

MEDIA RELEASE



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One man's parting gift inspires new enterprise

Toowoomba's newest social enterprise, Collectables, was inspired by one man's generous gift before he passed away.

Clive Bashford lived in a quiet pocket of Toowoomba where he liked to keep his house spick and span.

He kept dusted vases of artificial flowers, neat displays of tended ornaments and well-polished furniture. Amongst the order, you could spy treasures and mementos collected during his life-long love affair with travel.

At 77, his mind and wit was still sharp however, his failing health impelled him to leave his home of almost 30 years and move into residential care.

In a final gesture that underlined his humble yet generous character, Clive decided to gather up all his lifetime possessions and donate them to local, not-for-profit organisation YellowBridge QLD, to be used to help others less fortunate than him.

Clive's generosity inspired YellowBridge to create their first social enterprise, Collectables, featuring a boutique op-shop, men's shed and community activity space at 2 Station Street.

The purpose of Collectables is to provide work and training opportunities for people with a disability. All proceeds from the op-shop will be reinvested into the enterprise to support this mission.

Clive's close friends, Margaret and John Kruger, were not surprised by his generous act.

"He was a humble and private man but also very neighbourly," Margaret said. "He always returned from his travels with a small gift for us, it is just what he did."

"One year he went all the way to Lapland at the top of Finland to deliver our grand children's letter to Santa. They were so thrilled when they received a letter from Santa in reply," she said.

"He would come to our house every Friday for morning tea. Every week he turned up with roses and lemons from his garden and every fortnight he would bring a cake."

Both Clive and John worked as bankers over 30 years for the National Australia Bank, travelling around Queensland to fill relief positions. They have been firm friends ever since.

"He was very curious about people and places," John said, "and we would talk for hours about politics and life. He was a very interesting person to talk with."

Clive enjoyed tinkering in his shed and making various items of furniture. His vast assortment of tools and equipment will be used in the Collectables men's shed so members can also experience the pleasure of making something with their own hands.

YellowBridge CEO Penny Hamilton said staff at the op shop would learn a broad range of retail skills to develop skills and experience that were practical and useful.

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“People with a disability are often very keen to work but can struggle to land a job so we are delighted to be able to offer them some concrete work and training opportunities,” she said.

Collectables was officially launched on 7 June by Coralee O’Rourke MP and opened to the public the next day. It opens Wednesday to Saturday, 10am to 4pm.

Toowoomba Toyota has joined as Foundation Partner and the Patron is Des Orr, who founded YellowBridge QLD almost 30 years ago.

YellowBridge is appealing to the community to support the enterprise by visiting the op shop or donating items.

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YellowBridge QLD is a local, independent, not-for-profit organisation that provides housing, disability support and home services across the Darling Downs.