

Steampunk Art & Drinking Fountain Unveiled in Foster

Foster has a new art installation in its main street. A drinking fountain and sculpture all in one, that celebrates our water and water network infrastructure. The Steampunk Water Maze is the creation of local artist David Bell, well known for his 'Raising the Rattler Pole' a full-scale replica of a W Class 'Rattler' Tram upended at the corner of Spencer and Flinders Streets in Melbourne and 'The Nest' in Darebin Parklands.

Local community members and the Foster Chamber of Commerce approached South Gippsland Water looking for a drinking fountain to be installed in Foster. A MOU agreement in place between South Gippsland Shire Council and South Gippsland Water has made the project possible.

The Steampunk Water Maze is the first combined art fountain piece for South Gippsland Water and has come about after some innovative thinking. Managing Director for South Gippsland Water, Philippe du Plessis said, "When the MOU team realised that the cost of purchasing an 'off the shelf' public drinking fountain was quite high, they started looking at alternate options. With South Gippsland Shire funding the refurbishment of the laneway in Foster and street-scape works in 2018, it made sense for this fountain to also add to the aesthetic of the area and not merely provide a drinking fountain".

"The Steampunk Water Maze has been installed for the same cost as purchase and delivery of a stock standard stainless steel fountain"

Designed to intrigue the viewer, whilst offering fresh, clean drinking water as a reward. The piece features interactive elements such as valves and levers that create a puzzle that can't be solved. A strong water theme, with a collection of vintage water equipment, some of which has been sourced from South Gippsland Water's archives and the decommissioned water treatment plants at Korumburra and Poowong.

South Gippsland Shire and South Gippsland Water are united in our desire to encourage people to drink tap water, reduce consumption of sugary drinks, reduce plastic waste and enhance the liveability of our local region. It is hoped that locals and visitors alike will enjoy the clean, fresh water sourced from the rolling green hills of South Gippsland.

This project could not have been made possible without support from South Gippsland Shire Council, Foster Chamber of Commerce, South Gippsland Water and the Choose Tap Coalition.

[Image 1] The Steampunk Water Maze now installed in Foster's Main Street laneway.

[Image 2] – L:R: Amy Van Kuyk South Gippsland Water, Vicki Bradly South Gippsland Shire Council and artist David Bell celebrating at the fountain.

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