The Board of Directors
welcomes you to
the Sixth Annual General Meeting
of THE CENTRAL COAST AREA HEALTH SERVICE
and
the Thirty-eighth Annual General Meeting
of GOSFORD DISTRICT HOSPITAL

Monday 15th November 1982 at 8pm

* Welcome
* Apologies
* Confirmation of Minutes of Meeting held November 16, 1981
* Chairman's Report
* Treasurer's Report
* Introduction of Guest Speaker
* Guest Speaker, Mr. H. R. Beer
* Vote of Thanks
* General Business
* Supper
Minutes of the Fifth Annual General Meeting of the Central Coast Area Health Service and the Thirty-seventh Annual General Meeting of the Gosford District Hospital, held in the auditorium of the Gosford High School on Monday, 16th November, 1981 at 8.00 p.m.

PRESENT:
Miss J. Noble, Commissioner, Health Commission of New South Wales; Mr. H. R. Beer, Deputy Regional Director of Health, and Mrs. Beer; Director L. Hannell, Chairman of the Board, and Mrs. Hannell; Director L. Fenton, Vice-Chairman of the Board, and Mrs. Fenton; Director N. A. Byrnes, Treasurer; Director M. Westerwell and Mrs. Westerwell; Director and Mrs. N. Wallwork; Director and Mrs. R. Eddy; Director and Mrs. R. Dibben; Director and Mrs. M. Brown; Dr. B. Shaw, Vice-Chairman of the Honorary Medical Board, and Mrs. Shaw; Mr. R. Matthews, Past Board Member; Mrs. A. Findlay, Past Board Member; Alderman and Mrs. Tarbox, Gosford City Council; Mr. B. O'Donoghue, Auditor, and Mrs. O'Donoghue; Mr. H. Mattocks; Mrs. D. Poole, Co-ordinator, Gosford Shire Community Services; Miss M. L. Lowndes, Director of Nursing; Dr. R. J. Kennedy, Medical Superintendent, and Mrs. Kennedy; Mr. K. Herd, Ambulance Superintendent, and Mrs. Herd; Mr. N. R. Boyce, Chief Executive Officer, and Mrs. Boyce; together with representatives of the Honorary Medical Board, the Hospitals' Auxiliaries, Voluntary Services, Local Service Clubs, Organisations and Government Departments, staff of the various departments of the hospital and health services, and an assembly of some 150 local residents.

APOLOGIES:
Among apologies received were those from the Hon. K. J. Stewart, M.P., Minister for Health; Dr. R. McEwin, Chairman of the Health Commission; Dr. J. S. Lawson, Regional Director of Health; Director and Mrs. R. Newton; Mrs. N. Byrnes, Dr. T. Vandeleur, Chairman of the Honorary Medical Board, and Mrs. Vandeleur; Mr. K. O'Connell, M.P., Member for Peats; Mr. B. Cohen, M.P., Federal Member for Gosford; Mr. B. McGowan, M.P., Member for Gosford; Mr. H. Moore, M.P., Member for Tuggerah; Mayor and Mayoress, Councillor and Mrs. D. Leggett, Miss I. Inskip, Past Matron.
MINUTES: Minutes of the Annual General Meeting held on 17th November, 1980 were confirmed on the motion of Directors Byrnes and Fenton.

CHAIRMAN'S ADDRESS

The Chairman of the Central Coast Area Health Board, Mr. L. E. Hannell, welcomed guests to the Meeting.

The cost of maintaining a patient in hospital is high, and many people require hospital treatment for conditions which are caused by some element of neglect in their lifestyle. The Chairman spoke of the services provided by the community health service to promote good lifestyle; it advertises regularly in the local papers courses, seminars and assistance available to everyone on the Central Coast in order to promote a good lifestyle. Knowledge of the damage caused by alcohol, smoking, drugs, poor nutrition, lack of exercise and obesity emphasises the need for health education. The best system in the world would fall short of success unless people learn to look after themselves.

Our Community Health Service recently competed against some forty other organisations throughout Australia for the honour of receiving the Community Outreach Award, which is presented annually by the Australian Hospitals Association. We submitted three programmes, all related to the community and our achievement, and were successful in winning this coveted Award.

The Chairman spoke of the opening of Stage 1 of Gosford District Hospital in February, 1981, which accommodates 120 patients, and of Wyong Hospital which accommodates 50 patients. He advised that it is projected another 185 beds will be required in five years; not being provided with these beds would result in unsatisfactory patient care.
Mr. Hannell thanked the many people and organisations which support the hospital. We have "something special and something good" going on the Central Coast, and hope that the donations received and the continuous activity of volunteers indicates acceptance of this. The dedication, time, energy and interest of people who work voluntarily in the interests of better health are remarkable to contemplate.

Three years ago it was reported that Gosford District Hospital had received full accreditation status for three years. A second survey was made earlier this year and, again, we were awarded full three year status. The surveyors were most complimentary of the standard maintained in all departments.

It has been a difficult year for everyone involved in health administration. Gosford comes under the authority of the Northern Metropolitan Region, and we greatly appreciate all the help and understanding given by Dr. Lawson, the Regional Director, and Mr. Beer, his Deputy.

The Chairman thanked Dr. Vandeleur, Chairman of the Honorary Medical Board, although he was not able to be at the meeting, and the other officers on the Executive of the Board. We are most appreciative of the work of the members of the Honorary Medical Staff, not only for their care of the patients, but for their participation in the training programmes run by the hospital, and in hospital activities.

Mr. Hannell expressed appreciation to Mr. Boyce, Dr. Kennedy, Miss Lowndes, Mr. Herd and all the heads of the various departments and their staff, and commented that the people of the Central Coast are indeed fortunate to have people working in the Health Services who, with their respective skills, combine to give such good service.

The Chairman expressed his thanks to his fellow Board members for their lively participation in the various meetings and activities. He advised that the Directors of the Hospital are appointed for five year terms, and the current term finished on 7th December, 1981. Of the nine members of the Board at present, eight have applied for reappointment, but to date no advice has been received as to who the new Board of Directors will be.
The Chairman then introduced a series of slides which showed some of the health facilities available to the people of the Central Coast. These slides were first shown to approximately 100 overseas Health Administrators at the International Hospital Federation Congress recently, and were very successfully received.

Mr. Hannell stressed to those present that no additional money will be made available by the State Government for hospitals. The Budget for 1981/82 was received on 9th October, 1981 and although some services had already been reduced in anticipation, our analysis showed that to retain our present services at the present standard we would be overspent by 30th June, 1982 by $1.8 million.

Along with the Budget the hospital was told -

1. That the allocation would not be exceeded, and this was emphasised.
2. That patient care was the hospital's first priority and this, too was emphasised.
3. That to meet the Budget figure it would be necessary to restrict some services.
4. That because salaries are by far the most expensive item, our staff were to be reduced by a further 122 persons to meet the money available for salaries and wages, but this was to be done by resignations, and no staff were to be dismissed.

Representations to the highest level open to the hospital produced no result, and on Friday, 13th November, 1981 a freeze, with no exceptions, was placed on the engagement of new staff. The next class of Trainee Nurses due to commence in early January, 1982 was also deferred.

Obviously some services cannot be restricted. Maternity, the Accident and Emergency Department at Gosford, Children's Ward, Surgery and Medical attention for life threatening conditions, Investive Care and Coronary Care Wards. All these and other high risk activities are based at the Gosford Hospital.
After consideration of clinical priorities it became obvious that some services would be at risk, and they could close in the near future:

1. The Wyong Hospital, including the Accident and Emergency Section;
2. The Wyoming Hospital;
3. The General Ward at Woy Woy Hospital;
4. The Post-natal Beds at The Entrance-Long Jetty Hospital;
5. A thirty-bed surgical ward at Gosford Hospital;
6. Some of the Day Surgical beds at Gosford Hospital.

These restrictions will have a startling effect on admissions for elective and minor surgery, and on admissions for non-serious medical conditions, and unless some relief is given to the hospital the situation will become chaotic.

The Chairman advised that the last avenue open to the hospital to prevent this chaos would be pressure from the community. The people of the Central Coast are community minded, and would not like to see their health system, which has taken so long to achieve and which serves the community so well, deteriorate to the extent that health needs are put at serious risk.

The aim of the Area Health Service is to ensure a continuing high standard of patient care, whilst containing costs, and working within a realistic budget.

The Chairman then called on the Treasurer to give the financial report for the year 1981/82.
The Treasurer, Mr. N. A. Byrnes, welcomed everyone to the meeting, making special mention of Mr. Harry Mattocks, Mrs. Amy Schwartz and Mr. Ron Matthews, who did a wonderful job when he was Chairman of the Board of Directors.

Mr. Byrnes spoke of the frustrations thrust upon the hospital through the almost unbelievable monetary problems. He spoke of the recent visit by Mr. Beer and part of his entourage, who then made representation for us to the Health Commission, but to no avail.

The Treasurer expressed thanks for all the work and help given to him over this year and past years, especially by Mr. Boyce, Mr. Cowdery and staff, the medical and nursing staff and the Honorary Medical Officers, without whom the hospital could not function. Since the appointment eleven years ago of the Honorary Medical Board, the Hospital Board has had the utmost co-operation and service from them.

The Treasurer moved the adoption of his Report, and this was seconded by Director Wallwork, and carried.

GUEST SPEAKER

In introducing Miss Jan Noble, Commissioner, Health Commission of New South Wales, the Chairman outlined to the meeting Miss Noble's extensive training at the Royal Alexandra Hospital for Children, and her experience overseas.
Miss Noble spoke of the critical importance of reassessing priorities in health care expenditure, and the fact that health is not alone in facing the need to adjust to financial constraints. Expenditure on education is now suffering also, and the growth of colleges of advanced education has halted.

New South Wales is not alone in having to come to grips with health expenditure and while, at first, the maintenance of a high quality health care system in a climate of financial restraint may seem irreconcilable, there are a number of strategies available which will assist in the achievement of these twin goals.

Miss Noble then went on to explain that the Health Commission had recently developed a formula for allocating hospital funds between Regions in New South Wales on a basis more appropriate to the health needs of each Region's population, but did concede that the Northern Metropolitan Region's hospital resources are not distributed in a manner consistent with the location of its present population.

She congratulated the hospital on being awarded the Community Outreach Award, and then went on to say that fragmentation of health services is another problem. The need for an integrated network of hospital services in New South Wales based on the delineation of hospital roles has recently been examined by the Health Commission Task Force and, when completed, the Report will form the basis of a consultative document to be distributed widely early in 1982.

In conclusion, Miss Noble stated that the challenge ahead is formidable, not just for health but for all areas of public administration. She is confident that those engaged in the health services will meet the challenge, and through careful evaluation and redirection of resources, continue to provide high quality health care to the people of New South Wales.

Mrs. Westerweller presented Miss Noble with flowers, and there being no further business, the meeting closed at 10.00 p.m.