



SASSAFRAS-FERNY CREEK FIRE BRIGADE

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Lengthy service honoured

Sassafras-Ferny Creek brigade's longest-serving member received dual honours at the brigade's recent annual dinner.

Bob Horner AFSM received a 55-year service medal from CFA, marking yet another milestone in a lifetime's contribution to the fire service in Victoria.

Bob also became the first member of a rural brigade to receive the Volunteer Fire Brigades Victoria (VFBV) Gold Star marking 30 years service to the association. The gold star award has only recently been extended to rural volunteers since the amalgamation last year of the urban and rural associations.

VFBV President Gary Lyttle AFSM presented the award, noting Bob's extraordinary service to the organisation through his lengthy involvement in many aspects of the work of rural association, including a term as Volunteer Rural Fire Brigades Association president. He reflected in particular on Bob's work through the Joint Equipment Review Committee and in developing personal protective equipment for all volunteer firefighters.

CFA Yarra Area Community Safety Manager Ray Fritz was on hand to present Bob with his 55-year service medal. He also presented six other members with service awards, the first occasion on which the new CFA service medals have been presented to brigade members.

Brigade member Bob Wood received a 20-year medal, while brigade president Win King-Smith; lieutenant Karen Noonan, firefighters Paul Hicks and Tim Gane and brigade member Jenny Adam all received medals marking 10 years of service.

Gwen Horner received a badge marking 45 years service to the brigade auxiliary.

Brigade Captain John Schauble told around 60 members and guests that the past year had tested the brigade's capacity to its fullest. This included an extensive commitment to the Black Saturday fires and their aftermath, but also to bushfires closer to home at Tecoma and Upwey last February. "I want to convey just how very proud I am of the way in which members of the brigade performed over what turned out to be the most appalling bushfire summer in the state's history," he said.

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In addition to the service awards, three other brigade members were presented with merit awards determined by the brigade officers. These were Sarah Krumins (Firefighter of the Year) and Jeff Harbour and Alannah Stevens (Officers' Awards).



Photo shows Bob Horner receiving the Gold Star from Volunteer Fire Brigades Victoria President Gary Lyttle.