



People Caring
for Nature

**Victorian National
Parks Association**

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Jenny Barnett

Conservation Tribute Campaign

25/08/1947 – 07/02/2009

23 March 2009

Our friend and colleague, Jenny Barnett, was one of the people lost in the shocking bushfires on Black Saturday.

You may have known Jenny, but if not, you would certainly know of her work. For more than 25 years her knowledge anchored many VNPA campaigns including fire ecology, conservation planning, alpine parks and alpine grazing, box iron bark forests in central Victoria, logging and forestry, freshwater and marine issues.

It is ironic that at the time of her death, Jenny was working on a major fire ecology project for us.

Her project sought to help us more deeply understand the impact of fire on different ecologies and vegetation, so that we could make more informed ...P.T.O

YES! *I would like to support the Jenny Barnett Conservation Tribute Campaign*

I am pleased to honour Jenny's lifelong work and support the campaign with a gift of:

- \$50 – enough to help produce useful information brochures on conservation issues.
- \$100 – to fund the work needed to provide intelligent media comment.
- \$500 – enough to fund a researcher for several days work on the campaign.
- \$5,000 – enough to help provide solid, science-based input to the Royal Commission into the bushfires.
- My Choice _____



Jenny Barnett Conservation Tribute Campaign
ABN 34 217 717 593

All donations over \$2 are tax deductible

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decisions about how best to manage the complex issues of human safety and conservation.

Jenny Barnett Conservation Tribute Campaign

I write to you now to ask if you would make a tribute to Jenny, both personally and financially.

In her honour, we have established the Jenny Barnett Conservation Tribute Campaign. If there was one thing Jenny would have wanted, it was for her work to continue.

Funds raised for the campaign will be used to:

1. Provide informed, thoughtful, science-based input to the Royal Commission into the bushfires.
2. Engage in public education work to into appropriate fire management techniques and help people understand the complex issues surrounding fire ecology, including fuel reduction (also known as 'burning off') and management.
3. Continue Jenny's work on intelligent planning for nature conservation.
4. Promote research into the protection of native plants and animals.

To give to the campaign, you can:

- reply to this letter using the reply form enclosed
- telephone the VNPA on 03 9347 5188 to make a secure credit card donation
- go online to www.vnpa.org.au to donate securely online

If you can, it is especially helpful to us if you donate online, as it means we get the funds more quickly, and it reduces our administration costs.

\$100,000 per year for five years

Our goal is to raise \$100,000 a year to continue Jenny's work, and if we can, to continue for five years.

Work will get underway as soon as funds arrive.

Create your own tribute or memorial

In addition to a tribute to Jenny, we have created the ability for you to create a tribute or memorial page to anyone else involved in the bushfires.

My cheque/money order payable to **Victorian National Parks Association** is enclosed or please charge my:

Visa Mastercard

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Signature _____ Expiry Date _____ / _____

Name on Card _____

Contact Telephone _____

- Please send me information about leaving a **Bequest** to VNPA in my Will
- Please send me information about supporting **VNPA** through the regular giving program
- I would like to join **VNPA** as a member, please send me a membership form

We respect your privacy. If you do not wish to receive further mailings from VNPA please tick here

By going online at www.vnpa.org.au you can follow the steps to create a page in memorial or tribute to someone who: was lost in the fire, is perhaps still missing, survived the fire or displayed great courage.

There are many stories, often heartrending, many inspiring, and they deserve to be told.

You can then use the email facilities available to notify friends, family and colleagues of the tribute or memorial page, so they can make a contribution if they wish, and leave a message of their own.

The fire moved too fast

Jenny and her husband were incredibly well-prepared for fire at their place in Steel's Creek, yet the rate and intensity of the fire which caught them meant they just didn't have a chance. The fire reached temperatures of 1300 degrees - enough to melt glass.

The key cause - unprecedented weather conditions

The scientific consensus is that the intensity of this fire was fundamentally caused by 10 years of drought, many days of intense heat beforehand, record hot temperatures on the day and wild, changeable winds which swept the fire along at up to 100km per hour.

The weather conditions were unprecedented. But they did not go unpredicted.

Victoria is one of the most dangerous places in the world for bushfires. Our location in the lush but now dry south east of the continent, and our proximity to the hot, dry winds sweeping down from central Australia, combined with the drying effects of climate change make us very vulnerable.

In the undeniable context of climate change, it is absolutely urgent that we increase both the knowledge and awareness of the impact and management of fire, and the needs of our environment.

Reducing the future impacts of fire

To reduce the impact of future fires, we need a deeper understanding of the impact of fire on different ecologies and vegetation, so that we can make more informed decisions about how best to manage the complex issues.

VNPA, and most environmentalists, have long supported appropriate fuel reduction burning. But our key concern is that the impact of fuel reduction needs to be properly researched and intelligently planned before it is carried out.

Fire management is a complex issue. For example, there are hundred's of different vegetation types in Victoria, all home to different animals. These habitats all respond differently to fire.

Fire frequencies that are too high or too low threaten Victoria's biodiversity. In wet eucalypt forests, for example, Mountain Ash and Alpine Ash will be killed by intense fires, but also need fires to germinate seed. Historically these forests burnt every 37-75 years. More frequent fires affect the structure of the forest and habitat for forest dwelling species. On the other hand, grasslands, need quite frequent fire maintain diversity.

We need an informed strategy for Victoria

Our goal is to see an effective and intelligent strategy where additional fire protection needed because of increased fire frequency from climate change will be properly planned with adequate consultation with the community and with all appropriate experts including those responsible for flora and fauna protection.

We want monitoring and research programs to be greatly accelerated to give us the added knowledge we need to cope with this situation.

What would Jenny have wanted?

Above all else, we know that Jenny would have wanted this important work to continue. Your gift to the Jenny Barnett Conservation Tribute Campaign will help us help Victoria develop an intelligent, informed approach to this horrific situation.

The loss of life has been shocking. There is real risk that it will happen again. However, it is possible to manage our environment in a way that protects and preserves it for us and for future generations.

Jenny loved the bush, she wrote the 'bible' on local conservation in the 1990's called 'Standing up for your local environment: An action guide', and made numerous meticulous submissions to the many and varied development projects across the state which posed a threat to the nature she loved.

Please give generously today.

Warm regards,



Matt Ruchel
Executive Director



P.S. VNPA must continue Jenny's lifelong work on conservation. Please support Jenny's work by making a gift today to the Jenny Barnett Conservation Tribute Campaign.

P.P.S. To give you an idea of how much difference you can make:

- \$50 is enough to help us produce useful information brochures on conservation issues.
- \$100 will fund the work needed to provide intelligent media comment.
- \$500 is enough to fund a researcher for several days work on the campaign.
- \$5,000 will help us provide solid, science-based input to the Royal Commission into the bushfires.

Please give what you can.