

Doctors cleared for not attempting resuscitation

Death in waiting room

By INGRID BOWN

A CORONER cleared three doctors at a Charlestown medical centre yesterday of wrongdoing after a patient died in the centre's waiting room and none of them attempted to resuscitate him.

Newcastle Coroners Court heard that 69-year-old pensioner Terence Leonard Wallis went to Charlestown Medical Centre without an appointment on Saturday, May 24.

The inquest heard Mr Wallis

entered the busy centre about 1.30pm and died about 2.45pm while waiting to be seen.

He had been snoring in his seat. After he stopped moving and snoring, a patient sitting next to him tried to rouse him. When he could not, he alerted a receptionist.

The receptionist alerted a centre general practitioner, Akadri Alarape, who came within 30 seconds and examined Mr Wallis.

From his observations, including that Mr Wallis's pupils were fixed and

dilated, he concluded he was dead.

Dr Alarape arranged for Mr Wallis to be transferred from his seat to a wheelchair and taken from the waiting area, out of concern for the distress the situation might cause other patients.

The receptionist called another doctor, John Heard, to assist.

The two doctors were joined by a third, Masoud Mohammadi, in a treatment room.

At least two of the three did a more thorough examination and

concluded it would be pointless to perform CPR, the inquest heard.

Another staff member called an ambulance.

During communications among her, the triple-0 operator and the ambulance service, the message was wrongly conveyed that Mr Wallis was unconscious.

When police and ambulance officers arrived, they noted that CPR had not been performed and that Mr Wallis had not been officially pronounced dead.

Ambulance officers, particularly one, had been very critical of the doctors' failure to perform CPR, coroner Elaine Truscott said.

But that criticism was not borne out by the inquest and she was satisfied Dr Alarape properly established Mr Wallis was dead.

The centre was criticised for not having a CPR or emergency protocol.

Ms Truscott said there was now a policy manual, though she noted it should be read, not just placed at the centre.



BUDDY SYSTEM: Scott Cameron as Buddy and Luke Tonkin as the Big Bopper in Newcastle yesterday. — Picture by Simone De Peak

By LISA BARRITT-EYLES

THE Buddymobile rocked into Newcastle yesterday to promote a new production of a musical based on Buddy Holly's life.

Buddy will open at Star City's Lyric Theatre on February 3, the 50th anniversary of the plane crash that killed Holly, the Big Bopper and Ritchie Valens.

Scott Cameron, 22, plays Holly in the new production.

A fan from the age of 7, Cameron said yesterday it was a surreal feeling to be stepping

That'll be the day: new show keeps music alive

into the shoes of one of the legends of rock'n'roll.

"Buddy is the father of rock'n'roll," Cameron said.

"Elvis Presley is called the king and Buddy is the father.

"He was the first to use strings in rock'n'roll, he invented a lot of its musical style and he was a

prolific songwriter."

Producer David White said Peggy Sue Gerron, the subject of one of Holly's most famous songs, visited the cast last week and was very impressed with Cameron's portrayal of him.

"She probably knew Buddy better than anybody and has met

quite a few of the people playing Buddy over the years," Mr White said.

"She couldn't believe how close to Buddy Scott really is, he even talks like him."

The musical has been performed around the world and is in its 19th year, but Mr White said the new production would be even more fun and energetic and was aiming to attract younger generations.

After a 12-week season in Sydney, the show will tour Australia's major cities.

Request from dock for four-day smoko

By PAUL MAGUIRE

A NEWCASTLE man, who pleaded guilty yesterday in the Supreme Court to murdering Con Karafylis, had earlier applied for a four-day adjournment to smoke cigarettes.

Todd Andrew Pearce brought his case to an unexpected end at midday yesterday by changing the not guilty plea he made at the start of his trial in East Maitland courthouse on November 10.

His extraordinary



CON KARAFYLIS

request for a cigarette break was made on Wednesday when he was asked to enter the witness box and resume giving

evidence which was halted on Tuesday when he yelled and swore at Crown prosecutor Helen Wilson.

Barrister Paul Winch, for Pearce, said his client was unable to give evidence as he was very upset and unsettled because he had been held in Newcastle police station cells overnight since Sunday and was unable to smoke or obtain a nicotine patch to reduce his addictive smoking habit.

Mr Winch asked for the case to be adjourned to

next Monday so Pearce could be taken to a state prison where he could smoke and settle down.

Judge Megan Latham said she found the application "extremely odd" as a lack of cigarettes did not normally stop people giving evidence.

Judge Latham then adjourned the case for 10 minutes and directed Corrective Services Department officers to supervise Pearce having a cigarette in the court's truck loading bay before he was returned

to the witness box.

Pearce said he was not feeling well yesterday morning and after receiving medication pleaded guilty to murdering Mr Karafylis outside a block of Housing Department flats in Fowler Street, Hamilton South, on August 18 last year.

Judge Latham convicted Pearce, discharged the trial jury of five men and seven women and adjourned the case for sentence in Newcastle Supreme Court on December 1.

Regions honoured in tourism awards


HUNTER and Port Stephens tourism operators have stood out among the state's best, with 20 businesses earning accolades at the NSW Tourism awards in Sydney last night.

Bimbagen Estate won the winery and restaurant categories and was inducted into the Tourism NSW hall of fame.

Hunter Wine Country Tourism's Wendy O'Donohue won the

young achiever award and Crowne Plaza resorts in both the Hunter Valley and Newcastle won gold and silver awards for meetings and business tourism.

Gold awards also went to Shoal Bay Resort and Spa, Tower Lodge, Boutique Wine Tours and Breeze Restaurant and Bar.

 **Winning tourists**
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