

Building connection to community and culture

11 NOVEMBER 2023

More than 50 members of the South Sea Islander community gathered on the Tweed Valley Hospital site on 11 November to place the final stones on the drystone walls for a new park on the hospital campus.

Acting General Manager for The Tweed Hospital, Adam Reid said the South Sea Islander Reflection Park was designed in close consultation with the community; and is dedicated to recognising the history of the South Sea Islander people, and their connection to the hospital site.

“This park has truly been designed by the community; from the concept of the nautilus shell shape, the inscription in the paving and the map of the South Sea Islands in the central plaque, as well as the selection of plant species,” Mr. Reid said.

“Many individuals have shared their family histories and experiences with us, and these stories have been collated to create an information panel that tells the history of the hospital site, as well as the connection of the South Sea Islander community to it. “

The park space features two drystone walls, which have been constructed using stones from walls within the hospital development area that were disassembled, with the stones archived and stored on the site until the park design was complete.

Tim Mason, Senior Project Director for Health Infrastructure said, “We understand the significance of drystone walls to the South Sea Islander community. It was very important to the team that we consult with the community to understand how they wanted to reinterpret the stones on the hospital site”.

“These new walls frame a beautiful park space for all hospital visitors to enjoy and represent an ongoing connection between the South Sea Islander community and the hospital site,” Mr. Mason said.

After laying the stones, the community were invited to have a birds-eye view of the park area from upper levels of the main hospital building, showcasing the unique design to its fullest extent. The event concluded with a joyful traditional dance in the park.

The community organisations in attendance commented that it was truly satisfying to see the project come to life after three years of extensive community consultations.

“The South Sea Islander Reflection Park will honour our SSI history and acknowledge the dedication and lasting influence of our island ancestors.

“We are thrilled to be a part of something that future generations can cherish”.

“An amazing tribute to our ancestors”.

The South Sea Islander Reflection Park is located near the front entry to the hospital campus and will be accessible to all visitors to the hospital when it opens to patients on 12 May 2024.



