

Artists delve into Devilbend

By Keith Platt

THE impressions and feelings aroused among 13 artists by the natural and man-made environment of Devilbend Natural Features Reserve are now on show in Mornington.

The artists toured the reserve five months ago, sketching, photographing and taking in the atmosphere of the 1000 hectares of bush and water near Moorooduc.

The resulting exhibition — *A changing land: Devilbend 2009* — was opened at Mornington Peninsula Regional Gallery by former deputy premier and water minister Professor John Thwaites, now chairman of the Monash Sustainability Institute.

It is the second exhibition developed by the gallery to support the exploration and interpretation by artists of this region's "natural" environments.

"The resulting journey has been one of exchange, inspiration, shared experience and, ultimately, response, which is manifest in a body of new works," gallery director Jane Alexander said.

"Through these works it is envisaged that the broader

community will gain a heightened awareness of both the environment and the issues that confront and challenge us all."

Land within the Devilbend reserve was a meeting place for the Bunurong people and over the past couple of centuries its indigenous flora and fauna, along with remnant pockets elsewhere on the Mornington Peninsula, has been altered and compromised.

Devilbend, now gazetted to protect its natural features, includes land cleared for horticultural and agricultural activities, a reservoir and more than 400 hectares of native vegetation.

Exhibiting artists are Marie-Louise Anderson, Bob Austin, Vito Bila, Adam Edwards'Magennis, Bea Edwards'Nambooka, Marian Hosking, Bob Kelly, Roger Saddington, Ken Smith, Patsy Smith, Claudia Terstappen, Trinh Vu and Greg Wallis.

Edwards'Nambooka, of Frankston, said she had been "initially shocked" by the landscape at Devilbend and felt that the project allowed her to show how she felt about the issues surrounding the reserve.

Saddington, who lives in



Artistic works: Bob Austin, Bea Edwards'Nambooka, Patsy Smith, Roger Saddington, Adam Edwards'Magennis and Bob Kelly are among 13 artists whose works comprise the exhibition *A changing land: Devilbend 2009*.
Picture: Gary Sissons

Brighton, said he was immediately struck by the quarry area and interested in the rocky forms.

He found it challenging to deal with the flaws in the environment. He has been coming to the peninsula for 20 years to photograph his favourite spots, including Cape Schanck and Bush-

rangers Bay, but said the landscape at Devilbend was "quite a contrast to these more typically pristine environments".

The exhibition is at Mornington Peninsula Regional Gallery, Civic Reserve, Dunns Road, Mornington, until October 11. Phone 5975 4395.