

MEDIA RELEASE

The Hon Frank Terenzini

Minister for Housing

Minister for Small Business

Minister Assisting the Premier on Veterans' Affairs



Friday 29th October 2010

State Government Backs Future of Cowra Japanese Garden

The Keneally Government today announced a business plan has been commissioned in a bid to guarantee the future of Cowra's Japanese Garden and Cultural Centre.

Minister Assisting the Premier on Veterans Affairs Frank Terenzini said it's vitally important this landmark garden memorial is not only preserved, but given the resources it needs to maximise the visitor experience.

"This garden is a unique symbol of the enduring partnership between New South Wales and Japan and provides a focus for local tourism as well as cultural exchange.

"The City of Cowra is a key focus of this partnership, having experienced wartime tragedy on its doorstep.

Minister Terenzini visited the graves of the four Australian guards killed during the Cowra breakout in August 1944 and laid a wreath in tribute to their heroism.

"This was a unique event in Australia's military history and has had a big influence on Cowra's identity.

"But where animosity once existed against the Japanese here, there is now a universal respect.

"Over the years friendships have bloomed and this Garden and Cultural Centre are now a tangible expression of the remarkable bond that's developed between the people of Cowra and Japan, Mr Terenzini said.

Mr Don Kibbler AM, the founder and builder of the Centre, welcomed Minister Terenzini in his capacity of Chair of the Cowra Japanese Garden Foundation.

"It is vital that the Garden and Cultural Centre retains its reputation as a pre-eminent example of Japanese history and culture, Mr Kibbler said.

Cowra Shire Mayor Bill West also welcomed the NSW Government's ongoing commitment to the Garden and Cultural Centre.

"I am pleased that our partnership with the NSW Government continues, with Cowra Shire Council and the Cowra Tourism Corporation working closely with the NSW Office for Veterans' Affairs to shortly establish a fund to draw wider community and business support to the Centre, Mayor West said.

Mr Terenzini said the business analysis will be undertaken by Mr Peter Loxton, a former senior NSW public servant who recently completed for the Premier a similar, successful review of the ANZAC Memorial Building in Hyde Park Sydney.

“Mr Loxton will advise on appropriate governance structures for the Centre and the resources it requires.

Media Contact: Darren Rodrigo - 0414 783 405