting their time and effort into bushfire safety preparation. It is not only disheartening and demonstrably wrong information, it is dangerous. Unprepared properties endanger their occupants, their neighbours and their towns.

“The claim that ‘No house can withstand a fire on a Code Red day’ defies research carried out by bushfire scientists into house losses and the evidence of one’s eyes. Over two thirds of houses in the areas affected by our worst Code Red day, 2009 Black Saturday ‘withstood’ the fires. Eighty per cent of those who defended their homes on that day did so successfully. Deaths were found to be caused not by the Code Red conditions, nor by the act of defence, but not knowing how to react safely.

“The claim that ‘leaving early is your *only* safe option on Code Red days’ is too simplistic. Whether leaving *is* the safest option depends on so many factors: on lengthy travel or short trip, travel through forested areas or through open country; on multiple fires spawning new outbreaks to trap and kill evacuees en route.

“By reversing their pre-2009 advice ‘people and houses are safest together’, bushfire authorities admit they were once in error. If they can be wrong once, they can be wrong again.”



Energy man up a very long ladder

Training:

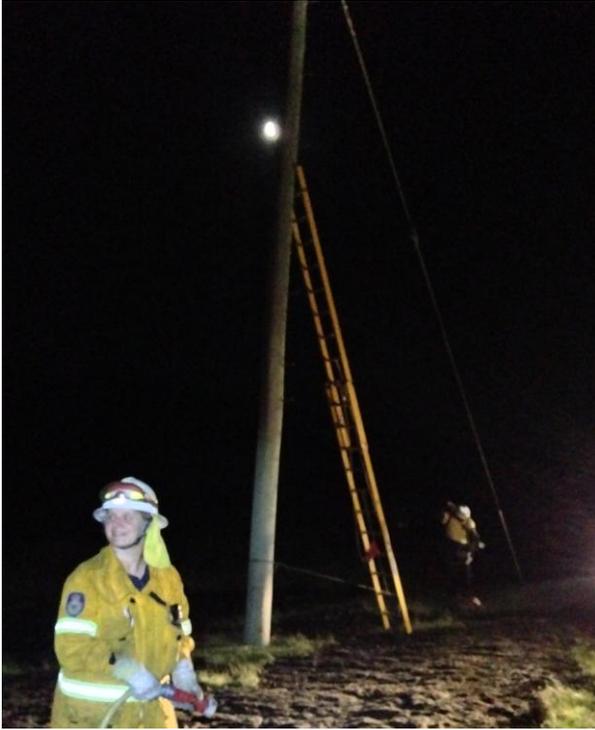
The Colinton Brigade conducts training every month on the second Saturday, at two o’clock, at the Station at Colinton. Everyone is welcome. ***If possible, crews are asked to arrive at 1330 (1.30 pm) to check the trucks before training.***

Community awareness for children is in action again, on the third Thursday of the month, at Colinton Fire Station for an informal hour or so, from 1900 (7 pm). Contact Michael Burton (0407 003 392).

Membership:

Membership: please pay by cash at training, or cheque to The Treasurer, Colinton Rural Fire Brigade, 88 Weemala Lane, Michelago NSW 2620. Membership fees: \$15.00 for adults, \$5.00 for juniors. Donations are always welcome.

Please provide a return address so a receipt can be mailed to you.



Sandra on scene: Bumbalong Road



Essential numbers

Emergency 000

Fire:

**Cooma Monaro Fire Control
(24 hrs)**

**1 300 722 164
02-6455 0455**

Fire:

**Captain and Permit Officer:
Graham Povey**

**02-6454 4150
0419 406 908**



Items for **The Colinton Courier** to Nick Goldie at
horehound@yless4u.com.au

02 6235 9190

by the first Saturday each month, or to any
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The Colinton Courier is also available at

www.michelagoregion.org.au

Views expressed in *The Colinton Courier* are not
necessarily those of the editor, the Brigade, or the
RFS.



Driver Reviver revived:

We have had a message from tireless Brigade
member Gill Robinson about Driver Reviver for
2013. Gill says:

“We are opening *Driver Reviver* at **Colinton Rest Area** on **Good Friday and Easter Monday**. This is a good opportunity to help reduce driver fatigue at the same time as boosting funds for the community.

“*Driver Reviver* will continue through the ski season on Friday and Sunday evenings, from the June long weekend until the October long weekend.

“If you can help at Easter please let me know by email or phone what time suits you best between 10am and 4.30pm on Friday 29 March or Monday 1st April.

“Thanks!”

0400 356 645, (02) 6235 9334

