

Australian Tidy Towns 2011 Program Report

Community: NEW NORFOLK Tasmania **Date judged:** 15 & 16 Nov 2010

Population: approx 6 500

Organisers: NEW NORFOLK community in partnership with Derwent Valley Council (DVC)

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COMMUNITY ACTION/PARTNERSHIPS

One of the oldest settlements in Australia, NEW NORFOLK was established in an environment of outstanding natural beauty more than 200 years ago.

Partnerships have been a cornerstone of the community since the first settlers arrived from Norfolk Island in 1807. The community looks after its own and achieves much through cooperative efforts and partnerships.

Great example is Tynwald Park, originally a hopfield, which has been progressively developed by the Lions Club and Derwent Valley Council to become a premier recreation area.

The most recent development is an award-winning educational bike track with roundabout, cross roads, intersections, traffic lights and a pedestrian crossing. This facility typifies how council and community work in partnership with supporters and sponsors, including Norske Skog Boyer, Timber Communities Australia, the Lions Club, Tasmanian Community Fund and the Federal Government.

The Derwent Valley Tidy Towns Committee have to be congratulated on their role in encouraging and guiding the community in ensuring NEW NORFOLK community confidently deals with the challenges that lay ahead.

A successful partnership between the active community and Derwent Valley Council is a testament to the numerous Tidy Towns-related tasks evident throughout the town. The alliance plays a coordinating role for numerous projects within the community.

Outstanding gardens at Corumbene Nursing Home have been created and maintained by a volunteer community gardening group, creating a pleasant environment for residents to enjoy.

The home's exterior resembles the style of an oast house in keeping with the region's cultural and historical connection with the hop growing industry.

The interior uniquely features a streetscape theme by using recycled buildings and original hop picker's huts. The actual residents' rooms are of modern design.

LITTER PREVENTION

Litter prevention initiatives are proactive throughout the district. The Tidy Towns Committee and Council have installed numerous cigarette butt bins in the central business district and doggy bag bins on the town's main walking track.

Local Molesworth Primary School reduces litter by having students take their leftover food and wrappers home. Scraps from adults and students visiting the adjacent Molesworth Environment Education Centre are used to feed the centre's worm farms. The worms are either sold for fundraising or used in the school's vegetable patch.

Senior students at Glenora District High School use permanent-markers to write names of purchasers on food packaging brought from the school canteen. Students who do not dispose of their rubbish properly can be easily identified and have their canteen privileges suspended if necessary.

RESOURCE RECOVERY & WASTE MANAGEMENT

Resource recovery initiatives are a feature of NEW NORFOLK's commitment to waste minimisation.

Recycling initiatives have been practiced in the town for more than a decade, with weekly household recycling collections and a recycling centre at the Peppermint Hill waste management site.

This has been enhanced by the establishment of Peppermint Eco Recovery, a private enterprise with positive environmental and employment outcomes.

The business salvages reusable items from the landfill site and offers them for sale at their retail centre situated in the town.

Molesworth Primary School students sort items from their local recycling centre for reuse at the Peppermint Eco Recovery facility. They also actively reuse and recycle all paper used in the school, and turn newspapers into 'bricks' for use in woodheaters.

The community also participates in the Mobile Muster program. With collection boxes placed at various locations around the district, residents also participate in other national efforts such as Christmas card recycling, etc.

ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION & INNOVATION

The preservation of the environment is important to the NEW NORFOLK community for the benefit of residents and the numerous tourists who visit and pass through each year.

Living on the edge of the South-West World Heritage Area, the community has a longstanding awareness of the need for innovation and protection of the environment.

Derwent Valley Council has installed stormwater gross pollutant traps which remove 900kg of litter and 5 000kg of sediment each year.

Types of pollutants captured are monitored and provide community education through local schools and community groups and coordinated by Council's Natural Resource Management officer.

Vacant fields adjoining the town's wastewater treatment plant were converted into artificial wetlands bringing both high praise and increased birdlife. Council was also involved in the co-operative purchase and preservation of the adjacent Murphy's Flat wetlands.

The Norske Skog Boyer newsprint mill is the town's largest employer and has invested broadly in environmental initiatives not only within its own business but throughout the district.

Derwent Valley Council, through its Natural Resource Officer, has partnered with a number of organisations including Norske Skog, Derwent Estuary Program and Parks and Wildlife Service in the eradication of weeds.

The Derwent Estuary Program is a regional partnership between the Tasmanian State Government, local governments, commercial and industrial enterprises, and community-based groups. The partnership restores and promotes the estuary as well as reduces water pollution, conserves habitats and species, monitors river health and promotes greater use and enjoyment of the foreshore.

WATER CONSERVATION

As with many communities around Australia, the need for conserving water is a major priority in NEW NORFOLK. With a major river running through the town, residents are extremely aware of the need to conserve this precious resource.

Despite having access to the town water supply, the NEW NORFOLK Scout Group has installed a 5 000 litre rainwater tank for use in flushing toilets and cleaning of facilities and equipment.

Molesworth Primary School received a \$20 000 grant to install rainwater tanks, water timers and dual-flush toilets throughout the school. Water is also processed through the enviro-cycle treatment systems and used to irrigate the oval.

ENERGY INNOVATION

Local tomato grower, Cracknell Enterprises has replaced a number of out dated glasshouses with a single state-of-the-art glasshouse - 4 000 square metres of glass to capture the sun's goodness. Thermal screens come over at night reducing heating costs.

The new glasshouse provides a totally controlled growing environment, with expectations of 50kg of tomatoes produced per square metre.

Tomatoes are now grown almost year round - an improvement on the former two crops per year.

This innovation has dramatically reduced energy use and product waste.

HERITAGE & CULTURE

Maintaining NEW NORFOLK's proud heritage is important to residents. Heritage restoration is a major priority with many fine examples of the preservation of cultural and historic features.

The town specialises in antiques where you can find anything from Australian colonial furniture and Georgian silver to Art Deco treasures.

Recently celebrating the town's bicentenary, it has a rich built and cultural heritage of which the community is most proud.

Great example includes the Back River Cemetery, where an historic colonial graveyard from 1837 received a makeover to improve access to the grave of Betty King, the first white woman to set foot on Australian soil.

Several other First-Fleeters are interred in the same cemetery. The project brought together the church community, Chamber of Commerce, Lions Club and council.

Hops were established at NEW NORFOLK in 1846 and remain one of the Derwent Valley's most important industries, supplying about 90 per cent of Australia's needs.

The Bush Inn has continually held its licence since 1825, an Australian record.

The NEW NORFOLK Historical Information Centre preserves and promotes the region's rich history, and the Derwent Valley Railway Preservation Society works tirelessly towards re-establishing tourist rail operations from NEW NORFOLK.

YOUNG LEGENDS

D'FAT (Derwent Valley Youth Future Action Team) is the Derwent Valley Council's youth advisory group. It meets regularly to advise council on youth issues and concerns and develops activities and projects to engage with young people.

Noteable examples and successes include:

- Refurbishing a recreational reserve – the Ellis Dean Reserve.
- Establishing a new children's playground, shelter and picnic table.
- Established a mural in partnership with students from NEW NORFOLK High School.
- Establishing a BMX bike track with dirt jumps in consultation with BMX bike riders.
- Establishing a portable legal graffiti wall after consultations with graffiti artists, mainly young people illegally conducting graffiti activities and the police.
- Obtaining funding from the Tasmanian Community Fund to establish a public BBQ area and extend the playground at Ellis Dean Reserve
- Organising a graffiti art workshop in partnership with NEW NORFOLK High School. Workshops were held with professional graffiti artists who assisted students to develop and refine their techniques and develop their own art portfolios. The artists worked with identified students to formulate designs and then transfer these designs onto a legal graffiti wall in Ellis Dean Reserve.

A great example of the NEW NORFOLK community working together for a common cause.

SUGGESTIONS

If not already in place, NEW NORFOLK's great achievement as being Tasmania's Tidiest Town for 2011 could be promoted on Council materials, together with local businesses encouraged to market the town's award on promotional brochures, etc.

Entry statements are an ideal way to attract new visitors to a community. NEW NORFOLK has a proud heritage and consideration may be appropriate regarding interpretation of that history. Involving the community in the design may also provide an opportunity to engage in public participation.

NEW NORFOLK's well established school system is available for a formal network of teachers to share ideas, initiatives and improvements at regular meetings. A school rep(s) may also be encouraged to join as a member of the Tidy Towns Committee.

Council and the community may wish to consider the concept of a by-pass to protect the amenity of NEW NORFOLK and reduce the impact of heavy vehicles that currently pass through the town generating pollution and potential damage to historic buildings.

Congratulations to everyone involved in the NEW NORFOLK's Tidy Towns program and associated community action projects.

Good luck with future initiatives in helping to keep your part of Australia sustainable.

*Dick Olesinski
National Tidy Towns judge*