



February, 2018

MEDIA RELEASE

FIVE GENERATIONS CONTINUE A FIRE FIGHTING TRADITION

Mildura's Peter Bishop has dedicated more than 50 years to volunteer firefighting but his family commitment stems back more than a century.

Peter's family link spreads over five generations stretching back to 1911, with three generations of the family attending the Volunteer Fire Brigades Victoria (VFBV) State Urban Junior Championships in Warrnambool on February 24-25.

"My grandfather Alfred, my father Kelvin, my brother Ian and myself, our wives Elaine and Lyn, my sons Timothy and Christopher and daughter Nadine McWilliams and her children Jackson and Patrick have all been involved with the Mildura Fire Brigade," Peter said.

His grandfather started around 1911. "He was a community-minded and strong-minded person and was also a city councillor," Peter said.

Kelvin started in 1924, followed by Ian and Peter. "It's in our blood," Peter said. "Ian has had near enough to 60 years' service and I've had about 58."

Both Peter's sons were CFA volunteers before moving from the area and Nadine is now junior brigade leader, with her sons Jackson and Patrick members and young Nicholas planning to start next year.

"They're keen to keep going," Peter added.

While the new junior generation is joining through competition, the Bishop family has had a long contribution as trained active volunteer firefighters.

"We've all been operational," Peter said. He was senior volunteer officer at Mildura for 39 years and on the CFA board for 10 years.

“Competitions are such a good breeding ground for volunteers,” he said. “Most of the officers that I know in brigades have come through the junior and senior competitions. A lot go on to university but if they stay living locally they stay involved.”

The Mildura Fire Brigade is an integrated Fire Brigade made up of staff and volunteers servicing Mildura Rural City and surrounding areas

VFBV CEO Andrew Ford said junior brigades and the championships were the best way for young people to become engaged and learn practical skills before being old enough to attend fires.

“The VFBV State Urban Junior Championships can set young people on a pathway to serve their communities,” Mr Ford said.

“They encourage family participation and help to instil a sense of community service and volunteerism in young people while raising the importance of local fire brigades,” Mr Ford said.

Ends...