

## Barfold town hall's nine lives

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THE Barfold Town Hall may be as lucky as a rabbit's foot or a handful of four-leaf clovers.

The hall has escaped bushfire nine times, most recently on February 7 last year when flames tore through Victoria.

A series of commemorative tiles was unveiled at the site yesterday to honour its role in the community for more than a century.

Victorian Bushfire Recovery and Reconstruction Authority chairwoman Christine Nixon said the tiles honoured the hall as a cornerstone of the region and acknowledged its importance in the aftermath of Black Saturday.

"Fires came perilously close to the Barfold Hall last year, so much so that paddocks surrounding the building were blackened," Ms Nixon said.

"Incredibly though, once again it was saved and went on to play an incredibly important part in the recovery process."

Local artist Kathryn Portelli created the piece, which includes eight tiles of melted glass and metal surrounding a commemorative tile in the middle.

"The community was badly impacted by the Redesdale fires last year with 14 homes, a church and a road bridge destroyed, thousands of kilometres of fencing burned and 10,000 hectares of farm pasture severely damaged," said Ms Nixon, who also visited staff involved in producing the Bridge Connection community newsletter.

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RICH MOSAIC: Elaine Murphy, Christine Nixon and artist Kathryn Portelli at the Barfold unveiling yesterday.