



Minutes from the Annual General Meeting of the Canyonleigh Rural Fire Brigade, 3 May 2017

Attendees were recorded on the Attendance Register. As well as members of the Canyonleigh Brigade, guests included Supt Martin Surrey and Group Capt Rowan Lund.

Apologies: John Kay, Dominique Kay, Brett Cubit, Rob Crough.

The meeting was opened at 7.45pm and chaired by brigade Captain Mark Pearson in President Kay's absence.

Minutes of the last AGM on 4 May 2016 were presented and were accepted.

Moved: Peter Attreed. Seconded: Adam Stefanuik.

Captain's Report 2016 / 2017 Fire season.

Good evening all and thank you to everyone for coming out tonight. I'd like to welcome Superintendent Martin Surrey, our District manager, Rowan Lund, one of our Group Officers and Jan Dalzell, from the Canyonleigh Community Association.

A bit of house keeping first. At the end of the meeting we will be conducting a fire drill as part of the ongoing workplace safety requirements, so if everyone could sign the attendance book, we will be able to account for everyone during the drill. Could all members with a key, let me know the number on their key for our key audit.

This fire season had the potential to be one of the worst. A very wet June and July (MV 318mm,95mm) set up a very good spring which meant we had a lot of green feed going into September and October. The rain then cut out with only 30mm in each of October, November, December and January. There were a couple of weeks in November when things got very dry and I think there was 1 Total Fire Ban day, while there were also bans in February. We fared a little better than west of the mountains, because temperature wise we had a milder summer. This was borne out by the very big fires near Coolah while closer to home the fire east of Queenbeyan at Carwoolla, destroyed a lot of pasture, fences and some homes.

During this fire season, the Hanging Rock Rd HR was completed. This was done over two days with a lot of input and help from outside brigades for which we are very grateful. Thank you very much to our members who attended.

We are also lucky to have two new recruits in Jeremy Johnson and Lindsay Fowler, helping to lower the average age of the brigade considerably! Hopefully we will get them to a few HR's in the spring.

A big thank you to Mick Trevisiol. Mick is stepping down as an officer of the brigade to take up a position as Senior deputy at Tallong. We'll still claim him as an ordinary member though, just have to negotiate his drop in remuneration! There are a lot of members coming up for long service medals, including the ladies, so that process will be put in train shortly.

Finally, thank you to all the senior members of the brigade for their support during the year, especially to Brett and Peter for their time given, when doing the post course work with Jeremy and Lindsay.

Mark Pearson,
Canyonleigh Captain.

Callouts:

- 4/4/16 Stolen car torched, Foxgrove Rd
- 30/7/16 Chimney fire, Foxgrove Rd
- 19/9/16 MVA, 1020 Tugalong Rd
- 28/12/16 Smoke sighting, Wattle Flats Rd / Ditly fire trail
- 30/12/16 Wires down, Foxgrove Rd
- * 8/4/17 Smoke sighting, Tugalong Rd

Permits written: 15

Moved: Peter Attreed. Seconded Adam Stefanuik

Treasurers Report – Presented by Frank Downs

A prepared financial report was tabled for the AGM. The report detailed income and expenditure over the previous twelve month period. Income over the 12 month period was \$1,832.69. Expenditure was \$1534.45. Accumulated funds on 31 March 2017 was \$11,342.58. certified by Treasurer Frank Downs and audited by Auditor, Trevor Fair.

The Treasurers Report was accepted.

Moved: Peter Attreed. Seconded: Dave Hough

Community Engagement Report – Presented by Frances Crown

Community Engagement Team

Cyril Turner and Frances Crown are Canyonleigh Brigade's team engaging the Canyonleigh Community. Our aim is to raise awareness and preparedness of community members and weekenders, encouraging them to take responsibility for themselves, their families, animals and property. The language of the NSW Rural Fire Service and the media has changed from asking people to make a Bush Fire Survival plan to having an expectation that people will have a plan. Marketing and media language give the message throughout the fire season, reinforcing that people are to "follow their Bush Fire Survival Plan" when fire threatens.

When communicating with the Canyonleigh community we have this expectation also and use the same language as the RFS media team.

Many brigade members have assisted with Community Engagement activities, all giving the same message and expectations.

A special thank you to Terry Biscoe for his many roles within the Canyonleigh Brigade. He maintains the Canyonleigh Brigade website and facebook pages, reaching many of our residents and weekenders through social media. Terry will be able to inform us of the numbers of people who are members on the facebook page and the number of hits it gets.

Community Engagement Committee Meetings

Community Engagement Officers from local brigades of the Wingecarribee Local Government Area (LGA) meet regularly at Mittagong Fire Control throughout the year to discuss issues related to the role and ways of engaging the community and overcoming challenges. We meet the Wollondilly LGA Community Engagement Officers once a year in person at the Christmas meeting and at each meeting through video link.

Matters discussed in the last year include:

- Resources shared between the Wingecarribee and Wollondilly teams
- District Events attended by Community Engagement Officers (e.g. Brigadoon, Thirlmere Steam Festival)
- Resource Trailer
- A mascot for events
- Winter message over the Fire Danger Rating signs
- The Challenge of Community apathy and refusal of many to make a Bush Fire Survival Plan
- Media releases from Head Office that we can use to plan our own events in conjunction with the advertising, particularly Open Day and Get Ready Weekend and 6 Week Challenge.
- Schools Community Engagement
- Secondary Schools Cadet Program
- 6 Week Challenge campaign (weekly challenge received by email to those who registered) whose completion synchronised with Get Ready Weekend.
- Community Engagement Conference and Forums

What works in Canyonleigh

I have worked in the role of Community Engagement Officer unofficially and officially for 8 years. In that time I have tried many approaches and methods of engaging the community and evaluated them.

We hold events and disseminate information. We have tried many methods of communicating with people. Our approach is multi-pronged to reach as many people as possible.

The most successful method for informing and getting people to attend programs and events appears to be a letter box drop throughout the district as this reaches most residents and weekenders. This is time consuming and increasingly more risky as the traffic increases on the roads.

Other methods include:

- Networking, community networks
- asking for help from community members
- signage at the highway turnoffs for Inverary and Canyonleigh Roads
- having the fire trucks being at planned events and Community events
- brigade members in uniform attending events such as auctions, market days, Carols by Candlelight
- Having a fire brigade table at the trivia night.
- Publishing information and advertising events in the Canyonleigh Chronicle – an article is written every two months giving a Fire Message and Brigade news – keeping up the awareness of the brigade and bush fires.
- Social Media – facebook page
- Website
- Flyers
- Liaising with other organisations in Canyonleigh
- Linking with Canyonleigh Community Association's email list to inform/advertise upcoming CE events
- Library of Bush Fire books at the Canyonleigh General Store (not available this year due to closing of store)
- Bush Fire Survival Plans available at General Store (no longer able to do this)

Women's Fire Awareness Program

The Women's Fire Awareness Program and the Community Fire Awareness (for both genders) have been a yearly event. Marketing these has been difficult. This year the Women's Fire Awareness Program was scheduled the week after a "Coffee and Chat" event at the Canyonleigh General Store. I cancelled it due to lack of interest 6 days before as it is a lot of work to prepare and requires many brigade members to be involved. Not enough women enrolled in time. Two women rang to enrol the night before we were due to run the program and were annoyed because I had cancelled it. They did not seem to realise that a lot of planning goes into the program and that they need to plan ahead themselves and enrol early.

Coffee and Chat Morning

We held a coffee and chat morning (9.30am until 2.30pm) at the Canyonleigh General Store on Saturday 27 August. We had a truck out the front and at one stage some Farm Stay Japanese students all had a turn using the hose.

We had Bush Fire Survival Plans, some pamphlets including planning for Horses. We had beverages available from the General Store which we supplied to people.

Estimated number of attendees 25.

Members involved: Frances Crown, Cyril Turner, Terry Biscoe, Captain Mark Pearson.

We met new locals who are interested in doing a Community Fire Awareness Day. We gave out Bush Fire Survival Plans, discussed property protection, encouraged community members to use the brigade's website and facebook page for information.

Coming Year

This year Frances has put in an application to attend a Community Engagement Forum at Bateman's Bay 17 – 18 June 2017. If accepted, this will be with other Community Engagement Officers from Wingello, Penrose and Mandemar Brigades. Our brigade has worked closely with these brigades setting up and mentoring them through their first Women's Fire Awareness Programs. These Forums have proved very positive and fruitful in the past giving me ideas and generating enthusiasm. Our plan this year forming but is open to suggestions from brigade members. Please talk with Cyril and Frances if you have ideas.

Thank You's – thank you

Terry Biscoe – for your sharing your media experience, for your media releases, for the website and for our Facebook page

Canyonleigh Community Association – for allowing us to promote and give information through your email list of members

Odin and Marie at Canyonleigh General Store – for allowing us to have information at the store and hold our Coffee and Chat Morning there.

Canyonleigh Chronicle – for allowing us to write an article each edition and promoting our events

Inspectors David Bartlett and David Stimson for coordinating the Community Engagement Teams over the past year

The other Community Engagement Teams for sharing their experiences and areas of expertise

Captain Mark Pearson for always being present at Community Engagement events and supporting us

District Report – Supt Martin Surrey

Election of Officers

Martin Surrey declared all positions vacant. A pre-agreed list of office bearers for the following 12 months was read out. All nominees accepted the roles.

Roles for the following twelve months are:

Captain: Mark Pearson.

Senior Deputy Captain: Brett Bannerman

Deputy Captain (Training and Administration): Peter Attreed.

Deputy Captain (Hazard Reductions): John Kay

President: John Kay

Secretary: Terry Biscoe.

Treasurer: Frank Downs.

Community Engagement Officers: Frances Crown and Cyril Turner

Equipment Safety Officer: Dave Hough

Brigade Health & Safety Officer: Adam Stefanuik

All nominations accepted and passed unanimously.

General Business

Mark Pearson took the chair for the final session.

- Terry Biscoe reported status of Facebook page and its support, web site and responses. Web site to be updated. Please advise any requests.
- Online Fire Permits . Brett Bannerman asked Martin Surrey if, following evaluation of a request, that Fire Permits can be issued electronically. MS said he would follow up and advise. (***Pursuant to this meeting, MS has advised that permits can be issued online. TB to seek form template from Firecom.***)
- Brett Bannerman advised of the recent aero course and RAFT course qualifications he has acquired – the brigade congratulated him on this initiative
- It was agreed that a new work bench and associated tools be acquired over the coming year
- Fire drill and roll call

Meeting closed at 8.45pm