

**K1**



**Quakes cause chaos again**



# K1

December 2016

K1 is an independent magazine produced by the K1 Group.

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Cover photo



***The Elms Homestead near Kaikoura that collapsed killing one occupant. Firefighters dug out two others.*** Photo: Mike Shaw, NZFS

## This issue

Firefighters shaken out of bed

3

Buildings coming down in Wellington

6

Puhoi shack seque to new station

7

Old ladies take their ease

8

Romance rules OIC's household

10

UFBA advocacy continuing

11

Surrounded by fire service

12

Scion challenging accepted extreme fire science

16

Climate change ramping up U.S. wildfires

17

UfBA representaion to be extended to the individual

18

Judith first woman director

19

Test run for local committees

19

How to get noticed!

20

New heavies for Victoria

21

K1

# Firefighters shaken out of bed

Firefighters were shaken out of their beds just after midnight on 12 November when a 7.8 magnitude earthquake rocked the country.

The quake was over 30 times more powerful than the Christchurch quakes, but 5km deeper and centred in rural land between Hamner Springs and Culverden, otherwise it would have been much more destructive. It was felt almost the entire length of the country and many aftershocks followed. About 800 aftershocks were recorded in the first 24 hours.

Many North Canterbury firefighters woke to a huge dose of déjà vu, having assisted with the post-

earthquake chaos in Christchurch. For several days Kaikoura was sealed in by slips and, along with neighbouring Waiau, their district took the brunt of the shake.

Without power the siren didn't sound, but firefighters automatically gravitated to the station. The first action required was forceably removing a jammed engine bay door via a tow rope and 4WD. Then they began touring the town giving a tsunami warning with the loud hailer.

The brigade dug out 100-year-old Margaret Edgar and her daughter-in-law from the collapsed 20-room Kaikoura landmark, The Elms Homestead, (cover photo) where she and the family had lived since 1952. The house was totally destroyed. Firefighters had to crawl beneath the rubble and use hand-tools, including chainsaws, to reach those inside. "The crew did a bloody good job on the collapsed house, and everyone held up really well," said CFO Ian Walker. "Unfortunately Margaret's son was found deceased."

The first duty stint was 24 hours, then the brigade managed four hours off. When career crews were flown in later, the brigade was able to retreat to half on-half

**Two new station doors, please.** Photo: Kaikoura Star

off crewing. "The career boys are manning the first truck and the volunteers the second, which has taken the pressure off," he told K1 on Day 3.

All the jobs have been quake-related – lots of damaged chimneys or insecure walls and subsequent leaks and smoke in the house due to damaged chimneys.

"We have a debrief/get-together at 1900 each day with all crew and their families to talk out anything worrying anyone and also be of mutual support," he said. All the 25 brigade members' houses have damage of some description, some of them uninhabitable. The cruellest blow of all to Chief Walker was his prized 1972 Corvette being tossed off the hoist in his garage.

National Commander Paul Baxter said tasks in Kaikoura had included:

- carrying out building assessments with local authorities – possibly utilising drone capability;
- supplying two purification units to ensure access to safe drinking water in Kaikoura when water supplies were unsafe to drink, and helping the local authority to get the town's water supply back up and running as soon as possible;
- communications equipment to establish multi-



**National Commander Baxter assessing the situation first-hand with Chief Walker in Kaikoura.**



agency satellite communications and internet for the disaster relief effort.

Prime Minister John Key said restoration could cost as much as \$3 billion. Earthquake scientists gradually came to the conclusion that the initial quake had fired off a lot of other fault lines in a sequence, explaining why the earth movement was so extensive and so varied from place to place.

A GNS monitoring station at Cape Campbell recorded land movement of two metres to the north, and a vertical fall of one metre. In other places, the land has lifted between two and 5.5 metres. Consequently there are huge rents in the land surface marking the position of the various fault lines.

Callouts were just part of the whirl of activity, and the fire station the centre of it all as the helicopters came and went, the ships from three navies came and went, relief firefighters came and went, and armed forces personnel ashore to help with the clean-up, restoration of services and the distribution of supplies.

## Waiau

Waiau chief Hugh Wells said over half the buildings in the town have varying degrees of damage. The old

stone church bell tower leans at least 15 degrees, the historic cob cottage is a disaster area... "Everything in our house was on the floor. It's hard to believe that even the linen cupboard could be emptied. Three minutes of constant shaking...

"We have been lucky to have help from Hamner Springs, Christchurch and Hawarden crews. Everyone has coped well, including a young woman recruit who had a tough first 6-8 hours and has since displayed great attitude and has been brilliant."

Sometimes you just have to laugh. Chief Wells said the Waiau station was absolutely untouched. "We were about to sign off on a brand-new station when the Christchurch earthquakes hit. Subsequently we slid far down the list – we'll be further down now she has stood up to this," he joked.

## Seddon

Seddon firefighters could be forgiven that sinking feeling when the quake hit. Badly damaged in Seddon's own 2013 quake, the brigade had, as a result, developed set procedures. DCFO Justin Stevens said a crew immediately took the truck on a tour of the town. "The first guy they came across was having a heart attack. He was taken off for treatment. We were without power for only 12 hours, so it wasn't anywhere as bad as earlier. There were four or five buildings yellow-stickered."

Justin has just finished spending

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**Left: Chief Ian Walker briefs brigade members.** Photo: Mike Shaw, NZFS.

\$40,000 on his house as a result of the last big quake in Seddon. Luckily he will not need another \$40,000.

## Thanks From FSC

"On behalf of the Board, I'd like to commend our urban and rural fire service personnel for their professional response to the major earthquake centred in Kaikoura/Waiau on Monday 14 November, the resulting tsunami warnings, and subsequent flooding in different parts of the country," said FSC board chair, the Hon. Paul Swain. He told *K1* the Board is particularly grateful to those who left their own homes and families to tend to the needs of others first.

"Despite challenging conditions, the response and support offered by our people to their communities in the hours and days following has been simply outstanding. It represents a major team effort from rural and urban, career and volunteer, operational and non-operational people alike, which is a great sign for the future of Fire and Emergency New Zealand, and the communities who rely on you."

Internal Affairs Minister Peter Dunne has also extended his thanks and appreciation for the ongoing response.

At November's meeting, the Board unanimously agreed to provide financial support to volunteer and career workforce on the ground, in the form of an initial contribution to the Benevolent Fund to support volunteers and career staff impacted by the earthquake, and a supplementary brigade grant to urban and rural volunteer brigades involved in the earthquake response.

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*Special thanks to Jeff Maunder and Mike Shaw for their help with this article.*







Above: **Supplies being ferried ashore from HMNZS Canterbury.**

Photo: Mike Shaw, NZFS.



Left: **the daily morning ritual briefing at Kaikoura fire station for all branches of the response.** Photo: Kaikoura Star.

Right: **..SAR work on a damaged chimney.**

Photo: Mike Shaw, NZFS.



Left: **Kaikoura 51 on the road yet again.**

Photo: Mike Shaw.



**December 2016**



# Buildings coming down in Wellington

Wellington City firefighters and other emergency services staff were busy sealing off some Wellington streets immediately after the big quakes, allowing fallen glass to be dealt with and inspections made.

At first it seemed as though the capital had got off lightly, apart from stock and possessions thrown everywhere. Then reports began to filter in of damage to the port container area, stairwell collapse in the Statistics Dept and Defence HQ likely to be uninhabitable for a year. Undoubtedly more damage will be reported over coming weeks as lesser, currently hidden damage makes itself known. An instance is the Asteron Building, only six-years-old, in which faults were found a week after the main event. It has been evacuated bringing the total number of public servants having to relocate to about 3000.

Three buildings damaged in the Seddon quake have now been advanced to 'must be demolished' status.

The Deloitte building on Molesworth St was sealed off and a command unit and Operational Support with USAR guidance were much in evidence. The 10-storey building

was condemned and demolition teams began carefully deconstructing the Deloitte building on 28 November (pictured left).

One wing of a Khandallah retirement home is to be demolished and three commercial buildings in the Hutt Valley will also come down.

The Wellington CBD was a ghost town for several days as buildings, including NHQ, were checked over and staff worked from home. The remedial work done on Wellington City station has been worth the time, trouble and expense, said National Commander Paul Baxter, as the National Co-ordination Centre based there has been able to continue working throughout.

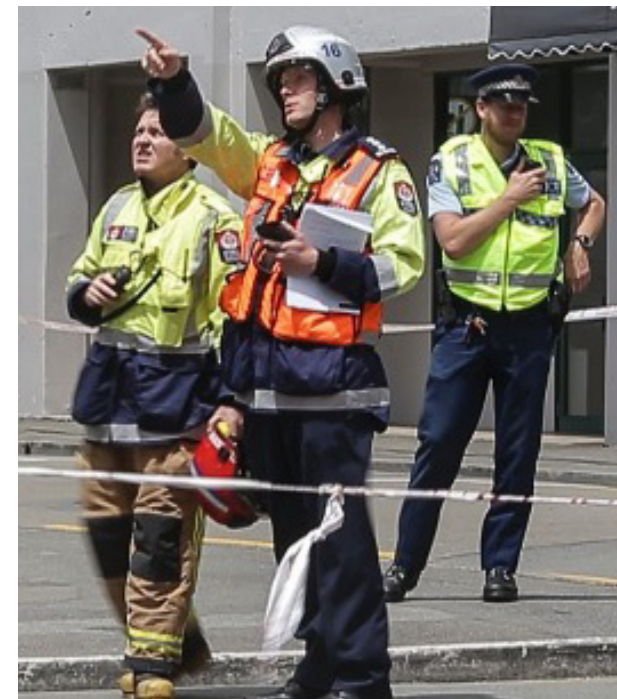
Amongst all this, Wellington sustained torrential rain that cut roads in many areas.

NZFS responded to 2248 calls and 460 incidents on Monday 14 November (and a lot more since).

Between midnight and 6pm the following day, it also received 211 weather-related calls for Wellington – of these, 103 were urgent. NZFS responded to 54, and managed responses for a further 55 with other agencies.



Above: **The normally bustling Feartherston St in Wellington echoed only to the sound of emergency workers' boots and radios.** Photo: Rob Hosking NBR. Below: **Firefighters help with damage assessment in Wellington.** Photo: Stuff





# Puhoi shack seque to new station

Puhoi Rural Fire Force is looking forward to a new station after 10 years of a roof between shipping containers. The brigade has been fundraising hard and a Givealittle-thon was run over Guy Fawkes weekend, and will remain an open cause until May 31, 2017.

Chief Russell Green concedes with a smile that timing was bad – the brigade should have waited until it was absorbed into FENZ, and then it would have been NHQ's problem. The rural fire brigades have tended to be the poor cousins – not under direct NZFS funding, but apportioned from an NZFS grant to national rural fire.

Joking aside, 10 years in an open garage was more

than enough and the brigade and the community has been beaver away to top up grants towards construction. "We had a big boost from Auckland local body coffers of nearly \$500,000 coming up to the recent elections, thanks to our local representatives, and it means we essentially have the \$600,000 required for the build. However, that is only the shell – we still have to fit it out: another \$200,000 or so."

No doubt the Chief will be happy to get his property back – the brigade 'station' is on his Puhoi Motors land, across the road from the famous Puhoi pub. The new station lies within Historic Places Trust governance in the old Puhoi village, and gaining the various consents has been more work than usual.

Never mind the dust, the heat in summer or the cold in winter, no running water or other such luxuries, it is the fifth busiest rural brigade at over 100 calls a year. Its callouts tend to be evenly spread between motor accidents, medical responses and fires. Being able to carry breathing apparatus means the rural brigade is able to attend a wider range of callouts, operating very similar to an NZFS brigade.

Puhoi personnel were deployed to the Australian bushfires in 2014 and 2015, and also travelled south to Christchurch to help out with the 2011 quake aftermath.

The proposed new station on Ahuroa Road will be a big lift for the brigade, being large enough for two appliances, a training room, kitchen, office and purpose-designed storage. It will also double as a civil defence/evacuation/welfare centre for the community.

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***From the ridiculous to the sublime ... the current station and a drawing of the new one.***



**December 2016**

# Old ladies take their ease

Stratford's volunteers have put in a huge effort over the years to save five of its former appliances from disappearing into history. The grand old ladies of Stratford's fire history now rest in a shed behind the station, putting on their best shiny brass occasionally for town parades.

The brigade's first petrol-fuelled appliance was a converted Buick taxi, which had the oddity of having to be cranked left-handed. But it was the brigade's **1924 Graham Paige Dodge** that started the collection. It was purchased by the local council in 1924 as a chassis and bulkhead and firefighter Ernest Brocklebank spent seven months in between his real work as a cabinetmaker, fitting out the appliance.

For many years the vehicle was without a pump until a Scammel portable pump was mounted in a cradle and supplied with one length of two-inch suction.

The Dodge had a magneto injection system, said SSO Brent Rawlinson, with a Ford Prefect distribution convertor over an ordinary coil. This was later amended when it failed and the brigade mechanic bypassed the magneto and fitted a Ford Prefect distributor and 12 volt coil. The engine had cast iron valves and it dropped a valve head on the way to a call in Toko. As parts were no longer available, a set of Fordson Major exhaust valves were fitted and

modified. The only other mechanical repair it had was a valve grind. A couple of years after that Toko job, a distributor was fitted.

Brent said the vehicle only had two wheel brakes so it was interesting with a crew on-board when it came time to stop – even more so when it was towing the Gwynne trailer pump.

The gallant Graham Paige was passed on to the Toko Fire Party when it was formed and served there from 1961-71. On retirement it was taken out of service, retained by the Stratford brigade and totally restored and painted by retired panelbeater Arthur Davis.

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**Brent Rawlinson keeping the Dodge shiny bright.**

**K1**

In 1966 the Stratford fire brigade was a trend-setter, being the first to use the ripple relay house bell warnings installed in brigade members' homes and, in some cases, their place of employment, by then SO Graham Thame.

One was even installed into one of the well-known drinking places, the Stratford Hotel – when the brigade received a call, a light on top of the alarm box would flash, and brigade members would rush for the nearest exit.

## Ford V8

At some stage in their lives, most of New Zealand's brigades have had some version of a 1940s Ford V8. Stratford's came into service in 1944, fully built-up and ready for service. Brent said by the 1950s it had a 378 litre water tank and a low pressure reel was mounted behind the cab. The pump was driven off the gearbox power take-off.





1949 newspaper clipping

## Royal pump for Fire Brigade

The Stratford fire brigade has what members call a royal pump.

It is a trailer pump especially designed to use in rural areas. Built in England it came to New Zealand in the hold of the *Gothic*, the royal yacht. It will be demonstrated during the 1949 New Zealand fire brigade conference at Hawera this month.

This means the Stratford brigade will have two engines one with a pump and two trailer pumps making it easier for the fire brigade to cope with country fires and to be in a position to meet an outbreak in the town at the same time.

The appliance's V8 pump was identical to the trailer pump, which was towed to rural property fires. The rear pump was driven through a transfer case stage one pump, stage 2 rear axle. A ratchet lever was mounted to the foot brake pedal to hold the vehicle while pumping as the hand-hold brake could not be applied while the pump was in use.

The hose reel pump was driven by a gear pump off the PTO. In the 1950s a 378 litre tank and low pressure hose was mounted behind the cab and the pump driven off the gearbox power takeoff.

The Ford V8 went on to serve at Toko from 1971 to 1977, replacing the Graham Paige. When it blew its engine, it was sold to the Stratford stock car club to water the track. It stood outside deteriorating before being rescued by the brigade and the bodywork was restored by former DCFO Eric Jordan.

## 1960 Commer

The quality of appliance took a major step forward with the arrival of the 1960 Commer Karrier Carmichael – it had a built-in crew cab !!!

It arrived from England as a shell and brigade members set to and built up the lockers to suit local conditions, and installed a mid-mounted UMP two-stage high/low pressure pump and 378 litre tank. On top of the bodywork went a detachable searchlight with a 1.6km range and 100 metres of flex. In 1970 the appliance was souped up by Barrie O'Donnell and Noel Downs who fitted a Holden Monaro V8 muscle car motor. As you can imagine, this improved its performance and reliability.

This also found its way to Toko and served there 1979 to 1982.

## 1971 International

Finally, an appliance arrived fully made up and ready to go! FT1971 was purchased for \$21,000 and served

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*The Commer during a street parade.*



Stratford from 1971 to 1989. The three-stage Darley pump was a revelation, delivering 2839 litres a minute. The International was purchased by the Nelson District Council for the Stoke rural fire party. The Stratford brigade social club purchased it back when it became surplus to requirements.

## 1988 Acco International

This was the first of the new 6R2 series to reach Taranaki and it served its full service life of 24 years with Stratford before being taken over by the social club. It is powered by a Perkins turbo-charged diesel generating 180 bhp and served as a dual purpose rescue and firefighting tender.

## Current appliances

Stratford's current stable is a 2003 and a 2011 Iveco Eurocargo. The social club runs a Toyota Hiace van and a 2003 Volvo water tanker.

With the NZFS now changing appliances on a regular basis, it is unlikely the collection will get any bigger. The brigade will probably have to extend the old shed on the back of the station some time soon to accommodate the Acco and the Dodge. The Dodge is currently in an appliance bay.



*The brigade's 1944 Ford V8 .*

# December 2016



***Except for honours nights, the support of partners, or their achievements while fitting into a firefighter household, are often overlooked, however...***

# Romance rules OIC's household

The household of Paraparaumu volunteer chief Tim Morgan has undergone a few changes since he and his wife Leeanna met in Philadelphia on a Contiki tour 24 years ago.

Tim was a firefighter when they married, so she went in with her eyes open, supporting her husband and the brigade. She is a veteran of 2am callout family disturbances and her husband disappearing at inconvenient times, like being abandoned at the supermarket with armfuls of shopping. "Before the career crews arrived in March 2009, the volunteers carried a huge load, and as DCFO, Tim was a busy man."

Times have changed lately with Leeanna no longer the library and arts manager of the Kapiti District Council, and with less callouts due to the composite brigade, Tim is running the house and organising the children as well as being a manager at Nebulite, Wellington. The reason is that Leeanna has become a world-renowned author of romance fiction earning around \$200,000 a year after only two years in the market. With that has come overseas trips, a new car and financial stress has melted away.

She is a *USA Today* best-selling author averaging sales of 300 books a day from her collection of 15 Montana-based novels. She likes happy endings and her style

has struck a chord with the mainly American clientelle. After starting with the soul-destroying task of trying to interest a mainstream publisher in her work, Leeanna listed two of her titles on Amazon and was amazed by the response.



The success meant early starts and long hours until resigning her day job a couple of months ago. But it has all been worth it. She can completely control the management of her book through e-publishing and will not be decorating her writing room with reject slips from international publishers.

E-publishing takes a bit of adjustment – Leeanna listed her first book on Amazon free (like a loss-leader) to establish a readership base. Subsequent books have been sold at only \$3 but there is no print bill, no waiting for publishers to pay you a pittance every quarter or half-yearly, and only minor fees to belong to the network you distribute through. Social media has become a big part of Leeanna's life, using it to promote her work. And she has had to learn new skills such as electronic formatting, building websites and cover design, because there is no publisher to do it.

For the moment, the Morgan family wouldn't change a thing. Leeanna is disciplining herself to write eight hours a day and produce five books a year. And Tim is running the house, and responding to the pager. "There are nice new things about the arrangement, like having breakfast together..."

Is there a firefighter romance in the future? "Well... maybe ..!"

## Oldest hotel razed

Exeter city in the UK lost several medieval and 17th century buildings in a recent blaze at the heart of the city. Among the casualties is the Royal Clarence, the first building the England to call itself a hotel. Before then, pubs were 'inns'. Built 1769, it had a large assembly room, as well as accommodation and bars and was generally known as the heart of the early city. Over 100 emergency response personnel attended the blaze.



## Baxter to lead AFAC

National Commander Paul Baxter is the new president of the Australasian Fire & Emergency Service Authorities Council. He was the first New Zealander to be elected Deputy President of the AFAC Board and now the first as President.



He says New Zealand's international reputation has benefitted greatly from its AFAC presence, which has enabled close collaboration with member authorities on safety standards, and deployment of rural firefighters in Australia, Canada, and the United States.

## Last call

Ret LM Michael <b>Price</b>	Akaroa & New Brighton
Ret SSO Phillip <b>Donnelly</b>	Hutt-Wairarapa Area
Ret SSO Wayne <b>Tokley</b>	Auckland City
Ret CFO Colin <b>Butler</b>	Opunake
Ret DCFO Allan <b>Corry</b>	Whangarei
Ret FO Tony <b>Moylan</b>	Chch Airport & New Brighton

## UFBA advocacy continuing

The UFBA and the Fire Service Commission have signed a transitional advocacy and support agreement to formalise the UFBA's position over the transition period to FENZ.

The agreement establishes a clear, certain and formal relationship between the parties that bridge the transition period, from the current regime to the fully integrated unified regime foreshadowed by the Minister's review, said UFBA CEO George Verry.



It will allow independent advocacy and support services to be available to FENZ volunteers who are members of the UFBA (which will now include members of rural fire forces).

"Through our MOU with FRFANZ, we will continue to jointly represent the interests of rural fire forces that are members of FRFANZ. As well, we are implementing a programme to ensure the interests

of fire forces not currently members of UFBA or FRFANZ, are represented by UFBA?FRFANZ during the fire services reform."

UFBA advocacy is widening to include representation of individual members, not just brigades. The amendment was passed at the 2016 conference allowing for appropriate changes to the UFBA constitution.

Interesting to note that the FENZ Transition Project says all volunteers become FENZ personnel, whereas the previous relationship has been heralded as symbiotic, or franchise-based. If the FENZ board holds to this, it should follow that all volunteers should have the goal of matching career standards in as much as their workload demands (i.e. no high-rise capability in Carterton). And the direction of the volunteer force is from NHQ, not from brigade social room sofas.

## Hot milk !!!

Hundreds of litres of milk were poured on a storage shed fire, slowing its spread towards a home in Hilderthorpe near Oamaru.

Nearby dairy farmer Hayden Williams was heading off in his truck and milk tanker unit to feed his 450 calves when he saw smoke coming from the property and drove there to help. "I tried ringing and no-one answered so I went and investigated." After ringing 111 he decided he needed to do something about the blaze in the shed that was only 4m from the house. When he approached the fire and started hosing the flames down with the milk, the owner turned up. "I asked if there was going to be anything that would blow up in our faces."

The milk supply was getting low when the fire brigade arrived.

## December 2016



# Surrounded by fire service

If the fire truck turns up at your place in Matata, there is a fair chance a member of the wider Dobson family will be on it.

Like in many small community brigades, the fire service has become a way of life for the Dobsons. Current CFO Brian Dobson has just been presented with his 50 Year Medal. He has been surrounded by the fire service ever since he can remember with his father having served 10 years in the Raetahi brigade before the shift to Matata.

It was a struggle to establish a brigade in the seaside town. Whakatane and Tauranga were the closest brigades before Edgecumbe finally got a brigade in 1929, and it was still 13 km away. Like the start of many other brigades around the country Matata was established after too many fatal fires, the last being in 1958 in which a young child perished. The community had had enough and began the process of convincing the then Whakatane County council that the community of Matata needed fire protection.

"Three men lead the charge," said Brian, "one being my father." He was five-years-old at the time, and his father was determined to establish a brigade.

"The other two main agitators were Mick Longstaff and Cyril Paltridge, Cyril being the only other townsman to have some service under his belt. It took these three, and a number of others, five long years to get their wish, having to get past a very stubborn county clerk."



**Allan, Tom and Brian Dobson.**

The brigade was formed in 1963 with Dobson snr its first CFO. "I was only 13 at the time. Myself and my brother who was three years older watched the brigade form and develop, saw and were part of the building of the station, this again led by Tom, my father, he being a tradesman builder and a plumber/drainlayer. It was mostly all volunteer labour and the small amount that wasn't, was paid for by the communities fundraising committee which my mother was involved in."

The brigade's first fire engine a 1938 Fargo, bought from Rotorua for £130 pounds. "We all, including my sisters and younger children, got to ride on this at the Christmas functions the brigade put on for the firefighter's families, so I got to know all the original members and those that had joined and left before I actually joined. So I have known all the 133 members who have served from its start till the current day, even those many that did not last the three-month probationary period, and that was quite a few."

Brian's brother joined in Sept 1964 and he followed in September 1966. Not interested in furthering his education, Brian began working for his father as a builder's laborer. Within a year and nine months in the brigade he was made secretary/treasurer. "I'm not sure if I really wanted to be at the time, but I was helped a lot by my mother who had some good experience in bookwork back then. I did a stint of 12 years in this roll, stepping down only when I became DCFO in 1980. Our then deputy passed away due to a heart attack; a good man lost suddenly at not so old age."

In the meantime his brother left the brigade in 1970 having served five and a bit years, and Brian stepped into his position as a young Sub officer. In 1973 he was one of four members to



do a BA course to allow the brigade to receive its first breathing apparatus sets, which it got the cylinders several months later!

"I went to my first UFBA Conference that year at Matamata – the first of many of my time in the brigade which took me all over the country meeting so many people and making friends which I looked forward to meeting time and time again. The early ones to the South Island with my parents were extended a week or so as a holiday."

The first years saw very few fire calls, some as few as five or six a year, mainly grass and chimney fires. "My first real fire was in 1967 when Eddie Stoneham's shed was torched. Both my brother and myself were still living at home and were asleep in our bunkroom. As the siren went off I saw brother Allan trying to get out

of bed on the wall side! He finally got it right when he fully woke up to my laughing. During the incident I again saw my brother in action, this time though it was to see him hauling branchman Stanley Marks back out of the blazing building, which was more or less fully involved. Jackson, as he was called, was one of the real characters of the brigade had been either over-eager or more likely had came straight from some party around town!"

Back then PPE consisted of the old cork Cromwell helmets, a pair of normal overalls, black woollen bunker coats and proper steel capped gumboots, all second hand, donated from other brigades, even the some axes and hip belts. "But, we looked the part!"

Brian was elected 3rd officer in 1977 after Bill Paterson, perhaps his father's best friend, passed away due to cancer. That was the beginning of all the pre Officer and Phase 1 and 2 officer courses for him over the next few years.

His father retired in 1988 after 35 and-a-half years and Brian became the brigade's second CFO. Brian married in 1980, local girl Bonnie Parkes, daughter of the then Third Officer. Gordon Parkes joined in October 1967 and became Brian's deputy the same time Brian became CFO. He

stepped down from that position in 2003 to a support roll and finally retired a year later serving just under 36 and-a-half years,

"My time as CFO has been made so much easier having someone at my side who grew up under the influence of the service, and who so keenly assisted me with the piles of paperwork that was to come my way over the next few years. Bonnie also took on that leading role that both our mothers had done in the past – organising our social and fundraising events.

### Family joins in

"She finally took it by the horns in 1998 and joined the brigade as our first admin person, saying she has more or less done it for the past 10 years or so! She has now served 18 years, and has changed her roll to include operational support when the brigade began a Medical 1st Response Unit" in 2004. She is now a fully trained St John Ambulance Officer as well."

Their son Mark joined in 1999 and served just over 11 years, having some broken service during that time, resigning in April 2015, his wife Nicola also had a stint as admin officer serving almost five years from June 2007.

"My second oldest daughter Nicole also joined in October 2006, then like my son had broken service with a stay in Aussie for a couple of years and returned to rejoin in November 2013 and has now served 6 years 10 months – not to be outdone, my oldest daughter Tracey has also returned to Matata and has now over a year's service as our admin person, but has decided to join the ranks as a operational firefighter.

"While I was compiling notes for this interview, my third oldest daughter Aimee called me to say she is joining the Edgecumbe brigade! She will join my wife's brother-in-law who has so far done 27 years with



**Brian and Bonnie at the 50 Year presentation.**

**December 2016**

them. I still have one daughter left at university and not in a brigade, yet!

## Innovations

The greatest innovations at Matata during Brian's time he says are establishing a medical first response unit, introducing a cadet system where the brigade accepts 15-year-olds who carry out certain roles, but the personal highlight is forming a proper four-man competition team to carry out UFBA waterway runs.

"Dad had tried so hard to get one started over the years, but it wasn't until 1989 that two young Maori

**Brian on a competition run.**



joined and I took them to a event in Kawerau. Both said 'Man, that's us, let's form a team'. With another current member and myself, we began training and that was a start of the best years I have enjoyed in the brigade. In later years I had the proud moment to run with my son and daughter during which we finally won our first ever National Certificate at Queenstown coming 4th in the monitor event.

"I was still running last year, but my daughter has taken up the combat challenge. I might have to change to that!"

Looking to the future, Brian thinks the biggest change the service faces today and in the future is the enforcement of health and safety. "It is, and will, change the way we carry out our job. I fear we will no longer have the adrenalin rush when the siren goes off or when we see the red stuff."

## Highs and lows ...

When Matata CFO Brian Dobson looks back over his career he will never forget a day in 1979 that qualifies as the basis of a Monty Python sketch.

"Our truck was away for repair, and we only had the trailer pump to respond to a car fire 4km out of town. The site it was nearly 200m from a stream, so we set up and ran out our four hoses while the car was attacked with extinguishers. That did not fully put it out, and we were miles too short with our hose line! We began pushing the car toward the branch – Man, it must have looked funny! By the time we got there flames had come through to the inside!"

Unfortunately, there is the other side of the coin. "The job that shook me the most was in 1984 when I was

following the crew in my car to a hay barn fire on a metal road. As the truck rounded a couple of corners I lost sight of it. When I did catch up, it was upside down, forced off the road onto loose metal, and over a bank by an on-coming car. My heart was in my mouth, but thank God no-one was hurt, only some bruises and a bit of shock. We did get another truck, though!"

The brigade's longest job was the 2005 debris flow that near wiped out both ends of Matata township. The flash floods moved houses and all sorts of property, leaving boulders, mud and trees everywhere. No fatalities but it took three to four weeks to clean up with the brigade taking a major role.

**Pictured is a Matata street covered in debris after the flash floods of 2005.**





# Top shelf

## The association between smoke alarm presence and injury and death rates: A systematic review and meta-analysis

David Rohdea, et al

- Smoke alarms play a key role in reducing household fire injuries and deaths.
- Systematic review of links between smoke alarm presence and death and injury rates.
- Findings suggest death rates are halved in households with a working smoke alarm.
- No significant link between smoke alarm presence and household injuries were found.

*Fire Safety Journal* Volume 81, April 2016, Pages 58–63

## An ear to the ground or a head in the sand?

Jan M. Gutteling and Peter W. de Vries

Explains why new insights into how the public responds to a crisis – whether they seek or avoid risk-related information in emergencies – will help to shape better risk communication.

*Crisis Response Journal* V12 Iss 1 Sep 2016 p76-78

## How to be an effective incident commander

Katherine Lamb

The role of incident command has changed dramatically over the last few years and, as part of new UK incident command guidance, incident commanders are expected to demonstrate a new array of behavioural and subjective competencies

*Fire & Rescue* Iss 102 2nd Qtr 2016 p22-24

## Can we halt firefighter suicide?

Rick Markley

It may take a very bold and costly initiative to make serious strides toward stopping firefighter suicides

*FireRescue1* Oct 29, 2016

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# Scion challenging accepted extreme fire science

by Michelle Harnett of Scion

Dangerous, demanding and dirty, rural firefighting is not going to get any easier with climate scientists predicting extreme weather and extreme fire conditions.

While New Zealand might not experience bush and forest fires on the scale and intensity seen in Australia or North America, any fire has the potential to turn into an extreme fire at any time. Fires in Marlborough and Canterbury in the last couple of years have been intense and moved at alarming speeds, hinting that extreme fires are already here.

Extreme fires present new firefighting challenges. They are so intense they cannot be attacked directly. Often blowing up suddenly, they are erratic and unpredictable, spread rapidly, throw embers and other particles ahead of the fire front (spotting), generate fire whirls and tornados and tall, violent convection columns.

Recognising that current fire management strategies cannot suppress these fires, Scion's Rural Fire Research Group has proposed a research programme to develop new methods, decision support and models for extreme fires. The programme – Preparing New Zealand for Extreme Fire – has recently received funding of \$8.75 million grant over five years from MBIE's Endeavour Fund.

Fire Research Leader Dr Tara Strand says the research will challenge the current understanding of the way wildfires spread. Instead of growing through the radiation of heat from the flame front to unburned fuels, fires seem to flow in waves produced by the fire's convection. If this theory is validated in real-world conditions in New Zealand, it will change global wildfire science and drive innovation in community readiness and resilience, fire prevention, prediction and control.

Grant Pearce, a fire scientist with 20 years' experience, is leading the project. With current fire behaviour

models unable to predict extreme fire behaviour, the work will focus on gathering new information on when extreme fires are likely to occur, such as what atmospheric conditions cause a fire to escalate, and the effect of fuel type and loads.

More experimental burns are planned, similar to those carried out in wilding conifer fuels last summer and autumn. The burns will look at large-scale effects, such as how long a fire takes to spread, and also what is happening on a small scale, within the flame front itself. The researchers plan to capture data on how the fire spreads from one fuel element to another within the fire, using high-speed video and infrared cameras, drones and other specialist equipment.

Carrying out experimental fires in New Zealand is less complicated than in many other parts of the world, and the strong relationship the Scion team has with landowners and rural firefighters supports and facilitates the work. This real-world laboratory is also attracting collaborators from around the world. The Scion team will work with researchers from the University of Canterbury and Lincoln University, plus the US Forest Service's Missoula Fire Science Laboratory, University of New South Wales, San Jose State University and the US Forest Service Pacific Northwest Station's AirFire research team.

Another aim of the work is improving the speed at which new fires are detected. Satellites already monitor and track fires, but there can be delays in getting the information. It is hoped that a system can be developed that can spot a



**Scion's Grant Pearce observing the Aoraki trial burns.**



fire starting and raise the alarm in close to real time, as well as track and provide updates on the fire's progress.

Alongside helping prepare for extreme fire, the Scion team will continue to work with the Resilience to Nature's Challenges National Science Challenge to strengthen community resilience to wildfires and other natural hazards. Human factors research will also be important – looking at how firefighters cope with stress, possibilities for keeping firefighters out of harm's way with more remote firefighting, and increasing use of drones to monitor fires and hotspots.

The natural environment, primary production, vulnerable communities, our taonga species and rural fire stakeholders will all benefit from the improved ability to identify, mitigate and adapt to the threat of extreme fires.

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***A wildfire building strength near Hamner earlier this year.*** Photo: Gavin Martin



## Climate change ramping up U.S. wildfires

Climate change has already doubled the number of forest fires in the western USA since the 1980s – and it is a trend that will continue to increase, according to new research.

The rise in temperatures and aridity sucks the moisture out of the plants, trees, dead vegetation on the ground and the soil, and is part of a world-wide trend of ever-increasing wildfires. Scientists from Columbia University pin the blame firmly on human-induced climate change – a significant statement in a country where many Republican supporters still refuse to accept that the burning of fossil fuels is causing global warming. The scientists want to settle the argument.

"No matter how hard we try, the fires are going to keep getting bigger, and the reason is really clear," says bioclimatologist Park Williams. "Climate is really running the show in terms of what burns. We should be getting ready for bigger fire years than those familiar to previous generations."

Forest fires in western USA began increasing in the 1980s (as measured by area burned, the number of large fires, and length of the fire season). The increases have continued, and, while there are a number of contributing factors, the study concludes that at least 55% of the increase is due to man-made climate change.

"A lot of people are throwing around the words 'climate change' and 'fire' – specifically, fire chiefs and the governor of California last year started calling this the 'new normal'," said University of Idaho's

John Abatzoglou. "We wanted to put some numbers on it."

Since 1984, temperatures in the forests of western USA have increased 1.5°C (2.7°F), and resulting aridity has caused forest fires to spread across an additional 41,000 square km than they otherwise would have – an area larger than the states of Massachusetts and Connecticut combined.

### Other factors

Williams and Abatzoglou say their research does not take into account some factors that could be offshoots of climate warming, and thus they may be understating the effect. These include millions of trees killed in recent years by beetles that prefer warmer weather, and declines in spring soil moisture brought on by earlier snowmelt. There is also evidence that lightning – the usual initial spark of forest fires – may increase with global warming.

The overall increase in forest fires since the 1980s is considerably more than the researchers attribute solely to climate change; the rest is due to other factors, for example, a long-term natural climate oscillation over the Pacific Ocean that has steered storms away from the western USA. Another is firefighting itself. By constantly putting out fires, authorities have allowed areas they 'saved' to build up more dry fuel, which later ignites and causes ever more catastrophic blazes.

Carbon released to the air adds to the burden of greenhouse gases already there, thus producing even more warming. And soot settling on snow and ice causes them to absorb more heat and melt faster.

# UFBA representation to be extended to the individual

The 138th UFBA conference has passed a remit that will amend the constitution and rules to allow the organisation to advocate on behalf of individual firefighters, not just brigades.

Another remit to review the cost and supply of medals and honours, with consideration of putting the supply of honours out to tender, was carried. There are several issues to consider such as retention of quality (or better) whether there will be a need to stock larger quantities of medals, etc.

Two remits were withdrawn after director Bill Butzbach advised these has been covered in the joint UFBA/FRFANZ submission to the Select Committee. The remits were: the UFBA request a discount or waiver for New Zealand Fire Service members for the New Zealand Fire levy on all insurance plans; the UFBA look into increasing gratuity payments for resigning members.



## Last call

Firefighters remembered at conference were:

QFF Hayden Fraser  
Ret SO Wayne Tockley  
Ret SFF Alby Matthews  
Ret SFF Alexander Mullinder  
Ret SFF Robbie Cooper  
Ret CFO Ian Connelly  
Michael Price  
Ret SFF Henry Jensen  
Ret SSO John Decke  
Ret SSO Kevin Third  
Ret Fire Commissioner Ivor Wesley  
Ret AAO Trevor Tilyard  
SFF Dwin Bishop  
Ret SFF Bruce Scammell  
Derek Theobald  
Ret CFO Pat Wood  
Ret SO Kevin Adie  
SFF Bill Tims  
Ret DCFO Darren Clent  
Ret CFO Bruce Adams  
FF Bailey Honeycombe  
Ret CFO Doug Archibald  
Ret DCFO Don McDonald  
Ret CFO Peter Noonan  
Jock Mitchell  
Ret SFF Steven Hancy  
Ret DCFO Maurice Eilken  
QFF Gerald Stephens  
Ret Senior Officer Tom Lawlor  
Ret Senior Officer John Martin

Auckland City  
Auckland City  
Auckland Sthn Command  
Bluff  
Bulls  
Bulls  
Canterbury Provincial  
Dannevirke  
Dunedin  
Dunedin  
NHQ  
East Otago  
Fairlie  
Gore  
Greytown  
Greytown  
Hastings  
Haumoana  
Helensville  
Kaiapoi  
Kaingaroa  
Kaitaia  
Kamo  
Kaponga  
Katikati  
Kawakawa  
Lincoln  
Mapua  
Marton/ Hunterville  
Matamata

Ref FF Ian Darwen  
Ret CFO Maurice Watson  
Ret Senior Officer Michael McDonald  
OS Robert Williams  
SSO Kevin Munn  
Ref CFO Colin Butler  
Senior Officer Bell Philippi  
SFF Reginald Royal  
SO David Galloway  
Ret SSO Peter Bartosh  
John Arthur  
James Curran  
Ret SO Maurice O'Donnell  
Rex Rattenbury  
Ret SO John Thelwall  
Ret SO Ron McKubre  
SFF Berny Liesout  
CFO John Compton  
Ret SFF Murray Mellish  
OS Trevor Capon  
SO Joe McLellan  
Jon Edmond  
Brian Douglas  
Harold McLoesh  
Frank Hallett  
OS Anne Talijancich  
Ret DCFO Don McQuilkin  
John Allen  
Ret SSO Phillip Donnelly  
Ret SSO Ian Gleeson  
Ret VSO Jophn Griffiths  
Ret SFF Bryan Umbers  
Ret SO Bruce Popple  
SFF Tony Bean  
Ret Senior Officer Bob Varley  
Ret QFF Jim Harvey  
Ret SFF Russell Jespersen  
Ret FF Maurice Shaw  
Ret SFF Michael Drain

Motueka  
Murchison  
Murupara  
Ngunguru  
Ohakune  
Opunake  
Opunake  
Otaki  
Paihia  
Palmerston Nth  
Paraparaumu  
Paraparaumu  
Petone  
Piopio  
Porangahau  
Porirua  
Pukerau  
Raetihi  
Rakaia  
Silverdale  
Springfield  
Taihape  
Taupo  
Te Awamutu  
Te Awamutu  
Te Kopuru  
Te Kuiti  
Tirau  
Trentham  
Wairau Valley  
Waitakere District  
Wanaka  
Wellington City  
Wellington City  
West Harbour  
Whakatane  
Winton  
Wyndham  
Wyndham



# Judith first woman director

Paekakariki SFF Judith Stanley is the first woman elected to the UFBA board.

Achieving it was something of a marathon, requiring four votes to finalise who would be the second of two new directors. UFBA president Russell Anderson was elected on the first ballot, but there was no clear second. Candidates were whittled down through successive ballots interspersed between reports and address to conference.

Currently an independent technical writer, Judith has a background in industry training, teaching and project and partnership management. She has spent several years in Parliament working for and against various governments as a researcher, policy advisor writer and campaign strategist.

Over the past few years she has been deeply involved in UFBA training review, volunteer sustainability and is on the NZFS Training Standards Committee.

Alan Kittelty was installed as president, Invercargill VSO Joe Manihera was elected vice-president and Silverdale DCFO Shayne Kennedy to the Technical Panel.



# Test run for local committees

Local committees, to be introduced under FENZ legislation, will be given a test run in the Greater Auckland area before the new law comes into effect, to see how they best function.

The committees are essentially the interface between FENZ and the community and will provide local advice about local fire and emergency risks and needs. The committees – personnel to be decided – will not have any influence over local brigades. They start work before Christmas. Transition Committee chair Nicki Crauford says that by 1 July, 2017, FENZ needs to know how local committee members will be selected, what the committee's principles will be, and how they will work with FENZ, among other basic issues. The pilots, using test committees, will help the project answer these important questions.

It is expected there will be up to 16 local committees, although no decisions have been made yet. The pilot process will not have affect day-to-day work. To find out more about local committees and their purpose, go to [fenzproject.co.nz/Information](http://fenzproject.co.nz/Information)

# Co-response number reaches 73%

The NZFS is co-responding to a significant number of cardiac arrest calls. National operations manager Paul Turner told K1 that NZFS co-responded to 73% of ambulance services' cardiac calls in the 2014/15 year. NZFS is receiving very positive feedback from the ambulance sector and the public. "We are directly contributing to reducing response times and increasing survival rates," he said. An average of five people a day are treated for out-of-hospital cardiac arrest in New Zealand.

# Queensland tough on smoke alarms

Every Queensland residence must now be fitted with photoelectric, interconnected smoke alarms in all bedrooms, as well as hallways after new smoke alarm legislation was passed in the Queensland Parliament. The legislation specifies that all new builds and significantly renovated residential properties will need to comply with the smoke alarm legislation upon completion after January 1, 2017. All houses leased or sold will need to meet compliance after five years and all owner-occupied private dwellings will need to comply with the legislation within 10 years.

# Death sentence after explosion

The chairman of the company operating the Tianjin chemical storage facility that exploded with the force of an earthquake and killed 165 (including dozens of firefighters), has been given a suspended death sentence. It is understood this is generally commuted to life imprisonment in China. Forty-nine other officials received prison sentences of one year or more.

# Silo investigation complete

WorkSafe has concluded its investigation into the rescue of a worker from a silo that involved the Riversdale brigade. Charges have been laid against the farm partnership and a commercial firm only.

December 2016

## How to get noticed !



Thirteen hectares of Browns Island (Motukorea) in the Hauraki Gulf was burned after a signal fire from a marooned woman got out of control. The uninhabited, pest-free island, 5.5km off St Heliers, has many historical and wildlife nesting sites.

The woman told police she had been stranded on the island for three days and had lit other fires in attempts to attract passing boats. She certainly got attention with the last fire when wind picked up and the smoke plume was visible all over the inner gulf.

Crews from Bethells Beach, Kaukapakapa, Puhoi, Waitakere, St Heliers, Remuera, Birkenhead, Mt Roskill and Parnell were ferried onto the island by Police and Doc launches. A helicopter assisted with the blaze.

Photo: *Stuff*

***Making a big splash at a recent Taupo coastguard search and rescue exercise was this restored PBV Catalina flying boat. They were prominent during the Second World War in long-range recce, anti-submarine, convoy escort and S&R roles.***

Photo: Steve Punter



## In deep water ...

A Rangiora firefighter was swept down the Ashley River recently with one of the passengers of a 4WD that had become stranded.

Believing the ford to be shallow, the crossing was attempted but the river was carrying 10 times the normal flow. The four in the 4WD were forced to climb onto the roof as the water rose around them. Friends tried to tow them out with a truck, but it got stranded as well. A firefighter attempted to wade out of the 4WD to meet one of the passengers, but both lost their footing. They were swept 30m downstream before a bystander managed to grab them. The brigade later got a rope to the vehicle and rescued the other three. The driver was breath-tested and will face charges.

Meanwhile, a heavy weather system brought floods to Northland as well and 18 firefighters were involved in the search for a man swept away from his van the attempted to cross a flooded ford. Searchers worked in pairs due to the power of the flooded stream. The deceased was found about 100m downstream.



# New heavies for Victoria ... and some little ones

Just in time for summer, 40 new Unimog heavy tankers are being delivered to the Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning in Victoria as part of an A\$32 million overhaul of its rural firefighting capacity.

Seventy vehicles in all are expected to be delivered over the next three years.

The upgraded Unimogs will include:

- water carrying capacity of 4000 litres;
- the ability to tow an additional 8000 litres of water in a trailer;

- the capacity to carry four firefighters;
- in-cabin firefighting capability and fire curtains;
- a Falling Object Protection Structure over the cabin.

The design of the vehicles was chosen after a comprehensive field testing programme of different types of vehicles and equipment.

The Unimog upgrade is in addition to the overhaul of the ultra-light firefighting fleet, of which 270 will be delivered over the next three years.



New ultra-light fire fighting vehicles with greater water carrying capacity and safety features are being delivered to the Victoria's Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning. A total of 301 will be built.

The vehicles are modified Mercedes Benz G Wagons. The first of them was delivered last year and modifications have already been incorporated into the latest tankers. The upgraded vehicles have a greater water-carrying capacity than the older vehicles – 630 litres versus 400 litres – meaning firefighters are able to stay longer on the fire ground.

The body of the vehicle has been ergonomically designed to accommodate people of all sizes. An electronic rewind to the hose reels has been added, and heavy items repositioned so they're low and more easily accessible.

**December 2016**