

Art From The Extended Region. A lasting memorial.

The project. Mosaic artist Kathryn Portelli received funding from the Arts Recovery Quick Response Fund to create an artwork as a memorial to those in the Redesdale/ greater Bendigo area who lost homes in the bushfires. She created a mural made up of objects salvaged from homes that were damaged or lost in the fires; it stand 11 metres long and contains 280 tiles.

The Fund enabled Kathryn the opportunity to get the project started. She received \$2,500, which she allocated to the making of one particular section of the mural, the 'fire scene', a part of the project that was particularly meaningful to her. She spent 658 hours on the project, with on 22 per cent of her time funded. The rest she paid for from her own savings. The grant gave Kathryn the confidence that she could start the project without the worry of having to justify her project to other potential funding bodies, as she was intent on doing the project anyway.

Project outcomes. The tangible memorial that Kathryn created has given the community the chance to reflect on and honour the local people who lost their possessions and livelihoods in the bushfires. Because the project is made from items donated by others, the mural has become a true community project. Its memorial nature may help people make sense of the disaster and put their memories into a context so that eventually it may not be as painful. The mural has created a place-based approach to providing psychosocial support.

After the project. The project has given Kathryn Portelli the confidence to pursue other funding opportunities for other community projects. Regional Arts Victoria selected Kathryn to represent the state of Victoria in the Outstanding Contribution Volunteer Awards for the time and efforts devoted to the creating and project management of the Art From The Extended Region project. Since the project, Kathryn has been given the opportunity to work on a community project with the Public Records Office and Heritage Society.



"Regional Arts Victoria believed in artists and knew they would step forward".

Kathryn Portelli

