

DESIGNER OF THE YEAR

CHRIS DAVIES THE SUNDAY MAIL
QUEENSLAND

BLACK SATURDAY

“
When we compare the weather that is forecast for this Saturday as against some of the classic fire days of this state's history... (it) is in fact worse
Country Fire Authority chief officer Russell Rees



THE DAY BEFORE HELL DESCENDED...

VICTORIAN Premier John Brumby's warning to his state could not have been more prophetic.

Brumby, fire authorities and weather experts cautioned that the combination of searing temperatures, strong winds and a country-side left dried and withered by the drought had created a perfect tinder-box ready to explode in flames.

"It's the sort of day when a fire that gets away won't just damage property, it may well cost lives, as Black Friday and Ash Wednesday have done before," Brumby said.

"So I don't exaggerate when I say we need to be on alert.

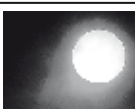
"It's just as bad a day as you can imagine, and on top of that the state is just tinder-dry so people need to exercise real commonsense."

The recipe was there, Brumby warned, for Saturday to be "the worst day in the history of the state".

The heat and winds were duty on their way, to deliver Australia the blackest day in our peacetime history.

WAR ZONE: The aftermath of the firestorm that ripped through the hills at Yarra Glen
PICTURE: Alex Coppal

SATURDAY FEBRUARY 7 2009



Victoria buckles under record temperatures of up to 42°C - the mercury rising ominously past the previous benchmark of 45.6C, recorded on Black Friday, January 13, 1939.



Ten bushfires begin to rage across the state's west, northwest, northeast, east and on the fringes of Melbourne, with many residents arming themselves with garden hoses, buckets and wet blankets.



By late afternoon, 14,000 hectares are ablaze. The inferno fanned by 100km/h winds. An army of 3000 firefighters is mobilised, marring 500 trucks and 37 aircraft.



Victoria's Deputy Police Commissioner Kieran Walsh holds a press conference confirming fears of an impending catastrophe. He announces 34 people have already been killed and up to 40 could be lost.



As the evening came, the state is in chaos with 150 towns under siege, walls of flame rising 40m into the night sky, power lost in 100,000 homes, mass evacuations underway, roads looking like a war zone and families in turmoil, desperate to contact loved ones in the affected areas.

STATEMENT
VICTORIAN BUSHFIRES
BLACK SATURDAY
FEBRUARY 2009
DESIGNER: CHRIS DAVIES

A week after the Black Saturday bushfires in Victoria, The Sunday Mail published a 16-page run-of-press liftout to mark the human tragedy and human triumph of the devastating event. The brief was to create a liftout that would be uniquely different to those published in competitive and interstate media. This meant the liftout had to be completed in real-time on the Saturday prior to Sunday publication to prevent any double-up with competitive media. The theme "From Hell to Hope" aimed to capture the events of the prior week but leave readers with a compelling belief in the ability of our communities and the nation to recover. The challenge was to find images, which had not already been over-exposed and to use them in a way that captured the essence of the bushfires and the impact on people's emotions. The decision to focus on a small number of photographs made the image selection a vital element of the feature and the necessity to use some in full colour and others in mono - due to press constraints - added another layer of complexity to the choices made. The font selection - Times Classic and Rockwell - aimed to give the liftout a respectful tone and was carried across to the front page of the paper to replace the traditional Franklin Gothic tabloid treatment.



IN MEMORY OF AUSTRALIA'S WORST
NATURAL DISASTER 16-PAGE LIFTOUT

the Sunday Mail

FEBRUARY 15, 2009 \$2

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HOME TO HEARTACHE:
Marysville residents reunited
in grief yesterday
PICTURE: Alex Coppel

TEARS FOR A TOWN LOST

Residents of Marysville made the painful journey home yesterday
to weep for a community destroyed and pray for its recovery

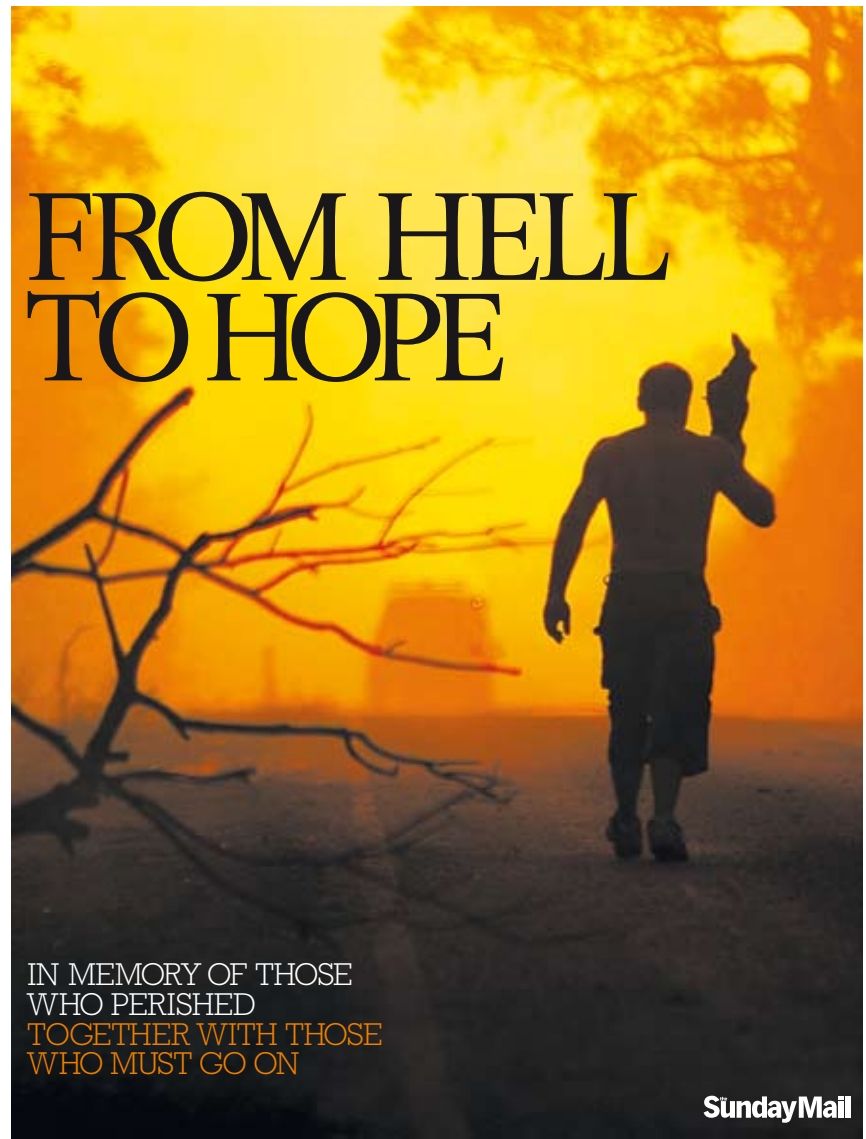
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VICTORIAN BUSHFIRES FEBRUARY 2009
AUSTRALIA'S WORST NATURAL DISASTER



FROM HELL TO HOPE

IN MEMORY OF THOSE
WHO PERISHED
TOGETHER WITH THOSE
WHO MUST GO ON

SundayMail

WITH COURAGE LET US ALL COMBINE TO ADVANCE AUSTRALIA FAIR

FROM SECOND VERSE OF OUR NATIONAL ANTHEM



SundayMail

VICTORIA FIRE TRAGEDY IN MEMORY

SundayMail

“We will find more bodies as we gain access to different parts of the fire areas. So far we have found people in cars. We have found people on their properties, in paddocks. We've found others in their houses. It covers the whole range.”
Victoria's Commissioner of Coroner's Court



SHUTTERSTOCK: Simon Burgess/Photograph
A woman kisses her young son in the rubble of a destroyed home in Victoria.

PICTURE: Jon Morgan

THE HUMAN TOLL

The fire and destruction in Victoria has been a tragedy for the state. It has been a tragedy for the people who have lost their homes and lives. It has been a tragedy for the people who have lost their loved ones. It has been a tragedy for the people who have lost their way of life. It has been a tragedy for the people who have lost their future. It has been a tragedy for the people who have lost their hope. It has been a tragedy for the people who have lost their faith. It has been a tragedy for the people who have lost their love. It has been a tragedy for the people who have lost their life.

TUESDAY
FEBRUARY 10
2009



VICTORIA FIRE TRAGEDY IN MEMORY

SundayMail

“I bloody don't want to be there. That fire was unstoppable. I'm not a bloody hero. It's just the Aussie way.”
CFA Captain
Eddy Magley



HEROES

They were the unsung heroes of the fire. They were the people who risked their lives to save others. They were the people who worked tirelessly to contain the fire. They were the people who showed courage and bravery in the face of adversity. They were the people who made a difference. They were the heroes of the fire.

WEDNESDAY
FEBRUARY 11
2009

