

## Newsletter October 2025

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



We have a large display board at the museum; it was put together many years ago, perhaps by Ross Holland. The label states that all of these items are classified as “exhale valves.” Their purpose was to allow excess gas to escape from the breathing circuit without allowing air to enter. They are of British, American and Australian design, and used between 1920 and 1970. If one of our members would like to spend an afternoon naming each one of these exhale valves that would add greatly to our collective knowledge.

Looking at the board myself with a “non anaesthetic” focus, I have always thought of them as simply “connectors.” They remind me of the many connections we at the museum have made through the years. Certainly since 1987 when the SPASM was formed we have had 154 members join our group. In addition we have formed many connections over the years though group visits, attendance at conferences, associations with select organisations and it is those connections that I would like to celebrate in this newsletter.

Our connections to the NSW Operating Theatre Association, the NSW College of Nursing and the A& N.Z. College of Anaesthetists began 25-37 years ago. Both Nursing fraternities have maintained strong connections to this day supporting us by annual corporate sponsorships. Individual anaesthetists have maintained the anaesthetic connection and we are grateful for their support.

Connections are also made by group visits and a number of organisations throughout the years have visited the museum and added to our enjoyment of showing our unique collection of artifacts. These artifacts include items from medicine, surgery, anaesthetics, nursing, radiography, sleep studies and sterilizing technology. They are all housed within the unique environment of the first purpose built Mental Health facility in Australia!

The following photos have captured some of those connections. **In the new year we invite you all to reconnect with the museum to view our new display area** made possible by the excellent remedial work of Alex and his crew from Facilities NSW Health, one of our most important connections. We are grateful for their support and their maintenance of these amazing heritage buildings we occupy.

## October 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.



The display of “exhale valves” - currently unnamed.

Gary & Ros with Alex (Property Admin officer) and James (Heritage Project Manager NSW Health.)



## 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 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](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://mgns.w.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.

**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 New 2025 Display area** has the large EEG machine and multiple ECT machines on display along with historical ECG equipment. Also a Special tribute to the SA Both Bros who invented early ECG equipment.

## Building 6

**Room 1** is set up as 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 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, Including the Ryde Historical book about the burial site at the museum.



June 2021 Dundas Probus



2022 Baulkham Hills Bus Group



April 2023 North Rocks women's Group



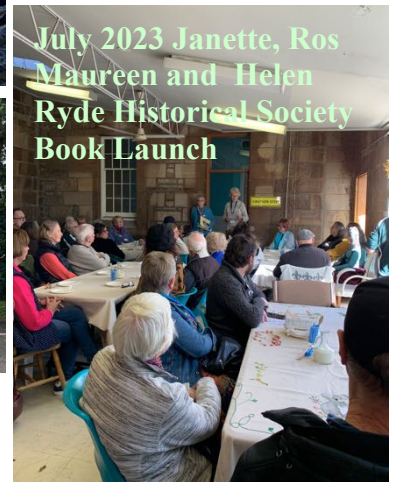
2022 Antique and Classic Motor Club



Collecting exhibit for NSW Library exhibition Kill or Cure



July 2023 Janette, Ros Maureen and Helen Ryde Historical Society Book Launch



June 2022 Periop nurses group from Newcastle



March 2022 Haberfield Probus Group

## A brief pictorial history of the use of protective masks



Certificate of Attendance can be downloaded at the end of the webinar for CPD redemption. With the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, masks have been at the forefront of everyday life.

Join us as we look back over the early days of masks discussing some unusual practices including The Plague Doctor Costume and the bank-like masks claimed to come to have been worn during the Black plague in the 1600's. We look at different mask practices and construction as we move into modern day masks. We've certainly come a long way in the development of masks.

**MEET THE SPEAKERS**

- Ree Barryman** (Ms. Ree Barryman, Grad Dip Admin, BA, MS NZQA)
- Sally Sutherland-Fraser** (Ms. Sally Sutherland-Fraser, Cert (Pharm. Bus), Cert of TAC, MACK, RACQNS)
- Jo Douglas** (Ms. Jo Douglas, MSc, MEd, MEdTech)

Thursday 2nd December 2021  
02:30 PM AEST (01:30 PM NZST)

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

Duration: 60 minutes

Scan the QR code or visit <https://bit.ly/20Wd8r1> to register for this webinar.

\*For iPhone - scan the code with the Camera. For Android phones - download a QR Code Reader app from Google Play.

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Dec 2021 Working with Jo Douglas, Molnlycke on Mask Webinar.

Corporate Members of SPASM  
NSW OTA.  
NSW Nurses Association

