MEDIA RELEASE

AIDS GARDEN OF REFLECTION FUNDING GOAL CLOSER

The realisation of a permanent AIDS memorial in the National Capital is nearing with the ACT AIDS Action Council working hard to reach its fundraising target of $125,000 for the AIDS Garden of Reflection at the National Arboretum.

Personal donations from AIDS Action Council Patron John Mackay, community groups and other donors including the Snow Foundation currently total $95,000 leaving a shortfall of just $30,000 still to be raised.

"We are so grateful to the community for its generosity in supporting this important initiative," said AIDS Action Council Executive Director Philippa Moss.

"We could never have imagined raising this sort of money and now we are so close, the dream is almost a reality," Ms Moss said.

The 500sqm AIDS Garden of Reflection will be located adjacent to the Margaret Whitlam Pavilion in the Arboretum's Gallery of Gardens, a series of seven connected gardens to be developed on the Events Terrace. It has been designed by renowned Melbourne-based John Patrick Landscape Architects, who have worked previously on projects in Yarralumla and Old Parliament House.

Snow Foundation CEO Georgina Byron said: "Throughout the world memorials such as this help to forge links between the generations, those who have lost a loved one and those who experience HIV.

"The space will provide, in perpetuity, a place of reflection so that the lives of people who have died from HIV and AIDS are not forgotten and their story is known by future generations.

"The garden is not only about remembrance and reflection but also about inspiration and action. Most memorials are built after the struggle is over; but there is no cure for HIV, people continue to be at risk and we need to work together to eliminate HIV in our community," Ms Byron said.

Canberrans have another opportunity to support fundraising for the AIDS Garden of Reflection this Thursday 11 August at an evening to remember the founder of Canberra's Interchange General Practice and HIV/AIDS campaigner Dr Peter Rowland, who was killed 20 years ago.

"We invite everyone to join us in this important community fundraising initiative and enjoy a great variety of local wine, craft beer and delicious canapes. Thanks to the generosity of King O'Malley's, all proceeds raised will go towards the AIDS Garden of Reflection," Ms Moss said.

Tickets can be purchased at www.peterrowland.eventbrite.com.au

More information on the AIDS Garden of Reflection can be found at: www.aidsgardenact.com.au
More information on the Snow Foundation can be found at: www.snowfoundation.org.au

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