

Premier opens Forest Heritage Centre

MORE than 300 people gathered for the official opening of the Forest Heritage Centre at Dwellingup recently.

The world-class facility is set to provide a major boost for the fine wood industry in Western Australia and nature-based tourism in the Dwellingup region.

It is the result of a partnership between the Fine Wood Industry and CALM, with sponsorship from numerous State, Commonwealth and private agencies.

Premier Richard Court said people will look back on the opening of the centre as a milestone in the developing relationship between the forest, its fine wood crafts and tourism.

The Forest Heritage Centre combines a commercial fine wood gallery, a working School of Wood, an interpretive display area, and a series of walktrails.

It is built of rammed earth in the shape of a giant leafy bough, and each of its three leaf-shaped components houses a different aspect of forest heritage.

The biggest, central leaf is the School of Wood, which has just been accredited to offer an Associate Diploma in fine wood craft and design—the first in Western Australia.

The smaller, western leaf is the Forest Heritage Gallery, where forest-inspired fine wood products, and art and craft, are exhibited and available for sale.

The final, eastern leaf houses an interactive display area where visitors can learn about forest ecology and understand its diversity and management.

Environment Minister Peter Foss, said the centre provided a showcase for the rich grains and warm colours of WA's magnificent hardwoods.

"It demonstrates the value-adding processes that transform our local timber into unique, high value pieces. There is no doubt that WA can develop a fine wood industry that is the envy of the world," he said.

In the weeks leading up to the opening, CALM Dwellingup staff pulled out all the stops to have the centre, particularly the interactive display area,



Premier Richard Court tests the effectiveness of a plane at the new Dwellingup Forest Heritage Centre, encouraged by Environment Minister Peter Foss, Murray MLA Arthur Marshall and Director of The School of Wood Malcolm Harris. Photo by Greg Wood. Another picture - page 2.

by Penny Walsh

walktrails and the old forestry cadet school, ready for action.

Coordinating their efforts, and providing the driving force behind CALM's involvement in the centre, was Education Officer Tammie Reid.

Tammie was singled out for special recognition by Executive Director Dr Syd Shea at the opening.

"She has been bubbling with enthusiasm for this project for two years, and it

is great to see her vision, and the collective vision of all those who have been involved, come to fruition," he said.

Those attending the opening were able to 'sneak preview' the range of forestry tourism and education experiences the centre has to offer.

Dr Shea said the facility provided a brilliant illustration of how forest management and use could be integrated.

"Timber harvesting, value-adding and marketing are brought together under one roof, along with a world-class fine wood training facility.

"And the high quality regrowth forest that surrounds the centre illustrates the nature-based tourism possibilities of sustainably managed forest—linking the natural beauty of the forest with the crafted beauty of its products."

Not far from the Forest Heritage Centre, another Dwellingup attraction to receive a boost from the Premier was the Marrinup Prisoner of War Camp.

The camp was included on the Register of Heritage Places and Mr Court launched a conservation review of the POW facility, as part of the Govern-

ment's "Australia Remembers" program.

The Marrinup site was the only permanent prisoner of war campsite established during the Second World War in Western Australia. It operated from August 1943 to April 1946 and catered for more than 1200 Italian and German prisoners and their Army guards.

CALM staff from Dwellingup and the Planning and Visitor Services Branch have been heavily involved in researching the camp and planning its management.



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OFFICIAL OPENING FOREST HERITAGE CENTRE - DWELLINGUP Dec. 1995





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