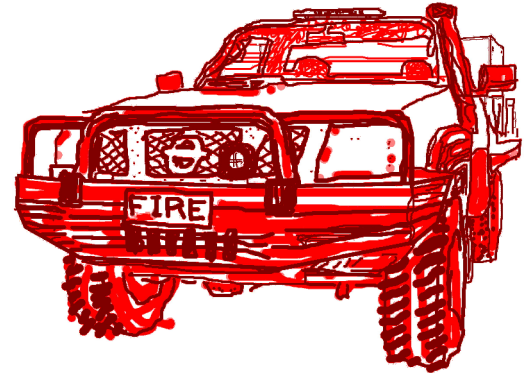




WIMMERA hills winery

P Y R E N E E S

Fire Engine Red



Ben's Story

My wife and I own and operate our small winery in the beautiful ancient hills of Glenpatrick. We live there with our three children. I am a volunteer firefighter with the Elmhurst Brigade.

I was on standby at home on the 7th of February, expecting to be called in to standby at the shed or out to a fire, beeper burning a hole in my pocket. I should have been in the vineyard putting nets on but you can't in weather like that. Wind makes the kids wild and they were bored and boistrous, can-we-go-to-the-top-of-the-hill?-can-we-go-to-the-beach?-can-we-go-up-Ben-Nevis?

Fire weather always makes Jane nervous and the children weren't helping. "NO. Just stay close to the house!"

The beeper didn't go off. We didn't hear the horrendous news until evening. We didn't believe it. Not at first.

I was not called out that day but volunteered for strike team duty and went to the Yea-Murrundindi fire three days later.

I went with strike team 1613 to help with the fire at Alexandra. My main worry was not for my safety or those around me but for the people we left at home.

It seemed as though every tanker and every crew from the neighbouring brigades was there with us. I know that CFA policy keeps a minimum number of appliances appropriately distributed but nevertheless the worry creeps in. On the way home and in the following weeks there was much thought and discussion of what we could do to help those in need.

I think the best strategy is to get our own house in order so that we minimise risk in our own community and are able to continue to provide firefighting support to others when they need it. The key issue that will make me

happier to go away on strike team is knowing there is a purpose-built, well-equipped and professionally maintained appliance back home. If all we need is money, we'll just have to find the money.

Sadly we can't afford simply to donate the kind of money it takes but we do have sufficient premium wine in stock to bottle a special fundraising label – so the Fire Engine Red concept is born.

The wine is our premium Pyrenees shiraz that we normally retail for \$15 per bottle. We will bottle and label it with a low cost label.

Community members will market the wine to family and friends for \$14 per bottle.

We will handle all sales and will retain \$5 per bottle that represents our material costs. The remaining \$9, representing labour costs, marketing costs and profit we will hold in a trust account for the specific purpose of purchasing the ultra-light tanker for ERFB.

www.fireengineered.org.au