16 March 2017

Honouring our volunteers

When Rosalie Saunders retired from the steel industry two decades ago she found herself looking for things to do.

The 78-year-old, who lives in Campsie, thought the local hospital would be a good place to start.

After 20 years providing support to the staff as a volunteer at Canterbury Hospital, Rosalie has seen a great deal of change.

"When I first started I made sandwiches in the canteen. I led people around the new hospital when it opened in 1988 and I've worked with a number of nursing executives."

Herbert Dibden (left) and Rosalie Saunders (right) with Canterbury Hospital general manager, Dr Genevieve Wallace.

Rosalie, who assists the nursing administration unit, said she was "treated like royalty" by staff when she had her first hospital admission last year.

"I'm lucky that I've worked with some very lovely people and I really enjoy it. I like the friendship and I feel like I contribute to the hospital."

Canterbury Hospital recently celebrated the 30-strong group of dedicated volunteers helping behind the scenes at a special luncheon.

Well known by all in the corridors at Canterbury, 95-year-old Herbert Dibden has been volunteering for 30 years.

A former Air Force cutter grinder, Herb is now vision and hearing impaired but still loves his weekly time at the hospital, helping in the administration unit.

The hospital's general manager, Dr Genevieve Wallace, said volunteers like Rosalie and Herb gave the hospital a community feel.

"Our volunteers are part of the reason Canterbury feels like a family. They support our staff in a range of areas and their enthusiasm is always well received by our staff and patients," she said.

If you are interested in becoming a hospital volunteer at Canterbury, please call 9787 0151 or go online www.slhd.nsw.gov.au/Canterbury/volunteers.html.