

# Colinton Courier

Newsletter of the Colinton Rural Fire Brigade \* No 146\* January 2014



*Explosives on display: Bob L  
(all pictures by 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

**NSW RFSA Delegate:** Jeremy Mears

## **Call out:**

Mid afternoon on *Monday 16 December*, Colinton was asked to assist with a grass fire near the Numeralla bridges. *Alpha* (Sandra, Jeremy, Nick) was soon on the road, intending to link up with *Bravo* (Graham). However the Colinton crews were stood down before meeting at the station.

On *Tuesday 17 December* a fire was reported on Poveys Road. *Bravo* (Graham) was quickly on scene, where a lightning strike had ignited a tree, and a small area of scrub. By the time *Alpha* (Jeremy, Nick) arrived, Graham had effectively put out the fire.



*Captain Graham at Good Good*

On *Thursday 19 December* a fire was reported at Good Good, near Peak View. This fire was in very difficult country, not

accessible by road, and was contained by means of a bulldozed perimeter. *One* (Graham, Sandra) joined units from Bredbo, Peak View, Jerangle and National Parks.

On *Thursday 9 January*, units from Numeralla, Nimmitibel Cooma and NPWS were kept busy by a fire in difficult country off Bells Road (near the scene of the Yarrabin fire just a year ago). On *Friday 10 January* Colinton Seven *Charlie* was dispatched to patrol the fire. On *Saturday*, *Charlie* was crewed by Eliška, Karl and Nick; and on Sunday by Michael B and two Andrews. The fire-ground consisted of areas of tussocky paddock surrounding a steep granite ridge, where piles of leaf litter and fallen timber continued to flare up in the afternoon heat.

*Tony R writes:*

“Graham, Jeremy and I attended a fire on a property on Bells Rd, off the Kybeyan Rd near Nimmitabel. The fire started at around mid-day the day before, when a flaming frying pan of chicken was apparently hurriedly removed from the house kitchen and placed outside.

“Unfortunately the pan was then doused with water resulting in hot burning fat splattering into the surrounding grass.

“The Nimmitabel brigade was soon on scene but not before the fire had spread around the house and up the slope into the surrounding bush. A firebreak was bulldozed around the ridge by driver Warwick in his CAT4 and back-burning commenced on the northern side.

“A call for assistance that evening resulted in Graham putting together a crew who arrived at the fire ground at 0800 in Seven *Charlie*. We were deployed along the bulldozed track on the western side for backburning, and in the afternoon blacking out the edges.

“Graham enjoyed playing with the knobs and switches in *Charlie* and found with delight that he could control the pump speed from the luxury of the air-conditioned cab. We were stood down at around 1630. After more prolonged knob-fiddling to get *Charlie* out of four-wheel drive we were on our way and arrived home in time for dinner.”



*Training: going in low to a burning vehicle*

### **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.***

## Training (2):

*Sandra writes:*

“At training in December the brigade went to Bumbalong for a dangerous goods workshop, hosted by Tablelands Explosives.

“During the workshop we learnt about various explosive devices and substances that may be found in farm sheds.

“After the workshop, brigade volunteers did a live fire exercise with a burning car, simulating what might happen at a motor vehicle accident (MVA).

“Thanks to Bob and Kirsti for hosting the day and providing the cars. Thanks to Dave from Bredbo Rural Fire Brigade for helping out with the MVA exercise.”



*December training: vehicle fire*

## For the record:

*The Captain's log shows that for the year 2013, the brigade turned out*

- as primary responder to 14 incidents
- as supporting brigade to 11 incidents
- as well as six days attending the Blue Mountains fires (October), and nine days at the Yarrabin fire (January).

The brigade was very pleased to receive a formal *Certificate of Appreciation* from the Wollondilly Shire Council.

## 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.

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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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Items for **The Colinton Courier** to Nick Goldie at  
[horehound@yless4u.com.au](mailto:horehound@yless4u.com.au)

02 6235 9190

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[www.michelagoregion.org.au](http://www.michelagoregion.org.au)

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



## Forced evacuation: legal or no?

Fire-fighters argue about whether they have the power to force people to leave their homes in an emergency. Captains and Deputies carry a card which authorises them to enter any properties, even using “reasonable force”.

Michael Eburn of *Australian Emergency Law* has posted a fascinating investigation into what the laws actually say about forced evacuation. This was prompted by the State Mine Fire, where Colinton crews were busy in October, and where some residents objected to being told (by police) to evacuate. See:  
<http://emergencylaw.wordpress.com/2014/01/10/legality-of-forced-evacuations-during-nsw-bushfires/>

The legal position is not simple (surprise!) but it is interesting reading.

*“In summary, there is not a policy of mandatory evacuation but the police and emergency services do have the power to order an evacuation if required ... but during fires such as the State Mine fire, it will, for all practical purposes, be unenforceable.”*



## Static Water Supply (SWS):

Fire fighting needs water, plenty of it, and this is often hard to find in the heat of summer.

Fire trucks carry a surprisingly small amount of water, which all can be pumped on to a fire in a matter of minutes.

The RFS issues small metal *Static Water Supply* signs to be attached to property gates where there is a tank, swimming pool or dam that can be used in an emergency.

The signs (a small vertical “SWS”) are unobtrusive, but instantly recognisable by fire-fighters. There needs to be access, either on foot or by vehicle, to the water supply. If it is a tank, it is helpful if the tank is fitted with a standard Storz hose coupling, used by all fire trucks in NSW.

If there is only foot access, for example to a swimming pool or dam, fire-fighters can easily set up a portable pump and hoses.

In many cases, the water supply is not obvious from the road – it could be a remote farm dam or creek. For this reason, it is necessary to give details – a grid reference - to your local brigade of (1) where the sign is and (2) where the water supply is. There is a simple form to be filled in with these details.

If you have a water supply which could be available for fire-fighting, let someone in your brigade know. The SWS forms, and the metal signs, are available from Fire Control in Cooma or from Colinton secretary Sandra (0418 626 077).

