

Colinton Courier

Newsletter of the Colinton Rural Fire Brigade * No 94* September 2009



Ready for anything ...

Fire season: special announcement

Because of prevailing weather conditions, the official fire season, which normally starts on 1 October, has been brought forward two weeks.

The fire season has been declared from

Monday 14 September.

This means that no outside fires may be lit without first obtaining a permit from your brigade captain. For details of permit conditions, and for weather advisories, see the RFS website:

<http://www.rfs.nsw.gov.au/>

And a message to brigade members: if you have a pager and/or a UHF radio, be sure to check the batteries, and have it switched on and with you, at all times.

Committee 2009-2010:

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: Jeremy Mears
Community Awareness: Nick Goldie
Permits: Graham Povey
NSW RFSA Delegate: Jeremy Mears


Call out:

The morning of *Saturday 15 August* was misty and still. The landowner of a property bounded by Ryries Hill Road and the Monaro Highway commenced a love-grass burn, on the understanding that no fire or smoke was to reach the highway. At around ten o'clock, Nick did a patrol around the entire perimeter of the fire, and reported that everything was under control. However within minutes of this, the wind had sprung up and the fire was racing southwards. Two trucks from Michelago, along with Colinton Seven *Alpha* (Martin,

Nick) and Seven *Charlie* (Graham) had the fire blacked out by lunch time.


Early afternoon on *Saturday 22 August* there was a pager call to a structural fire to the north of Michelago village. Colinton was asked to support the Michelago brigade. By the time Seven *Alpha* (Bob, Tony, Nick) and *One* (Graham, Martin) had arrived, the Michelago brigade had the fire, in a shed, under control, though they were grateful for the extra water. Seven *Bravo* (Barry, Jacqui) arrived soon after.

On *Friday 28 August*, a love-grass burn to the south of Micalago Station escaped control and ran quickly north-eastwards. First on scene was Seven *Charlie* (Graham) who assessed the situation and quickly called for reinforcements. By the end of the afternoon, when the fire was finally blacked out, nine trucks were active including Colinton *Charlie* and *Alpha* (Nick, Noreen, Tony R), Colinton *One* (Martin, Barry) and *Bravo* (Bob) as well as trucks from Bredbo and Michelago.

Saturday 29 August, a day of wind and drizzle, saw yet another love-grass burn threatening to escape, putting some smoke on to the highway at the foot of Ingelara Hill. This was quickly contained by Graham, and Barry and Jacqui, in their own vehicles, and Seven *Alpha* (Nick). Meanwhile, at the Fire Station a Crew Leaders course was being held, with Colinton represented by Bob and Nick (when not in *Alpha*). At lunch time, Bob was asked to collect Tony C and drive Seven *Bravo* to Bermagui to assist in fighting the 'Section 44' fires. They returned the following afternoon, after many hours of property protection and patrolling in the Burrill Lake district. 

Open Day:

The state-wide **RFS Open Day** will be held on *Saturday 26 September*. The Colinton Brigade will be holding a combined event with the Bredbo Brigade, in Bredbo. All


brigade members are invited to note the date and take part on the day. 

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.


It is planned to have a special training day on *Saturday 10 October* driving the Cockatoo Creek fire trail complex. This will require an 1100 am start and may involve some private 4WD vehicles as well as fire trucks.

A Basic Firefighter (BF) course will be held at Colinton on *Thursday 19 November* (evening) and *Saturday 21* and *Sunday 22 November*. Dates to be confirmed. Please tell Nick or Graham if you are interested in attending. 

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: \$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. 

Work:

The brigade has held several working bees in recent weeks, bringing the extension closer to completion, and improving truck access to the fire shed. We are extremely grateful to members who have given up their time, contributed their skills, and donated materials. (And thanks to Scott Duthie for a very welcome donation of 'reo' for use in the 'Duthie ramps' ...) 

Summer Job opportunity:

The Department of Sustainability and Environment (DSE) in Victoria is responsible for the management of public land and other natural resources. DSE employs several hundred additional firefighters each summer to assist in the prevention and suppression of wildfires throughout the state.

Here is what they ask:

1. You can work safely alongside your colleagues as a team player
2. You're fit and healthy (you'll need to pass a medical and fitness test)
3. You hold a current manual driver's licence and are contactable by phone during your employment.

In return you will receive:

1. A salary of \$717.74 - \$944.46 per week plus allowances and overtime
2. A rewarding job as a project firefighter including positions of machine operator, hover exit crew or rappel crew member
3. Professional training.

You can find out more and apply online at:

<http://www.dse.vic.gov.au/fires>

Alternatively, contact us on 136 186, email pff.positions@dse.vic.gov.au. Indigenous employment opportunities are also available; contact the Team Leader, Employment Strategies on (03) 9637 8220.

*** You only have until **Sunday 6th September** to lodge your application. ☞

Climate and weather:

The *Canberra Times* (August 22) included a small news item headed *Hot days point to harsh fire season*, written by technology reporter Nyssa Skilton.

"Australia is bracing for another severe bushfire season this summer as forecasters report 'unprecedented' hot winter days. The Bureau of Meteorology

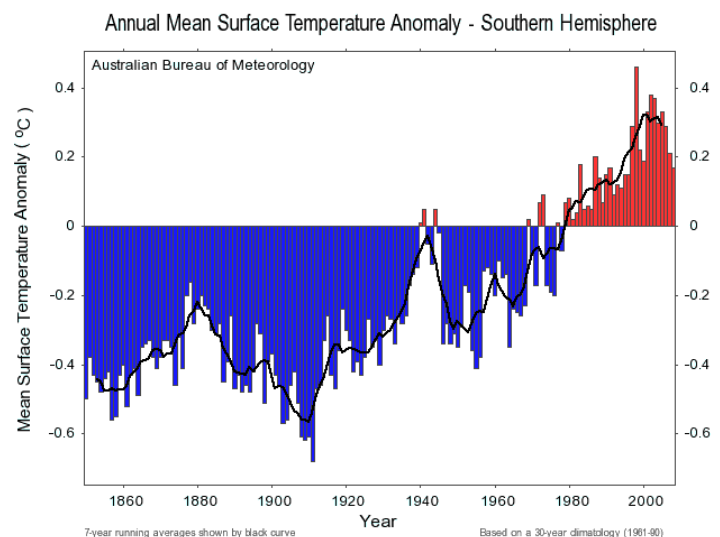
has recorded temperatures 10 to 15 degrees above average this winter across the centre and north of the country.

"Analysis from the United States National Climatic Data Centre has revealed the world's ocean surface temperature was the hottest on record in July, breaking the previous record set in July 1998.

"Australian National University climate specialist Bradley Opdyke of the Research School of Earth Sciences said the ocean surface data showed the world was indeed continuing to warm and was significantly warmer than it had been in recorded history.

"Strong El Nino years, which were mostly warmer than average years, were likely to approach record high temperatures as a result of climate change."

Below, a southern hemisphere graph from the Bureau of Meteorology.



Meanwhile the highest ever winter water temperatures have been recorded off the east coast of Tasmania. And, from the CSIRO magazine *ECOS* (September 2009), research by a team at the University of Queensland suggests that land-clearing plays a significant role in climate change. "The 'bulldozer solution' of clearing large tracts of bush to reduce the risk of

bushfires will only compound the problem – by clearing the land, you get a hotter land surface, so bushfires will be more severe,” said research leader Dr Clive McAlpine. “Rather, we need to restore and actively manage native forests and woodlands for the multiple ecosystem services they can provide.”

The internet is crowded with climate change websites, ranging from the dryly scientific to the raving loony. We think that it is improbable that the world’s scientists have formed a global conspiracy to defraud the people, and so we are inclined to accept the view of the majority of climate researchers. For an objective (and southern hemisphere) view, we suggest for starters CSIRO and the Australian Bureau of Meteorology.

<http://www.csiro.au/science/Changing-Climate.html>

<http://www.bom.gov.au/climate/enso/>

<http://www.bom.gov.au/climate/change/> ❧



Items for **The Colinton Courier** to Nick Goldie at

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02 6235 9190

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,
Fyshwick,

*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 4150

0419 406 908



*Crew leader course – car bonnet briefing
(pic: Mick Holton)*