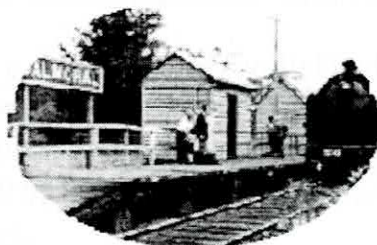


Village Voice



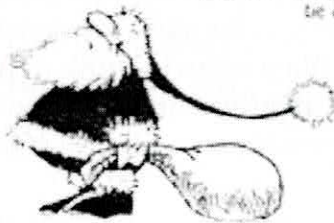
December 2011

No 44

A newsletter published by the Balmoral Village Association Inc.

We would like to take this opportunity to wish every one of you the happiest of Christmasses and a wonderful New Year, and to thank you one and all for the support you have given us over the year, It has been very much appreciated we assure you and hope we can continue into the future.

It was great to see so many new faces at the Hallow'een Party and a few from Buxton too. We hope to see you all again at the Christmas Party on December 18th. Everyone will be welcome!!



I'm sorry, but the vehicle was left unlocked and unattended while you were down the chimney, livestock would need to be separately insured, and sacks of toys can hardly

be described as personal effects...

So none of your loss is covered!

Balmoral Village Association News

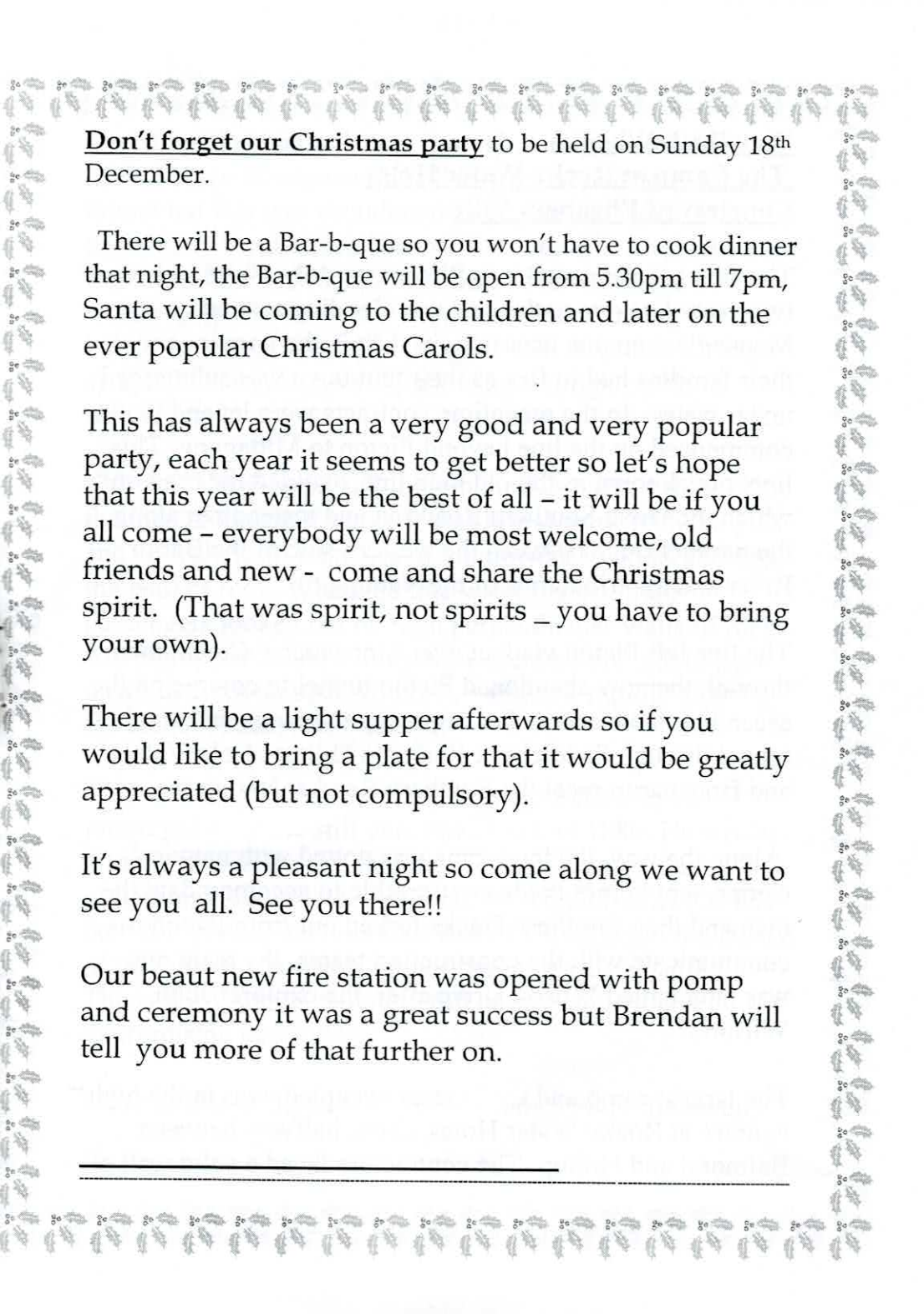
The Hallow'een Party was a great success, so many new faces - not enough fancy dresses though, but the ones who were dressed for the occasion were fantastic in every sense of the word, and added so much to the fun of the night

. Welcome to the new people who came and especially the people from Buxton, we were delighted to meet you and hope to see you again.

The children had a great time with a treasure hunt they seemed to run for themselves, there were lots of indoor puzzles and games (thanks to Ralph for those) but we were so lucky with the weather, a warm and pleasant night in spite of the rain hanging around, most of the activities were held outside, it was so pleasant.

Thanks again to Judy and Russel Scholes and Pam and Fred Marks, our faithful Bar-b-q chefs par excellence who are always so willing and work so hard, it would be much more difficult without them.

Thanks too to Rob and Maureen Wilson for their help running the raffle and being the ad hoc emcees, to Claire, Pat, the trusty Maree and all the others who worked so hard setting up the hall, hanging up skeletons and other gruesome objects (they seem to think up uglier things every year) and cleaning up afterwards both on the night and on Sunday morning, you are the salt of the earth.



Don't forget our Christmas party to be held on Sunday 18th December.

There will be a Bar-b-que so you won't have to cook dinner that night, the Bar-b-que will be open from 5.30pm till 7pm, Santa will be coming to the children and later on the ever popular Christmas Carols.

This has always been a very good and very popular party, each year it seems to get better so let's hope that this year will be the best of all - it will be if you all come - everybody will be most welcome, old friends and new - come and share the Christmas spirit. (That was spirit, not spirits _ you have to bring your own).

There will be a light supper afterwards so if you would like to bring a plate for that it would be greatly appreciated (but not compulsory).

It's always a pleasant night so come along we want to see you all. See you there!!

Our beaut new fire station was opened with pomp and ceremony it was a great success but Brendan will tell you more of that further on.

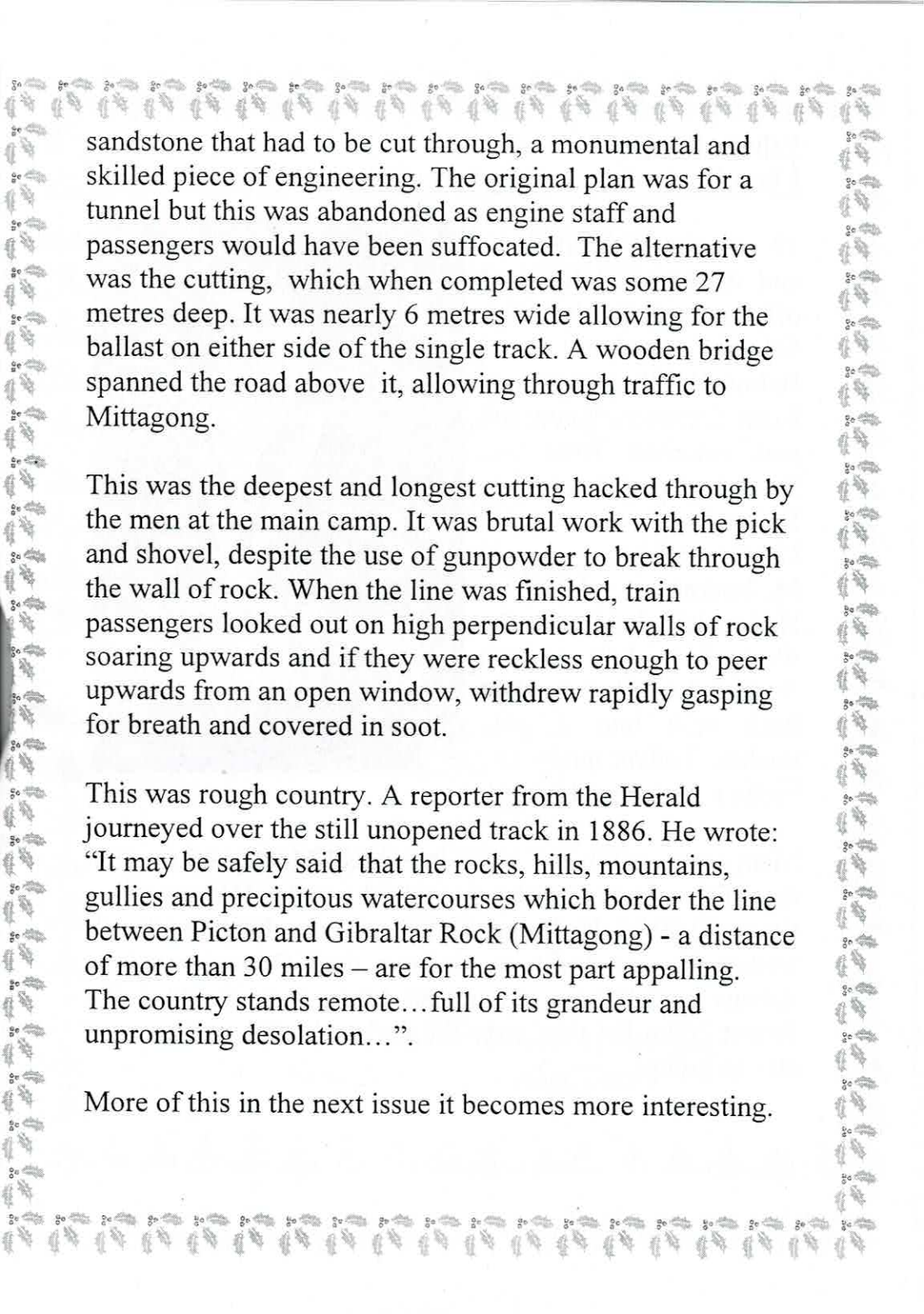
Way Back When
The Camp at Rocky Water Holes
Courtesy of Elizabeth Villy

The first train steamed into Picton on July 1st, 1863. It was two years late due to the constant flooding around Menangle – on one occasion, in 1860, the navvies and their families had to flee as their tent town was submerged under water. In the meantime contracts were let and work commenced on the line beyond Picton to Mittagong. This line, now known as the old loop line, avoided the road on which the Great Southern Road ran and instead ran along the parallel ridge between the western side of the Bargo River and the tributaries of the Nattai.

The line left Picton viaduct over Stonequarry Creek, then through the now abandoned Picton tunnel to emerge on the ascending tableland at Thirlmere, up the range and another tunnel through Saddleback Range to Hilltop, Colo Vale, and Braemar to meet the Southern Road at Mittagong.

Along the way, the landscape was dotted with navvies' camps, tent homes made comfortable to accommodate the men and their families. Tracks forked out from Picton to communicate with the construction teams, the main one was later called Wilson Drive after the explorer John Wilson.

The largest camp and the longest occupied, was in the high country at Rocky Water Holes, about halfway between Balmoral and Hilltop. The contractors faced a solid wall of



sandstone that had to be cut through, a monumental and skilled piece of engineering. The original plan was for a tunnel but this was abandoned as engine staff and passengers would have been suffocated. The alternative was the cutting, which when completed was some 27 metres deep. It was nearly 6 metres wide allowing for the ballast on either side of the single track. A wooden bridge spanned the road above it, allowing through traffic to Mittagong.

This was the deepest and longest cutting hacked through by the men at the main camp. It was brutal work with the pick and shovel, despite the use of gunpowder to break through the wall of rock. When the line was finished, train passengers looked out on high perpendicular walls of rock soaring upwards and if they were reckless enough to peer upwards from an open window, withdrew rapidly gasping for breath and covered in soot.

This was rough country. A reporter from the Herald journeyed over the still unopened track in 1886. He wrote: "It may be safely said that the rocks, hills, mountains, gullies and precipitous watercourses which border the line between Picton and Gibraltar Rock (Mittagong) - a distance of more than 30 miles - are for the most part appalling. The country stands remote... full of its grandeur and unpromising desolation...".

More of this in the next issue it becomes more interesting.

Village People
Liam Cunneen

Courtesy of Tom and Jane Cunneen

12 months of hard work and dedication have paid off for local Bowral High School student and Balmoral Village resident, Liam Cunneen. Liam has just returned from the School Sport Australia Swimming Championships in Melbourne (School Nationals), held over the week 31st July to 5th August. Liam has brought back with him 4 gold medals, 1 silver medal and broke a 10 year old record.



Liam competed in the 200m Individual Medley on the first day of the championships winning the under 16's event in a time of 2.09.10. He broke the 10 year record held by Travis Nederpelt, who went on to be a dual Olympian at the Athens and Beijing Olympics. Liam also recorded the fastest 200m IM time over the entire championships, over all age groups.

Liam also won gold in the under 16yrs 100m free, the 4x50m 15-16yrs boys medley relay and 4x100m free relay. He won a silver medal in the 4x50m free relay.

The School Sports Australia Championships are the end of 6 months worth of school swimming for Liam. The first carnival was the Bowral High School Swimming Carnival held in February. This was followed by a zone carnival in Queanbeyan, regional carnival in Dapto and then Combined High Schools State where Liam was named Under 16's age champion. He then swam at the All Schools Swimming Championships in May where Liam qualified for the School Sports Australia Championships in 3 individual events.

Liam has been training up to 9 times a week at the Atlantis Aquatic Swim Centre in Narellan.

2011 has so far been a very successful year for Liam. Over the Easter holidays Liam competed at the Australian Age Swimming Championships (Nationals) in Adelaide. He won a silver medal in the 200m Individual Medley. Qualifying 3rd in the heat earlier in the day, Liam took 4 seconds off his personal best time to score the silver in the final in a time of 2.09.43. Liam was the only swimmer from NSW in the final, so there was plenty of screaming and excitement in the stands from all the NSW clubs. With Liam's team of 11 swimmers, family and friends from the Atlantis Swim Club in the crowd there was huge support for the local.

Liam competed in 8 events over the championships. He made the finals also in 200m fly and 100m fly where he placed 7th in both events.

Liam also qualified and swam at the 2011 Telstra Australian Swimming Championships (World Championship Trials) a few weeks earlier, in Sydney. The experience and atmosphere of swimming in multiple events against Australia's best in an open event is a great feat. It is enormous testament to the coaching skills of Rod Furlong and the hard work and dedication of the swimmers. Liam competed in the 200m and 100m butterfly.

Kids Corner

Jokes, HA HA HA!

Courtesy of Roy Bramich-Wilson

Q. What do you get if you cross Bambi with a ghost?

A. Bamboo!

Q. Doctor, Doctor, I feel like a sheep?

A. That's Baaaaaad!

Q. How do cows count?

A. They use a cowculator!

Q. What is a skeleton's favorite instrument?

A. A Trum-Bone!

Q. What kind of music do geologist like best?

A. Rock!

**Balmoral Village N.S.W. Volunteer Rural Fire Brigade
News from the Captain**

PO Box 87

Buxton NSW 2571

Phone (02) 4889 8387

As we are now into summer there is NO BURNING OFF PERMITTED until the end of the fire season, which is the end of March 2012. No Fire Permits are issued during the Fire Season and there is No Burning off Permitted, from the beginning of November to the end of March each year.

Brigade News:

Balmoral Village Volunteer Rural Fire Brigade members conducted Hazard Reduction's leading up to the fire season to reduce the fuel load in and around the Village. Unfortunately rain and strong wind held up a number of planned hazard reductions, which did not give us enough time to complete all we had planned to do.

PREPARE

You must make important decisions before the fire season starts

- Know and understand your bush fire risk.
- Prepare yourself, your family, your home and property for bush fires.
- Prepare a Bush Fire Survival Plan.

ACT

The higher the fire danger rating, the more dangerous the conditions

- Know the fire danger rating for your area and what you need to do.
- Put your preparations into action – don't wait and see.
- Check your Bush Fire Survival Plan.

SURVIVE

Fires may threaten without warning - know what you will do to survive.

- The safest place is away from the fire – your survival is the highest priority.
- Follow your Bush Fire Survival Plan and make decisions to protect you and your family.
- You need to know what to do if you are caught in a fire. You may be threatened by a fire without warning.
- Know the bush fire Alert Levels, monitor conditions and keep up to date.

What you need to know about the Fire Danger Rating Sign located in the Village

The Fire Danger Rating (FDR) is an assessment of the potential fire behaviour, the difficulty of suppressing a fire, and the potential impact on the community should a bush fire occur on a given day.

The FDR is determined by the Fire Danger Index (FDI). The FDI is a combination of air temperature, relative

humidity, wind speed and drought. An FDI of 1 (Low-Moderate) means that fire will not burn, or will burn so slowly that it will be easily controlled, whereas an FDI in excess of 100 (Catastrophic) means that fire will burn so fast and so hot that it is uncontrollable.

When a High Fire Danger Rating is advised, you need to take it seriously and be prepared to act.

Your survival may depend on it.

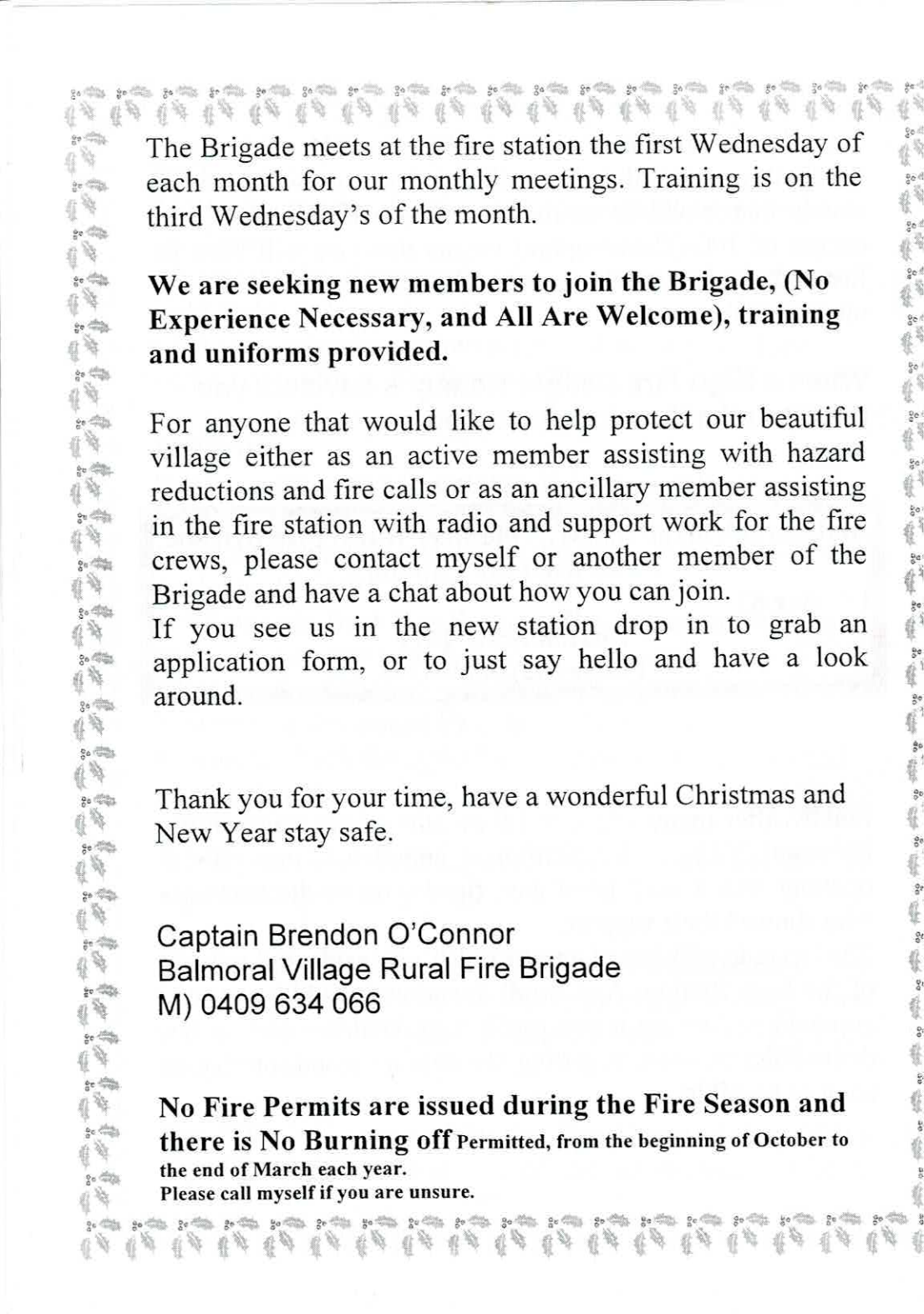
**Balmoral Village N.S.W. Volunteer Rural Fire Brigade
News from the Captain**

PO Box 87

**Buxton NSW 2571
Phone (02) 4889 8387**

Finally after many years and 8 months of construction the Balmoral Village Fire Station is completed, our official opening was a very good day, thank-you to the residents who showed their support.

The Brigade still has plenty to finish off inside and outside of the New Station. Any small donations would be greatly appreciated (we are a non profit organization which is tax deductible) to assist in getting the station up and running as soon as possible.



The Brigade meets at the fire station the first Wednesday of each month for our monthly meetings. Training is on the third Wednesday's of the month.

We are seeking new members to join the Brigade, (No Experience Necessary, and All Are Welcome), training and uniforms provided.

For anyone that would like to help protect our beautiful village either as an active member assisting with hazard reductions and fire calls or as an ancillary member assisting in the fire station with radio and support work for the fire crews, please contact myself or another member of the Brigade and have a chat about how you can join.

If you see us in the new station drop in to grab an application form, or to just say hello and have a look around.

Thank you for your time, have a wonderful Christmas and New Year stay safe.

Captain Brendon O'Connor
Balmoral Village Rural Fire Brigade
M) 0409 634 066

No Fire Permits are issued during the Fire Season and there is No Burning off Permitted, from the beginning of October to the end of March each year.
Please call myself if you are unsure.