

Piecing together our memories

By Jessica Foulds

Macedon Ranges residents joined others across Victoria on Sunday to commemorate the first anniversary of the Black Saturday bushfires in Kyneton.

Art From The Extended Region, also known as the AFTER Project, was officially unveiled at the Kyneton Town Hall.

The bushfire memorial wall, which was created by Pipers Creek artist Kathryn Portelli, includes more than 200 mosaic tiles.

Residents affected and moved by the bushfires were invited to donate patterned china, colourful crockery, ceramic tiles and other household items destroyed in the blaze to be used on their own tile, each displaying the shape of a gum leaf.

Ms Portelli said the mural, which depicts community connectivity, was a show of support for all those in the community affected by the bushfires.

She said she would like to see the area enhanced with an extended pathway and seating for people to be able to take time to sit and contemplate the meaning behind the artwork.

“It was extremely fulfilling to work for my community, combining their donations with my mosaic skills and to build creative relationships with 45 different volunteer contributors. I will enjoy listening to the public’s reactions to particular tiles and am very pleased I delivered on the original vision and that our wonderful community members got behind those in need.”

Partners in the project included Macedon Ranges Shire Council, the Helen MacPherson Smith Trust, Regional Arts Victoria, Cobaw Community Health, Redesdale Recovery and Wellbeing Group, Kyneton Bushland Resort and Smalti Australia.

A commemorative plaque, donated by the council and Wooling Hill Memorial Garden Estate, was also unveiled.

In Gisborne, a tree planting ceremony, attended by local CFA and SES units, was held at the Gisborne Lions Park to mark the anniversary.

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Telegraph, Tuesday, February 9 2010 - 5