

Notes from the Field

National Arboretum recognises Australian Fire & Rescue services. Contribution by Pat Jones AFSM FIFireE, ACT Emergency Services Agency

In May 2014, the National Arboretum in Canberra launched a website that links honour rolls from Australia's fire and rescue services together in one place. This website provides a dedicated, physical memorial in the Nation's Capital for firefighters who have lost their lives protecting the community. It brings together honour rolls from Fire & Rescue services around Australia in one easily accessible place.

Bushfires swept through the ACT including the site of the current Arboretum in 2001 and again in 2003. The National Arboretum serves as a phoenix from the ashes.

The Bunya pine tree, which has fire protection characteristics, has been selected to symbolise the courage and dedication shown by current and past firefighters and aims to symbolise firefighters as a collective while recognising the contribution made by Australia's firefighters to the National Arboretum in Canberra.

The location of the Bunya Pines at the Arboretum is bounded by the Bicentennial National Trail. This location allows visitors to look north and south over the vista of the Canberra and its surrounds. The view extends north to Telstra Tower on Black Mountain and Canberra's city area, to the Parliamentary Triangle, through Woden Valley to the south of Canberra. The expansive view allows for reflection on the work of urban firefighters.

The web site can be found at www.nationalarboretum.act.gov.au/about_us/fireandrescue.

The view south to the Brindabella Ranges reflects on the work of rural firefighters, and to the west, the ever-present bush that surrounds not only the Nation's Capital but most of its urban centres.



Image: Christine Becher

The eagle and nest sculpture overlooks the National Arboretum which has become a symbol of the Capital's recovery program.