

## Newsletter August 2024

*Spasm HealthCare Museum, Building 6 Victoria Rd Gladesville  
Situating at the Crown Street bus stop on Victoria Road Gladesville*



*Not sure if you, dear reader, notice that the colours of background and font change from time to time on this newsletter. There are several templates to choose from so I'm changing the colour of the template this month and the title of it is called "Clarity". It has a nice ring to it, and it's certainly easier to see than some of the others.*

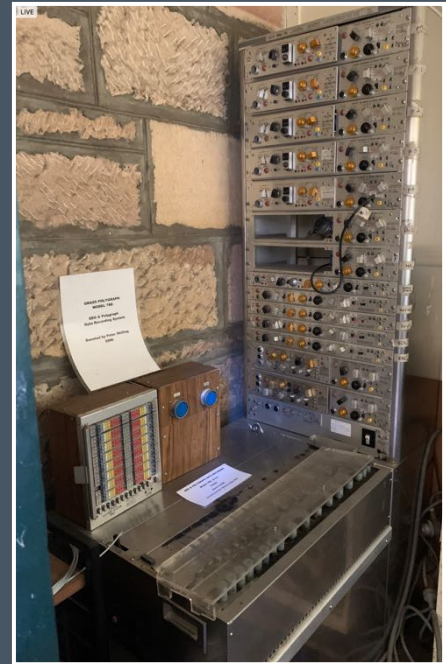
*We are also changing the names of some of the rooms at the museum Perhaps you read about that in the last newsletter? This month we will look at the little room that is called "The small room outback" Such an unassuming name for a little space that holds one of our biggest exhibits. A room that until very recently has not had very much attention paid to it. But this month it was noticed and appreciated by one of a small group of visitors who expectantly called in on the museum.*

*With both Gary and Ros away "the boys" aka Peter and Kerry thought they would have a quiet day..... That was until Sam and his group called in. One of the most appreciated machines on the tour was the Grass Polygraph machine Model 78D now on display in the small back room. Our records tell us this is - "A mobile 15 channel EEG and polygraph data recording system capable of measuring and recording multiple physiological parameters at the same time, Although primarily designed for laboratory use, the Grass found favour with anaesthetists involved in cardiac and neurosurgery. This particular instrument was used at RPAH in the cardiology department laboratory – a similar machine was used at RNSH in the neurosurgical operating room. The Grass Company of Quincy, Massachusetts, USA took its name from its founder Dr. Grass. Each machine was customised to the needs of the purchaser, after the purchaser made a pre-purchase visit to the company headquarters.*

*Other items in this room include various ECT machines.*

## August 24

Attendance at a Health Care Museum such as SPASM allows visitors to reflect on the past, to contrast with the present and contemplate the future.



'The "small room outback" contains a number of interesting items



## Visiting the HealthCare Museum in real time or online.

Opening hours for the Museum are 11 am – 3pm on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Saturday and 4<sup>th</sup> Monday of each month - February to November. Prior arrangements for small Group visits may also be arranged on other days – depending on volunteer availability.

### Executive Members :

President: Sandra Solarz.

Co Curators : Gary Klopfer & Peter Hartigan.

Secretary /Treasurer: Ros Berryman

**Volunteer Guides:** Val Corcoran, Kate Sauer, Kerry Moroney, John Murphy & Peter Hartigan

**Fire Warden:** Kerry Maroney.

Email : [info@spasmmuseum.org.au](mailto:info@spasmmuseum.org.au)

Contact SPASM by phone 0414993138

SPASM web sites at [www.spasmmuseum.org.au](http://www.spasmmuseum.org.au)

Like us on Facebook:

<https://www.facebook.com/SPASM1>

We also feature on the Hunters hill web page:

<https://www.facebook.com/discoverhh>

And the Museum and galleries of NSW website:

# Entry to the Museum takes you to another era:

## Building 1

**The Corridor** gives a time line of the Tarban Creek Asylum - Gladesville Hospital.

**1. The Ross Holland Anaesthetic Room.** Showcases the changes in anaesthetic apparatus used by surgeons, dentists and anaesthetists over the years. Look for: the ventilator, which has bicycle gears as part of its internal mechanism

**2. The Anne Jaumees Operating Theatre circa 2000** has a "new" op table, mayo stand, anaesthetic machine and endoscopic tower. All items were donated by Canterbury Hospital.

**3. The Pharmacy room** shows beautiful jars, and bottles, household remedies and also some early dispensing records, There is also an optical collection and some straight jackets to view.

**4. The small room outback** has the large EEG machine and ECT machines on display along with additional anaesthetic instruments and equipment.

## Building 6

**Room 1** takes us to a 1911 Consulting room: "**The consulting room of Dr. John Sand Smyth**" who practiced in Warwick Queensland. Also The Five Dock GP "**Dr. Menzies collection**" is in the large display case at back. The 1936-2006 instruments of GP **Dr. Leslie Bruce Johnson** are also now in this room.

**Room 2. The surgical "pick room"** contains instrument cupboards with a display of surgical instruments, sutures and blood collecting apparatus.

**Room 3 The St Thomas Hospital Operating Theatre** has a display of receptacles used in the operating theatres as well as an early operating table, early surgical instruments as well as ENT, obstetric, and general instruments. A timeline is provided for innovations. The early challenges of pain, sepsis & blood loss are explained.

**Room 4 The haemostasis room** an impressive display of diathermy units as well as other methods used to prevent bleeding during operations. Tourniquets, clamps, suturing material, bone wax, and more. Then there is the 1930's operating table, a swab rack, a large print photo of RNSH Thoracic Theatre Nurses C1954. Plus our 2024 acquisition the Sigmamotor heart lung pump machine.

**The corridor to the exit** takes you past a display of hearing trumpets, tracheostomy tubes and other historical equipment. There are small formaldehyde sterilising cupboards, sterilizing drums, as well as small water bath sterilizers used at the South pole! The dental section shows 4 types of dental drills, including a **very old treadle drill**, used between 1890s and 1930's. Our 2023 exhibit the C1920's Ritter-Biber X-ray machine takes pride of place at the end of the Corridor.

**The library work area** is now a pleasant place to sit & relax take tea and work on cataloging the many artifacts we have that have not been entered into the computer.

**The World War I & II area** is now complete with its large photograph of Casualty Clearing Station Operating Theatre in France and instrument sets used during both wars.

## Building 5

**The Tea Room** for group tea or coffee

**The Gladesville room** The staff bundy clock, and religious artifacts used at Gladesville during services: a very old bible; church organ & pew. There are photographs and some stories about past patients and attendants, as well as literature about the past history of the asylum.

*One of those ECT machines was used for the long running television production "A place to call home". There are also some policies, procedures and check lists relating to ECT procedures for staff. They were in use in the 1970s and 1980s.*

*Various anaesthetic instruments such as facemask frames, towel clips, tongue forceps and mouth gags are in the large display case. There are various "Fergusson" mouth gags and also, perhaps a lesser known, "Mason" mouth gag. This instrument has a screw joint and silicone tubing covering the parallel tooth plates. There is a retaining screw to keep the gag open. The handles do not cross each other at the hinge. So by pressing them together the blades or short extremities are separated.*

*Francis Mason was born in 1837 qualified with distinction at King's in 1858 became FRCS in 1862 and in 1863 assistant surgeon under William Fergusson. In 1876 he was promoted to senior staff at St Thomas's, which he served until his premature death in 1886 from "hospital sore throat" and oedema of the larynx. He had the foresight to have his own tracheotomy instruments placed by his bed where they were needed 12 hours later. He recovered from the operation sufficiently to be able to settle his affairs the next day but died delirious 24 hours later. (ref. Proceedings of the History of Anaesthesia Society Feb 1990 Vol. 7 page 11-17)*

*Another display board contains a multiple number of connectors and exhale valves. The note beside them explains: Their purpose is to allow excess gas to escape from the breathing circuit without allowing air to enter. They are of British, American and Australian design.*

*Our final photo on this page is of our President following her recent visit to the museum last Monday. So great to have you back again with us Sandra!*

