

Colinton Courier

Newsletter of the Colinton Rural Fire Brigade * No 182* January / February 2017



Laurence at Lower Boro

*Owing to a computer malfunction (and failure to back up!) the January issue of the Colinton **Courier** disappeared into the aether. The editor's apologies. This issue will cover events in December and January*



Call out:

On *December 13*, a *Monaro Strike Team* was dispatched to a fire at Lower Boro, near Tarago, which had been burning for some days. Strike Team Leader was Colinton Captain Graham, in a white command vehicle, with Sandra as his scribe. According to the fire map, some 480 hectares had been burned, with a perimeter of 10 km.

Tankers from Cooma, Bredbo and Michelago made up the Team, along with Colinton Seven *Alpha* (Jeremy, Nick) and *Charlie* (Bob M, Michael B). Crews returned home in the early morning light.

On *Friday 23 December*, there was a call-out to the property Scottsdale, where a dry lightning strike had set love grass blazing. Two Bredbo trucks were quickly on scene, followed by Colinton Seven *Alpha* (Jeremy, Sandra, Nick) and *Bravo* (Kieran, Graham). As the Colinton vehicles arrived, there was a massive hailstorm which immediately extinguished the fire – and gave drivers some anxiety about becoming bogged in the paddock.

The hail continued, and very soon became a major hazard on the Highway, with Gungoandra Hill being covered with 4 – 6 inches of ice as well as very heavy rain. Four cars skidded off the road and

Committee 2016-2017:

Fire Captain: Graham Povey
Senior Deputy: Nick Goldie
Deputies: Bob Morison, Jeremy Mears, Michael Burton, Barry Woolacott
President: Michael Burton
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

on the north side of the hill gutters soon overflowed. Within an hour Colyers Creek had burst its banks, and for a while the Highway was impassible, with flood-water, mud and logs being carried down.

One and *Charlie* were busy, controlling traffic and checking reports of flooding, bridges being damaged and roads blocked. *Charlie* (Barry) was despatched along Bumbalong Road, blocked by floodwater, while a small bridge on Mount Colinton Road was damaged by a floating log.



Flash flood and hail on Gungoandra Hill

On *Wednesday 18 January*, crews returned to the Tarago area, for a much larger re-run of the Lower Boro Fire, now called the Currandooley Fire: 3387 hectares burned, with loss of sheds, vehicles, and at least one house.

[Michael B provided the following succinct account:]

Wednesday 18 January; Cooma Monaro sent a strike team to the Mt Fairy fire

(Currandooley Fire). The strike team consisted of Michelago *Seven*, Bredbo *Seven*, Shannons Flat *Seven*, Cooma *One* and Colinton *Seven Charlie* (Michael B, Kim and Daniel). Graham was strike team leader with Heather Jauncey as scribe.

All vehicles met at Michelago fire shed and departed at approx 5.15pm bound for Bungendore for a briefing. Whilst en-route the crews listening to the Lake George PMR could hear a detailed description the second fire at Sutton.

The strike team arrived at Bungendore at approx 6.30pm, had dinner and waited for the 7pm briefing. We were then directed to meet the officer in charge at the corner of Kings Highway and Goulburn Road, where we would be tasked for the evening. As we got closer to the staging area a thick fog was rolling in from the east and the temperature dropped.

We were tasked to patrol and mop up on the Mt Fairy road and the northern grader trail in the eastern division. All crews completed the tasks as directed. At approx 2.30am, with light rain falling and little or no active fire, the strike team met at a designated location where we would wait until being relieved.

At approx 5.00am, the strike team was directed back to Bungendore for breakfast, at 7.00am the team boarded a bus and was taken home, with the trucks remaining at Bungendore for the next Monaro night shift. The next night shift was not required and Cooma Fire Control organised for the strike team trucks to be returned to their fire sheds. MB

Australia Day (*Thursday 26 January*) was eventful, with two fires calling for Colinton participation. Early afternoon, while people relaxed after the holiday BBQ, radio traffic suddenly increased as the Bredbo Brigade were called to a grass fire at the Bunyan glider club airfield.

Bredbo Captain Sparky was soon calling for assistance, most especially more water, as there was a fast-moving blaze in a large area of love grass.



Working together at the Glider Club perimeter: RFS and NSW Fire and Rescue

Seven *Bravo* (Graham) was quickly on the road, followed by *Alpha* (Sandra, Jeremy, Nick), and *One* (Michael B, Karl).

The fire was burning in thick love grass and reeds, and blowing on to the Highway. Police blocked traffic, while crews worked along the Highway edge and fence line. Meanwhile, chancy winds had led to a renewed blaze along the western flank of the fire, which covered about eighty hectares. The gliding clubhouse and some hangars were also under threat.

Units from Bredbo, Numeralla and Cooma were part of the team, as well as several NSW Search and Rescue trucks and a bulk water tanker parked by the Highway.

While Fire Control (Danny) was coping with all this radio activity, there was a call for a second or even third fire along the Shannons Flat Road. Colinton units *Bravo* and *One* immediately headed for Shannons Flat via Cooma, where they joined crews from Shannons Flat, Dry Plains and Brothers at a bush and scrub fire.

The fires were contained by late afternoon, and after mopping up and re-filling tanks, crews were home for a late evening meal. Although the Shannons Flat fire was quite small, it was in rough country, and was patrolled for some days (*Charlie*, Barry, Laurence) until *Sunday 29 December*.

On *Sunday 5 January* at around ten at night, a severe thunderstorm passed through the district, and there was soon a report of a lightning strike and fire in the vicinity of Poveys Road. *Bravo* (Graham, Daniel, Laurence) and *Alpha* (Sandra, Jeremy, Nick) - Kieran attended at the station - were quickly on the road, but no fire was found. Crews were home by midnight.

During the night, Baroona Road received 14 mm of welcome rain. 

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. 


Snake Removal
Michael Burton
0407 003 392




Back from Bunyan – a sooty couple

❧

**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
nickgoldie@bigpond.com
02 6235 9190
by the first Saturday each month, or to any
Committee member. For production assistance we
are grateful to:*


 Corporate Design
 Et Print Solutions
and to


M & T MOTORS
24 Hour Towing - Mechanical Repairs
6452 5250 – 0414 484 180

*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.*

❧

Drones for Xmas?

Adapted from an ABC (WA) report

Emergency services have reinforced warnings to drone enthusiasts that drones can interfere with aerial firefighting and even spark a fire if they crash.

Under current air safety rules, after any contact between an aircraft and an outside object, like a drone or a bird strike, the aircraft must land and be inspected for damage. In a bushfire, it would mean taking an aircraft out of action when it is most needed.

Drone rules:

- *Don't fly your drone out of your sight.*
- *Do not fly within 30 metres of vehicles, boats, buildings or people, and that includes public gatherings. *Fly no higher or further than 120 metres. *Do not fly within 5.5 kilometres of an airport.*

Earlier this year a crashed drone sparked a significant blaze near New Norcia in Western Australia's Wheatbelt. ❧