

2 December 2013

10 year celebrations will bring Gardens to life

A celebration is being held this Friday 6 December to mark the 10th anniversary of the Mount Penang Gardens at Kariong.

To be officially opened by the Minister for the Central Coast, Chris Hartcher, Gosford City Council Mayor Lawrie McKinna and landscape architect Anton James, the celebrations will include free guided garden tours, children's activities, birthday cake and an appearance by Santa. Meet Santa and have your child's or grandchild's photo taken.

Mr Hartcher said Friday's event is a great way to celebrate the Gardens, which feature the best of native Australian flora and touch on Australia's cultural identity.

"The Gardens are home to 100,000 native plant species and include elements that acknowledge our indigenous culture, as well as a striking selection of gardens inspired by other countries," he said.

"Ten years on from its opening in 2003, the Gardens have become a popular oasis and a valuable asset on the Central Coast."

The Mount Penang Gardens are the work of Mr James from JMD Design whose contemporary and whimsical concept saw him win a competition to design the Gardens.

Funded by the NSW Government, the 12 themed gardens that make up the Mount Penang Gardens feature a variety of permanent and changeable gardens modelled around a cascading water feature and outdoor amphitheatre.

Mayor McKinna said since 2004, 12 Wondabyne Stone Sculptures have occupied an area in the Gardens.

"It is great to see the Gardens continue to change and evolve. Having been moved from their original site at the Gosford Quarries, the sculptures are now more readily accessible to community members and are kept safe from vandalism," he said.

To mark the 10 year anniversary, a commemorative tree has been planted in the Wondabyne Stone Sculpture garden. The Coolamon or Rose Apple tree is a rare species that grows up to 18 metres. The tree produces clusters of watermelon-pink gum-like flowers and white fleshy fruit which attract birds and nectar feeding insects to the garden.

Acting General Manager for the Central Coast Regional Development Corporation, Bob Hawes said the anniversary was also a celebration of the volunteers who work at the Gardens.

“The Blue Thumb volunteers are the Gardens’ ambassadors, conducting tours, holiday programs and events, and of course lending a hand with the gardening,” he said.

“I would like to pay tribute to these volunteers, some who have given 10 years of continuous service. The Gardens wouldn’t be the beautiful place it is without its volunteers. Their contribution is very much valued.”

“I encourage locals to come down to the Gardens this Friday to enjoy the range of free activities on offer. With free admission and parking, everyone can come along. “

Community members interested in joining the Blue Thumbs can meet the volunteers on the day and explore the gardens at leisure.

Event details

What: Mt Penang Gardens celebrates 10 years

- Free admission
- Guided garden tours
- Children’s activities
- Birthday cake
- Meet Santa and have your photo taken

Where: Mt Penang Gardens at Mt. Penang Parklands

When: Friday 6 December 2013, 9.00am-11.00am with formalities at 9.30am

Mt Penang Gardens is located 2 minutes off the Gosford exit on the M1, in the Mt Penang Parklands in Kariong. Entry into Mt Penang Gardens is free.

For more information on Mount Penang Gardens visit: <http://www.ccrdc.nsw.gov.au/MtPenangGardens.aspx>.

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For more information and interviews call STEPHANIE PROUSE on 0477 726 490.