



Rewarding service

Garrett retires after years of dedication

By **Ben Brennan**

AFTER four decades, Craig Garrett's working life as an ambulance officer at Murray Bridge finished in the same way it started.

Last week, on the final shift of his 44-year career, Mr Garrett was called out to a vehicle accident on Jervois Road.

It was reminiscent of his first shift in which he was called to "a horrendous accident" as a rookie officer, but it was also a sign of how things have changed.

"Years ago that was a major part of the job but now you don't have these sorts of accidents all the time," Craig said.

"We used to average 28 to 30 fatals a year on the old road before the freeway, but these days the cars and the roads are designed to keep the passengers safer."

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RIGHT - Fresh faced: Craig Garrett shortly after beginning his career as an ambulance officer in 1969.



Ambulance officer retires after years of dedication

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As the tragic car accidents became less frequent, Craig was able to focus more on the part of the job he really enjoyed.

"I've just really enjoyed looking after people and talking to people," he said.

"During some of the routine transfers to town you talk to people and they tell you some amazing stories about their lives.

"I just get satisfaction in helping people, all kinds of people, whether it's a major trauma or just someone who wants to hear a caring voice.

While Craig is officially still employed by the SA Ambulance Service until his leave expires earlier next year, he officially hung up his hat and handed in his keys last week.

He celebrated the end of his long career on Friday, with colleagues friends and local and State government leaders, including doctors David Hein and Martin Altmann, Murray Bridge Deputy Mayor Barry Laubsch and State MP Adrian Pederick.

Craig is now planning to move gently into retirement.

"I'll wait to settle into

retirement and next year think about heading overseas with my wife on holiday, maybe to Canada, Europe and London," he said.

Craig began his career at Hindmarsh in 1969 at age 18 before moving to Murray Bridge in 1972 to become the town's sec-

ond ambulance officer.

There are now 29 ambulance officers, paramedics and intensive care working from Murray Bridge Station.