

MR ALEXANDER GEORGE BEDWELL

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

It is difficult to recognise just one aspect of the contribution made by Alexander Bedwell to Bathurst community life. The University has chosen his work in the field of health, particularly aged care, but we could arguably have highlighted his efforts on behalf of a range of community activities.

Alexander Bedwell has recently celebrated his 75th birthday. He was born in Numurkah, Victoria, on 14 March 1925, but came with his family to Bathurst in 1929 aged four. He was educated at the Howick Street Public School and Bathurst High School. Mr Bedwell joined the Bank of Australasia at Orange in July 1940 and served at Orange, Blayney and Tullamore branches until his entry into the Royal Australian Navy in May 1943. He qualified as a telegraphist in December 1943 and saw active service until June 1946. This Navy service continued a time-honoured tradition in the Bedwell family which can claim a 200-year association with the Royal Navy.

On his return to Bathurst, Mr Bedwell joined the family business of GA Bedwell & Son, later Bedwells Pty Limited, a farm produce business with agencies in petrol, tyres, fertilisers and farm machinery.

Mr Bedwell holds the distinction of being the most senior ranking Freemason in Bathurst at this time. He was initiated into Freemasonry in January 1944 and has served at least one year in every office of Lodge Barham, except Chaplain. He was a member of the NSW Masonic Buildings Board between 1984 - 1996 and it was his involvement in the Lodge that partly led to his contribution to aged care in Bathurst.

Mr Bedwell was for 25 years a Director of Bathurst Base Hospital (formerly District Hospital) and Macquarie Homes for the Aged (now Macquarie Care Centre). He was a Foundation member of the Management Committee of the Ilumba Gardens Retirement Village at Kelso for six years to 1991, but had worked behind the scenes for some years prior to this in consultation with Frank Whiddon Masonic Homes, initiators of the project.

Mr Bedwell was Deputy Chairman of the Bathurst/Evans Health Council for two years until his birthday last month when he made the decision to retire from active involvement in the administration of health care in Bathurst.

Alex Bedwell is now, with Audrey, a keen bowler and has been an accomplished swimmer and rugby union and hockey player. Never content just to play the sport, he spent years actively involved with the Waratah & Ex-Students Hockey Clubs and the Bathurst District Men's Hockey Association. He was a Committee Member of the Bathurst City Amateur Swimming Club for 10 years and was always Club Secretary or a handicapper during this period.

Mr Bedwell was a Director of the Mitchell Co-op Housing Societies for 27 years, including seven years as Chairman. Under his leadership the Societies saw huge growth, increasing in number from eight to 38 during his time on the Board. He was a Foundation Director of the Mitchell Permanent Building Society Ltd in a commitment that lasted for 14 years, including five years as Society Chairman.

Mr Bedwell was Deputy Presiding Officer of the University's Mitchell Advisory Council for five years from 1994. Mr Bedwell has been a Justice of the Peace for 30 years and was Deputy Sheriff of the Supreme Court of NSW for 15 years from 1979 to 1994.

Mr Bedwell's involvement with the Management Committee of St Stephen's Presbyterian Church in Bathurst dates back to 1959. He has been a member of that Committee for 18 years, and its Treasurer for the past six years. Mr Bedwell spent six years as District Commissioner of Scouts for the Macquarie District from 1960, he was a keen Rotarian for 14 years from 1971, including holding the office of Treasurer at Rotary District level, and a member of Bathurst Legacy for eight years. He was Foundation President of the Probus Club of Bathurst on its formation in 1984, and remains a member of Probus. He was for nine years the Trustee/Secretary of Kelso Public Recreation Trust, and Honorary Curator of Bathurst District Historical Society Museum for four years from 1992 to 1996.

It is hardly surprising that Mr Bedwell was honoured as "Citizen of the Month" in Bathurst in January 1992.

The University is delighted to further recognise Alexander Bedwell – thorough gentleman, businessman, tireless community worker and advocate of health care in Bathurst - by conferring on him the award Master of Health Science (*honoris causa*).

Dated this Twelfth Day of April Two Thousand