

BUGAUP saving more lives than surgery: doctor

BY TRUDY STOREY

A doctor who wants cigarette advertising banned was fined \$20 yesterday for defacing a billboard advertising Rothmans cigarettes.

He was also ordered to pay \$160 in witness costs.

Dr Arthur Chesterfield-Evans, 33, of Yarranabe Road, Darling Point, had pleaded not guilty at Burwood Court of Petty Sessions to wilfully marking with paint a Rothmans billboard at Lewisham railway station without the consent of the owner on August 21, 1982.

He admitted defacing the billboard but at an earlier hearing had claimed he had not committed any crime.

He said in court yesterday that he had defaced the billboard because he thought children should be prevented from taking up smoking.

He had spray-painted over the ad — which showed a romantic couple — the words "Darling let's give up and save money." The original words were "Move up."

Dr Chesterfield-Evans said he had realised he had to campaign to prevent people smoking rather than "just picking up the pieces in surgery."

He had taken action through normal channels, including writing letters to politicians, in an attempt to get something done about cigarette advertising and the rights of non-smokers.

He said he had written 400 letters and had received replies to about 20 per cent, most of which were "platitudes singing the same song of 30 years."

The doctor is a member of the Non-Smokers' Movement of Australia and also subscribes to the concept of BUGAUP (Billboard Utilising Graffitiists Against Unhealthy Promotions).

He agreed with Sergeant Eddie Billett, prosecuting, that his act had been illegal.

Mr Simon Fenton Chapmain, a community program co-ordinator with the NSW Government's anti-smoking campaign, said the evidence he had collected indicated that cigarette advertising encouraged children to take up smoking.

He believed Dr Chesterfield-Evans's action had made a "humorous change" to the advertisement.

He thought many people were probably amused by it and perhaps "jolted into an awareness" that it was a more sensible message than the original.

Dr Chesterfield-Evans, who is to appeal against the conviction, said outside the court later that he had had a fair hearing but was in a "moral dilemma about the matter."

He said that if going to jail would make a political difference (to cigarette advertising) which would save thousands of lives, "then you are looking at saving lives versus spending a short time in jail."

Six years of surgical train in Australia and England had sparked his concern about the dangers of smoking.

He realised he had to do something to help people stop smoking after treating a successful businessman who had had a bad coronary. The man, a smoker, died after an operation.

Soon after, he had gone to the cinema and the first thing he saw on the screen was an advertisement for Marlboro cigarettes.

"I said to myself 'This has to stop if I have to stop it,'" he said.

He joined the Non-Smokers' Movement of Australia and became involved in writing letters to politicians to which he received "drivelling replies."

He then realised that Bugaup was likely to save more lives than his surgery.



Dr Chesterfield-Evans . . . fined \$20 for defacing poster.