

MR CHRISTIAN CHARLES WILLIAM KOHLHOFF

Citation for the conferral of a Master of Health Science (*honoris causa*)

Christian Charles William Kohlhoff was born in West Maitland, New South Wales in April 1912 and spent his early years in the small village of Stanhope near Branxton where his father was a teacher. Following the death of his mother, young Charles went with his family to live with his grandparents in Neutral Bay where he attended the Neutral Bay Superior Public School and later, the Central Technical School in Ultimo.

After gaining clerical employment in a general office, Charles studied accountancy and secretarial practice at the Metropolitan Business College in Sydney. At the age of 20 he secured a position at the Mater Misericordiae Hospital in Crows Nest where he gained an appreciation of the health sector – an appreciation that was to last for the rest of his life.

The work at the Mater Hospital appealed to Charles and he was soon appointed Assistant Secretary of the Hospital. He became Secretary in 1936 and in the years that followed was actively involved in the formation of the New South Wales Institute of Hospital Administrators and the Australian Institute of Health Administrators that superseded it. Following a childhood injury to an eye Charles was not eligible for service and spent the war years working with a firm of chartered accountants before moving to Murwillumbah in 1945, where he spent the next seven years as Secretary to the Murwillumbah Hospital. In May 1952 Charles moved his family to Bathurst where he served as the Chief Executive Officer of the Bathurst Base Hospital and the Macquarie Homes for the Aged for the next 25 years.

Influenced by the role of his grandparents in his childhood, Charles developed an abiding interest in the welfare of the aged. In Bathurst he played a significant role in the formation and development of the Chifley Village, the Senior Citizens' Centre, the Respite Centre and the Stroke Rehabilitation Centre that later became the Rehabilitation Centre.

For many people in Bathurst, the name of Charles Kohlhoff is synonymous with Meals on Wheels. Although Charles is quick to pay tribute to the many other volunteers that provide the time and financial support to make this service work, the record shows that from its establishment in Bathurst in the early 1960's until recently Charles Kohlhoff was its President and driving force. It was principally in recognition of this service to the community that Charles was admitted to the Order of Australia.

Charles Kohlhoff's commitment was not restricted to the aged of Bathurst. He also served on the Eisteddfod Committee for many years, including periods as its President, and on the Bathurst Art Gallery Committee of which he was Secretary.

In a recent interview Charles was quoted as saying that his hope for the future was that Bathurst would continue to provide educational and employment opportunities for the young so that they could remain in the area and make their futures here; a sentiment shared by the University.

Chancellor, this University wishes to honour Charles Kohlhoff and to recognise his outstanding service to this community – service that has extended over almost fifty years. It is therefore with pleasure that I present to you Christian Charles William Kohlhoff - health

administrator, community leader and altruist, for conferral of the award Master of Health Sciences (*honoris causa*).

Dated this Eighteenth Day of April Two Thousand and One