



The National Rock Garden's Federation Rocks prior to re-location to the new NRG site

## UPDATE ON NATIONAL ROCK GARDEN IN CANBERRA – October 2021

The Steering Committee has made substantial progress on the delivery of the National Rock Garden (NRG) Project. Our NRG rocks will be moved from several current temporary sites in the ACT into a prime position within the National Arboretum Canberra (NAC) under an agreement for a ten-year plus placement, which was executed between the ACT Government and the NRG Board on 4<sup>th</sup> June 2021.

The new site brings with it major benefits and advantages, including the following attributes:

- We are enthusiastically welcomed to the new site by the executive team at the Arboretum, who will provide expert guidance in planning, construction and communicating the goals of the Rock Garden. Both institutions are closely aligned in their key objective to be world class educational facilities and there are potential synergies between our ongoing development plans.
- We gain access to essential facilities for the public (especially for visits by school groups) such as parking, restrooms and refreshments. The new site is an easy walk from the Visitor Centre where tourists can get coffees, meals and souvenirs as well as a wonderful view over Canberra.
- We will now be able to achieve faster development of the Project, with existing infrastructure including access roads and car parking, and greater security for the exhibits, providing a visual demonstration to attract greater funding opportunities to achieve our vision.
- The NRG will be part of a high profile site that receives around 700,000 visitors per year, one of the three most popular tourist attractions in the ACT, including some 30,000 school students in facilitated programs.
- The site has much greater visibility because it is on the main entrance road to the Visitor Centre at the National Arboretum, as well as enhanced publicity and promotion directly through the Arboretum, and also through funding recently acquired for an upgraded website.
- Our new site is directly adjacent to the Southern Tablelands Environmental Park which is an attractive visitor destination in itself.

We are keen to bring in additional rocks, each with an interesting and informative story (such as our attractive fossil-rich Chinaman Creek Limestone from Queensland at the right), with a view to a public opening of a “proof-of-concept” display of around 30-40 rocks in 2022.

We retain our initial goal to bring in over 100 rocks to the NRG. This will require substantial financial support for the transportation of large rocks from interstate. The initial 30-40 rocks will allow us to demonstrate the tourism and educational potential of the Rock Garden, stimulating both corporate and individual support in coming years.





The red triangle shows the new location of the NRG in relation to the main entry road (Forest Drive), the Village Centre and parking (P) within the National Arboretum Canberra

**Right: Uplift of an eleven tonne block of Tarana Granite (the rock in the lower half of Sydney Opera House) in preparation for transportation towards the ACT**



The NRG has recently received a private donation of \$15,000 to fund the design of the pathways and the rock cluster layout at the new location which has been contracted to a Canberra group of Landscape Architects. This example of family support complements our general reliance on contributions directly associated with the delivery of rocks from interstate and their preparation for display. We are very encouraged by our fundraising success in the past six months, whereby we have received three pledges for donations specifically tied to the delivery of important rock specimens from Temora and from Broken Hill in NSW and from Geraldton in WA.

The benefits afforded to our financial supporters include the following:

- 1) The NRG holds DGR status and will issue a receipt from the Trust Fund which will satisfy the Australian Taxation Office for a claim of a tax deduction for every contribution.
- 2) The Steering Committee will establish a public display of the names of donors who have contributed \$10,000 or more to the National Rock Garden, located at the site, and in a form to be confirmed in the future.
- 3) There will be public recognition of larger donations on the plaque attached to the rock in the Rock Garden.
- 4) There will be recognition of donors on the NRG website, and also on the web-based technical description of the rock which will be accessed by the QR Code on the plaque.

For further information in regard to technical or financial contributions, please contact the following directors of the National Rock Garden: Professor Brad Pillans (Mobile 0427-662-112) or Mr Mike Smith (Mobile 0411-103-761).