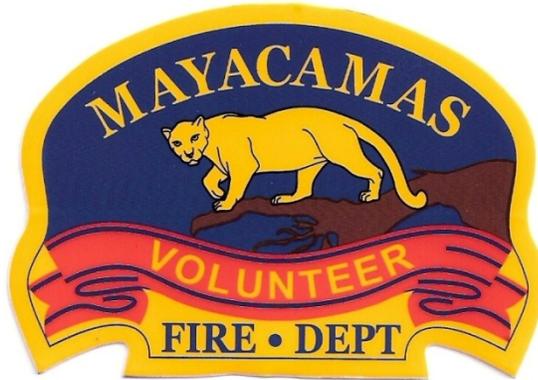


# MVFD Firefighter Anthony Horne

*Interviewed by Rina Faletti on*

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Transcription provided by:



**Tigerfish**  
Transcribing-Editing



Anthony Horne: I just wanted to do it.

Interviewer: What did you think you were going to get out of it, and why did you want to -- what does that mean to you now? Why is it important to you?

Anthony Horne: The community.

Interviewer: What about the community?

Anthony Horne: What do you mean, "What about the community"?

Interviewer: Like when you say it's community, it sounds like it means you want to help the community.

Anthony Horne: Yeah, yeah, yeah, yeah, yeah.

Interviewer: In what ways as a firefighter do you do that? You're sometimes fighting fires and you're also doing other things, but what's the help that you give the community as a volunteer firefighter?

Anthony Horne: Just make sure we're all safe.

Interviewer: What kind of training do you have to get as a volunteer firefighter?

Anthony Horne: A lot. A lot of training. We do it like every couple -- two times a month. Sometimes the county will come out and train us.

Interviewer: Do you like the training part?

Anthony Horne: Yeah.

Interviewer: Do you remember an experience of training that made you, I don't know, that you really liked or that you felt was really helpful to you?

Anthony Horne: Yeah.

Interviewer: Can you tell me about it, what you remember?

Anthony Horne: I'm just trying to think.

Interviewer: Take your time.

Anthony Horne: It was mainly the wildland training, actually. That's all I can think of.

Interviewer: That wildland training helped you with the current fire that we had, which was mostly a wildland fire, I'll bet.

Anthony Horne: Yeah.

Interviewer: Before this big fire happened in October, did you have worries or concerns about fire before that?

Anthony Horne: Mm-hmm.

Interviewer: What did you think about and worry about before this fire happened?

Anthony Horne: I guess just I kind of knew that one of these days a fire like this would come, but really didn't expect it.

Interviewer: It sounds like no one expected something so big as this. Did you feel like you were prepared and that the fire department was prepared for such a big unexpected fire?

Anthony Horne: No. No. We did the parade that morning down in Glen Ellen.

Interviewer: Tell me about the parade.

Anthony Horne: It was good. Just took the fire truck down there, met Michael Jablonowski and Scott Palkoski, did the parade. Then I came home that evening and all of a sudden it was the fire. And then it just got bigger and bigger, this and that came, so.

Interviewer: You said you got home that night after the -- Sounds like the parade was a celebration. Was the parade only about firefighting?

Anthony Horne: No.

Interviewer: The fire team was part of it?

Anthony Horne: Yeah, yeah. Glen Ellen goes there and so do we.

Interviewer: Never imagined, huh? When you got home that day, do you remember when you first found out about the fire and how you found out?

Anthony Horne: They had the other fire going on in Napa, and I could see it from my house. I told my dad. I'm like, "Dad, you need to come out here." Saw the flames over towards Dry Creek. And then five minutes later we got a page saying there's a fire on Nuns Canyon.

Interviewer: So then what did you do when that call came in? Where did you have to go or what was your -- ? Where did your body go?

Anthony Horne: I think I was here. My dad went down the Highway 12 and I was here.

Interviewer: At the firehouse?

Anthony Horne: Yeah, and then I went with Ted Meyer.

Interviewer: Where did you go?

Anthony Horne: And Engine 81 down the mountain. Then we went to Gene Reed's place and we hung out there all night and saved his house. And then the next day I was here on this turn stopping traffic all day.

Interviewer: That would've been -- ?

Anthony Horne: Monday.

Interviewer: When the calls came in at night, do you remember what time that was-ish?

Anthony Horne: About 8, 8:40, something like that.

Interviewer: And so, when you say all night at Gene Reed's house, it was all night like Sunday to Monday?

Anthony Horne: Sunday. Then I was here about 8:00 all day. And then Michael called me and had me go rescue his dogs.

Interviewer: Tell me about that.

Anthony Horne: Took his dogs to my house, put them in the kennel, then we got evacuated. Because they go to my house, get his dogs, and go meet Catheryn.

Interviewer: And who's Catheryn?

Anthony Horne: His wife.

Interviewer: I haven't met her. Sorry.

Anthony Horne: Yeah, yeah.

Interviewer: So went to meet her and she was -- Where as she?

Anthony Horne: She had to meet me at Highway 12 and Melita Road, because she couldn't come any further.

Interviewer: Right.

Anthony Horne: And then gave her his dogs.

Interviewer: Oh my gosh. So many people must've been worried about their animals.

Anthony Horne: Yeah, and I'm glad I did. And then, yeah, mainly I was just the go-getter. Went down to get sodas and drinks and all that. Then they had to keep checking on Tish Ward because she didn't leave.

Interviewer: How often did you need to go check on her?

Anthony Horne: A couple times a day.

Interviewer: Did the fire get up close to her place?

Anthony Horne: Yeah, oh yeah.

Interviewer: And so then what happened when that happened if she wasn't leaving there? That must've been a concern.

Anthony Horne: Yeah. But I think after Wednesday it passed through her place.

Interviewer: I see. Were you here when the fire came up to the firehouse?

Anthony Horne: No.

Interviewer: Do you remember that?

Anthony Horne: No. Me and my dad were at our place. That's when we were tied up there.

Interviewer: That was happening at the same time then?

Anthony Horne: We came here, yeah.

Interviewer: So tell me --

Anthony Horne: We finally drove to our place. I said, "Dad, we need to go check our place," and we got there too late.

Interviewer: I'm so sorry.

Anthony Horne: Yeah, so.

Interviewer: When you got down there -- First of all, let's go back to the first night and tell me what you saw. When you went with Ted, you said he picked you up and you went with him down to Highway 12, did you say?

Anthony Horne: Gene Reed's.

Interviewer: To Gene Reed's. Sorry, yeah.

Anthony Horne: Yeah.

Interviewer: And so, what did you see? People like me who don't fight fire, we've never seen fire. We haven't been in front of it, --much less get close enough to it to help fight it.

Anthony Horne: Yeah.

Interviewer: So, part of the reason we're doing the interviews is so people can see with your eyes what you also saw. I'm wondering if you could describe a little bit of what you saw, what you smelled, what it felt like when you were at Gene Reed's, because you said you saved his house.

Anthony Horne: Yeah. It was just flames everywhere. I have actually a nice video on my phone of the flames roaring up the mountain past Gene Reed's.

Interviewer: I'd love to see that later.

Anthony Horne: And then, you know Rusty Dillon's place at 1255 Cavedale across the street from Gene Reed's? Yeah. I saw it take out his place.

Interviewer: You saw that?

Anthony Horne: In minutes, yeah.

Interviewer: Wow. What does it look like when a house in that situation catches fire?

Anthony Horne: I have a video of my house.

Interviewer: You do?





to come back, my brother, that night, and then he stayed there and camped out for another week.

Interviewer: Just to make sure?

Anthony Horne: Yeah.

Interviewer: Yeah. And then where did everybody go live? Your mom was in Vacaville, your dad was up here fighting fire, or did he also go?

Anthony Horne: He finally went to Vacaville because my mom made him so he could rest.

Interviewer: You remember at Gene Reed's place being up all night. Did you all sleep at any point, or if you did, where did you sleep? What did you eat?

Anthony Horne: I came back and -- I actually stayed at Claude and Betty Ganaye's because I brought my trailer over there and my parent's trailer. So I stayed there for like five days. And then I ate here because somebody donated a lot of food for us. It was good.

Interviewer: Do you know who that was?

Anthony Horne: No, I don't.

Interviewer: How did the firefighters communicate with each other during all this time?

Anthony Horne: By radio or texting. Where the radios won't work, we text.

Interviewer: So sometimes the radios weren't working?

Anthony Horne: Yeah, because of the hillside.

Interviewer: What do you mean because of the hillside?

Anthony Horne: They only go a certain amount of range.

Interviewer: So like a phone it has limited reception in some places?

Anthony Horne: Yeah.

Interviewer: I see. So texting worked?

Anthony Horne: Texting worked good, yeah.

Interviewer: Were the firefighters always -- ? Since you were standing here that whole day directing traffic and stuff, what else did you see? Did you see the other firefighters come here or what else was going on around you?

Anthony Horne: A lot of people stopped here. A lot of fire trucks were back and forth, in and out, for water.

Interviewer: Right. You mean to get water here out of this tank. You have tanks here.

Anthony Horne: Yeah. And then a few people left their cars here. So a lady couldn't get through because she had a flat tire at her car. She had to leave it here. It sat here for like two weeks in our way. Some family up here came back with some food for me. That's about it for there.

Interviewer: When you say you saw fire trucks coming, were they just Mayacamas fire trucks, or who else was coming through here during that really intense first few days?

Anthony Horne: Basically nobody. A few people were trying to tell me they needed to get through to check their property.

Interviewer: You mean the residents?

Anthony Horne: Yeah. But I just didn't let them back through. There was one guy, he's like, "Yeah, my grandma's in the house and I can't get her out," and he was in an unmarked police car. That was kind of fishy. Talking to my dad, he said, "No, not happening."

Interviewer: Other fire departments come up? Was CalFire coming up here? Fire trucks from other locations, do you remember any of those?

Anthony Horne: There was a couple dozers from Napa County came this way and lowered the dozers right on the pavement. They didn't care.

Interviewer: What were they going to do?

Anthony Horne: They drove one up Cavedale.

Interviewer: What would a dozer do during a fire?

Anthony Horne: Make the fire lines, fire breaks.

Interviewer: I see. Now I know that before we could get back up, because it was two-and-a-half weeks or something before we all got to get back in, right? What we were told was that the reason it took so long was probably what you just said, three weeks, three-and-a-half weeks or whatever, of spot fires, but also that PG&E and whoever were finding that poles and lines and trees had fallen everywhere. Is that true? Tell me something about that situation.

Anthony Horne: Yeah, there was a lot of downed power lines, especially across Trinity Road. We were driving over them, but they were dead.

Interviewer: Good. Still scary, right?

Anthony Horne: Yeah. Driving around fallen power poles.

Interviewer: Wow.

Anthony Horne: Because I made a lot of trips up and down the mountain. In fact, we were eating at Glen Ellen Fire Department. Somebody brought in food there. So I bring up food for the guys. So yeah.

Interviewer: What were your feelings during all that time? Were you afraid? What could you say you were feeling when all this was happening?

Anthony Horne: It was scary. It just happened too quickly, basically.

Interviewer: What do you think that the biggest challenges during the fire were? What were your biggest challenges for yourself or the most difficulty that you faced?

Anthony Horne: I guess seeing my house go up in flames. I guess that's it.

Interviewer: That would make sense to me. How's your family doing? Did your family spend time talking about it together? That's a big trauma. It's so difficult, like you say.

Anthony Horne: Yeah.

Interviewer: How does a family, even a family of firefighters, there's several firefighters who lost their homes, right? Do you mind talking about this part? Is it okay?

Anthony Horne: Yeah.

Interviewer: Yeah, okay. I just want to make sure. But I'm wondering, because you guys saved our home. We had terrible damage around our home --

Anthony Horne: Yeah, me and my dad were at your guy's house one day.

Interviewer: Yeah.

Anthony Horne: I think the same day our house went up.

Interviewer: So how does a family -- ? It sounds like you're close. Your brother is on Wall Road also.

Anthony Horne: Yeah, because we lived there since we were kids. I moved there when I was three. We all got together and then -- My one brother from Santa Rosa, he had a hard time with it, but he finally came to see the place.

Interviewer: It took him a while to come up?

Anthony Horne: Yeah. But that phone call, they just couldn't believe it.

Interviewer: Yeah. Do you feel like people are like maybe -- ? Everybody uses the word "recovery," and I'm wondering if you feel like people are recovering from that little by little? What helps?

Anthony Horne: Talking about it, actually.

Interviewer: Yeah?

Anthony Horne: Yeah. But I think my mom took it the hardest. Well, so did my dad. But we got to put it past us.

Interviewer: Yeah, you said talking helps. What kinds of things would you like to talk about about that?

Anthony Horne: I don't know.

Interviewer: Any other memories about what you saw or what you saw other firefighters going through that you just recall or remember from your experience up here?

Anthony Horne: Let's see. Can you read that again?

Interviewer: Yeah, just wondering. I can put it a different way, too. I was just wondering. One of the things we're talking about is each firefighter's experience. But another thing that has been interesting to me in talking with people is whether you're a firefighter or just like me, a resident, is you kind of learn about other people's experiences as well because of people talking about it or just knowing what people have been doing.

So, I guess what I'm wondering is if you remember, for example, what did you see -- ? You've talked about your dad's experience. What were some more things that you heard your dad say or that you knew your dad was going through or someone else you know on the fire department? You were with Ted first part of it.

Anthony Horne: Yeah.

Interviewer: What about Jerry? What about Jesse? What about your dad if you want to talk about your own family again, or any of the other guys?

Anthony Horne: I know Scotty. He loves his place, too. So did Jesse. We kind of made sure they're okay, because they're out here, too. I'm thinking about that at the same time. It's just pretty hard. In fact, Scotty was with me one day.

Interviewer: What were you and Scotty doing that day?



Vacaville -- My brother was up here too from Vacaville, Todd, on Wednesday helping us. In fact, his wife was not happy.

Interviewer: No.

Anthony Horne: But other than that, that's all I can remember.

Interviewer: Yeah. When you say "now I'm remembering," what was it that you were remembering all of a sudden?

Anthony Horne: About the day of our house burning.

Interviewer: I see.

Anthony Horne: Yeah.

Interviewer: Like the stuff around it.

Anthony Horne: Yeah.

Interviewer: How does a person -- ? I've talked to many people who've driven through flames like you just said. How do you figure out whether you should keep going or whether you should turn around and, do you know what I mean, go the other way? Tell me about those decisions when you're driving right through fire.

Anthony Horne: A CalFire Firefighter in his truck just came through. He said just stay in the middle of the road and ride it out, you'll be fine. So I'm like, "Okay." So me and Scotty did. But you can't see nothing.

Interviewer: What were you guys saying to each other as you were going through this fire with fire on both sides of the road and you can't see anything?

Anthony Horne: I can't remember. We just did it.

Interviewer: Yeah.

Anthony Horne: It was only for like maybe 10 seconds.

Interviewer: I see.

Anthony Horne: Yeah.

Interviewer: It wasn't the whole entire way down the road?

Anthony Horne: No, no.

Interviewer: I see. Got you.

Anthony Horne: No.

Interviewer: It was a place where the fire had crossed the road?

Anthony Horne: Smoke was just coming, because the smoke goes sideways.

Interviewer: Wow, that must've been scary.

Anthony Horne: Yeah.

Interviewer: Or something.

Anthony Horne: But there was one point where I think flames were like real close.

Interviewer: When you were doing this drive?

Anthony Horne: Yeah. And then when I got to Wall Road I saw Wall Road on fire. I'm like, "Do I want to go down there?"

Interviewer: Yeah, I can imagine that.

Anthony Horne: Yeah.

Interviewer: So that's Scotty. Did you spend any time, for example, with Jerry or Jesse?

Anthony Horne: Yeah.

Interviewer: Tell me about what you did when you were with them.

Anthony Horne: Just rode with them on spot fires and stuff.

Interviewer: Just was after the big fire team through the first few days?



Interviewer: And said, "We need to find some tires"?

Anthony Horne: I got here before everybody else and like, "Oh, the tire's blown." So I just called Les Schwab myself. They're already working on it.

Interviewer: Do you know if Les Schwab or if the situation must have happened to other vehicles too, or was it just up here, or do you know?

Anthony Horne: Yeah, they said they were all over the place.

Interviewer: Oh man. So they were helping others, too?

Anthony Horne: Yeah. There wasn't enough vehicles, enough mobile vehicles, to assist everybody.

Interviewer: I can imagine. And then how about -- ? It sounds like you saw Michael or were with him for part of the time, too?

Anthony Horne: No, that was basically here.

Interviewer: Okay. And anybody else, who else would there be? Ted Meyer you mentioned. Jesse and Jerry Apgar, Scott. Anybody else you spent some time with?

Anthony Horne: No.

Interviewer: Okay.

Anthony Horne: That's about it.

Interviewer: What do you feel that your most important roles were during the fire? What did you feel was the important stuff that you did?

Anthony Horne: I guess when Michael J. called me to go get his dogs.

Interviewer: Yeah. What happened up at his place? What did you see on that drive?

Anthony Horne: The fire wasn't going through there at that time. But then the day after, we drove up there and the fire had gone through.

Interviewer: Wow.

Anthony Horne: A lot of burnt vehicles. This house made it, his little cabin.

Interviewer: Any other memories or things during the fire that you would like to talk about or that you remember?

Anthony Horne: I probably will remember but not now.

Interviewer: Yeah, if you remember anything, let me know.

Anthony Horne: Yeah.

Interviewer: If there's like, "There's a story I want to tell," or if you're talking to other people too and they say that, please do let me know. So now we're after the fire, quite a bit after. Several months now and a lot has happened. And now we've even had a new fire over in various areas. I know I got home from a





Interviewer: I don't, either. You know what I can do? Let me toss --

[Break in recorded material]

Anthony Horne: They're coming up from Gene Reed's, but this is -- I got so many videos and pictures. It's just doing that. It might go in a minute.

Interviewer: Yeah, it's not. I see. We'll see if she answers. So, you did have the presence of mind to turn your phone on and video tape it, huh?

Anthony Horne: Yeah. Had the Wi-Fi worked better.

Interviewer: Yeah, let me -- I'll text my [unintelligible]. So, this is what you saw when you walked up the driveway at your house.

Anthony Horne: Yeah.

Interviewer: Oh, Anthony.

Anthony Horne: [Unintelligible]

Interviewer: What did he say?

Anthony Horne: [Unintelligible] before.

Interviewer: Wow.

Anthony Horne: In my dad's car.

Interviewer: Wow.

Anthony Horne: This is the only car on the property we couldn't get. Key was in the ignition ready for somebody to come get it. But this is coming up. We'll see if this will finally work. That was it.

Interviewer: Yeah, so you can hear the wind. How strong was the wind right then?

Anthony Horne: I'd say about 30. 25, 30.

Interviewer: When was this?

Anthony Horne: I believe it was Tuesday morning. No, Monday morning.

Interviewer: Monday morning.

Anthony Horne: Monday morning.

Interviewer: So now this video you just showed me, I can see this turn sign and stuff. Where exactly on Trinity is -- ?

Anthony Horne: That's right in Rusty's driveway.

Interviewer: Right at Rusty's driveway?

Anthony Horne: Yeah.

Interviewer: You don't know his number, do you?

Anthony Horne: No.

Interviewer: I'll find out. I see. And you're looking which -- ?  
So which direction are -- ?

Anthony Horne: Coming down Trinity, Rusty's driveway is here.  
There's that driveway that had a grading right now. I was parked right there because  
that's where that site is, looking over to the right.

Interviewer: You're looking downhill.

Anthony Horne: No, looking kind of over to the right where  
those --

Interviewer: Towards the north?

Anthony Horne: Towards Nuns Canyon, basically.

Interviewer: Towards Nuns Canyon, so towards -- so north-  
ish. Yeah. And that's where this was coming from. It was sneaking up from over  
there.

Anthony Horne: Yeah.

Interviewer: Oh my goodness. So, if it was 30 mile an hour  
wind, then was it less wind that morning that it had been during the night?

Anthony Horne: I think so. Yeah.

Interviewer: And this was after you had saved Gene Reed's house?

Anthony Horne: Yeah. Yeah, like the next day.

Interviewer: In the morning?

Anthony Horne: Yeah.

Interviewer: Looks dark. Is that just because of the smoke or is it because it was early in the morning?

Anthony Horne: It was like 6:00 in the morning.

Interviewer: I see. Wow. Well, that's not the first time you've seen fire, though. You just were seeing it more coming?

Anthony Horne: Yeah.

Interviewer: When you were at Gene Reed's, who was with you?

Anthony Horne: Ted and my dad. Yeah.

Interviewer: Did you hear any stories about anybody who got stuck, or was it a situation where they weren't sure they were going to be safe or anything like that?

Anthony Horne: Uh-uh.

Interviewer: No.

Anthony Horne: No.

Interviewer: I know it's hard to get interview question after question, but I really appreciate you talking to us. Your memories and your experiences are really important to the community.

Anthony Horne: Yeah. Like I said, if I think of anything, I'll let you know.

Interviewer: Okay.

[End of recorded material]