

Colinton Courier

Newsletter of the Colinton Rural Fire Brigade * No 82 * Septembert 2008



Captain Graham: a good place for a chainsaw course ...

Committee 2008-2009:

Fire Captain: Graham Povey
Senior Deputy: Nick Goldie
Deputies: Bob Morison, Tony Campbell, Jeremy Mears
President: Martin Hughes
Secretary: Nick Goldie
Treasurer: Bob Morison
Special projects: Tony Campbell
Training Officer: Jeremy Mears
Equipment Officer: tba
Community Awareness: Nick Goldie
Permits: Graham Povey
NSW RFSA Delegate: Jeremy Mears

Call out:

Friday 29th August, crews responded to a pager call at 1500 for a grass fire, one kilometer south of Michelago. Colinton *Seven Alpha* (Martin, Nick) and *Seven Bravo* (Barry, Graham) joined Michelago *Seven*, Anembo *Seven*. The fire was quickly extinguished after burning a little more than two hectares of grass. 

Burn:

The official fire season starts on October 1st, so there's still time to burn off without needing a permit.

If you do plan to burn, please tell your neighbours in advance, and ***tell your local fire brigade***. This saves a great deal of time and energy, as crews don't have to be called out needlessly. 

Open Day 2008:

RFS **Open Day** will be held on *Saturday 20 September* from 1100 to 1500. Please come and visit the station on the highway at Colinton, meet the members, view the fire trucks and equipment, and join us for an informal BBQ from 1200. There will be games and demonstrations, fire safety information, and information about how to join the brigade. 

Training:

The Colinton Brigade conducts training every month on the second Saturday, at two o'clock, at the Station at Colinton. Everyone is welcome.

The Junior brigade is in action, every second Thursday night. Contact Bob Morison or Tony Campbell for details. ↪

Learning and Development:

The new RFS Learning and Development Officer for the Bombala, Cooma Monaro and Snowy River teams is Mick Holton, previously of the NSW Fire Brigades.



Mick Holton at Colinton

Mick has developed an email newsletter, the *Monaro News*, to overcome what he describes as 'some of the communication shortfalls' that he experienced when trying to get a handle on the Monaro training schedule.

To be added to his mailing list, send your details to:

monaro.news@rfs.nsw.gov.au

or contact Mick on

02 6456 4555

0427 562 136

Email: mick.holton@rfs.nsw.gov.au ↪

Fitness test:

US firefighters, according to writer John N Maclean (*Fire and Ashes*) are expected to pass a basic physical test: the requirement is to cover three miles (4.8km) in forty-five minutes or less, while carrying forty-five pounds (20.41kg), no running.

Australian remote area (RAFT) firefighters have a similar test. ↪

Working Bee:

A group of Colinton members (Martin, Graham, Jeremy, Michelle, Barry, Tony R, Nick) with Andy the plumber and Sparky the back-hoe artiste spent *Tuesday 2nd September* finishing (almost) plumbing and painting the extension, in a long day of pick-and-shovel work. Next item please: some inspired landscaping.

Although the extension is not quite finished, it has been used regularly for training meetings, most recently an *Advanced Firefighter* course on Thursday 4th and Saturday 6th September. ↪

Brigade 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: \$10.00 for residents, \$50.00 for non-residents. Donations are always welcome. If paying by mail, please provide a return address so a receipt can be mailed to you. ↪

Fire management neglects animals:

adapted from an article by Anna Salleh of *ABC Science Online*, with permission.

Australian fire managers are using wishful thinking rather than science to ensure animals are protected, says Associate Professor Michael Clarke of La Trobe University in the current issue of CSIRO's

Wildlife Research Management and Conservation.

"In the past we've said a bit naively that if we cater for the needs of plants, we'll just cross our fingers and hope that the needs of animals have been met as well," he says. "We need to be much more refined in our use of fire."

Professor Clarke says in the past, most fire management has focused on meeting the needs of plants. But while some plants are adapted to bushfire, animals do not respond to fire in the same way.

"There's a fundamental difference between plants and animals that people often overlook," Professor Clarke says.

He says animals are either incinerated by a fire or they flee to a refuge so they can later re-colonise the burnt area. But their capacity to survive depends on whether the refuge is close enough for them to get to and large enough for them to survive on once they get there.

Current fire management depends on having a mosaic of areas that are burnt and left unburnt. While the impact of fire frequency of plant survival has been well studied, Professor Clarke says for animals the exact pattern or mosaic of which areas are burnt and unburnt is important.

For example, he says, a bird requiring 8 square kilometres will not get enough food if refuges are only one hectare in size. "For a plant it may not matter diddlysquat whether it's part of one hectare that's burnt or 10,000 hectares that are burnt," Professor Clarke said. "For an animal it will matter profoundly." ↪

Workers Compensation:

The RFSA, which represents the interests of fire brigade volunteers, is conducting a survey of brigade members. The one-question survey intends to find out about

the employment status of volunteers, in order to improve benefit levels under workers compensation legislation, for volunteers who might be injured during brigade activities. See:

<http://www.rfsa.org.au/rfsa/index.php?D=1>

and for the survey

www.rfsa.org.au/rfsa/index.php?D=144 ↪



Items for **The Colinton Courier** to Nick Goldie at horehound@yless4u.com.au by the first Saturday each month, or to any Committee member. For production assistance we are grateful to:

*The Sharp Corporation of Australia Pty Ltd,
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*Noel Teys Real Estate 0428 625 307

The Colinton Courier is also available at

www.michelagoregion.org.au/bushfire/brigades.htm

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 4131
0419 406 908**





Support your local fire brigade

NSW Rural Fire Service

OPEN DAY

Saturday 20th September

From 11 a.m. to 3 p.m.

- **Meet your local volunteer firefighters**
 - **Learn how to protect your home**
 - **Learn how your brigade operates**
- **Find out how you can become a volunteer too**



On the Clear Range fire trail

**Visit the Colinton Rural Fire Brigade Station
Colinton
Monaro Highway**

