



SitRep

Olinda Rural Fire Brigade Newsletter

The BEST Fire Brigade in the BEST Community

Station Phone 9751 1273

Duty Officer Phone 0407 455 914

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Message from President Neil Grenfell

Since our last newsletter I had the pleasure of attending the Bendigo Bank Community Grants Presentation held in Upwey. The Bendigo Bank was allocating around \$110,000 to many community groups throughout the Dandenong Ranges. The Olinda Brigade was the recipient of a \$2,000 grant from the bank. What amazed me was the diversity and number of community organizations these grants were supporting. Truly amazing and humbling! So may I thank Peter Marks (Chairman), John Faull (Board Member) and the rest of the board of the Bendigo Bank for their real and generous financial support to our Brigade and the Dandenong Ranges Communities.

Earlier in August, the state government's promised community consultation sessions came to our part of the Dandenong Ranges at the Olinda Community House. Speaking with several attendees, many of you and your neighbours took the time to attend and contribute to the event to a packed house. I say fantastic!!

The danger can be in community forums that special interest groups and individuals can take up the limited time available to drive their own agenda's or politics. This takes away opportunities for other residents to express their thoughts and views on the issues that need to be discussed. Despite those dangers the forum achieved the feedback needed from our townspeople and other nearby communities to this consultative process. The greatest example of "people power" of the evening was the many round table discussions and the spirit of sticking to the issues and good faith people conducted themselves in.

I am now aware of a number of discussions talking about developing possible new radar and telephone based technologies to assist communities and the emergency services in the event of a natural disaster (based around wildfire). Whether these technologies can be developed and hopefully used in the future is still some time away. In the meantime, we as Dandenong Ranges residents who choose to live in this wonderful environment our townships and region provides will still need to rely on good observation, communication, planning and readiness from each other as neighbours in each of our communities.

Never forget that our members are your neighbours, and you're ours!!

Community Events Where The Community Met our Brigade

Olinda Golf Course	Olinda & Kalorama Brigades Golf Day	Sunday 30 th May 2010
Olinda Primary School	Home Fire Safety Presentation	Monday 21 st June 2010
Olinda Main Street	Channel 9 "Today" show	Wednesday 23 rd June 2010
Olinda Hall	Community Trivia Night & Silent Auction	Saturday 17 th July 2010
Sky High Restaurant	Hill Top Brigades Annual Dinner	Saturday 31 st July 2010



If you have a community event that you would like us to attend please call Elissa Jans on 0438 001 281 or email to elissa@techinfo.com.au

Message from Captain Steve Donner

As mentioned in our Winter 'SITREP' Newsletter, I said I would perhaps write about the findings of the Black Saturday Royal Commission findings. Well, I've chosen to reflect on one of our earlier significant Victorian fires, the 1939 Black Friday fires, and the subsequent Royal Commissions findings of 1944. I particularly chose 2 extracts written by Judge Leonard Stretton, who recommended some of the most important learning's that we don't seem to have quite grasped or properly adopted. They included:

"Throughout the State there is an attitude of apathy towards fire prevention. It is impossible to prevent the outbreak of bush-fires as long as mankind pursues his manifold interests in the bush."

"Probably the best means of prevention and protection is that of education, both of adults and children. It is with the children of to-day that future forest safety lies. It is not the province of this Report to seek to occupy the field of pedagogics. But it is suggested that the dull lecture form of education will fail."

Good bushfire survival literature, has been, and is available, to help you to make informed decisions to live with our environment and to survive bushfire. So why are some of us still not properly educated, why did we fail, why did we lose 173 lives, injure 414, and lose 3500+ structures in total (2,030 houses), because I keep reminding myself, this could happen to our township, albeit at a different scale, and I still am not convinced that our level of awareness has reached a necessary level of education, and it frightens the hell out of me.

It is my simple view, that because we choose to live in arguably, one of the most beautiful places in the world, yet one of the most bushfire prone areas in the world, we cannot not be apathetic, or complacent, bushfire is a real potential event for us, it can happen to us, and we must be vigilant against its threat, and we MUST learn from history, we MUST educate ourselves to live with the risks we expose ourselves, and we must take ownership of the decisions we will make.

My own personal thoughts surrounding how we can properly educate ourselves, is to read all the CFA literature that is available, or is to become available, and to adapt this to your personal circumstance or situation, making it real for you and your family, your friends and neighbors. Perhaps use a risk management approach, and saturate yourself with preparedness information, educate yourself, and absorb what you are reading, understand what your vulnerabilities are, and put in the appropriate controls to help you live with, and survive bushfire, knowing that when it comes to the crunch, multiple activities may work better for you, as opposed to just one, or someone else's. Create Plan A, but think about there being a need for it to be backed by Plans B,C & D, so look at, and analyse all the survival options available to you. These considerations may include leaving early the day before a bad day, or in the morning, defending your property if prepared with equipment, and being physically and psychologically capable, evacuating to safer areas if safe and early enough to do so, installing an approved bunker, but understanding how and when to use them, BUT do it all as an educated person, do it with the key objectives in mind, love where you live, learn to live in the place you love – Start your education RIGHT NOW !

Turnout Statistics Continuing in 2010 are:

32. 10.10am	Fri 25 Jun	Support Call	Acacia Drive, Ferntree Gully	Chemical Spill Hazmat Incident
33. 22.26pm	Sun 27 Jun	Support Call	Corner Ridge Road & Observatory Road	Motor Vehicle Accident
34. 23.56pm	Mon 28 Jun	Primary Call	35 Perrins Creek Rd	Grass & Scrub Fire Power Lines
35. 12.55pm	Tue 06 Jul	Support Call	Ridge Road, Kalorama	Undefined Fire
36. 13.06pm	Wed 07 Jul	Primary Call	1434 Mt Dandenong Tourist Rd	Motor Vehicle Accident
37. 23.48pm	Fri 09 Jul	Primary Call	Cnr Mt Dandenong Tourist Rd & Ridge Rd	Explosion Heard
38. 21.27pm	Mon 12 Jul	Support Call	212 Mt Dandenong Tourist Rd, Ferny Creek	Motor Vehicle Accident
39. 08.35am	Sat 24 Jul	Primary Call	Basin Olinda Road	Undefined Fire
40. 17.31pm	Thu 05 Aug	Primary Call	1411 Mt Dandenong Tourist Road	Power Lines Sparking
41. 09.59am	Fri 06 Aug	Support Call	25 Alice Street, Sassafras	Bedroom Fire
42. 22.16pm	Sat 14 Aug	Primary Call	Tatra Hut 1401 Mt Dandenong Tourist Road	Kitchen Fire
43. 19.00pm	Wed 18 Aug	Support Call	180 Olinda Creek Road, Kalorama	Alarm Panel
44. 14.15pm	Sat 28 th Aug	Support Call	327 Mt Dandenong Tourist Road, Sassafras	Motor Vehicle Accident
45. 18.45pm	Fri 3rd Sep	Support Call	22 Blythes Road, Mt Dandenong	Grass & Scrub Undefined Fire
46. 23.15pm	Fri 3rd Sep	Support Call	Mt Dandenong Tourist Road	Support Ambulance
47. 11.14am	Sun 5 ^h Sep	Primary Call	601 Olinda Basin Road	Power Lines
48. 19.57pm	Sun 5 th Sep	Primary Call	19 Stanley Street	House Fire

Message from Community Education Coordinator Elissa Jans

The 2010 fire season is approaching. Now is the time to start your preparations around your property and discuss your bushfire survival plan with your family and friends.

This year we have several public meetings and street corner meetings. We strongly encourage you to come along to one of our community meetings. This year the meetings content will be more focused on local issues that immediately concern us as residents of the Olinda/Mount Dandenong area. Our Captain will give an overview of the risks associated with our area as well as other important information that is relevant to us. The content of the meeting will be about personal and property protection and preparedness. It is very important that you try to make the effort to come and hear what these meetings have to offer. The more educated you are about bushfire survival the more prepared you and your family can be.

The public meetings will be advertised on signboards generously donated by Stockdale and Leggo in Olinda and will be placed around our area as well as in the local papers so please make a note in your diaries now to attend. Here are the dates:

Street Corner Meeting	Mon 15th November	@6.30pm	Cnr Ridge Road & Radnor Court Melway 66F4
Street Corner Meeting	Mon 15th November	@8.00pm	Cnr Dodds Road & Nicholson Road Melway 66 H7
Public Meeting	Sun 21st November	@10am	Olinda Fire Station 547 Mt Dandenong Tourist Road
Public Meeting	Sun 23rd January	@10am	Olinda Fire Station 547 Mt Dandenong Tourist Road

CFA's Community Fireguard (CFG) is a fire safety education program that is *free of charge*. It teaches residents to plan for bushfire and manage their own risk.

Community Fireguard helps community groups develop bushfire survival plans that suit their lifestyle, family, environment, values and sense of wellbeing. This means your Bushfire Survival Plan will be based on who you are, where you live and what is most important to you.

CFA facilitators support and deliver the Community Fireguard program in high-risk areas across Victoria. Facilitators help establish groups and provide support, information and reading material.

Community Fireguard encourages residents to work together to improve bushfire safety. You are most likely to share the same bushfire risk as people who live close to you. For this reason, Community Fireguard groups are usually made up of neighbours such as people living in the same street. CFG is an initiative co-ordinated by the CFA locally managed out of Lilydale district 13 office.

Currently we have 19 CFG group's in the Olinda Rural Fire Brigade area so if you would like to join one please contact Helen Worsitzky and her contact number is 8739 4013 or visit <http://www.cfa.vic.gov.au/residents/program>

Do You Own, Operate Or Work For A Business In The Olinda Area?

We have a very unique Community Fireguard Group in our area for our local businesses. This group has had 20 local businesses participate in the core CFG programme. This group is open to all local businesses in the Olinda, Sassafras and Mount Dandenong areas including restaurants, bed and breakfasts, retail shops, nurseries as well as all other businesses. The group discusses common strategies to ensure the safety of their staff and clients as well as the sharing of resources. The contact is John Faull, his contact numbers are 9751 1395 or 0427 371 344. The first meeting for this fire season will be held on **Thursday 30th September at the Olinda Fire Station (Upstairs) from 5.30 to 6pm**, please RSVP to John Faull. All businesses in the area are welcome and we welcome you all to attend.

Message from Non Operational (NOPS) Member Yo Heading

The NOPS have been reviewing their activities. While these activities are not very onerous or overly time consuming they have a significant effect on the running of our Brigade. They include : The Trivia Night, Cuckoo Collection, Brigade Open Day, Open Gardens, Brigade shopping and Cleaning, Attending NOPS monthly meetings, Providing assistance at Operational events, Driving OPS to Strike Team collection points, Support of internal brigade catering, Folding Newsletters, Willingness to be on a Phone tree and helping with group Feeding. If you would be keen to assist in any of these please ring Yo Heading on 9751 1639 or come to our monthly meeting at the Fire Station 1st Wednesday of the month at 7.30 pm. All welcome.

Brigade History by Brigade Member John Faull

The trials and tribulations of a volunteer fireman were highlighted when I was Captain of the Olinda volunteer brigade. One time, we were having a huge amount of false alarms or hoax calls. I will never forget the night, it was the 3rd hoax call that evening, and I remember responding in the brigade ute from home. Yes you guessed it, in my pj's and slippers! As I turned into Hume Lane, Murphy's law, it was a real fire! A large shed was fully involved. How embarrassing when the rest of the crew turned up to see me fighting the fire in my pj's and slippers, which is quite different look to our new turnout gear. The only other thing missing was my beanie!

Junior Brigade Update

We held an Information Session on Wednesday 14th July for all new prospective junior members and their parents. We now have some new junior members which is fantastic. Our Junior Volunteers are training every second Wednesday night from 6.30pm.

We are always looking for more Junior Members. This is a fantastic way for kids to become part of their community and gain valuable skills. Junior members are aged between 11 and 16. So if you are looking to join please call us on 9751 1273 and leave your details. Junior training is on Wednesday evenings from 6.30pm.

Did You Know

- If you have solar panels on your roof and there is a fire at your property, if possible, let us know upon arrival. There will be live power between the solar panels, inverter and the cables between both units. It is essential for Firefighter safety that all crews involved in a structure fire are aware of this dangerous environment.
- Copies of the 2009 Victorian Bushfires Royal Commission Final Report are available to the public at no charge. You can order a copy online at: <http://www.vic.gov.au/2009-victorian-bushfires-royal-commission-final-report-pre-order.html> or by calling 1800 463 684.
- The Olinda Fire And Emergency Assembly Area Association Inc are seeking community support for the Olinda Neighbourhood Safer Place – Place of Last Resort. If you would like to get involved and are interested in joining please contact 0427 371 344.

About Us

We train every Wednesday nights from 7.30pm to 10.00pm and on Sunday mornings from 10am until 12pm.

Olinda Rural Fire Brigade is made up of 36 operational members (OPS) and 21 non operational members (NOPS).

The Brigade has been in service since 1927.

Volunteering

By making a contribution to your community you will make new friends, learn new skills and be part of Victoria's largest volunteer team. Are you available during the day, and are you interested and prepared to do some minimum skills training in CFA Operations, then we NEED YOU to become one of our operational members, particularly for response during weekdays when most of us are working off the hill. Become part of your community and volunteer for operational or non operations roles. Call our Duty Officer on 0407 455 914.

" As one of the most recent members to have completed the CFA's basic wildfire course, I am finding my place slowly amongst the many personalities here in Olinda. Everybody seems keen and there is definitely a great team spirit and effort that can be felt here within the Olinda CFA. What I think is so amazing about the CFA is anyone from any background is welcome mums, dads the young and the...well young at heart ! The Captain and his management team have two main aims at Olinda, that it is a **safe** environment and a **fun** one, no room here for the gung-ho type, team players only!

This spirit within the Olinda team, along with Wednesday night training helps in being able to respond quickly and efficiently when the callout comes.

Knowing how the Olinda CFA (along with other local brigades) have protected not only the Olinda surrounds but the whole Ranges in times of fire or vehicle accidents or participating at community events, makes the CFA a rewarding experience.

It is hard work sometimes but it is a fun environment too, and a darn valuable one to be a part of!" James, Olinda.

Important Websites - For regular updates visit us on the web www.olindacfa.info

CFA

www.cfa.vic.gov.au

Shire of Yarra Ranges

www.yarraranges.vic.gov.au

Bureau of Meteorology (DSE)

www.bom.gov.au/weather/vic

CFA Incidents

www.cfa.vic.gov.au/incidents/incident_summary

Fire Ready Victoria

www.fireready.vic.gov.au

Department of Sustainability and Environment

www.dse.vic.gov.au

Important Contact Numbers - All Fire Calls 000

Police / Fire / Ambulance/ Vic SES 000

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| • Olinda Rural Fire Brigade | 9751 1273 |
| • Olinda RFB Duty Officer 24/7 | 0407 455 914 |
| • CFA Region 13 | 8739 1300 |
| • Victorian Bushfire Information Line | 1800 240 667 |
| • Shire Of Yarra Ranges | 1300 368 333 |
| • Electricity Faults | 13 1799 |
| • Gas Faults | 13 2771 |
| • Water Faults | 13 WATER |

Important Radio Stations

ABC **774 AM** 3MDR **97.1FM** 3YVR **99.1FM**

If you would like this newsletter sent via email as well as other information please email the brigade at

info@olindacfa.info

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Please Support Us

We need the support of our local community. If you are able to support us with either your time or your financial donation we would be greatly appreciative. We are community brigade made up of volunteers. We are not paid for our time or our commitment to our community. Any assistance you can offer will be very helpful.