

*We wish to acknowledge The Wurundjeri People, the traditional custodians of our region, and all Aboriginal Elders, past and present.*

## News in Brief

### Sustainable Living Festival

This Melbourne Highlight presents a multitude of activities with many occurring from Friday February 10 to Sunday February 12. HEWI will once again support the Great Forest National Park stall, with an arresting display which attracts hundreds of enquiries (thanks Steve). The HEWI films' presentation is also included as an SLF attraction this year.

<http://www.slf.org.au/program-launch-2017/>

### Casey Community Awards

Last December, Maureen accepted a community group award as recognition of her leadership and organisation of volunteers for revegetation projects along Healesville's streams. This nomination was submitted by Chum Creek Landcare, whose President, Evelyn Feller, also attended the morning tea at Chirnside Park organised by Tony Smith MP and his staff for a room full of Casey electorate volunteers

### Melbourne Water Grant

HEWI is most appreciative of our long partnership with Melbourne Water and their annual administration grants that we have received since 2000. We are also extremely grateful to all the staff from various sections who have given so much assistance with each of our projects. HEWI received a finalist award in the River Health Incentives Program to celebrate their 21st birthday. We were delighted when our own MW representative, Katie Drummond, received the Stewardship award.

### Plastic Bag Free Healesville

PBFH has received a \$1,000 community grant from Council, auspiced by HEWI. Contact Ria If you can assist with the huge demand for 'boomerang' bags. [plasticbagfreehealesville@gmail.com](mailto:plasticbagfreehealesville@gmail.com)

### Native Vegetation Clearing Regulations

Extension of Comment Period  
<https://engage.vic.gov.au/native-vegetation-review>

Comments/ submissions close

**8 March**

*Welcome to our 28th year of environmental activism! Many of you will have heard of Maules Creek in NSW and the inspiring efforts of the community to protect the Leard State Forest from a giant open cut coal mine. The mine has been continuously opposed by the Gamilaray people, surrounding landholders, townships, community and environment groups. A community blockade against the mine is the longest running of its type in Australia's history and became the subject of a documentary entitled Black Hole. We are excited to bring you this highly acclaimed documentary that will be introduced by the Director, Joao Dujon Pereira. Dujon will also be available for Q&A following the showing.*

**FREE FILMS February 24, 2017 The Memo Healesville**

## "The Great Forest"

A beautiful and sensitive local documentary by Marli Lopez-Hope.

Annotated by the ancient words of local indigenous language, through Senior Aboriginal Wurundjeri elder, Aunty Joy Murphy Wandin we marvel at the complex symbiotic nature of this ecosystem, from the forest floor to the canopy above.

and

## BLACK Transforming a Forest into a Symbiosis HOLE

One Mining Company, a 965 day blockade, over 300 voluntary arrests a, a State Forest home to 396 Species of native fauna and flora, 34 endangered. Director João Dujon Pereira asks us to examine the future of coal, corporate responsibility and the rights that governments afford to people versus polluters.

The film is a collective narrative of first person accounts with characters that thread throughout the film, from 2013 to the present.

The stakes are high; water security, agricultural land, endangered flora, fauna and significant indigenous cultural sites. We meet key figures in the establishment of the campaign against the mine and their overview sets the tone.

After 560 days embedded in the forest, the now growing number of campaigners are given a move-on order by local council. Resident farmer Cliff Wallace invites the blockade onto his farm called 'Wando'. Cliff knows what's at risk and the impact of how a coal mine can change the fabric of a once quiet community.

The intensity of the ongoing civil disobedience is in contrast with the ways of the Gomeroi Indigenous Community. The Gomeroi battle Whitehaven Coal through ongoing court actions and political lobbying. Their plight of being denied access to country has fractured the Gomeroi nation.

The grief and loss that we see of the Gomeroi, farmers, locals and campaigners does not diminish an ultimately successful campaign. It becomes greater than saving the Leard State Forest. The birth of a divestment campaign has created a movement that questions our addiction to coal and continual approval by State and Federal Governments in allowing the construction of greenfield coal mines in Australia.

**> Friday February 24 7.30pm, The Memo Healesville**

**January 30**

Term 1 begins

**January 31**

Waterwatch Training

**February 01**

Meeting with Cr McAllister

**February 02**

Meeting with DELWP

Fuel reduction issues

HL&amp;LC

5.30 – 6.30pm

**February 02****HEWI meeting****HL&LC 7.00pm-9.00pm****February 4-26**

Sustainable Living Festival

Federation Square *et al***February 10**

Waterwatch Monitoring

Queens Park rotunda

9.30am -11am

**February 24**

Free Films Presentation

The Great Forest

and BLACK HOLE

The Memo 7.30pm

**March 10**

Waterwatch Monitoring

Queens Park rotunda

9.30am -11am

**March 24**

Waterbugs Identification

Healesville Primary students

Queens Park 10.00 – 11.30am

**YELLINGBO CONSERVATION AREA (YCA)**

Late last year there was a concerted effort by a small groups of landholders, supported by Yarra Ranges Councillors, to derail a process to implement the vegetation controls required to conserve this (YCA) unique habitat for both Leadbeater's Possum and the Helmeted Honeyeater. A process that had been approved by the State Government in 2014 following an exhaustive VEAC Investigation.

Community meetings were totally disrupted by rowdy protesters who also met with the Minister for Energy, Environment and Climate Change, the Hon Lily D'Ambrusio MP. However, in spite of countless approaches, the Minister has not agreed to meet with the hundreds of environmental volunteers who have contributed to the Yellingbo conservation project over many years.

The Minister has now stated that the request by Yarra Ranges Council to reduce the Yellingbo Investigation Area is not supported. However, the proposed vegetation controls have been reduced even though it is Crown land that DELWP is required to manage for conservation and streamside protection. HEWI members are dismayed that such a small noisy group could force major changes to approved conservation measures without any credible ecological evidence to support their claims. As we await our own reply from DELWP, we will continue to follow up Council's deplorable Motion with Cr Fiona McAllister.

**WELCOME RETURN OF LONG-TIME MEMBER!**

There are many locals who will remember Penny Richards who lived, worked and volunteered in our community for many years. For the past 20 years, Penny has worked in natural resource management including conservation planning, land protection, wildlife planning and management, Landcare support and biodiversity planning. She implemented the cooperative approach to blackberry management which assisted local landholders to clear blackberry infestations after the 2009 fires.

Penny has recently been appointed CFA Risk Landscape Coordinator and works within the East Central Bushfire Risk Landscape team with which HEWI and other environment groups are currently engaged. Welcome back to the local scene Penny, we will certainly appreciate your ecological background in our ongoing discussions on fuel reduction.

**WIRRUP YALUK**

At the first public meeting for 2017 of Yarra Ranges Council, the renaming of Don Road Drain was on the agenda and HEWI was invited to speak re approval of "Wirrup Yaluk" to be recommended to Victorian Government's Registrar of Geographic Names as a suitable title for this natural waterway. Our involvement began with the loss of the significant Mountain Swamp Gums in the 1996 floods which was followed by an invitation to work with Council and Melbourne Water on revegetation of this watercourse. Our later association with HICSA and the Meeting Place gardens resulted in Aunty Joy Wandin Murphy's nomination of Wirrup Yaluk, Blackfish Creek.

We are most appreciative of all involved in this long journey including Council's corporate staff and were delighted with Councillors' unanimous support at the meeting.

**COMMUNITIES FOR PLATYPUS**

*Dulaiwurrong Tamboree* is the title of the recent film produced for Yarra Ranges Council's Platypus Project. It was launched during the Healesville Music Festival in the Senior Citizens Hall where there were children's activities and a Woiwurrung Singing workshop with Brooke Collins. HEWI and Plastic Bag Free Healesville provided information tables and the HICSA Young Women's group displayed a superb photographic exhibition. The film includes HEWI Platypus stencils for drain covers, our planting activities and litter collection from waterways – all based on Wirrup Yaluk.

*A gentle reminder that HEWI memberships are due at the beginning of each calendar year so a form is also attached – or you are welcome to make your contribution to Bronwyn at the films evening.*

*The rates remain unchanged but your subscription is vitally important to maintain our credentials as community representatives.*



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[www.hewi.org.au](http://www.hewi.org.au)<http://roundleafpomaderris.org.au>