

# Cottage gets modern makeover

Local businesses have donated their time and services to help upgrade 80-year old amenities for the some 1,000 children who visit Queenscliff's Cottage by the Sea annually.

The charity's historic building is currently undergoing a modern transformation costing in excess of \$3 million.

Work, which commenced prior to Christmas, has stepped up in recent weeks with the removal of the back deck and extensive internal modifications.

CEO Adam Wake said a safety audit in 2016 revealed a need for the upgrade to ensure the facility met current building codes.

"Like many old buildings, we were just not up to modern standards," he said. "With installation of a lift, ambulant facilities and a number of other improvements the Cottage will soon be accessible to a greater number of children."

"Cottage by the Sea is here for children who have little access to opportunities to have fun, be inspired and to broaden their horizons.

"The works currently underway will enable us to offer opportunities to a more diverse number of children.

"A recent study into the social impact of Cottage by the Sea revealed that 60 per cent of the benefits of the Cottage are for the children and an astonishing 40 per cent of social value is created for families and the broader community. Imagine what more we can do when we open our doors to more children," Mr Wake said.

The Federal Government has allocated \$1.5



Left: Work underway on the original Cottage building. Inset: an architectural design of the finished building

million to the project's cost under its Building Better Regions Fund. A further \$1.5 million has come from fundraising and philanthropic efforts, including the proceeds of the Cottage annual fair.

Local builder David McDonald, landscape architect Tim Nicholas and students and Deakin University Architecture and Design students have also pitched in, delivering their time and services pro bono.

"The Cottage is an amazing institution in desperate need of improvement to bring them

up to current standards," Mr McDonald said. "Being local, I'm very familiar with the Cottage and the excellent work they do. I'm happy to be able to lend my time and skills to help keep this great institution going."

Established in 1895, the Cottage initially housed convalescing children for two or three week stays, but over time has provided short-term relief care and camps for children whose families are experiencing difficulties.

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