On the September 22, 1860 the first patient was admitted to our hospital, a 35-year-old shepherd, James Brennan. The hospital was founded by a group of concerned, squatters of the district. The nearest hospital was at Bendigo some five days away in the back of a jolting dray.

The foresight of this group cannot be underestimated. In 1860 hospitals where a very limited resource. Our hospital pre-dates many hospitals that are today pre-eminent in our state. The Alfred Hospital opened 1869, St.Vincents Hospital dates from 1893, and the Royal Children's Hospital dates from 1870. Closer to home, Echuca did not gain a hospital until 1882, while Mildura had to wait until 1892.

The opening of our hospital was merely the first step in a long struggle to overcome constant financial and staffing problems. This was achieved with the help of the generous support of the surrounding district. While government funding has given a financial base we are still reliant on the district's support to improve our facilities.

In 2008 we changed our name from Swan Hill District Hospital to Swan Hill District Health to better describe the range of services we now offer and has grown to employ about 500 staff the services a catchment area spanning from Balranald to Wycheproof.

Detailed History

DATE	EVENTS
1860	Lower Murray District Hospital was built on September 22, just 10 days after Burke and Wills left Swan Hill. The first patient was admitted – 35 year old Shepherd
1889	Swan Hill District Hospital (SHDH), built at a cost of 3755 pounds in Splatt Street, was officially opened on July 15.
1890	The committee of management resolved that the hospital should accept women patients. Nine women were admitted in 1889-90 and 117 men.
1896	Miss Clara Ellerton, the hospital's first permanent nurse, was appointed at a salary of 30 pounds a year.
1897	The first hospital fete was held on the 60th anniversary of Queen Victoria's accession to the British throne. A procession and athletics during the day were followed by fireworks and a ball.
1898	Miss S.Coleman, the first nursing matron, was employed at a salary of 50 pounds a year.
1903	New nurses' quarters were officially opened by the Rev. James Patterson. The building cost 500 pounds to erect; the furnishings were a further 50 pounds.
1910	Telephone communication was installed between the hospital and the central exchange.
1912	Electric light and electric bells were installed at a cost of 97 pounds while a hot water system cost 128 pounds to install.
1913	Two tents (30x15) were erected for temporary infectious diseases wards with two smaller tents put up for staff quarters. The tents and timber roofs and water and power were connected. SHDH accepted the first nurses for general training.
1915	Aseptic tank was installed
1922	A "back to Swan Hill" week commemorated the 50th anniversary of the hospital's incorporation. Swan Hill Shire Council promised to build a permanent infectious disease ward at the cost of 4400 pounds.
1923	Some 266 Swan Hill residents voted for the implementation of a sewerage scheme and 71 were against. The referendum was held in conjunction with the annual shire election.
1926	SHDH accepted the town's first ambulance as. a gift from the Victorian Ambulance Service. The charges were one shilling a mile, with the minimum fee 10 shillings ($1) a journey.

1931 The seven-bed maternity wing, built at a cost of 3750 pounds, was officially opened by Country Progressive Party women's committee President, Mrs T. Connellan who was one of the instigators of the project.

1935 The hospital was connected to the town's new sewerage scheme at a cost of 700 pounds.

1936 SHDH Women's Auxiliary opened a shop to enable it to raise funds for the hospital.

1937 Sir John and Lady Harris officially opened the new infectious diseases ward and the "temporary" tents were dismantled.
3SH Women's Club was formed, an organisation that brought many items of equipment for the hospital.

1938 Victorian Premier Mr Dunstan opened the new kitchen block, operating theatre, dispensary and children's ward which were completed for about 20,000 pounds.
The hospital for the first time accepted intermediate patients.

1940 SHDH gained authorisation to conduct a three-year general training school for nurses.

1946 Plans were afoot to build a new hospital on a new site with the current building to be used as a community centre.

1947 Plans of the proposed new 400,000 pound hospital were released.

1948 Health Minister Sir Albert Dunstan said Swan Hill was not to be misled. "To promise materials for such a project (as a new hospital) would only delude the people".

1949 Swan Hill's new hospital was listed among the first 15 to be built in Victoria. Commenting on SHDH's monthly wage of 600 pounds. The committee of management decided to go ahead with the conversion of an army hut into a pathological laboratory. Northern District School of Nursing was established at Bendigo.

1950 An egg appeal gathered 800 dozen eggs for the hospital.

1951 Apex conducted a jam drive. Hospital beds were reduced by 25 percent due to staff shortage. Nurses' quarters were evacuated because of maternity ward overcrowding.

1953 Victorian Premier Mr John Cain dashed Swan Hill's hopes for a new hospital when he said: "We will go on with the buildings (hospitals) already begun but will not start any new work".
The hospital relinquished control of the ambulance service when Mid Murray District Ambulance Service was established.

1958 Victoria Governor Sir Dallas Brooks opened the new nurses' home (191,000 pounds).

1959 The maternity wing was completed at a cost of 50,000 pounds

1960 Mrs M.C. Mabbitt and Mrs Marjorie. Miles were the first women appointed to the committee of management.

1962 Theatre block extensions were completed for 72,293 pounds.

1965 The children's ward was extended to accommodate 13 and Stage 1 of the ward block was complete for total cost of 100;000 pounds.

1970 Stage 2 of the ward block finished (208,000 pounds).

1974 The former public ward was converted to a temporary day hospital

1976 Senator Guilfoyle, the Federal Minister for Health, opened the $228,000 day hospital.

1977 Alan Wood, MLS (Swan Hill), officially opened the two-storey service complex which included a centralised store, linen exchange, ground floor mortuary and first floor staff amenities. The dental clinic in McCallum Street was opened.

1979 This two-story 52-bed geriatric ward ($1 million) was opened by Mr. Fisher, MHR (Mallee). A new staff cafeteria was built at a cost of $135,390.

1981 Swan Hill Fete Society sold Woanna Park for $112,500. The money was to be invested in perpetuity with the interest to be used for hospital projects. The first phase of Stage 4 was completed. This comprised administration offices, reception area and a physiotherapy department. This phase cost about $2 million. The old hospital building was demolished.

1982 X-ray equipment costing $184,000 was installed in the new radiology department.
Stage 4 was completed incorporating radiology, pathology and pharmacy departments and the new complex was linked to the existing main corridor.

1984 Completion of the new theatre and CSSD complex. Cost $1.3 million.

1985 Completion of Stage 5 which included a new casualty department into an outpatients clinic.

1989	Minister for Health Ms Hogg dedicated the Bruce Fraser Memorial Children's Ward and opened the kitchen extensions. Costing $1.14 million. The renovations and extensions represented the completion of the hospital's seven-stage building program.
1991	Mr. Barry Ryan, Chief Executive Officer for 18 years retires. Mr Ryan oversaw almost the total rebuilding of the Hospital and was instrumental in the establishment of considerable new and innovative services
1995	Swan Hill and District Community Health Service was intergrated into services, a division of Primary Care was established.
1996	Hospital in the Home was introduced
1997	Nyah.District Bush Nursing Hospital transferred into the ' Swan Hill District Hospital's operation. The Susan and Roly Hayward Trust was established from a bequest. Funds to be used to benefit the Extended Care Unit.
1999	Building works to relocate the termite damaged Midwifery were completed. Included in the project was a renovated Emergency Department.
2000	Significant preparation was undertaken for Y2K. The year 2000 came without any issues. Hospital Charity Day raised $79,400 for the purchase of medical equipment.
2002	New Day Procedure Unit established. An expansion and upgrade of the Renal Dialysis and Chemotherapy Unit completed. "My Hospital" marketing theme created to promote the Hospital and the community working closer together
2003	Computerised Radiology commences. Board of Management appoint its first female president, MaryAnne Moloney
2005	Department of Human Services appoints consultants to undertake a staged redevelopment of the current facilities in the existing site
2007	Swan Hill District Hospital Ladies Auxiliary donated $29,000 for new equipment. The first Blue Ribbon Foundation fundraising effort for the Hospital was in January, a `Twilight Race Meeting' at the racecourse.
2008	Introduction of a new billing system. for private patients - Simplified Billing. This program provides much needed financial benefits to the Hospital. Public Health Award 2008 winner for the "Safe Sex in the Sticks" Program. In November, name change to Swan Hill District Health to reflect the range of community services provided. Dedication Ceremony was held on 28th November to open the Robert Lane Resuscitation Unit. Blue Ribbon Foundation donated $60,000 for patient monitoring equipment for the new unit.
2009	New 16 Slice CT Scanner for the Medical Imaging Services thanks to the generosity of Perpetual Trustees.
2010	Agreement with the Anglican Church to purchase their adjoining land to make space for a new aged care facility. 150 years was celebrated.
2011	Swan Hill Blue Ribbon Foundation donated $30,990 for a new portable ventilator for the Robert Lane Resuscitation Unit. Swan Hill District Health Ladies Auxiliary donated of $34,000 for new equipment. New Dental Clinic opened in September with three dentists.
2012	Received M$18 for new Aged Care facility. Lymphoedema and Continence service run by the Physiotherapy Department commenced.
2013	Aged Care services achieved accreditation. New Education Centre completed. 8 Room student accommodation facilities completed. Private Dental services started. $63,700 raised by the community for a new bus for Aged Care residents. New Ultra sound unit $98,000 for Radiology.
2014	M$2 to relocate Day Procedure Unit to Theatre Suite. Opening on new Community Rehabilitation Centre. Ladies Auxiliary Op shop relocated to McCrae St. New digital mammography unit purchased. Blue Ribbon Foundation supported financially the new Behavioural Assess room in the Emergency Department. Clinical Services review completed by Dr Heather Wellington.

2015	Portable for Occupational Therapy and Medical staff completed. Purchased 11 Pritchard St to build new headspace building. Purchased new Digital Radiology Unit. Healthscope successfully tendered for the continuation of our pathology services. Ladies Auxiliary raised $124,000.
2016	The Primary Health Medical Centre was opened on 20th June. Logan Lodge opened February. Swan Hill Hospice Committee raised over $250,000 for tow hospice beds.
	SHDH became the lead agency for headspace. Funding approved for a new Counselling building to be built on 13 Pritchard St. New 2016-2019 strategic plan completed. Ladies Auxiliary raised $144,900.
2017	Successful Sub Acute/Hospice funding M$2.66 announced. Monash Uni 4th Year Medical Student training program with PHMC established. Medical Services division established with recruitment of a Director and Manager. Headspace and Counselling buildings completed. Hardwiring Excellence program established. SHDH Community Information Brochure circulated. Ladies Auxiliary raised $136,000.
2018	Telehealth Fracture Clinic, Stress Echo Clinic, Oncology Telehealth service and Paediatrician services started. $84,000 termite damage fixed in the Dialysis and Chemotherapy units. New fire sprinkler system installed in the Acute ward. Ladies Auxiliary raised $142,000. Received $237,000 Health Service Violence Prevention Funding to install 10 CCTV cameras, secure Allied Health and duress alarm system for Emergency and Midwifery Departments.
	Relocation of Medical Services and Quality and Risk Departments.
2019	• District Nursing and Palliative Care Services moved to 44 High St
	• 28 High St to be renovated for Monash Medical Students and extra consulting rooms for the Primary Health Medical Centre
	• Sub-Acute/Hospice building completed May 19.