



Bulletin 12 – 21 September 2023

ROTARY CLUB OF NELSON BAY TOMAREE HOSPITAL SENSORY GARDEN PROJECT.

This project was first explored in the 2021 -22 Rotary year by President Doug Craike during preliminary meetings with the Tomaree Community Hospital. Doug had meetings with Hospital Management and Hospital Auxiliary to explore possible projects our club could consider providing useful facilities at the hospital. The construction of a sensory garden adjacent to the Palliative Care Ward was suggested. To allow further consideration by the Rotary Club concept plans were drawn up.

The proposal to construct a garden was submitted to the first meeting of the 2022-23 Rotary year. At this time costings and an action plan were not available, and the proposal was deferred till these details were prepared in some detail. The garden project was adopted at the August Board meeting by President Don Whatham and special meetings of a small committee were held to firm up the budget, discuss potential suppliers, tradesmen and sources of materials.

Funding was discussed and donations were sought from local business houses and community organisations. Much of the sponsorship planning was undertaken by Rotarian Geoff Robinson. We also successfully applied for a Federal Government Stronger Communities Grant and a Port Stephens Council Community Support Grant. With a grant of \$20K from the Federal Government and \$6K from Port Stephens Council together with several generous donations and supplementary contribution by the club the project was funded to allow completion with a budget of just under \$50K.

With funding guaranteed work got underway in earnest in March. The major engineering tasks were managed by Geoff Diemar and Warwick Mathieson. Geoff and Warwick's knowledge and contact with local contractors facilitated the layout, placement of retaining walls and major earthworks associated with the project. Local excavation contractors, bricklayers and concreters built the foundations of the garden and completed concreting paths and the foundation for the shelter. The shelter was purchased and erected by local contractors. Much of the work was undertaken at very discounted rates thanks to the relationship held between Geoff, Warwick and the local tradesmen.

Warwick spent many hours constructing the seating off site. When onsite preparation was complete the seating was transported to the site and placed in position. Doug Craike maintained a close liaison with Tomaree Hospital management ensuring that all work was completed without disruption to the hospital and in accordance with correct OH&S protocol.

Once the project reached the appropriate stage of completion the outdoor furniture was fixed in place, irrigation system installed and garden soil filled into the built garden areas. The final stage was the planting and placement of garden features. This work provided the opportunity for involvement of all club members who placed the trees, shrubs and plants on location according to the garden plan provided by the landscape architect. Rotarians also laid the extensive lawn.

COMING EVENTS.

- 28 Sep – Club Meeting
- 5 Oct – Club meeting
- 7 Oct: Bunnings Barbeque
- 11 Oct: Board Meeting
- 12 Oct: Club Assembly
- 26 Oct: International Night at Hawkers Inn - \$30 Banquet BYO beverages.
- 14 Dec: Club Christmas Party
- BIRTHDAYS:**
 - 26 Sep: Peter Page
 - 29 Sep: Dieter Greiter

ANNIVERSARIES: None this month

WINNERS: (Last week)

- H/T: Peter Page
- RAFFLE: Dieter Greiter
- Three Minute Talk:**
Dieter Greiter
- MEMBER DUTIES –**
 - Door:** Doug Craike
 - Grace –** Chris Bartlett
 - Toast –** Peter McBean
 - Introduce Speaker:**
David Clark
 - Thank Speaker:** Geoff Robinson
 - Bulletin:** Dieter Greiter
 - Photos:** Dieter Greiter
 - Binoculars:** Geoff Diemar

COMING SPECIAL EVENT THURSDAY 26 OCTOBER

- Dining away from the Club. Hawker Inn.**
- Nelson Bay Banquet \$30 or \$35 with seafood.**
- BYO wine or beer**
- Normal time 6 for 6.30 pm**

The project was completed in the 2023-24 Rotary year. The final touches completed in President Ella Clarke's year included the manufacture and placement of the acknowledgment plaque which recognised the contribution of the generous supporters of the garden project.

Site OH&S Supervisor Chris Bartlett provided these statistics. The hours spent in construction both on site, off site and equally as important, behind the scenes effort have been calculated and total approximately 1900 man-hours over the three-year planning and construction period. This massive work program has made this program the resounding success it is.

The work and hours of labour have been contributed mainly by club members, volunteers and some trades people. 2021-22 President Doug Craike and Jenny have ensured the concept of the garden becoming a reality. Warwick Mathieson, Geoff Diemar and Doug were powerhouses on site, while Secretary Don Whatham's behind the scenes efforts were vital to the success of the project. Don and Ella Clarke as Presidents in following years enabled the project to be finished.

There were no injuries on site to report to either volunteers or trades people highlighting the respect for OHS requirements. A special thanks for Tomaree Hospital maintenance Manager Brian for advice, assistance and paving the way forward for the project.

Special mention is made of the work of Megan Cooper from Dream Design Landscapes. Megan designed the garden as well as supplying all the native plants which feature in the garden. Megan is a former local having graduated from Nelson Bay High School in 1996. We also acknowledge the work of Coastal Lazer Cutting & Engraving who were able to manufacture the Acknowledgment Plaque to our exact specifications.

The project was completed within the allocated budget with funding from the two grants, donations, work in kind and the balance from Rotary Club of Nelson Bay funds. The project was completed on schedule in time for the official opening by Meryl Swanson MP Federal Member for Paterson on 23 September 2023. The work was completed over three Rotary years under the leadership of Presidents Doug Craike, Don Whatham and Ella Clarke. It brought a great deal of cohesion into our club and will be a wonderful asset to the local hospital and Nelson Bay community.

The Official Opening Ceremony was enjoyed by all. We thank MP Meryl Swanson for performing the official opening and thank our special guests Meryl Swanson MP Member for Paterson, Hon. Kate Washington MP Member for Port Stephens Minister for Families and Communities Minister for Disability Inclusion, Leah Anderson Deputy Mayor Port Stephens Council, Karen Kelly Executive Director Greater Metropolitan Health Service, Louise Lasic General Manager Community & Aged Care Services / Greater Newcastle Sector, Hari Nair CEO Tomaree Community Hospital, Raad Richards Chairman Port Stephens Veterans and Citizens Aged Care and Director Nelson Bay Bowling Club, Suzanne Newton CEO Port Stephens Veterans and Citizens Aged Care, Julie Lister Director Soldiers Point Bowling Club, Sarah Smith & Kym Farr Tomaree Breast Cancer Group, Heath Jones CEO Nelson Bay Real Estate, Megan Cooper Dream Design Landscapes, Beverley Ingham Nelson Bay CWA and Laurie Easter Area Governor Rotary D9660 for their attendance. Guests were treated to a magnificent morning tea provided by the Tomaree Community Hospital Auxiliary following the official proceedings.



Opening Photos Courtesy of Henk Tobbe

