



Friends of the Old Bega Hospital Newsletter

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Trivia Night

Our next fundraiser is a trivia night to be held at the Bega Country Club, Tarranganda on Saturday the 30th of July at 7pm. Groups can book a table of eight, or those at loose ends will be assigned to a table. There will be additional fundraising opportunities with the ongoing calendar fundraiser and a supper auction with super cakes! In addition to answering questions there will be games for prizes and a lucky door prize.

Cost is \$10 per person, BYO nibbles and the bar will be open for drinks. Please book by the 23rd of July, ring Claire at 6492 2570. Andrew Ogilvie will be the quizmaster, so an entertaining night is pretty much guaranteed.



Proudly supported by: RD Miller, Bega Cheese and Bega Valley Shire Council.



Recollections of Kevin Umback

A few months before he died, Kevin Umback wrote down the following story on his memories of the Bega Hospital:

“MY SISTER and I were admitted to the Bega Hospital for diarrhoea late 1920s, but, as soon as we felt well enough, we decided to discharge ourselves but were caught going down the front steps near Matron's office, and that was just as well as it was quite a few miles out to our home at Pericoe sheep station, Peters Swamp.

This was during the depression.

The night nurse found her way around by way of a hurricane lantern.

Stan Maples was employed to milk the hospital cows, acting also as wardsman, and driving the Hospital Lizzie (a car) to convey the nurses to and from town or their home, a distance of two miles.

Stan was indeed a character, always wearing his britches at half-mast to avoid the long, wet grass.

Dr John McKee was one of the early doctors to come to the Bega Hospital about 1920, settling in at Bega Street and his surgery “Dunvegan”, where he remained for the entirety of his professional career.

In 1928 he was called to view the shot-gun murder of Wolumla school teacher Mulholland on the front lawn of Nat Reid's house opposite the school.

Dr Marshall was in practice at Pambula after serving in the Boer War and assisted at Bega in the early days of the hospital.

Dr Cummings was in practice in Gipps Street, Bega, and sold to Dr Eric Marshman in 1934, and moved to Sydney where he became a noted Rugby footballer representing Australia.

Dr Ted Blomfield spent a little time at Pambula after army service and then took over Dr Marshman's practice in Gipps Street, Bega, easing the workload on Dr McKee, Dr Ireland and Dr Loftus, who still carried on with his Candelo surgery that he had bought and moved into from Melbourne and taken over from Dr Whyte in 1936.

During his early days in Candelo the Loftus family were to make many friends and they loved their new home, the most beautiful place they had ever seen.

Young John Murphy lost a thumb in his father's butcher shop to the sausage machine, but undeterred Dr Loftus took a bone from one of his toes and grafted it on to the stump of the thumb, successfully repairing the thumb, less a nail, and John was able to hold a glass of beer and wiggle his new thumb much to the delight of his cobblers.

A miracle number one.

Joe Wheatley, an elderly friend of Dr Loftus, had his leg packed in ice and Dr Loftus operated and amputated near the knee successfully, and Joe was able to hobble around for many years.

Miracle number two.

In the early days of the old hospital, for convenience payment into the hospital's scheme and office was situated in Carp St near Rosevears. Marie Watson was in charge in the 1940s.

Early September each year was set aside for Hospital Day with donations of cakes, eggs or any foodstuffs but especially eggs when the chooks were beginning to lay after a winter lay off.

The Hospital Secretary was Harry John Dicker and the assistant Audrey Driscoll.

This is the Bega District Hospital staff as I remember through working at Branson's Pharmacy delivering medicine and catching buses with "medicine urgent" to towns from Bermagui to Eden, sixpence freight.

Matron Caterson, Phyllis Howard (office), Alvred Goetz (physiotherapist), Sister Corkhill, MM WW1 (Corky), Dr John McKee, MBE, Dr Eric Marshman, MM, Dr Frank Ireland (ex 26th Field Ambulance), Dr Ted Blomfield, OAM, Dr Bill Loftus, Dr George, Sister Bernice Smith, MBE,

Sister Chapman, Nurse Fletcher (Eddie Reeve), Nurse Jack Noble, Nurse Roma Ahkin, Nurse Joan Lucas, Nurse Betty Devlin, Nurse Betty Bray, Nurse Meggsie Gerathy, Nurse McDonald, Nurse Treasure, Nurse Judith Fraser, Nurse June Cameron, Sister Moodie, Nurse Clare Heffernan, Nurse Betty Smith, Nurse Judy Spindler, Nurse L Parbery, Nurse Dibley, A J Rixon, Dorothy James, Marjorie Shelley, Helen Coleman, Bertha Vagg and Dorothy Upjohn.

Drs Marshall, Evershed, John Mckee and Mr John McKee (surgeon).

Domestic staff: Ida Snowdon (cook), Joyce Eyre, Heather Ramsey, Olga Brownlie, Doris McMahan, Muriel McMahan, Phyllis McMahan (Fritzi), Stan Maples (driver and wardsman), Bert Hay (boilerman) and John Doyle (general duties).

Ambulance officers: Pop Shelley, Col Friend, Ron Carriage, Les Atkins, Keith Knight, Malcolm Lucas and Keith Beresford.

Bega District Hospital completed January 19, 1889, opened April 18, 1899 by Mr R L Tooth, Kameruka.

Private Maternity Hospital, Gipps Street in the 1940s.

Sister McKee and Sister Gildea, Medicine delivered on way to Belmore Street.

Sister Bernice Smith: Mrs Hilda Jamieson had eleven home births helped by Sister Smith, Named the youngest Bernice.

Dr Ted Blomfield: Credited with delivering 3, 160 babies in the Bega District. The maternity ward in the new hospital was renamed the Dr E C Blomfield ward in 1987.

During the war years Dr Marshall had a bunker dug under his house in Gipps St for anti-air-raid protection for his family.

The Bega District News kept its readers informed on patients admitted to hospital until someone complained.

Boundary Street defines the exact boundary between Imlay and Bega so the hospital was in Imlay Shire although being on the southern edge of Bega. In 1964 Cr Hart of Imlay Shire offered Bega the chance to have the hospital in the Municipality but Bega was not ready to make the change after so long the hospital being Imlay's responsibility.

On leave from the army:

Umback, K D NX204559 admitted to the Bega District Hospital with acute appendix in January 1945. Immediate appendectomy by Captain Marshman. Post op unable to pass urine. Dr Marshman assisted me to the toilet, pulled the chain and waterworks responded. In care of Nurse Roma Ahkin and Nurse Joan Lucas (a relative). Cascara, black and nasty, was given to keep bowels open.

Dr Eric Marshman served in a field ambulance during World War One and was decorated with a military medal.

Kevin Umback
Ex 20th Field Ambulance
Hiroshima, Japan.

This anecdote will be included in the upcoming history of the Old Bega Hospital, titled "Capturing the Memories".

Grant for disabled toilet



Jay Ellard, Peter Hendy, Richard Bomford, Pat Jones and Claire Lupton

A federal government grant means the first work to the burnt section of the Old Bega Hospital can now begin.

Member for Eden-Monaro Peter Hendy visited the old hospital on June 2 to announce \$20,000 towards installing a disabled toilet and improve an existing toilet at the main building.

Trustee of the Old Bega Hospital Reserve Trust Richard Bomford said it was the first work to take place in the burnt part of the building since it was gutted by fire in 2004. "It's the start of bringing it back to life as a community and cultural centre in the Bega Valley region," he said.

Dr Hendy said fixing up the old hospital was a "huge project" and it was important for the building to be repaired as it was a site used by the community for different activities. (Story by Albert McKnight, courtesy of the Bega District News).

The grant was obtained by the Old Bega Hospital Trust which is the body responsible for the site, hiring the rooms which weren't affected by the fire. It is the Trust which will receive the \$500 000 to commence work on the restoration of the roof. This money was promised by the State Government. It is hoped the Federal Government will also provide further grants to the Hospital. The Labor Party candidate for Eden-Monaro, Dr Mike Kelly, has a personal interest in the restoration as two of his great-grandparents were directors of the hospital.

Next Spring Festival: Sunday Oct 30th.

Pictures from the last Festival:



