

Having a brother and his family move into the Kinglake area three weeks prior to the 2009 fires, meant spending a harrowing eighteen hours waiting for confirmation of their survival.

No phone contact was possible and no fuel was available to leave. So the night was spent with wife and children huddled inside whilst father dragged a wheelie bin up and down the property trying to douse the spot fires faster than the embers were starting them. No power meant no pumps.

They have since brought the surprise of twin girls into the world to add to a boy and girl they already had.

How based on that 2009 Summers experience and the current 2013 heatwave, how are these children supposed to deal with these type of events in the future. By the time they are my age, 53, the planet is predicted to be considerably warmer and doubtless these extreme current conditions will be considerably worse.

With my own family living in a less vegetated area of Ferntree Gully even I felt threatened by the near 48 deg and raging winds that day. Had a fire in suburbia started that day it would have burned many houses before being extinguished if at all.

Yet we know what the causes are and we know of the solutions. Only yesterday was a program on 7/2 TV about the use of concentrated solar in the USA back in the 1970's and although some action is now taking place its far less than the problem requires.

If Martin Ferguson's enthusiasm for digging up more coal oil and gas was redirected into renewable energy sources we may give these children a chance of enjoying the summers we all enjoyed as kids. Sadly I don't see that happening, but we MUST get more serious about mitigating these effects NOW.

I have considered creating a curtain of ember resistant fly wire to envelope the whole house which when gutters are blocked and flooded would form a screen of cascading droplets as they bead across the gaps in the fly wire. An astronomer from Siding Spring commented on how fly wire on windows had protected the telescopes.

And a leafblower with an attachment for a garden hose to rapidly snuff out spot fires with a blast of mist laden air.

Two trips to Canberra to lobby for a carbon tax is about the extent of my physical capacity due to illness. But all our children deserve much better.

Anthony Robbins stated there are unknown unknowns but now they are known knowns and Governments must rapidly do more about them.

We can't all live in a fire shelter.

Anthony, Nancy, Kiandra, Romanie, Mieke and Zuleika Barnes on behalf of  
Nicholas, Karen, Johnathon, Charlot, Juliet and Josephine Barnes.