



Eye & Ear Drum



Staff Bulletin



Graeme Houghton's drum beat

Signing off

We welcome Ann Clark as CEO this Friday and I retire after serving in this role since 2002. I will leave feeling very optimistic about the future and redevelopment of the Hospital.

A lot of great work has been done in the last few years to redesign the way that we provide our care to our patients and the redevelopment is a big opportunity to design our services and our facilities so that they meet the needs of our patients and are truly in the first rank internationally.

Several new medical technologies have been introduced in recent years, both to alleviate hearing loss and in the treatment of potentially blinding eye diseases, including age-related macular degeneration. They illustrate the value of the Hospital to the community and the importance of our partnerships with other bodies such as the universities, CERA and Bionic Ear Institute.

It has been a privilege to contribute to the work of the Eye and Ear and to have been able to celebrate events such as the 25th anniversary of the first cochlear implant and the international centenary of corneal transplantation.

CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

Graeme Houghton's six years at the Eye and Ear

Wednesday, 6 August 2008

What are your favourite memories?

A favourite memory will be of some great people I have worked with but also just some of the hard-working and cheerful people who we pass in the corridors or meet in the café. Another is the exciting work that was done last year to improve our systems and models of care and decide how the New Eye and Ear should work. The international study tour was a great, but exhausting experience. It was fantastic to see other hospitals like ours in countries with very different health care systems - and most of them had been recently re-built. There is a lot to learn from them but we can teach them some things as well.

What will you be doing after you finish off here?

I have some commitments - accreditation surveys and being on the Board of Western Health - but I'm also looking forward to having a little time for some of the things I do to relax: galleries, reading, golf, motorcycling.

What is the biggest challenge you faced in your time as CEO?

Undoubtedly it was fixing a financial problem, as required by the Board, when I first arrived. We set about improving our financial control systems and management skills and looking for areas to reduce expenditure but for quite a long time nothing seemed to happen. Then in the space of a couple of months our performance turned around and we exceeded our plans.

Another challenge with an even more rewarding outcome was convincing the Government to continue funding the redevelopment. There are so many hospitals with a need and plans to redevelop that it has been crucial but difficult to convince DHS and the government that we are developing something important, new and exciting that they must support.

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30 years of bringing sounds to silence

Friday August 1st marked the 30th birthday of one of Australia's greatest inventions, the cochlear implant.

The first implant was done here at the Royal Victorian Eye and Ear Hospital in 1978. The occasion was marked with a reunion and afternoon tea with the team involved in the first ever procedure. Some team members travelled from as far as Singapore.

The audience at the reunion heard from a number of recipients about how much the bionic ear had changed their life. A media event was held in the morning and the story featured on television, radio and in newspapers all across Australia.

Celebrations to mark the anniversary will continue at the Hospital, where we carry on the cochlear implant legacy.



Associate Professor Bryan Pyman, Professor Graeme Clark and Professor Richard Dowell, members of the original cochlear implant team, celebrate its 30th birthday with some of the recipients

Free Public lecture: "Diabetes—a global epidemic: do we have any solutions"

Associate Professor Jonathan Shaw, Associate Director Baker IDI Heart & Diabetes Institute

Date: Saturday, 16 August

Time: Breakfast 8:30am, Lecture 9 am

Venue: Lucy Jones Auditorium

Excellence

Caring

Integrity

Teamwork

Meet our new CEO



This Friday, August 8, Ann Clark will start in her new role as the Chief Executive Officer of the Eye and Ear.

Ann comes to the Eye and Ear from her role as Executive Director, Corporate Services at the Royal Children's Hospital.

During her time at RCH, Ann has been at the forefront of enhancing relationships with research and teaching partners and integrating clinical and non clinical aspects of the hospital.

Ann has also had major hands on experience in leading a hospital through redevelopment. She provided leadership in negotiations with the Department of Human Services and was executive sponsor of the RCH *Building our Future Change Program*.

Before her time at RCH, Ann worked in the financial sector as a chartered accountant and has held senior leadership positions and consulting roles across a range of public and private sector industries.

Keep your eye on *The Drum* to find out more about our new CEO when she starts in her role.

If you would like to submit a story for *The Drum* please contact:
Kim Payne on ext. 8689 or e-mail:
kimberlee.payne@eyeandear.org.au

Rugging up on Ward 8

Ward 8 staff were delighted to receive a handmade quilt as a thank you gift from one of their patients.

Noel Murphy was recently an in-patient following his second corneal graft.

His wife Monica hand made the quilt which features a colourful garden scene and is titled "Not my garden". Monica completed the quilt at a time when the drought and a plague of grasshoppers had devastated her own garden.

Ward 8 Nurse Unit Manager Libby Wilson said they are very grateful to Sarah Flynn of "Lazy Daisy" needlework specialists, Burgundy Street, Heidelberg for her expertise and financial contribution towards the cost of framing.



Members of the Ward 8 team with the rug they received as a gift from a patient

Melbourne orthoptists converge on the Hospital

The Eye and Ear recently played host to the July Scientific Meeting of the Orthoptic Association (Vic Branch).

About 50 orthoptists from around Melbourne attended the meeting, including those from the Hospital and CERA.

The July Scientific Meeting incorporated a practical workshop on Glaucoma monitoring which was lead by Dr Linda Malesic and assisted by three orthoptists, all of who work in Professor Crowston's Glaucoma monitoring clinic. Glaucoma specialist Dr Michael Coote also participated.

The meeting was held to give orthoptists the opportunity to improve their skills so has to enhance patient care and better assist eye doctors in the management of eye disease.

Things that make you go mmmmm—strange health stories from around the world

*A monument to the enema, a procedure many people would rather not think about, has been unveiled at a spa in the southern Russian city of Zheleznovodsk. The bronze syringe bulb, which weighs 800 pounds and is held by three angels, was unveiled at the Mashuk-Akva Term spa. "An enema is almost a symbol of our region," spa owner Alexander Kharchenko said. The Caucasus Mountains region is known for dozens of mineral springs spas.

*Sixteen people had to be treated for rabies in Hilton Head, South Carolina after exposure to a baby raccoon later discovered to be rabid. While some of the 16 had merely cuddled it, others apparently could not resist kissing the wild animal on the lips.



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What is something you have learnt at the Eye and Ear that you will take with you?

For most of my career I have believed that specialist hospitals were not a good idea. At worst, they can become very isolated from the rest of the health care system and quite arrogant about their place in the world. My experiences at the Eye and Ear, and the international study tour, have demonstrated that specialist eye and ENT hospitals are both very viable and very valuable resources. I will always be an advocate for the Eye and Ear.