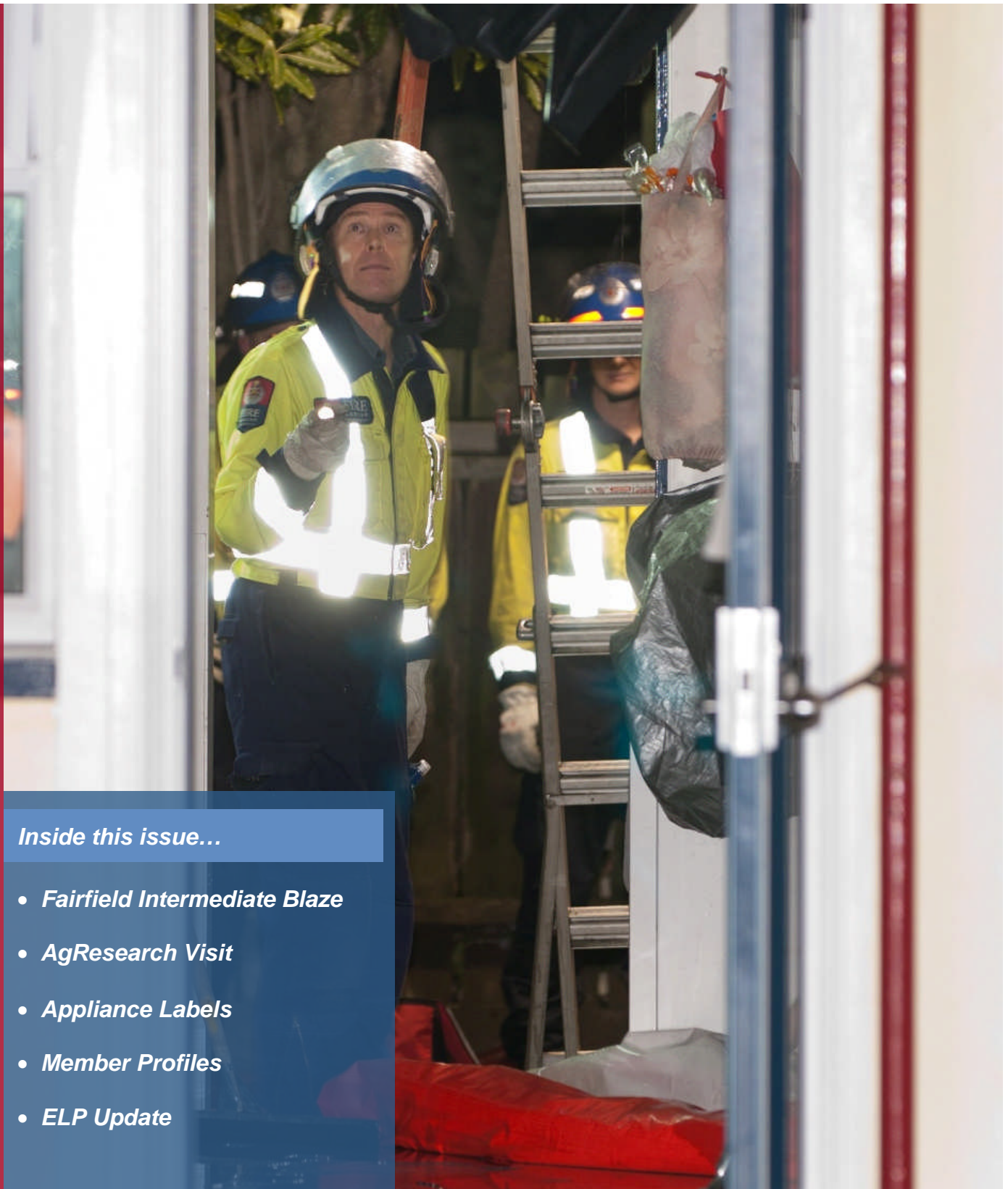


On Station

News from the Volunteers of the Hamilton Fire Brigade

FIRE



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Cover picture: FF Hansen Ihle inspects one of the successfully salvaged classrooms during the Fairfield Intermediate fire. Photo courtesy NZPA/Stephen Barker.

What it's all About (The Fine Print)

On Station (previously called *HamVol Happenings*) is the newsletter of the Hamilton Volunteer Fire Brigade. It's produced quarterly and sometimes more often as required.

The Hamilton VFB is the only volunteer component within the Hamilton Fire District and is on call 24/7 to provide Operational Support to Hamilton's career firefighters and all volunteer brigades throughout the Waikato Fire Area. Our services typically include:

- Incident lighting
- Heavy duty salvage
- Storm/natural disaster relief
- Urban Search & Rescue assistance
- Resource pooling/logistics
- Scene protection
- Command Unit assistance
- All-round extra hands

For other brigades:

To respond us simply radio FireComm with an assistance message "Attach Hamilton Volunteers for (state requirement)".

Note: Hamilton paid crews or Area Management don't need to be in attendance for us to respond.

For public & non-emergency enquiries:

Please contact the appropriate person below.

Brigade Officer in Charge:
SO Craig Meads, 027 455 7213

Brigade 2IC & Recruiting:
SO Andrew McOnie, 021 145 0416

Training & Promotions:
SFF George McQuillan, 027 442 3004

Or visit www.freewebs.com/hvesc

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All Hands On Deck For Fairfield Intermediate Blaze

Just a few minutes before our weekly training night was due to kick-off on Tuesday May 31st, we overheard on our recently installed station radio the career crews of Hamilton 411 and Pukete 431 being despatched to a reported fire at Fairfield Intermediate School – only about 1600 metres from our own station. Upon arrival and finding several classrooms well involved in fire, 411 quickly transmitted a 2nd Alarm.

With most of the equipment being off our appliance undergoing end of month checks, a rapid re-stow was called for before members of Red Watch crewed the appliance and responded (the brigade is grouped into "Red Watch" and "Blue Watch" who take turns month-about for station, appliance and equipment maintenance). On pulling up to the school we found ourselves as the third arriving appliance; resulting from a combination of the incident being so close in proximity, many personnel already being on station and the career crew we share Chartwell station with being at another job in Hamilton East.

As a result the fire was still in full swing and our crew found themselves being able to assist during the crucial early stages of the incident, as opposed to the later overhaul and mop up stages that are typically underway by the time we've arrived. Aside from providing additional manpower for lugging equipment and lending a hand where required, we were able to effect rapid scene lighting, making firefighting crews activities enormously safer, and carry out aggressive salvage to protect neighbouring classrooms. The latter proving once again the benefit of getting a salvage crew in ASAP to prevent damage from water run off and other indirect damage.

Ten minutes after arrival it was apparent there would be no let-up anytime soon for the six crew members who responded initially, so crew OIC SFF George McQuillan called in extra personnel. Four additional members made their way by private vehicle and reported to the Command Unit which was by now on site. A total of ten personnel now on scene allowed us to effectively split into two crews – SO Craig Meads led one working the Western side and SFF McQuillan the other on the Eastern side of the incident. Work carried on at a good rate until we began to wind down and the incident scaled back around 21:30, with our crews finally departing at 22:22 after assisting others with making up.

Though the school suffered significant damage from the fire, Fire Service operations prevented much worse and our crew were pleased to be able to directly contribute to this from the initial stages.

AgResearch Familiarisation Visit

For May 11's training night the crew carried out the first in a series of risk familiarisation visits to AgResearch's Ruakura Research Centre. The centre is a massive facility with a multitude of buildings housing laboratories, offices, meeting facilities and a plethora of research related equipment – a number of private enterprises also tenant some of the premises, ranging in diversity from a pet crematorium to a crèche!

Building overseer Stu Eaton kindly meet with us after hours and gave a guided tour of approximately a third of the campus which proved all we could fit in on the night, the remainder will need to be scheduled for later in the year. The visit was extremely interesting for brigade members, most of whom had never been on to the site previously, and will be of enormous benefit should we be called there. We're also grateful to AgResearch for making the campus available to us for regular training night drills and exercises as this gives us a large area to play with close to the station and without hindering the public, which can be a problem sometimes when using public sports grounds and parks.

Appliance Labels Enhance Awareness of Capabilities

Ultimate Signs of Morrinsville got in behind the Hamilton VFB during June, donating some fantastic wee labels for sticking next to fire vehicle radios throughout the Waikato. The bright yellow self-adhesive labels have a laminate for hard wearing and will be distributed at the next area CFO's meeting. Stock will also be carried on our appliance to pass on to other brigades if we're working out of district between now and then.

The intention is for these to be a prominent reminder to crew OIC's of the resources at their disposal. Being a resource for the whole Waikato area, we're only a radio message away and are here to assist any brigade or crew. Several brigade's from Tirau to Te Kauwhata have already benefited from the capabilities we offer but the key is to call for us just as soon as OIC's think these would be useful – especially for incidents South of the city, as we have to come through town from Chartwell. The labels follow on from several area familiarisation visits we've carried out and will hopefully serve as a reminder to get us rolling ASAP. Big thanks to Rick and the team at Ultimate Signs!



Phone 07 889 6725

Please Allow Us To Introduce...

Over the next few issues we'll be introducing our brigade members to you, two at a time. We hope you enjoy finding out a little bit about who your volunteers are and what makes us tick.

Stephanie Toft



Rank: Qualified Fire Fighter (QFF)
A.K.A: "Steph"
Watch: Red
Length of Service: 5 years
Time in this Brigade: 5 years
Portfolio/s: Memorabilia Guru

Where do you consider to be your home town? *Hamilton.*

What's your favourite music or band/musician? *I'm a huge country music fan!*

Who's your greatest influence in life and why? *My Grandma, she was such a lovely lady with a heart of gold who'd do anything for anyone. You could ask her anything and she'd always answer openly, honestly and if she didn't know she'd just say so. She always saw the best in every situation, nothing was too much trouble or too hard for her. She had a great love and respect for people and lived life to the full.*

What do you enjoy most about being in the brigade?
Getting out there involved with the community.

What's your day job and what does it involve? *Despatch Team Leader for Global Proficiency Ltd. I'm responsible for the running of the despatch area, ensuring deadlines are met, all despatches leave on time and I often get dragged in to the lab to help with the manufacturing and dispensing of samples.*

When you're not at work or doing fire things what are you most likely to be found doing? *Scrapbooking/handcrafts, mountain biking, fishing, boating/water sports, road-trips, gardening, 4-wheel driving, shooting.*

What do you currently drive and if you could change it, what would you get? *Nissan Primera station wagon but I'd love a Holden Clubsport!*

What's your ideal get-away/holiday? *A roadtrip with friends/family to somewhere I haven't been before.*

What TV/movie/book character would you most relate yourself to and why? *I really don't know.*

What are you most looking forward to in your future with the Fire Service? *Nothing specific, just pretty much everything we've been doing and anything else that might come along.*

Is there anything else that people would be surprised to know about you? *Nope, what you see's what you get :)*

George McQuillan



Rank: Senior Fire Fighter (SFF)
A.K.A: "Gumboot"
Watch: Red
Length of Service: 9 years
Time in this Brigade: 7.5 years
Portfolio/s: Training & Promotions

Where do you consider to be your home town? *Even though I'm Te Awamutu born & raised - Palmy North!*

What's your favourite music or band/musician? *At the moment, a French rock band called Silmarils.*

Who's your greatest influence in life and why? *My mum who was (is) an awesome single parent, and every amazing role model who helped her that I was privileged to have in my life when growing up.*

What do you enjoy most about being in the brigade? *Being part of a group that has such a positive impact in our community.*

What's your day job and what does it involve? *Biosecurity Advisor/Trainer for Independent Verification Services (IVS) Ltd. I help importers to meet MAF regulations and keep unwanted greebies out of our country.*

When you're not at work or doing fire things what are you most likely to be found doing? *If I only had the time!! Chilling with my girlfriend Laura or trying to finish one of a hundred projects I've started lately!*

What do you currently drive and if you could change it, what would you get? *Subaru Grand Wagon. Having been a Land Rover man my whole life I'm definitely going through withdrawal at the moment.*

What's your ideal get-away/holiday? *A good old tiki-tour - chucking a sleeping bag and tent in the back and driving wherever.*

What TV/movie/book character would you most relate yourself to and why? *Cooch from Footrot Flats. A bit of a tree-hugger and maybe not as practical as he likes to think he is.*

What are you most looking forward to in your future with the Fire Service? *Seeing our newer members develop their skills and become competent leaders in the field.*

Is there anything else that people would be surprised to know about you? *I love playing indoor netball!*



Thank you to the
major sponsors of our
Emergency Lighting Plant
project



Congratulations Team: ELP Stages 2 and 3 Complete!

A little shy of one year from our purchase of the ex-Tawa Mitsubishi pump appliance for our Emergency Lighting Plant project, we have in rapid succession been extremely pleased to both secure the final funds required and to begin physical work on the project. A lot of hard graft by SFF Karl Johnson and SO Andy McOnie went into a successful funding application made to The Lion Foundation, who in June awarded us the final \$29,000 required to make the project happen. This is the biggest single sponsorship fund received and we sincerely thank the Lion Foundation for supporting us.

With Stage 2 complete (final funding), we wasted no time at all in getting the truck down to our friends at ProSteel Engineering and stripping the vehicle of it's remaining equipment, locker body and pump. Saturday July 2nd saw Stage 3 completed with 10 brigade members plus ProSteel staff working on paring the truck back to the basic cab and chassis we need it for. This was achieved within the one day and marks another – nicely visible – milestone in bringing the project to fruition.

The next major step will be the production and fitting of a replacement driveshaft, before commencing body build. This is being carried out by ProSteel Engineering and is necessary because in these fire appliances the pump was powered via direct link to the driveshaft, which was split in two to accommodate the pump drive mechanism. Now we eagerly await the completion of Stages 4 and onwards

