

Presentation by Barbara Moore (President BHAG Inc) **8th Oct 2014 - Roof Fund Donation \$48, 543.00**

My name is Barbara Moore (President BHAG). Also present are Fenella Briscoomb, Charlotte Blesing and Shirley Dunne, (current BHAG Committee Members) and Gai Stern, Deb Anderson, and Harry and Meg Martin
Thank you to all + special thanks to Lyn Lelean and Vanessa Edwards for arranging this event.
Apologies from: John Conway and Pauline Murphy (committee), Maida Bugg, Bill Sense and Jen St Clair

Today is another momentous occasion for Bellingen Hospital showcasing the passion and commitment our Shire wide Community has for Our Hospital.

There are many Volunteers and Organisations in our Shire that fundraise and do on ground volunteer work. They purchase much needed equipment, construct outdoor shelters, attend to patient personal requests such as shopping, visit and chat with patients providing them with social contact, paint walls and help with interior decoration and assist the maintenance crew with outdoor gardening to name a few activities. However I am not aware of other communities raising funds to assist the re-roofing of their local hospital as this work would normally be only funded exclusively by the Health Department. I would like to thank and congratulate everyone who worked tirelessly over the years to achieve this amazing result.

The BHAG organisation represents our entire community where our commitment is:

1. To continually monitor the retention of services especially Surgical, Emergency, Acute Care and X-Ray ensuring that our community is not disadvantaged. In the early days we also worked towards retaining Maternity services however we were unable to achieve that status.
2. To receive the commitment of relevant government bodies to continue to support Bellingen Hospital and appropriate health services.
3. To continue and develop the process of consultation about future health care delivery in the local community.

Our hospital was under threat of closure or conversion to aged care 5 years ago (Nov 2009) and one of the critical factors being considered by senior executive staff was the poor state of the buildings. There had been no capital works or significant maintenance invested for some time. Maybe we were regarded as 'a back-water' compared to the new Coffs Base Hospital and just not worth the investment.

With that in mind BHAG wrote to the then CE on the 26th Nov 2009 offering to assist (financially and with labour) with some infrastructure/maintenance concerns. This offer was not received well however we were able to commence a volunteer gardening group which remains active. We were now even more determined to pursue the infrastructure matters so we relentlessly campaigned for – NEW ROOFS and Solar Hot Water.

With a change in the executive and substantial Federal and State funding Our Hospital is once again viable, cared for, maintained, expanded and 'on the map'.

Due to BHAG's relentless campaigning for new roofs, the support of our local MP's, the generosity of our community's donation and the Governing Board's allocation of funding, today we have a new roof on Hewitt Block and on Hartley House AND it can't be transferred to another hospital. **Thank You.**

I would also like to **thank** Stewart Dowrick (CE) for his patience and tolerance, Kath Bowman (EO/DON) and Janelle Goodall (D DON) for their advice and open doors to discuss anything that is relevant to our community's health service needs and Ken Meale, Mark McKiernan and his predecessors for their on-going cooperation.

This project has been a massive achievement for our community and it has been my privilege to represent you through the Bellinger Health Action Group.