

**Minutes of the Annual General Meeting of Mt Wilson/Mt Irvine Rural Fire Brigade
Held on Saturday 2nd June 2012 in the Mt Wilson Village Hall**

Attendance:

Invited guests present: Hon. Louise Markus (Federal Member for Macquarie), Hon. Roza Sage (State Member for Blue Mountains), Ron Gavin & Mick Garvey (NSW Ambulance Service, Lithgow), Rob Vinzenz (Operations Officer BMD RFS), Rick & Kaye Whitbread (Bell RFB)

Residents of Mt Wilson & Mt Irvine present: Susie Hope, Owen Haviland, David & Sarah Howell, Graham & Judy Tribe, Ray Harrington, Timothy Sterling-Levis, Valerie Talela, Penny Ewing, Tom & Suzanne Bassett, George & Jane Mayne, Mary Reynolds, Wendy Holland, Michael Sweeney, Bill Scriviner, Mark Bancroft, Robyn Scriviner, Tim & Kim Gow, Graham & Beverley Thompson, Richard Beattie, Beth Raines, Ron & Moira Green, Henric & Marion Nicholas, Ted & Deb Griffin, Ross Kelly, Peter Dempsey, Kathleen Oakes, Phillip & Jane Beeby, Stephen Dean, Barry Freeman, Nancy Fox, Bruce Arnold

Welcome:

The President David Howell opened the meeting at 4.10pm and welcomed the invited guests present and residents of Mt Wilson & Mt Irvine.

David thanked the members of the Executive Committee for their work during the year and especially Beth who is the lynch pin of our brigade.

He also thanked those filling roles in our brigade: Stephen Dean as equipment officer and the for the BBQs for training morning breakfasts, Owen Haviland as resident architect, Moira Green for catering, Sarah Howell for preparing the RFB section in the Community Newsletter which Tim Gow edits so well, Kim Gow for organising the Willy to Billy and for her work with Community Engagement, Tom Bassett as lead Station Officer, Peter Dempsey & Vic Zhukov for keeping the fire trails clear, and to all members, both old and new, for their huge effort during the year.

Station extensions: As you will have noticed the extensions are not yet started! Meeting with BMCC on 22nd March 2012 it was noted that an Asset Protection Zone (APZ) would need to be negotiated with the Dept. of Lands if the station extension was built downhill from the present fire station. A decision was made to negotiate with the Dept. Lands to seek to have this land (Lot 7010 known as 49 The Avenue) transferred to BMCC. This then lead to a decision to change the location of the extension to between the present fire station and the Teacher's Cottage.

David then introduced Louise Markus, Federal Member for Macquarie, to the meeting:

Louise Markus thanked Beth and the RFB team for doing a great job informing her on issues of concern, particularly Bowen's Creek Road and Bridge.

She is a member of Oakville Rural Fire Brigade

Thank you to all members and their families as she is aware we do a lot more for the community than fires
It is a pleasure to be at our meeting.

David introduced Roza Sage, Sate Member for Blue Mountains to the meeting:

Roza Sage has been working with David on the transfer of land from Dept. Lands to BMCC. She produced an email from the Department of Lands discussing the APZ, but did not address the transfer of the property. David thanked her for all the work she has done on this issue.

Apologies:

From invited guests: Terri Hamilton & Eleanor Gibbs (Councillors BMCC), , Neil Stone (NPWS), David Hoadley (A/Manager BMD RFS), Mick Metcalf (Group Leader West Sector), Frank Vincent (Group Captain West 1), Fred Taylor (Deputy Group Captain West 2),

From Residents of Mt Wilson & Mt Irvine: Elizabeth & Joe Montano, Allen & Robyn Hyde, Annie Catling, Jim Tzannes, Robert Chesney, John & Judy Teulon, David & Rosie Taylor, Diana Lauzi, Brian & Carol Carrigan, Milba Mewburn, Julie Townend, John & Mary Holt, Sarah Hope, Kathy Harrington, Peter & Linda

Raines, Libby & Keith Raines, Helen Freeman, Margaret Dean, Ellis Reynolds, Maria Kelly, Loretta Beattie, Ruth Scriviner

Confirmation of minutes from 2011 AGM:

Moved by Penny Ewing, seconded by Graham Thompson

Report from David Hoadley A/District Manager/Fire Control Office BMD RFS

The report was presented to the meeting by Inspector Rob Vinzencz (Operations Officer BMD, NSW RFS)

A summary is presented in these minutes; the full report is available on request.

During 2011/2012 our District Plan has seen the following significant achievements with a number of milestones completed:

- The 2011 District Strategic Plan was developed and implemented providing the district with a clear direction and purpose and a Strategic Plan for 2012 has been developed.
- A 10 year infrastructure plan and many projects have been completed including the Valley Heights Standard Design Brigade Station, the District Office and Administration area renovated and refurbished, capital upgrades at Bell & Blaxland Stations, the water tank project for Stations, a catering unit for the District, the Blue Mountains website has been redesigned, there has been a major upgrade of \$200,000 in radios & equipment to the Brigades,
- Many projects are well into the planning phase including Shipley Brigade Station, Yellow Rock Station, Extensions to the Fire Control Centre, Glenbrook Station, new Lawson Brigade Station,
- Thank you to the 2010 & 2011 Red Balloon Balls a 22 seater bus has been delivered and thanks to the 2012 Red Balloon Ball and the Fairmont Hotel sponsorship the District has accepted 2 Electronic Message Boards
- Hazard Reduction: Increased planning is being undertaken for hazard reduction preparation:
 - 35 jobs involving some 3,500 hectares are planned
 - A position of hazard reduction supervisor has been seconded from NPWS
 - The Northern Strategic Line project has been undertaken
 - The Western Strategic Line has been identified and planned
 - Southern Strategic Line project plans are underway
 - 3,200 hectares of Hazard Reduction have been completed in the District
- Operations:
 - The District assisted in the July 2011 storm damage in the Blue Mountains
 - Section 44 fires were experienced in September 2011 at Leura and October 2011 at Katoomba
 - All Blue Mountains SOP's have been revised and reviewed
- Volunteer training:
 - The importance of Junior members has been recognised with their primary support provided by their own Brigade within the sectors
 - Plans to increase training facilities and aviation operations by utilising the Katoomba Airfield at Medlow Bath
- Blue Mountains Risk Management Plan review has commenced and will be integrated with adjoining Districts to our west
- BMD Disciplinary Panel has been enhanced and their strong decisions have provided a message to our volunteers.

Congratulations to all the recently elected Group Officers

Special thanks to our retiring Group Leader, John Fitzgerald AFSM. John has a long and distinguished history in the RFS in the Blue Mountains.

Thank you to all the Brigades, our Brigade Officers, volunteers who have assisted in training, and District staff.

David Hoadley's time as the Acting Manager is coming to an end on June 30th. The RFS will soon be undertaking a recruitment process to find a permanent manager who will be in our District for many years to provide the stability and leadership that this District requires and deserves

Ambulance Service of NSW – Lithgow

Community First Responders:

Mick Garvey spoke about the skill and dedication of our Community First Responder team. We have 7 people who have ongoing training once a month to provide this service. Their skills in making primary assessments, taking patient histories, initiating treatment and providing radio reports to the paramedics exceeds expectations. The paramedics coming are also very grateful to have guidance in finding properties in our area.

Ron Gavin spoke about the valuable role of volunteers in the Ambulance Service and the important role they play in early intervention leading to better outcomes for patients. The Ambulance service is being funded for volunteer projects with CFR teams from RFS, SES, NSW F&R. Headquarters are being established at Bathurst. He is proud of the record of the CFR team from our Brigade who were the first RFB to train Community First Responders.

Reports for 2011 – 2012

Captain: Beth Raines

Operations:

The Brigade attended 33 incident calls this year:

- 13 MVAs, 8 CFR calls, 1 rescue, 5 fallen trees, 4 fires, 1 oil spill, 1 automatic fire alarm
- The major event this year was the wind storm starting on 5th July 2011. The devastation was enormous with all the roads being blocked at one time, many being cleared only to have more trees fall. It took 7 hours for paramedics to reach a medical emergency. Power lines were down all over the mountain and a concrete pole below the Zig Zag snapped. We were without power for 5 days. The devastation to private properties was also huge.

Some of the positives from the event was the assistance we received from Mt Tomah and Katoomba/Leura brigades, BMCC, Endeavour Energy and contractors, especially with heavy machinery. The Mt Wilson Station was able to function with a generator and gas cooking and the Brigade members who assisted did a brilliant job in especially trying circumstances.

One of the major things we learnt from the event was the need to improve communications with people off the mountain, especially when the phone and power are out and when all our local people are busy dealing with the unfolding incident and others are stuck in their properties because of fallen trees and power lines.

Training:

- We continue to hold training on the first Sunday of the month and every second month the Brigade joins with Bell & Tomah for combined training. We have again enjoyed joining up with our neighbouring brigades for these joint trainings. Thanks to Stephen Dean we have enjoyed a catch up and cooked breakfast before training Sundays.
- We have had Brigade members do a wide range of the training available within the Blue Mountains, including Basic and Advanced fire fighting, Crew Leaders, chainsaw courses, traffic control, Rail Corp familiarisation, Community Safety Assistant and First Aid Application.
- Maintenance nights on the 2nd and 4th Fridays in summer and the 2nd Friday in winter have been started. These have been followed by dinner, thanks again to Stephen.
- Graham and Tim have kept the website up to date, including maps showing the fire trails and water sources. Again, I encourage all to spend a bit of time looking at the website and the brigade section in particular – there is a tremendous amount of information there.
- We have welcomed a number of new members, both new people to the Mounts and also people who have been here for years and have decided it was time to become active (oe who now had time to become active).

- The Community First Responder group continues to train every month with officers from Lithgow Ambulance Station. Thank you to Ron Gavin and Mick Garvey for your guidance.

Hazard Reduction:

- We had a favourable break in the weather that allowed us to complete a couple of hazard reductions at the Bogey Holes and Waterfall Creek. 17 Brigade members assisted (some at both). We also thank brigades from Mt Tomah, Glenbrook/Lapstone, Mt Riverview, Marrangaroo, Wentworth Fall, Fire & Rescue NSW and NPWS for their assistance.
- On the ‘to do’ list are the burns at Wynnes Rocks Road, Mt Irvine/ Knight Brown, The Northern Fire Trail and Mt Irvine Rd.
- The Brigade has also been busy helping out at the Hazard Reductions at Megalong Valley, the Wild Dogs, Bell and Winmalee.

Bush Run:

- Another very successful Willy to Billy Bush Run was held in August. Thank you to all the people who stood around in the cold at the start or on one of the drink stations. Thanks also to the scone makers. A huge thank you to Kim Gow for the tremendous work she has done in liaising with Council, meeting with the Bilpin Brigade, organising the drink station volunteers and overseeing the entire operation.
- This year may be more of a logistical challenge with Silva Plana out of action due to a rather large mud puddle!

Community Engagement:

We were chosen to be part of a pilot program to develop Community Protection Plans for vulnerable communities. Brigade members have been included in the development of these plans and they will be rolled out for community consultation in the coming months. We hope to use this as a continuation of the street meetings that were postponed due to the wind storm.

Thanks:

- To the executive committee, David Howell, Judy Tribe, Susie Hope, Peter Raines, Henric Nicholas, Barry Freeman and Graham Tribe.
- To Moira Green for catering
- Graham Tribe and Stephen Dean who are my ‘go to’ people
- Kim Gow in Community Engagement
- Peter Dempsey and Vic Zhukov for overseeing the trails
- Thanks to the Deputies, especially those who have taken on a specific role on training day. Stuart Donaldson has decided not to stand again because of changing commitments, but has said he will still be around for HRs and fires.
- To Sarah Howell who has compiled the Brigade section of the Newsletter for many years, a big job, thank you!
- I think we also need to thank the core people in this Brigade, who be happy circumstance live here but also have the burden of attending the majority of call outs. I thank them in particular – as we all should.

Moved that the report be accepted by Barry Freeman, seconded by Graham Tribe

Treasurer: Susie Hope

This report covers our financial dealings for the 12month period 1 April 2011 to 31 March 2012. A copy of the report was sent out with the AGM papers.

Copies of the audited statement of income and expenditure, statement of accumulated funds and social club account summary and copies of excel books/worksheets are available for anyone who would like to see them.

In summary:

Income: including		\$47,360.12	
Donations	\$24,352.60		
Willy to Billy Bush Run	\$5,908.65		

Sale of Kathy Delaney's goodies	\$268.19		
Interest: from this account & term deposit deposited in this account	\$357.79		
Membership fees	\$2,654.39		
Bazmark during filming of 'Great Gatsby'	\$12,400		
Reimbursement from BMCC for our telephone	\$550.90		
Reimbursement for personal equipment	\$90.91		
GST collected & then paid to ATO	\$776.51		
Expenditure: including		\$36,040.60	
Personal equipment (name badges)	\$512.23		
Fire fighting equipment - purchases	\$7,912.79		
Fire fighting equipment - maintenance	\$5,801.01		
Fire trail maintenance	\$2,590.00		
Website support, our share	\$625.61		
Mt Wilson Fire Station alarm	\$1,288.00		
Electrical works to Mt Wilson Station: Joe Inzitari	\$3,135.60		
New computers & software: Thanks to Tim Gow IBM donated \$1,600 towards this purchase, included in donations above	\$2,203.91		
Oxygen & other medical supplies	\$528.40		
Office administration	\$868.54		
Telecommunications	\$3,906.66		
Captains debit account	\$3,000.00		
Hall hire	\$345.91		
General catering & shed supplies	\$2,209.41		
Gas	\$459.02		
GST paid and then refunded from ATO	\$652.51		
Resulting surplus		\$11,319.52	
Opening balance in working account		\$9,602.18	
Closing balance in working account at 31/03			\$20,921.70
Term deposits			\$117,212.71
Captains Debit account			\$2,96.40
Total Brigade Funds			\$141,090.81

The Social Account balance at 31 March 2012 is \$3,621.53, an increase of \$15.70 for the year. Perhaps we need to have more fun between now and 31 March next year.

During the year we set up a Debit Account for our Captain. Beth did not ask for this. It was unanimously agreed incentive of your committee because she was constantly out of pocket for items she purchased on behalf of the brigade. As the signatories of the account are predominantly weekenders, sometimes Beth was not reimbursed for ages. We felt it was prudent to deposit \$3,000 into a Debit Account for Beth to use. Every cent from that debit account is accounted for with supporting receipts and is recorded in our working account when we top it up.

We have also had to deal with the new regulations relating to Deductible Gift Recipient Status (DGR) imposed on us by the Federal Government. To meet the current DGR criteria you need to be a Public Benevolent Institution. The ATO definition of this is 'being body to relieve poverty, sickness, suffering, distress, misfortune, disability or helplessness'. The RFS does not fit this description!

Thankfully the RFS has been negotiating with the ATO on all our behalves. The basic outcome is that as from 1 July 2012 we have two options:

1. We set up our Public Fund for all future donations to be deposited into
2. We put all future donations to us into a general Public Fund controlled by NSW RFS

Your committee has decided to go with option 1

To implement this we have needed to

1. Amend our constitution as recommended by NSW RFS. We did that at the General Meeting 11 May 2012
2. Have those constitutional amendments approved by District Office – done

3. Establish a separate 'Public Fund' bank account for all donations from 1 July 2012
4. Appoint a 'Public Fund Management Committee' with at least three members, a majority of whom are 'responsible persons', according to ATO definition. Subject to your approval eligible members of your executive committee are prepared to be appointed as responsible management committee members: Justice Henric Nicholas, Graham Tribe AM, David Howell FAICD, Barry Freeman JP and Beth Raines Brigade Captain. Also Judy Tribe and I are prepared to be the minority of allowed 'irresponsible' members on that committee
5. Apply to the ATO for new DGR endorsement

Moved that the Treasurer's report be accepted by Graham Tribe, seconded by Stephen Dean

Appointment of an Auditor:

Susie Hope thanked Phil Lupton for auditing the accounts. She also informed the meeting that Phil Lupton from Honan Partners is her personal accountant

Henric Nicholas moved that Mr Phil Lupton from Honan Partners be appointed as honorary auditor for the 2012/2013 financial year, seconded by Tim Gow and accepted by the meeting

Election of officers for 2012/13:

Inspector Rob Vinzenz took the chair for the elections. The following people had been nominated unopposed prior to the meeting and were confirmed in their positions:

Position	Nominee Name
*President	David Howell
*Vice President	Henric Nicholas
*Treasurer	Susie Hope
*Secretary	Judy Tribe
*Captain	Beth Raines
*Senior Deputy Captain	Peter Raines
*Deputy Captain (1)	Barry Freeman
Deputy Captain (2)	Tim Gow
Deputy Captain (3)	David Howell
Deputy Captain (4)	Ian Docker
Deputy Captain (5)	Stewart Gunn
*Training	Graham Tribe
Community Engagement	Kim Gow
Equipment Officer	Stephen Dean
Fire Trails Coordinator	Peter Dempsey & Vic Zhukov
Catering	Moira Green

Those elected positions marked with * will form the Executive Committee

Closure of the meeting:

As there was no other business David Howell closed the meeting at 5.05pm and invited all those present to join the committee for wine and cheese.