

MEDIA RELEASE

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Community shares rich history of Beswick through heritage trail

The unique Indigenous and pastoral histories of the Beswick region will be shared with visitors to the Roper Gulf region after an interactive heritage trail was officially opened on July 6.

The push to create the 1.6-kilometre trail was led by Roper Gulf Regional Council after its Beswick Local Authority identified it as a potential community engagement project several years ago, and oral histories and information sourced from the Northern Territory Library have been used to create signage that tells the story of the establishment of Beswick Station, and the settling of local Indigenous families in the area.

Set among picturesque paperbark trees, the trail loops around a waterlily-filled billabong and lets visitors learn more about the remnants of the station that shaped the structural aesthetic of Beswick as it stands today.

Almost 100 Beswick residents converged on the community's iconic Sidney Williams hut to watch Member for Arnhem Selena Uibo cut the ribbon spanning the trail.

Ms Uibo praised the Council's municipal services team and Community Development Program participants, whose work creating the trail has ensured Beswick's cultural and historical past has been preserved, and linked to the natural landscape.

"I think the trail is important, because the community has the pride to be able to share those stories and to pass them on," she said.

"You can see there's been a lot of work done on the trail.

"Having that local story and local knowledge being able to be shared with more than just the community is great."

Mayor Tony Jack attended the opening and said keeping the stories of the Roper Gulf region alive was something the Council had thrown its full support behind.

"This history is very important to the Beswick community, so Council is happy to have worked with the Local Authority and residents to record these stories in a way everyone who visits can learn about," he said.

“I’d like to see more projects like this across the region, because they help to promote cultural tourism that benefits our communities.”

The Beswick Heritage Trail was funded through a Federal Government Community Heritage Program Grant.

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For further information, please contact the Communications Coordinator on 0427 674 212 or at roper.governance@ropergulf.nt.gov.au.