



## Captain's Corner

### Inside this issue:

History in Pictures	2
Pig & Horn	2
Polo T Shirts	2
Letter from the President	3
Training	3
OH&S Report	4
Early Fire Season	4

I would like to sincerely thank our outgoing President **Tom Harding** for his dedication and guidance to this Brigade, and in particular his friendship over the last 3 years as we focused on the building the number of "Active Firefighters" in the Brigade.

THANK YOU TOM! and as we all know, behind every good man there is an even better Woman! Thank you **Elizabeth** for loaning us your Tom and supporting him as you always do.

I also thank our outgoing Executive, all of whom have been re-elected at the AGM last month. In particular, congratulations to **David Howell**, who has been elected President. David has put in a great amount of time and effort over the last few years in the role of Brigade Secretary and as part of the Executive Team. Thank you David!

Both **Peter Raines**, Senior Deputy Captain and **Suzie Hope**, Secretary, were re-elected to their positions. Thank you Peter for your support, and the time you so freely give to Training our Firefighters and preparing Hazard Reduction Plans. Suzie is our "dynamo"! at times I don't know where you get the energy and enthusiasm from Suzie, but you certainly know how to get things done.

Welcome to **Ross Kelly** as Vice President, **Suzanne Daly** as Secretary, and **Tim Gow** as Operations Support Officer, all of whom are new

members of the Executive Team.

Already the Executive Team has met and are planning Phase 2 of our Brigade Management Strategy and key priorities for the next 3 years. Details of these plans will be in coming issues of this Newsletter.

Congratulations to our 2 newly qualified Crew Leaders, **Alan Heap** and **Tim Gow**, who have been elected as Deputy Captains. Both Alan and Tim have built up their Fire-ground experience in recent years and both have trained as Village Firefighters (Structural Fires and Motor Vehicle Accidents)



Congratulations also to **Doug Wood**, **Beth Raines** and **Stuart Donaldson**, who have been made Deputy Captains Elect, until such time as they complete their Training and Assessment as Crew Leaders in the coming 6 months.

A complete list of elected Brigade Officers is on display in the notice board at the Mt. Wilson Fire Shed.

Barry Freeman

Captain

## Technology update



Through their programme 'On Demand Community', IBM has very generously donated an S50 Think Pad workstation and flat screen monitor to the Brigade.

The On Demand Community programme is a world-wide scheme through which IBM contributes technology and expertise to help develop and sustain strong communities where IBM employees live and work. It is aimed specifically at meeting the changing needs of communities worldwide. IBM provides both technology and talent to schools, not-for-profit organizations and economic development groups, focusing on

communities threatened by the "digital divide" - the discrepancy between those who have the skills and tools to use information technology and those who don't.

The Brigade gratefully acknowledges the contribution from IBM and undertakes to put the computer to good use in the administration of Brigade activities!



The Hon. Bob Debus, Member for Blue Mountains and NSW Attorney General and Tom Harding (just retired)



## Pig & Horn



The Pig & Horn night conducted after the AGM in June was the 4<sup>th</sup> and most successful event to date. Approximately 80 Residents and friends joined together in a festive spirit and had a great time in each others company. Thanks to Suzie and Sarah Hope who put in a tremendous effort to organise the Karaoke competition on the night. Many people 'had a go!' but no one should give up their day job just yet!

Winner on the night was Stuart Gunn and stepson Will – a tremendous duet if ever I saw one! They collected a family ticket to Mt.Vic Flicks for their effort, well done guys!

The Pig & Horn runs from **6-9pm** at the Mt Wilson Village Hall. Come on down and bring family and friends to join in the fun.

Don't forget to BYO Food and Drink and a plate for supper. Tea and Coffee provided

**Come on Down!**

**Next Dates:**

**Sat 2nd October**

**Sat 4th December (Xmas Special)**

## Stop Press

New keys have been issued for the Mt Wilson and Mt Irvine sheds.

Your old keys will no longer work—over the next few weeks, replacement keys will be issued to those existing key holders.

Please see Peter Raines for details!

## Brigade Polo Shirts

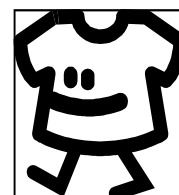
The new Navy Blue, 100% Cotton Polo Shirts with the RFS Logo, Brigade Name and your Personal name are now being distributed to those who placed their order in the first round.

The shirts look great! And already we have others wanting to purchase them.

The shirts are available to all financial and life-time members whether you are active or in a support role.

The cost is \$43 each, and the second order will be placed with the supplier on 2<sup>nd</sup> August.

If you would like to order one, please contact Helen Freeman ASAP who can advise you on sizes.



## Brigade History in Pictures

If you have any photos of brigade members in action or brigade vehicles from the year dot we would like a copy for historical records. If you can have a copy made, that would be great, if not forward them to Suzzane Daly, Brigade Secretary, so that we can scan a copy and return the original.

If you have any other memorabilia suitable for display at the Fire Station please let the Captain know, so that it can be recognised and considered.

*Many thanks* to Owen Haviland for designing and building a new mezzanine level at the Mt Wilson Fire Shed. Situated in the main truck bay, but accessible from the office areas via a very grand staircase, the new area allows a large amount of storage space for items of equipment that were previously cluttering the floor. Plans are underway to increase the floor area even more by putting in a floor above the office area. Stay tuned!

# Letter from the President

Welcome to the first newsletter from the new Executive. I am very glad to see that we are making a fresh effort to keep residents informed of current RFS issues. Thanks to Tim and Kim Gow for driving this project.

## Commonwealth Government Small Equipment Grants

I am pleased to tell you that we have been awarded a grant from the Commonwealth government for \$1,900 to cover the cost of purchasing a stretcher, back-pack blower and a back-pack slasher. The stretcher will be used for rescues, and the blower and slasher help with ground clearing in hazard reductions. These new pieces of equipment will assist the work of the Brigade and we are grateful for the grant.

## Water Tanks

As you were advised at the AGM, the four community tanks situated on Council land have all been approved and the last one should be installed in Farrer Road West by September. We have prepared a Review of Environmental Factors for the tank near Danes Way and submitted it to the National Parks & Wildlife Service for their comments. This document takes the place of a Development Application for a tank on NPWS land. After initial comments we must then submit the document to NPWS headquarters for final approval.

## Community Education

We hope this year to accelerate the community education process by appointing Street Wardens to act as communication officers during a fire situation. A planned letterbox drop will provide you with leaflets and maps outlining preparation and action during a fire.

## Planning For Summer

It is never too early to plan for summer, so remember to clear flammable material away from your house, keep the gutters clear and check that your portable bush fire pump is working. If you don't yet have a bush-fire pump (non-electric), now would be a good time to buy one. Barry Freeman or Peter Raines can advise you on the best type.

## Thank You

Thank you to each and every Brigade member for the work being done for the Brigade, particularly those on the Executive and the Senior Deputies. Your help is essential to the day to day running and continued existence of your Rural Fire Brigade

David Howell

# Training

The Brigade is computerising the membership and training records and need all members who have undergone training of any sort to either -

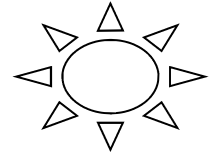
copy their Course certificates and/or

List the Training Courses you have attended and the date you undertook the training

Please forward the information to the Brigade Secretary before the end of August. This is important for refresher training such as First Aid which runs out after 3 years etc..

There has been a lot of training happening this year. Amongst them were

- **Prescribed Burning Supervisor** course = Peter Raines and Alan Gunn
- **Crew Leader** Training = Doug Wood, Beth Raines and Stuart Donaldson
- **Basic Firefighter** course = Bill and Maureen Ryan, Sarah Hyde, Brian Abrahams, Jane Beeby, Paul Lawrence, Diana Lauzi, Vic Zhukov, Anne Mellady, Alasdair Donaldson (Junior Member) Jack Wood (Junior Member)
- **Chainsaw Operator** = Peter Dempsey and Robyn Hyde
- **Senior First Aid** = David Howell and Sarah Hyde



## HELP NEEDED!!

We currently need some active support members to assist with

- Painting of the new concrete Water tanks installed
- Installing a timber built-in desk in the Administration Office
- Painting of the Admin Office at the Fire Station.

If you have some spare time please contact Barry or Helen Freeman on 4756-2053. This work can be carried out at your convenience.



## Special Training

First Aid for members whose accreditation has lapsed will be held on Sat/Sun 11-12th Sept at Mt Wilson Shed.

Anyone else who would like to do this course is welcome.

Special training session for VF qualified members: Sun 3rd Oct  
1-3pm BBQ available at 12 noon

## Want to receive Brigade announcements and correspondence by email?

The task of distributing written material about Brigade activities is both time consuming and expensive.

If you would like to receive correspondence via email from the Brigade, could you please email Kim Gow at [king@hitachi.com.au](mailto:king@hitachi.com.au)

Your email address will be then added to your record on the Membership List. Obviously, your personal details will do not be given to third parties outside the Brigade.



## Occupational Health and Safety

No activity or task we undertake is of such importance that takes precedence over another that could injure or maim a volunteer member.

Occupational Health and Safety is the responsibility of everyone.

If you believe a piece of equipment or activity is dangerous, or capable of causing injury, please voice your concerns immediately. By doing so, you are not only minimising the chances of injury to yourself, but also to others.

The best way of voicing your concern is by talking to your Crew Leader.

## The Bush Run

**Saturday 21st August**

Volunteers are needed to help at the drink stations and at the start of the race

Scones are needed as well.

Please contact

Milba Mewburn ASAP

NSW RFS Blue Mts District

## 7th Annual Charity Ball

Saturday 14th August

Hydro Majestic Medlow Bath

\$55 per person or

\$95 per firefighter and partner

**For further info contact:**

Suzanne 0402 289 655



## Early Fire Season

### 2004-2005 FIRE SEASON

The Commissioner for the NSW Rural Fire Service, Phil Koperberg has declared the start of the Fire Season to be Sunday 1st August. This declaration has become necessary due to the prolonged dry conditions and the current Bureau of Meteorology weather forecast for the next 3 months. With the low soil moisture, low water table and amount of fuel in the bush, we would need in excess of 180mm just to bring us back to average conditions.

As indicated at the recent AGM, we need to prepare ourselves as a Community, for a bad Fire Season. To this end the Brigade will be focusing on Community Education and Property Preparation in this coming year. Your President, David Howell together with Ross Kelly (Mt. Irvine) and Brian Abrahams (Mt. Wilson) will be working with residents to form

area/street 'FireWise Groups'. Please give them your assistance and co-operation when contacted.

Each property owner should be well down the track in preparing their properties through hazard reduction, pile burns and ensuring access into your property and along fence lines for Fire Trucks.

From the 1st August, **ALL BURNING** will require Fire Permits. Application forms are available from the container on the verandah of the Mt. Wilson Fire Station. These permit applications must be submitted by post or fax to the Blue Mountains RFS Control Centre in Katoomba.

Property owners should not 'panic burn' in the lead up to 1st August, just to avoid having to get a permit. If you prepare properly and meet the requirements stipulated, permission

will not be withheld. Permits will be issued by the RFS and **not** BMCC.

Many recent fires that the RFS has attended, have been burn-offs that got out of control in windy conditions. If you are in doubt, don't! If you want advice please talk with either myself or Peter Raines.

In the coming months this Brigade will still be trying to do our Prescribed Burns, and we will notify all residents affected or in the area concerned, at least 24 hours beforehand.

Even though the current weather is cold and not conducive to ignition at our elevation, please stay vigilant and continue your property preparation.

Barry Freeman

Captain