

MEDIA RELEASE

Bringing the benefits of Art into healthcare

You wouldn't usually associate hospitals with art yet Central Coast Health's new Arts for Health gallery at Wyong Hospital aims to combine the two bringing the benefits of art into the hospital.

"Hospitals can be quite daunting places for patients and visitors," said Michael Ryan, Wyong Hospital's Commercial Services Manager. "As part of the redevelopment of the hospital we are looking at ways to reduce the stress that some people experience when they need to come to hospital.

"To be able to look at an artwork or photo can evoke some very positive emotions in people.

"The Arts for Health gallery allows us to brighten up the hospital and connect with the community at the same time by exhibiting works by local artists, many of which will be of the local area."

The inaugural exhibition, a series of twenty-five photos taken from the publication, 'Tuggerah Lakes: way back when,' traces the history of the Lakes system from the early 1900s through to the mid-1990s.

With photos of trucks loaded with timber at Wyong Railway Station in 1910 to photos of the floods of 1949 through to photos of residential development near Kanwal in the late 1990s, each image tells a story of the area.

Unveiling the photographic exhibition, Wyong Mayor, Greg Best said that the exhibition was made possible by the donation of photos from the personal collections of residents interviewed for the book.

"Without the support of local residents much of the history of the Tuggerah Lakes area would be lost.

"We expect that many patients and visitors to the hospital will recognise the areas displayed in the exhibition and be able to relate to the images, such as prawning activities.

"And for those too young to remember we hope it will arouse interest in both the ecology and history of their local area," continued Councillor Best.

Donated to the hospital by Wyong Council many of the photos will find a permanent home in the hospital's new facilities such as in the 50-bed mental health inpatient facility due for completion next year.

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