

# Emergency centre is battling

The emergency accommodation centre at Ettalong, administered by Woy Woy and District Community Service, is in desperate need of community support if it is to continue operating.

The centre, which receives no government assistance, has provided shelter for 98 adults and 30 children in the short time it has been operating.

Those sheltered include family groups evicted from their homes the unemployed and the alcoholics.

Men, women and children are accepted into the centre.

At present, five single men are in residence.

Service president, Mrs Lee Lucas, said the group found it extremely difficult to balance the budget for the emergency accommodation centre which costs \$50 a week in rent alone to operate.

Those who enter the centre are told the maximum stay is six weeks but this can be extended under exceptional circumstances.

Each person sheltered is expected to pay rent — \$15 a week for single persons and \$35 a week for a family.

Very often, people who seek accommodation at the centre are penniless and cannot pay the first week's rent.

Often, too, they have to be assisted with food vouchers until they can arrange social service or unemployment benefits.

The centre provides blankets and linen for its people who are assisted into other suitable accommodation where possible.

Mrs Lucas appeals to organisations and individuals to come to the aid of the centre.

"We would appreciate donations, large or small. It would give the centre a much needed boost," she added.

Anyone who can help the emergency accommodation centre should contact Woy Woy Community Service which operates out of Alice Ransom House, Fassifern Street, Ettalong (next to Ettalong Caravan Park).

The Woy Woy Community Service itself received some good news through Member for Peats, Mr Keith O'Connell, recently, with the announcement by the Minister for Youth and Community Services, Mr Rex Jackson, that a grant of \$2790 had been approved to assist the service with its community aid and information programs.

Community Service volunteers, in addition to transporting sick and aged people unable to use public transport to doctors, therapists and so on, also do shopping, change library books, provide company for the lonely and generally help solve many of the problems of the area's needy people.

The service operates on a 24 hour a day, seven days a week basis.