



treated as crime scenes. This did however ensure the emergency services had enough time to complete the task of locating and recovering bodies from the area.

The fires were mostly controlled by 4 March, however the rebuilding of communities will take decades and the rebuilding of lives will take even longer - with many never able to put the terrible loss of family members and friends behind them.

Over 3,500 fire personnel were called upon across the State on Black Saturday - making it the single largest call out of Emergency Personnel in our State's history. Nearly 600 Police were also on duty in fire affected areas.



One emergency services member lost his life (fire fighter David Balfour from Canberra) when on the night of Tuesday 17 February, a burnt out tree fell onto him as he secured a fire hose to the fire tanker he was assigned too. David had travelled to Victoria to help with the mopping up process.

Regretfully a number of the 400 fires recorded on Black Saturday were deliberately lit. As a result, 'Taskforce Phoenix' was established by the Victorian Government to examine the cause of the fires. It was Victoria's largest and longest running Royal Commission ever held. The Commission's findings can be found by searching for: '2009 Victorian Bushfires Royal Commission'.

ARTWORKZ TOURISM WEBSITE

www.esplash.me

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Brochures have been produced by passionate volunteers to help promote our District.

Disclaimer: The authors have taken care to ensure this publication is correct, though please be aware that errors and omissions do occur.

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DISTRICT

HISTORY OF BLACK SATURDAY



*Shadowed by over 30 Mountains and
on the banks of the beautiful Goulburn River
and Lake Eildon. This is our playground!*



The 7 February 2009 was named 'Black Saturday' after a series of fires ravished Victoria resulting in the single greatest loss of life from bush fire since records began. 173 people were killed State-wide after conditions on the day reached "Catastrophic Category" with temperatures averaging 46.4 degrees and unofficial reports describing temperatures at up to 48 degrees in some areas. Wind speeds were 80 km/h and gusts registered over 120 km/h as firestorms created their own localised weather patterns. Established trees were ripped from the ground with others snapped like twigs mid height by the strength of the wind. Some trees were blown over and then remained unburnt due to the speed of the fire racing over them.

The bush was extremely dry due to Victoria's

drought, making conditions in the lead up to the day more dangerous! The previous three days were all over 43 degrees and much of the bush was burdened with extremely heavy fuel loads due to the lack of natural fuel reduction fires. Some of the fire affected districts had not seen natural reduction burning since the horrific 1939 bushfires.



The Black Saturday fires destroyed over 2,000 homes, including entire townships such as Marysville, Narbethong, Buxton, Granton, Kinglake, Taggerty, Flowerdale and Strathewen.

Over 70 townships were affected by the fires on Black Saturday and around 8,000 people were displaced in our district alone. Many of those could not gain access to their properties for considerable time due to the fire affected areas being



Stevenson Falls before and after the Black Saturday Bush Fires