



Environment Minister Cheryl Edwards is pictured with the West Coast College of TAFE's director of academic development, Geoff Hawke (left), Yanchep's visitor services manager Phil Smeeton (centre) and Noongar elder Cedric Jacobs. Photo by Ernie McLintock

## Wangi Mia 'talking place' shelter opens at Yanchep

**THE new heart of Yanchep National Park—an Aboriginal 'talking place'—was officially opened in September.**

The stunning Wangi Mia (talking place) shelter is the axis of the park's upgraded facilities including refurbishment of the inn and new tea-rooms to be completed by the end of the year.

The new limestone and timber facility is part of more than \$3 million of work to beautify and improve the park.

Completed work comprises foreshore improvements, new car parks, new walk trails, upgraded caves access, reticulation of the waterfront to provide lawns for picnickers, new barbecues, renovated toilets and administration buildings, improvements to the golf course and a more easily accessible Lakeview picnic area.

The Wangi Mia is part of CALM's commitment to create a cultural focus for the park using its Aboriginal Heritage Unit.

"Up to 200,000 visitors a year will be able to experience and learn about Aboriginal culture and take part in tours," the park's visitor service manager, Phil Smeeton, said.

A fifth of Yanchep National Park's visitor services staff were Aboriginal, and all had contributed to the creation of the Wangi Mia.

Phil said Yanchep's Aboriginal heritage school tours attracted 15,000 primary, secondary and tertiary students annually. They learnt about how Aboriginal people lived in the bush, tool making, bush foods, mias (bush camps) and cross cultural understanding.

Each year another 40,000 people visited the park on coach tours to see the koalas, caves or take part in Aboriginal heritage tours.

Phil said the Wangi Mia had a shop for visitors to buy wildlife and Aboriginal memorabilia. There was also a replica bush camp within the shelter.

Phil said CALM's partnership with Balga TAFE's pre-apprentice stonemasons and carpenters, Mission Australia's Work for the DOLE group and Main Roads' redeployees resulted in more than 3000 hours' voluntary work saving almost one third of the \$150,000 cost.

"This building is a meeting point for social groups, families, tours and school parties. It is also something of which every volunteer can be proud," Phil said.





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19A 25A FUJI 20 26 20A 26A 400 21 27 21A 27A 22 28 22A 28A MO9 23 29 23A 29A FUJI 24 30 24A 30A 400 2



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31A 37A 32 38 32A 38A MO9 33 39 33A 39A FUJI 34 40 34A 40A 400 35 41 35A 41A FUJI 36 42 36A 42A MO9 4



20/7/00  
WANGI MIA OPENING  
YANCTEP NATIONAL PARK

BY ENVIRONMENT MINISTER CHERYL EDWARDS

PHOTOGRAPHER:

ERNIE McCLINTOCK.