

Royal Far West exhibition celebrates history of caring for country kids in Manly

As a highlight of the 2010 Manly Arts Festival, the Manly Art Gallery & Museum in partnership with the Royal Far West is to present a museum exhibition surveying the long history and important contributions that Royal Far West has played in the community of Manly and in the lives of countless children and their families from rural and remote New South Wales.

Royal Far West, which is based in the popular Sydney seaside destination Manly, provides a wide range of essential specialist health services to meet the needs of country children and their families.

Titled '*Royal Far West - Caring for Country Kids in Manly: The Extraordinary Legacy of Stanley G. Drummond & Lucy Drummond*', the exhibition features a treasure-trove of historical photographs, documents, objects and items from the Royal Far West documenting its 86 year history.

Curated by **Margo Bavinton**, the exhibition will be launched by **Dr John Yu**, eminent paediatrician, arts patron and former Australian of the Year at Manly Art Gallery & Museum, on West Esplanade, Manly at 6.00pm on Friday 3 September 2010.

"This exhibition gives insight into the unique history and services provided by Royal Far West, operating in Manly since 1924," says Director of the Manly Art Gallery & Museum, Therese Kenyon.

"Initially, Royal Far West brought children from remote country areas for respite in Manly's seaside environment, but it today provides specialist health services not available in rural areas."

"The idea for Royal Far West was conceived in 1924 by its founder, Stanley Gillick Drummond, as Superintendent of the Methodist Far West Mission in NSW, while he was himself convalescing at Manly.

He and his wife Lucy, along with tireless volunteers from both the country and city, set up and ran the first of many seaside holiday camps, often providing outback children their first chance to see the sea.

It quickly became apparent that many of the camp children required medical attention, signalling the organisation's evolution from 'holiday camp' to 'health provider'.

Within eight years of its foundation, the Royal Far West Scheme had purchased land in Wentworth Street, Manly, opening a much-needed two-storey, 80-bed nursing home known as the Drummond Far West Children's Home in 1935.

"Since then, the scheme's building programme has expanded and this unique organization, now known simply as Royal Far West, has provided more than 80 years of free access to specialist health care for many thousands of country children who would otherwise not have access to such care," said Therese.

Jann Kingston, Chief Executive Officer of Royal Far West said:

'We are very proud of the contribution Royal Far West has made to the health and well-being of country children during its extraordinary history. Everyone associated with this unique organization is committed to ensuring that this contribution continues into the future.'

PUBLIC PROGRAMS**Curator's Talk**

Sunday 7 November 2010, 3pm

Exhibition Dates

3 September 2010- 21 August 2011

Further events will be held during the exhibition

See the website for further information: www.manly.nsw.gov.au/gallery

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