



SASSAFRAS-FERNY CREEK FIRE BRIGADE

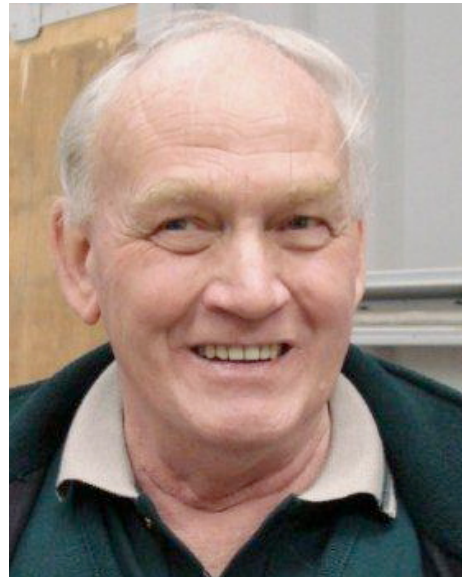
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An honour for Bill

A well-known and popular figure in the Dandenong Ranges, Bill Burnett was recently honoured with a 40-year CFA medal for his service to the Sassafras-Ferny Creek brigade.

Operations Officer Colin Brown presented Bill with the medal at a special ceremony at his home, due to recent ill health. Also present were Sassafras-Ferny Creek captain John Schauble, long-time member Bob Horner and Parks Victoria ranger Lex Wade.



Bill first joined Sassafras-Ferny Creek as a 17-year-old in February 1953. His association with the brigade goes back some 58 years, making him the earliest member still linked to the brigade.

Bill was an active firefighter from 1953 until 1971, a period marked by major fires in the Dandenongs in 1962 and 1968. During this time he was involved in helping develop the brigade's first vehicle. He served as a brigade lieutenant for eight years, including five years as 1st Lieutenant.

It was around this time that Bill joined the Forest Commission of Victoria, his work unit later becoming part of the National Parks Service and eventually Parks Victoria. He resigned from the brigade as an active member in 1976, but through his work never lost touch with it.

In 1994, at a time when the brigade was like many others experiencing problems with day-time turnouts, the idea came up of encouraging local Parks rangers like Bill and Lex Wade to rejoin the brigade to provide some experienced manpower during the winter months.

Bill retired from Parks after more than 30 years of service. It was through Parks Victoria that he was honoured with National Medal for his role as a firefighter.

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