

Colinton Courier

Newsletter of the Colinton Rural Fire Brigade * No 142 * September 2013



*The brand new Cat Six in action
(photo: Sandra)*

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, Nick Goldie
NSW RFSA Delegate: Jeremy Mears

Call out:

Mid-morning on *Thursday 22 August* Deputy Captain Jeremy, on his way to Canberra, noticed a pile burn that had apparently escaped and was threatening a shed, on a property on the Micalago Road. Seven *Alpha* (Nick) was dispatched to assist, while Michelago Seven *Alpha*, driven by Anembo's Matt, was also on scene. The fire was quickly contained.

Early mid-morning on *Saturday 24 August*, observers from all ends of the valley noticed a smoke plume from the Bumbalong Road area. Crews were called out at around 1030, by which time the "controlled" burn had grown to some thirty hectares and was threatening a number of buildings between Downstream Road and the river.

All four Colinton trucks, *One* (Michael, Gill), *Alpha* (Nick, Tony), *Bravo* (Graham, Jeremy), *Charlie* (Bob M) were in action.

Crews were joined at the fire-ground by Tanya, Eliška, Bob L, Kim, Lyn, Helen, and Justin.

Bumbalong residents were active with their own hoses, pumps, and bulk water carriers.

Two Michelago trucks and four from Bredbo joined in, including a brand-new *Cat Six*, "on appro" with Bredbo, a fearsome vehicle with six wheels, a bulk water tank, and a nose-mounted swivelling water cannon.

No buildings or vehicles were lost, but some thirty-five hectares of paddock and scrub were burned. The fire was contained and crews were home by early afternoon.

Lovegrass:

On *Sunday 25 August*, Colinton and Bredbo brigades, with help from Cooma Fire Control, held a major African Lovegrass workshop and demonstration. Up to a hundred people heard Colinton Captain Graham, Bredbo Captain Sparky and Deputy Will G open proceedings at the Bredbo fire shed.



*Graham gives the word on lovegrass
(photo: Sandra)*

Cooma Shire weeds officer Warren Schofield also spoke, and said that the lovegrass infestation from Michelago to Cooma is effectively beyond control. Burning lovegrass is a temporary control measure at best, and he urged all landholders in the district to ensure that all assets – sheds, houses, stock-yards – are surrounded by a slashed, mowed or grazed buffer zone of at least fifty metres.

Bredbo landholders have long been requesting the creation of a fire-break between the Silver Brumby residential development and property owned by Bredbo deputy Chris R, which adjoins

Bredbo on the north. There is a very real fear that a hot north-west wind could bring fire to the heart of the village.



A view from the cab

This heavy infestation of lovegrass was a perfect venue for a demonstration of the ferocity of a lovegrass fire, and of firefighting methods.



Bredbo deputy Dave K

As well as local trucks from Colinton, Bredbo and Michelago, there were crews

and trucks from Cooma, Numbla Vale, Jerangle, as well as ACT crews from Guises Creek, Hall, and Rivers.

Colinton members who took part included Graham, Sandra, Jeremy, Ann, Michael B and E, Nick, Karl, Eliška, Bob M, Julith.

Landowner Chris had done some careful preparation for the event, with the hilltop paddocks divided into strips separated by well graded breaks. This enabled each grassy strip to be individually lit, burned and extinguished. Because of the large area to be burned, most of the ignition was done at high speed on quad bikes by Chris R and Will G.



High speed ignition

Each truck carried a combination of local and visiting crews, enabling all comers to experience the speed and heat of burning lovegrass, while using rakehoes, blowers, and different combinations of hose and nozzle to contain and extinguish the serial blazes.

Inevitably, proceedings were interrupted by real life, as trucks and crews were

called away to attend “real” fires – Cooma and Michelago trucks attended an escaped burn on the Chakola Road, while Michelago, Bredbo and Jerangle units were busy well into the night with a fire on Caseys Road in the Jerangle district.

At the end of the day, the ACT crews in particular gave their thanks to the organizers of the event, saying that they would treat lovegrass with great respect in the future. ✍

✍
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**

✍

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. ✍

Presentation:

On *Friday 6 September* Captain Graham, with Jeremy, Nick, Kim and Helen attended a small ceremony at the Cooma NRMA offices with deputy-mayor Bronnie Taylor. NRMA's Regional Manager Michele Mohr presented the Colinton Rural Fire Brigade, and the Bumbalong Valley Progress Association with certificates marking their successful applications for NRMA Community Grants. The Brigade received funding for the purchase of two fire-fighting backpack blowers.

The Bumbalong group has created the BVPA Home Safe Plan. Association secretary Kim Templeton said: "The group has called on the Colinton brigade's expertise to educate residents in fire prevention and safety." 



RFS OPEN DAY

**The Colinton Brigade
invites our friends in the
community
to the
Annual Open Day
on
Saturday September 28
at
Colinton Fire Station
to**

- **meet the members**
- **share a BBQ**
- **roll out a hose**
- **ride in a truck**
- **have fun**

**from mid-morning
to mid-afternoon**

Everyone welcome!



Reminder:

*The official Bushfire Danger
Season opens on
1 October.
This means that*

NO FIRES

*may be lit without a permit.
All permits are revoked on
days when there is a
Total Fire Ban.*



*Items for **The Colinton Courier** to Nick Goldie at
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*by the first Saturday each month, or to any
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