

# Colinton Courier

Newsletter of the Colinton Rural Fire Brigade \* No 157\* December 2014



*Approaching the burning tree: Keevo and Michael*

## **Committee 2014-2015:**

**Fire Captain:** Graham Povey  
**Senior Deputy:** Nick Goldie  
**Deputies:** Bob Morison, Jeremy Mears, Michael Burton, Barry Woolacott  
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**Secretary:** Sandra Lauer  
**Treasurer:** Bob Morison  
**Training Officer:** Jeremy Mears  
**Equipment Officers:** Michael Burton, Karl Higgins  
**Community Awareness:** Nick Goldie  
**Fundraising:** Gill Robinson  
**Permits:** Graham Povey

**NSW RFSA Delegate:** Jeremy Mears

## **Call out:**

A grass fire on the Chakola Road on *Thursday 13 November* was attended by trucks from Cooma and Bredbo. Bredbo *Six* (bulk water and a water cannon) was deployed, so Colinton *One* (Graham) was on standby. The heritage-listed Chakola trestle railway bridge was damaged by flames. The fire was apparently started by a slasher, which re-inforces the message: if you are planning to use a slasher or a mower, choose your weather carefully, and have a supply of water handy to deal with any sparks before they turn into a major fire.

At around noon on *Saturday 6 December*, Captain Graham spotted a column of smoke on the property *Willandra*. The gates were locked, so access was a long way round through the Travelling Stock Route and across Povey country. The fire turned out to be a single large triple-trunked Apple Box, burning well inside, while a steady rain fell.

Graham in *Bravo* was joined by *Alpha* (Michael, Nick) and by chainsaw virtuoso Keevo from Bredbo, who had been instructing at a chainsaw course.

The situation was made more complicated as the blazing tree was not on *Willandra*, but on the adjoining property, separated by a taut new fence with an electrified strand on either side, making a difficult obstacle. This was solved by backing the trucks up to the fence, so Michael and Keevo were able to jump across.

While Graham took *Bravo* to fetch a wooden ladder to allow escape, Nick stayed on his side of the fence with *Alpha* and operated the pump. Half a tank later, and with most of the tree neatly felled,

the fire was out, confirmed by the use of the new infra-red camera. And the two active fire-fighters were able to scramble to safety using the wooden ladder. Crews were home at around 1800 hours. ↪



*Keevo at work on the blazing tree*

### Size does matter:

From the Facebook page of the *Llandilo Rural Fire Brigade*:

“The Llandilo fire truck is 7.1m long, 3m wide, 3m high, and their question is: will we fit through your gate? Or under your trees? And if we do, is there a clear 30m turning space?”

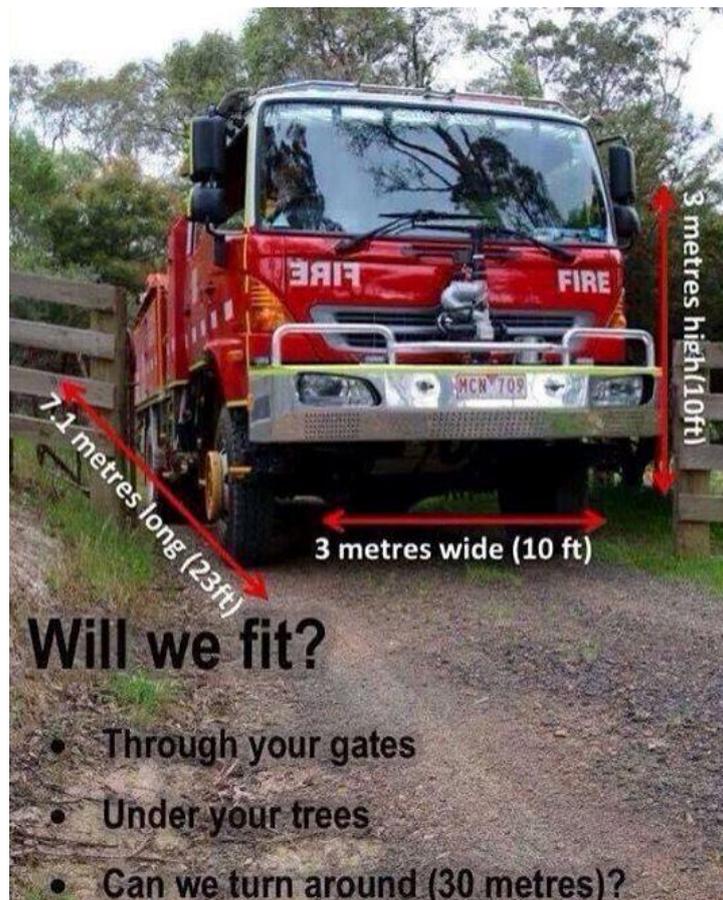
No two fire trucks are the same, but this gives you the idea ... ↪

### I am woman - I can do anything:

An ABC news item reported that regional fire brigades are suffering a decline in numbers, and so are recruiting women. The story was about a town called Murrurundi in the Upper Hunter region, where the local (paid) Fire and Rescue

brigade targeted the mothers' group when numbers declined. The brigade is once again viable with fourteen active members.

This prompted us to have a look at our own statistics. The Colinton brigade has 39 active members, with 12 active female firefighters, four call-out officers of whom three are also active; five catering and support officers of whom three are also active firefighters. ↪



**We call them hooligan tools too:**  
*from our travelling correspondent,  
Gill Robinson*

“I can't imagine a fire brigade more different to ours. Huge appliances with in-built computers, amazing state of the art communications, an articulated foam truck, jaws of life etc etc.

“In November I visited the Chorley Fire Brigade in Lancashire, UK. The fire

fighters and the Watch Manager had no calls that day so they were most pleased to get me providing a diversion.

“They were a great bunch of committed fire fighters but were bemoaning the fact that the Government is cutting back on emergency services so they had just been on strike. No new fire fighters have been recruited for eight years and there is a big reliance on building up the retainers (part-timers).

“The guys were most interested in our bush fires and thought it all sounded very exciting compared to their duties. They said they were embarrassed to show me their newly acquired moorland fighting gear. It didn’t look too bad to me: portable pumps, hose (non-percolating), and a beater. They thought our rake hoes were a great idea and would recommend them to their Commander. They asked about firebreaks and told me they do firebreaks on the moors in the peat by digging trenches and filling them with stones.

“They asked me to bring them some African Love Grass next time to spark up their boring round of MVAs, false alarms at old peoples’ homes, school visits and chip shop fires. Next time I go to Chorley I will look out for the fire appliance with the koala on the front dressed in NSW fire PPE.”

✍

### **Membership:**

Membership: please pay by cash at training, or cheque to The Treasurer, Colinton Rural Fire Brigade, PO Box 4829, Kingston ACT 2604.

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.

✍



*At Chorley (Lancashire)*

### **Brindabella Exercise**

*by Sandra Lauer*

On Saturday 13th December crews from the Monaro (Bredbo, Colinton, Michelago, Shannons Flat and Monaro Support Unit) participated in a cross border multi agency navigation/comms exercise in the Brindabella and Namadgi National Parks.

Other agencies involved included: Australian Federal Police, NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service, ACT Parks and Conservation Service, SES, ACT RFS, and NSW RFS (Lake George Zone.)

Each crew was given a set of waypoints to locate in a specific order and were then given tasks to complete at each point as part of the exercise. Our team, made up of Ken, Ashleigh, Heather and me (in Bredbo 9A & 9B), were sent to Mt Coree to give a weather report for one of the tasks.

Mt Coree is on the ACT/NSW border. The peak is 1,421m high and has one of

the main fire towers used in the region. We were lucky enough to arrive just as the morning cloud cover cleared and we had amazing 360 degree views, including much of Canberra and back toward the Tinderries.

A great day out, involving lots of problem solving, working with other agencies, cross border communications practice and a BBQ/debrief afterwards. Thanks to the organisers for the opportunity to participate. ❧

### Training:

The Colinton Brigade conducts training every month on the second Saturday, at 2.00 pm 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.*** ❧



Ashleigh, Sandra and Sparky on the summit of Mt Coree



Items for **The Colinton Courier** to Nick Goldie at [nickgoldie@bigpond.com](mailto:nickgoldie@bigpond.com)

02 6235 9190

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



**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**

