

SPASM MUSE

Newsletter February 2023

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



This month we will explore some of the artifacts on display in the John Sands Smyth room at SPASM. This room has been set up to depict a GP's office (1910-1960's) with desk, examination couch and diagnostic aides such as an wooden Xray viewing box, a tray with instruments to examine the nose, ear and throat. The room was initially developed from artefacts of Dr John (Jack) Sands-Smyth. His university degrees, medical registration and BMA car badges are framed and hang on the wall. He graduated from Sydney University in 1910 and practiced in Warwick Queensland from 1911. He needed to hold registrations in Queensland and NSW to allow his certificates and prescriptions to be legal in both states. This situation was only remedied in 2010 with National registration of doctors. In 1915 Jack's mother and sisters went to Cairo. His mother volunteered and helped set up the Empire Soldier's club in Cairo and his sisters joined a volunteer aid detachment as nurses at the No 1 AGH a 1,000 bed military hospital in Cairo. Jack enlisted in the Australian Army Medical Corps in April 1915 and met up with his mother and sister in London. The whole family survived the war and returned to Sydney.

Another of the collections in this room belonged to Dr Bruce Menzies who graduated from Sydney University in 1944 After two years at RNSH he commenced GP work in Drummoyne in 1946 following his father's career as a GP in the area. "Bruce served others, saved lives and welcomed more that 2000 lives into the world during his time as a GP." * For about 40 years "Dr Menzies was responsible for the immunisation program for all children in Drummoyne. For this he was honoured by the City of Canada bay".** He retired on 30 June 2003.

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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.



Infant weighing scales, such as these, were often a feature of a GP practice.



The Menzies collection - Items used by Dr. Menzies in his GP practice at Five Dock Sydney.

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 these days, or other days – depending on volunteer availability.

Executive Members :

President: Sandra Solarz

Curator : Gary Klopfer

Secretary /Treasurer: Ros Berryman

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

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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:

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And the Museum and galleries of NSW website:

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

* Dr Bruce Menzies turns 101 -a print out displayed at the museum

** MS Angela D'Amore Private Members Statements Hansard and Papers Wed 25th June 2003 item 49 of 66

Entry to the Museum takes you to another era:

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 the back of the room.

Room 2. The surgical “pick room” contains instrument cupboards with a large display of surgical instruments, sutures and blood collecting apparatus | There’s also a new orthopaedic display cupboard.

Room 3 The St Thomas Hospital Operating Theatre Room hosts an evolutionary display of receptacles used in the operating theatres. An early operating table, early surgical & anaesthetic apparatus are displayed as well as ENT, obstetric, and general instruments. The notice board provides a time line for innovations, photos and the story of 3 early surgical challenges: pain, sepsis & blood loss.

Room 4 The haemostasis room is also home to: 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, and we now also have a swab rack, mayo table and a large print photo of RNSH Thoracic Theatre Nurses C1954.

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.

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. We also have to add new books & cabinets to the database.

The World War I & II area, once our store room and wash up area, is now complete with its large photograph of Casualty Clearing Station Operating Theatre in France and various instrument sets used by different surgeons during both wars.

Building 1

The 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.

The pharmacy room shows beautiful jars, and bottles, household remedies and also some early dispensing records. An optical collection has been added.

A small room now has the EEG machine on display along with additional anaesthetic instruments.

The Corridor and Gladesville Room gives a time line of the Tarban Creek Asylum- Gladesville Hospital. There are ECT machines, anaesthetic equipment, straight jackets and mittens, photographs and stories from patients and attendants, and religious artifacts used at Gladesville during services.



Instruments & items typical of those used by a GP 1940 -1980 used by Dr Menzies at his GP practice at 95 Lyons Rd Drummoyne. Indicating use as anaesthetic aides, as well as surgery such as tonsillectomy adenoidectomy .



1. Magill forceps. These were first described by Magill in 1920 and they were used as an aid for nasotracheal intubation as well as to remove foreign bodies.



2. A sterile eye pad sewn into a gauze bandage roll. The pad was placed over the eye and the bandage wrapped around the head. In its original cardboard box.



3. St Clair Thompson adenoid curette and cage, with fluted handle and angled fenestrated curette cage with distal 12mm cutting blade. Designed by Sir St Clair Thompson (1858-1943) who was a British surgeon and professor of laryngology.



4. Ether Mask c 1940-60. A cloth rag would be placed over the metal wire, designed to keep ether, which could cause irritation, away from the patient’s skin.



5. A Guys Hospital straight tongue holding forcep with triangular fenestrated blades, serrated jaws & take off joint and ratchet.



6. A black rubber airway connector with metal Cobb endotracheal tube suction connector. The 1.6mm diameter liquorice stick has an internal diameter of 9mm.



7. Cross action towel clip. Used to hold cloth drapes in place during surgery, mostly discontinued in 1980’s due to the damage sustained by the drapes.

8. Wilson tonsil artery forceps, curved jaws and angled shaft with screw joint.

9. The white coat always worn by Dr Menzies.



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