

# How we started

## BACKGROUND

Tomaree Headland Heritage Group Inc.

**In early 2019 a number of community groups (9) came together to form 'The Friends of Tomaree Headland'**

representing organisations from business, tourism, community, historical and environmental groups, who subsequently prepared a **Vision Document** for the future of the Tomaree Headland.

**In June 2020, the organisation developed a more formal structure and became 'The Tomaree Headland Heritage Group Inc.'**

In developing a **Vision Document**, the Group felt that it was particularly important that the **natural and heritage features of the Tomaree Headland are recognised and identified** which will form the basis for a major interpretation investment, particularly making use of the existing Tomaree Lodge Heritage site infrastructure which is bounded by the beautiful pristine waters of Port Stephens.

The Group also envisages a coordinated oversight involving the **key elements** of the Headland which would include recognising, restoring, preserving, and **interpreting the history, particularly military, Worimi and Marine as well as enhancing the natural environment and tourism opportunities.**

Many creative proposals for use of the Tomaree Lodge Heritage site have emerged from the Community since involvement of the Tomaree Headland Heritage Group Inc. including the potential for a major **Interpretive/Museum/Marine Centre particularly based on our Cultural and World WarII heritage.**

Also there will be the opportunity to **reinstate the Public Jetty** with a pontoon which will **enhance the use of Public Transport** and the appeal and accessibility to the Tomaree Headland with its breath taking views and the panoramic Tomaree Coastal Walk winding through the Tomaree National Park.

The Tomaree Headland Heritage Group Inc. has also been well aware of the impending relocation of the Tomaree Lodge residents allowing the nine (9) hectare site to be available for the Community and will accordingly play an integral role in the future of the iconic Tomaree Headland. **The commitment from the NSW Government with the support of the NSW Government opposition to retain the Tomaree Lodge Heritage site in public ownership is very positive** for the future of the site and Port Stephens.

At the same time, the State Government has provided a \$6.7million commitment to the substantial **upgrade of the Tomaree Coastal Walk from Tomaree Headland to Birubi Beach**, taking in panoramic views over the Pacific Ocean and rugged topography of the Tomaree National Park with its extensive historical elements – extending for approximately 23km's and planned for completion in 2024.

Major upgrades of tracks and interpretation are planned for this important Tourism project with substantial focus on the upgrade and interpretation of the Tomaree Headland. There is already an extensive array of extremely popular walking and hiking tracks traversing the Tomaree Headland.

**The Tomaree Headland Heritage Group Inc. believe there is the potential to transform the Tomaree Headland into a ‘Nationally Significant Visitor Attraction’ which could, at the same time, protect and showcase the natural and heritage assets with the support of Community participation and an appropriate Masterplan.**