

# FACES IN THE CROWD



▲ Bradbury's longest serving CFS Volunteer, Ray Allen, reached the milestone of 50 years in April 2007.

Photo: Mount Barker Courier, 6 June 2007

## RAY ALLEN'S 50 YEAR MILESTONE

At age 72, Ray Allen is the longest serving member of Bradbury CFS, having reached the milestone of 50 years service in April 2007.

Ray officially joined the Longwood, Bradbury, Scott Creek EFS on 28 April, 1957.

In the early years, CFS was a real family affair for Ray.

His father Charlie and brother John, both members of Bradbury, urged him to join.

Ray and his brother John built three fire trucks for the brigade, including one from a former petrol tanker they bought for 200 pounds in 1957.

Not only was Ray one of the station's mechanics, but he was a builder too, helping to erect the fire station at its first location and then adding to it later on.

In 1985, Bradbury was expecting a new appliance which wouldn't quite fit the station, so Ray said 'no worries, we will just lift the roof and take the sides out; a piece of cake!'

This is a well-liked story that is still recalled.

In 1996, eleven years after this addition to the station, a new location and station was needed and again Ray drew up the plans and together

with a wonderful band of helpers, did all the inside work to the shed once it was erected.

Ray married Lois in 1964 and as a new bride, she soon found out how much CFS was a part of Ray's life.

He would come home from work, have his meal and go straight to the fire station, a schedule that would sound all too familiar to partners of CFS members.

It wasn't long before Lois found 'if you can't beat it; join it' and she is still a member of Bradbury CFS and holds the positions of Brigade Logistics Officer and Radio Operator.

In the early years of Ray and Lois' marriage, Ray did water carting with the fire truck; Lois took the calls. Ray delivered water after work and on weekends for many years, often with their eldest daughter Robyn who was trained at the age of eight to start the pump.

Ray has been in the thick of two Ash Wednesdays and many other fires.

After the first Ash Wednesday, some of the wives and mothers of Bradbury CFS members told Lois that they were always glad to hear that Ray was driving the truck, as he was a safe and experienced driver who remains

calm in hazardous situations.

Ray was a delegate at original Council EFS meetings and has served on many other CFS committees and even now still attends general meetings with the Mount Lofty Group.

Up until 1968, Bradbury CFS didn't have a Captain and Lieutenants, as we know them now; there was a Station Officer, Fire Controllers and Fire Party Leaders.

Ray was elected Captain of Bradbury CFS at the 1968 AGM and again in May 1980 for a few months.

At the AGM in August 1971 Ray became the Brigade Administration Officer (BAO), a position he has held for 36 years.

Ray held the position of Fire Controller until he became a Lieutenant in 1980 and has been a Lieutenant for 27 years.

Ray has given 50 years of full service to the CFS and only Lois knows the silent hours he has put in working on trucks and at the station.

Ray has been a builder, mechanic, firefighter and mentor to so many; you could say it's his life.

Ray never expects praise, he is a most modest man, but in his families eyes he deserves life's highest award.

