

I WONDER WHAT IT'S WORTH? **SOLD** COM AU

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HOME | PAGE ONE | NATIONAL | WORLD | BUSINESS | SPORT | FEATURES

The Sydney Morning Herald

PREVIOUS ◀ | ▶ NEXT

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Brief encounter

By JUDITH WHELAN

Margie Nelson hasn't been able to do any nursing shifts or run her farm near Canberra properly since she damaged her ankle on a hidden rock at Broulee Beach, near Batemans Bay, on April 15. Despite physiotherapy and lots of rest in between, she still couldn't bear any weight on the joint.

Last Thursday she saw a foot and ankle surgeon, Dr Martin Sullivan, in his Sydney rooms. On Tuesday she arrived at North Shore Private Hospital at 2.30pm, was in theatre by 4, awake by 5, allowed to go by 7.30 and home, in Canberra, in her own bed, by 10pm.

During the operation, Dr Sullivan cut two small holes on the sides of her ankle. The joint was pumped with clear fluid. Using an arthroscope through one hole to show a magnified image of the inside of Mrs Nelson's ankle he removed the damaged cartilage that caused her pain.

She can expect to have her bandages off and be back at work in two weeks. If her procedure was done with open surgery, using a large incision, she would have spent about a week in hospital and would have needed at least two weeks recovery at home.

"It seems unnecessary to be in hospital," she said.

"I'd just be doing the same thing there, lying around in bed, and it's nice to be home with the kids."

PREVIOUS ◀ | ▶ NEXT

HOME | ARCHIVE | TEXT INDEX | FEEDBACK | HELP | FAIRFAX

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