



## **Minutes from the Annual General Meeting of the Canyonleigh Rural Fire Brigade, 4 May 2016**

Attendees were recorded on the Attendance Register. As well as members of the Canyonleigh Brigade, guests included David Bartlett and Mathew Walker  
Apologies: John Kay, Michael Trevisiol, Frances Crown, 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 12 April 2015 were presented and were accepted.

**Moved: Peter Attreed. Seconded: Adam Stefanuik.**

### **Captain's Report**

2015 / 2016 Fire Season

This year's fire season started with plenty of warnings because after good August rains, the season cut out with very low rainfall for September, October November and the first half of December. Rain in late December and January decreased the danger for a short while until all the paspalum and native grasses went crazy leaving a lot of dry grass around in February and March!

The two main fires that we went to in our area were in mid December ( near Old Coowong Rd ) and the Tugalong Station fire at the start of February, both started by lightning strikes. Thank you to John and Dominique who spent a fair bit of time the next day at the Coowong Rd fire carting water up in backpacks to ensure it didn't flare up over the next couple of hot days.

Frances ran another Women's fire awareness day in September. Thank you to all who helped with this, Marg, Brett, Pete, Dominique. We followed this up with a couple of house visits in November, looking at fire plans and preparedness.

We still have a HR to do down on Hanging Rock Road. My success in making it rain the night before a HR is starting to be a bit of a pain in the neck! Hopefully we'll be able to get it done and introduce our new members to a drip torch.

Thank you to all members who can turn out when the pager goes off. It certainly eases the mind knowing there will be someone to share the job with.

Thanks as well to Ron and Charlotte for hosting the Christmas party at their place, far from the madding crowd.

Finally a thank you to Laird Stewart. Laird joined the brigade in 2006 and has served as Vice President for the last few years, as well as auditing the accounts. Laird and Jenny are about to go off travelling, so thank you to both Laird and Jenny for their contributions to the brigade.

### **Call-outs:**

14/08/2015	Canyonleigh Rd	MVA, single vehicle rollover ( Camry)
16/12/2015	1488 Tugalong Rd	Lightning strike ( supported by NPWS )
21/12/2015	1020 Tugalong Rd	MVA, ( Triton ute hit tree )
30/12/2015	Tugalong Rd	MVA, Ute on its side at Old Coowong Rd
1,2,3/2/16	Tugalong Station	Lightning strike
14/02/2016	Wattle Flats Rd	Smoke sighting ( from Tarlo NP HR )
4,5/3/16	Hanging Rock Rd	Lightning strike
13/03/2016	Canyonleigh Rd	tree on road
13/03/2016	Tugalong Rd	Smoke sighting ( from The Oaks HR )
26/03/2016	Inverary Rd	MVA, ( Nissan Pathfinder roll over )
4/04/2016	Foxgrove Rd	Car on fire

**Moved: Peter Attreed. Seconded: Adam Stefanuik.**

**Senior Deputy Captain Report – Brett Bannerman** (read by Terry Biscoe as Brett didn't arrive until later in the evening)

Following an informal review of our attendance and response to a couple of incidents over summer the following was implemented

1/ The fire off Tugalong Rd, which was inaccessible by truck, required crews to walk in. One possible solution to reduce the physical demands on crews was to have water airlifted in which crews then used after walking in. Research established that there are standard off the shelf helicopter compatible storage units. Ashley was contacted with the offer that Canyonleigh purchase one of these units to be stored at the Shed with the portable trailer. Ashley advised that he had used this unit in the USA, they were very useful and he would purchase some to be stored at the airfield at Mittagong. I haven't followed up on this to know if Ashley did complete these purchases.

2/ There was a smoke sighting report off Hanging Rock Rd. When crews attended they found a locked gate. The big shifter was used, together with a spud bar, to lever off the hinge. Fortunately no damage was done to the hinge so it was able to be screwed on. As a result a set of ratcheting spanners 6ml to 24ml has been purchased for each truck. They are stored in a cardboard cylinder as they are too big to fit in the tool box. Each truck, in the tool box, also has a universal socket and wrench. This socket will fit any head from ¼ inch to ¾ inch or 6ml to 19ml. Thanks to

Mick for suggesting this. The trucks also now carry angle grinders, a 240v in the Cat 1 and a battery grinder in the Cat 7. So if confronted by a locked gate go through the following decision tree.

- 1/ If possible unscrew the hinges of the gate as no damage is done to the landowners property. If not possible
- 2/ Cut the chain next to the padlock using the bolt cutters. If not possible
- 3/ Cut the chain next to the padlock using the angle grinders
- 4/ If methods 2 or 3 are used resecure the chain using the Brigade padlock stored in the toolbox. Make sure you do not bypass the landowners padlock ie they should still be able to have access. Attach the pre-laminated label (also in the tool boxes) to the Brigade padlock so the property owner can contact Mark or I and have the padlock removed if they need to. The keys to the padlock need to be given to Brett/Mark who will store them in the keysafe in the office.
- 5/ If required cut the fence using the bolt cutters. This will require a return trip to fix the fence.

Other items purchased during the year include a folding table, a set of 6 camp chairs and an extra log roller for the Cat 7

## **REPORT ENDS**

**Moved: Peter Attreed Seconded Adam Stefanuik**

### **Community Engagement Report – Presented by Cyril Turner**

Canyonleigh Community Engagement AGM Report 4 May 2016

Goals remained similar to past years

- To form relationships with people in the community and to encourage them to ask questions and seek help.
- To assist residents to become ready for bush fires, bush fire season, property preparation.
- To make elderly residents aware of the AIDER program and how to access it and assist them with their Bush Fire Survival Plan.

The two first goals were achieved through running programs and the brigade's presence at Community events such as the Australia Day 2016 event at the General Store.

The third goal has yet to be achieved through visiting the Circle of Friends meetings on a Monday at the Canyonleigh Hall and networking with elderly residents.

Brigade member Cyril Turner has joined Frances in Community Engagement and brings to the role his fresh ideas, writing skills, ability to converse with people with his great sense of humour, his long experience, history and contacts in Canyonleigh as well as his knowledge of fires from his rural firefighting days in Sydney. Cyril is also tenacious for example he noticed the gas bottles at Canyonleigh Hall venting towards the hall. After much persistence in talking with people to change this the Council sent their "best plumber" and it is done.

Women's Fire Awareness Program

- Saturday 12 September 2015 8.30am to 4.00pm. Thank you to Carolyn Chaplin for being our Guest Speaker once again. She discussed her Bush Fire Survival Plan and changes over the years in protecting her property. We had 5 women attend. Carolyn Chaplin was guest speaker again. Thank you to all the brigade who assisted with Bush Fire Survival Plans and spot fires and pump activities.

- Follow-up Property visits were done by Mark, Dominique and Frances.  
Horse Course

- Sunday 2nd August 2016, 1.30 -4.00pm.

- The marketing for this course was done by Lisa Romano. Thank you so much Lisa. The poster and flyers were very impressive and went a long way to getting so many participants from Canyonleigh and Berrima.

- Terry organised publicity in the newspaper and radio as well. Thank you Terr. This generated a lot of interest. I was interviewed by Melinda James on local morning radio.

- Thank go to Emily and Bob for their time and expertise. This course was run by Emily James and Bob Izzard from Lakesland Brigade informing horse owners about horse fire safety and preparation.

- Thanks go to Susan and John Carter for allowing the 14 participants to walk around their property and discuss horse plans and preparation in the event of a fire.

Raising the RFS profile and message:

- Canyonleigh Chronicle, local bi-monthly publication always has an article by the Canyonleigh Brigade.

- Thank you to Terry Biscoe for writing the Fire Brigade article for previous years with so many great messages and news reports. This year the articles have been written by Frances Crown and the latest May/June 2016 edition was co-authored with Cyril Turner.

- Thank you to Carolyn Chaplin for inviting the brigade to submit an article each edition. She does this at no cost to the brigade but as a service to the community and to help the brigade's presence in the community and because she believes in the messages we give.

- Messages and News

- May/June 2015 was title "Rake Now" which discussed property protection and directed locals to websites for downloading hints on property protection and a "Bush Fire Survival Plan" for them to complete.

- Jul/Aug 2015 had an ad for and information about the Horse Course, information about the Women's Fire Awareness Program, news about the First Aid Course undertaken by brigade members and welcome to newly trained members.

- Sept/Oct 2015 had an ad for the Women's Program, began a competition for the best Bush Fire Survival Plan in Canyonleigh and talk about the Horse Course held in August.

- Nov/Dec 2015 was about the year for the brigade at a glance, the fire caused by the lightning strike with remote crew dropped in and the brigade working with hand tools to form a safety line; a reminder on "Keeping your family safe this fire season". The editor Carolyn Chaplin wrote a front page article on me as my Hidden Treasure Honour Roll inclusion.

- Jan/Feb 2016 gave a description of the Limestone Creek Fire up at Tugalong Station.

- Mar/April 2016 had a farewell and thank you to Laird Stewart, a reminder that the brigade is here to help and support the community and information on pile burns.
- The next article will be written by Cyril Turner.

Website and Facebook: These have been going for some time now and are maintained and updated by Terry Biscoe. They include stories, suggestions, information, events, links to relevant places. Terry will inform the brigade of his actions and the number of followers the sites have.

Canyonleigh Community Association: Once again we thank the association for sending our Horse and Women's Program advertisements out to their members. Library at General Store has been in limbo with no follow up from me I am ashamed to say. Conversations with the librarian at RFS Headquarters Lidcombe were positive with books able to be loaned to Canyonleigh for 6 months at a time. The difficulty for me is that I didn't believe I would be able to chase up all the books dispersed around the community. The DVD "Then the Wind Changed" has recently be put in the library to meet the needs of non-readers and give them an opportunity to increase their fire awareness. Brett and Mark have formed a good relationship with the new owners of the General Store. The library has yet to be upgraded and a better borrowing system worked out.

#### Community Engagement Grant

The materials bought with the \$500 from the Community Engagement Grant have been used in the programs run by the brigade in 2015. We very much appreciate the grant. I have decided not to apply for the grant again this year as it was so time consuming.

#### Community Engagement Team Meetings, Mittagong Fire Control

- Cyril and Frances attend these meetings regularly. They are usually every two months. It is an opportunity to network and get ideas from other Community Engagement Officers across the Wollondilly and Wingecarribee Teams through teleconference.
- Many of the other officers attend forums and the Community Engagement Conference and share their learning with the group. I was asked to submit a proposal to speak at the conference again. I didn't feel I had anything new to contribute that wasn't said at the 2012 Conference so did not get involved this year.
- Some of these ideas we have tried and some we may try in the future.
- One idea that didn't work was a competition for the best Bush Fire Survival Plan in Canyonleigh with no takers. It was advertised in two Chronicles with generous prizes donated by Carolyn Chaplin.
- The Horse Course was discussed at a Community Engagement Meeting by Penrose Brigade where it was successful. Because of that information it was put in Canyonleigh's Community Engagement Plan and run in the winter very successfully.
- Resources for Community Engagement at Mittagong are continually being upgraded and available through Fire Control for events. Canyonleigh has not used these resources very much over the last year other than borrowing a manikin for the Women's Fire Awareness Program.
- The FACT van is available for brigades to use at Community Engagement events
- A Community Engagement resource list is being compiled by Fire Control and extra storage space allocated for resources at Fire Control.

- A new mascot is being developed for Community Events.
- On the "Fire Ready" weekend in 2015 we held our Women's Fire Awareness Program, trying to use some of the statewide publicity.
- RFS Officer David Bartlett nominated Frances and two other Community Engagement Officers from the District: Elizabeth Ellis (Penrose Brigade) and Leslie Wood (Mandemar Brigade) for the Hidden Treasures Honour Roll in 2015, a joint project of Department of Primary Industries and Rural Women's Network recognising women in rural areas. All three were included. Pru Goward MP, NSW Member for Goulburn invited us to an afternoon tea and presented us with a certificate from herself and Niall Blair MLC, Minister for Primary Industries, Minister for Lands and Water.

Any suggestions for Community Engagement within Canyonleigh, please let me or Cyril know. We are willing to try new things and obviously not afraid of failure!!

**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 \$5,125.40. Expenditure was \$1588.24. Accumulated funds on 31 March 2016 was \$11,044.34. certified by Treasurer Frank Downs and audited by Auditor, Laird Stewart.

The Treasurers Report was accepted.

**Moved: Peter Attreed. Seconded: Dave Hough**

#### **Election of Officers**

David Bartlett declared all positions vacant. A pre-agreed list of office bearers for the following 12 months was read out all nominees accepted.

Roles for the following twelve months are:

Captain: Mark Pearson.

Senior Deputy Captain: Brett Bannerman

Deputy Captain (Training): Peter Attreed.

Deputy Captain: John Kay: HRs

Deputy Captain: Mick Trevisiol: Administration

President: John Kay:

Vice President: Michael Trevisiol.

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

**Moved: Peter Attreed, Seconded Adam Stefanuik**

### **Area Report – David Bartlett**

David Bartlett advise the Brigade of current activities and events in the local area including:

Insp. John Curry has recognised the efforts of the Canyonleigh Brigade over the past twelve months regarding incident response and community engagement (one of the busiest Brigades in the Shire)

Congratulations to Frances Crown and Cyril Turner for their community efforts. Ashley Frank has accepted a role in the with the Hunter Valley RFS The Bush Fire Risk Management Plan has now been signed by the Mayor – with the new plan to be implemented in July 2016.

There are still issues with GRN and PMR radio networks in the area, but these should be rectified soon.

There are no plans to upgrade the Pager network.

David then handed out Service medals to Brigade Members Kay, Stahl, Stefanuik, Trevisiol and Attreed.

Captain Mark Pearson resumed chair of the AGM

### **General Business:**

Terry Biscoe outlined web site and Facebook performances – very strong web site visitation and over 1,100 Facebook Likes. Good response and feedback from local community when news is provided.

Terry also questioned David Bartlett on `Fires Near Me` RFS link and why is has caused concern with locals when wrong information is posted. DB agreed that there

is an ongoing issue, but the RFS has stated its own criteria. Brett Bannerman asked that the Brigade is supplied with the contact number of the person who calls 000 so a more accurate report can be ascertained. DB said that this was a possible option and would follow-up and advise.

New/additional Equipment – It was agreed that each fire truck be `fitted' with an ipad or Android Tablet to assist with maps and exact GPS locations for fire calls in remote and `off the track' incidents. Frank Downs also recommended that a 4G/3G mobile booster be purchased for greater/enhanced mobile phone coverage in and around the trucks.

There being no other business, **the meeting was closed at 8.45 pm.**