



# Museum Matters

Volume 6, Issue 2  
June 2022



**Committee:**  
Chairman: M. Parcell  
Secretary: J. Kingston  
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## IPSWICH HOSPITAL MUSEUM Inc.

### Chairman's Chatterings

I am not sure if you are having the same experience but my ability to judge the years has been challenged by the recent pandemic. It is incredible to think that we have not been able to invite members of the public into the A.E. Wilcox museum for more than two years and it may yet be some time before we can again open the doors.

The Greek philosopher Plato is attributed with this famous quote 'Necessity is the mother of invention'. It is out of desire and necessity that the Museum volunteers have been preparing to be able to bring the rich stories and history of Ipswich Hospital into the virtual realm. We are currently working on creating a series of animations of various significant people, improvements in clinical care and infrastructure milestones. It is envisaged that improving the Museum's virtual offerings will improve access to the many inspiring stories that the Museum has to offer. We are in the early stages and have applied for a number of community based grants to assist us to achieve this aspiration. We continue to welcome anyone who wishes to be part of the museum or who wish to support us financially.

We welcome all contact with us via our Facebook group (Friends of the Ipswich Hospital Museum) or on our website.

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### Museum Display

Members of the public have been unable to visit the Ipswich Hospital Museum since March 2020. For a long period during the last two years the museum was being used in connection with the COVID-19 testing clinic in Jubilee Building. There is now a demountable building behind Jubilee being used as the testing clinic.

To add to the museum's woes, two of the storage areas used to hold collections were requisitioned—one at Cribb House used to sort, catalogue and store smaller items such as photographs, books, instruments and textiles, was emptied to make way as part of the COVID-19 vaccination clinic; another underneath the car park is now being used as part of the site office for the builders of the new mental health unit. The items stored in these two areas were taken to the Park—Centre for Mental Health.

Late last year volunteers cleared and cleaned a permanent storage area on the hospital campus and much of the museum's collection has been brought back from The Park and housed here.

In the last few weeks museum volunteers have been allowed to return to the museum and have cleaned and sorted, preparing for when the public can be welcomed back—one day.

In this edition of Museum Matters we show you some items which are on permanent display in the museum.



Early 1900s—wooden **bedside table** and splash back with marble top. Note the towel hangers on the sides. On top is an enamel water jug, china feeding cup and china Nelson's inhaler. The inhaler was used to treat chest infections and was invented between 1861 and 1865. It is still manufactured today with very few modifications. The inventor is believed to be Dr David Hume Nelson, a Scottish born English doctor.



#### Pill Rolling Board

In the early 20th century, pills were not mass produced and ready to be distributed at a pharmacy the way they are today. If a doctor prescribed you a medicine to be taken in pill form, pharmacists compounded those pills themselves. That was the purpose of this device. Pharmacist would measure carefully then mix their wet and dry ingredients separately in different mortars and pestles. They would then combine the ingredients to make a paste, which they would roll out with a pharmaceutical spatula to form a pill pipe. When the pill pipe was carefully, evenly formed, it was placed in the teeth of the device and the upper component was rolled over top to separate the paste into pills. The pharmacist then rounded and smoothed each pill with a rolling disc.



#### Bandage Winding Machine

Circa 1905-1933. The bandage winding machine manually wound calico bandages for patient use. A sheet of calico, often sheets, was torn into strips of differing widths. The length was around 8 feet or 240 cm. The bandage was wound around the handle shaft by hand initially to get purchase. Then the handle was turned until the bandage was tightly wound. Each bandage could be reused, after it was washed, dried and rewound on the machine.

## Full Circle of Children's Care — Sunshine Ward to Sunshine Ward

The Sunshine Ward opened in July 1935. It was the second purpose-built children's ward. The first was the Jubilee Ward which opened in 1887.

In 1978 the children's ward was moved into the new main hospital building and named DTPU (David Trumpy Paediatric Unit). Twenty years later, after the original Sunshine Ward was demolished, children's moved again to its current home in the newest ward block and is once more called Sunshine Ward.

Sr Steph Shannon, whose career spanned from the original Sunshine Ward in the 1950s to DTPU and finally to her retirement from the new Sunshine Ward, remembers the many changes and challenges during this time.

Steph recalls the grief and disappointment when informed of the planned demolition of the original Sunshine Ward.

"To enable high standards of care for our children and their families, change and adaptability to rethink and redirect our energies and nursing practices was paramount. Our 'paediatric team' was dedicated, high spirited and highly motivated and prepared to participate, plan and support each other and meet whatever challenges presented."

First of such challenges in the 'planning stage' of the David Trumpy Paediatric Unit was the height of window ledges! If, in keeping with the designer's vision, each window level of the new high-rise was kept uniform, the young patients would not be able to see the outside world. With Dr Robert McGregor (affectionately known to the children as Dr Bob) leading the debating panel at executive level the challenge was won!



The young patients, no matter their height, could indeed visualise street environs and traffic.

The 33-bed unit accommodated large bright child orientated features. There were three 'dedicated' nurse workstations. This well-designed unit also boasted a dedicated 'burns bathroom' and isolation facilities with options to expand from three to eight beds or cots. The bright treatment room allowed privacy and a dedicated 'milk room' with large sterilizing tubs for bottles and teats. Pre-packed formulas had not yet evolved. The school room was multi-functional - converting to playroom/party room/Red Cross Play scheme (ably facilitated by Bev Louden and her team of volunteers).

Errol Hack was the teacher, seconded from Special Education, Ipswich. The young patients responded so positively to his 'no nonsense' approach and a relaxed discipline was achieved, placing normality into the hospitalised child's stay. He was ably assisted by teacher's aide Mrs Jan Logan.

"Once orientated to our DTPU the relationship of ownership and belonging quickly followed as we became accustomed to our new unit.

"Always on display was our mascot, 'Nurse Goodie Two Shoes', who was the brunt of many a caustic comment from our tired and hard worked paediatric nurses at the end of their long day with her cool, uncrushed and determined appearance!

"Our first baby was admitted on 24<sup>th</sup> March 1979 and many hundreds of young patients followed over the next 20 years.

"So rich are the memories and achievements - the good times, the sad times, the laughter, the resilience and the courage of our many children and families."

### Back to Sunshine

The first challenge with the move to the current Sunshine Ward was maintaining 'the title'. This was the topic of some protracted debate as Executive members believed that no hospital ward should carry a name! They argued this to be a government directive. There was an equally strong belief that since the new children's ward was on the ground footprint of the 1935 Sunshine Ward that it was most appropriate that this name should indeed claim 'rite of passage.' It also acknowledged the generosity of the Ipswich community to their support of the hospitalised child in financial and material donations. This corner stone having its foundation in the era of 'Uncle William', pseudonym for Fred Ware and his generosity in 1935. The winning streak to this argument came when there was a government building opened in Brisbane named after the highly recognised Neville

Bonner.

The new ward had 24 beds which was a loss of nine beds. It was proposed that children over 2 years of age and admitted for short stay elective surgery, be admitted to the Day Surgery Unit. A big plus was the inclusion for parent/care giver to access a dedicated parent retreat and overnight accommodation. A new concept was the design of one bay of 4 paediatric beds to allow 'swing capacity'. This would allow for these beds to accommodate maternity patients and be nursed by maternity staff. Division of both wards would be discrete.

"From the 1950s, where a child would be hospitalised for weeks and months, we were witnessing a change in the face of paediatric care. Now we have short stay, day surgery and rapid 'through put' of our young patients. We are watching evolve 'hospital in the home' where young babies and children with the most complex needs are nursed at home with support of navigational and support paediatric nurses. The tsunami of technology appears never ending and carries an impact to how and where we care for our sick children. The 'humanity' of our interactions must be held firmly to our hearts."



Above: The first baby admitted to DTPU on 24 March 1979 with Sr Steph Shannon.

Above left: Steph & patients with another of the colourful murals in DTPU.

Editors Note: As a staff member at the hospital for many years I remember the staff calling DTPU "Dittypoo". Steph said the term would have been coined by a doctor. She never used it personally but it "was used affectionately and frequently to 'get a rise' out of me!!!!", she said.



This cross stitch panel was created by one of the children's ward staff, Shona Fitzpatrick, after the move from DTPU to the current Sunshine Ward. It was displayed in the Sunshine Ward for a period but is now held in the museum collection.

Shona trained at PAH and started work in David Trumpy Paediatric Unit (DTPU) in 1988 as a novice graduate. She said she was supported, nurtured, educated and guided by an incredible team of nurses lead by Sr Steph Shannon. "The children and families of Ipswich that we partnered with were also great teachers."

"I moved away to work in paediatrics in Townsville but returned to DTPU in 1994 and continued to work in paediatrics at Ipswich in many differing roles".

Shona left Ipswich Hospital in 2017 to work as a Nurse Navigator for Rural and Remote children and families at Queensland Children's Hospital.

She is currently working with the Statewide Paediatric Palliative Care Service at Queensland Children's Hospital, supporting children and families around the state with life limiting illnesses .

"I am lucky to continue to love what I do", she says.



Shona Fitzpatrick

### Brompton's Mixture (Cocktail)

Morphine Hydrochloride	gr ¼
Cocaine	gr 1/6
Alcohol 90%	mms. 30
Syrup	3 drops
Aqua Chlorate ad	3 s.s

Sedative/pain relief.

Morphine and cocaine were being used in combination in 1896 but the Brompton's Cocktail was first published in the Formulary of the Royal Brompton Hospital in London in 1952.

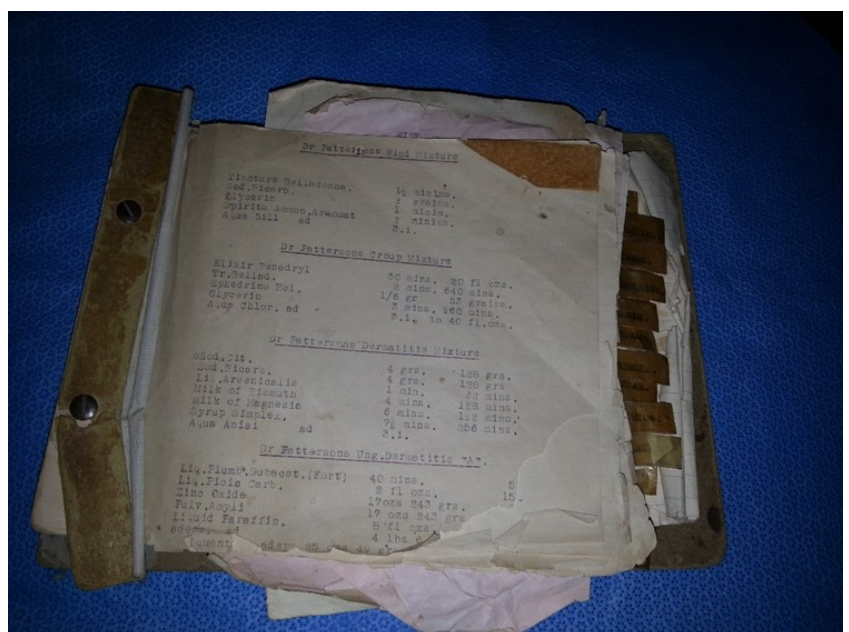
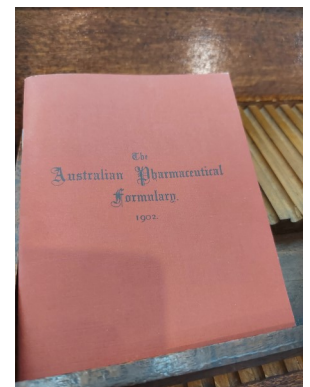
This was a modification of a previous formula which contained gin and honey instead of alcohol and syrup. It was used as a sedative and for intractable pain.



### Apothecary Box

A doctor would carry this large wooden box from ward to ward dispensing medications on his rounds. It contains several drawers, a tray and a lift up expanding lid. These boxes were used predominately in the 1800s and came in many sizes and layouts.

Within one of the drawers is a copy of the Australian Pharmaceutical Formulary 1902 (right), a small booklet containing commonly used recipes.



*Ipswich Hospital Pharmacy Recipe Book* (right), probably from the 1930s but could be earlier. Although the cover has suffered some damage most of the typewritten and handwritten pages are legible. The book has been transcribed into a digital copy by one of the museum volunteers. It contains many recipes of medicines, tablets and balms in use at the hospital then, including some favourite recipes of doctors.

One of the recipes in the book is Brompton's Mixture (above left).

## Letters from a Nurse

Continuing our insight into a new nurse's experiences at Ipswich Hospital in her first year. After extensive research of 1890 records, one of our museum volunteers has composed fictional letters from a nurse to a friend relating her view of hospital life at that time. The information is based on historically recorded facts.

1<sup>st</sup> September 1890

My Dear Friend,

*Hello again. It is two months since my last letter. I will use the short winter days, the cold westerlies and the ailments and illnesses that seem to thrive in this weather as my excuse for not writing more promptly.*

*The fever ward was reopened this past month. Already there have been 3 cases of typhoid and a little tot, not two, died from whooping cough.*

*This place is giving me an education quite different from the Central Girls School. With the exception of some of the accident victims, the patients are those who cannot afford to pay the town medical men for treatment. They are labourers, servants, miners, railway workers, paupers, or their family members. They are often here for weeks, and when they are discharged many have little money and no employment. So they talk a lot about jobs and wages and employers while they recuperate.*

*Mrs Bennett\* and some of the ladies regularly visit the hospital, bringing books and papers to alleviate the monotony of the wards. They try to find a suitable placement in a household of their friends and acquaintances for any servant girl that would otherwise be homeless and penniless when she is discharged. The men have to fend for themselves*

*With the big strike by the shearers earlier this year, and then the labourers refusing to load "scab" wool and the landowners retaliating and the local votes for unions to be formed in various establishments and trades in the town, the discussion between the patients can get quite hot. I just try to be agreeable and pleasant, as we ladies have no vote and no say in politics.*

*We have seen horrible injuries to young workers. There was the poor orphan boy Edgar Meyers from Harrisville, so badly flogged by his master, that when he came to the hospital covered in bruises and scars Dr Thorton called the police. The boy was returned to the reformatory, and his master fined £10. A young lad of thirteen,*

*named David Campbell, just his second day at the Darra brickworks, caught his sleeve and was dragged into the brick press and crushed. They took the machine apart to get him out and he was brought to the hospital but he died that night. Just last week another lad William Spencer Edmunds, not much older, had his left arm sliced off by the pipe-cutter, at the Reliance Pottery, Dinmore,*

*I think the accidents are the most upsetting cases I see. Lots of riding accidents are admitted, but the burns are the worst. A little girl of 13 who was playing with matches and her dress caught a light, and Mrs Galloway a mother from Brassall who was doing the washing when the back of her dress caught in the fire and she was unable to put it out. Dr Thornton gives them opium drugs for the pain but there is so little else can be done.*

*My letter this time is quite sombre. I hope the spring will make things brighter.*

Your friend, Ella Banks

\*Mrs Harriett Bennett (nee Foote) was the wife of Thomas Bennett who owned a department store in Brisbane St/Nicholas St. Mrs Bennett and several other Ipswich women formed a Ladies' Auxillary to assist unmarried, unemployed female patients gain employment before being discharged from hospital.

## Visit of Conservator

Recently Dr Michael Marendy visited the museum to perform a preservation needs assessment on the items in our collection identified as either locally, regionally, nationally, and (maybe even) internationally significant, to evaluate IHM's ability to care for and preserve its collection. He examined our existing storage and display conditions, our current policies and procedures and will provide a report recommending steps we could take to benefit these and other items under our care.

The museum had successfully obtained a Community Gambling Grant to undertake the assessment.


Dr Marendy is a free-lance conservator specialising in textile conservation and curator at the Miegunyah House Museum (home to the Queensland Women's Historical Association).

Dr Michael Marendy's working background has been in four distinct areas: clothing design, fashion education, textile conservation and museum curatorship. For 15 years he taught in the TAFE and University sectors, as well as working as a clothing designer and textile conservator. Michael has provided numerous lectures on conservation and dress history, as well as conducting practical conservation workshops throughout Queensland.

## CONTACT US:

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**Rolltop Desk**

*Used by Matron Alice Wilcox and believed to have been in her office when she became matron (1933-67). It remained there until her successor, Miss Margaret Macfarlane, retired in 1997.*

*Under the glass (retrofitted for the museum) is displayed Matron's Board Report from 1959-1965, her Christmas/New Year/Easter order book from 1938-1945 and a nurse's certificate, with hospital photograph, ready for matron's signature.*



*On top of Matron's desk is Dr Trumpy's inkstand (left) and a Duff wooden clock (right). Made in the USA, probably during to the 1870s/80s it is believed the clock may have been that of Dr Phillip Thornton, the first Medical Superintendent. It has a price of 45/- written on the back. Partially restored it is wound every week and chimes on the hour and sounds on the half hour.*