

Press Release

**2 ANDREWS; 2 ROOFS; 2 DAY - COMMITMENT FOR BELLINGEN HOSPITAL**

The Bellinger Health Action Group (BHAG) is excited to announce that on the 20<sup>th</sup> of July 2013 our local MP's Andrew Stoner and Andrew Fraser publically stated "the 2 Andrews commit to replace the 2 roofs (Hewitt Block roof and Hartley House roof) at Bellingen Hospital". The resilient though wet supporters erupted with applause and cheers as the announcement was made. BHAG has requested this commitment in writing. After decades of leaking roofs and then meetings and correspondence over the past 3 years with Local Health Service Executives and Politicians the buildings known as Hewitt Block & Hartley House at Bellingen Hospital are to have new roofs.

Barbara Moore (President of BHAG) was advised by Andrew Fraser that he had been in discussion with Warren Grimshaw (Chairman of the Governing Board of the MNCLHD) prior to the petition presentation. He advised Mr Fraser that funds had been allocated from the 2013/2014 financial year budget. Andrew Stoner confirmed this by stating that the works would be undertaken in this current 2013/2014 financial year. Millions of dollars are currently being invested in expanding and upgrading our local hospital and with the guarantee to invest further funds to replace the leaking roofs on existing buildings we are more confident in retaining our local hospital and its health services now and in the future than has been the case in the past. Our community & those in neighbouring Shires, staff, patients and visitors will all benefit from a dry safe hospital facility.

BHAG commenced an intense fundraising and public awareness campaign in late February this year. \$46,953 has been raised to contribute towards the cost to re-roof both buildings and with 2,847 signatures on the petition this disgraceful situation could not be ignored. The Local Health District/Government will finance the balance of the cost.

I would like to thank the BHAG Committee, the Bellingen Shire Community and the Coffs Harbour & Nambucca Shire communities for their absolute support financially, morally, verbally and in writing with this matter.

A united voice maintaining that squeaky wheel has once again shown its true power in our community.

Barbara Moore (President BHAG Inc.) 20<sup>th</sup> July 2013