

## **Gail Jennifer BUTT**

Ms Gail Butt joined the Monteagle Rural Fire Brigade in the 1960's and has been a member of this brigade for almost 50 years. During this time, Ms Butt has been directly involved with the Service combating many local campaigns.

Being a local long-standing farming family, Ms Butt and her family are all heavily involved in the Monteagle Brigade with her husband holding the role of Group Captain and her four children all being current active members. This has been evident at community events when they all turn out to promote the NSW Rural Fire Service (RFS) and educate the public on community safety.

In the early days Gail provided communications support to the brigade and her husband, the then Brigade Captain, which has led to the establishment of the 'Monteagle Base' communications point within the South West Slopes Zone. As her husband progressed to Group Captain, Ms Butt was always there providing support to him as the scribe. This was before the implementation of the PMR radio system and well ahead of its time. This is a now common practice for our brigades and training.

In more recent years Ms Butt's attention and focus has turned to the establishment and management of the 'Monteagle Catering Trailer'. The welcome that Ms Butt and this trailer receives on many fire grounds throughout the South West Slopes Zone and neighbouring areas is priceless and in most recent times was witnessed by Premier Barry O'Farrell who describe Ms Butt as being just 'like mother duck to weary fire fighters" at his attendance at the Cobbler Road fire.

Ms Butt is a diligent, capable and caring member. She is a logistics manager, change manager, active participant, mentor and committee member. She has a selfless attitude to the RFS, often foregoing her own pursuits to undertake Service activities.

She is available at any time to assist at emergency incidents In the District and to also provide catering support at any hour of the day/night.

Ms Butt is highly respected by both volunteers and staff within the District. She has previously been awarded a 25 year Long Service Award. Her contributions as a RFS volunteer over the past 40+ years have been of significant benefit to the RFS and the local community.

Ms Butt is a worthy nomination for the Australian Fire Service Medal.

## **Charles Leslie MAY**

Mr Charles Leslie May has been a member of the NSW Rural Fire Service (RFS) for over 48 years. Since joining the Nundle Bush Fire Brigade in 1965, Mr May has held the positions of Captain, Honorary Deputy Fire Control Officer and Honorary Fire Control Officer for the Nundle Shire.

In the role of Deputy Fire Control Officer and Fire Control Officer, Mr May showed outstanding dedication and commitment to volunteering and service to the community while working full time in his own business. Mr May showed significant leadership, raising the bar for all the brigades within the Nundle Shire, equipping the Brigade station with a modern fleet of diesel powered tankers well ahead of many other Districts in the Region. Nundle Shire before amalgamation with Tamworth Regional Council was one of the smallest Council's in NSW by way of population yet through the drive and passion for the RFS, Mr May was able to achieve an outstanding level of commitment from the Council to provide the best equipment and training to the RFS volunteers of the Nundle District.

Mr May was awarded a National Medal on 21<sup>st</sup> February 1994, National Medal 2<sup>nd</sup> & 3<sup>rd</sup> Clasp awarded but not yet presented 2013 and Nundle Citizen of the Year 2012 (Nundle Australia day Committee). He currently supports the Tamworth District staff through monitoring "000" callouts, remains the Secretary/Treasurer of the brigade and acts as a first responder for callouts within Nundle Brigade. Mr May maintains the tankers at the Nundle Station and takes the vehicles on weekly maintenance runs. His wealth of knowledge of the Nundle area is without peer and Mr May provides high level advice to the Tamworth District.

Mr May has always displayed a high level of professionalism and provided distinguished service to the RFS, his community and is highly respected.

Mr May is a worthy nomination for the Australian Fire Service Medal.

## **Sean MCARDLE**

Mr Sean McArdle joined the NSW RFS in 1990 as a volunteer in the Tamworth area and was heavily involved in the roll out of structured training within that area. In 1998, he deployed with local members to the major fires around the Sydney basin and later that year he applied for the newly created Deputy Regional Coordinator position Castlereagh Region.

In December 1994 Sean became the first Deputy Regional Co-ordinator Castlereagh Region. Towards the end of 1995, Mr McArdle took on a secondment to the Hunter Region. In 1997, Mr McArdle transferred to the vacant Deputy Regional Coordinators position in the Riverina Region. In 1999, Mr McArdle became involved with the Olympic Volunteers In Policing (OVIP) Program and quickly organised and provided training for all the volunteers within the Region that had expressed an interest in being part of the 2000 Olympics OVIP program. His ability to engage members from across the Region ensured the experience was enjoyed by all and to this date members still express their thanks for Mr McArdle's efforts.

During the transfer from local Government to state Government employment for Fire Control Officers and Deputy Fire Control Officers Mr McArdle was actively involved with the negotiation process and was a member of team which developed the award for all RFS employees. He was an active member of the Joint Consultative Committee for 14 years and has assisted in the negotiations of many industrial matters within the RFS. He was a founding member of the State Learning and Development Committee and served on this unit until it was replaced with the Members Services committee which he is also a member of. Mr McArdle's commitment to providing professional training within the RFS has been greatly appreciated by all those he comes in contact with (both Staff and Volunteers) and he again demonstrated his passion for this as a member of the professional Development Committee. During his time on this committee staff qualifications have been raised from 20% holding the required qualifications for their role to 80% now holding the required level. He always provided sound advice and support to all members on how best to meet their current and future roles within the organisation.

Mr McArdle's professionalism, leadership and commitment to the RFS have seen him seconded to the Zone Managers position in the Corowa / Berrigan Zone and as the Zone Manager in the Monaro Team. He has been deployed to Victoria during their last two major fire seasons as the IMT safety officer and during his deployment to Kinglake his dedication and leadership was able to help members (both NSW and Victoria) deal with very challenging conditions.

Mr McArdle is a worthy nomination for the Australian Fire Service Medal.

## **Noel Waldo SCALES**

Mr Noel Scales joined the NSW Rural Fire Service (RFS) as a volunteer member of the Jemmy's Creek Rural Fire Brigade in the Merriwa Shire after leaving school in 1960. Noel has served with dedication and distinction as a frontline firefighter, Senior Field Officer and Deputy Fire Control Officer during the course of his 52 year career as a member of the RFS.

Mr Scales' service history also includes membership with Widden Valley, Collaroy, Carroll and Idaville Brigades and a term of 6 years as the Deputy Fire Control Officer for Merriwa Shire Council.

One of Mr Scales' greatest attributes has been his willingness in leadership and his ability to maintain brigade teamwork across a diversity of members with differing backgrounds and values. He held field officer positions with the Idaville Brigade over a period of 9 years and in 1998 was appointed Deputy Fire Control Officer at Merriwa and continued in that role until mid 2005.

Mr Scales continued his service with the RFS as a volunteer and was appointed to the rank of Group Captain within the Liverpool Range Zone. Mr Scales' leadership and local knowledge significantly contributed to the overall success of the bush fire fighting operation both locally and out of area and he served as part of NSW's interstate deployment to Victoria during the 2009 Black Saturday Bush Fire Emergency.

Mr Scales continues to be an active RFS Volunteer and in the capacity of Group Captain Retired provides valuable contributions to the Zone in various operations and Incident Management Team (IMT) support roles.

Mr Scales has a passion for Fire Investigation and is a qualified and highly regarded Fire Investigator within the RFS. His ability to establish and maintain professional and productive working relationships with volunteers, staff and representatives of other firefighting agencies has allowed him to work effectively in the fire investigation field both locally and throughout the state.

Mr Scales has been previously recognised for his contribution to the RFS and was awarded the National Medal and First and Second Clasp in July 2000. He has provided outstanding service and has been a role model for volunteers throughout his brigades and district. His achievements are just reward for many years of selfless and dedicated service. Mr Scales is a true professional and a fine example of a volunteer that represents the core values of the RFS.

Mr Scales is a worthy nomination for the Australian Fire Service Medal.

## **Graham John WHITE**

Mr Graham White has been a volunteer with the NSW Rural Fire Service (RFS) for 39 years joining the Eunony Rural Fire Brigade in 1974. In 1981 he was appointed Captain of the Eunony Rural Fire Brigade and in 1989 Mr White was appointed Deputy Group Captain. In 1989 his skills as a capable and dedicated leader lead to him being appointed to Group Captain In 1992. Mr White still holds the positions of both Group Captain and Captain.

Mr White has a demonstrated leadership at Brigade, District, Zone and Regional levels across a full range of activities including but not limited to: operations, training, hazard management and service management. He has managed the full range of emergencies and incidents and is well respected and liked by all work alongside him.

At every incident his duties have been conducted at the highest level of safety, while maintaining effective and efficient outcomes for the benefit of the fire fighters under his command along with the best possible outcomes for the community effected.

Mr White currently holds the position of Senior Group Captain for the Wagga Wagga Rural Fire District in the Riverina Zone. His dedication to his role is shown through his positions as the volunteer delegate for Wagga Wagga District on the Riverina Zone Service Agreement Committee, Bush Fire Management Committee, and Chairman of the Senior Management Team.

Mr White's leadership skills were pivotal as a member of the then Riverina Liaison Advisory Committee in the zoning of the five local government areas making up the Riverina Zone and he continues to work tirelessly to ensure the interests of the volunteer membership are well looked after.

During his service Mr White has attended numerous deployments to fires in NSW as well as interstate Including the Blue Mountains in 1994, South Coast 1996, Cabramurra /Snowy Mountains 2003, Junee 2006, Black Saturday Victoria 2009 and Riverina Zone 2013.

Mr White has also led numerous strike teams from the Riverina to fires across the state. Mr White was been a key contributor In the Inspection of tankers across the Wagga District for the determination and prioritisation of the Wagga Tanker Replacement Program. Mr White continues this process in consultation with the Group Captains, Captains and Zone staff.

Mr White has committed many hours to the training of RFS personnel across not only the Wagga District but the entire Riverina Zone and is only too happy to share his extensive knowledge and leadership skills. Mr White was recognised in 2010 for his outstanding contribution when he was awarded the National Medal and 1<sup>st</sup> Clasp for his services to the community and emergency service.

Mr White is a worthy nomination for the Australian Fire Service Medal.

## **Christopher August WILHELM**

Mr Christopher Wilhelm joined the Little Topar Rural Fire brigade in January 1977 shortly after his family had moved into the district. He quickly became a valued member of the brigade and showed a real interest in the protection of his community and the community of the Unincorporated Area of NSW as a whole. Due to his dedication and leadership ability Chris was elected Captain of the Little Topar Rural Fire Brigade on the 30 June 2001, a position he still holds today.

During his early years with the brigade he regularly attended meetings of the West Darling Bus Fire Prevention Scheme, this scheme was constituted to provide support to the brigades within the Unincorporated Area and for many years it was the only support available to those brigades due to a lack of local Government in that area, His interest In the scheme continued right through and he was elected President of the scheme In 2007.

At that time Mr Wilhelm realised that the original constitution of the scheme was no longer valid and he began a lengthy process to ensure the viability of the scheme into the future, he is currently finalising the incorporation process and has revived the membership and understanding of the scheme across all brigades of the Unincorporated Area. Without the leadership and motivation shown by Mr Wilhelm this scheme could well have collapsed taking with it many years of brigade contributions and a historical record that may never be repeated in the modern world of government funded fire services.

In the year 2000 Mr Wilhelm was also nominated as a member of the West Darling Bush Fire Management Committee (BFMC) representing the Rural Lands Protection Board (at that time) he remained a valued member of the Committee and in 2007 accepted the role of Chairman of the BFMC. The interest he shows along with a calm and decisive demeanour makes Chris an extremely valued member of the Committee and the RFS as a whole In the Far West of NSW.

Mr Wilhelm is a worthy nomination for the Australian Fire Service Medal.

## **Peter Edward Williams**

Mr Peter Williams joined the NSW Rural Fire Service as a member of the Vacy Brigade in September 1979 and has served continuously since then. He has held the roles of Brigade Secretary from 1990 to 1994, Deputy Captain from 1989 to 1990 and then Senior Deputy Captain from 1990 to 1994. In 1994 he was elected as Captain of the Vacy Brigade, a position he still holds. In addition to his Vacy Brigade, Mr Williams was elected to the position of Group Officer in Dungog Shire from 1995 to 2006.

Mr Williams has also been an intrinsic member of the Dungog Shire Senior Management Team from 1991 and was an inaugural member of the Dungog BFMC until 2002. He was also a member of the Lower Hunter Zone (concept) working Party from 2000 to 2001.

With the introduction of zoning, Mr Williams was an inaugural member of the LH Zone Bush Fire Management Committee from 2002 to 2007 and then continued as a member of the LH-Lower Hunter Zone BFMC from 2007 to present day. He also has been an inaugural member of the LH (now LH-Hunter) Zone Liaison Committee from 2003 to present day 2013.

Mr Williams contribution to the Service is unprecedented in Dungog Shire. His contribution to the LH BFMC Risk Management Plan which was endorsed on the 25 August 2009 was outstanding. He attended monthly workshops during 2008 and then from January 2009 to the Plans endorsement he was a driving force within Dungog Shire regarding the Non Legislative and Legislative Public Exhibition periods. Without Mr Williams' expertise and local knowledge regarding critical State Infrastructure, isolated communities and other assets, threats and hazards, the plan would never have been successful to date.

Mr Williams is involved in training and is a member of the training committee. He provides support to the cadet secondary school program as an instructor. Mr Williams is a key member of the Community Program Engagement team and is heavily involved with Community workshops to assist with the preparation of Bushfire Survival Plans, practical use of pumps, fire blankets, extinguishers and sprays. Peter also continues his association with many organizations.

In 2006 he received a Dungog Mayors commendation for his work with the Vacy Oval Management Committee. He was also presented with his National Service Medal, by the then Commissioner Phil Koperberg.

Mr Williams is a worthy nomination for the Australian Fire Service Medal.