

Mark Zagorski

2008 Westpac Australian Rural Doctor of the Year.

Mark was nominated by his local community and given the award at the Annual RDAA/ACCRM conference at the Novotel in Sydney. Mark has been at Mt Beauty for 27 years where he quietly steered the development of the medical centre and sister clinic in Falls Creek.



He was described in the local newspaper as a “rural GP who led the charge to modernise first aid and trauma management in his community and the Australian ski fields”. The medical group maintains a full roster throughout the ski season at Falls creek and are able to manage most accidents either there or down in Mt Beauty. Keen skiers, they work closely with ski patrols and undertake ski-field retrieval.

The Building of the Medical Centre, pictured below, demonstrated Mark’s commitment to the community at a time when Medical services in the Alpine community service were being seriously curtailed. He and Mark Robinson, a former President of RDAV now working in Canberra, fought hard and successfully for the preservation of theatre facilities when the Mt Beauty Hospital was redeveloped in 2002. They have their own integrated solid state XRay system to facilitate fracture management. He also drove fundraising efforts that raised many thousands of dollars for emergency equipment in Falls Creek.



Mark is a GP anaesthetist with special interests in ski-field medicine. He has been for many years an EMST instructor and sits on the EMST State Faculty. He has been described as ‘the quintessential rural GP’. At his 25th year celebrations in Mt Beauty, stories were told of his complete dedication to the well-being of his patients.

His wife Jane deserves as much mention as he for her support and dedication, as well as her work as occupational therapist and staff member at the medical centre, and for her many years’ work for the Rural Medical Family Network. Mark was a founder member of the Rural Doctors’ Association of Victoria and has been treasurer since its inception. Throughout his 27 years as a rural doctor at Mt Beauty in Victoria’s alpine region, he has inspired generations of medical students and registrars with his compassion, commitment and motivation to his patients and the local community.

At the award Mark said "It's hard to put into words. I don't consider myself any different from my colleagues. What I do is day-to-day routine stuff that is not extraordinary in any way but there are those who think it is. I feel a little bit humbled and can think of others just as worthy of this award. I believe community is the central attraction of practising medicine in rural Australia. There is the ability to extend and use all the skills you have developed. "Someone once said to me, 'don't try and do extraordinary things, try to do ordinary things extraordinarily well' and I guess that's what I try to do. That includes providing quality local medical care in my community of Mt Beauty and through my branch practice at Falls Creek. One of the things that keeps driving me to practise in this part of the world is the peace and quiet of the valley where I live and the mountains where I work in winter. The great thing about being a rural doctor is the chance it gives you to really appreciate and enjoy your local environment, as well as the close involvement you have with your local community and the wide variety of work you do each day."

Mark is also an enthusiastic promulgator of a technique for reducing dislocated shoulders without the need to sedate the patient, a method which he learned from another doctor many years ago. This technique has become known as 'the Zagorski method'.

By the way, don't get him telling jokes. He'll have you in stitches all evening. We wish Mark and Jane absolutely all the best for the future.