

SPASM MUSE

Newsletter May 2018

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



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.

This Special May newsletter was created to be part of a poster display at the ACORN/ASIAORNA conference in Adelaide. We look at: Samples and records held by SPASM relating to : Syringes.

In ancient Greece The "pyoukos" (**syringe**) was a medical instrument similar to the contemporary **syringe**. It was used for the removal of pus with suction and for the addition of liquids with depression (injection)

1) Brass Syringes, used well before the 19th Century to administer medications rectally. They were known as "clysters" (the ancient word for enema) & were of dubious value except in the case of opium.

2) Bladder Syringes, predate hypodermic injection by many years. Early designs were crude and unsanitary. Examples show bladder syringes with cotton thread, cork and rubber pistons.

3) The all metal syringe, with the technology available in the second half of the 19th Century allowed manufacture of a leak-proof all-metal syringe which had the additional advantage of being easily sterilised and not interacting with the medication. Such syringes were graduated on the shaft of the plunger.....PTO.

Examples of Syringes on display in the SPASM museum:

1) Brass Syringe



2) Bladder Syringe




3) All Metal Syringe

Visiting the HealthCare Museum in real time or online.

Opening hours for the Museum is 11 am – 3pm on the 2nd Saturday and 4th Monday of each month February to November. Prior arrangements for Group visits may also be arranged on these days, or other days - depending on volunteer availability. The museum is housed in two 1870's Heritage listed sandstone buildings on the old Tarban Creek / Gladesville Hospital site. It is easily reached as it is on Victoria road near the Gladesville Bridge. If travelling by public transport the Crown street bus stop on Victoria Road is conveniently directly in front of the museum.

Executive Members- President: Sandra Solarz
Secretary / Treasurer: Ros Berryman
Committee Members: Val Corcoran, Kate Paton, Margaret Warby & Peter Hartigan

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www.discoverhuntershill.com.au/whats-on

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Entry to the Museum takes you to another era:



The Military syringe - Perhaps the most elegant example of an all metal syringe is the American syringe and needle case, carried by medical officers in the field during World War 1. The entire assembly could be sterilised and then carried ready for use. Needles were encased in guards to prevent their points and a most ingenious system of right and left hand threads enabled them to be extracted from the sheath and connected to the syringe in a single movement.

1949 THE WORLDS FIRST PLASTIC DISPOSABLE SYRINGE WAS CREATED IN ADELAIDE

By 1949 penicillin injections were being used to treat most bacterial infections, but penicillin tended to clog up glass syringes and make them hard to clean. To solve the problem, Austrian inventor, **Charles Rothauer** created the world's first plastic, disposable hypodermic syringe at his **Adelaide factory** the Quality Toy Co., at the request of **Harry Willis** of AM Bickford & Sons, a Drug company attempting to develop inexpensive plastic syringes.

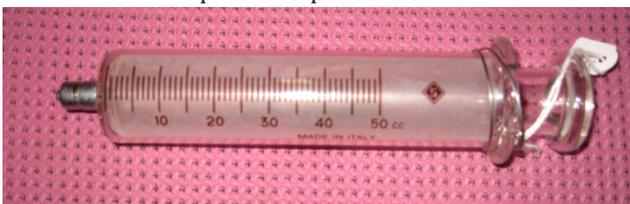
Rothauer made the first syringes in polyethylene. However, because polyethylene softens with heat, the syringes had to be chemically sterilised prior to packaging, which made them expensive. In 1951: Rothauer produced the first injection-moulded syringes made of **polypropylene**, a plastic that can be heat-sterilised, for a company called Bickfords. Millions were made for Australian and export markets. <https://ma.as/142885> |author Museum of Applied Arts & Sciences



The metal and glass syringe, apart from its fragility had obvious advantages to all metal syringes: the contents were visible and calibration was much easier to see and adjust. For most of the first half of the 20th century metal and glass syringes predominated. They came in many forms and some were designed to be dismantled into as many as five or six different parts. This syringe was **manufactured in Victoria** by Ogden Industries, a company established in 1934. This syringe box is date stamped 21 Sept 1948.



"The Summit All Glass Hypodermic syringe" with slip nozzle and a beautiful blue glass plunger, with it's original red cardboard box. A blue plunger often signified a tuberculin syringe or a syringe for allergy testing. This syringe was an "Everett Product" The sole wholesale distributor was Amalgamated Dental Co Ltd Melbourne & Sydney. The syringe is marked "British Made" The date on the box lid is April 1966. (S & N entered the Hypodermic syringe market in 1934 with the purchase of S & R J Everett & Co)



Early **"Glass Syringes"** were individually numbered on both plunger and barrel. By the time these syringes appeared the "luer lock" nozzle, which became the standard, had superseded the metal "record taper" nozzle. Spare barrels were available for some brands, although there was still a problem in matching the glass barrel to the glass plunger, many were not interchangeable and plungers became stuck in the barrel if not matching.



Of all syringes in the collection perhaps my favourite is this small glass 20 Minim syringe with an all glass plunger and record nozzle. Minim markings ceased in 1970s. So this syringe was manufactured before this date. It has a most beautiful blue and gold coloured glass plunger. If you have any more information about this type of syringe please see us at the SPASM stand.

All References SPASM records accessed 3/2018

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