

Newsletter OCTOBER 2021

Spasm HealthCare Museum Building 6 Victoria Rd Gladesville
No 1 gate house at the Crown Street bus stop on Victoria Road Gladesville



Our first webinar of the series "*SPASM health Care Museum Reflections on the past present & future*" remains available on demand until further notice, so if you missed it, you can still view it by entering bit.ly/3rFC9Z6 in google.

Our next webinar, hosted by Molnlycke, may not be presented until the new year. Sally and I explore the contents of one of a number of beautiful boxed sets of instruments on display in the museum. We will also discuss the nurses role in early surgery. We will let you know more when further details are available. In future webinars we hope to discuss the anaesthetists equipment and roles. **If you would like to be part of those webinars please let us know so that you can be included in the planning process.**

The photo opposite is one of early surgery, at the University College Hospital Medical School London 1898. One nurse appears to be attending a small bench model boiling water steriliser, probably heated by a gas burner. (We have examples of this type of water steriliser at the museum.) The nurse on the patient's left side appears to be holding a sponge. Note the clothes worn by all attendees at this operation, and not a mask in sight! It was at this hospital that surgeon Robert Liston (1794-1847) performed the first amputation under ether anaesthesia in England in 1846. You can Learn more about this hospital on the website below.

<https://ezitis.myzen.co.uk/universitycollege.html>

We continue to have a monthly meeting on the fourth Monday of each month via Zoom. **If anyone wishes to attend those please let us know so that we can include you in the invitation.**

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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

SPASM Health Care Museum

Reflections on the past, present & future

Wednesday 11th August 2021
2:00 PM AEDT / 04:00 PM NZDT

This webinar will be available on-demand for all registrants.

Duration: 60 mins inc. LIVE Q&A



Visit: bit.ly/3rFC9Z6 to view the webinar.



Photo University Hospital Medical School London C1898



On Page 2 we discuss face masks

Visiting the HealthCare Museum in real time or online.

Opening hours for the Museum is normally 11 am – 3pm on the 2nd Saturday and 4th Monday of each month - February to November. **The museum is currently closed to the public, until further notice, due to Covid restrictions, but we hope members are enjoying the newsletters.**

Executive Members : President Sandra Solarz
Curator: Dr. Gary Klopfer
Secretary /Treasurer: Ros Berryman
Volunteer Guides: Val Corcoran, Kate Paton, Dr. Kerry Maroney & Peter Hartigan

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SPASM WEBSITE: www.spasmmuseum.org.au

FACEBOOK google search for [DiscoverHuntersHill Facebook](#)

FACEBOOK:google search for: [Society for the Preservation of Artefacts of surgery and medicine SPASM](#)

ACCESS PAST SPASM NEWSLETTERS ON LINE AT:
<http://www.spasmmuseum.org.au/newsletters.html>

Entry to the Museum takes you to another era: “of medical attire – masks ”

This month we consider apparel worn to prevent transmission of disease.

The Black plague ravaged Europe from 1347-1351, killing 25-50 million people. The John Martin Rare Book room at the University in the State of Iowa relates to the history of medicine. The Plague Doctor Costume is described, (although other writings claim this is a hoax) The web site can be sourced at : <http://hosted.lib.uiowa.edu/histmed/plague/>



THE PLAGUE DOCTOR COSTUME

“The plague doctor costume consisted of an ankle length overcoat, a bird-like beak mask filled with sweet or strong smelling substances, along with gloves and boots. The mask had glass openings for the eyes. Straps held the beak in front of the doctor’s nose, which had two small nose holes and was a type of respirator. The beak could hold dried flowers (e.g. roses or carnations), herbs (e.g. mint), spices, camphor or a vinegar sponge. The purpose of the mask was to remove bad smells, thought to be the principal cause of the disease. Doctors believed the herbs would counter the “evil” smells of the plague and prevent them from becoming infected. The costume included a wide brimmed leather hat to indicate their profession. They used wooden canes to point out areas needing attention and to examine patients without touching them. The canes were also used to keep people away and to remove clothing from plague victims without having to touch them.”

In 1750 JOHN HUXHAM (1692-1768) wrote “An essay on fevers, and their various kinds, as depending on different constitutions of the blood”. 2nd ed. London, 1750. This essay is said to contain the first use of the word “influenza” by an English physician. See p. 144.

In 1897 Johann Mikulicz-Radecki (1850-1905) from the university of Breslau and bacteriologist Carl Flugge (1847-1923) demonstrated how ordinary conversation could spread respiratory droplets containing bacteria. Mickulicz-Radecki created a facemask – “a piece of gauze tied by two strings to the cap, which covered the nose, mouth and beard.”

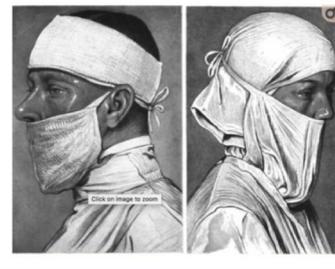
In 1905 Dr. Alice Hamilton (1869-1970) proposed that Scarlet fever was transmitted through droplet infection and recommended that surgeons wear masks.

In 1918 Mask wearing was encouraged to prevent infection during the Spanish flu. In San Francisco, citizens were fined \$5, if they were caught in public without a mask. “The mandate was not without protest.” <http://rimed.org/rimedicaljournal/2020/12/2020-12-72-spotlight-pan.pdf>

This is an interesting face cover made of gauze advocated by British Surgeon B.G.A. Moynihan. (1865-1936) “The gauze is suspended on hooks dependent from a spectacle frame”



Gauze mask. The gauze is suspended on hooks dependent from a spectacle frame.



Face Masks and forehead bandage for persons with long hair

Taken from Kirschner, M. Allgemeine und Spezielle Chirurgische Operationslehre Bd I, Julius Springer, Berlin, 1927

At this time, it was not common to cover the nose with a cloth-made mask.

<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC7309199/>



TWO WOMEN SITTING ON A PARK BENCH WEARING FACE SCARVES DURING THE PANDEMIC IN 1918

At the end of the First world war in 1918 and 1919 “The Spanish Flu pandemic killed more than 30 million people world wide. As an island, Australia was able to quarantine people when they arrived by sea. Despite this, about 15,000 Australian died of the flu in 1919.”

Source National Museum Australia

At the Museum we have a number of those little gauze multiuse facemasks that were washed and rolled up into little balls for storage. They were unwrapped and worn by nurses and surgeons during the 1930’s – 1970’s.

Since the 1990’s single use disposable masks P2 or N95 are fitted to the face so as to allow a leak rate of less than 30mL and filter more than 95% of particles that are 0.3 microns in size or larger..... We have come a long way in the development of masks.



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Founded by Prof Ross Holland AM 1928-2017