



THE BEACON

OFFICIAL QUARTERLY PUBLICATION OF THE AMBULANCE HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF VICTORIA

Ambulance Victoria Museum

22nd Edition – Autumn 2022



\$4.00

Special Edition

Black Saturday Bushfires 2009

The day hell came to Victoria



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Message from the Acting C.E.O.

Hi everyone,

Thank you for the opportunity to contribute to this edition of The Beacon as Acting CEO of Ambulance Victoria whilst Tony is on medical leave. I am very pleased to report he is making good progress and looking forward to returning to work.

Having moved across from Victoria Police in August last year to the position of Chief Operations Officer (COO), my usual role is responsible for a collaborative approach to the delivery of integrated, effective and efficient state-wide operational services in line with organisational performance targets. This includes the management of response to the community, logistical and education services.

Since commencing, I've recently had the opportunity to visit the Ambulance Museum and meet with Chas Martin OAM and the team to appreciate the incredible work being done to both preserve and share Victorian ambulance history with our people and the community. It was a privilege to meet and chat with Chas and be able to personally acknowledge his absolute dedication and commitment to the evolution of the Museum. This work is highly valued and recognised for its importance in providing context to the journey of ambulance and those people and stories that form our past. Our thoughts and support are with Chas as he faces his own current health challenges.

COVID-19 is still having an impact across our communities. Personally, and professionally, many of us are feeling the virus' presence again as case numbers and hospitalisations increase. We continue to monitor and adjust accordingly. Although we have committed to develop wind back plans for our surge workforce – the health and safety of our staff and patient care remain the priority. The involvement of surge volunteers from Life Saving Victoria and the State Emergency Service (SES) ends during April, with others from St John Ambulance Australia and Hatzolah Melbourne remaining onboard for now. We are very grateful for the incredible support these agencies have given to AV during the COVID-19 pandemic. Our staff have worked extremely hard and have been adaptable to the changing circumstances, enabling AV to continue to provide best care to the Victorian community. We are all hopeful that very soon we are speaking of COVID in the past tense, but we are not there yet.

Finally, as the cooler weather, falling leaves and reduced daylight hours remind us, Autumn has definitely arrived. Flu season isn't far away and with communities mixing once again, we are warned of a likely increase in flu cases this winter. Please remember to see your GP or pharmacist to discuss your flu vaccination soon. Take care.

Regards,

Libby

Elizabeth Murphy APM

A/Chief Executive Officer

Ambulance Victoria



AmbulanceVictoria



Words of Wisdom

The older I get, the more I realise the value of privacy, of cultivating your circle and only letting certain people in. You can be open, honest, and real, while still understanding not everyone deserves a seat at this table of your life.

Anon

The Curator's Desk



The pages of the calendar turn, and already winter 2022 is near upon us.

Since my last Curator's report in the January/February edition of *The Beacon*, my confidence has been growing that at last our museum is returning to normal. Group tours have resumed in quantity, as have local and regional events displaying our vintage ambulances. These events are becoming regular again. Also, the 'Melton Boys' have been attending a considerable number of film shoots with various vintage ambulances. These

two blokes never seem to stop, and they are an asset to our operation in general.

As *The Beacon* goes to print, most members and friends of our Ambulance Museum family will have learned of my recent medical diagnosis. I have been diagnosed with a serious, life-threatening disease which unfortunately is not treatable. This condition is taking a physical toll on me, particularly at 84 years of age. This has required me to step back somewhat from the day-to-day museum activities which I love in order to preserve my personal resources to combat this complaint. Ambulance Victoria, through the action of **Liz Puntton**, Manager Operational Fleet & Equipment, **Kerryn Douglas**, Chief of Staff, **Libby Murphy**, Acting C.E.O. (in Tony's convalescence) have been exceptional in support to both Marg and myself, providing ambulance transport for my medical appointments, and ensuring the ongoing operation of the museum, which includes assistance in my role as Honorary Curator.

Many thanks to the incredible number of phone calls, personal wishes, and emails. I was overwhelmed. In final summary, my prognostic outlook is a matter of wait and see.

On another issue, rather than having Pete place the following under 'Mentioned in Despatches', I would personally like to thank **Dorothy Goedheer** for her generous donation of \$300.00 to our museum. Dorothy is the daughter of former long-term, V.C.A.S. Superintendent/Secretary Frederick Raven 1930 – 1965, Lonsdale Street and Latrobe Street Headquarters.

See you at the museum.

Chas Martin – O.A.M.

Hon. Curator



New Members as of 30th April 2022: We welcome the following new members to our museum family and hope you enjoy being a part of this great Victorian Ambulance heritage.

Kate Azzopardi, Berwick. Allister Briggs, Sunbury. Michelle Crilly, Lalor. Trevor Davies, Noble Park. Dwayne Dobinson, Lilydale. Anthony Dunn, Hughesdale. Claire Henley, Mooroolbark. Graeme Parker, Diamond Creek.

*Please join in our museum activities. We are a family-like organisation offering a friendly atmosphere and camaraderie. We take part in both Museum internal activities, and external Vintage vehicle display events, locally and throughout regional Victoria. Members are welcome to attend and/or participate. Contributions to *The Beacon* are always sought after. Your AHS Museum membership is yours to enjoy. So again, a warm welcome!*

From the Editor – Autumn Beacon 2022

The past quarter has brought a variation of news, some good and some not so good.

I will commence with the ‘not so good’, as there is little ‘good’.

Two of our Ambulance Victoria leaders have suffered ill-health during this three-month period, both with serious issues.

First to become a patient is our C.E.O. Tony Walker, followed later by our Ambulance Victoria Museum Curator, Chas Martin.



C.E.O. Tony Walker through the agency of a home bowel test kit was referred for a colonoscopy. This procedure returned a positive bowel cancer result requiring scheduled surgery. It is believed Tony’s prognostic outlook is excellent, as has been the case post-operative. Tony is looking to return to the Ambulance Victoria helm at the end of his recovery period. It is most commendable that Tony chose to put his own adversity aside and embarked on a bowel cancer awareness campaign for the wellbeing of others, utilising T.V., radio, and press for this initiative. I am sure all would agree this is a true endorsement of Tony leading by personal example.

Chas Martin, our Ambulance Victoria Museum Curator, and octogenarian, was the next casualty. Chas had been unwell for a couple of months losing his usual spark and continued to decline until wife Marg took him to a new G.P. who immediately sent him to Maroondah Hospital for investigation. The diagnosis and prognostic outlook for Chas unfortunately was not parallel with Tony’s. Chas has an untreatable condition, however as one would expect, it’s business as usual with Chas, ‘Museum or Bust’, and his personal outlook is an inspiration to all, and again this is a setting of the standard.

Both men are to be complimented on their stoic and selfless approach in the face of adversity.



Chas and Libby

In a wonderful and most thoughtful gesture, Chas, to his delight, was paid a personal visit at the museum by three ladies in uniform for coffee and a chat. – Ambulance Victoria’s Acting C.E.O. **Libby Murphy**, Manager Operational Fleet & Equipment **Liz Punton**, and Chief of Staff **Kerryn Douglas**. – Thanks girls, or rather ‘*Ambulance Victoria Angels!*’

Peter Dent
Editor



Chas certainly seems to be enjoying the company of the four ladies!



Wife Marg, Chas and Kerryn



Marg, Chas and Liz



60 Years of World-Class Care in the Air



Air Ambulance Victoria (AAV) will celebrate 60 years of world-class pre-hospital care next week (May 2).

The AAV wing of Ambulance Victoria (AV) was set up in 1962 and included one rotary wing aircraft and one fixed-wing plane.

Twelve patients were transported in the first year, the majority being medical and trauma patients from the Snowy Mountain Hydro Scheme.

Sixty years on and AAV's fleet of four fixed-wing planes and five helicopters (HEMS) provide a vital link between rural communities and metropolitan health services.

Fixed-wing aircrafts – typically staffed by Advanced Life Support (ALS) flight paramedics – and HEMS – staffed by Mobile Intensive Care Ambulance (MICA) flight paramedics – reach across Victoria and into parts of southern New South Wales, northern Tasmania, and South Australia.

The service is made up of just over 37 ALS flight paramedics and almost 50 MICA flight paramedics supported by a dedicated team of flight co-ordinators, pilots, aircrew officers, doctors, engineers, trade assistants, retrieval services and administrators.

In 2020/2021, AAV responded to more than 7,000 incidents – up almost 1,000 on the previous year, with the fixed-wing fleet transporting more than 5,000 patients.

AV's Manager of Air Operations Anthony de Wit said AAV is at the forefront of pre-hospital patient care in Australia and worldwide.

'While it's difficult to confirm the number of lives saved since 1962, over the past decade AAV has assisted more than 50,000 people throughout Victoria and our bordering communities,' he said.

'Our fixed-wing arm is the backbone of AAV, and it cares for so many patients per year, really helping to connect regional and rural Victoria with the health services that metropolitan Melbourne has to offer.'

Over the last year, the fixed-wing planes averaged approximately 250 missions each month and clocked up about 430 flying hours (per month), equating to eight to 10 flights per day.

The fixed-wing service transports people from regional and rural areas for treatments such as chemotherapy and radiotherapy.

The fixed-wing planes also fly patients with acute medical conditions requiring surgery, transfer injured patients from regional hospitals and retrieve critically ill patients from regional hospitals to specialist care, such as cardiac care and intensive care.

AV recently announced the fixed-wing fleet was undergoing a major upgrade to become one of the most innovative in the country.

The first 'Ambulance Officer' to work on the first AAV flight, John Blossfeld (Geelong)

On July 19, 1962, MICA paramedic John Blossfeld was the first 'Ambulance Officer' to work on the first AAV flight that was transferring a patient with spinal injuries from the Snowy Mountain Hydro Scheme.

Latvian-born John had never been on a plane before, having sailed to Australia as a 17-year-old after fleeing war and living in German war camps for five years.

'I joined AV just after my 19th birthday and have never regretted the life-changing decision.'

'On my first ever flight, both professionally and personally, I accompanied the Director of the Spinal Unit at the Austin Hospital on the Skyways plane from Essendon airport to

Khancoban, to retrieve the young man who had been admitted to Corryong Hospital with a broken spine, and leg and chest injuries after being crushed under falling rock.'

'After I did that first flight, I completed a training course that was run by a Royal Australian Air Force (RAAF) surgeon, and I learnt all about air pressure and how patients are affected by altitude - once we passed the course, we had a special badge to wear with the one wing attached to the AV logo.'

The current longest-serving female at AAV, **Nicole Grant** (based at AAV, Essendon) Flight Paramedic Educator Nicole Grant has been with AV for almost 20 years.

'My most memorable job actually involved no clinical intervention whatsoever; I was transferring an elderly palliative care patient from Melbourne back to country Victoria and she told me she had never been on a plane before and was quite apprehensive about doing so, so I spent some time explaining what she could expect in regard to noise, sounds and feel of the aircraft before loading her on board.'

'It was a beautiful morning for flying and she spent the entire trip with her nose glued to the window. I remember the look of rapture on her face as she said it was the most magical experience she's had and was so appreciative of being looked after in this way. It reaffirmed why I do the job that I do.'

'The biggest development I have seen during my time at AAV is a 'state-wide system-change' for patients suffering heart attack or stroke, which has resulted in a marked reduction in mortality and morbidity in this cohort of patients.'

'Flight Sisters on AAV'

- When Victoria introduced a policy of domiciliary care, where the aim was to meet the needs of patients close to home, it was mainly the cases requiring specialist obstetric and neonatal care which needed transport to hospitals in Melbourne.
- In this period pre-MICA, qualified nurses, known as 'Flight Sisters', worked in cramped spaces in small aircraft cabins to provide in-flight care to patients travelling from rural areas to hospitals in Melbourne.
- During this era, the ambulance personnel with basic first-aid skills, who had been serving on AAV, were replaced by the flight sisters who were better trained for obstetric and neonatal work.
- However, once MICA was introduced into helicopters, there came a push within the ambulance service for MICA to replace the nurses on board fixed-wing.
- In 1990, nurses were succeeded on fixed-wing planes by MICA.
- Today, AV's fixed-wing fleet is typically staffed by ALS paramedics, though MICA can be dispatched depending on the needs of the patient.

***In memory of our Flight-Nurse Colleagues who lost their lives in Air Ambulance crashes
Helen Lang, Moorabbin 1970, and Deleine Bury, Essendon 1986.***



Helen Lang



Deleine Bury

In Other History

Most would have heard of the notorious bushranger, **Daniel ‘Mad Dog’ Morgan**, a 6-foot 3-inch, bushy-bearded, Irishman who plundered and murdered, terrorising North East Victoria and Southern N.S.W. in 1862/63. He was also thought to be insane, and prone to frequent bouts of uncontrollable rage, and occasional brutality.



The following is recorded as true history:

In the small country town of **Adelong**, near Tumut in Southern N.S.W., a bank manager was closing for the day, locking the bank safe and premises, taking all keys on his person. He had a horse-ride of some four miles to his home in the nearby hills. Riding slowly along the track, a rider galloped up from behind joining the bank manager, he drew his horse back to walking pace. *“I will ride along and accompany you”* the horseman said. After a

short while the newcomer asked: *“What do you think of this Daniel Morgan?”* The bank manager pondered and replied: *“Oh, I don’t know, deep down he is probably a decent chap.”* They rode along together talking in general. After quite a while they came to a fork in the track. The bank manager indicated this was his turn off down the spur to his home, the track ahead leading on around the ridge that the other horse rider would take. It was here at this parting point there came a chilling statement, although the bank manager had not given his name at all in the duration of the ride, the other horseman said: *“Well goodbye **Mr Paterson**, it’s been a most interesting conversation, when you sit down to dinner tonight with your family, you can tell them this evening you rode with Daniel Morgan.”* With this comment, the bushranger slapped his horse, and galloped off around the mountain track.

A few well-chosen words had saved the bank manager’s life, and no doubt also the Bank.

Daniel Morgan was shot and died of his wounds at Peechelba Station near Wangaratta in 1865 – aged 35 years, this occurred during a siege with police who were attempting to arrest him after he had held the residents hostage. He is interned in the Wangaratta cemetery.

The Museum Infirmary

Our intrepid vintage car mechanic and member **Bill Redpath** is returning to Frankston Hospital for the third procedure on his knees. It has been an ongoing problem for some time; however, we hope this third occasion will be the answer. ‘mmm’ Third occasion? Is there an attraction there Bill?



Ambulance Victoria Museum long serving and diligent Treasurer **Darrell Rintoule** went off to Adelaide for a week’s holiday. He returned rested and relaxed, although with a tender hand. The end result being, he spent three days in Warringal Private Hospital with cellulitis, on an intravenous anti-biotic drip, with a hand the size of a boxing glove. Maybe you should have stayed with the ‘Croweaters’ Darrell! Anyway, we hope all is settled down now.

Ambulance Victoria C.E.O. **Tony Walker** – See: ‘From the Editor’

Ambulance Victoria Museum Honorary Curator **Chas Martin** – See: ‘From the Editor’

~~~~~ *‘Thinking of you.’* ~~~~~



## Remembrance of Our Police Counterparts



**Snr Constable Kevin King**



**Constable Joshua Prestney**




**Constable Glen Humphris**

*Our thoughts and respectful  
memories of the four Victoria  
Police counterparts who lost their  
lives tragically on the Eastern  
Freeway, April 22, 2020.*





**LS Constable Lynette Taylor**

## Ambulance Victoria Museum -Committee and Members



# Ambulance Victoria Museum



*Thank you Chas Martin OAM*

*You are invited...*

The Ambulance Historical Society and Ambulance Victoria invite you to join us for morning tea to acknowledge the years of dedication by Mr Charles (Chas) Martin OAM to the collection and preservation of Victorian ambulance history.

We celebrate Chas' incredible commitment to the curation and management of the Ambulance Historical Society Museum.

Monday 23 May 2022  
10:00am-11.30am

Ambulance Historical Society Museum  
1/55 Barry St, Bayswater.

RSVP:  
Text Barb 0417 290 946 by 18 May.

# *Nature's Supremacy Over Man*

## *About Bushfires*

In 1939, my family resided at Walhalla via Moe in the Baw Baw Plateau near Erica. Walhalla was directly in the path of the 1939 bushfires. Naturally, all the locals rallied to fight the fire including my father a seasoned bushman. Subsequently, in time, he passed on to my brother Max and myself, as youngsters, knowledge of the magnitude, and characteristics of these devastating fires. – Quote: ‘The entire sky was on fire, and the fire was jumping ridge to ridge, four to five miles at a time. Brick houses exploded into flame. At midday it was completely dark. Hurricane lamps were carried.’ During the horrendous fires, in a bid to escape, people took refuge in water tanks, only to be virtually boiled to death, rivers ran hot killing fish stocks. This again occurred on occasions of other devastating bush fires throughout Victorian regional country areas and beyond, 1962 - Dandenong Ranges, 1965 – East Gippsland Fires, 1969 – Lara Fires, 1977 – Western District Fires, 1985 – Ash Wednesday, Mount Macedon and many more.

I knew he would never exaggerate, and other locals confirmed this. As a child, and later in adulthood, I would tell people these bushfire facts, and in many cases the statement was met with scepticism, and often ridicule, particularly with city-based persons, and those with no remote living background.

In 1962, serious fires broke out in the Kinglake, Yarra Glen district. My father had a water tanker truck, and both him and I joined up with the firefighting activities at Coldstream, I was a member of the C.F.A. at Wandin. At Coldstream, this contingent failed to stop the fire reaching the next spur leading to Mount Evelyn. All units rushed to Pine Hill, then a clearing located on the Warburton Highway to attempt to stop the fire there. We waited and heard the fire roaring up the spur to the ridge and clearing, a deafening noise of great volume. A considerable number of inexperienced volunteers ran down to the anticipated fire front with only knapsacks. My father said: *“We will go in the opposite direction.”* He also said: *“You are going to see something you won’t believe.”*

He had no sooner spoken when the fire reached the timber edge of the clearing and ‘crowned’ (the term then used for firestorm). Large trees fell to ground, the force of the fire flung large burning branches 25 metres (75 feet) high into the air carried with the rising flames, ash, and smoke, then the branches crashed to the ground together with burning cinders, causing everyone to seek cover where possible. The radiated heat from the fire burning the air, together with choking smoke and hot embers.

I had just witnessed nature’s eternal superiority over man, in this case her unbridled fire power, a force of destruction and terror unable to be paralleled by scientific and technical development of the human race. In the midst of this, those who had run to the fire front, suddenly went running past us away from the fire inferno, many left the scene entirely, more likely in shock. The fire jumped Warburton Road and roared on up the hill towards Mount Evelyn.

Now I knew what my father meant about 1939, and I believe his experience with the 1939 fires would have been far worse than my experience here, also this bore testimony to his previous statements. This experience further left me with the knowledge of this massive force of unharnessed fire. This appreciation gives me insight to write the following account of the 2009 bushfires tragedy and know it’s consequence. I have a realistic vision of the horror that the victims of these fires experienced with the Firestorm bearing down and exploding, consuming all before it, like an Autumn leaf in a gale.

As an aged, experienced bushman I believe the main contributing factor of bushfire deaths is lack of knowledge. For those who have never witnessed a bushfire storm, or raging bushfire there is no perception of the incredible velocity, sheer force, devastation, deadly danger or a second chance. In peril, are those without knowledge, who perceive a bushfire to be a scrub fire with 6 ft high flames.

To reinforce this statement, it seemed after 2009 Black Saturday’s death and destruction, that the previous scepticism and ridicule of my father’s 1939 bushfire description was no longer forthcoming.



# *Black Saturday Bushfires Victoria 2009*



*Ambulance Victoria Participation  
'Again standing proud'*

*'This feature, marking the tragic 2009 Black Saturday Bushfires, is dedicated to our Ambulance Victoria paramedics and personnel who contributed frontline, often in dangerous, and at times life-threatening situations, for the survival of fire victims. Also, the contribution of Ambulance Victoria Operational Communications, Emergency Management Unit, Fleet, Rosters, Wellbeing Support Services, Media, and other corporate support teams.'*

*'It is also a tribute to our Emergency Service counterparts for the selfless support of our Ambulance operation over the duration of these catastrophic bushfires.'*

*For all frontline personnel, nothing could have prepared them for the confronting horror and danger in the hours and days that lay ahead, nor the aftermath legacy.*

**Images and statements in this feature may be distressing to some readers.**



## *The 2009 Black Saturday Bushfire Commences*

On the morning of February 7, 2009, dawn broke over Victoria, the weather forecast predicting further extreme heat with accompanying strong wind reaching 100 km/hour. These conditions set to create horrific fire risk. Preceding February 7, a heat wave over a two-week period had existed, bringing average temperatures of 43° over a three-day period, peaking at 45.1°C on January 30, 2009. On February 6, the State Premier warned that catastrophic fire danger would exist as this extreme heat cycle had rendered the bush and undergrowth tinder dry, this situation exacerbated by years of neglected fuel reduction programs. The elements were equal, if not worse, than that of the 1939 bushfires that ravished East Gippsland claiming 71 lives, homes, sawmills, and countryside.

As the temperature climbed on this day, accompanied by the forecast 100 km/hour hot north-westerly winds, an explosive ambient developed. At 1147 hours, the strong wind brought down powerlines at East Kilmore, the sparks instantaneously starting a fire in the hot, windy conditions with tinder dry fuel. This fire spread rapidly, by 1300hrs it jumped the Hume Highway, causing closure, and soon reached Wandong, hitting Mount Disappointment at 1500 hours. The fire was then forced onwards by strong wind and heat generation to Humeville, Kinglake and surrounding districts. The Murrindindi Mill fire also commenced at 1455 hours, spreading through the Murrindindi State Forest and Black Range, reaching Narbethong at 1620 hours and Marysville at 1845 hours before turning towards Buxton and Taggerty.

The following day, February 8, 2009, the Kinglake and Murrindindi Mill fires around Marysville merged and created the massive Kinglake fire complex with flames 30m (100ft) high driven by incredible fire generated force. At the end of the day, over 400 fires were burning throughout Victoria, tragically for the unfortunate people in this region of the North East and Bendigo, an unparalleled nightmare was unfolding, bringing death, destruction, and devastation. Over the fire duration 173 people perished (120 in Kinglake), 414 persons injured, 3500 buildings destroyed, including 2000 homes, 450,000 hectares burnt, an estimated one million wild and domesticated animals killed, with many others left suffering.

A combined 19,000 CFA, DSE, and other firefighters, together with heavy machinery and aircraft, confronted this unsurpassed inferno, however the sheer force of Mother Nature could not be bridled by mankind. For the majority of victims surviving this catastrophic event, the Emergency Services, volunteers and all participating, life would never be the same again. The deaths, destruction, and sheer magnitude of this bushfire would take a toll never before experienced in our Nation.

***“Fire – A good servant, but terrible master”***





# *Duty of High Demand on Personal Resilience*

*Shaun Whitmore – MICA Flight Paramedic*

I was working as a relieving CSO for the month that the fires occurred.

In the heat emergency that preceded the fires many of us worked triaging patients in their homes and making decisions as to the acuity of their need and letting them and the families know what to expect regarding ambulance transport timeframes. At the time this was unusual but is less so now with the current COVID workload.

In 2005 I did my Urban Search and Rescue Training with the MFB and never in a million years did I think I would actually use it. The course was great fun, but I figured that was about it.

After doing two of the triage-shifts on the heat days I was at home with the kids, and my wife was at work. I had worked most of my days off so was having a quiet afternoon. My recollection of the heat on the day of Feb 7, 2009, was like nothing I had experienced. The wind was hotter than the sun.

Mid-afternoon I saw a huge cloud of smoke start to fill the horizon coming from the north. I was living approximately 30km as the crow flies south of Kinglake. It blocked out half of the horizon.

Shortly after the photo was taken the south westerly change hit. Minutes after this I could see the smoke from Kinglake billowing to the north. Again, I have never seen anything like it.



*The smoke rises at Shaun's property.*

It was clearly something really big so I rang my immediate manager at the time and asked if I could assist given I had a fully equipped CSO car in the driveway. Things were still being sorted out at the time so he said he would ring me when he needed me. I didn't hear anything until 1900 when he asked me to take over in the Pakenham Emergency Ops Centre, looking after the Labertouche/Tonimbuk/Bunyip Ridge fires that night. I arrived there at 2145 and took over the Liaison role from **Dave Llewellyn**. I worked there until 0200 when the EOC was cut

back to skeleton staff as all trucks were being pulled out due to visibility and safety issues. I was asked to head back there for an 0700 start in the morning. I got into bed at 0300 and got up at 0600 to head back to Pakenham. I rang the Ambulance EOC at Brady St and was asked by **Phil Hogan** to go to Air Ambulance to staff an extra plane to cope with expected workload. I wasn't keen on this on 3 hours sleep and was expecting a lazy day in the EOC, but I trudged over to AAV. Oddly, we didn't do a job on the fixed wing.

On the Tuesday I was sent up as AV Liaison at Kinglake West. It was a busy place and ended up being a pretty hard day with community liaison and dealing with a lot of people, many not happy at being locked out of the town. Oddly, we were still running CPE days and I did one on the Wednesday when I was rung to head off on a USAR Deployment on Friday.

**Justin Nunan** and **Darren Hodge** had been on the first deployment, working around Kinglake, Yea, Strathewen areas. They had told me it was really hard work and an incredibly unpleasant environment, searching for human remains with Disaster Victim Identification Teams. It also involved a high level of physical work removing rubble and damaged structures, then spotting to ensure those in the buildings were safe.

**Rohan Minniken** and myself were on the second deployment and met at the Forensic Services building in Macleod on Friday morning. We were all then split up into smaller teams and given search areas. Ours was Marysville. We were part of a 9-person team consisting of 2 x MFB, 3 x CFA, 1 x SES, 2 x AV and a Civil Engineer.

In the 3 days we were there we probably removed a tonne or two of rubble each by hand and worked with heavy machinery to do the initial structural removal, then either trussed up or pushed down remaining structure, then went through it by hand so as not to lose evidence. The DVI people then went through it at a minute level. In the 3 days we found five people. It's the most grueling work I've ever done but at least was rewarding in some way as it reunited those people with their families despite the awful circumstance. I was physically and mentally pretty exhausted at the end of it, and after 36 years in health care it remains the single most affecting circumstance I have encountered in a work setting.

**Paul Golz** and **Andrew Sears** were also deployed after Rohan and myself, and **Dave Kervin** was deployed in the gear cleanup following. The role affected all of us in different ways, and I was unable to return to Marysville for 6 years following the fires. I'm not an anxious person but my first drive in there in 2015 to meet some mates to go on a 4WD trip rattled me a bit. Interestingly now it has become one of my favorite towns and I drive through there regularly and have found the rebirth of the town and the resilience of the residents a rewarding thing.

#### *The Legacy:*

*In 2010 I was doing a USAR Skills Update Day at the MFB Training Centre. There were about 20 people in the update day, and at the start of the day they asked who had actually been deployed as a USAR Operator. I didn't say anything as I didn't really want to talk about it in that room full of Firies. In the class was a Firie SO who was on the deployment subsequent to me, and he knew I had been deployed. He approached me in the mess room discreetly at a tea break and said, "you went to Marysville." I said, "yes I did," he said, "what did you think about that?" I said, "I walked round in a daze for 3 months" He said, "yep, so did I"*

*I found this really unusual as I would have thought the Firies deal with all that stuff regularly. The Black Saturday stuff has affected a lot of Emergency workers in an unusual way, and I've had many incidental conversations with Ambos, Police and Firies who all have common threads in their thoughts. Probably a good study subject for a budding Psychologist!*



**Shaun and forensic science crew: AV, MFB, CFA, SES, and Civil Engineer. (Shaun, 2nd from left of image.)**



*Shaun Whitmore's personal photographs taken in his attendance.*



**Photograph descriptions from left to right:**

1. Surveying destroyed residences for demolition and forensic searching.
2. Heavy equipment is utilised in the demolition and search process.
3. Aerial photograph of the fire destruction taken from HEMS 1.
4. Specialised hand operated equipment is needed to assist micro forensic searching.
5. The forensic team's tent, used for storage of specialised equipment and preservation of retrieved human forensic evidence.





## *Marysville Bushfires Claim Community Stalwart*

**Kevin Edward Bradwell** was born on the 18<sup>th</sup> of December 1956.

To complement his general education, Kevin added a Batchelor of Business, and a Certificate of Paramedic Science, the latter a passion with him.

He married his soulmate **Shirley**, and they brought two daughters to the union, Bronwyn and Donna.

Both Kevin and Shirley were very community-minded, Kevin already a member of the local C.E.S., and in 1999, the Alexandra and District Ambulance Service. In December 2008 he became an Ambulance Community Officer (A.C.O.) with Ambulance Victoria (A.V.) when all regional ambulance services were amalgamated as one throughout the State in 2008/2009. In July 2006, Kevin and Shirley joined St John Ambulance together to serve the community. It was within St John they met and became friends with **Alan** and **Robyn Stephens**. During this association Kevin and Alan worked often together at various St John commitments. Alan found Kevin to have a cheerful and likeable disposition, and also most competent in his medical ability. This shone out at Woori Yallock during the 'Oxfarm Trail Walk', when a sudden weather change created an emergency situation at their St John first-aid post covering the event.



*A Happy Kevin Bradwell*

At 1600 hours on Saturday February 7, 2009, Kevin completed his shift at a local Marysville hardware store and returned home to Allison Street. From here, at 1800 hours, he telephoned Shirley in Melbourne to inform her he was not leaving, instead preparing to defend the home from bushfire, as he was not sure of the fire's intensity. Also, at 1814 hours, he telephoned the Marysville Ambulance Victoria A.C.O.'s wife **Kay Brown** and offered himself for on-call duty if required.

At 1845 hours the bushfire storm hit Marysville totally razing all but 33 of the town's 390 homes and tragically taking the lives of 34 persons, Kevin Bradwell's amongst them, Kevin having perished in the former lounge area of his fire-destroyed residence.

This horrific bushfire had claimed the life of a Marysville community stalwart.

**R.I.P. Kevin Bradwell.**  
**1956 – 2009**



**Alexandra & District  
Ambulance Service**



*Marysville was not the only country town to take full force of this catastrophic bushfire, other towns included Narbethong, Kinglake, Strathewen, and Flowerdale, razing most residences and encompassing an area of 450,000 hectares. The grief, despair, and hopelessness of this tragic situation is taking decades to heal and rebuild, however proudly the true 'Aussie Spirit' prevails.*



## ***Ambulance Victoria Communications a Critical Requirement.***

On February 7, 2009, Black Saturday, Ambulance Victoria Technical Services Manager **Ralph Casey** A.S.M. was requested to enhance radio communications black spots that were occurring around the shadows of some summits of the Mount Dandenong range. This was an early phase installation of our ambulance UHF/radio network.

Ralph was despatched to the Kalorama oval at Mount Dandenong, which was deemed to be a 'safe zone'. The communications around the mountain were of poor standard. This would present a problem in the case of an emergency evacuation. After an initial set-up Ralph established communication with Doncaster Headquarters 3WX.

The bushfire expansion on this day was rapidly increasing in the extreme weather conditions, and many areas and towns were already being devastated by the bushfire storm. Subsequently, Ralph's expertise was urgently required in this main bushfire zone to the north-east of Melbourne. In the wake of this catastrophic bushfire lay death and destruction, including a wipe-out of all the telecommunication networks. As such, the critical demand of Ambulance Victoria operations in high-risk areas between paramedics and Ambulance Headquarters communications centres was an operational top priority.

One of these communication emergencies was the township of Marysville, which sadly took full force of the fire storm, causing multiple deaths and razing near all the town's residences, commercial and other buildings. This devastation included the town's telephone exchange, resulting in the total loss of all communications in and out of the devastated town, telephone, radio, or facsimile service. The ramifications of this situation are left to the imagination.

In order to re-establish critical radio communications back to frontline paramedics and personnel, the ambulance technical support group from rural and metro, supported by Telstra, set up a relay station at Mount Gordon, above Marysville, to relay back to Melbourne and Wangaratta control centres. The fire lookout tower which previously carried the communications was totally destroyed in the fire storm, and subsequently had to be re-built and fitted out with new equipment. The following is a sequence of images of this project:



***WX1 Comms Bus***



***Ralph - Enroute to Marysville***



***Radio Tech from Morwell, Tony Desira lashing the mast and trailer down to ensure no more wind damage occurs.***



***Mt Gordon Radio Tower being reworked with Telstra and Ambulance Victoria.***



## *A Nightshift of Unexpected Challenge*

*On February 7<sup>th</sup>, 2009, Ambulance Victoria paramedics **Jen Elmer** and **Callum Bloomer** reported for their rostered nightshift at Eltham Branch. There was no reason to expect this to be anything but a normal ambulance shift. They had no knowledge of any bushfire activity, as it seems Ambulance Victoria were not officially notified of the bushfires until late afternoon of that day. As a result, the dayshift they replaced were also uninformed, and therefore could not brief the incoming crew.*

*Subsequently, unbeknownst to Callum and Jennifer, this was not to be any normal nightshift. These two young paramedics would have no knowledge of the immense danger, massive challenges, and the scale of horrific burn and other injuries and suffering that would confront them on this tragic night of February 7<sup>th</sup>, 2009.*

*Here is Callum and Jennifer's personal accounts of their attendance at the 2009 bushfires that tragic night:*

*"On February 7<sup>th</sup>, 2009, we were nightshift, starting at 1630 hours at Eltham. We met the dayshift at Box Hill and took over their ambulance. From there we heard the case over radio control of a mother and children trapped in a house fire and the Kinglake CERT could not access them. A West A.V. crew came on air saying that they may be able to enter from the west, and Callum being from the northern suburbs, and knowing the area well, thought we could attempt to get to the patients through the centre. We never made it through as we were dispatched to the fire lookout with MICA8 at Kangaroo Ground fire observation tower. We were then directed to move into the fire zone to assist fire crews with first aid management at Panton Hill, St Andrews and Strathewen areas. Enroute, we were alternatively dispatched and then diverted from multiple cases, detailing patients in highly distressing situations.*

*Whilst assisting CFA crews we were directed to attend to a female paediatric patient who police were transporting from the family property with severe burns. The patient was extremely distressed having been involved in a car accident whilst trying to flee the property with her parents. The patient's family had died in the car from the bush fire, whilst the patient was prudently taken from the car and submerged in a local dam by a family friend. The patient suffered deep partial thickness burns to approx. 40% of body and was managed with cold water irrigation and analgesia. We then rendezvoused with MICA 8 nightshift who continued management and transported the patient to the Royal Children's Hospital.*

*We were then directed to St Andrews Fire Station to continue treating multiple CFA fire fighters who had suffered burns in the fire.*

*Shortly after we were dispatched to Strathewen to attend an approximately aged 50-year-old male who police had found in the fire zone. The patient was in the rear of a police vehicle, unresponsive on our arrival. He was having an AMI (severe heart attack) with nil burns present. Initial management was commenced, and we began transporting the patient to Hurstbridge Field Hospital. During transport the patient went into cardiac arrest multiple times, each time requiring intensive management prior to ROSC (return of spontaneous circulation). A CFA fire fighter was seconded to drive the ambulance to enable us to better manage the patient during transport. Due to recurrent cardiac arrests, the transportation of the patient was significantly prolonged with requests for backup denied due to safety concerns because of the fire. We finally arrived at Hurstbridge CFA Field Hospital where resuscitation was continued with the MICA 4 and Sunshine crews until the patient was declared deceased. We later received a commendation from Ambulance Victoria for our management of this case.*



For the remainder of the nightshift, we were directed to Whittlesea Show Grounds where a larger field hospital had been set up. We continued treating patients who presented from the King Lake region at the field hospital and assessing CFA members' injuries rendering them first aid where possible, allowing them to return to the fire front to continue fighting the fire."

*For those who choose a paramedic career, they do so with prior knowledge that this vocation can be accompanied with a price tag, as is the case with our emergency service counterparts. The deep satisfaction of preserving life can often give way to stress-related illness, a situation most certainly exacerbated in circumstances parallel to Callum and Jen's execution of duty for this particular shift. Both share this very personal issue as do others in this feature. It should be noted that Ambulance Victoria provide exceptional support and management of paramedic personnel during these unfortunate legacies. ED.*



"It took me quite some time to be able to return to the fire affected areas. I avoided any talk or exposure of the fires for a long time, and it is really only in the last few years that I can listen to a news story or read an article without feeling compelled to leave the room, turn the television off, close the book etc. Approximately 18 months to 2 years after the fires I travelled through Marysville, and whilst it was confronting it was helpful, as I realised I was ok after observing the burnt environment face on. I sought assistance from one of the Victorian Ambulance Counselling Unit psychologists in the months following the fires, and it was really beneficial. She has been a point of call for me many

times throughout the years of my service for different reasons, and I was so thankful I established this relationship early on in my career".

#### **Jen Elmer – Advanced Life Support Paramedic A.V.**

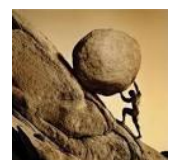
"Looking back, something that I did struggle with was that although Jen and I had experienced the horrors of bushfires up close, for everyone else, life continued as normal. An example of this that really brought it home was at the completion of our case where we transported the cardiac arrest victim out of the fire zone to Hurstbridge CFA station and eventually onto Diamond Creek CFA station, I called my wife and parents to let them know that I was safe. Both were blissfully unaware of the horrors that had been taking place not 30kms from where we all lived. This feeling was again replicated when we responded to a case the following night for someone who had a minor injury. Considering the tragedy and horror we witnessed, the return to business as normal was a difficult concept to process."



#### **Callum Bloomer – Wodonga Single Response Unit/Acting Team Manager A.V.**

### ***Courage***

***Courage does not always roar. – Sometimes courage is the quiet voice at the end of the day saying: "I will try again tomorrow."***



## *Involvement in Darkness and Smoke – Peter Dowling*

On the night of the 7<sup>th</sup> of February 2009, I commenced work on the Thomastown Ambulance working as an ALS Paramedic for Ambulance Victoria with ALS Paramedic **Kate Puusepp**.

At approximately 1900hrs we were dispatched to the Diamond Creek ambulance branch. We were directed to assume the roles of TCO/CCO and be expecting 40-200 burns patients. On arrival to the branch a number of CFA volunteers were present and also the Preston ambulance arrived at the same time. We set about setting up for the potential influx of patients and provided basic training to some of the volunteers in administering oxygen and dressings in anticipation of the influx of patients.

At approximately 2030hrs we were directed to move up to the Hurstbridge ambulance branch and set up a casualty collection area again for the influx of patients. When we arrived at Hurstbridge, again we set up for potential burns and respiratory issues. Kate and I set up intravenous bags and cannulation equipment. We also set up a number of nebulisers and eye wash facilities. During this time, we treated a number of DSE staff for eye irritation and smoke inhalation. It was at this stage we heard that the Eltham ambulance who were in the Strathewen area had a patient who developed chest pain and subsequently had a cardiac arrest in the back of the ambulance. We offered to back this crew up as, having grown up in the area, I knew a few ways to get to their position.

As we attempted to get to Strathewen a roadblock was set up by Victoria Police at Hildebrand Road. Our safety could not be guaranteed if we proceeded. Unbeknown to us we were less than a kilometre from the fire front at this stage. The hills of Kinglake due north of our position were glowing red. We stayed at this position with many of the local residents extremely upset about the loss of life and the loss of property. At this point we were handed a mobile phone from a local resident who advised us that a 90-year man who had sustained burns was trapped in the fire zone with his nephew. We advised over the phone to treat the burns with water, but none was available so damp towels were placed over the patient. We relayed the location of the patient to ESTA and advised him we will get to him as soon as we can. At this point the Eltham ambulance arrived at our location. I opened the back doors and Callum Bloomer had been doing CPR on the patient for nearly one hour in 40-degree temperatures. We continued to treat the patient at Hurstbridge CFA station but unfortunately the patient was deceased. The Eltham ambulance then transported the patient back to Diamond creek CFA station.

We continued to man the Hurstbridge CFA station with a stream of firefighters coming in with minor burns and in need of eye washes. Due to the geographical location, for many residents of Kinglake and Strathewen, the road down off the mountain was impassable on the east side. During this time the northern area of Hurstbridge was under ember attack. Fortunately for us the wind direction changed.

At approximately 0200hrs we were directed to assemble at Diamond Creek CFA station. At this time approximately 15 ambulances proceeded in convoy from Diamond Creek to the staging ground in Whittlesea where a large casualty collection post was set up. We were on standby for an hour or two while a strike force was set up to head up to Kinglake. However, the conditions proved too dangerous to continue up the mountain, so we transported one patient to the Northern Hospital with burns and then proceeded back to our branch in Thomastown to do a restock as we had exhausted many supplies.

At approximately 0600hrs we were sent to Arthur's Creek CFA branch as a CFA tanker had picked up a number of survivors requiring ambulance assessment and treatment. When we arrived as the sun was coming up, I realised the total devastation that had occurred in the previous few hours. It was surreal to see all the residents at the CFA station just shell shocked



many without homes and lost friends and relatives hoping we could tell them news of people who got out or what was happening. It was a very sad and confronting experience for me.

I was then directed to an elderly man Jack who was there with his nephew. Turns out it was the same patient we spoke to on the phone some ten hours earlier. Jack had sustained severe burns to both his arms and described the horror of the fire when it hit his residence the night before. Jack survived by jumping into a wombat hole with his nephew as the fire raged overhead. We transported Jack and his nephew to the Northern Hospital. We finished the shift at 0930hrs on the Sunday morning - 16.5hrs after we started.

This night was compounded for me as I grew up in the area and knew many people who were affected by this tragic event. I also had my parents in the area and was concerned for their safety as communications were very limited at best.

The following day, Monday 9<sup>th</sup> February, I requested to work a nightshift which was to head up to Kinglake and provide primary care to the residents of Kinglake. This night confirmed the total devastation that had occurred to see the many cars that were attempting to come down off the mountain during the fire but had not made it. It was extremely confronting.

I was stationed at the police station in Kinglake and was helping St John and the defence force trying to establish basic services for the community. This shift I also attended a patient who was suffering respiratory issues who was located on a street I knew which was not too far from the centre of town. As I headed down the road, I soon realised that local landmarks had gone as had the street signs. Locating the patient proved quite difficult. The patient ended up using a flashing torch to notify me of his location. This patient was transported to the Austin Hospital, but it took a considerable amount of time due to the condition of the roads.

This night proved to be the hardest night I have worked in my Ambulance career both physically and emotionally. The colleagues I worked with that night were some of the bravest and professional people I have ever encountered.

## *A Clockwork Response*

In writing this special feature covering our Ambulance Victoria response and activity in these catastrophic bushfires of 2009, it has been my endeavour to present this participation in a holistic manner.

A clock cannot keep time unless all parts move simultaneously, just as major emergency operation cannot function safely and effectively without the very same synchronisation of all departments.

In the case of the 2009 bushfires, this was an overall effort proudly achieved.

The following is a supporting message from our Ambulance Victoria Chief of Staff **Kerryn Douglas**:

*'Behind the Health Commanders, Area Managers, Team Managers, frontline paramedics, ACOs and CERT responders sits extensive infrastructure supporting and enabling this emergency response work to be done. These people are often a voice on the radio or phone, a name on an email, but without them we would not be able to serve the Victorian community in times of greatest need. Our Emergency Management Unit, Operational Communications including Duty Managers, Communication Support Paramedics, Clinical Support Officers and Triage Services Practitioners, Fleet & Equipment, Property team, Rosters, Wellbeing & Support Services, Health and Safety team, Patient Safety and Experience team and an extensive number of Corporate staff- including Communications and Engagement (media), Workforce Planning and the Executive Team- all parts come together to make a whole and provide Best Care. There is no doubt we are 'better together'. - Kerryn*

*2009 Victorian Bushfires Royal Commission*

The **2009 Victorian Bushfires Royal Commission**, concluded on 31 July 2010, investigated the circumstances surrounding the **Black Saturday bushfires** on Saturday 7 February 2009 which caused 173 fatalities.

Premier ***John Brumby*** announced a Royal Commission into the fires to examine "all aspects of the government's bushfire strategy", including whether climate change contributed to the severity of the fires.



On 13 February 2009 Brumby announced that Justice ***Bernard Teague***, former judge of the Supreme Court of Victoria, would chair the Commission.

Performance and judgment were scrutinized, including Commissioner of Emergency Services ***Bruce Esplin***, and CFA Operations Officer ***Jason Lawrence*** but most significantly CFA Chief Officer ***Russel Rees***. Rees's

knowledge and the rapidity of his actions (mainly lack of) were questioned, and his defense included: that 7 February was the first day the Integrated Emergency Coordination Centre (IECC) had been tested and it worked well; that intelligence was unclear during the day; that the IECC were very busy; the fires were being fought from the inside and not the outside; and that he couldn't focus on one fire because it would narrow his statewide perspective. The commission's questioning explicitly revealed that Rees had not kept close contact with the progress of the Kilmore East fire. At 4pm, ten minutes before the Strathewen fires had consumed the area, Rees had accepted a state situation report claiming the fire remained in Mount Disappointment's Forest and wouldn't reach Whittlesea for five hours, 30 minutes later the Kilmore East fire reached Kinglake West and swarmed Kinglake less than three hours later. News of deaths reached the Kangaroo Ground CFA office at 5pm and Rees said he'd first been informed of these deaths between 7 and 8pm. Rees was also unaware: of the aircraft line-scan taken after the fire erupted, chief fire behavior expert Dr *Kevin Tolhurst's presence* and predictive map he and his team produced. Rees's evidence explained that warnings weren't issued from the centre but from the periphery, the local incident-control centers (ICCs), the IECC's only responsibility was to place such warnings on the CFA website, but nor Rees or any IECC members saw the warnings.

In its final week, the commission looked at the fuel-reduction burns in Bendigo and Gippsland. As it turned out, none of the 51 recommendations the commission handed down dealt with fuel reduction, but there was significant public concern that something more should have been done.

### Criticism of the fuel-reduction burns.

In a guest editorial for **Australian Forestry**, *Michael Ryan*, one of the victims who lost houses in Bendigo and who works in forestry, said that Victorian authorities need to "manage fuels appropriately in diverse forest types, and residents at the rural-urban interface need to be properly prepared—and on 7 February the reality is that many were not."



## *Post 1939 Bushfire Refuge Strategy*

**For Interest:** In the wake of the terrible death toll of the 1939 bushfires, when 71 people perished, most of these fatalities were timber workers caught in the bush, working felling trees for sawmill logs, and mill hands at remotely located sawmills. Many of these poor souls remains were found clinging to tree bases obviously seeking protection from the inferno. The then Forest Commission of Victoria (now D.S.E.) undertook a project to provide and increase in number the safe havens for those working in isolated bush, at remote sawmills, mountain travellers, and others. These initiatives were located throughout our state forests for refuge in the event of fires that again may occur and threaten lives. These safe havens were called '**dugouts**' and were like bunkers, dugouts had saved many lives during these catastrophic bushfires of 1939.



*Assimilated image of a dugout.*

The rudimentary dugouts were located on mountain roads in the dense timber country, constructed using the following method. An area of bush was selected about the size of a small football ground. This area would be cleared of trees and scrub by bulldozers. The trees removed were cut to size into logs. These logs formed the roof of the dugout. In the central location of the cleared area the bulldozer would excavate a pit generally some 25 x 25 feet (7.5 x 7.5m) x 9 – 10 feet deep (3m), although they varied in size to accommodate up to ten men. The cut-to-size logs from the clearing were then towed over this excavation forming a solid roof. The excavated soil was then backfilled, and spread over the log sub-roof, thus forming a fully fire-proof and heat-insulated external earthen roof, giving the dugout an internal ceiling height of around 8 – 9 feet. A trench-like entry led into the dugout with a normal size doorway opening draped with hessian that would be soaked with water in the case of a bushfire to keep smoke and heat out. These dugouts were modestly furnished and equipped, the objective being to save lives and provide basic survival for a few days prior to rescue by the authorities. From memory, there were four wire beds with blankets, wooden table and chairs, cupboard with tinned food, tea, coffee, etc., a filled water container together with the normal basics, billy, frying pan, utensils, kerosene lamp, the toilet was the bush, as were cooking facilities. Rescue of these survivors could only be made by motor vehicles, an arduous task due to many burnt trees falling across the road. Cumbersome two-man chain saws were in their infancy and few and far between, helicopter rescue never existed in this era; remote communications were a wonder of the future, the very basic post and wire telephone network to towns had been destroyed by the bushfire, medical assistance a wish and a prayer.

The dugouts were serviced regularly by the Forest Commission, ready for fire refuge purposes at any time. As a youngster I used to go with the forest officer from Erica on the dugout inspection and replenishment trips (fresh water, etc.), also their comforts were regularly taken up by wildlife, wombats, kangaroos, snakes and so on.

Dugout placements were always publicly respected and left untouched. However, from the mid-1960s onwards, vandals and other undesirables sought them out, camping in them, using provisions, and generally wrecking the facility, leading to the project being abandoned in the 1970s, and never reintroduced.



## *From the Ashes to Rebuilding the Future.*



These are images reflect the rebuilding of towns devastated by the 2009 Black Saturday Bushfire, in particular, Marysville, Kinglake, Narbethong, Strathewen, and Flowerdale.

## *Recovery*

*Day by day new soil is turned, one by one new foundations are laid, stage by stage new buildings rise, replacing the ashes of devastation. A fresh future emerges on horizons, a smile once again appears.*

*Over vast blackened landscape Mother Nature is reclaiming her own, trees sprout, ferns strike new fronds, scrub grows – And the true and proud Aussie spirit shines through.*

*The essence of time ebbs visions of death, destruction, despair, and grief. – Albeit never to be erased from human memory.*

PKD