



November 2019

MEDIA RELEASE

VOLUNTEER RECOGNISED FOR DEDICATED SERVICE

John Beavis is soon going to need a bigger lounge room wall.

Mr Beavis, 83, has to find space for his latest Commendation for Service as a CFA volunteer for more than 60 years, but his display of certificates is already looking a bit clogged.

The new framed certificate will hang alongside life memberships for Bunyip fire Brigade, Flinders Urban Fire Brigades Association, East Central Zone Fire Brigades Association, Combined Gippsland Fire Brigades Association, No. 8 Fire Control Regional Council, and Drouin-Bunyip Competition Team.

He also has long service certificates from the Eastern Districts Fire Brigades Association, as president of Regional Council 8 from 1986-88, CFA certificate of Appreciation for 30 years' service and Victorian Urban Fire Brigades Association, the forerunner to Volunteer Fire Brigades Victoria (VFBV), in appreciation for service as an official at competitions.

Then there's his Australia Day citizen of the year nomination, and certificates of thanks for supporting the Good Friday appeal and Hillview Bunyip Aged Care, where he has instructed staff on the use of portable fire extinguishers for more than 20 years.

"They're all on my lounge room wall. Some are up a bit high to see," he said. "You don't go out of your way to look for recognition or awards, but if they come along you appreciate them."

The latest commendation stands as one of his most memorable. "It blew me away," Mr Beavis said. "I had my youngest daughter with me and then when I looked up my other two daughters walked in. It was very much appreciated."

Mr Beavis, 83, officially joined Dromana brigade in 1956

"For a few years before that my Dad was in the brigade and the alarm would go off and I'd tag along," he said.

After five years at Dromana, Mr Beavis moved to Bunyip for a work promotion and joined the local brigade a few years later when there was a major fire.

"It's something I've always enjoyed for the comradeship and in giving something back to your community," he said. "Volunteering is an integral part of the community, not only in CFA but in a lot of other organisations as well."

Although he no longer turns out for emergencies, Mr Beavis is still involved as a competition official and in community safety.

“I enjoy that side of it, especially meeting people from other brigades,” he said.

Mr Beavis was brigade secretary for 30 years and treasurer for a number of years, and brigade delegate to several associations.

VFBV CEO Adam Barnett said Mr Beavis typified the volunteering spirit of regional Victorians.

“Volunteers like John play a huge role in the community, not only in protecting people and assets close to home and far afield as volunteer firefighters, but in advocating for community safety and helping behind the scenes,” Mr Barrett said.

Learn more about CFA’s world-respected surge capacity on the VFBV website: <https://vfbv.com.au/index.php/component/k2/item/568-cfa-s-volunteer-surge-capacity-essential-for-victoria>

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