

LOVE

TIONA PARK

a new future begins



Background

After many years of running Tiona Park as a campground and caravan park, Community of Christ realised it needed to create an alternative option in order to maintain and develop it for the future. In 2003 Tiona Park was leased to Sundowner, who developed and ran the Park for 14 years. In November 2017 the lease was sold and transferred to Southern Cross Parks (SCP). SCP then ran the Park until December 2019 when the lease was sold and transferred to new and current holders, Tiona Investments, and at the same time a new lease was negotiated and signed. Tiona Investments is a company established by Rob Jeffress, who is a local business owner and entrepreneur with decades of experience in the tourism and accommodation sector, and who lives for much of the year at Boomerang Beach. This recent history is important to establish as it paints a picture for the complexity and possibilities for this sacred place we've known for nearly 100 years.

Lease and Relationship

With a new lease in place, the relationship with Tiona Investments is off to a wonderful start. The learnings we've gained over the past 20 years have ensured clear communication and a joint vision for Tiona are central to its success, guaranteeing it is a place of value for the community and for our movement. With a certain investment horizon, Tiona Investments have embarked on a development plan which has been accelerated during the Covid-19 pandemic. This plan includes more cabins, Wi-Fi connectivity, upgrades to cabins (including air-conditioning, larger front decks, furniture upgrades, painting) and the Conference Centre. Community of Christ also has obligations for maintenance of our buildings, and we are undertaking work including the Lake House, Conference Centre, services infrastructure, the pool area and various other minor maintenance. These works have impacted the church financially, however, we believe this investment will return a positive impact to both our finances and our events at Tiona in the long term. Quarterly meetings of a joint Management Committee have and will ensure ongoing cooperation and communication is at the forefront of the relationship.

Update from Margaret*

All our efforts have been reflected in the new branding for the park - our message to our guests, our staff, our community is to "Find Your Space". We want people to be able to explore the natural environment around the park and discover new spaces; to relax or play in the different spaces the park has to offer; and to connect with nature, each other and themselves. In this, we see what we do as mirroring the Community of Christ's priorities of community, relationships, and spiritual balance by providing a space that facilitates this, and also offers physical "soul food".

Last week saw the completion of what could be a real game-changer for the park - we are now connected via wi-fi! The ability for guests and visitors to have the option of being able to maintain connection with the outside world, being able to share their adventures and thoughts in real time and access information and work remotely has already been well received and will lead to increased occupancy going forward.

All of our ensuite cabins now have split systems installed, giving us warm cabins in winter and cool in summer, and the Beach Spa balconies have been transformed with the addition of spacious balconies that we have no doubt will be popular with families entertaining in summer. The team are working their way through the other cabins with remediation and skirting, and it will be great to see a consistent and professionally presented cabin precinct by the end of the year.

The cabin precinct [on the beach side, around the 'loop'] will be rounded off with the addition of four new cabins, three of which are arriving next week. This adds vital roofed accommodation to meet demand generated by groups and weddings and is more user friendly than having sites in between cabins. The one on the beachside which has already arrived has been affectionately dubbed "The Nest" - there are lots of surprises coming with this one, and the private location combined with planned interior upgrades will make this a couples retreat that will have everyone wanting to book a romantic weekend getaway.

*Margaret Shannon, General Manager at Tiona Holiday Park, took over management in December 2019. Margaret has nearly 20 years' experience in the holiday park industry, including park management, events and marketing

Tiona Chapel update

The development has been very challenging, and a significant amount of work has been done in the past 18 months. MidCoast Council have issued construction consent for both stages. Application to MidCoast Council for issue of a Practical Completion Certificate has been submitted for stage 1, the carpark and associated infrastructure connecting to services.

There have been some major delays onsite, with the NSW bushfire situation late in 2019 causing an immediate shutdown of work as there were no trades available. This was then followed by a series of rain and flood events and the Covid-19 pandemic causing significant disruption to the remaining planning and development. That being said, work has progressed, and attention is now moving to the actual Chapel building, stage 2, with engineering and the development of working drawings to commence soon. At this stage it is likely that building works will commence early 2021.

Tiona Chapel Fundraising

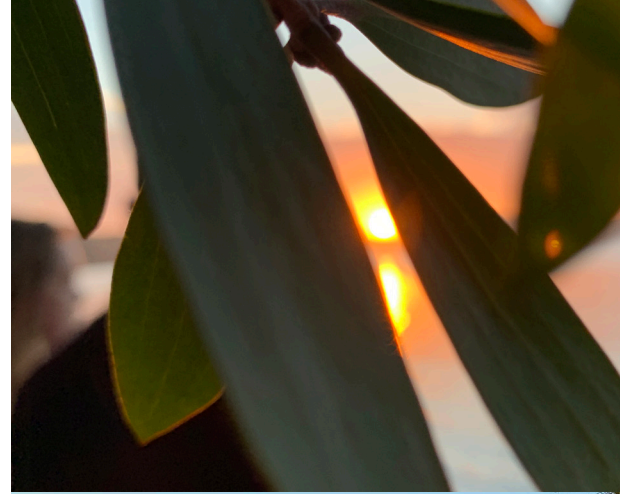
The fundraising effort was re-launched at National Gathering in August 2018, with a goal as a community to raise \$700,000. To June 30, 2020, we have raised a total of approximately \$338,000, which means we're close to half-way of our goal! We still need to raise over \$360,000 from the community to reach our goal, which is no small task! We need your help to continue to make our collective dream a reality.

Vision

The vision for the Tiona Chapel is coming to life. Details of what will happen there and who will do the tasks are still being formed, however, what we know is that its purpose will be to share our message that all things are sacred, all people are worthy, and that when lived out with love and joy, our lives form a tapestry of peace and hope for our communities. The Tiona Chapel will be a signal to the wider community that harmony begins with centering ourselves - with God, ourselves and each other.

Future

While our near future with Covid19 is challenging to forecast, we know there will always be the need for a space in the community to gather and reflect. Australia (and the world) has garnered significant insight over the past 4-6 months about what matters most, and community, relationships and spiritual balance are high on that list. We also know that 'church' as we know it has shifted, and a new reality is being born within us to explore how the Spirit of God works in our lives. It's an invitation to understanding and to think more deeply about our purpose as human beings in connection with each other.



Images by Anne Bonnefin

