

## **MEDIA RELEASE**

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Attention: News Editor

### **Friends camp out to celebrate Twertup**

The Twertup community has recently celebrated the completion of the Twertup Field Studies Centre after it was substantially damaged by a bushfire in 2008.

The centre, located in the Fitzgerald River National Park, was officially reopened by Great Southern Development Commission's (GSDC) Chief Executive Officer Bruce Manning.

The weekend event incorporated an overnight campout with nature walks, presentations and an evening campfire.

It was an opportunity to celebrate and acknowledge many years of hard work by the Friends of the Fitzgerald River National Park volunteers and community members who rebuilt the environmental research and education facility, with support from funding organisations including the GSDC.

Following the bushfire, funding support from the GSDC in 2009-10 helped to establish a Master Development Plan and building plans.

Additional funding support was provided in 2015 and 2016 through the State Government's Community Chest Fund, which contributed to the construction costs of restoring and completing the centre.

GSDC Chair Ross Thornton said the GSDC was proud to have provided \$55,000 support for the project over the years.

"Support over several years shows the GSDC's strong commitment to developing this community and environmental asset," Mr Thornton said.

"Twertup is a valuable centre for researchers conducting field work in the park, attracting local, national and international visitors to the UNESCO-listed Biosphere Reserve.

"The rebuild is a great result and a wonderful example of collaboration for the benefit of biodiversity protection, research and community engagement."

A quarry worker built Twertup Cottage in 1965 out of spongolite blocks from the adjacent quarry. After his death, the cottage remained empty and fell into disrepair until 1980 when the Fitzgerald National Park Association took on responsibility for the building, which opened as the Twertup Field Studies Centre in December 1981.



It was the base from which the community conducted the first ever professional biological survey of the Park, extending over two years, and it was the venue for the first Biosphere Reserve gathering in Western Australia.

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