

# **FIRE EVACUATION AT KERAMI GARDENS RESORT 2009**

**BY A & J VARGA**

## **Resort Managers take care of guests**

Spare a thought for those families on holidays at resorts and hotels that were effected by fire in the Victoria area. Resort managers Richard and Jill not only assisted in a safe evacuation, but also provided excellent leadership and guidance during a very difficult time. A DAE Member staying at the resort has sent DAE this message, "We wish to commend the excellent way in which Richard and Jill successfully carried out their evacuation plans leading up to the horrific fire at Marysville on Saturday, 7<sup>th</sup> February 2009".

Mid-afternoon Richard visited all units to advise guests to pack the car with belongings, "caution proceedings". As the smoke thickened cars were brought to the front of the resort and all guests assembled in the lounge. Cool drinks were supplied and constant phone contact held between Richard, at the community fire station and Jill, in the lounge.

All was reasonable until the wind changed direction. Increased smoke began billowing behind the hill to the west of the town, lightning flashed and flames started to flicker high into the skyline. Richard returned, a clear briefing was given as to the one available direction out of Marysville and to Alexandra, prepared maps of the route issued, guests were checked out on Jill's list and cars departed in an orderly manner, as instructed.

Due to the preparation, brave and outwardly calm leadership of Richard and Jill the group of guests proceeded to safety. Now the Hodge family has lost everything, for the second time. As they go about assessing their needs and future we hope luck will turn and the road ahead will be a smooth one.