

PETER DRAPER

INDEPENDENT MEMBER FOR TAMWORTH

MEDIA RELEASE

Duri's hospital auxiliaries branch primed to have a say on the future of health service delivery

12 August 2004

The importance of making the voice of remote communities heard in the future of the region's health services was highlighted at the annual general meeting of the Duri Branch of the United Hospital Auxiliaries of NSW Inc this week.

In his address to the branch's AGM in the Duri Hall on Wednesday, Member for Tamworth Peter Draper urged the organisation to have input to the Area Health Advisory Council consultation meeting to be held at the Tamworth Town Hall on August 17.

Mr Draper said it was vital the auxiliaries' interests were part of a process which would determine the direction and delivery of health services in the Hunter New England Area Health Service.

"The branch has made an enormous contribution to the facilities at the Tamworth Base Hospital throughout nearly 60 years of service and it is vital that members continue to have a role in health service delivery," Mr Draper said.

The AGM, which is the 59th since the branch's formation, saw the election of nine enthusiastic office bearers all of whom will carry the important work of the auxiliary through the next 12 months.

Mr Draper said it was encouraging to hear the branch's membership had increased from 22 to 40 in the past 12 months which augured well for the future.

"The branch raised thousands of dollars over the past year and had a great time doing it. Their dedication and hard work in a voluntary role for the good of the community's health services is to be applauded. Every dollar raised goes to making people well and to improving the general health of the community," he said.

Re-elected branch president Patricia Gibson highlighted the fact the branch had recently donated two electric beds to Tamworth Base Hospital which were acknowledged by executive staff as being essential pieces of medical equipment.

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Mrs Gibson said the branch had enjoyed another successful year with its major fundraiser, the Autumn Fete, raising over \$2600 while a mystery bus tour returned almost \$1000 in revenue.

The AGM was also attended by the deputy chief executive officer of the Hunter New England Area Health Service Fergus Fitzsimons and Tamworth Base Hospital executive officer Sandra Strong who also stressed the vital role outlying communities had to play in the Area Health Advisory Council consultative process.

Caption: The newly elected executives of the 59th annual general meeting of the Duri Branch of the United Hospital Auxiliaries of NSW Inc. Back row, from left: Peter Draper MP, Hunter New England Area Health Service deputy chief executive officer Fergus Fitzsimons, branch treasurer Dawn Reading, junior vice president Myrl Aitken, vice president Peg Roberts and publicity officer Joan McCluand. Front row, from left: Secretary Gordon Gibson, assistant secretary Betty Horsburgh, branch patron and member for 58 years Rose Kay, president Patricia Gibson and Tamworth Base Hospital executive officer Sandra Strong. In front is Mrs Aitken's great grand daughter Monique Taylor, 3 years.

End Release

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