

All abilities playground

Work is about to start on the new All Abilities Playground at Riverway, bringing a year's work to fruition in a creative, fun-filled environment.

The facility is being jointly funded with \$200,000 from the State Government and \$340,000 from Townsville City Council.

The playground will feature pebble mosaics, totem poles, turtle and dragonfly features, story boards, a sensory garden and musical instruments.

The design has been finalised after a series of public workshops and input from the Umbrella Network, a group of parents of children with disabilities, children themselves, and health professionals.

But it's not too late to get involved. Residents can take part in painting workshops, planting days and other creative hands-on activities.

To register, contact the Customer Service Centre on 4727 9000.

Swimming legends return for rededication of Hall of Champions

Australian swimming greats Dawn Fraser and Laurie Lawrence returned to Townsville in May to visit the public pool that helped them make history.

Fraser and Lawrence were guests of honour at a rededication of the Hall of Champions at the Tobruk Memorial Baths, which was operated by Lawrence's father, Stumpy, and used as a winter training venue by the Australian swimming squads for the 1952, 1956 and 1960 Olympics.

Before becoming a gold-medal coach and learn-to-swim crusader, Lawrence grew up alongside Olympic swimming champions such as Forbes Carlisle, Murray Rose, Lorraine Crapp, Jon Henricks and Fraser.

These swimmers, along with 100 others, have been memorialised in a substantial refurbishment of a historical display set up for the Sydney Olympics in 2000.

Townsville Mayor Cr Les Tyrell rededicated the Hall of Champions and said the panels told three important stories: the evolution of Australian swimming from 1952-64, the



Tobruk Pool patron Veda Crossley learns more about Townsville's brush with the Olympics at the Hall of Champions.

noted swimmers who had used Tobruk Memorial Baths, and the contribution of the pool to their success.

"The Hall of Fame builds upon the good work carried out in 2000. With joint funding from

the State Government we've been able to digitally conserve the images, expand the accompanying text, repaint the venue, improve the lighting and replace the trophy cabinets," he said.

Townsville Parks and Gardens – something for everybody

Where can you enjoy a workout, entertain the dog, learn more about local botanics, amuse the kids, or ponder the meaning of life? Townsville's more than 200 parks, gardens and open spaces, that's where!

Townsville's fortunate to have the spectacular precincts of Riverway and The Strand, but there are sure to be other parks and recreation facilities near your home, just waiting to be explored. Winter is the perfect time to venture a little further and find a new green space to make your own.

If you are an avid gardener, why not visit the city's three botanic gardens—Anderson Gardens, Queens Gardens and the Palmetum—which are each unique in character, housing fine collections of tropical vegetation in spacious surroundings. Dan Gleeson Memorial Gardens also presents a wonderful botanical collection and amenity for residents and visitors alike. Allow yourself several hours to wander through the gardens – all have picnic areas and public toilets, so why not plan an outing that will allow you to appreciate all the botanic gardens have to offer?

The recently launched 10,000

Steps pathways have added to the range of free exercise options in the city. They are located within Anderson Gardens, from Rowes Bay to Pallarenda, and both upstream and downstream from Aplins Weir. You can take advantage of the council's free pedometer hire program (from any CityLibrary branch) and step out with purpose to achieve your healthy steps quota.

Townsville boasts seven off leash areas for dogs, spread across the city, so why not undertake a boredom buster tour with your pooch – seven parks in seven weeks! Each facility is slightly different and your pet will thank you for the change of scenery.

Winter is also the time for weddings in Townsville, and the city's parks and gardens are increasingly attractive as the location of choice for couples. More than 350 ceremonies are held in Townsville's parklands each year, with seven sites along The Strand

proving extremely popular. Other sites available for ceremonies include Riverside Gardens, Dan Gleeson Memorial Gardens, Magnetic Island, Riverway, Queens Gardens, Anderson Gardens and The Palmetum. Contact the Customer Service Centre or visit the website to find out more about locations, hire fees and conditions.

City Update will review individual parks in upcoming issues, but you can visit the website anytime to review the city's parks and gardens. Our outdoor lifestyle is one of the most cited benefits of living in Townsville—it boasts such an array of parks, gardens and open spaces. There are sure to be several that will become your own personal favourites.

Theresa and Justin Silver chose to have their wedding photographs taken in the picturesque Queens Gardens in September 2008.

Photo courtesy of Mirage Photography

