



# Buxton Fire Brigade

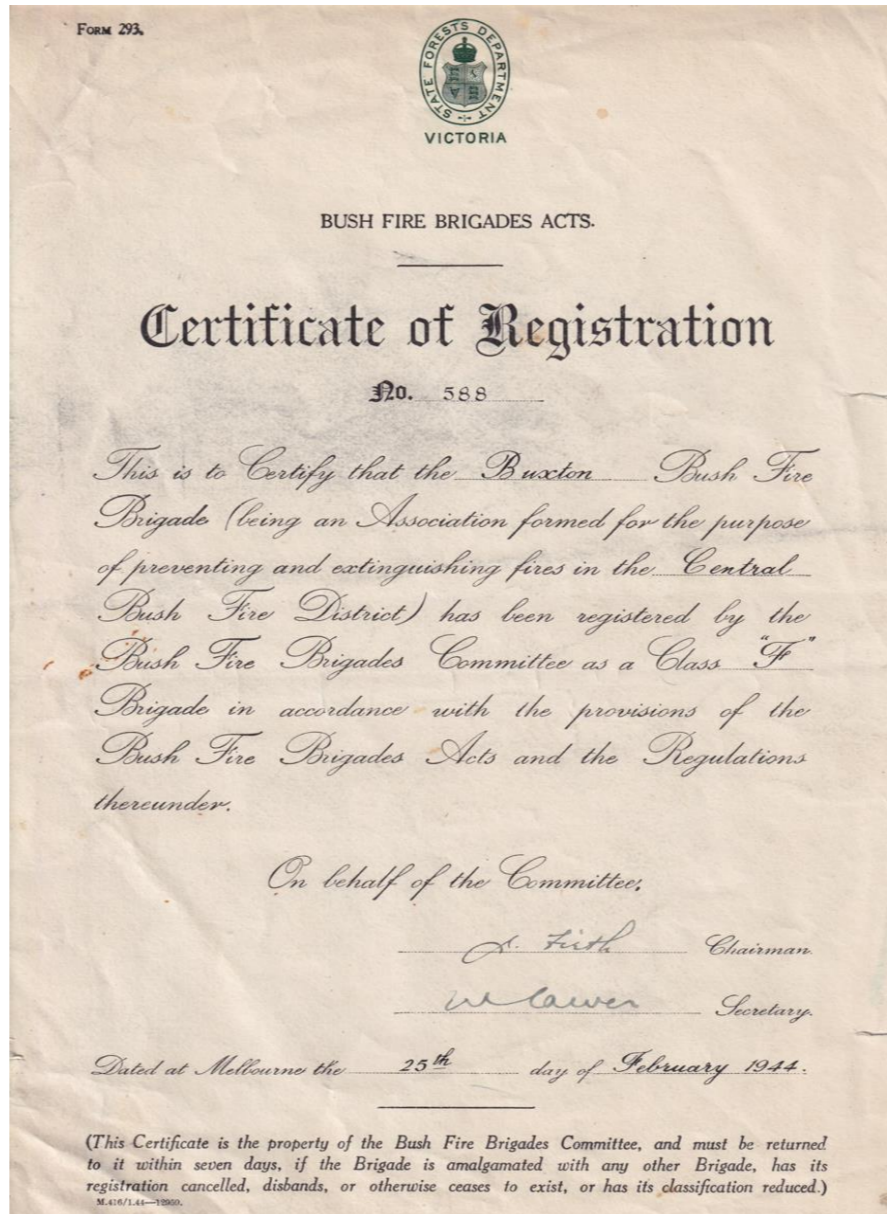
## Our origins



### Our beginnings 1943

It was 1943 and a desperate time during the second World War. There were severe manpower and resource shortages. Conditions were deteriorating locally and across the State, with terrible bushfires in 1942 and 1943 (and 1944). As with all self-reliant farming communities of the time, Buxton by necessity had its own long-established, local firefighting force already in place. It comprised individuals and relied upon their own enormous efforts along with their own personal resources. The all-encompassing bushfire organisation resulting from the post-1939 Bushfire Royal Commission was starting to take shape. Some Buxton residents met in late 1943 to formalise a fire brigade, with the intent of joining the new bushfire brigades organisation. Maurice Keppel was elected Captain & President.

The Brigade's first request was:  
18 knapsacks  
1 furphy  
45 beaters  
12 rakes  
½ dozen axes  
½ dozen slashers  
1 dozen water bags



### 1945 Affiliation with CFA

The Bush Fire Brigades Association was absorbed into the Country Fire Authority when CFA was created in 1945. Buxton Brigade was in CFA Region 13 initially, but when Buxton township was transferred to Alexandra Shire in October 1963, Buxton Brigade transferred to Region 12.

### 1949 Joined Victorian Rural Fire Brigades' Association

Buxton Brigade decided to join VRFBA in November 1949. Many years later, VRFBA and VUFBA (Victorian Urban Fire Brigades' Association) merged to form the present Volunteer Fire Brigades Victoria (VFBV).



Stalwart of the community for many years, Maurice Keppel was Buxton Fire Brigade's first Captain and President.

### Funding

Buxton Brigade funding was originally proposed to be by member subscription — you paid to be a firefighter. Available firefighting equipment was pooled. Funding now would be by community subscription:

- Land holders: 10/- for first 100 acres or part, plus 1/- per 100 acres thereafter
- House holders: 10/- flat

Before long, every male in the community over the age of 16 years was expected to be a member.

### 1944 Getting organised

The zone for which Buxton Brigade was responsible was defined to be "the whole of Parish of Buxton and that portion of Parish of Taggerty excluded from Parish of Taggerty Fire Brigade". Note that at this time Taggerty was in Alexandra Shire whereas Buxton was in Healesville Shire (boundary north of South Cathedral Lane on Maroondah Highway), and crossing Cerberus Creek was quite difficult — this area was contentious for some years.

### Registration with Bush Fire Brigades Committee

The Bush Fire Brigades Committee issued Certificate of Registration No 588 to Buxton Bush Fire Brigade dated 25th February 1944. This made Buxton Brigade an "official" brigade.

