

Nomination:
Kleenheat Gas Community of the Year Award 2008

Hyden Progress Association

Hyden Progress Association Inc (HPA) works dynamically, innovatively and compassionately, undertaking varying roles in the Hyden community according to local needs. HPA aims to develop and improve Hyden and surrounding districts, and to foster a spirit of friendship and cooperation. Depending on issues that arise, HPA may lobby Government, liaise with local government, apply for funds for services and facilities, hold events, or create infrastructure – activities that improve the quality of life for people of all ages and capacities in our community, aiming to encourage new residents, support and enhance the lifestyle of all community members and grow our community's economy, improve its environment and provide opportunities for sharing, caring and FUN!

HPA is a not-for-profit incorporated community organisation, managed by volunteers since 1945. Everyone who has a Hyden postal address (400) is considered a member. Meetings are held monthly and are open to all local residents. HPA elects volunteer office bearers annually, but many members choose just to be involved in more “hands-on” capacities such as attending busy bees, preparing for events, and other ways of participating.

Each year, the Hyden community builds on its reputation as a “Can Do Community”, leading the way with initiatives that “pioneer” solutions to many and varied rural challenges. Hyden is a “leaderful” community with a diverse range of community groups and private enterprises successfully achieving their own projects whilst always pulling in the same direction. HPA continues as the hub for community volunteer activities. Some recent and current major projects include:

- Construction of **Hyden People Care Place**, a new and innovative multi-purpose facility that comprises a pastoral care and counselling centre, overnight and activity centre for respite care services, and a residential unit for a professional service provider.

Four grants, totalling nearly \$400 000 were accessed from the federal government and Lotterywest. The local community raised over \$100 000 in cash and contributed at least as much in-kind, largely by donations from individuals and families.

A generous local mining company donated \$20 000, and the community aims to pay off the final costs of a further \$100 000 with a community crop that has been planted and funded by more donated support.

In all a massive and magnificent community effort has achieved a building that has no known equal anywhere in the state. The community has created this unique people care centre based on local needs.

Opened in April 2008, the People Care Place is already well used and will ensure quality people care for Hyden district's foreseeable future. It comprises;

- The Respite Centre has an accommodation unit with special needs beds and disability support ablutions, as well as a bedroom and en suite for a resident respite carer. It also has a large community kitchen, meetings and activities room and a large entertainment lounge too. Seniors, people of all ages with disabilities and families with special needs are accessing this centre with support by the local respite service provider.
 - The Fellowship Place unit in the centre has overnight accommodation for visiting church ministers, and a lounge area that is used for fellowship prior to church services. Pastoral care, grief support and counselling will also be conducted in this facility as required.
 - The rental accommodation unit is available for a resident professional service provider, who can enjoy quality housing to encourage longevity of stay in our rural town. (This unit also provides rental income to help cover the maintenance and management costs of the whole People Care Place – a sustainable community business model.)
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- Establishment and ongoing management of an innovative rural **Respite Care Service**, providing an employed respite carer for local disabled and frail-aged people so that their strained day-to-day carers, often family members, can have well-earned regular respite. This service enables families to continue to live locally and enjoy improved life quality. Hyden Silver Chain sub-committee has teamed with Hyden Progress Association to manage this service, recently approved for continuation funds for a further 4 years.

 - **Hyden Community Legacy** was established in 2004, the first Western Australian community donation account under the Western Australian Community Foundation, and it is seen as a leading example for many other communities. This initiative is a significant step towards **ensuring Hyden's sustainable future**, aiming to reduce reliance on government grant funds and provide past, present and future community members, small businesses and corporates with the opportunity to contribute towards Hyden's future by donating or bequeathing towards this trust fund.

HCL also aims to build on our community's mindset which is "**what can I give back to my community?**" rather than the more common mindset of "what can it do for me?" Hyden aims to have a \$Million fund that can return significant funds to eligible community projects each year - again **Hyden is pioneering this cause** so other communities can also benefit.

In 2008 the first grants from Hyden Community Legacy were returned to the local community;

- Hyden Toy Library – replacement toys
 - Kondinin-Hyden St John Ambulance – new life saving equipment
 - Hyden Telecentre – coffee machine
 - Hyden Occasional Child care – landscaping and new signage
 - Hyden Respite Centre – furnishings
- Coordination of a whole-of-shire **cultural enhancement project** with HPA accessing funds and bringing professional artists to work with volunteer “artists” from Hyden, Karlgarin and Kondinin as they created **scrap-art sculptures** for their public places.

The Hyden Peoplescape sculptures, depicting Hyden’s history, feature in Hyden’s main street. Interpretive signage, installed near each sculpture provides lasting heritage information. Project organisers encouraged Indigenous Elders to contribute, by provision of preferred wording about Noongar connections to the district.

Effectively this whole project has created a new visitor attraction and local volunteers gained new creative skills and lots of participatory fun. In 2008 a “Coinus Collectus” sculpture has been added and funds raised by coin donations go towards the Respite Centre.

- Hyden recognises the importance of preserving and promoting its history. Local pioneers donated magnificent framed photographs of earlier eras and these are installed in the **Heritage Photo Gallery** in the Hyden Memorial Hall for lasting enjoyment.

- **Annual commemorative dawn ANZAC services** draw increasing crowds, with the local choir and volunteer Veterans leading the service. A community breakfast donated by Wave Rock Motel, follows the early morning service. A great sense of camaraderie is aroused by this annual event.

- New residents of Hyden receive a **Welcome to Hyden Package**, containing a Welcome card, an Information Booklet, and a Hyden-Karlgarin Phone Directory, aiming to give newcomers user-friendly information that encourages a smooth relocation experience.

- HPA hosts a **“Welcome Party”** for the whole community to welcome our new residents new residents. This allows new and long-term residents to meet in a social atmosphere and encourages introductions to community groups. This event, comprises sunset drinks and picnic tea at Wave rock, and is held on Australia Day each year.

- **Hyden Young Singles Housing**, a sub-committee of HPA, is a group of community volunteers and young tenants who manage 12 Housing Joint Venture home units in Hyden. Since 1996 these units have had 98% occupancy and are credited with encouraging many young people to stay living and working in Hyden. This group officially opened 2 family units in 2007, having raised \$40000 towards the project, and also arranging for the Shire to contribute the land and site-works. Existing units have been landscaped with communal connecting pathways following planning and volunteer initiative of our young management committee.

This sub-committee also liaised with Disability Services for provision of a purpose built house for a young intellectually disabled tenant.

Whilst HPA works for these projects, other community groups are contributing valuably to Hyden's capacity and wellbeing. Many of these have achieved extraordinary projects in recent times, often working cooperatively with other groups to achieve whole of community outcomes. These include:

- **Hyden Occasional Child-Care Committee** established the community's first stand-alone Child-Care Centre in 2003. This centre, managed by volunteer parents of young children, employs Carers three days each week. The Committee has resourcefully renovated an old house, providing an attractive children-friendly building and playground. The project involved leadership growth amongst young parents as they raised funds, negotiated with departments for approvals and licences, prepared business plans and employment contracts. This facility has provided parents with more flexible employment opportunities, and provides children with quality care of educational and social benefit. For families, without grandparents, HOCC childcare also offers them a welcome respite and parental support service.

- **Hyden Silver Chain Nursing Post Management Committee** has worked particularly raising funds to ensure Hyden maintains its Nursing Post to a high standard. In the recent past they purchased medical equipment for the centre, paid for interior painting, and did major landscaping of the medical centre and nurses' home surrounds. With increasing demands placed on this emergency medical service, the community's current ambitious project is to acquire funds and expand the Nursing Post extensively. It is likely to be a \$500 000 project but this is a determined and innovative community, so watch this space!

- **The Lions Club of Hyden**, celebrated 30 years of exemplary volunteer services for Hyden in 2008. This group's main ongoing projects include maintenance of the Hyden Cemetery, roadside clean-ups, recycling initiatives, beautification of the Hyden Lions Park and management of Hyden's retirement village, Whispering Gums. They have proactively fundraised and applied for more Joint Venture home units for older people, and contribute much towards making Hyden a senior-friendly place, providing pick-up services to elderly and many social opportunities for them as well.

- **Hyden Telecentre** continues to expand its services and facilities to meet community needs. It has improved internet services for tourists, and the latest technological equipment for computing, photography, and adult education courses. Amongst its many services, the Telecentre continues to publish Hyden-Karlgarin's weekly Householder - an excellent communication tool that keeps the community connected and informed.
- **Sporting clubs** are an integral part of the social fabric, health and wellbeing of the Hyden-Karlgarin community. Participation rates in most clubs are high with family friendly childcare arrangements and encouragement of people of all ages to be involved. The Shire of Kondinin, in partnership with Karlgarin-Hyden Hockey Club, Hyden Netball Club and Hyden Swimming Pool Committees, has accessed facility upgrade grants and raised significant funds, and achieved major improvements to sporting and recreation facilities, including a new hockey field and major pool renovations in 2007.

Local enterprise and local investment continues to grow in Hyden:

- **Hyden Business Development, (HBD)** celebrated its 10th Anniversary in 2007 with the official opening of two executive home units they had built, with an investment of \$450 000, to improve housing availability in the town. This group of local farmer shareholders, continues its quest to support new local businesses, and is especially credited with providing initial support for a metal fabrication business, an electrician and a plumber, all who have thriving businesses servicing the district.
- The new townsite in Hyden has no remaining vacant residential blocks – there are currently 6 additional new homes under construction by local people who are investing their future in our town. **When the trend is for rural towns to diminish, Hyden continues to grow and enjoys new arrivals and new businesses – a sure sign of a spirited community that welcomes and cares for its people**
- **Wave Rock Tourism Development Company** continued its local investment and extended its services with the opening of the Toy Soldier Collection - a new addition to the Wave Rock Experience, and improvements to the ablution and camping facilities at Wave Rock Caravan Park, aiming to attract and retain visitors to our region. This company also contributed, in partnership with the **Shire of Kondinin** and the Department of Tourism, to the Wave Rock Walk Circuit – a \$200000.00 boardwalk/path with interpretive signage that provides a recreational 3.6km circuit near Wave Rock.
- Regrettably **Hyden-Karlgarin Landcare** went into recess in 2007, after the cessation of federal government funding for their landcare officer. However, this group's volunteers worked successfully with Indigenous Elders, Water Corporation and the Shire to upgrade and protect a special local granite outcrop, The Humps and Mulka's Cave, with a Cultural and Environmental Management Plan, interpretive signage, designated walk trails and visitor facilities.

The many and varied community activities are typical of **Hyden's ongoing determined and energetic approach to creating opportunities** that improve the lifestyle and wellbeing of its residents and visitors.

Population growth, new business start-ups, new shops and houses under construction, and the ongoing demand for housing in Hyden are measurable outcomes of a rural community that is achieving positive things.

Even though Hyden is a small community with a population of just 400, there are many other examples of **significant community compassion and fundraising**, some led by individuals and others by community groups;

- An annual Walk for Diabetes attracts a huge local crowd and raises thousands of dollars for the Diabetes Foundation
- Australia's Biggest Morning Tea for Cancer is another big annual fundraiser
- "Mo"-vember, Girls Night-In and Create-a-thon craft events raise further funds for prostate and men health and breast cancer.
- RFDS funds are raised by regular coin donations at the local Bush Bakehouse too.

Hyden is a generous community for people care projects both within and outside our local district. Because of this, its people thrive and grow by their positive "we can do it" attitude.

Our community's ongoing aim is to flexibly meet changing needs, and particularly to strive to achieve the many goals prioritised at our community planning forums – always a dynamic community team that enjoys Hyden's "Bush Living at its Best"!

Appendix;

- Samples of Hyden-Karlgarin Householders, the weekly newsletter, demonstrating many and varied initiatives by Hyden Progress Association, various community groups and individuals for community benefit.
- Memorandum of Understanding for Hyden People Care Place
- Photos of the official blessing and opening celebration of Hyden People Care Place (on cd)
- Photo of official opening of Hyden Young Singles Housing Phase Three (on cd)
- Photo of local farmer shareholders in front of a new home unit they have constructed to improve the quality and availability of housing in Hyden (on cd)
- Photo of visitors enjoying Hyden Peoplescape Sculptures, created by local volunteers (on cd)
- Photo of new signage at Hyden Occasional Child Care Centre, managed by parent volunteers (hard copy photo)
- Hyden Community Legacy bequest brochure
- 2008 Hyden Progress Association President's report
- Welcome Booklet – as given to all new residents