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## **MEDIA RELEASE**

### **FAMILY CONNECTIONS STRONG IN GLENGARRY LIFE MEMBERSHIPS**

The importance of families in volunteer firefighting has been highlighted in a series of life memberships for the Glengarry Fire Brigade.

Among the 11 to recently receive brigade life memberships were three husband and wife teams, along with one of their sons.

George and Joy Waltham and their son Adam, David and Wendy Farmer, Graeme Chesterton and his wife Helen Henry were awarded Life Membership to the CFA.

Mrs Henry is the brigade's 1<sup>st</sup> Lieutenant, Adam Waltham is 3<sup>rd</sup> Lieutenant and Mrs Waltham is President.

Other life membership award recipients were Don Duncan, communications officer Ken Markham, Ian Christensen and Norm Inglis.

The awards were presented by Captain Brian Holman and Mrs Henry on July 30. During the ceremony, service awards were presented to current and former volunteers for contributions ranging from five to 55 years, for a total of 895 years of service.

CFA Board Member Lynda Hamilton also awarded two members Ian Ashworth and David Parr with National Emergency Medals for significant service during the 2009 Black Saturday bushfires. This brings the number of Glengarry Fire Brigade members awarded the National Emergency Medal to nine.

Some of the life memberships recognised volunteer contributions to the former Glengarry West fire brigade.

Although a relatively rare occurrence, the dual life memberships for the couples highlight the active and behind-the-scenes support of families for CFA brigades.

Mr Holman said the life members had contributed more than 30 years of service "which is an achievement in itself".

“I would hate to have to add up the countless hours these people have spent serving their local and wider community. These members and the brigade itself are held with high esteem within our local community,” he said.

Mr Holman added that there are many positives for a family when they share the same passion for supporting the community through the CFA.

“Even if there’s only one member involved, we still need family support to understand the time spent away from home carrying out our CFA duties,” he said.

The brigade has 44 members, including 33 active firefighters and usually responds to between 30 and 50 calls a year.

Volunteer Fire Brigades Victoria CEO Andrew Ford said volunteers are essential to public safety and provide a professional service that is effective and affordable.

“Our dedicated volunteers are continuing a great Australian tradition that is well respected in our communities,” Mr Ford said.

Mr Ford said volunteers are part of the fabric of society and contribute to community resilience.

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