



Contract signed on hostel for carers

BY HOWARD JONES

SOUTHERN Cross Developers will next week start building the Albury-Wodonga carer hostel, now expected to be ready by Christmas.

Meanwhile, efforts to raise the second half of the \$3 million needed from a public appeal will be stepped up.

More individuals will be urged to make major pledges and others from towns outside Albury-Wodonga will also be asked to donate.

Southern Cross director John Tyrrell and Fight Cancer Foundation managing director Eric Wright signed a \$3.3 million contract on the site in Keene Street

yesterday.

The Albury company beat about a dozen rival local and national firms in a tender process.

Mr Wright said the cost of the 20-bed project remained at \$5 million to \$5.5 million.

With \$1.47 million already raised in the public appeal, the fund-raising chairman for major gifts, Peter Drummond, is leading the push to raise a further \$1.53 million, with a car raffle about to be launched.

Mr Drummond said the centre would serve a wide region in NSW and Victoria and he hoped to see donations from the other areas.

The low-tariff hostel will accommodate patients and carers who have to travel long distances for treatment in Albury-Wodonga.

Mr Drummond said this would involve not only patients with cancer but others "with all sorts of illnesses".

The commonwealth has given \$1.5 million and NSW \$750,000 and the foundation is seeking \$750,000 from Victoria.

"We don't expect an answer from Victoria until May," Mr Wright said.

The project was announced almost two years ago after Rotary, Lions and Zonta clubs partnered with the foun-

ation to seek government funding and raising funds in the public appeal.

Steering committee chairman Alf Armstrong and long-time campaigner Maddy Dobson attended the signing ceremony yesterday.

Kevin Poyner has designed a motel-style building that can be extended later by a further 10 beds.

The site was bought from the NSW government last year and initial works were undertaken by Douglas Earthmoving.



● Eric Wright and John Tyrrell at the signing of the carer centre building contract yesterday. Picture: TARA ASHWORTH