

Doctor with a spray can



DR CHESTERFIELD-EVANS
... sees cigarettes as "deadly".

By HELEN CORCORAN

IF there is a physical image a doctor should live up to, Sydney's Dr Arthur Chesterfield-Evans would certainly fit the bill.

From the distinguished-sounding name to the clean-shaven face and tweed suit, he looks every inch the family GP.

So appearance-wise at least, you would be hard put to guess the night time activities of this well-established doctor.

But the true tale of Dr Chesterfield-Evans and the passion which drives him to criminal acts will be revealed in a court in Sydney on Friday.

Dr Chesterfield-Evans is a graffiti-artist. Call him what you will — vandal, artist or protector of the social conscience — he is dedicated, passionate and eloquent.

A member of the not-so-secret BUGA-UP (Billboard Utilising Graffitiists against Unhealthy Promotions) group, he is one of a band of Australian professionals, parents and workers who have shed some of their standards on vandalism and radical action in an attempt to protect their children and society against the so-called ills of cigarettes.

Dr Chesterfield-Evans took up his spray can more than 12 months ago when he realised how passionately he hated cigarettes, cigarette advertisements and what he terms the "deceitful" ways in which cigarette companies go about promoting their "deadly" product.

He proudly points out the black scrawls he and fellow-sympathisers have painted across the giant cigarette billboards of Sydney, the slogans linking cigarettes to early death, the ones that point out how easily addicts are created and show how the romantic images created by the cigarette companies are false.

Dr Chesterfield-Evans freely admits his night-time sojourns and flashes of spray-can wit are illegal — but he maintains it is not immoral to tell people of the potentially fatal effects of a product.

He is the fifth in a line of Australian doctors to go before the courts on

charges relating to night-time graffiti raids. He was convicted and fined \$20 (and ordered to pay \$158 compensation and \$160 in costs) in Parramatta Court 12 months ago and will know the result of his appeal on Friday.

If the appeal fails, Dr Chesterfield-Evans could face the big test of his convictions — either he can pay the fines and return to his practice or he can choose to serve his four days hard labor imprisonment and show his true grit.

He won't be making that decision until the judge makes his ruling.

Dr Chesterfield-Evans was in Brisbane last week to speak at a conference of the Australian Medical Students' Association. He and other speakers, including ALP Senator Margaret Reynolds and Australian Medical Association Queensland president, Professor David Weedon, said there was a need for doctors, professionals, governments and members of the public to fight to reduce cigarette use.

Dr Chesterfield-Evans told more than 200 students international studies had found conclusively that cigarette smoking was the major health threat of the 20th century. He said 16,000 deaths annually in Australia were attributed to cigarette-smoking and cigarette-related diseases. This was four times the national road toll and well above the number of deaths caused by heart failure and cancer.

"Bug-a-up is not against the cigarette companies or the cigarettes, but their advertisements. They tell you cigarettes make you beautiful, or suggest they will somehow gain you the class and money to own a yacht or sky-dive in the Mediterranean. None of it is substantiated," Dr Chesterfield-Evans said.

"Billboards are a one-way communication, big company to little sucker."