

DUO RECOGNISED

Two dedicated members of Hoddles Creek Fire Brigade, 1st Lieutenant Brett Kerford and Secretary Cheryl Dew, received the Volunteer and Community Award presented by Federal Member for Casey, Aaron Violi last month.

Brett commenced his journey with CFA at Yellingbo, transferring to Hoddles Creek in 2017. Throughout his career Brett has held many roles including Secretary, 1st, 2nd and 3rd Lieutenants, Group Delegate and Brigade Training Officer.

Brett's service to Brigade and community is reflective of the person he is. His passion, dedication and selflessness are evident to all who meet him. Brett is a mentor and team player who seeks no recognition for his contribution.

Cheryl commenced with Hoddles Creek CFA only three years ago, however her achievements and contributions have been amazing. As

Secretary Cheryl Dew, Federal Member for Casey Aaron Violi and 1st Lieutenant Brett Kerford at the presentation.



an operational firefighter, Cheryl has completed many qualifications, including gaining her truck licence.

Always willing to 'get stuck in', Cheryl has also taken on the role of Group delegate, VFBV delegate and brigade secretary. Her commitment to helping others is unwavering. She is also instrumental in organising brigade fund raising events and ensures a good supply of home baked goods after all brigade training and meetings. Cheryl's ability to see tasks and get them done have made her a valued asset to the Hoddles Creek Brigade and community.

This award to both Brett and Cheryl has been well earned.

Warrnambool Auxiliary celebrates 70 years

Warrnambool Fire Brigade would like to acknowledge and pay tribute to past and present members of Warrnambool Fire Brigade Auxiliary, which celebrated its 70th anniversary recently. The support and service of its many members over the years has been generously given, happily accepted and deeply appreciated.

The 70th anniversary was on November 14, this being celebrated at a High Tea the following day. President Heather Love gave a brief report to mark the occasion and a booklet was produced which contains the history, annual reports and some speeches from previous anniversaries.

Currently there are 11 members of the Auxiliary. Over the years this number has fluctuated between approximately nine and 25 members.

In 1954 the Warrnambool Badminton Club and the fire brigade met and played badminton at a joint Xmas party (because the badminton team consisted of fire brigade members).

The following year the women in the Badminton Club approached the brigade about forming a Ladies Auxiliary, to help raise funds for the brigade and help out where they could.

As a result Warrnambool Fire Brigade Auxiliary was formed and the first meeting was held on November 14, 1955 at the old fire station.

From the very first meeting fund raising was an important activity for the Auxiliary, finances raised donated to the brigade to assist with purchasing equipment for the brigade. Activities of the Auxiliary included fetes, street stalls, catering for local and state championships, competitions and the Hampden Marshalls.

Funds raised in more recent have been used by Warrnambool Brigade to contribute toward the purchase of a Breathing Apparatus vehicle, the purchase of uniforms for competition teams, purchase lights at the running track and sponsorship of the brigade's firefighter of the year award.

Current Auxiliary members include Heather Love (President); Nola Maslen (Vice President); Margaret Smith (Secretary); Nola Maslen (Assistant Secretary); Maree Rayner (Treasurer); Kathy Lane, Helen Read, Margaret Smart, Marlene Murphy, Kerry Richards, Natasha Kelly and Carol Ovens.

Life members include Sylvia Ponting, Betty Norley, Kathy Lane, Heather Young, Val Charles, Maree Rayner, Merle Cozens, Angela Hicks, Heather Love, Thelma Hallam, Barbara Birthisel, Nola Maslen, Sue McNally, Helen Read, Michele Wills, Margaret Smith and Margaret Smart.

These ladies have all given exceptional service to the Auxiliary over many years.

Brigades honour a friend and colleague

A Plenty Fire Brigade member will be remembered as "keen, enthusiastic and humble" by Yarrambat and Plenty fire brigades, with two commemorative plaques created in his name.

Respected firefighter Greig Wanless, who passed away in April 2024, was a member of the team each year when the volunteers worked the Yan Yean/Ironbark Road intersection, collecting donations for The Royal Children's Hospital Good Friday Appeal.

The brigades' annual collection, first organised by Yarrambat Fire Brigade 11 years ago, has raised close to \$85,000 for the hospital.

The two brigades will each display a plaque, recording the amount raised each year by their cooperative efforts.

Speaking at a celebration of Greig's service last month, Yarrambat Fire Brigade's Sue Mountain explained to the gathering that he was a regular member of the Good Friday team, a great friend and passionate about the cause of helping the hospital.

In honouring his efforts, Claire O'Riordan, Commu-

nity Fundraising Manager for the Good Friday Appeal, spoke of the commitment of all CFA volunteers to the annual Royal Children's Hospital Appeal. "It's the people's charity that improves the lives of children, and we will be forever grateful," she said.

Greig's wife Karen unveiled the plaques at Yarrambat Fire station, with their children Alannah, Matilda and Will, brigade members and Good Friday Appeal official Claire O'Riordan.

FIRE WISE

Four editions of Fire Wise will be printed annually with the other eight electronic versions available only by email, if provided.

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Below: Will, Matilda, Alannah and Karen Wanless, with Yarrambat CFA volunteer Sue Mountain and the Good Friday Appeal's Claire O'Riordan and the commemorative plaques.



Celebrating the anniversary were standing, from left: Margaret Smart, Helen Read, Heather Love, Margaret Smith, Kerry Richards, Carol Ovens. Seated: Front: Maree Rayner, Kathy Lane and Marlene Murphy. (Nola Maslen and Natasha Kelly were apologies).

2026 RURAL COMPETITIONS

DISTRICT	DAY/DATE	LOCATION	CONTACT	TELEPHONE
District 2 (Twilight)	Friday 6 February	Mandurang	Chris Griffin	0422 634 680
District 2 (Twilight)	Friday 20 February	Maiden Gully	Chris Griffin	0422 634 680
North West Region	Sunday 22 February	Donald	Barry Wiseman	0429 998 266
District 7	Sunday 1 March	Connewarre	Karen Woodhart	0412 536 243
District 24	Sunday 1 March	Chiltern	Tony Treffers	0438 592 843
District 14	Saturday 14 March	Plenty	Tim Smith	0438 562 749
District 2	Sunday 15 March	Maryborough	Chris Griffin	0422 634 680
District 23	Sunday 15 March	Eldorado	Peter Brick	0417 346 839
West Region	Sunday 22 March	Lexton	Peter Loader	0417 356 210
District 22	Sunday 22 March	Strathmerton	Wayne Geisler	0418 176 143

RURAL STATE SENIOR CHAMPIONSHIPS – STAWELL – 28 MARCH, 2026
RURAL STATE JUNIOR CHAMPIONSHIPS – STAWELL – 29 MARCH, 2026

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Vale Chris Winsall

It is with deep sorrow and heavy hearts that Camperdown Brigade will remember Chris Winsall; a true pillar of the brigade and the broader CFA community.

Chris dedicated more than 44 years of his life to protecting his community and supporting his fellow volunteers, joining Camperdown Brigade on June 29, 1981.

Serving an impressive 22 years as an officer, Chris held key roles within the Brigade Management Team (BMT), including Foreman, Apparatus Officer and Lieutenant. He also shared his invaluable knowledge as the Group Training Co-ordinator for three years.

His commitment did not go unnoticed, earning him the highest distinctions including Life Membership of Camperdown Fire Brigade and CFA, recognised with the 40 year service medal; the National Medal and 2009 National Emergency Medal.

Chris's dedication, leadership and unwavering commitment will forever be remem-

bered by all fellow members who had the privilege of serving alongside him.

URBAN COMPETITIONS 2025-26

ORGANISATION	DAY & DATE	VENUE	START	ENTRY	CONTACT	PHONE
Greater Midlands	Sat Dec 13	Echuca	0900	Seniors	Brendan Jilbert	0438 516 458
Combined Gippsland	Sat Dec 13	Sale	1015	Juniors	Helen White	0428 329 233
Western Districts	Sat Jan 17	Colac	0900	Snrs/jnrs	Andrew Bath	0419 557 439
Combined East Central	Sat Jan 17	Hallam	0900	Snrs/jnrs	David Baptist	0459 283 174
Greater Midlands	Sat Jan 17	Swan Hill	0900	Juniors	Brendan Jilbert	0438 516 458
Greater Midlands	Sun Jan 18	Swan Hill	0900	Seniors	Brendan Jilbert	0438 516 458
Combined Gippsland	Sat Jan 31	Morwell	0900	Juniors	Helen White	0428 329 233
Greater Midlands	Sat Jan 31	Bendigo	0900	Juniors	Brendan Jilbert	0438 516 458
Greater Midlands	Sun Feb 1	Bendigo	0900	Seniors	Brendan Jilbert	0438 516 458
District 17	Sun Feb 1	TBA	0900	Snrs/jnrs	Sarah Simmons	0439 499 131
Greater Mid/Western Dist	Sat Feb 7	Stawell	0900	Juniors	Malcolm Bishop	0407 041 365
Greater Mid/Western Dist	Sun Feb 8	Stawell	0900	Seniors	Malcolm Bishop	0407 041 365
Combined Gippsland	Sat Feb 14	Morwell	0900	Snrs/jnrs	Helen White	0428 329 233
Western Districts	Sat Feb 14	Osborne Park	0900	Snrs/jnrs	Terry Mann	0412 516 184
Combined East Central	Sat Feb 21	Hallam	0900	Snrs/jnrs	David Baptist	0459 283 174
Western Districts	Sat Feb 21	Warrnambool	0900	Juniors	Tom Woodhams	0406 778 692
Greater Midlands	Sat Feb 21	Tatura	0900	Juniors	Brendan Jilbert	0438 516 458
Greater Midlands	Sun Feb 22	Tatura	0900	Seniors	Brendan Jilbert	0438 516 458
Western Districts	Sun Feb 22	Warrnambool	0900	Snrs/jnrs	Tom Woodhams	0406 778 692
Eastern Districts	Sat Feb 28	Morwell	0900	Snrs/jnrs	Brad Miller	0400 876 325
Greater Midlands	Sat Feb 28	Melton	0930	Juniors	Brendan Jilbert	0438 516 458
Greater Midlands	Sun Mar 1	Melton	0900	Seniors	Brendan Jilbert	0438 516 458
District 17	Sun Mar 1	Horsham	0900	Snrs/jnrs	Sarah Simmons	0439 499 131
Greater Midlands	Sat Mar 14	Echuca	0900	Snrs/jnrs	Brendan Jilbert	0438 516 458
Western Districts	Sat Mar 14	Hamilton	1300	Snrs/jnrs	Nathan Appledore	0448 186 904
Combined Gippsland	Sat Mar 14	Traralgon	0900	Snrs/jnrs	Helen White	0428 329 233

URBAN STATE JUNIOR CHAMPIONSHIPS – STAWELL – 21-22 MARCH, 2026
URBAN STATE SENIOR CHAMPIONSHIPS – STAWELL – 28-29 MARCH, 2026
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"Fire Wise", published monthly, contains a variety of information of value and interest to personnel of the fire service and associated organisations. Every edition will be mailed/emailed to the address nominated, this being the subscription for 12 months.

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