

Official Opening of Court Nine 1 Dec 2012



The weather Gods smiled on the occasion selected for the official opening of our newest, and most likely our last, tennis court – court nine. A small crowd gathered on the new lawn under the shade of the flowering Poinciana trees to hear our President Ian Somers welcome the State Member for Cleveland Mark Robinson and Federal Member for Bowman Andrew Laming to help celebrate the special occasion with us.

Court Nine is the last piece of a jigsaw that has been 10 years in the making. Many of our current members may not even recall what our centre looked like a decade ago, but let me assure you, it was a lot different to the one we enjoy today... rusting fences, a very modest clubhouse with comparatively primitive amenities, eight courts in a different configuration to what we currently have, and an energy-inefficient lighting system that kept many of our neighbours awake at night.



Mark Robinson MP, Member for Cleveland

However, we should not forget that our centre was built in a different era. It was built and maintained largely by volunteers and funded solely by the proceeds of the tennis activities and many a chook raffle. Its agricultural heritage is still in evidence today if you look closely at the recycled irrigation pipes that make up the fence posts around our southern perimeter.

Today we have a modern facility which is the envy of most other community tennis centres in south-east Queensland and understandably there is no shortage of interest in playing tennis here. The additional court has already helped relieve some of the pressure on existing facilities allowing greater participation at peak times, whether that be more teams playing in competition events, or just coaching and casual tennis activities for the wider community at the same time as regular tennis fixtures.

But such facilities should never be taken for granted. We must first acknowledge and thank the State Government for sharing our vision and contributing around 75% of the monies required to build Court Nine. They have also been very supportive in contributing to much of the redevelopment of our centre over the past 10 years.

I would also like to thank Krissie Dickman, the Sport and Recreation Coordinator from Redland City Council who helped guide us through the official planning process over the past five years or so to ensure that our lease area could accommodate the new court and received local Government approval.

I would also like to acknowledge of the invaluable role that our fellow member and resident architect Shane Keeffe has played in ensuring that the planning and project management was all carried out in a very professional manner and with a touch of flair.

In official opening the new court, Mark Robinson unveiled an appropriate plaque and cut a ceremonial ribbon with the help of two long-time stalwarts of the RLTA in our Patron Lena Bandiera and Court Caretaker Keith Collyer.



From left to right: Keith Collyer, Mark Robinson & Lena Bandiera

With the official duties out of the way, our Mark Robinson and Andrew Laming showed that their skills were not just confined to political duties and participated in a celebrity tennis match with two of our club celebrities - coaches Damian Waddell and Alex Fielding.



From left to right: Mark Robinson, Damian Waddell, Alex Fielding and Andrew Laming

The assembled masses were treated to some scintillating shot making while feasting on refreshments provided by our wonderful volunteer catering group, the legendary Lena, Maureen and Yvonne. To mark the occasion, Grace Waddell had even gone to the trouble of making a batch of RLTA cupcakes. Thank you all so much for making it such a memorable event.

