

Rotary Club of Epping Projects

The Terrys Creek Environment Project 2001

*There's a track winding back,
Where there used to be a shack'
Along the banks of Terrys Creek
Where the folks are all working to make the bush clean,
We'll all see a difference, a much better scene.
Rotary leads the way; we're combining work and play
Along the banks of Terrys Creek*

Words by Ken McPhail

Terrys Creek is an important tributary of the Lane Cove River bisecting the Hornsby and Ryde local council areas. The area includes an important remnant of Blue Gum High Forest. In 2001-02 the club organised the construction of a 4km walking track that provides a link from Eastwood station to the Great North Walking Track at Browns Waterhole, Marsfield

PP Graham Stevens, reflects on the background to the project

When I was President Elect in 2000-01 I was looking for a major project for the club. I knew that Terrys creek flowed from Eastwood to Browns Waterhole at Marsfield but could not find any tracks that would allow me to follow the creek line. The area was overgrown, infested with privet and other weeds and largely neglected. The surrounding houses looked away from the bushland and only a few dedicated volunteers were involved in restoring the degraded bushland.

I had been talking with the bushcare groups and how Rotary might be able to assist them, when I saw an advertisement promoting the Work for the Dole scheme. I spoke Ray Burgess a Community Work Coordinator with the group and found that they were looking for local projects. Not only could they provide access to volunteers from the program but they could also provide trained and paid supervisors for any successful project.

Armed with that information I approached both Hornsby and Ryde Councils with a plan to upgrade and link up the existing tracks along Terry's Creek to develop a formal walking track between Vimiera Park Epping and Brown's Waterhole at Marsfield, a distance of about 4kms.

While the councils listened to the proposal they brought forward a number of objections including public liability insurance, lack of funding, reluctance to become involved with the Work for the Dole program without some council oversight and the fact that the creek could be subject to flooding. All of these were valid objections but after talking with the company, Hornsby Council agreed to support the construction of a track from Vimiera Park to the Dence Park swimming pool on the western side of the creek,

a distance of about 1km. It also committed some funding at allow one of their bushcare managers, Mr. Sonny Anderson to oversee the project.”
Graham Stevens

A Pat on back for Rotary

I was recently invited to attend the official opening of the Terry's Creek Rotary Walk in Epping – a scenic walking trail from Vimiera Park to Dence Park which has undergone extensive restoration and bush regeneration work.

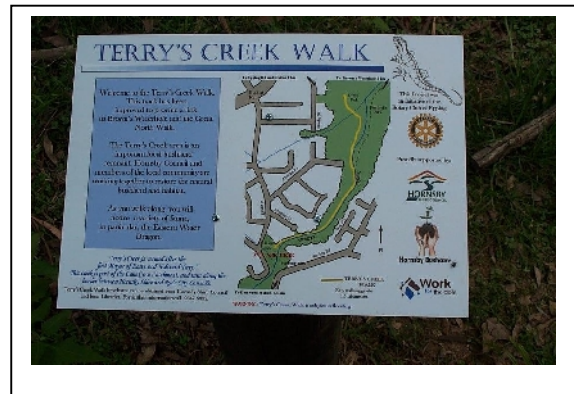
I would like to congratulate Mr Graham Stevens, the President of the Rotary Club of Epping for his tenacity and vision in initiating and undertaking this fantastic project.

A wonderful belief was reaffirmed for me- a belief that one person can make a positive difference and I applaud Mr Stevens and Epping Rotary for the invaluable work they are doing.

As the only formalised walking track through a bushland reserve in the southern most part of the Shire, this project is an incredibly important environmental initiative designed to facilitate the area's sustainable future for all residents to enjoy.

Stage 1 of the project commenced in September 2001. Supervisor Grant Wilson worked with volunteers over a six month period to improve and build the walking track. Epping members organised Community Awareness Days to inform the local residents of the work. The club also arranged for final year Environmental Biology students at UTS to undertake a pollution study of the creek, as a practical field study exercise for their course. Their work was featured in a segment on the children's' TV show *Totally Wild*.

Under the direction of Paul “that was a very wooden performance” Clune, the club made a short video of the project. Filmed by Bob Smeallie, it included interviews with some of the Work for the Role participants as well as Rotarians and was shown at the 2003 District Conference as part of the Community Service presentation.



As the track head was an important crossing point for the Great North Convict Road between Sydney and Newcastle, the club arranged for a plaque to be mounted to record that fact.

The first stage of the track was opened by the then Hornsby Mayor Cr Steven Pringle on 3 March 2002.

Stage 2 of the track which was to be constructed along the eastern bank of the creek proved to be more problematical. While the club had in principle approval for the track from Ryde Council there was reluctance by Council staff to authorise its commencement. The club had secured a further 6 month commitment from the Work for the Dole program and National Parks who controlled the Browns Waterhole end of the track gave their approval. It was decided that “improvement” of the tracks on the eastern side of the creek should



President Ava Emdin and PP Graham Stevens at the opening of

Work progressed until the track was completed and we invited the Mayor of Ryde to open the walking track. That caused a small furore with council staff who pointed out that various planning approvals had not been granted. Nevertheless stage 2 was opened on 21 September 2002. Total cost of the project to Epping Rotary was less than \$2,500 and the community now had a 4 km walking track that linked Eastwood station and the Great North walk.

Epping Rotary maintains its association with the track, participating in the annual Clean Up Australia Day removing accumulated debris along the creek line. In March 2012, the club celebrated the 10th anniversary of the opening of the track, cleaning graffiti from the signage along the track.

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