

SALUTE TO OUR FRONTLINE – RUAKAKĀ

We are the community

► by Amy Fifita

Darrell Trigg is the Ruakākā Volunteer Fire Brigade chief fire officer and has a strong community focus and training specialised for the district.

“My father was in the Whangārei Fire Brigade, initially as a volunteer, then a paid firefighter during his 40 odd years of service. I spent my first five years living behind the station, and it got into my system. I’ve been in for 34 years, and for me, it is about the people and leading a great team,” Darrell says.

“As leaders of a fire brigade, we have to create a culture where people want to turn up because that is all

we’ve got. If you create the right culture and environment, then people will want to turn up and do what being a firefighter entails.

“We have an amazing bunch of people and amazing employers that allow them to go out in their employment hours to answer the call when the community calls. It relies on the generosity of employers and the large commitment from the community. People think that the fire brigade is always there, but the fire brigade is the community, and the community is the fire brigade.

“When someone calls 111, it is a whole community effort. You are relying on the community to leave what they are doing, go to the fire station, put the gear on, jump in the truck and respond back to the community that called it. I am extremely grateful and proud for the team we have.”

Darrell says the Ruakākā brigade has a steadily developing industrial precinct based on its proximity to Auckland and the deep water port. Coupled with the rapidly expanding residential areas make things busy.

“The refinery, which has scaled right back now, has an import terminal.



▲ Ruakākā Volunteer Fire Brigade chief fire officer Darrell Trigg at the 2019 Sydney Tower Eye for Motor Neurone Disease

Although the refinery wasn’t a risk because they had their own firefighting capabilities on-site, we were always first in the gate as a backup.

“We do training around industrial firefighting. We have an annual exercise at the port and with the bigger facilities in our district so we can learn about people and infrastructure changes. Most brigades do specific training according to where they are. We are not unlike other brigades. There is a mixture of call-outs we attend, scrub fires, car fires, structure fires, car accidents and medical calls. Still, we do have a uniqueness where we

have an ever-expanding port facility. It is a heavy industry.”

Darrell says that the brigade is a loyal supporter of the upcoming Firefighter Sky Tower Challenge and other awareness appeals, which have been disrupted in recent years.

“I’ve climbed in Sydney, Melbourne, New York, Calgary and all over the show, and it is about bringing awareness to the cause of the day. It’s a great brother and sisterhood to be part of. It’s a big old world, but it is quite small when you have a family like firefighting around the world.” ■

OUR LOCAL

A huge thank you to our volunteer firefighters, part of a proud tradition of service

STORAGE BREAM BAY
76 Waiwarawara Drive

021 432 701
info@storagebreambay.co.nz

FIRE BRIGADE

OUR LOCAL

We stand beside our local firefighters for their service

MPP WE'VE GOT YOU COVERED
MARSDEN PANEL & PAINT

CONTACT US TODAY!
09 433 0313
470 Marsden Point Road, Ruakaka

FIRE BRIGADE

OUR LOCAL

Always there for the community in times of need

Akarana timbers

Ph 09 929 9608
sales.marsden@akaranatimbers.co.nz
66 Waiwarawara Dr,
Marsden Business Park, Ruakaka

FIRE BRIGADE

OUR LOCAL

We stand beside our local firefighters for their service

MARS DEN MOTORS

021 262 0338 | 09 929 9508
7b Kitepai Street, Marsden City
info@marsdenmotors.co.nz

FIRE BRIGADE

OUR LOCAL

A huge thank you to our volunteer firefighters, part of a proud tradition of service

OTP ELECTRICAL
AND HEAT PUMPS

Ph Jeremy Thomassen
027 258 0762

FIRE BRIGADE

OUR LOCAL

Always there for the community in times of need

BBR BREAM BAY REALTY

Ph 09 433 0300
bbrealty.co.nz
Licensed Under the REA Act 2008

FIRE BRIGADE

OUR LOCAL

We stand beside our local firefighters for their service

PORHOUSE - BAR & EATERY -

Ph 09 432 8909
Open from 12pm 7 days a week
163 Port Marsden, Highway Ruakaka

FIRE BRIGADE

OUR LOCAL

We stand beside our local firefighters for their service

MPU ELECTRICAL

Ph 09 988 9651
info@mobilepowerutilities.com
34 Lakeside Park Rd, Ruakaka

FIRE BRIGADE

OUR LOCAL

Always there for the community in times of need

RUAKAKA MOTORS

Ph 09 432 7233
ruakaka.motors@gmail.com

FIRE BRIGADE

SALUTE TO OUR FRONTLINE – RUAKĀKĀ

Fifty-five years of firefighting

► by Amy Fifita

Operational support worker, Bob Garrity, recalls the Ruakākā Volunteer Fire Brigade’s early beginnings starting in 1967 and how it has grown.

The Ruakākā Volunteer Fire Brigade began as the Ruakākā Volunteer Fire Party in 1967; before that, the closest brigade was at Waipū. Fires in the area from years before it was founded required help from the community or volunteers from the army.

“Originally, we were an auxiliary to Waipū, and we were going to have the first on November 9 1967. It was suggested the year before that at the Ruakākā Residents and Ratepayers

Ruakākā Fire Party to use, and gave them a second-hand Land Rover and trailer pump.

“The trailer pump is now at the Museum of Technology in Maunu. We gave it to them a few years ago, providing we could borrow it at the jubilee, and we had it at our 50-year jubilee.

“In 1969, we moved into a building that was a garage on the corner of Simons Road. It was never used as a garage; it was used as a shirt factory.

“In 1979, the new station was built, and that’s where the station is now”

meeting that Ruakākā should get its own brigade.

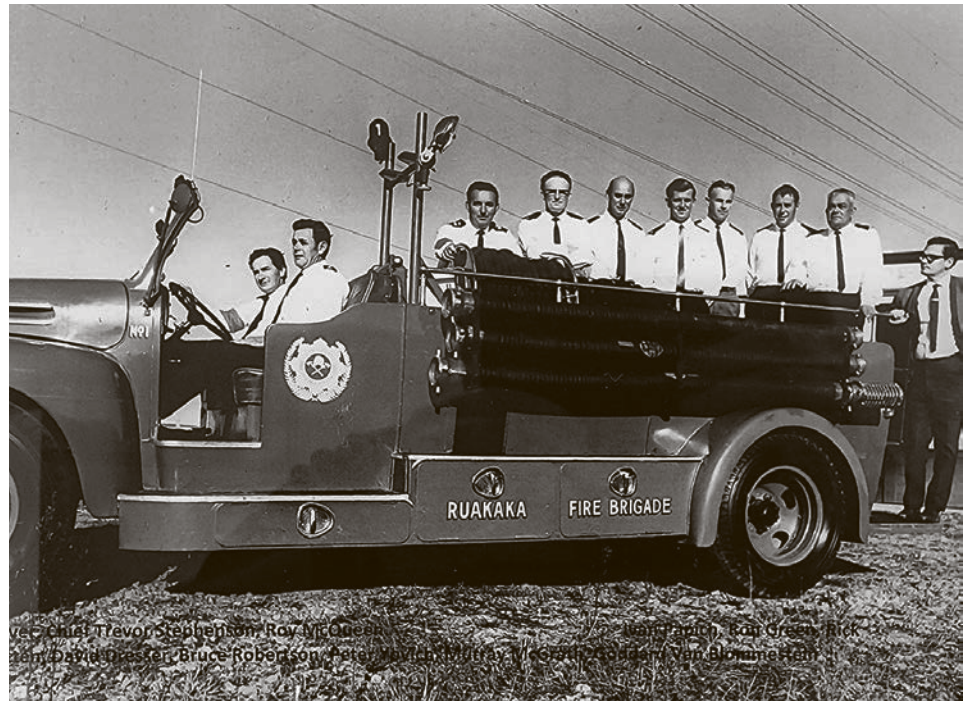
“Waipū gave us some equipment in those days. They gave us a standpipe and a couple of dividing breeching and lengths of hoses. It was stored in a trailer in Trevor Stephenson’s garage, and the first person that was in the brigade that heard of a fire would hook on to his car and tow the trailer to wherever we were firefighting.”

In 1968, Whangārei County Council made some land available for the

“When they moved on, it was given to us to use by the Shell Oil Company, providing we kept the grounds in good condition and looked after the maintenance. The garage is still there, and it is the garage opposite the tavern.

“In April 1970, we went from being a fire party to being a secondary urban fire brigade, and our first real appliance arrived. It was an open-top Ford V8. We had that appliance for about nine years.

“In 1971, we moved to a half-round barn, and we used it for many years. In



▲ Ruakākā Volunteer Fire Brigade members with its first fire engine in April 1970

1979, the new station was built, and that’s where the station is now.

“We had a temporary station for a few months, by the Ruakākā Hall on the main road, while the station was being built.

“In the 1980s, we secured a job for the brigade at the refinery for donations.

When the refinery tanks were built, they had to be cleaned of the salt water and residue. We got the job of cleaning all of the tanks internally with fresh water.”

The donations from the refinery job went towards a kitchen, an extended lecture room and other facilities. ■

OUR LOCAL

Proud to support our volunteer firefighters, real community heroes



**Ph 0800 278 324
09 432 7968**
Northland@astech.biz

FIRE BRIGADE

OUR LOCAL

Always there for the community in times of need



**Brynderwyn/Tinopai
09 431 8303**
Ruakaka
09 432 5030

FIRE BRIGADE

OUR LOCAL

Proud to support our volunteer firefighters, real community heroes



Ph 021 227 4355
soulflux@gmail.com • soulfluxyoga.com
Lakeside Park Rd, Ruakaka

FIRE BRIGADE

OUR LOCAL

A huge thank you to our volunteer firefighters, part of a proud tradition of service



Ph 09 777 0012
dispensary@mcpharmacy.co.nz
1b Ngawaka Lane,
One Tree Point, 0118

FIRE BRIGADE

OUR LOCAL

A huge thank you to our volunteer firefighters, part of a proud tradition of service



Ph 09 393 7755
www.poolsidemarsdencove.co.nz
FB • poolsidemarsdencove
16 Waiwarawara Drive,
Marsden Cove

FIRE BRIGADE

OUR LOCAL

Always there for the community in times of need



Ph 027 532 7377
info@sbelectrical.co.nz
www.sbelectrical.co.nz
385 Marsden Point Rd,
Ruakaka 0152

FIRE BRIGADE

OUR LOCAL

We stand beside our local firefighters for their service



Ph Alexis 027 341 9535

FIRE BRIGADE

OUR LOCAL

Proud to support our volunteer firefighters, real community heroes



Ph 027 486 7081
102 Takahiwai Road,
One Tree Point, Bream Bay

FIRE BRIGADE