

RIDDELLS CREEK FIRE BRIGADE

2014/2015 newsletter



TO THE HOUSEHOLDER

Important information from your local fire brigade



GRASS FIRE THREATENS RIDDELLS CREEK DURING FEBRUARY 2014



The Dalrymple Road grassfire approaches Riddells Creek near Sutherlands Road during February 2014.

After a prolonged spell of hot and very dry weather last summer, the threat of major fires happening somewhere in Victoria continued to grow and unfortunately the inevitable happened on 9th February when the town came under direct threat from a fast moving grass fire.

The fire started at around 11.45am on the Calder Freeway near Dalrymple Road and spread quickly towards Sunbury under the influence of strong northerly winds.

But before long, the predicted change in wind direction occurred, causing the fire to change direction and spread towards Riddells Creek. Later that afternoon the fire reached the outskirts of the Riddells Creek township and was eventually halted as it reached Campbells Road and Sutherlands Road, but not before destroying 5 houses, 46 sheds and around 2,500 hectares.

This was the most significant fire threat we have seen since the Gap Road bushfire in the summer of 1990/1991. The events of last summer should serve as a reminder to all of us living in Riddells Creek that the threat of major grass fires or bushfires is very real.

OUR NEW FIRE TRUCK ARRIVES THANKS TO YOUR SUPPORT!



Riddells Creek Fire Brigade's new Medium Tanker

We are very excited to announce that after many years of fundraising, the Riddells Creek Fire Brigade reached the target and purchased a new 'medium tanker' late last year.

With a price tag of almost \$360,000, the fundraising effort was certainly a lengthy one and the brigade has the entire Riddells Creek community to thank for their support and financial contributions. Not long after the township was threatened by a major grassfire on 9 February 2014, the Riddells Creek Farmers Market led the charge to help the brigade raise the last remaining funds. What happened next was totally unprecedented, with in excess of \$30,000 raised in one day.

The new 4WD tanker is an additional vehicle to the fleet of fire trucks at Riddells Creek and offers a welcomed increase to our ability to maintain excellent fire protection for our local area.

We would like to take this chance to thank everybody who has offered donations to the fire brigade over the past few years.

HOW TO DONATE TO THE RIDDELLS CREEK FIRE BRIGADE

Although we have achieved our target to purchase our own fire truck last year, there is an ongoing need for equipment to be maintained and updated. The brigade greatly appreciates any donation received as it helps us provide the best service we can to you, our community. To make a tax-deductible donation to the brigade, please fill out the enclosed donation slip and return it in the reply paid envelope. Alternatively, we are readily available at the fire station every Sunday morning to receive donations.

STATION ROBBERY

The Riddells Creek Fire Brigade and Bolinda Monegeetta Fire Brigade woke to the horror news early on the morning of Sunday 20th July that their fire stations had been broken into and ransacked.

The thieves stole a number of smaller pieces of equipment and our four wheel drive control vehicle. Unfortunately the vehicle valued at around \$60,000 was later found as a burnt out wreck near Melton

What followed was a painstaking 6 month project to replace the stolen vehicle and the other items of equipment.

But once again we were delighted to witness the strong show of support that many local residents and businesses extended to the brigade to help us replace some of the stolen items.



Victoria Police investigate the station robbery in July 2014

NEW 'PUMPER' OFFERS ENHANCED CAPABILITY



Introducing 'Riddells Creek Pumper'

Late last year, just as the brigade was coming to terms with having a new fire truck at the station, we were offered the chance to exchange one of our older fire trucks for a newer 'Light Pumper'. By late November the deal had been finalised and one of our firefighting vehicles was destined for the Pyramid Hill Fire Brigade, north of Bendigo, in exchange for the new Pumper. The vehicle swap with Pyramid Hill was a great example of CFA's utilisation of its vehicle fleet and we have benefited greatly

by receiving a vehicle which will better meet the future needs of Riddells Creek, especially as the township continues to grow. Pyramid Hill now has a 4WD fire truck which will better serve their nearby rural and farming areas, so the swap has been a big win for both brigades.

GET TO KNOW US

The brigade has 71 members who volunteer many hours of their time attending training sessions, community service calls and emergencies.

Many of you have continually supported the brigade over many years and for that we continue to thank you. As Riddells Creek is a growing community, some of you will be new to our area and may not have had exposure to a volunteer fire brigade before. You might not have been aware, but the members of the Riddells Creek Fire Brigade are all volunteers and as such they don't "man" the station 24 hours a day. When the brigade is called to a fire, our members are often at work, at home asleep, sitting down to dinner or even doing the weekly grocery shopping.

As more of us commute daily to the city, the need for volunteer firefighters who are available during the daytime is increasing.

We also have an active Catering and Support Group, who perform an equally important role in the community. These volunteers assist the firefighters by supplying meals and refreshments. If you are interested in becoming a Catering & Support member please contact Louise Hemingway on 5428 7683.

HOW TO CONTACT US

In the event of an emergency, dial "000"

For non-emergency calls you can contact the brigade on **5428 6000**. Your call will divert to the Brigade Duty Officer who will be able to answer your query or redirect you to the appropriate CFA contact.

For information during and after major bushfires, contact the Victorian Bushfire Information Line on **1800 240 667**.

The Brigade maintains a web site which provides up to date information with regard to recent events and seasonal reminders. Please visit us at www.riddellcfa.com or follow our regular updates through our Facebook page.

71 volunteer members including 44 firefighters and 27 support members

224 fires and emergencies attended last year

365 days of protection provided to the community