



MEDIA NEWS

28 July 2008

WILDFIRE IN THE HIGH COUNTRY

The Mansfield community will remember the events of the 2006/07 Great Divide Fires on Friday 1 August when *Wildfire in the High Country* is launched.

Wildfire in the High Country is a collection of reports, stories, letters, poems, art works and photographs from the fires compiled by the Mansfield Writers' Group.

Victoria's longest-running fires, the Great Divide Fires, burnt almost 1.2 million hectares over 69 days after beginning on 1 December 2006.

The book describes the impact the fires had on the local communities in the Mansfield area and details the recovery and rebuilding process.

The project had many enthusiastic contributors, including Publication Editor Robin Purdey who said the book is an insight into the fires.

"*Wildfires in the High Country* is very important to the Mansfield community and is another step in the local area's recovery."

"There were so many amazing people including volunteers who worked during and after the fires. The event really pioneered our community spirit, something which the book hopes to capture and display to all readers."

The book highlights the significant cost of the fires, focusing on the effects on the community and the stories of those on the frontline.

Mansfield was at the heart of three major fires – the Tatong, Mansfield Complex, and the King Valley fires – and its spirit shone through as local residents rallied together in support of each other.

After having already celebrated the extraordinary efforts of all involved from the Mansfield community on Australia Day in 2007, this book launch is seen as another significant step forward for the community.

Attending the launch will be representatives from organisation that funded the book including Bushfire Cooperative Research Centre, CFA, Department of Sustainability and Environment and Department of Human Services.

All profits from sale of the books will be donated to local CFA Brigades.

The book is available from Mansfield Information Centre, Mansfield Historical Society, Mansfield Newsagency, Mansfield Country Tales Bookshop, Mansfield High Country Apparel, The Produce Store and Kinloch Wines.

The Wildfire in the High Country launch will take place at the The Delatite Hotel Mansfield at 6.00pm on Friday 1 August 2008.

For further information on the launch contact Robin Purdey (03) 5777 5159