

Colinton Courier

Newsletter of the Colinton Rural Fire Brigade * No 139* June 2013



*Jeremy and the blower at the Baker fire
(all photos by Sandra, Jeremy)*

Committee 2013-2014:

Fire Captain: Graham Povey
Senior Deputy: Nick Goldie
Deputies: Bob Morison, Jeremy Mears, 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:

Early afternoon on *Saturday 18 May*, a pager call alerted members to a major grass fire in the Bredbo brigade area. Seven *Alpha* (Sandra, Jeremy, Nick), *Bravo* (Graham) and the shining new *Charlie*, on its first outing (Michael, Bob) were soon on the road. The three Colinton Sevens joined Cooma One *Alpha* and One *Bravo*, as well as Bredbo Nine *Alpha* and Nine *Bravo* and Bredbo *Seven*.

The fire was south of Dromore Road, and threatened several houses which were saved with difficulty. Some sixty hectares were burned. Crews were home in time for the evening meal.

The next day, *Sunday 19 May*, again in the early afternoon, a call came for a grass fire at the eastern end of Poveys Road which was threatening to escape into steep forested country. Seven *Bravo* (Graham, Barry) was first on scene, where the landowner was not quite able to contain the blaze. *Bravo* was followed by *Charlie*, on its second outing in two days (Michael, Bob), while *Alpha* was on stand-by. Quite soon Captain Graham decided that the third truck was needed, and *Alpha* (Sandra, Jeremy, Nick) was dispatched to the scene. A rake-hoe perimeter was established, aided by Jeremy using the new back-pack blower, and crews were able to leave the scene by nightfall.

Call-out officer Noreen had meanwhile alerted other potential crews who were put on stand-by at the station

Captain Graham thanked those who were on stand-by. "I knew you were there and was glad of it; glad to know that the other incidents had not left the Colinton area

unprotected. Thanks to Justin, Tanya, Kieran, Rowan, Paul and Sue.”

On the afternoon of *Sunday 26 May*, *Seven Alpha* (Nick) attended a single vehicle accident on Riverview Lane, where a car had missed a turning and hit a gate-post. First on scene was Jeremy, in his own vehicle, and Rowan, on a motorbike, with Bob M arriving soon after. The car was quite seriously damaged, but there were no casualties, and crew members were able to leave the scene after draping barrier tape on the damaged car.



Sandra at Bumbalong

At nine in the evening of *Monday 27 May* there was a pager call for a fire on Bumbalong Road. The three Sevens were soon on scene, with *Alpha* (Sandra, Jeremy, Nick) and *Charlie* (Bob M, Michael) dousing the perimeter of the fire, while *Bravo* (Graham, Barry) attended a blazing shed. All three trucks were soon busy with the shed, which was ultimately destroyed, but damage to the adjoining buildings was prevented. Crews were

home by midnight. We note that Andrew and Eliška were also on stand-by at the station.

On *Saturday 8 June*, a routine training day, the brigade's callout team met with Graham, Sandra and Nick for morning coffee with Noreen. A number of call-out issues were discussed, then the members of the brigade Executive left for the station for the normal noon meeting. Not quite an hour into the meeting there was a phone call from Fire Control, and the meeting was instantly abandoned for a grass fire at Ingelara (reported by neighbours Andrew and Eliška.)

The three sevens were quickly on scene, with *Charlie* (Bob, Andrew, Michael) taking the northern flank of the fire, *Alpha* (Sandra, Eliška, Nick) the southern flank, and *Bravo* (Graham, Jeremy) on the west. The fire was soon contained to about five hectares.



Teija and Tanya at the Bredbo fire

Captain Graham requested assistance from Michelago and Bredbo, but was told that Bredbo was busy with a major grass fire south of the town, to the east of the Highway. As two trucks from Michelago arrived to assist with mopping up, there

was another call from Fire Control about a third fire on the Billilingara Road.

Alpha (Nick, Eliška) remained at Ingelara, to work with the Michelago trucks, while Michael returned to the station to find brigade members expecting normal Saturday training. He quickly recruited a crew for *One* (Michael, Karl, Tanya, Teija) while *Charlie* (Bob, Andrew, Daniel) headed for Billilingara Road, followed by *Bravo* (Graham, Jeremy, Sandra).



Teija, Tanya, Karl with Colinton One

Bob was soon able to report that the Billilingara fire was very small and largely out, so the three Colinton trucks proceeded to the Bredbo fire. *Alpha* and one of the Michelago sevens were also dispatched to reinforce the crews from Bredbo and Cooma.

The fire, which started with a landholder burning some rubbish, had spread rapidly along the east side of the old railway line, eventually burning about 100 hectares. Colinton crews were able to leave the scene at around six pm, but at least one

Bredbo crew had to return the next morning to deal with a flare-up caused by smouldering logs in a gully beside the railway line. ↪

Love grass:

Love grass was one of the essential items on the agenda of the truncated Executive meeting on *Saturday 8 June*.

At a recent meeting of brigade captains to discuss the worsening issue of African love grass, the decision was made for five brigades north of Cooma (Michelago, Bredbo, Colinton, Cooma, Smiths Road) to extend the ***fire permit season to include all of September***.

A set of guidelines was developed:

- It is the landowners responsibility to ensure than any burn has a bare-earth perimeter, at least three metres wide
- For any activity involving fire (burning off, welding, grinding, etc) there must be an adequate supply of water on site
- All burns, including pile burns, should be completed before 1 August
- If brigade assistance is requested, a formal *burn plan* must be completed
- The brigade is always happy to offer advice to anyone planning a burn
- Anyone planning a burn must notify the brigade, their neighbours, and anyone else likely to be affected (including, for example, the RTA if there is a chance of smoke over a road.)

The take-home message: *do burn, but burn responsibly!*

Local landholders will be invited to a love grass demonstration / workshop to be organized in the near future. ↪

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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**

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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: \$20.00 for adults, \$5.00 for juniors. Donations are always welcome.

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

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Sandra faces the flames at the Bredbo fire