

# SPASM MUSEUM

## Newsletter September 2023

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



The AGM was held on August 18<sup>th</sup> Thanks to all those who attended and also to those who sent their apologies. It is a special time each year when we showcase the museum and have a delicious lunch together. This year was no exception and the lunch was held in Building 5 in our tearoom. We were very pleased to show our three new areas:

- The Canterbury Hospital exhibit c1995-2000 operating theatre
- The “New Gladesville room” now housed in Bulding 5.
- The X-ray section displaying magnificent 1920s xray machine.

At the AGM Helen Patterson and Maureen Copley from Ryde Historical society have been welcomed to Spasm as “Friends of the Museum” both ladies frequently assist on open days welcoming people to the Gladesville Room. Their assistance and expertise is greatly appreciated.

Peter Hartigan was appointed as Co-Curator, a position created to assist our current curator Gary Klopfer who we are very pleased to announce will continue in his role, and allow another member experience the joy of an executive position!

Over 20 people attended the AGM. It was a very merry meeting, as evidenced by these photos. Lunch as usual was delicious with salads provided by Kate, chicken by Gary and Sandra, quiche by Ros, curry by Sue, egg salad by Carol, drinks by Peter, potato salad & bread rolls by Val, melting moments by Kerry, choc fudge by Jenny, orange cake by Violet.

### Our volunteers are still saving lives.

We received a phone call from a grateful member of the public who drove his car into the hospital grounds on Monday August 28<sup>th</sup> looking for assistance. He was experiencing chest pain radiating down his left arm. The nurse who met him advised him to contact the ambulance service STAT. He had a stent inserted the next day. He rang us the following week to say “thank you for saving his life.” Congratulations Kate for your excellent ministrations!

## September 2023

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.



Members Prof Barry Baker, Warren Bruce, Ian Edmiston and Gary Klopfer inspecting the WW1 exhibit to name the anaesthetic apparatus depicted.



Robynne McEachran Upton, Sally Sutherland Fraser, Violet La Forrest and Lexi Upton on a quick tour of the museum before the AGM

## 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 those days or 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, Carol Logie, Kerry Moroney, John Murphy & Peter Hartigan

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:

<https://mgnsww.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 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 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.

**4. The small room outback** has the large EEG machine and ECT machines on display along with straight jackets and 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 is 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, 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. Our latest exhibit the C1920's Ritter-Biber Xray 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 various instrument sets used during both wars.

## **Building 5**

**The Tea Room** where you can have a cup of 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.



The ACN History Faculty's inaugural Meet & Greet on Saturday 9th September was held at SPASM last weekend. It was a small but merry group that enjoyed coffee tea and cake to begin their meeting. Leslie Potter welcomed the group and promoted the latest publication from the ACN. "*No longer Silent, Voices of 21st Century Nurses.*" She also presented SPASM with a copy for our library. Photographed here were Lauren Barber, Sally Sutherland Fraser, Dr Judith Godden, Marilyn Gendek, Kathy Hons, Leslie Potter, Ellen Moore, Agnes Shea and Val Corcoran. **Kathy has agreed to become a member of the museum**, and Lauren has offered to donate a glass and metal syringe to our collection. Five members of the public who saw our open sign also joined us later that day, so it was a good day for the museum.



After the visitors left and the dust settled, our new Co Curators and Ros held our executive meeting. One of the items to discuss was the latest request we received from a retired anaesthetist in the UK - Dr John Dingley. John was part of a group in the UK who designed and built a ventilator demonstrator in response to the Covid crisis in March 2020.

John requested photos or a video clip showing our East Radcliff ventilator actually working!



Ros, Gary, Peter and Val went off to the Anaesthetic Room to see if we could start up and film the East Radcliff Ventilator. After

a careful safety inspection the correct switch was activated and this amazing machine sprang to life..... A magical sound !! Later that night, following a helpful suggestion from Sally, the very large video file was successfully sent to John.

**John, we are pleased to report, is now our very first international member!**

**So all in all a very good day for the museum** a, thank you so much to all members and visitors who make belonging to this museum such an interesting and rewarding experience.

Corporate Members of SPASM

NSW OTA.

NSW Nurses Association

Health Care Museum  
SPASM