

Newsletter April 2025

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



April has been a quieter and less expensive time for us at the museum, which is just as well with all the home activities due to Easter and ANZAC day holidays. At the Museum the “inner sanctum” has still not been repaired as approval for repairs does take some time apparently. So our move of items from the overcrowded anaesthetic room has not yet been implemented.

We received some walk in visitors to the museum last Saturday who were very interested in the displays. So many people when they come, say they often walk around the Gladesville site, notice the museum and then plan to return at a later time when we are open. One even took the time to send us the photo above.

We also had a visit from Dr. Kerri Melehan a sleep scientist from RPA who donated a machine to us that was previously used in Sleep studies. She also toured the whole museum and was so excited when she saw our Grass Machine. Apparently machines like this were used during sleep to study brain activity. She has offered to talk about the machine she donated and the Grass machine when we have set them up in their new home once the “inner sanctum” has been repaired. We will let you know when that happens.

In the meantime we continue showing day trippers around and as time permits entering data onto the system. It seems like each time we open another drawer we find artifacts and paper records that have been completed but just not yet entered onto the system.

Next Monday is “bring your dog to the museum day” as Val often brings Charlie and I intend to bring Rralph. Hope to see you there too.

April 2025

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.



A member of the public sent this photo to us some time ago. Not sure why the lights were on, but it looks very beautiful doesn't it !



Val's Charlie at an open day last year and My Rralph at home on the couch!

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.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.

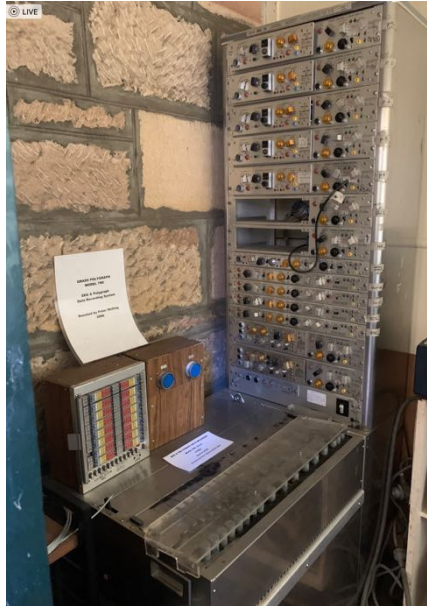
The library work area is now a pleasant place to sit & relax take tea and work on cataloging the many artifacts we have that have not been entered into the computer.

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.



Our item of interest this month would have to be the Grass Machine. It could be used as a Lie detector (but wasn't) It could measure, Skin conduction, Pulse, Heart rate, Breathing rate, EEG waves and more. If you would like to know about this machine Kerri has offered to give a talk about her use of this type of machine during her work as a sleep scientist.



The recently donated apparatus A "Rigiscan Plus" used to measure tumescence during REM sleep. for display in the new viewing room soon.

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NSW O.T.A.
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