

Financial windfall for aged care and health

YALLAMBEE Homes for the Aged and Gunnedah Hospital's maternity ward are among a number of projects to receive a massive revamp thanks to Shenhua Watermark Coal's \$1 million Community Fund.

Yallambee, which came previously close to closing in 2003, was announced last week as one of 12 community organisations to receive funds through the scheme, which kicked off last year with a \$1 million donation towards the Gunnedah Rural Health GP Superclinic.

News that Yallambee will receive \$230,000 through the fund has absolutely "thrilled" Yallambee committee chairman Delores Worthington.

"We are well supported by the community and thrilled to receive even \$10, so to receive this much is amazing," Delores said.

A much-needed refurbishment of 13 self-contained units will now take place, with each unit receiving a renovated bathroom and new hot water heater.

"The bathrooms in particular haven't been renovated since they were built in 1966," Delores said.

"Without this fund our plans would have remained a pipe-dream," she said.

The PaediatRiC And Maternity Support (PRAMS) is another big winner from the fund, set to receive \$90,000 which will allow the group to complete a refurbishment of Gunnedah Hospital's maternity ward.

"We will now be able to finish our refurbishment of the maternity ward which we had planned to fund-raise for over the next five years; because of this we'll see some substantial changes happen pretty quickly," PRAMS committee member Amber Donoghue said.

The group submitted an application for funding which will allow for the purchase of a new



YALLAMBEE committee members (from left), Margaret Dodd (secretary), Delores Worthington (president) and Judy Lenton (vice-president) are extremely excited about receiving funds to refurbish 13 of their units.

labour bed, new foetal monitor, a maternity specific bathroom fit-out, repainting of the maternity wing, and creation of an outdoor visiting area which will feature play equipment for visiting children.

Other beneficiaries of the fund include Gunnedah South Public School; Breeza Progress Association; GS Kidd Public School; the Salvation Army's Hope House project; Gunnedah Skate Park Committee; Gunnedah Riverine Improvement Scheme; Curlewis Progress Association; Schizophrenia Fellowship's local support group, Gunnedah Active Minds; Jacaranda Day Centre and Lions Club of Premer.

Many of this year's successful applicants will receive funding to improve important local facilities.

Recipients of this year's fund-

ing have been through a rigorous application and selection process that commenced in May.

The Community Fund Committee selection process is believed to be a first of its kind. The committee itself is made up of 11 people from various community sectors (agriculture, aboriginal, health, environment, education, council, business and general community).

Following the overwhelming response, with 63 applications received, the committee was asked to advise the company by prioritising projects for funding.

The Community Fund Committee reviewed all applications and ranked the projects against criteria the committee had formulated and recommended 12 projects to Shenhua for funding. Shenhua has endorsed all the committee's recommendations.