

Newsletter September 2024

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



Like last month we have changed the colour of the template. This month it is called "Genesis". This template was chosen to commemorate those who began the museum. Ross Holland, Judy Cornell, Mayer Jones, Narelle Hines & Bevan Stone. They put so much effort into collecting, labeling and cataloging many artifacts for the museum collection. We have now over 8000 items in our Mosaic Data base collection. Our current mission is to ensure they are suitably housed and displayed.

Gary, our current co-curator, is giving a talk today to colleagues about the museum. Within that slide tape presentation one of the slides he is presenting is fittingly labeled "Challenges". He will speak of some the challenges our small charity museum, housed in heritage listed buildings has faced in the past, and those challenges we will certainly face in the future

Some of the challenges he identified are: display spaces; security; vandalism; unstable inflammable artefacts; old sandstone buildings; heritage listing; termites; asbestos; peeling paint from ceilings; isolation; no hot water; no air-conditioning; cataloging; duplications; limited interest; ageing volunteers; future directions. Some of these challenges have been addressed previously and even been topics of previous newsletters.

Whilst it is true that the buildings that house our museum collections are old, they are heritage listed and managed by the Ministry of Health. With this comes the wonderful team of Facility Management located just down the road from "our" building. Most repairs are managed swiftly and beautifully. We just have to report problems in a timely manner for Alex, Andy or the staff to solve the issues. Our grateful thanks go to them.

Security and vandalism is something that impacted on us a few years ago, following a write up in the SMH and sequentially lots of visitors. We had a break in and a few items were stolen. Fortunately that has not happened since and security offices regularly patrol the area. The fact that the buildings are old and the walls are made of solid sandstone means that the rooms are relatively cool in summer and so air-conditioning is less necessary.

September 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.



Peter Kerry and Gary putting together one of the first new display cases in 2021.



'The lovely article in the SMH by Linda Morris regarding Micro Museums

Visiting the HealthCare Museum in real time or online.

Opening hours for the Museum are 11 am – 3pm on the 2nd Saturday and 4th 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

Contact SPASM by phone 0414993138

SPASM web sites at 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:

<https://mgns.w.org.au/organisations/spasm/>

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.

Special thick blinds were installed many years ago that help preserve the artifacts from heat and light. Only opening the museum twice a month also ensures the areas stay cool and are relatively heat stable.

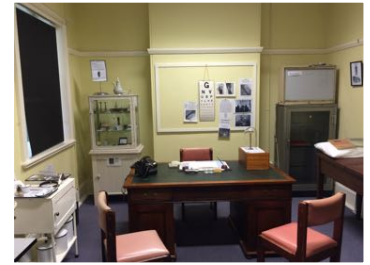
*Our biggest problems come not from the asbestos that is in some of the internal walls, but from silverfish that have found their way into our extensive, relatively untouched, library. A phone call to **Caroline Lorentz from NSW Library and advice from Jonathon London, has given us some ideas and work to do to mitigate this problem. Thank you so much!***

Space to display the large number of artifacts was always a concern. We have maximized the space available with the purchase of a number of display cabinets over the last 4 years, which look great, however there is no doubt that we could do with some more space to allow a better display of some of the larger items.

*Cataloging was one task that we thought we had at last under control, however with the recent withdrawal of one of our volunteers this job has fallen back again. **So we are on the lookout for someone who loves data entry!** Detailed data about each of the artifacts are entered into the computer, with additional files and notes recorded for a number of items. Kate and Val are adept at looking up items in our multitude of catalogues; John is great on the Internet; Peter, Gary, Sandra and Kerry have a wealth of personal experience to add. Each time we visit the museum my personal goal is to ensure we add, to our Mosaic computer records, some of the data that has been recorded on paper but not yet put into the system. Also any new items added to our collection are entered onto the computer ASAP. Not as much detail is entered as previously, but at least (I tell myself) they and their identification number are now safely recorded.*

*Since Covid - large groups have not visited the museum. Our visitors now come from walkers who are discovering the delights of the Gladesville area. Sadly such walkers rarely bring cash with them so admission fees have dwindled. We are **visiting the Bank this week to hopefully solve this problem & allow cashless transfers.***

*Aging volunteers is one challenge that we seem not to be able to solve. **If anyone has a solution we would love to hear from you!***



Health Care Museum
SPASM

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