Milestone in hospital history

The expansion of Gosford District Hospital to twice its former size at a cost of $1,120,000 would make 1966 one of the milestones in its history, said Mr. R. G. Mathews, the retiring chairman of the hospital’s Board of Directors at the annual general meeting on Monday night.

Mr. Mathews reported a most satisfactory financial position with a surplus of $812 at the close of the financial year. There had been a rise of 33 in the number of staff (from 131 to 164) and Dr. I. Walters, formerly of Prince Henry Hospital was appointed Medical Superintendent on July 4.

In introducing Dr. Walters to the gathering, Mr. Mathews said:

"As the initial appointee to this important post, Dr. Walters is responsible for the control and supervision of all medical activities within the hospital. Dr. Walters was chief resident medical officer at Prince Henry Hospital prior to taking up the position at Gosford. The board of directors considers itself most fortunate in obtaining his services. He added that a three-bedroom residence was built during the year in the hospital grounds on the corner of Beane and Stephen streets at a cost of $17,000,000, and was recently occupied by Dr. and Mrs. Walters.

"Mr. Mathews said further extensions and building works were being undertaken at the hospital.

"Messrs Beattie & Frost Pty. Ltd. is carrying out major extensions to the nurses’ home to provide 30 more single bedrooms for nurses living-in, plus a large nurses’ training school", he said.

"Simultaneously, the same firm is renovating extensively both floors of the old section of the hospital. "When the renovations are completed, the old wards will be as modern as the new wing recently opened. "The combined cost of the nurses’ home extension and the renovations is $259,407. "It is anticipated that the work will be completed by February, 1967, and the hospital will then be operating at 130-bed capacity".

Referring to proposed increases in staff, Mr. Mathews said arrangements had been made for a further 42 appointments to be made by the time the hospital reached 130-bed capacity early next year, and these appointments would alleviate pressure on local doctors.

Over the past three years, he said, the daily average of occupied beds had increased from 61 to 62.5, and then to 64.8, with a total of 3,641 in-patients treated during 1965-66.

District nursing visits provided by eight district nurses had risen from 26,764 in 1965 to 30,380 in 1966.

Total income of the hospital for the year ended June 30, 1966, was $412,694 and total expenditure $412,288. Gross expenditure rose to $412,288 compared with $354,620 in 1965.

"Recovery of fees has been maintained at a satisfactory rate since the employment of a full-time collection officer two years ago", said Mr. Mathews.

"The policy introduced by the board in extending time to pay in sincere circumstances has operated most successfully and will continue. "The hospital staff welcomes the opportunity to discuss financial matters relating to forthcoming accounts or unpaid accounts, and will make arrangements satisfactory to all concerned.

"We are generous and we are sincere in our wish to help people meet their accounts, but when we know will not pay, we will take they are going to default and legal action", he said.

The following special grants were made by the board during the year:

Building, $499,926; equipment, new building, $191,000; medical superintendent’s residence $17,500; ground improvements, $3,612; office furniture, $210; D.N.S. car $1,600; ward roofing, $295; staff scholarship, $543.50; total, $642,868.50.

Mr. Mathews said that the board of directors could look back with pride in the progress that had been achieved. "I am pleased once again to acknowledge the complete harmony within the board, and the most cordial and cooperative relationships which exist with the staff and the honorary medical panel.

"It has been a great personal pleasure to lead this happy team throughout the present period of expansion." He paid tribute to the work of Rev. I. Davidson, of Woy Woy, who resigned in May.

Shire President hospital chairman

The shire president, Cr. R. M. Vaughan, was appointed chairman of the board of directors of the Gosford District Hospital at the board’s annual general meeting on Monday night.

He succeeds Mr. R. G. Mathews, who has been chairman of the board for four years.

Mr. Mathews announced his resignation from the post at the meeting.

He told those present he had been transferred to Sydney, and he regretted that owing to business commitments he felt he could no longer continue as chairman.

The election of members of the board resulted as follows:

Chairman, Cr. R. M. Vaughan; vice-chairman, Mr. R. Hill; treasurer, Mr. H. Craft.


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