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| My name is Mona Farr.  Excuse my voice, but I’m 101 years old.  When I was in my late teens I wrote a poem, ‘The 1919 Fire’, which swept through the Otway Ranges when I was ten years old.  Through suffocating smoke and heat  We struggled to draw breath  And some while fighting for their homes  Were trapped and burned to death.  Though the odds were great  All they had they gave  Battling for all they were worth  And many will carry the scars to their grave  Of that terrible hell on earth.  Now the ranges are all green again  Blooming brightly in the spring  And amongst the slender saplings  The wild birds nest and sing.  But the swaying golden wattle  And the scent of sweet briar  Can never teach us to forget  The 1919 fire. |