

CALM NEWS

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DEPARTMENT OF CONSERVATION AND LAND MANAGEMENT

SEPTEMBER-OCTOBER 1996



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Opening the Valley of the Giants



Smiles and laughter were the norm for all those who ventured on the Tree Top Walk. More photos of the Valley of the Giants official opening can be seen on page 3. Photos by Simon Westlake.

THE Valley of the Giants project—one of the most significant nature-based tourism and conservation projects ever to be undertaken in Western Australia—was officially opened by Premier Richard Court in September.

The tourism icon provides a unique means of interacting with nature for thousands and thousands of visitors, while protecting the ecosystem of the sole tangle forest in the world.

Mr Court said the Valley of the Giants was an excellent example of the successful integration of the conservation of our natural environment with tourism.

by Mitzi Vance

"Western Australia is world renowned for its natural attractions and its abundance of rich resources," he said.

"It is in the enviable position of being able to capitalise on the growth of the nature-based tourism market through its combination of natural advantages and the skills and expertise of its people."

Mr Court said the 600-metres-long Tree Top Walk, which reached a level of 40 metres from the forest floor, combined with the Ancient Empire, a family barbecue area and the

information interpretive 'Tingle Shelter' centre, promised a tourism facility of great value.

"The Valley of the Giants will generate huge social and economic benefits for surrounding towns, while, more importantly, redressing the decline in the health of the tingle forest."

The project and its facilities are designed to accommodate the 100,000 plus tourists who visit the Valley of the Giants each year.

It is the culmination of almost three years of research, planning and hard work that required the commitment, support and dedication of a variety of government departments, local com-

munities and local government bodies.

CALM Executive Director Dr Syd Shea commended all those involved in the planning, design and construction of the project for their excellent support and work.

They were ably led by the Valley of the Giants planning and design team—Tracy Churchill, Cliff Winfield, Gary Muir, Bill Cuthbert, Greg Mair and Kevin Vear.

All those attending the opening were impressed by the project. The majority, including those with a fear of heights, braved the winter elements to experience the Tree Top Walk

and its breathtaking views.

The Premier said he was delighted to be able to view and experience first hand the project in its final form.

"Two years ago, I was invited to inspect the site and I saw the damage being done to the tingle forest floor by visitor pressure, I then had the pleasure of announcing the concept stage six months later."

Dr Shea said the Valley of the Giants was one of a series of projects undertaken by CALM to provide eco-tourism facilities throughout the State.

"CALM has embarked on a

visionary plan to provide the people of Western Australia and tourists with unique experiences only available in this State," he said.

"In the past two years, a number of major conservation and recreational facilities, such as the Hills Forest Activity Centre in Mundaring, the Forest Heritage Centre in Dwellingup and the Wilderness Lodge in Perup, have been opened."

"All these facilities promote tourism, but, at the same time, help sustain our wonderful natural attractions for future generations," Dr Shea said.

NatureBase wins Australian Internet Award

NatureBase—the Department of Conservation and Land Management's Internet site—has been awarded the Best Government Site in the inaugural Australian Financial Review/Telstra Australian Internet Awards.

The Best Government Site award is presented to the site that improves access to information and services of Federal or

State government agencies and statutory bodies, or that increases a government's ability to meet citizens' needs at lower costs.

CALM Executive Director Syd Shea said *NatureBase* was officially launched by Environment Minister Peter Foss in June this year after taking only five weeks to construct.

It was developed by a

small team in CALM's Corporate Relations Division in conjunction with the Perth-based web design consultants, Dow Digital. The team included Corporate Relations Director Ron Kawalilak, *LANDSCOPE* Editor David Gough and Brian Haines from Dow Digital.

"*NatureBase* provides up-to-the minute information to a rapidly growing

audience through an easy-to-navigate and entertaining site," Dr Shea said.

"It has more than 60 pages of information about WA's parks, forests and wildlife.

"Net browsers can access the full *Western Shield* Action Pack—an activity program which gives an insight into measures being taken to bring native species back from the brink of

extinction. "*NatureBase* also has a bookshop through which browsers can order CALM publications such as *LANDSCOPE*, the Bush Books, calendars and a host of other books on the State's native flora and fauna."

Dr Shea said the *NatureBase* site would be continually upgraded as

• Continued on page 3





One of the fundamental requirements of forest management is to maintain a balanced age class distribution of trees in the forests. The idea is that as the old ones are harvested or die, there is always a new group of trees ready to take over.

The same principle applies to organisations. Unfortunately, it is very easy for an organisation to develop an age class distribution problem, particularly in times of economic adversity.

It seems only yesterday that when I attended departmental meetings I was the youngest sitting around the table—now too frequently I am the oldest.

For a number of years we were unable to recruit field staff because of budget constraints. This in part led to a decision (the fact that we now have five universities producing graduates in environmental management in Western Australia was another) to close the cadet school.

Fortunately, over the past two years we have been able to recruit 32 new field officers.

These will be the people in not very many years who will be carrying the main burden of management of CALM throughout the State.

Consequently, it's fundamentally important that they get all the support that we can offer them during this critical stage of their career. One of the great things that I enjoyed when I first commenced work in the Forests Department as a student was the 'family-like' support I received from the people I worked with.

I still regard that stage of my career as being the most valuable because I was being taught by people who were doing the things I wanted to learn about.

Obviously the cadet school system did provide huge camaraderie which, for those who have been through it know it will continue throughout their working career.

But we are making sure that the new recruits do have the opportunity to work together and live together, even though it is for a much shorter period than occurred under the old system.

In this edition of *CALM News*, the work that one of the recent recruits, Megan Hughes, is doing for the Department is described and it is appropriate that she will be responsible in successive editions of *CALM News* to write about each of our new field staff.

I am sure everybody will do their bit to support all our new recruits because they have a tough job and a rapid learning curve ahead of them.

One of the things that they will have to learn to live with is that the Department, and individuals in it, will often be subject to grossly unfair criticism, particularly from the media.

In the last little while CALM has had to cop the most unreasonable and nasty criticism from sections of the media during their coverage of the Gracetown disaster.

In situations like this, it is particularly frustrating because tragedies like that are of course subject to a coronial inquiry and it would be quite improper for us to respond to the outrageous written and verbal comments made by some sections of the media.

What I can say is CALM people did a fantastic job in dealing with the disaster, we had no warning from anybody that the area was unsafe and our advice from technical experts is that no-one could predict cliff falls like the one that occurred.

Dr Syd Shea, Executive Director

CALM supports air race for RFDS

CALM sponsorship recently helped the Ende family of Gooseberry Hill to take part in the Mobil Outback Air Race, a fundraising event that realised \$200,000 in support of the Royal Flying Doctor Service.

Pictured at right with Human Resources' principal risk management officer John Ireland (second from right) are Jan and Penny Ende and son Dan, after John had presented them with the \$1,000 sponsorship cheque.

They are standing beside their sturdy 35-year-old Cessna 180C, which Jan found lying in a derelict state in a Cowaramup hay shed in December 1993.

The family, including another son, Carl, had since restored the aircraft in readiness for the Outback Air Race, in which the Endes came a highly commendable second out of 33 competitors.

It was a shared love of flying during their younger years that brought Penny and Jan together, Penny as a nurse and Jan as a pilot, both with the Royal Flying Doctor Service.

Dan Ende, whose career with CALM has been temporarily on hold after he was seriously injured in a spotter aircraft crash in January 1994, owes his life, in part, to swift action by the RFDS.

"But he is determined to return to flying and had even hoped to have recovered enough to navigate the plane in the Mobil Air Race," said John.

"His quiet courage and determination have impressed those around him," said John.

"His parents, too, are to be commended for the encouragement and support they've shown their son during a very difficult time, when many other parents in similar circumstances would have done every-



thing to thwart their child's wishes."

So when CALM Executive Director Dr Syd Shea heard the Ende family was seeking sponsorship on behalf of the RFDS,

he promptly offered the department's support.

"So many lives have been saved by members of the Royal Flying Doctor Service, and when it is remembered that some of

them have lost their own lives doing so—Jan's late brother Dan among them—who could refuse to help?" said Dr Shea.

Story and photo by Verna Costello

In appreciation

Recently I had the misfortune to be involved in an accident and sustained injuries that resulted in quite a lengthy stay in hospital.

The response and ongoing support that I received from many CALM departments and individuals alike, was quite overwhelming.

I take this opportunity

to say a sincere thank you to Syd and Chris for their assistance, and to everyone who sent cards, flowers and messages of encouragement. It was quite overwhelming, and it's nice to know that CALM employees are not just numbers.

Rex Walker - Mobile Ranger.

Staff Movements

Appointments

Emily E Humble, to Permanent Staff as Clerical Officer, Timber Utilisation Centre, Harvey District, ex contract staff.

Promotions

Ray I Flanagan, to Operations Officer, Walpole District, from Forest Ranger; Peter Morris, to Ranger-in-Charge, Mornington District, from Acting Senior Ranger.

Transfers

Peter Batt to Mundaring as Forest Ranger from Technical Officer, Goldfields Region; Peter Algaba to Minister for Planning as Employee Services Officer

from Personnel Officer, Human Resources Branch.

Internal secondments

Penny Hussey, to Land for Wildlife Co-ordinator, Como Wildlife Branch, formerly Rural Nature Conservation Officer with the same Branch.

Resignations

Ross W Bartley, Acting Quality Assurance Clerical Officer from the Human Resources Branch.

Redundancies

Robert Symons, Senior Cartographic Officer, Information Management Branch.

This clipping was taken, by kind permission of the Albany Advertiser, from an article that appeared on page 6 of its September 12, 1996 issue:

Giants protest plan scrapped

ENVIRONMENTALISTS have been won over by the popularity of the new Valley of the Giants tourism walkways.

On the eve of the official opening of the walkways through tingle trees near Nornalup, environmentalists have dropped their protest against the Department of Conservation and Land Management facility.

During construction of the treetop and ground walkways, local environmental groups said building activities would damage the unique tingle forest.

They were concerned CALM's consideration of building a kiosk or restaurant in the forest and entering into similar commercial ventures would ruin the wilderness experience for tourists.

But Denmark Environment Centre committee member Geoff Evans and South Coast Environmental Group spokeswoman Donna Selby said they would not be protesting against the facility during Saturday's opening ceremony for fear of antagonising the local community.

Mr Evans said he had seen a massive increase in visitors to the Valley of the

Giants since the walkways opened to the public last month.

"It could have negative effects if we seem to be criticising all of CALM's actions," he said.

"When CALM does things well, we have to let them know.

"And they do a good job in certain respects."

He was disappointed the centre had not received an invitation to attend the opening.

Ms Selby said environmentalists supported CALM's attempts to raise money from some tourism-related projects because it reduced the pressure to log forests for money.

But they were concerned CALM intended to use the tingle forest surrounding the walkway facility as a "burn buffer" to protect its tourism assets.

Mr Evans is seeking to raise other concerns with Environment Minister Peter Foss during his Saturday visit.

Mr Foss will be joined by Premier Richard Court and CALM executive director Syd Shea at the walkway opening, scheduled for 11am on Saturday.

The walkways will be open to the public from 1pm on the day.

LETTERS... LETTERS... LETTERS... LETTERS... LETTERS... LETTERS... LETTERS... LETTERS

Wow! We have just experienced four wonderful days in Purnululu National Park ((Bungle Bungle).

This has been by far the best camping experience in 15 years of camping, not only for the Bungle walks and viewing, but

for the amenities supplied.

The head ranger Ian Solomon has done a magnificent job in making our stay more comfortable. The slide show was so informative. It enhanced our appreciation of the park.

What more could we ask for, when water, toilets and firewood have been supplied.

Our friends with us were here in 1992, and could not believe the improvements for camping. If only the above could

be incorporated into other parks.

It was GREAT!
Deane family
McLaren Vale, SA.

The following was faxed to Busselton District's senior operations officer Charlie Broadbent after the recent whale rescue at Dunsborough:

My congratulations to you and all persons who assisted in rescuing the whales at Dunsborough.

While living in the Nannup Shire in 1986, I went into the chilly waters at Augusta to keep stressed whales afloat. This was one of the most emotional moments in my

life. I suspect that Dunsborough was even more emotional.

Thank goodness for CALM and the numerous volunteers who gave up the comfort of their home and bed in order to help other species in our environment.

CALM is frequently at the receiving end of criticism and I have been among those giving it; I do get more pleasure giving praise for your environmental care, hence this fax.

Plant it for our planet.
Adrian Price
Boyup Brook Land Conservation District Committee

CALM Classified

THIS column is divided into sections dealing with 'for hire', 'for sale', 'surplus equipment', 'swap', or 'wanted'. If you have any equipment or requirement that you wish to advertise through this service, please send or fax typewritten details to: The Editor, CALM NEWS, Corporate Relations Division

FOR SALE

Motorola PMR 2000 Pager with battery charger Price \$100 - For more information contact Kylie Dyson at Woodvale on (09) 405 5131

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Valley of the Giants (cont'd.)



A strong supporter from the concept stage, Premier Richard Court voices his enthusiasm for the project.



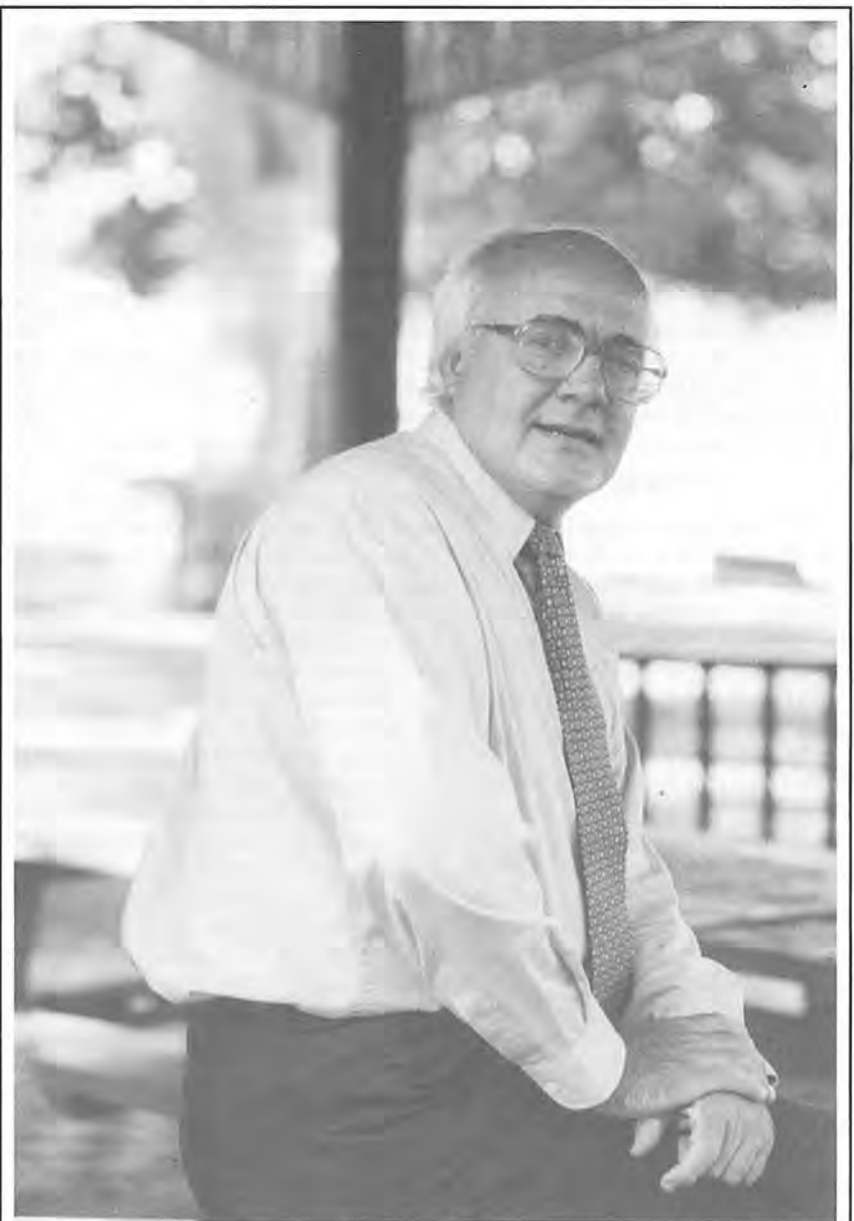
Environment Minister Peter Foss commends all involved in the Valley of the Giants project.



The Tree Top Walk was particularly enjoyed by Sir David Brand Special School student James Dumitro and his teacher-assistant Val Collins. James's father is CALM senior finance officer Stefan Dumitro.



Visitors from throughout the South-West look on as the Premier officially opens The Valley of the Giants.



Dr Jim Armstrong, pictured shortly before his United Nations appointment. Photo by Verna Costello

United Nations post for Dr Jim

THE former Director of CALM's Science and Information Division has taken up a senior position with the United Nations in Geneva.

Dr Jim Armstrong has been appointed Deputy Secretary General of the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES).

CITES is a treaty signed by more than 130 nations, including Australia, to promote the conservation of wild plants and animals by controlling their over-exploitation through trade.

The serious threat to the survival of the African elephant caused by hunting the animals for their tusks, for example, has been significantly reduced by the CITES ban on the import and export of ivory.

"This is the first time an Australian has held such a senior United Nations position and the appointment is a tribute to Jim Armstrong's abilities," CALM executive Direc-

tor Dr Syd Shea said.

"CALM has been a science-based organisation since its inception and I am proud to say that many CALM scientists are recognised internationally for their work.

"This appointment is a further recognition of the calibre of CALM scientists and the professional management of the division."

Dr Armstrong joined CALM in 1989 as Director of the Western Australian Herbarium and was promoted to the position of Science and Information Director in 1992.

Before coming to WA, he was Assistant Director of the Australian National Botanic Gardens in Canberra.

Dr Armstrong was appointed to the CITES Plants Committee in 1990, representing Oceania (one of the six management regions into which CITES is divided) and became Committee Chairman in 1992.

The full Convention also appointed Dr Armstrong as Chairman of the CITES Timber Working Group in 1994.

This working group was set up to review the international timber trade and make recommendations to the Convention about the implementation of CITES regulations.

Membership on all these committees is part-time and unpaid.

The Deputy Secretary General is one of the full-time members of the CITES Secretariat in Geneva.

Dr Armstrong took up his new post in September, when he became responsible for administering the Convention and liaising with management agencies in each of the signatory nations.

Dr Neil Burrows is Acting Director of Science and Information until a replacement is found for the position, which is to be advertised in and outside the WA Public Service.

NatureBase wins internet award

• *Cont'd from page 1*
exciting new developments in Internet technology raced ahead.

"Already, users can mingle with the dolphins at MonkeyMia with virtual reality, and soon they'll be able to see and hear our distinctive native wildlife," he said.

In a recent *Australian*

Financial Review, publisher and editor in chief, Gregory Hywood, said the inaugural awards had drawn 590 nominations.

Because of the high level of nominations, the number of judges was increased from six to 30.

Telstra Chief Executive Frank Blount said the number of commercial Internet users in Aus-

tralia had doubled in the past year and that by the end of 1998 the Internet traffic in Telstra's international links would be greater than its telephone traffic.

NatureBase can be found at <http://www.calm.wa.gov.au/> and a full run down of winners at <http://www.webawards.info.au/>

Montebello 1996 renewal program finished

DIRECTOR of WA Threatened Species and Communities Unit Dr Andrew Burbidge concludes his account of the 1996 Montebello Renewal Program, which began in the July-August 1996 issue of CALM NEWS:

How do you eradicate rats and cats on 100 islands without affecting the native fauna? This is what CALM set out to do on the Montebello Islands, off the Pilbara coast.

Phase I

The 1996 works program of Phase I of *Montebello Renewal* finished on 31 August when the West Australian Petroleum-chartered barge *Karawa 2* picked up equipment, empty fuel drums and rubbish from CALM's Hurricane Hill Hut, the Hermite Island base used by the project.

The last volunteers had left on August 26 and the last staff left on September 2.

The project got under way late in May. Phase I aims to eradicate black rats, which occurred on nearly every one of the more than 100 islands in the archipelago.

Since then, 25 volunteers, most of whom were CALM staff, have worked with 'master-baiters' from CALM's WA Threatened Species and Communities Unit (WATSCU), Pilbara Region and Science and Information Division (SID) to lay and service rat bait stations throughout the islands.

Trainee wildlife officers also worked on the project as part of their training in wildlife management.

Mind-boggling logistics

The logistics of the project give some idea of its size and complexity.

ACI Plastics Packaging, one of *Montebello Renewal's* sponsors, donated 13,800 plastic bottles with holes cut in the sides, which were used as bait stations. The bait station design was developed to prevent native birds (mainly bar-shouldered doves and brown quail) from feeding on the bait, and to prevent it being affected by light rain.

About 11,000 bait stations were laid in a 50-metre grid on about 20 islands.

They were either pinned to the sand with wire pins (17,000 were used) or glued to rock with Selleys 'All Clear',

some of which was provided free by Selleys Chemical Company.

Around 150 cartridges and 50 tubes of 'All Clear' were used. Each bottle was partly filled with Talon G, a commercial rodenticide, supplied at a discount price by Crop Care Australasia.

Four to seven days later, each bait station was revisited to top up the bait as necessary.

Sometimes, the bottle had to be replaced as the rats, in their eagerness to get at the bait, would chew large holes in the bottle! Then, another four to seven days later, each station would be visited and checked again.

On some islands with particularly heavy rat infestations, the bottles had to be visited a fourth time, as it was necessary to eliminate most rats and leave full bottles of bait before declaring an island finished.

More than 80 small islets and rocks were 'bombed' three times from the helicopter and once from the boat with plastic bags containing Talon. Bait stations were unnecessary on islets as the biological survey work showed that they are not visited by grain-eating birds. The whole project used three tonnes of Talon.

Labour intensive

Volunteers were crucial for this project as it was labour intensive—all those bait stations had to be put in on foot. In all, the work crews walked an estimated 2,500 kilometres.

During their sojourn at the Montebellos, the volunteers had to put up with sandflies, unseasonable heavy rain, cold salt water showers, rough terrain, strong winds (it's not called Hurricane Hill Hut for nothing!), flapping tents, good company and good food! And some people even managed to find time to catch a few squid and fish.

During the first four weeks of the project a chartered Bell Jet Ranger provided transport for the baiting of the outlying islands.

Also equipment dumps were installed on all the larger islands. The helicopter was in the air for 59 hours and used 5,800 litres of Jet A1 fuel.

For the latter seven weeks CALM's vessel *Pseudorca II* carried the baiting crews to the islands being worked. It

used 6,800 litres of petrol.

At any one time during the 11 weeks of the project, eight to ten people were housed at the Hurricane Hill Hut. Electricity was generated on site from 2,000 litres of diesel fuel. Fresh water was supplied by a reverse osmosis plant that used about 1.2 million litres of salt water (which had to be pumped about 130 metres from a nearby channel) to produce 13,000 litres of fresh water.

Fresh food brought in

Fresh food was trucked and shipped from Perth every two weeks by Apache Energy to their oil production base on Varanus Island, 12 nautical miles from Hermite Island, from where it was picked up by helicopter or boat.

All the fuel and equipment, and all the staff and volunteers, had to get to and from the Montebellos.

This would not have been possible without the help of *Montebello Renewal's* major sponsor, West Australian Petroleum Pty Ltd, who supplied a barge that brought all the equipment and fuel needed at the start of the project, and another barge to remove empty fuel drums, rubbish and equipment at end of the project.

WAPET also flew all Perth- and south west-based staff and volunteers from Perth to Barrow Island.

Apache Energy flew Karratha-based staff to Varanus Island and return as part of their sponsorship package.

The crews were picked up from Barrow and Varanus islands in the CALM-chartered helicopter or by *Pseudorca II*.

Apache Energy also flew personnel from Hermite to Barrow islands at the end of the project.

During the latter part of the project all islands in the archipelago were checked for rat activity. All indications were that the project had been successful.

The islands were also checked for native fauna. No deaths of native fauna could be attributed to the project—bar-shouldered doves were still abundant, ospreys were incubating eggs or raising young and reptiles, including sand goannas, were still abundant.

Spotted and marsh harriers, brahminy and black-shouldered kites and kestrels seemed as abundant as they had been before the project began.

Sea eagles were OK

Early in the project, the baiters saw a pair of white-breasted sea-eagles on one island that were eating dying rats. However, they noted that only the flesh was being eaten, not the stomach and intestines that contained bait.

Late in the project, this island was revisited and the sea-eagles were still present and healthy.

Phase II of *Montebello Renewal* began in August. This involved laying baits for the feral cats that occur on Hermite Island.

The baits were designed and prepared by David Algar and Jo-Anne Sinagra, cat researchers in SID.

Final preparation was carried out on Hermite Island by Peter Kendrick (Pilbara Region) and Phil Fuller (SID) and they were then laid by Peter and Phil from a helicopter provided by Apache Energy.

Cats were crafty

Unfortunately, cat track counts before and after baiting suggested that few cats had taken the baits. This was probably due to the abundance of natural food on Hermite Island this year, which has seen exceptional rainfall (see *CALM NEWS* July-August 1996).

Phase III of *Montebello Renewal* involves the re-introduction of locally extinct mammals and birds to Hermite Island and, subject to approvals, introductions of threatened species to some of the other islands in the group.

Further cat control work and final eradication will be necessary before re-introductions of native species to Hermite Island can be contemplated.



Barely recognisable in his protective gear, Richard Fairman stands beside the spot where the atomic bomb exploded. Photo by Ian Gale

However, if the rat eradication proves successful, introductions of critically endangered mainland species to other islands may be able to go ahead within the next couple of years.

Sponsors

Some of the funding for the project was provided by the Commonwealth Department of Primary Industry and Energy, at the time of the return of the Montebellos to WA State control.

Without the support of sponsors, the project would not have proceeded. CALM wishes to thank:

- ◆ West Australian Petroleum Pty Ltd
- ◆ Apache Energy
- ◆ ACI Plastics Packaging
- ◆ Crop Care Australasia
- ◆ Selleys Chemical Company
- ◆ Stephan Fritz, Steve Iredell, Neil Wolfgram and LeI Masini of WAPET were particularly helpful in arranging logistic support and air transport to and from Barrow Island. Iva Stejskal, Neville Jones, John Drew, Ivor Alexander and Geoff Wittome of Apache Energy were very supportive and helpful in providing helicopter transport between Karratha and Varanus Island, other helicopter support, and fresh food supplies. Bill Morrow of ACI Plastics Packaging arranged the plastic bottles used as bait stations and also volunteered to help in the field. Peter May of Crop Care Australasia was also always ready to help.

Montebello Renewal staff and Volunteers

More than forty-five people have been directly involved in *Montebello Renewal*. As well, many others have helped with various aspects of the project. Those involved in the field were:

- ◆ Biological survey and field planning: John Blyth (WATSCU) Andrew Burbidge (WATSCU) Phil Fuller (SID, Woodvale) Peter Kendrick (Pilbara Region) Fran Stanley (Pilbara Region) Pilbara Regiment, Australian Army
- ◆ Logistics: Andrew Burbidge (WATSCU) Steve Grenfell (Engineering Services) Geoff Kregor (Pilbara Region) Jill Pryde (WATSCU)
- ◆ Master rat baiters: John Blyth (WATSCU)

Andrew Burbidge (WATSCU) Les Harris (Pilbara Region) Brent Johnson (SID, Woodvale) Peter Kendrick (Pilbara Region) Peter Moore (Pilbara Region) Fran Stanley (Pilbara Region)

- ◆ Cat research and baiting: Dave Algar (SID) Phil Fuller (SID) Peter Kendrick (Pilbara Region)

- ◆ Helicopter pilot: Tony Scolari (Helicopter Resources)

- ◆ Boat Skippers: (all from Wildlife Protection) Doug Coughran Peter Lambert Dave Mell Don Noble Peter Pennings

- ◆ Volunteers: Barbara Bachos (Forest Management Branch, Manjimup) Kevin Barnsby (Pemberton District) Warwick Boardman (Information Management Branch) Luke Bouwman (Walpole District) Allan Brown (Mornington District) Caroline Brocx (Mornington District) Martin Clarke (Narrogin District) Mal Court (Pemberton District) Richard Fairman (SID, Dwellingup) Ian Gale (Mundaring District) Peter Keppell (Mundaring District) Karina Knight (SID, WA Herbarium)

- George Laws (Pemberton District) Jane McRae (SID, Woodvale) Kevin Morrison (Wildlife Protection) Bill Morrow (ACI Plastics Packaging) Trish Nanni (Manjimup District) Diana Papenfus (SID, WA Herbarium) Jill Pryde (WATSCU) Robert Rickman (Busselton District) Howard Robinson (Narrogin District) Jayson Stanley (Fugro Surveying, Karratha) Michelle Widmer (CALMfire, Nannup) Tom Wood (Mornington District)

- ◆ Trainee Wildlife Officers: Paul Connolly Matt Dowling Darren Graham Ben Tannock



The black rat. This little fellow may look endearing, but his voracious appetite for WA native animals has spelt doom to both him and the rest of his kind. Photo by Babs and Bert Wells/CALM

Operation Firebird takes off



Operation Firebird has drawn on the talents of many different branches of CALM and other agencies. Femina Metcalfe (left) and Leigh Davis of CALM's Information Management Branch Operations Section provided detailed maps for the planning team members Keith Low, CALMfire's Swan Region co-ordinator, Rob De Burgh of the Bush Fires Board and Les Port from Fire and Rescue Service. Photo by Nigel Higgs

Operation Firebird—the codename for this summer's aerial bush firefighting trial in the Swan Region—was officially launched last month by Premier Richard Court.

The trial will evaluate the role and effectiveness of 'water bombers' to combat bushfires in the outer metropolitan area, especially along Darling Scarp and pine plantations around Wanneroo.

At the launch in the Gnarup pines, Mr Court said Operation Firebird was a collaborative project co-ordinated by CALM and involving of-

ficers and crews from the Fire and Rescue Service of Western Australia, the Bush Fires Board and local volunteer brigades.

"This is a major initiative which reflects the State government's commitment to strengthen resources needed to combat wildfires, especially in high-risk areas," Mr Court said.

Fires in the Hills and the pine plantations to the north of the city account for more than half the number of fires on lands managed by CALM. A particularly worrying aspect

is that about half of these fires are caused by arson.

CALMfire manager Rick Sneeuwjagt said that under the contract—which had been let to the WA-based company Tactical Aviation Australia—two aircraft would be on permanent standby between December and March. The aircraft would be based at Perth Airport and despatched within five minutes of a bushfire being detected.

The planes—Dromader M-18As—carry 2800 litres of water-foam mix, which is highly effective in suppress-



CALMfire is playing a lead role in developing new fire suppression techniques, including compressed air foam which was demonstrated during the launch of Operation Firebird.

Photo by Norm Bailey

ing moderate intensity fires. They also can use short, unsealed airstrips.

The planes have state-of-the-art satellite navigation and communications equipment, which enables them to drop water, foam or retardant very accurately.

The three fire agencies will

work in with Air Services Australia Fire Rescue Service, which will provide the primary ground support for the planes at Perth Airport. Arrangements also have been made with the RAAF to provide support from Pearce Air Base when needed.

Rick Sneeuwjagt—who pre-

pared the Australian Fire Authorities Council policy paper on aerial fire fighting—said the techniques were most effective in the very early stages of a fire.

"Water bombers do not replace conventional strategies and tactics, especially the use of ground crews," he said.

"But they do give ground forces a better chance to mount a direct attack before a fire can develop.

"Once a bush fire reaches a stage where ground crews cannot fight it directly, aerial attack is unlikely to succeed."

Emergency Services Minister Bob Wiese, who was also at the launch of the project, said the government was committed to strengthening resources for combating wildfires in the outer metropolitan area.

CALM had begun a major replacement program for its heavy duty pumper fleet. The Fire and Rescue Service had established a new permanent station at Joondalup and a new volunteer FRS brigade at Mundaring is integrated with the bush fire brigade. The Bush Fires Board had assisted local shires to upgrade equipment for volunteer brigades.

The introduction of aerial firefighting would complement these initiatives.



Premier Richard Court officially launched Operation Firebird in the Gnarup pines last month. He is pictured with Bryan Rees (left) and Bill Fox from the Victorian Department of Conservation and Natural Resources who carried the training program, CALM Executive Director Syd Shea and CALM Senior Operations Officer Terry Maher. Photo by Norm Bailey



The key to Operation Firebird is the Dromader M-18A, seen here dropping 3000 litres of foam-water mix.

Photo by Norm Bailey



CALMfire officers involved in Operation Firebird training included Kevin White from Central Forest Region, Greg Napier from Dwellingup and Greg Standing from Jarrahdale. Photo by Nigel Higgs



Fire agency representatives at the launch included Graham Tweedie (left), Fire and Rescue Service; Hartley Read, BFB; Rob De Burgh, BFB; Captain Phillip Dunn from Tactical Aviation Australia and Lyndon Mutter from CALM Perth District. Photo by Norm Bailey

John returns from staff exchange stint ...

by Tammie Reid

ACTION began more than a year ago, when a letter inviting interest in a 12-month ranger-exchange pilot program with South Australia landed on Dwellingup District ranger-in-charge John Hanel's desk.

It culminated in John 'swapping jobs' in September 1995 with Tim Fuhlbohm, an account of whose experiences appear at the top of page 7.

Now, John has returned from his year-long sojourn, during which he worked in the Sturt District, from the Belair office of the Department of Environment, and Natural Resources, just 14 kilometres from the Adelaide central business district.

"After the initial jolt of relocating across the Nullarbor, everyone enjoyed the experience, especially the chance to visit my mother and twin brother, who both live permanently in South Australia," John said.

"My work involved directing a number of New Work Opportunities programs in conservation and rehabilitation schemes within the reserves and parks dotted throughout the Adelaide Hills.

"Mostly, it involved weed control, revegetation and building and maintaining fences, some



John and Julie Hanel with their family. From the left they are Philippa (6), Douglas (8), cousin Alana (13), and, barely visible behind the post to the right of Douglas, is Kurt (3). John must be a fast mover; he took the pic before hot-footing it back to take his place behind the steering wheel of the ute!

vermin control and constructing boardwalks and step access.

"The size and structure of the two departments are similar, and so are the rangers' duties.

"But I reckon Tim had the raw end of the deal," he said.

"In South Australia there are more facilities to maintain in what is basically suburban rem-

nant bushlands.

"For the first three months I didn't meet anyone in the reserves—people here use them before and after work to walk

and exercise but they have nothing like the recreation pressure we experience in the Lane Poole Reserve.

"My family and I were keen

to make the most of being in a new place. Julie, my wife, worked part-time in the park's camping grounds and caravan park, and the kids began Indonesian language studies and music at the local Belair Primary school.

"When I knew we were going to South Australia, I made up my mind I'd take the family to see the snow in Bright, in Victoria, attend a footy match at the MCG and finish the work I took on while rangers for DENR.

"I'm pleased to say I did all that as well as a spot of camping at Wallhalla in Victoria's Great Dividing Range.

"Working in South Australia gave me a new perspective on my work back in Western Australia, and I'd strongly recommend the exchange system to rangers in particular, and to other staff where it's practicable.

"But it's great to be back," John said. "We missed the Dwellingup fruit and vegies, but not its icy cold mornings!"

The exchange program story by Human Resources Manager Cliff Gillam appeared on page 2 of the May-June 1996 issue of CALM NEWS, and further details are available from Cliff on phone number (09) 334 0213 or fax (09) 334 0478.

Penny's gone to Scotland

A Rotary International Foundation scholarship to the University of Stirling in Scotland had media liaison officer Penny Walsh winging her way recently to a year's study towards a Masters Degree in Public Relations.

Penny joined CALM Corporate Relations Division in April 1995, quickly settling in and becoming a valuable link in CALM's relationship with the media.

It is a characteristic of Penny's to seek self-improvement that will also benefit others, as evidenced in her choice of University to attend.

In a recent speech to Rotarians,

she said that although initially assigned to Canada, she was able to convince the Rotary Foundation Trustees that her first choice, (Scotland) would best serve Rotary's purposes as well as her own and that of her employers.

"The course I'll undertake in September is a specialised one that, until recently, was unavailable in Western Australia," she said.

"In fact, the University of Stirling was the first institution in Europe to offer a postgraduate degree in public relations.

"Its Masters course is fully accredited by the International Public Relations Association

(IPRA), and it will equip me with skills in PR theory and practice, corporate strategy, business ethics, organisational management, research and evaluation techniques and communication theory.

"I see all this being put to good use on my return to WA, and to CALM," she said.

Penny says that when she returns to CALM in 1997, she also hopes to be able to gently assail our ears with her lilting Scottish brogue.

We look forward to hearing you, too, Penny. Meanwhile we wish you a whole string of 'braw bright moonlight nichts' (and days) of 'Stirling' successes.



When looking for a sign contact Guy or Martin

FOREST workers Guy Serafina and Martin Croxford, are seen here displaying an example of their handiwork, carried out at the Harvey Work Centre's Sign Bay.

Forest ranger George Watson said that the Harvey Sign Bay, was established to provide timber signs when

required in the district.

"Sign Bay staff had performed so very well, that they planned to maximise potential by expanding the production of signs to service other districts, as well as aiming for markets in the private sector," George said.

"Besides providing a useful product, the expanded sign

bay will provide additional work for seasonal staff during less busy times of the year, and will be invaluable in creating opportunities for staff on light duties

"You can phone or fax us to discuss your sign requirements, and get a quote, on (097) 291 505, or fax (097) 291 868.



Penny Walsh. Photo by Verna Costello

... and Tim goes back to South Australia

by Tammie Reid

IT'S been a hectic year for Tim Fuhlbohm, a South Australian National Parks and Wildlife Service ranger, who took part in a staff exchange pilot program between his employer and CALM.

He changed places with John Hanel, working as Dwellingup District's ranger-in-charge.

"I visited Western Australia's South-West with my family during our 1990 holidays and we were impressed with its natural environment, and the friendliness and enthusiasm of the CALM rangers we met," Tim said.

"When the WA exchange offer came up, I jumped at the chance."

Tim has been a park ranger for more than 11 years, and he and his wife Fiona—also an officer in the wildlife section of the South Australian National Parks and Wildlife Service (SANPWS), and on leave without pay—were keen to work in another part of Australia.

"We wanted to be exposed to different ways of doing things and to see wildlife management from a different State perspective," he said.

"We've learnt a lot from our stay here, and seen first hand, CALM's commitment to rare flora and wildlife programs," Tim said.

"Here, there is the structure, systems and resources to do the



During a 'get-to-know-the-State' trip, Tim, Fiona, and 18-month-old Naomi Fuhlbohm are seen here atop the Stirling Ranges. Photo by Tim and the wonders of his camera's time release mechanism.

job thoroughly. Also, the range and standard of CALM publications is excellent—CALM NEWS, LANDSCOPE the Perth Outdoors series and the Bush Books.

"A highlight for Fiona and me was to see some of the rare and

endangered species in the wild, particularly on our visit to Dryandra Forest and in the course of my work in the Murray valley."

"We've been both involved in wildlife management programs back in South Australia,

but it really raises your spirits to see how native animals like the chuditch, wambenger, woylie and numbat have been reintroduced and are thriving over here.

"Some of the Yanchep koalas came from Flinders Chase National Park on Kangaroo Is-

land where I've worked, and Fiona was involved in the shipping and handling of some of these creatures.

"It was great to see them all doing so well at Yanchep.

"I've also been part of the successful woylie reintro-

ductions in SA, as well as the recent stick nest rat recovery plan.

"Some of these South Aussie rats have been released by CALM at Salutation Island, Shark Bay, where they seem to be thriving.

"South Australia has been baiting reserves for foxes for a number of years now, but not on the scale of Operation Foxglove and Western Shield.

"Seeing aerial baiting in action encourages me to believe that South Australian fox and cat control programs can expand and be more cost effective."

The Fuhlbolms recently returned to their extended families in South Australia.

The Dwellingup netball team and weekly playgroup will miss the energy and friendship of Fiona, while Tim will return with an array of different and challenging experiences under his belt.

He will also take with him a fresh insight into how well situated his home State of South Australia truly is, compared to the physical and psychological barrier that the Nullarbor presents to Western Australians.

"It's a long way to come, but WA and SA are so similar in the conservation and land management issues we face," Tim said.

"With so much in common, I see the staff exchange program strengthening these ties, so that in time, the distance won't seem such a great barrier."

Basil raises Broome's Bilby-awareness to new heights

BROOME District office staff recently decided to become more proactive in the conservation of a threatened fauna species—the greater bilby (*Macrotis lagotis*)—whose habitat is restricted to northern and central Australia.

A think tank was formed to raise community awareness and concern for the greater bilby, and after some intense brainstorming the idea of 'Basil the Broome Bilby'—pictured right—was conceived.

Basil was laboured over by a talented local seamstress Di Vomiero, and eventually Basil was ready for the public—but was the public ready for Basil?

Basil, a 168-centimetre 'furry animal,' (skilfully animated by Debbie Burke) amused many and created much excitement, dancing among the local children.

The only 'negative comment' came from a couple of tiny tots who screamed loudly and dived for cover into their mums' arms.

Armed with two baskets of locally donated lollies, and accompanied by two cheerful CALM helpers, Basil headed for the Fringe Arts Festival Markets, waving merrily from the back of a four-wheel-drive ute to passers by.

Arriving at the markets, children swarmed around, eagerly awaiting a lolly and a cuddle from Basil. To our surprise, most children were aware that Basil was a Bilby.

Most adults, however, were



From left Kathryn White, Debbie Burke as Basil the Broome Bilby, and Peta Waterer.

by Peta Waterer, Kathryn White and Debbie Burke

perplexed and referred to Basil as either a rat, a rabbit or a numbat!

After an hour, Basil was fading away to a shadow, as (s)he

leapt around in something akin to a sauna suit in 35-degree heat.

Eventually, it was time to say goodbye to everyone at the markets, particularly those children who had taken it upon themselves to lead Basil around the grounds.

This performance was repeated the same evening,

when Basil reappeared at the Festival Parade in Chinatown, and once again Basil was a huge hit with adults and kids alike.

Basil will continue to appear at the many West Kimberley district festivals, and art, music and agricultural shows for all-out good fun and educational benefits.

Bibbulmun track update

by Jesse Brampton

IN response to users' requests, and to high levels of usage on the new northern section of the Bibbulmun track between Kalamunda and the Brookton Highway during peak hiking seasons, CALM is constructing additional campsites in this section.

These sites will be situated about half way between existing sites shown on the map released in August last year, and they will serve a number of purposes.

First, they will suit walkers who wish to undertake walks of a shorter distance.

A sizeable percentage of track users have found the 18- to 20-kilometre day walks between existing sites to be a considerable challenge, and a number were failing to reach their chosen campsite before dark.

Additional campsites will give these walkers an option to enjoy a much more leisurely-paced outing.

Second, having additional campsites through this section will take the pressure of numbers off our existing sites, giving users a choice of seven sites rather than only three.

This will reduce the impact on the site itself, and the environment surrounding it.

Third, having a range of sites to choose from will reduce the need for 'free or wild camping' and, given that the whole of this section of the track is within water catchment areas, it is

an important consideration.

One new site, to be known as 'Helena', and situated just off Driver Road, about half way between Ball Creek and Waalegh, is already finished.

A second site, about half way between the northern terminus at Kalamunda and Ball Creek, will be completed shortly.

It is proposed to name this site 'Hewett's Hill' in recognition of the role of Peter Hewett of the former Forests Department in the development of the track.

Further sites, between Waalegh and Mount Dale, and Mount Dale and Brookton Highway, will be constructed before Christmas.

All sites will be marked by a trail-side totem, and will be equipped with all the facilities we are now accustomed to in our new Bibbulmun Track campsites.

We ask people to enjoy these additional sites, respect them and make use of the increased range of opportunities they provide.

Congratulations go to Mundaring District recreation officer Jamie Ridley and his campsite construction crew, Max, Nibbs and Brian, on the outstanding job they have done.

Many, many walkers will appreciate their energy and enthusiasm.

Streamlining sponsorship money management

TO carry out many of the projects vital to conservation in Western Australia, such as threatened species research and wildlife special projects, CALM relies more and more on sponsorship from the private sector and grants from Federal and State Government agencies.

For many organisations, the task of attracting sponsorship, particularly in the current economic climate, has become a minefield set with value-for-money booby traps.

CALM has been able to successfully negotiate this minefield to the extent that between 1990 and April 1996, sponsorship and grant funds held in trust accounts, increased from \$10,000 to more than \$7 million.

Due to this rapid growth, and because attracting future funding is increasingly dependant on the administrative and financial monitoring of projects, it became necessary to be able to provide CALM management, project managers and donating organisations with instant, up-to-

date and more detailed financial information.

In 1995, the External Funds Working Group was formed to design a system that would streamline the general administration of trust accounts funded from external sources.

The group recommended the establishment of the Management of External Funds (MEX) System to enhance and improve the process of providing progress reports to sponsor organisations as diverse as the Australian Nature Conservation Agency, Alcoa of Australia Ltd., and Amrad Operations Pty Ltd.

The members of the External Funds Working Group are Financial Services manager Mark Neilson, Science and Information's acting head of Bio-conservation Group Keith Morris, Financial Services accountant Ian Frame, and acting external funds officer Jean Thomas, Science and Information Woodvale administrative officer Rod Mell, WATSCU executive officer Hugh Clift, Herbarium administrative



Suzanne Curry, Alan Burnett and John Dorlandt have good reason to look delighted as they see the sponsorship figures for 1997.

Photo by Verna Costello

officer John Dorlandt, Parks, Policy and Tourism acting external funding co-ordinator Suzanne Curry and Management Audit Branch auditor

Peter Ryan. Alan Burnett is the project co-ordinator and his responsibilities include: Surveying key users to determine information

requirements for management, project managers and the Financial Services Branch, providing financial information on the status of grant funds and trust

accounts for Cost Centre Summary Reports, Revenue Allocations Reports, Overdrawn Trust Account Reports and other information, as determined by the

user survey. For further information, Alan can be contacted by phoning him on (09) 334 0130 or by fax on (09) 334 0244.



South Perth Primary school students with CALM staff at Milyu Nature Reserve. Photo by Penny Walsh

Students' many hands make light work of Milyu NR restoration

It was a hive of activity at the Milyu Nature Reserve recently when South Perth Primary School students from Years 1 to 7 planted acacia seedlings along the Swan River foreshore.

As cars sped past on the freeway nearby, the boys and girls took to their chore with relish. Armed with trowels, seedlings, water and mulch, the whole area was planted in relays over two days.

Students like David Sisson (left) and Kane

by Penny Walsh

Lombardo (pictured under the watchful eyes of CALM Yanchep overseer Neil Osman and forester Wayne Calvert) enjoyed taking part in what has become a Milyu planting tradition for the school.

The objective is to recreate some of the foreshore's original landscapes and habitats, while at the same time helping the children to develop an understanding and appreciation of the

importance of the environment.

Milyu Nature Reserve is a very important destination for more than 30 species of visiting waterbirds, some of which come from as far as Siberia, the Arctic Circle, Eurasia and North Asia to rest in the Swan-Canning estuary.

CALM and South Perth Primary School have joined forces with Perth Zoo, South Perth City Council and the Friends of Milyu every year since 1991 to try to restore the area to its

former glory. Program Coordinator at South Perth Primary, Jill Johnson, said the children really enjoyed taking part in the planting project.

"We involve every student in the school, from year 1 to year 7, and have built a whole syllabus around the revegetation programme," she said.

The students collect seeds in spring, plant and nurture them in a greenhouse at school over the summer months, and then plant the seedlings that re-

sult during the next autumn.

"It's a great opportunity to foster a positive attitude towards the environment and have the children actively involved in promoting its well-being," she said.

Neil and Wayne, who are used to working with slightly older and more subdued colleagues, said their stint at Milyu was quite an experience.

"It was certainly different, and very entertaining. The students were keen to get on with the job," Neil said.

Encounters in The Hills Forest

by Larisa Vanstien

MORE than 900 people attended the inaugural Native Animal Encounters at The Hills Forest, where they took the opportunity to see local wildlife up close.

The day dawned cold and cloudy, but the rain held off for the day, allowing everyone to enjoy exciting encounters with a large variety of native birds, reptiles, insects and mammals—including the rarely seen chuditch and numbat.

Family groups of varying ages were welcomed by CALM staff with a copy of Quokka Press—our sponsors for the day.

Visitors were encouraged to use the day as a great opportunity to get out into the forest and chat with wildlife carers and their animals, see displays about 'Western Shield' and 'Operation Foxglove', and have their faces painted with native animal designs, while learning more about Western Australia's unique wildlife.

They were also entertained with a variety of activities in the beautiful rammed-earth amphitheatre.

These included Western Creations Aboriginal Dance Group, performing dances that demonstrated native animal stories, Raptor Retreat with live birds of prey, competitions and entertainment with local comedians Jon Doust and Roger Montgomery, and

ventriloquist Lyn Myers with Wally the Wallaby and Crackers the Cockatoo (who was kidnapped by an adoring young fan—but eventually found and returned to a panicking Lyn an hour after the bird had disappeared!).

There was billy tea, and to accompany it, the Eastern Hills Scouts provided a delicious, 'burnt-onion flavoured' sausage sizzle, and the 1st Mundaring Cubs supplied the cool drinks.

A big 'thank you' goes to all CALM staff members, including senior research scientist Tony Friend from Woodvale, and the Go Bush! Volunteers who helped with setting up, selling CALM publications, organising amphitheatre performances, staffing the information point and first aid post, facepainting (although it seemed the painters wore more paint than their clients), and generally helping the event to run smoothly.

All in all, the day was a huge success, and we look forward to making the Native Animal Encounters day a bigger and better annual event!

Note: Ranger Tim and ranger Stacey from Channel Ten's *Totally Wild*, and Agro's *Cartoon Connection* said they may join us for the full day in 1997!

Making fitness fit in with your busy lifestyle

FINDING an exercise that you want to do and enjoy is important in ensuring that you adopt a lifestyle of regular physical exercise. Aerobic dance or jogging may not be your cup of tea, but that doesn't mean that you can't stay fit and healthy.

It may be the first part

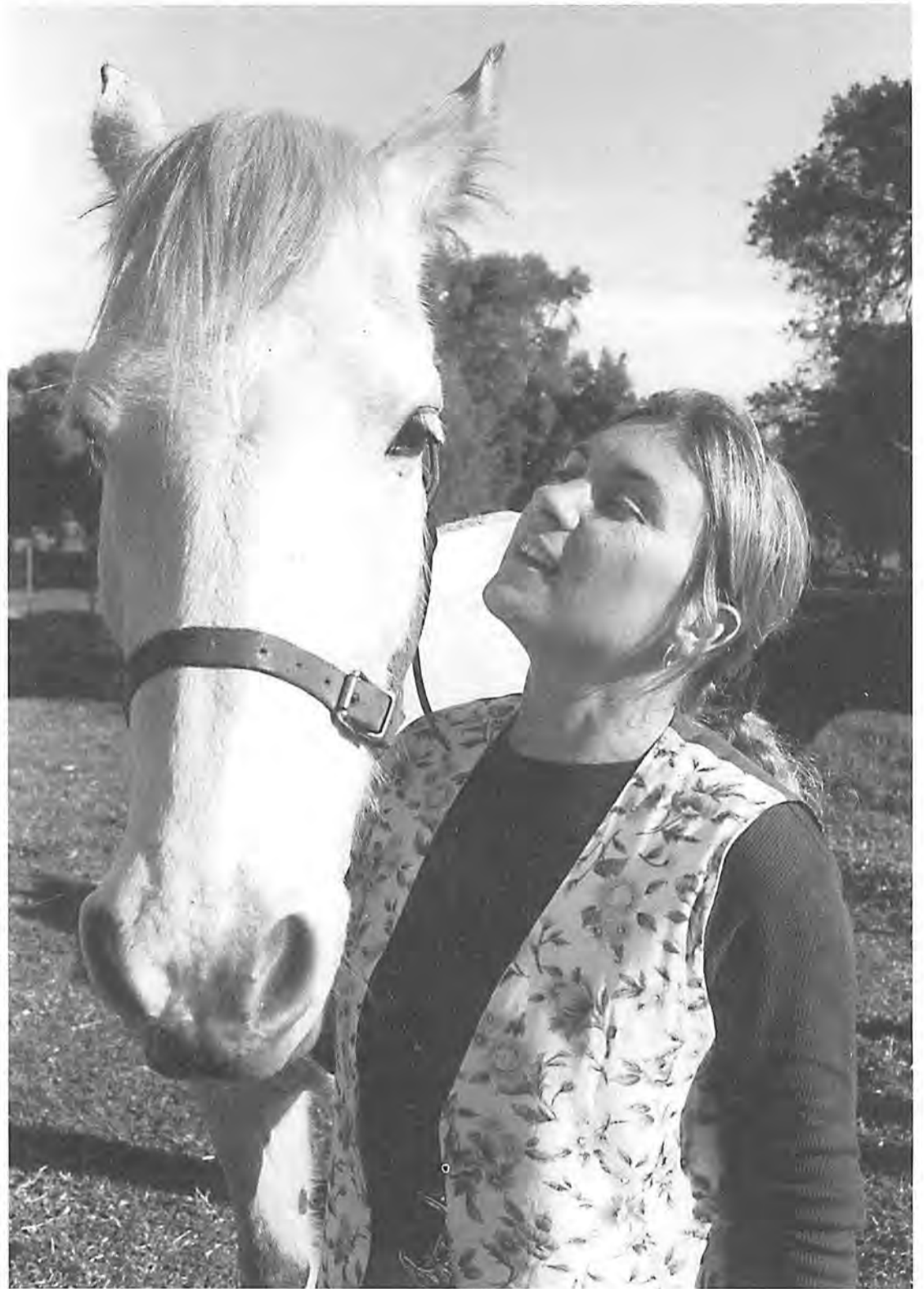
by Linda Gilbert

of your planning to improve fitness to find an activity or exercise that is for you and determine why you are exercising. It's a lot easier to allocate a couple of hours a week to an exercise that you enjoy, than one to which you have

to drag yourself. Try out different exercise and recreation activities to find the one that suits your needs, lifestyle and body best.

NOTE: You should ease yourself gently into new exercises, and may need to increase general fitness before you begin some new activities.

Reason	How to improve	Examples
Adventure	Engage in challenging activities.	Abseiling, rock climbing, caving.
Back mobility	Weight-supported stretching.	Swimming, stretching, yoga, tai chi.
Cardio fitness	Aerobic activities.	Walking, cycling, boot-scooting, boxercise (regular-minimum 3 x week 20 mins).
Competition	Team sports, races - triathlons, fun runs, swims, AUSSIE competition.	
Family	Activities all ages can enjoy	Picnics, walks in CALM recreation facilities.
Flexibility	Stretches. Regular program, especially before physical work and long sitting periods - home stretching circuit while watching TV, stretches while sitting in a chair, yoga, tai chi.	
Fun	Any physical activity you enjoy - preferably with others.	Daytona car racing, orienteering, horse riding, Quasar, fishing.
Injury management	Specific to injury, see physio or specialist for exercises - will build up the muscles surrounding the injury and restore flexibility.	
Muscle strengthening	Activities that overcome resistance.	Weights - gradually increase weight.
Muscle tone	Muscle endurance exercises.	Home circuit, light weights, high repetition, dancing, boxercise.
Social contact	Team sports, join a club eg., AUSSIE, Hash House Harriers, meet with friends, get into a training group, walk the dog, throw ball with kids.	
Speed/power	Anaerobic exercises.	Sprints.
Stress relief/relaxation	Any physical activity you choose - and enjoy doing - walk along the beach, fishing, horse riding.	
Weight loss	Aerobic - should be for longer than 30 mins, 4 times per week eat a balanced diet.	Walking, cycling, boxercise, stair climbing, aerobics.



An example of an exercise program fitting in with one's lifestyle is that of Perth District information officer Annie Greig. Her dog, April, needed regular exercise (as we all do) and Annie wanted to find an activity that would give her another interest in life, provide her with companionship, a new skill and another recreational activity. She recently took out a lease on a horse, (George) the terms of which sees Annie meeting his food bill and exercising him. "George, April and I work out together in an ideal arrangement that fits in with my I love of the outdoors," she said. Annie is looking forward to her future with horses, and to other CALM staff who have recently taken up horse jumping, she says, "Go for it! It's an exhilarating pastime." Photo by Verna Costello



Alan Clarke (with daughter and keen supporter Tegan), Dorion Moro and Peter Orell of Woodvale Research Centre trained together for The Avon Descent. The three have different paddling backgrounds and different levels of experience in the race, but all had the same aim—to keep fit and beat the river to make it from the starting line in Northam to the finish line in Bayswater. Alan, who was tipped by the paddling community to take third place, glided into second place in the open single ski category, breaking the race record with a time of 8 hours, 5 mins, 54 seconds. Dorion came sixth in the single plastic kayak category in 10:01:00, while Peter, competing in the open single surf ski category, came 13th in 9:35:59. CALM was one of the trio's sponsors in the event, which is an example of responsible recreational use of a national park. Photo by Verna Costello

International 'bird man' flies in to South Coast

RUSSIAN ornithologist, Dr Yuri Gerasimov, from the Kamchatka Institute of Ecology at the Far-East Branch of the Russian Academy of Sciences, recently visited CALM's Albany District.

With reserve manager Alan Danks as host, he visited Two Peoples Bay Nature Reserve to discuss various threatened bird recovery programs—notably the noisy scrub bird and western bristlebird. Dr Gerasimov was most impressed with these programs, in particular the success story of the noisy scrub bird translocation work.

Dr Gerasimov then spent a full day visiting the Fitzgerald Biosphere Reserve with regional nature conservation officer Kelly Gillen. He was fascinated by the diversity of flora in the area and by the pollination of some species which involves both insects and birds.

by John Watson

This visit included time at Bremer Bay Primary School to see the school's biological monitoring program, co-ordinated by biosphere ecologist, Angela Sanders.

Dr Gerasimov had worked as a teacher in Russia, and he spoke to the children about the animals he was familiar with at home. He video filmed the children checking their fauna traps, which are part of the Biosphere Reserve School's fauna monitoring program.

He also visited Wellstead Estuary at Bremer Bay, where he recognised the call of the common greenshank, although he said that the bird itself looked quite different here in its non-breeding plumage.

At Point Ann, he met Fitzgerald River National Park rangers Nathan

McQuoid and Lindsay Brown, and was most impressed with the new site works at this area.

The next stop was at the Twertup Field Studies Centre where the role of the Fitzgerald River National Park Association was discussed. Dr Gerasimov was most impressed by the opportunities that the centre provided for general park visitors and researchers alike.

Returning to Albany via the Stirling Range National Park provided an opportunity for him to film some of the flowering species at Bluff Knoll in the last minutes of good daylight.

A nice finishing touch to the day was a small group of carnaby's cockatoos busily feeding by the roadside.

On his final day in Albany, Dr Gerasimov visited Princess Royal Harbour and Wilson Inlet

near Denmark with local ornithologists Vic Smith, Tim Hunt, Eiko Nishimura and Alex Morrison, before departing for Broome.

Dr Gerasimov's studies in Russia have included considerable interaction with Japanese scientists and this enabled a ready rapport with Eiko Nishimura.

This was Dr Gerasimov's first visit to Australia and he was delighted while in the Albany area to see several species of shore birds that migrate annually between Russia and Australia.

Wetlands International and the Australian Nature Conservation Agency, had invited Dr Gerasimov to spend additional time in Western Australia, after attending meetings of an international conference on 'Shorebird Conservation in the Asia-Pacific Region' held in Brisbane.

Dwellingup eats its way to Daffodil Day

DWELLINGUP District clerical officer Natalie Burton, is involved in all sorts of colourful and productive, let alone tasty, events.

Recently, Natalie co-ordinated a hugely successful event for Dwellingup staff with an 'Australia's Biggest Morning Tea Ever,' to raise funds for the National Cancer Foundation.

The morning tea was a lead-up to the Cancer Foundation's Daffodil Day, which was held on August 23, a national focus day, like the Red Nose Day held by the Sudden Infant Death Syndrome Foundation (SIDS).

Natalie said that the Cancer Foundation chose daffodils because they heralded spring, the season of hope and the potential for new life.

"It reminds us that there is life after a cancer diagnosis," she said.

"It may well be a vastly different life, but it's a life, nevertheless—one that has a different quality and intensity, making every moment appreciated, probably as never

by Tammie Reid

before.

"Funds raised go to vital cancer research programs, community education, patient care and family support.

"The Foundation does a marvellous job—absolutely huge—and is something I experienced first hand during the recent illness and death of my father—an emotional and difficult time for everyone.

"People at work were so supportive during the critical times when Dad was so ill, and also in support of the fundraising events.

"My father, Barry Wilson, was a CALM roading contractor, working in the Southern Forest Region. He was proud of his work and enjoyed dealing with the CALM staff in the South West.

"I feel that helping with the fund-raising was a way of thanking the Foundation for the help and support they gave to dad

and my family; it's also a way of helping others who must deal with similar situations.

"The Biggest Morning Tea Ever was fun to do. Amelia Raper and Fiona Fuhlholm helped cook up delicious foods and I asked for a donation as people enjoyed their morning tea.

"With their mouths full, and obviously enjoying what was in them, they could hardly refuse!

"I also ran a similar morning tea for CALM spouses, which went down equally well."

"Daffodil Day itself was a great success. Dwellingup staff and their families really opened their hearts, pockets and purses. I also visited various business houses near the office and, with the money from the staff and spouses' morning teas, I raised a total of \$320."

If you would like to become involved in fundraising for the Cancer Foundation of WA (Inc.), please phone Emily at the Foundation on (09) 381 4515.



Natalie Burton (seated left) is seen offering Lisa Craig a huge sliced-and-ready-to-eat morning tea cake. Behind them are the rest of the Dwellingup clerical team Jacqui Jewell and Di Watts. Photo by Taryn Linning

CALM and Eagle Heritage restore birds to wild



Les Harris helps RAAF pilot Gair Bowbyes release one of the eagles. Photo courtesy Royal Australian Air Force



The wedge-tailed eagles. Photo courtesy Royal Australian Air Force

LATE last year, CALM's District Manager at Exmouth, Doug Myers and I were called out to collect a sick or injured wedge-tailed eagle at a water hole on Charles Knife Road, North West Cape.

We found the eagle, a female, lying at the water's edge, and apparently unable to use her legs.

It was a warm day, about 40 degrees, so I checked the water, which was also quite warm and full of slime and other growth.

From this, I suspected botulism poisoning as the main cause of the eagle's problems.

To calm her, we covered the bird's head with

by Les Harris

a towel so we could carry out further inspections, but we found no other injuries.

The local vet, Matt Bullard, was away for a couple of days, so we took her to the home of Debbie Coote, a member of Conservation Animal Rescue, Research and Education (CARE).

Over the next two days, Debbie and I fed the bird with meat, along with glucose and water administered orally using a syringe, and she seemed to improve.

When Matt returned, he confirmed my diagnosis, and told me how to

administer the medication he prescribed; this was to be by daily injections into the eagle's chest muscles.

Readers might like to try imagining Debbie and me 'playing vets' while crammed inside the cage; I would cover the eagle's head with a rag and turn it onto its back, while Debbie held its head with one hand and its legs with the other, so I could give the bird its injection.

Later, when I was away on a two-day work-related trip, my son Craig had the pleasure of taking over these duties.

I should mention that the eagle was unable to open her claws, which made our task a

fraction easier.

Eventually, we got the bird to the stage where she could stand, but she still couldn't open her claws; she was literally walking on her knuckles.

A phoned inquiry to Phil Pain of The Eagle Heritage in Margaret River revealed that the bird had 'muscle lock', which required intensive therapy.

So she was sent to Phil and his band of carers, who kept in touch with us, providing updates on her improvement, until she was ready to be returned to North West Cape.

BUT—Phil had a slight dilemma!

Another eagle—a male from the Darkan area—

was housed in the same aviary as our female.

Now, nature being what it is, these two eagles had paired up, which now posed the question: Do we split them up and return them to their respective home territories, or can we return them as a pair to one or the other's territory?

Enter CALM Wildlife Protection Branch at Como with permission for them both to be released on North West Cape.

Then came our second hurdle. The local domestic airline was fully booked at that time, and was unable to accommodate our needs.

So Wildlife Protection Branch approached the RAAF.

Fortunately, the airforce

had a Caribou aircraft flying from Pearce to Karratha the following week, and as the wedge-tailed eagle is the centre piece of RAAF emblems, the boys in blue felt it was entirely appropriate to help.

At long last, the two eagles arrived at the Exmouth Light Aircraft strip to be greeted by the welcoming party which included the RAAF public relations film crew, Debbie Coote and me.

At the release site, about 11 kilometres away, we found a small band of people from the nearby Kailis prawn factory, eagerly waiting to watch the event.

The release took only a few seconds. Once the

heavy cardboard boxes were opened, the female took off immediately and perched in a gum tree about 200 metres away.

The male hesitated, probably because the terrain was unfamiliar to him, but after we gave the box a slight shake, he headed straight for the hills.

It was a heart-warming experience to see these two majestic birds, now flying very strongly, in their rightful place within the natural world.

CALM and the CARE group of Exmouth would like to thank The Eagle Heritage carers and the RAAF for their compassionate response to our plea.

Field officers graduate

by Megan Hughes

DECEMBER 1991 saw the graduation of the last group of field officers pass through CALM's Cadet Training Centre, and with it the end of an era that saw CALM's major source of new blood coming from within the department.

From then onwards, recruitment and training occurred on a more-or-less ad-hoc basis, with officers coming into the department only as the need arose.

This system presented two problems: Firstly, the camaraderie generated during the cadetships was lost.

Secondly, CALM was no longer able to draw on a pool of suitable recruits. Each new officer was recruited and trained on an individualised basis.

However, CALM has introduced a new skills-based field officer program, under which recruits are again brought together to be trained.

Covering about fourteen weeks in all, the training incorporates a wide range of subjects, as diverse as first aid, law enforcement forest silviculture and four-wheel driving.

The program itself is divided into several blocks, allowing the new recruits to actively combine their

training with practical field work.

Human Resources Branch senior training officer Alan Byrne, who was responsible for the former cadet school during its final years, is also responsible for organising and overseeing the training of recruits.

"The new system is operating very successfully, with the 1995 graduates being placed almost immediately after completing the first block of training," Alan said.

"They can be found in several CALM regions, districts, business units and branches throughout the State.

"In fact, not only was this initial program successful, the 16 more-recently recruited officers have already been placed, and are now actively contributing to CALM's field operations.

"I believe the main advantage of this system is it allows new people to quickly begin forming networks within CALM.

"Those who went through the former cadet training program would be

aware of the importance of the friendships formed during training.

"Under this new system, recruits now have the same opportunities.

"In addition, the practical training that takes place in the field is invaluable, as was found by the 1995 graduates and this most recent group of recruits.

"Their initial three-and-a-half weeks of training was mostly in the field, and was conducted in some fairly severe weather conditions (Of course, this may have been because it was mid-winter in Dwellingup).

"Most of the recruits were suffering with a severe flu virus, possibly due to being outdoors in seemingly never-ending rain.

"Managers can certainly rest assured that they will be receiving new officers who have been well and truly trained to endure almost any adverse conditions they may face.

"It's very rewarding to see the vigour and enthusiasm of the new recruits, whether they're in the classroom or out in the field, and I have great confidence in their future success, as well as that of CALM's new skills-based field officer training program," Alan said.



Homebase Timber Advisory Centre manager Martin Beel (left) and CALM Goldfields reserves officer Grant Prunk check the contents of one of the display cabinets. Photo by Terry Jones

New display at Homebase

CALM and the Goldfields Specialty Timber Industry Group Inc. (GSTIG) recently established a display at the Timber Advisory Centre at Homebase in Wembley.

There are two display cabinets, showing turned and carved wood products produced from Goldfield timbers.

They include native willow (*Pittosporum phylliraeoides*), quandong

by Terry Jones

(*Santalum acuminatum*), salmon gum (*Eucalyptus salmonophloia*), western myall (*Acacia papyrocarpa*), sandalwood (*Santalum spicatum*), Goldfields cypress pine (*Callitris preissii* var. *verrucosa*), and emu tree (*Hakea francisiana*). The leaves and fruits of these species are also on display.

GSTIG is an industry

group comprising CALM, wood turners from the Goldfields and the South-West, wood carvers, timber sawmillers and processors, supply companies and people with a general interest in the new industry.

The display is being funded by the Goldfields Timber Research Project, which has grants from the Department of Com-

merce and Trade, the Goldfields Esperance Development Authority and CALM.

The Timber Advisory Centre at Homebase is open from 9.00 am to 5.00 pm on weekdays, except Thursdays, when it is open until 8.00 pm; from 9.00 am to 5.00 pm on Saturdays, and from 10.00 am to 5.00 pm on Sundays.

Admission is free.

The Hills Forest in award finals

THE Hills Forest was nominated recently for an award in the 1996 Adult Learners' Week Awards Western Australia, under the Innovation and Commitment to Learning category.

In its list of the eight finalists in this category, the or-

ganisers of the awards, The Australian Association of Community Education, quoted an extract from the submission by Edith Cowan University Department of Leisure Sciences, who nominated The Hills Forest, commenting on its commitment: '... to enrich and en-

hance people about the natural environment through a learning strategy based on enjoyment that will encourage other outdoor educators and administrators to develop similar programs and herald the potential of a recreational learning indus-

try available for all our community.'

While The Hills forest didn't carry off the award this year, having reached the finals was highly commendable and ... there's always next year! Congratulations to The Hills Forest and its hard-working, innovative staff.

"NEWS that The Executive Director's Scholarship is to be reintroduced has been greeted with enthusiasm by Australian Workers' Union (AWU) staff," said Senior Training Officer Alan Byrne.

"After the closure of the Field Cadet Training Program in 1991, AWU staff had fewer chances to enter field officer positions.

"Now, with the reactivation of the scholarship

they will have a chance to study at the tertiary level, and on completion of their studies apply for field officer positions when they are advertised.

"The value of the scholarship has also increased from \$6000 to \$8000.

"This is to cover most of the scholarship-winner's external study expenses.

"Studying externally isn't easy, but every effort will be made within

work centres to accommodate the recipient of the scholarship with the resources and technology to study at this level.

"In the past, Executive Director's Scholarship recipients have made valuable contributions to CALM field operations with their combination of field experience and post-secondary education qualifications," Alan said.

For further details see advertisement on page 12.

Honorary CALM officers appointed

COMMUNICATING with the public, the role of volunteers, and management of rare flora and fauna were three of the subjects covered in a recent Goldfields course for honorary CALM officers.

Other subjects included: the role, structure and function of CALM; a regional overview of the Goldfields and South Coastal regions; Aboriginal culture, liaison and land issues; mining on CALM-managed lands; and law enforcement.

Six nominees attended from as far away as Burnerbinmah Station in the Murchison, the Eyre Bird Observatory in Kalgoorlie and Yakabindie Station. Most nominees already

by Andy Chapman

have an informal custodial role on CALM-managed lands, and it was felt that the information presented at the course, as well as their formal induction as Honorary CALM Officers (HCOs), would further the scope for these volunteers to assist CALM in remote areas where full-time staff are not always present.

The course was conducted over one weekend and most presenters and nominees agreed that it was 'pretty full on'; however, as a live-in course there was still time for a

fellowship barbecue on the Friday night, as well as the opportunity to participate in pit-trapping before 'class', and spotlighting on the Saturday evening.

Goongarrie Station was purchased by CALM in 1995, with Sandalwood Conservation and Regeneration Project funding.

The homestead proved to be an ideal venue. Only one hour's drive from Kalgoorlie, it offers reasonable comfort, including 240-volt power and lighting, but is sufficiently isolated for all to remain focused on the task in hand, and enjoy the splendours of the bush and the magnificent starry nights.



Rear: CALM's Kevin Morrison, Klaus Tidemann, Terry Hales, Andy Chapman and Ian Kealley. Front: Course nominees Don and Rhonda Anderson, Phillip Sharple, Joye Wilson, Geoff Smith, and Mark Townsend. Photo by Warwick Roe

Dr Rica Erickson honoured

ABOUT 200 people, including several CALM staff, biologists, naturalists, botanical artists, family and friends recently paid tribute to Dr Rica Erickson, WA botanist, author and artist, for her lifetime interest in documenting and protecting WA's unique flora.

The tribute took the form of a ceremony, which saw about 124 hectares of bush located in Nature Reserve 27595, about 15 kilometres south-west of Calingiri, officially named after Dr Erickson.

In a break with tradition, the Geographic Names Committee overturned its usual policy of not naming locations after people still living, and approved the name of the 'Rica Erickson Nature Reserve'.

It was this piece of land that Mrs Erickson led the push to preserve and protect from other encroaching land uses while she was president of the Bolgart CWA in 1958.

by Rebecca Wolstenholme

A combined effort by CALM's Moora District staff, the Shire of Victoria Plains and other interested members of the community supported the naming of the reserve after an initial proposal by the Bolgart CWA in 1995.

Reserves officer Scott Godley and Shire of Victoria Plains development officer Angela Kelsall submitted an application to the Geographic Names Committee for approval to name the CALM reserve in recognition of Dr Erickson's work.

Moora District's operations officer, Russell Bone had the signs made at the district's sign shop, and organised their placement in time for the ceremony.

Director of CALM's WA Herbarium Neville Marchant carried out the official naming ceremony,

describing the wide diversity of plants to be found in the reserve.

"It's believed that there could be at least 400 species of plants in this reserve, including triggerplants and sundews.

Dr Erickson has written an excellent book on each of these species, as well as an equally fascinating story about the botanist James Drummond, who originally traversed the area," he said.

"She showed great foresight in initiating the move to have this piece of land vested as a nature reserve and it is most fitting that this reserve be named after her during her lifetime," Neville said.

In an emotional response to Neville's speech, Dr Erickson thanked everyone who had come along to witness 'the greatest honour of my life', and in particular those who had been instrumental in



Penny Hussey, Neville Marchant, Rica Erickson and Victoria Plains Shire development officer Angela Kelsall. Photo by Rebecca Wolstenholme

bringing it about.

She urged local residents to be mindful of the fact that they were custodians of the area and

its many species, a large number of which were unique to WA.

After the ceremony, Dr Marchant and land for

wildlife officer Penny Hussey, led the visitors on a tour through the reserve.

The day before the naming ceremony, Dr

Erickson celebrated another milestone—her 88th birthday. We wish her many more years of active and fruitful living.

Executive Director's Scholarship

Aim

The Executive Director's Scholarship is made available to all AWU staff to financially assist them in their post-secondary education studies to enter field officer positions throughout the State.

Background

Since the closure of the Field Cadet Training Program in December 1991, AWU personnel have had limited opportunities to enter field officer positions. Before the closure, the Executive Director would offer one position per year to an AWU staff member to enter the second-year cadetship study at the Dwellingup Field Officer Training Centre. Applicants were interviewed and assessed for suitability to complete both the second year of the two-year cadet program and approximately four units of the first year TAFE studies via external studies.

Process

The scholarship will be reactivated to allow AWU personnel to enter a range of field officer positions. The process for award of the scholarship is as follows:

The Executive Director's Scholarship will be advertised annually in October, inviting interested AWU personnel to apply in writing.

Applicants will be interviewed and assessed via the Australian Council for Educational Research (ACER) aptitude tests to ascertain the applicant's suitability to study at either the certificate or tertiary level.

The successful applicant is provided with quarterly instalments of \$500 over the four-year TAFE course of study, or \$333 over the six-year tertiary course of study, that is a total of \$8,000 in each case. These instalments should adequately cover campus fees, books, stationery, stamps and incidental costs associated with external study, and contribute towards the cost of the Higher Education Contribution Scheme (HECS).

The successful applicant will receive the support of the District/Branch Manager in approving the five hours per week for study leave during college semesters. Office space and access to a departmental computer will be provided, if available.

For further information on the Executive Director's Scholarship, interested staff should contact Senior Training Officer Alan Byrne at Dwellingup on (09) 538 1200 or fax (09) 538 1244.

Dr Syd Shea
Executive Director

Megan's shaping CALM courses

DESIGNING and writing a curriculum and syllabus for a range of competency-based training programs keeps newly appointed training officer Megan Hughes more than occupied.

Megan is one of this year's field officer recruits and joins senior training officer Alan Byrne and administrative officer Rose Haggatt at the CALM Training Centre in Dwellingup.

"It's great to have Megan on the team, as there's so much development work to be done," said Alan.

"Currently, the Training Centre is focusing on two main aims:

"The first is to update and organise already-existing courses into a competency-based format and, where needed, obtain national accreditation for them.

"The second is to develop new training programs wherever a need is identified.

"It's a matter of working with managers and practitioners working in the field

by Tammie Reid

to define training needs and then working together to design the course and materials that will facilitate learning," said Alan.

"Right now, Megan is working on a number of new training programs, ranging from areas as diverse as the Cave Guides Course, with Yanchep National Park senior ranger Ron Shimmon, and the Site Evaluation for Plantation Forestry Course with Busselton Farm Forestry research officer Steve Ward.

"This involves preparing a syllabus and curriculum, teaching aids and participant assessments, and then submitting the final product to the Skills Standards Accreditation Board (SSAB) for national accreditation.

"Luckily, Megan's interests lie in the education sphere. She is currently studying part-time towards a Graduate Diploma of Education at Curtin University."

Megan said that for her



Megan Hughes can cook too!

the challenge lay in understanding the practical nature of the job, and capturing the training needs that exist in the field.

"It boils down to maintaining effective communications with managers and practitioners to ensure that what is developed meets the requirements of the train-

ing standards set by the Skills Standards Accreditation Board and the training needs of those doing the work in the field," Megan said.

In the next issue of CALM NEWS, Megan will begin a series on graduates, where they are now and what they are doing.

CALM Wins Excellence Award in Community Communications

CALM was one of five major winners in the 1996 Public Relations Institute of Australia (WA) Awards for Excellence at a presentation held recently in Perth.

The department won the Community Communications category for activities designed to create a high level of awareness of, and support for Operation Foxglove and Project Eden.

AlintaGas was success-

ful in the Comprehensive Program category, PR consultancies Impressions Corporate Public Relations and Turnbull Fox Phillips won for Marketing Communications and Investor Relations, respectively, while the award for excellence in Employee Communications went to the Department of Contract and Management Services.

"Support from the community is critical to the protection and management of WA's wildlife, and

depends on effective methods of communications and consultation," said Director of Corporate Relations Ron Kawalilak, who accepted the award on behalf of the department.

"The award is a direct result of CALM's commitment to open and proactive communication with the wider community, and the involvement of research, regional, district and communications staff in the process."

Activities covered in the award included preparation and distribution of information materials, resident surveys, regular meetings and briefings with key stakeholders, community meetings, an internal communications program, and the use of various media to keep key audiences informed.

"Success of this work is evidenced by the fact that market research conducted earlier this year on Operation Foxglove

showed that 88 per cent of people in the affected areas were aware of the project, and 91 per cent were aware of, and understood, that the baiting program was to help protect native animals from feral predators," said Ron.

Many of the special projects, publications and programs recognised in the award were created by a team that included Carolyn Thomson, Penny Walsh and Nigel Higgs.

Big Brook reminder

By now those taking an active part in the Big Brook Relay should have been training for a couple of months or so—that's if winning is important to them.

If you're in it only for fun, training that includes flexibility as well as strength exercises is important if you want to avoid injury. Also, gentle warm-up and cool-down exercises are a must.

For advice on safe training techniques, contact your local fitness leader, or phone Linda Gilbert on

(09) 334 0398, or fax her on (09) 334 0478.

Be sure to get your entry forms in to Rod Annear before November 1.

Then all you'll need to do is be there on Saturday, November 16—and remember the 10th Anniversary Dinner in the evening.

Overnight accommodation is still available for those who don't fancy driving back to Perth after the 'decade-ent' celebrations. Just contact Rod Annear at Pemberton on (097) 761 207 or fax (097) 761 410.