MEDIA RELEASE

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Hospital auxiliary celebrates silver anniversary and history of support

Past and present volunteers, hospital staff and community representatives gathered together for a high tea at the Kingaroy TAFE recently to celebrate the 25th anniversary of the re-established Kingaroy Hospital Auxiliary Inc.

The occasion was an opportunity to take a trip down memory lane and reflect on the proud history of the auxiliary in providing support to the hospital.

Darling Downs Hospital and Health board member Cheryl Dalton said the auxiliary made a difference to everyone who came onto the hospital campus.

"The little extras that the auxiliary contribute to the hospital are vital," Ms Dalton said.

"They help to buy the extra things that provide wonderful comfort and benefit not just to the patients but the staff and visitors as well."

Kingaroy Hospital Auxiliary Treasurer Alison Murray said she wanted to publicly acknowledge and thank all of the hospital auxiliary volunteers and members over the past 25 years.

"The auxiliary has donated $298,000 worth of furnishings and equipment to the Kingaroy Hospital in the past 25 years.

"Individually we cannot do much, but collectively and using our individual talents, we have ensured our hospital is a more comfortable place to stay with free television and we continue to provide healthy food for patients and staff in our hospital canteen."

"We also campaigned tirelessly to get the Renal Unit at the Kingaroy Hospital, which was opened in 2009," Ms Murray said.

During the event, the auxiliary presented representatives of the Kingaroy Hospital with a cheque for $27,050, which will be used to purchase a C-MAC machine for difficult intubations.

The cheque was accepted by Kingaroy Hospital Medical Superintendent Dr RT Lewandowski.

"A C-MAC machine is a video assisted machine for intubating people. Sometimes it is nice and easy to get a tube in, but other times it's quite difficult.

"This machine assists us to save the lives of people who otherwise wouldn't be able to breathe," Dr Lewandowski said.

The auxiliary also launched its new fundraising appeal to raise $47,000 to purchase a new portable ultrasound machine for Kingaroy Hospital.

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"Today we are delighted to announce that the auxiliary has set aside $2,000 to kick-start the Ultrasound Scanner appeal.

"We hope local community groups will get behind us to help reach the target of $47,000 as quickly as possible," Ms Murray said.

Dr Lewandowski said the ultrasound machine was designed for use by doctors at the bedside of patients and was used in multiple areas of the hospital, including the emergency department for trauma cases, as well as in the wards and in maternity and theatre.

"I counted yesterday and I personally used the existing machine that we have six times while working in the emergency department."

"Having a second machine will really help as there are so many uses for it," Dr Lewandowski said.

The Kingaroy Hospital Auxiliary was originally started years earlier but was inactive for approximately 10 years between 1981 and 1991.

However by March 1991, with the increasing number of patients at the hospital, it became clear that extra support for the hospital through an auxiliary was needed. A steering committee was appointed and on 15 October 1991, the first general meeting of the re-formed Kingaroy Hospital Auxiliary was held.

The first initiative of the auxiliary was to establish a canteen at the hospital, which continues to be the main fundraising activity for the auxiliary today. One of the first canteen convenors, Nora James, was on hand to cut a celebratory cake with South Burnett Regional Council Mayor Keith Campbell. The cake was made using former auxiliary president Dr Julian Mullins' personal recipe.

"We have taken gross sales of $251,000 in our current canteen and from these funds, the auxiliary has donated approximately $50,000 worth of furnishings and equipment to the Kingaroy Hospital, including a medi-cab to transport patients to the helipad," Ms Murray said.

Other highlights noted throughout the lifetime of the auxiliary included the launch of a cookbook in 2006, which was so successful that a second volume was quickly published. Funds raised through the sale of the cookbooks, as well as jars of Dr Mullins' special commemorative apple marmalade, provided the majority of the total fundraising by the auxiliary for additional items for the hospital's Renal Unit when it was first opened.

Kingaroy Hospital Auxiliary Publicity Officer Pamela Lincoln said she had seen first-hand the warmth, generosity and fine community spirit that exists throughout the South Burnett.

"The purchase of equipment and items needed for the comfort of patients and staff will always be ongoing and that's why hospital auxiliaries are such an asset to the community."

"The Kingaroy Hospital Auxiliary can look upon its efforts and achievements to support the Kingaroy Hospital during the past 25 years with great pride and satisfaction," Ms Lincoln said.

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Photo caption: Kingaroy Hospital Auxiliary Treasurer Alison Murray presents a cheque to Kingaroy Hospital medical superintendent Dr RT Lewandowski for the purchase of a new C-MAC machine.

Photo caption: (from left) Darling Downs Hospital and Health board member Cheryl Dalton, acting Cluster Operations Manager Steven McNamara and Kingaroy Hospital Auxiliary Treasurer Alison Murray enjoy the high tea served by students at the Kingaroy TAFE.

Photo caption: South Burnett Regional Council Mayor Keith Campbell and Kingaroy Hospital Auxiliary former canteen convenor Nora James cut the celebratory cake.

Photo caption: (from left) South Burnett Regional Council councillor Danita Potter, Kingaroy Hospital administration officer Denyse Swendson and former canteen convenor Karen Ford catch up at the high tea.

Photo caption: Kingaroy Hospital Auxiliary Publicity Officer Pamela Lincoln provides an overview of the history of the Auxiliary.

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