



**The Rev. The Hon. Fred Nile MLC ED., L.Th.**

Member of the Legislative Council  
Assistant President of The Legislative Council  
Parliamentary Leader, Christian Democratic Party  
Parliament House, Macquarie Street, SYDNEY NSW 2000  
Telephone: (02) 9230 2478 Facsimile: (02) 9230 2098  
Email: f.nile@parliament.nsw.gov.au



**MEDIA RELEASE**  
**2020 CDP EDEN MONARO CANDIDATE – NARELLE STOREY**  
**For immediate circulation**



Eden Monaro is reeling. 2020 has brought trauma and insecurity to many lives, decimating homes, livelihoods, businesses and marriages. At a time when they need political strength and a voice in parliament, the loss of Mike Kelly and Andrew Constance is just another unwelcome blow. While the big parties are still jostling to select candidates, CDP already has their candidate on the ground with an action plan for her community. There's been lots of talk and lots of promises made, but at the end of the day, it's been the kindness of locals that has made this difficult time bearable. This community has a long history of working together. The Cobargo Folk Festival, the South Coast Producers Association, Seed Savers, Food Swaps, the Friends of Quaama

hall and many other small groups have helped to make a strong, connected and proactive community.

When fire ripped through Quaama and Cobargo, CDP candidate, Narelle Storey was in the centre of it all. Living behind the iconic Cobargo train cafe, now immortalised in media images throughout the world, the fire breached her room in a tornado that melted the iron frame of her antique bed.

"I could have lost my life so easily," said Narelle. "None of us expected the fire to come to town. We were fast asleep and if it wasn't for a mysterious txt from a girl I'd met while doing some volunteer work at the Quaama hall garden, I would have died. "

"Narelle is a great fit for Eden Monaro," said Fred Nile. "She has shared in the suffering of her community and has proven her tenacity, courage and resilience by actioning Restore Australia a NFP community recovery plan even in the midst of her own displacement. She will be a strong voice for the people."

“The idea for ReStore Australia first began while sitting in evacuation at Wallaga Lake on 1/1/2020, said Narelle. “It was a very strong impression. I guess I must have heard that the shops at Cobargo had burnt down and while I was considering what was to become of us, I saw the word ReSTORE and with that came a flood of strategies; a website for displaced local businesses, a store for the restore, where money could be raised through the sale of locally produced items; a place where people could tell their story, get help, promote their business and volunteer. We have started with our local area, creating [ReStoreCobargo.com](http://ReStoreCobargo.com) and LETS Restore Australia community exchange. There’s still so much yet to be done, but it’s my ultimate aim to bottle up the essence of this community, to extract the elements that worked so well for us and replicate it in other rural towns. This is about empowering communities to find and action their own solutions, rather than wait for promised handouts that often just don’t materialise.”



**Caption:** *All that was left of Narelle’s bedroom after the Cobargo fire ripped through the train cafe and breached the ceiling to incinerate everything.*



**Caption:** *Narelle looking at the devastation of Cobargo Fire*

*Fred Nile*

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**Media inquiries:**

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