

Colinton Courier

*Newsletter of the Colinton Rural Fire Brigade * No 84* November 2008*



Clearing up on the Clear Range

Committee 2008-2009:

Fire Captain: Graham Povey

Senior Deputy: Nick Goldie

Deputies: Bob Morison, Jeremy Mears

President: Martin Hughes

Secretary: Nick Goldie

Treasurer: Bob Morison

Training Officer: Jeremy Mears

Equipment Officers: Graham Povey, Nick Goldie

Community Awareness: Nick Goldie

Permits: Graham Povey

NSW RFSA Delegate: Jeremy Mears

Call out:

Nil



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.



Round Robin:


On *Saturday 1 November*, members from Cooma, Numeralla, Smiths Road, Bredbo, Anembo and Colinton (Jeremy, Sandra, Nick, Graham), along with members of the NSW Fire Brigade (Cooma), took part in a training Round Robin.

Cooma-Monaro Training Officer Mick Holton started proceedings with some words about the potential dangers of vehicle restraint systems and (in sports cars, for example) retractable roll-bars which pop up when there is vehicle stress – possibly damaging anyone who might be attempting to assist.


Mick then 'deployed' a vehicle air-bag, which he had mounted outside on a tow-bar; it was loud, assertive, and also potentially dangerous for a would-be rescuer. Moral: don't come between an air-bag and anything else, especially an accident victim.

The group then split into teams for a series of events: a structural fire in a small metal shed, a fire in a vehicle, bush skills (using a rake-hoe to protect a line of houses), bush driving skills, and vehicle stabilisation

(to prevent a vehicle, after an accident, moving or falling any further).

Everyone learned something, and a good day was had by all. 

Clear Range:


As part of regular training (*Saturday 8 November*), brigade members (Graham, Bob, Jacqui, Barry, Noreen, Jeremy, Sandra, John, Nick, Martin) took the two Cat. Seven trucks *Alpha* and *Bravo*, and a 'troopie' along the Clear Range fire trail. The patrol started at the southern end, crossing the river at Bumbalong and heading west over the range to the Gap Creek fire trail, and then north along the Clear Range fire trail, generally at heights above 1200m, until cutting down east past The Forest and across the ford below Livingstone Road. The fire trails were in good condition (though steep in places!), a couple of trees were down, and *Alpha* was delayed for 30 minutes by a rock caught between the rear tyres. 



On the Clear Range: Barry, Martin, Bob

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 in the hills:

If you had the feeling that fires seem to occur in the most inaccessible places, you might be right. A group of scientists with the Bushfire Cooperative Research Centre are looking at what makes fire in the high country different to fire on the plain.

Although the same processes influence fire behaviour elsewhere, understanding the unique nature of the interactions in the high country is considered to be the key to better management of fire in these areas, writes Rick McRae, of the ACT Emergency Services Agency and the CRC's Highfire Project.

The issues are not simple. For example: *the frequency and extent of complex fire weather scenarios in high country, including nocturnal low-level jetstreams, subsidence inversions and other dew point anomalies, interactions with dry slots, violent pyro-cumulonimbus cloud development, mountain wind waves and foehn winds ...*

The quotations are from an article 'Fire risk in the high country', in the spring 2008 number of *Fire Australia*. More information about the Highfire project is on the CRC website, with a series of papers dealing with fire, fuels, weather, community interactions, all in rugged terrain. For example:

http://www.bushfirecrc.com/publications/B_Sharple5.pdf 

Fire Ready Women :

Also from the spring number of *Fire Australia* 'Fire ready women', about a research project evaluating women's safety skills, and looking at the changing role of women in bushfire situations.

"Women are more likely to evacuate but not without their children ... in an assessment of bushfire casualties:

- the number of women dying in fires has increased over the past 30 years;
- most women perish while sheltering in (rather than actively defending) the house or attempting to flee; and
- late evacuations still account for most deaths.

"Many women took action contrary to **Stay and Defend or Leave Early** advice. Many did not know what firefighting equipment to use or how to use it. Of those who left their property during the fire event, 81% left late.

"Following involvement in a participatory learning program, most women reported shifts in their strategy from 'leave' to 'stay and defend' and increased confidence knowledge and preparedness."

The full research paper is available at www.afac-kw.com

Big one:

Reported in the *Bushfire Bulletin* 29/04 2007:

A company in North Wales has manufactured what is believed to be the world's largest and heaviest training dummy. Weighing in at 178kg, the dummy takes six people to lift and was designed because of the increasing number of overweight people fire fighters are being forced to move.

Fire fighters in the UK have received an increasing number of calls for assistance from obese people requiring assistance to be moved to hospital or a nursing home. A crew in Lancashire recently relocated a local weighing over 190kg.



Great bushfire stories:

Readers of *The Canberra Times* will have seen the large excerpt in *Times 2*, Thursday 6 November, from a new book by ABC journalist Ian Mannix: *Great Australian Bushfire Stories*, published by ABC Books. The excerpt in *The Canberra Times* dealt with experiences of a Duffy family in January 2003, a scary and instructive story. We hope to have a review of this book in the December issue.

Summer Rosters:

During the hotter months, especially at weekends and holidays, the brigade needs to know who is available to attend call-outs. To this end, we are compiling summer rosters. If you are a brigade member, and are NOT going to be

available at any particular times or dates, please let us know well in advance.

It is also helpful to know if properties will be unattended. If you are going to be out of area during a time of fire danger, especially at weekends or holidays, let the brigade know! ❧



Items for **The Colinton Courier** to Nick Goldie at horehound@yless4u.com.au
02 6235 9190

by the first Saturday each month, or to any Committee member. For production assistance we are grateful to:

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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.



Jeremy ... brute force



Clear Range cutting



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

