



PRAMS members and guests pictured at the launch of the PRAMS maternity ward upgrade last Friday evening. Back row, from left, Pam Duff, Margaret Johnston, Shenhua Watermark Project Director, Joe Clayton, Heidi Mainey, Dr Rob Parsons, Shenhua Communications Manager, Melanie Layton, Gunnedah Mayor Adam Marshall. Front: Olivia Brown, Nurse Unit Manager Katrina O'Brien, Alysha White, Amber Donoghue and Gunnedah Mayor Adam Marshall.

Maternity ward upgrade celebrated with Shenhua

THE completion of the second stage of the maternity ward upgrade at Gunnedah Hospital was celebrated by members of Paediatric and Maternity Support (PRAMS) and invited guests last Friday evening.

The \$90,000 upgrade was funded by the Shenhua Watermark Coal Community Fund and the night was an opportunity for the PRAMS committee to thank Shenhua for its generous community fund and community spirit.

The committee was joined by Joe Clayton and Melanie Layton from Shenhua, Nurse Unit Manager Katrina O'Brien, Health Service Manager Carole Young, Mayor Adam Marshall, doctors and local business owners.

The visitors were shown around the refreshed maternity ward before watching a delightful powerpoint presentation of the project's progress since the application for funding in July last year.

Shenhua Communications Manager, Melanie Layton said the company had been proud

to support the PRAMS group through the Watermark Community Fund and to see the legacy given to the community through the funding was "the best part of their jobs".

"To see \$90,000 turned into a project worth \$130,000 shows how much community support there was for the project," Melanie said.

"I have never before been in a community that gives so much to help itself.

"The improvements to the maternity ward are nothing short of amazing and the PRAMS members should be very proud of themselves."

Project Manager and Chairperson of PRAMS, Amber Donoghue said it had been a privilege to work with Shenhua on this project and see the amazing changes the group of young mothers and their helpers had been able to create for local patients and the valued hospital staff.

"It would not have been possible for us to make these amazing improvements to the hospital for both staff and patients without Shenhua's generous support," she said.

"Thank you for validating what we do in nominating our project to receive funding."

PRAMS has also expressed appreciation to the local businesses involved in the project.

Secretary Olivia Brown said that virtually every one had donated or discounted their products and services to some extent.

"Your generosity has allowed this project to expand beyond the plan," she said.

"We estimate that this generosity has provided an extra \$40,000 worth of value to the project."

PRAMS also paid tribute to Nurse Unit Manager Katrina O'Brien for her unwavering support in managing the logistics of the group's projects.

The upgrade took more than a year to complete with almost \$45,000 spent on the purchase of a new labour bed and foetal monitor alone.

Work began in earnest in April this year, with fresh paint throughout the maternity ward, a more user-friendly and ergonomically designed nurses station, new baby bathing area and upgraded curtains, fur-

nishings and fittings, including a refrigerator for patients in the sitting room.

The final and very important touch was a new playground for the fenced recreation area just outside the maternity ward, where siblings and young visitors could be occupied during visiting hours.

A tree was also planted to mark the occasion.

Some of the businesses that assisted include Corey Bakhuis and Co, Moore Than Just Kitchens, Regency Jewellers, Lease Leaves, Steve Middleton, Perflex Tile Studio, Ross Sign Co, Betta Electrical, Dial a Dingo, Old Bank Gallery, Universal Compost (playground), Petries Mitre 10, State Forest Nursery and Luke Johnston Electrical.

The PRAMS committee members remain dedicated to improving the facilities at the Gunnedah Hospital, and are looking forward to continuing their fund-raising efforts for their next round of projects, starting with the Italian Cheesecake stall at Porchetta Day and a Charity Golf Day on November 6.



ONE of the refurbished rooms in the maternity ward at Gunnedah Hospital.