GOSFORD DISTRICT HOSPITAL’S $300,000 “FACE-LIFT”

Prior to officially opening the extensions to Gosford District Hospital on Saturday, the Minister for Health, Mr. A. H. Jago, MLA, announced that the patients here in the hospital would be transferred to the new section to allow the hospital to be modernised.

The extensions carried out by Max Cooper & Sons, of Sydney, were contracted to cost $842,000, but this figure is expected to reach $1 million with extras and furnishings. Mr. Jago said the proposed modernisation of the original hospital, together with the building of a nurses’ training school, additional accommodation for the nursing staff and other facilities urgently required, would cost a further $300,000.

He said the extensions which he was opening later in the afternoon had been inspected by the previous Minister for Health, Mr. H. E. Jensen, MLA, and were an excellent job. He hoped this could be followed up and could be called part of the “package deal.” He pointed out that hospitals were so important that Boards should only have one requirement—that they have a high standing in the community that they were beyond any political barrier.

It was important that members of the Hospital Boards should only have one requirement—that they have a high standing in the local community. He said he believed the board of the support service clubs and other organisations, which was vital to the hospital’s future, had every opportunity of developing into a first class hospital in a compact way. Not all hospitals had been able to develop that way. Gosford would now have 300 beds, with 65 more to be added in the new extension.

MINISTER’S STATEMENT AT OPENING EXTENSIONS

He hoped that this could be provided by 1973—only not long after this time. Curiously by 1975 —10 years hence—the people of the district would see the hospital fully developed as a sound unit.

The Minister delivered his address to about 500 people who were seated in the hospital’s car park, where they were able to enjoy the ceremony in perfect sunshine. He said it was an excellent assurance, as the opening clashed with the big basketball procession and several other important local functions. Visitors included members of the various hospital auxiliary societies throughout the district, representatives of service clubs and civic leaders, together with the medical profession and hospital authorities.

Seated on the official dais were: Board chairman, Mr. R. C. Mathews; Dr. Sales, chairman, Hospitals Commission, NSW; Mr. F. H. Humphries, MLA (Gosford); Mr. E. E. Jensen, MLA, and Shire President, Cnr. R. M. Zverjan, who also was deputy chairman of the Hospital Board.

Mr. Mathews was master of ceremonies and delivered an excellent address of welcome on behalf of the board, which was published fully in this issue.

The official opening was performed after the speeches, and an inspection of the hospital by all visitors was well organised. In his address, Mr. Jago pointed out that the current extensions would provide 65 extra beds with a variety of other services—well equipped casualty ward, special cubicles, maternity ward, emergency department, and patient rooms.

Mr. Jago said Gosford was fortunate in that it had every opportunity of developing into a first class hospital in a compact way. All hospitals had been able to develop that way. Gosford would now have 300 beds, and he thanked the archi-...
Mr. Jago said all hospitals played a big part, whether big teaching hospitals or small ones in the country. It was important that the best possible use was made of the small amount of money available.

Because Gosford District Hospital was a focal point for regional development, the teaching hospital was, was for the benefit of all people in the district. He agreed with a comment made by Mr. Mathews - Gosford should have no more, or no less, than other similar areas.

Gosford would ultimately become the main centre for all major health services. He quoted Newcastle as an example, stating, that Dr. Gibson from the Royal Castle Hospital provided a medical service for 650 elderly people outside the hospital.

Mr. Jago said if people had to be treated in hospital, it should be for the shortest possible time. The emphasis should be on treating people in their own homes, where medical, nursing and other services would be available.

He said he was conscious of the views of the people of Woy Woy, but it was virtually impossible to establish hospitals in close proximity to one another.

It was important to establish a variety of services related to one another, which would be convenient to all requiring the services.

Mr. Jago paid a great compliment to Matron Inskip and her deputy, Sister M. Lowndes, on the high standard they had set which was reflected in the quality of the nursing staff.

He said it was also good to hear that the honorary medical staff was also held in such high regard by the Board.

State Member, Mr. E. H. Humphries, in introducing the Minister had pointed out that he held a very important portfolio.

Health services had become specialised, but the Minister also needed to be a "financial genius" as well.

Mr. Jensen, in his brief remarks, said there was no more important work than catering for the sick and injured — whether they were rich or poor. It was essential that those with the skill to alleviate their suffering should be provided with the best possible facilities.

Mr. Maxwell drew attention to the important role played by the hospital auxiliaries and the representatives of the churches who visited the patients in hospital.

He said he was delighted to hear the Minister speak of the help to be given in the treatment of the aged sick, a subject which concerned so many people in the district.

He paid a compliment to the district nurses, who provided a service which was the largest outside the metropolitan area, visiting over 100 patients daily.

Ambulance

In declaring the building open, Mr. Jago said he was pleased to see members of the Ambulance Services in attendance.

He paid a tribute to the work they had done over the years, transporting patients who could not be accommodated at Gosford District Hospital, to Newcastle and Sydney.

He said the ambulance service had an affiliation with the hospital whether patients came as casualties or ordinary patients.

The inspection of the hospital followed. Details of the four-storey extension were given in the "Star" on April 27.