




Messages from
Phillip Island
Community
Tree Memorial

Photography Terry Melvin
Photostory Laura Brearley

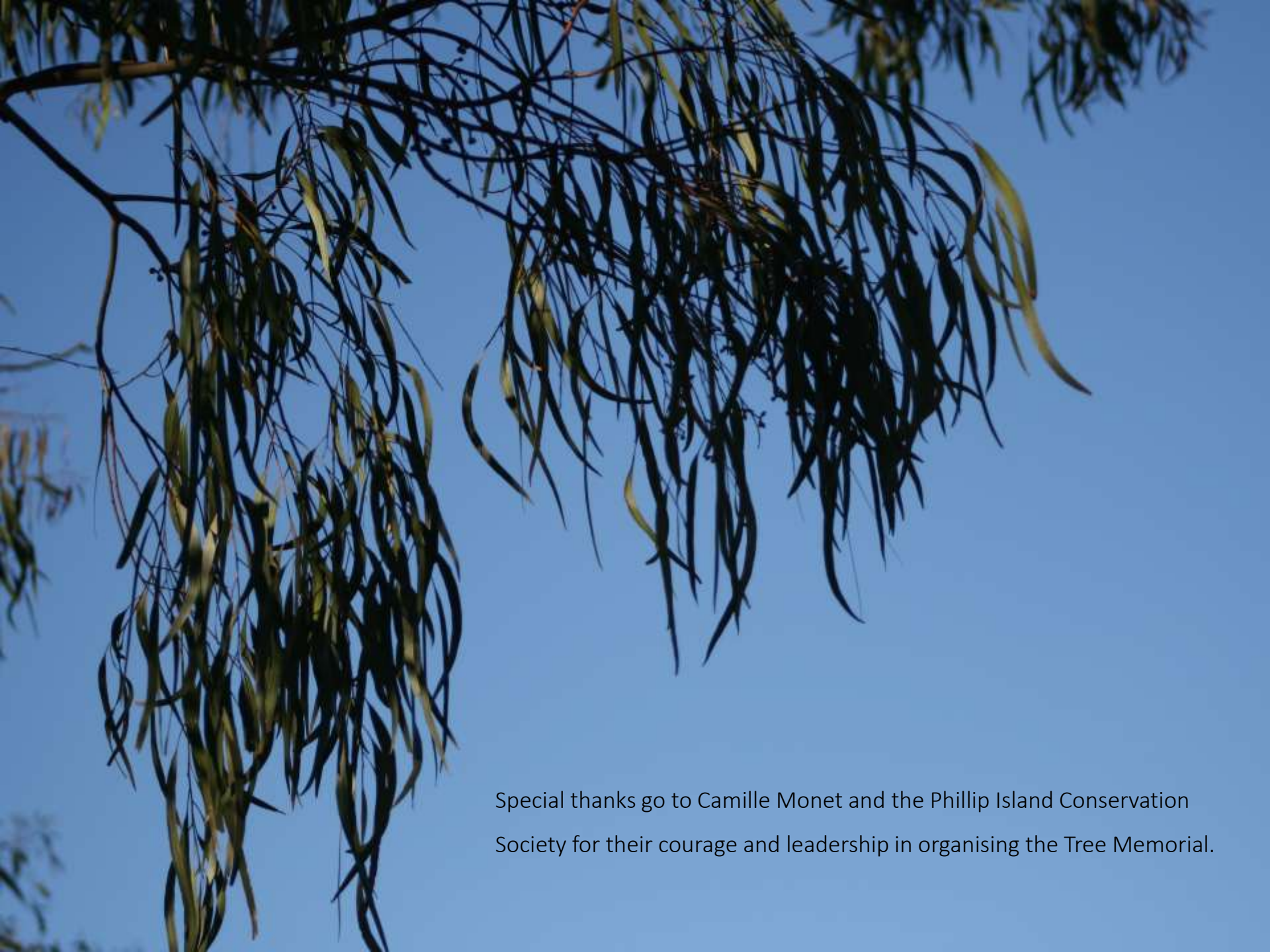




On the 31st March 2019,
members of the Phillip Island
community came together to
commemorate fifteen trees
that had been cut down to
make room for a car park.

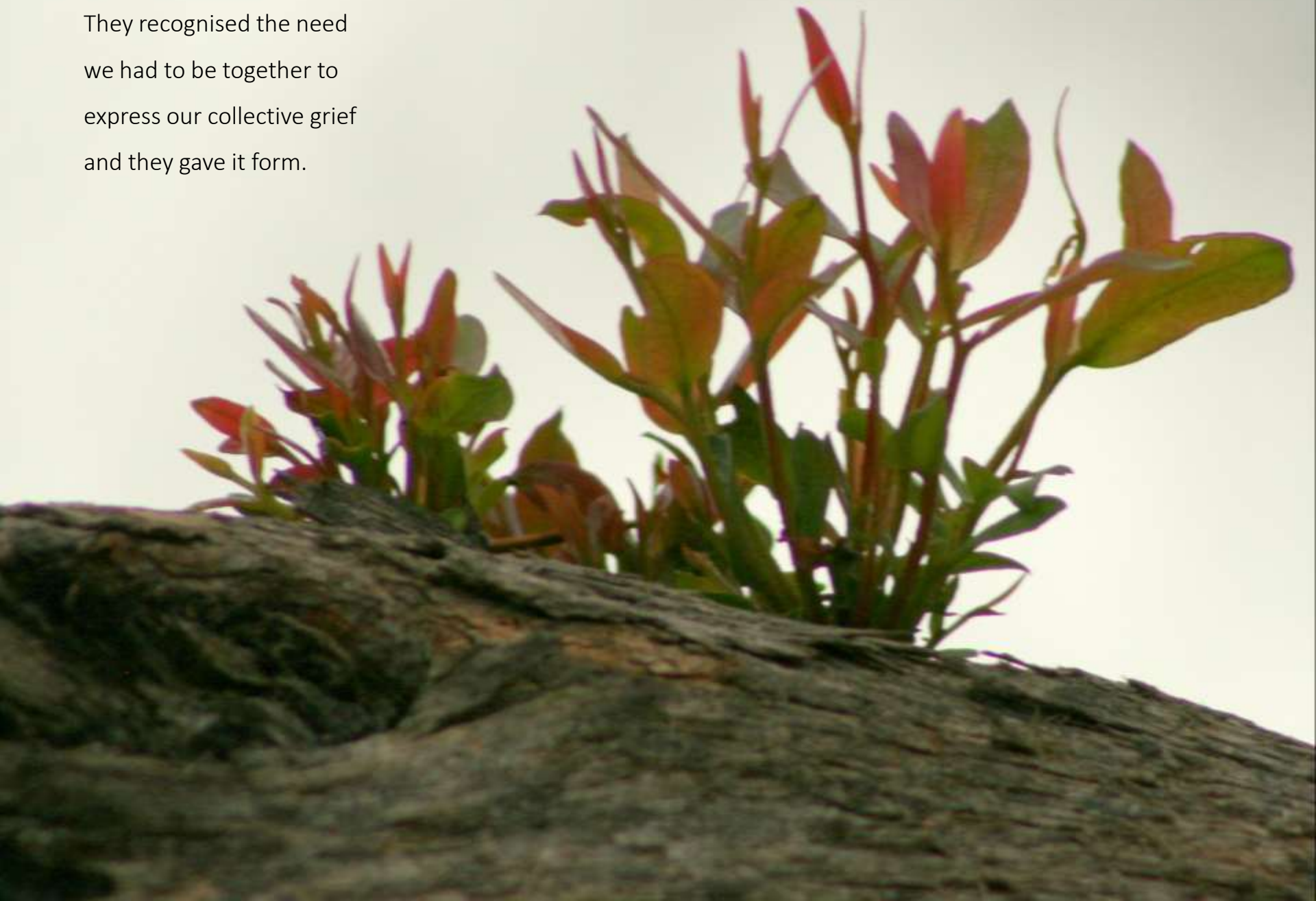


One of the trees,
a Blue Gum,
was 150 years old.



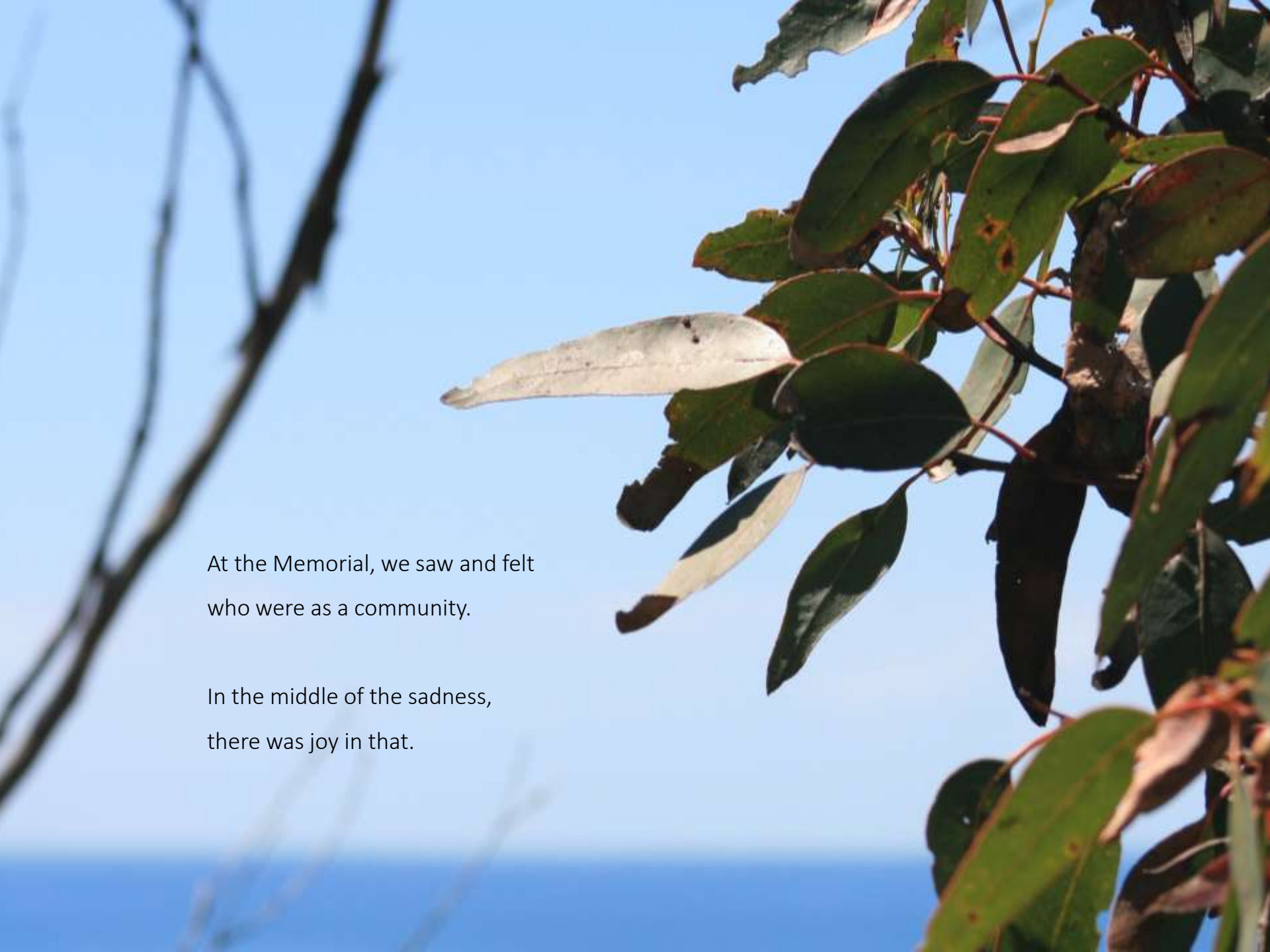
Special thanks go to Camille Monet and the Phillip Island Conservation Society for their courage and leadership in organising the Tree Memorial.

They recognised the need
we had to be together to
express our collective grief
and they gave it form.





The community who came together included artists, musicians, writers, long-term residents and brand new ones, environmentalists, elected community representatives, children, Aboriginal and Maori Elders and a chorus of lorikeets.



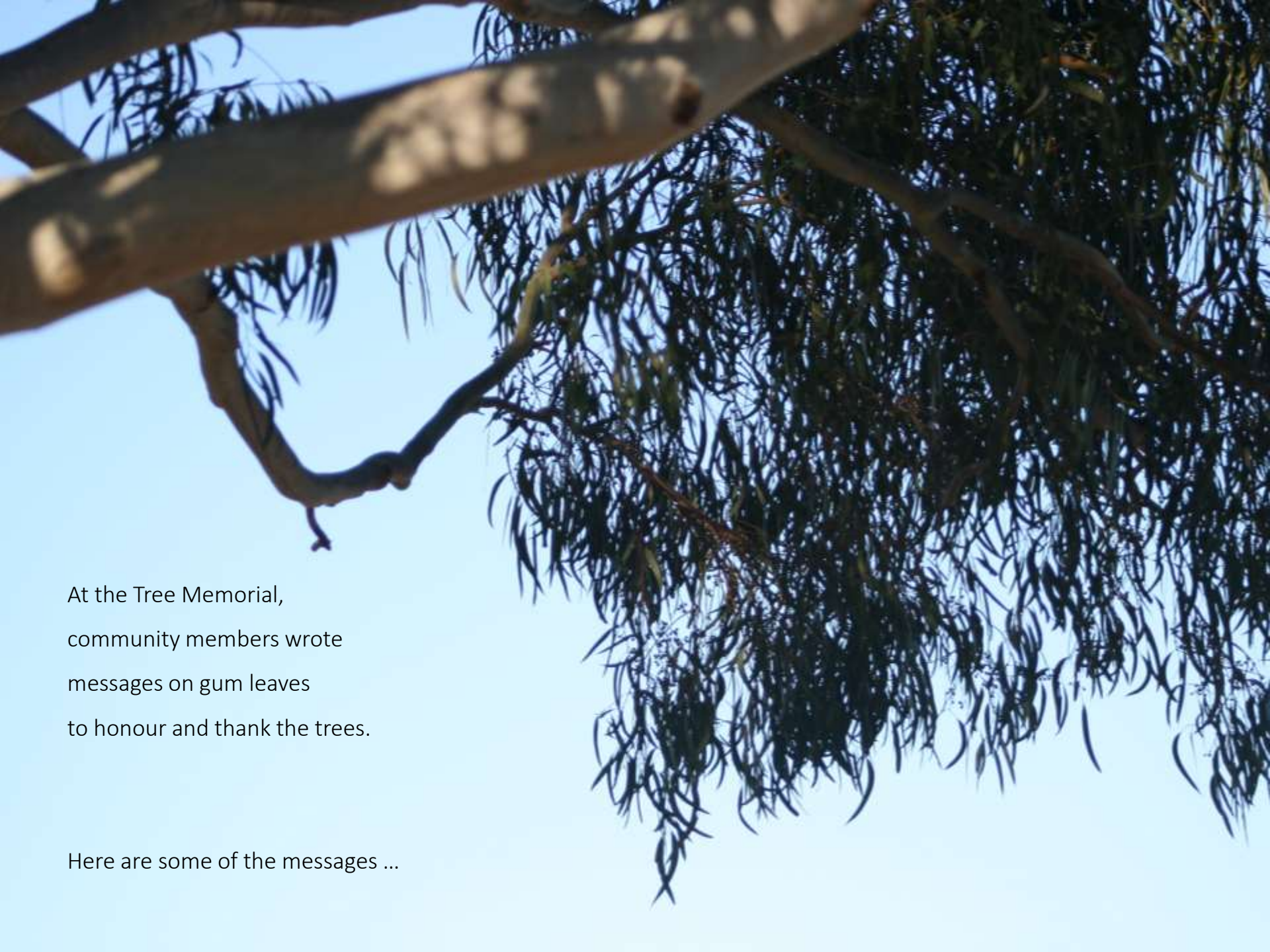
At the Memorial, we saw and felt
who were as a community.

In the middle of the sadness,
there was joy in that.



The ritual articulated our shared sense of loss as well as our sense of connection to the natural world.

It was respectful and restrained and helped identify what we could learn together from this.



At the Tree Memorial,
community members wrote
messages on gum leaves
to honour and thank the trees.

Here are some of the messages ...



Trees are life

Trees are art

Trees are beautiful

Trees are our kin





Trees keep us alive

Trees are the lungs of the earth

Trees should be respected

Trees forever





When we kill a tree
We kill one of our family
And a part of ourselves





Our trees are our cathedrals to meditate under
To love and respect



We are all one





We appreciate your place in our land
We respect the time it takes to grow





So sad to see trees lost



We love trees





We thank you and bless you all



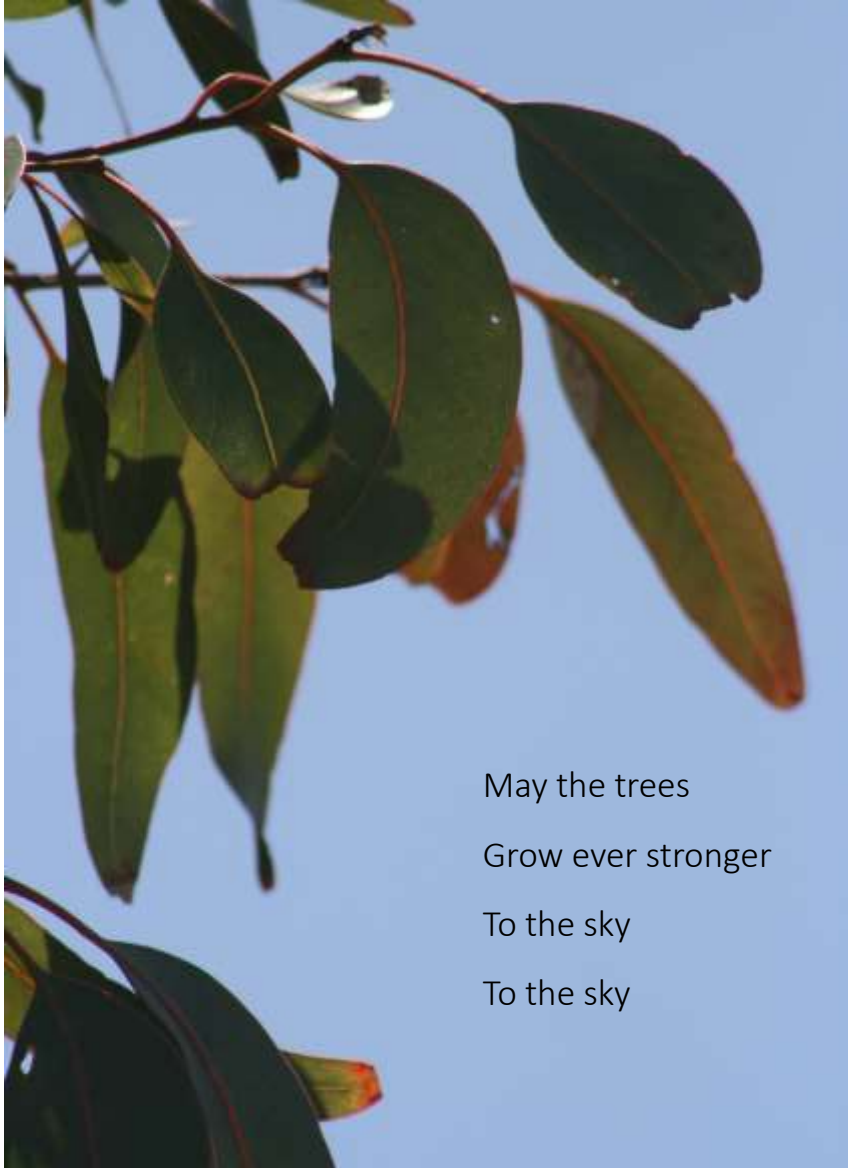
We love your tranquillity





Thank you to our beautiful trees
For all you provided for us



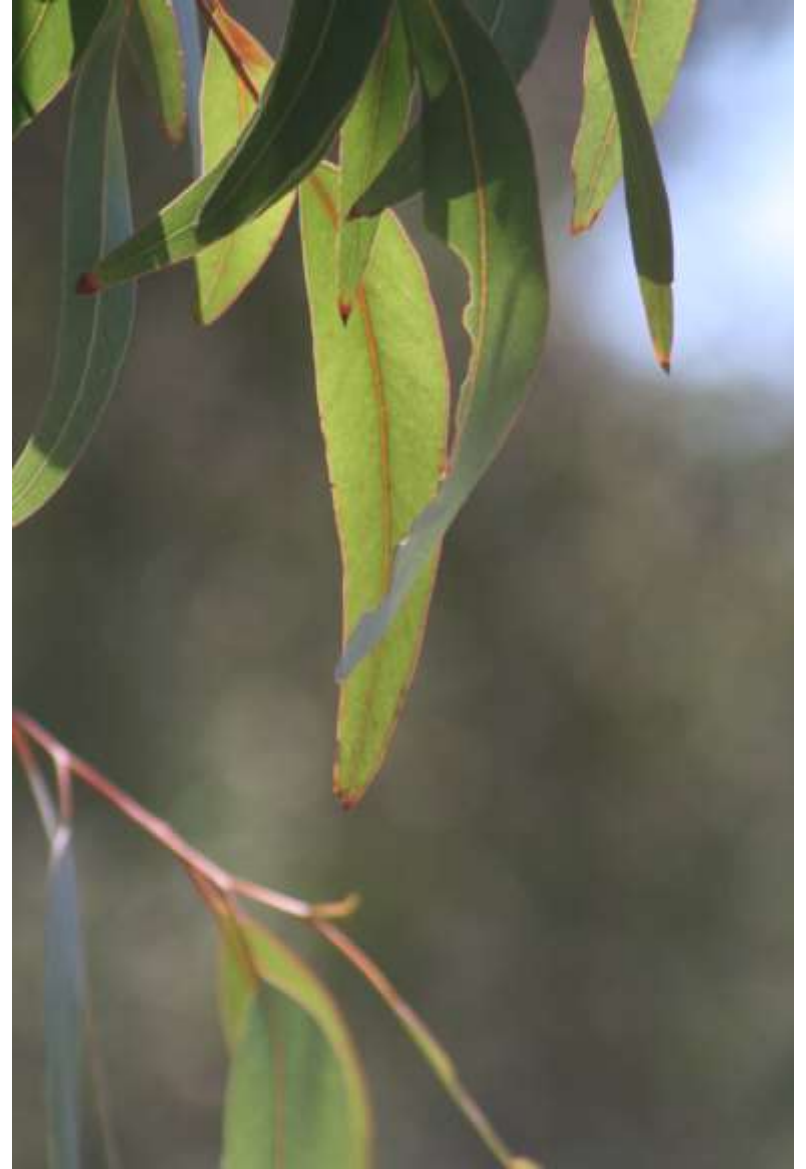


May the trees
Grow ever stronger
To the sky
To the sky



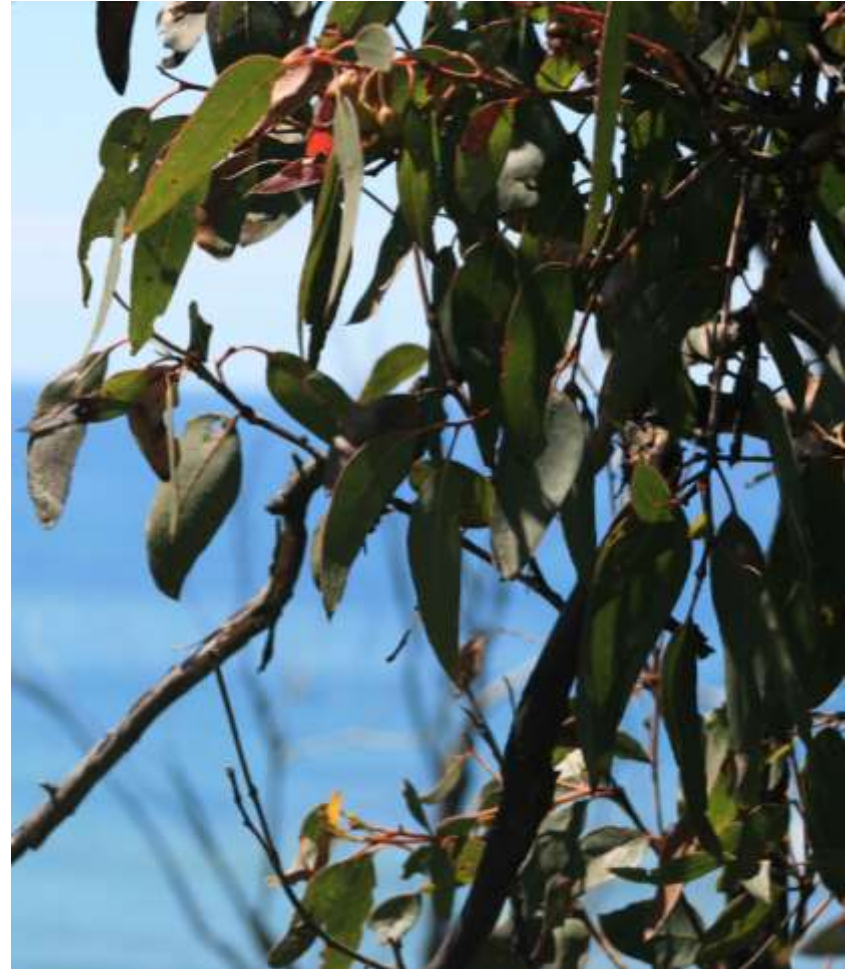


We need green





We are connected to this earth
And all her children





Don't forget about us





Protect us



Remember



A film of the Community Tree Memorial is available at <https://vimeo.com/328141866>



www.thelivingcircle21.com.au