



Museum Matters

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IPSWICH HOSPITAL MUSEUM Inc.

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Guest Editorial

For this edition we invited Steph Shannon to provide an insight from her experience as the Clinical Nurse Consultant/Nurse Unit Manager of Children's Ward for 31 years.

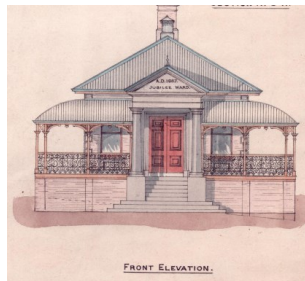
What informative reading through historical lens to our past 'structural facilities' for sick children in Ipswich, West Moreton and surrounds. I left footprints in the original Sunshine Ward in late 1950s, in David Trumpy Unit and retired from the current Children's Sunshine Ward, which shares its footprint on the same soil as the original Sunshine Ward. As grand as these buildings were it was not so for the plight of hospitalised sick children of that early era. Against the backdrop of societal health care norms of the late 19th and early 20th century parents of the hospitalised child were excluded, poorly tolerated and certainly never given option to participate in the care of their child in hospital. Visiting was very restricted. In 1959 the Platt Report was tabled in the UK Government containing 55 recommendations re concerns for the welfare of children in hospital. Sir Henry Platt was the Chair of this committee. Although slow to implement initially 'change' was on the horizon for the hospitalised child. Throughout the 1980's momentous periods of change nationally and internationally saw the Rights of the Hospitalised Child be tabled and implemented through many behavioural, play and educational activities. Parents were now encouraged to support their child and participate in their care through being a respected part of a paediatric multidisciplinary team. The tide had indeed turned.

It appears fitting to read the tributes to Margaret MacFarlane and Helga McCutcheon in this edition. Both nurse leaders in their chosen fields. To the band of volunteers of the IHM - our gratitude for echoing our past history so that many can appreciate 'our past'. Go gently.

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History of the Children's Ward

The first purpose built children's ward at Ipswich Hospital was the **Jubilee Ward** which opened in 1887, 27 years after the hospital was opened.



The original hospital building contained several wards but there was no specific provision for children. Nursing of children was usually done in the home. Destitute children were fostered out. Records indicate an allowance of 3d per week was given. Sick children may have received treatment and medicines as outpatients of the hospital. With patient accommodation being a bed in a dormitory and visiting hours twice a week, a recuperating child could have been disruptive to ward life. However, children with serious disease or injury may have been admitted to hospital, probably to the women's ward. There is a record of a mother offering to work at the hospital for nothing so she could be near her sick child. Alternatively, there is a record of a widower's two children sick with fever being denied admission, on the grounds that he could afford to hire a nurse or place them in a private

nursing home.

Originally Jubilee building was only one storey high. In 1909 a second storey was opened as nurses' accommodation.

A fever ward was constructed in 1864—a two room detached cottage which, in 1871, was being used as the female ward. In 1917 a new fever ward, the Epidemic Hospital, was built south of Chelmsford St. on property bought from Joseph Cribb, where the current Renal Dialysis Unit is sited. The original fever ward was converted to a Children's Ward with 26 cots/beds in 1920 and in October 1934 this site was pegged for the new Sunshine Ward, the foundation stone laid by the Duke of Gloucester in December.

The **Sunshine Ward** opened on 27 July 1935— a 2-storey brick building for 44 patients and an operating theatre. It was used until about 1978 for the treatment and care of sick children, when, following extensive redevelopment of the hospital and at the request of the then Medical Superintendent, Dr Michael O'Rourke, to have the patients concentrated in the new section, the children's ward was moved into the new building and became known as **DTPU (David Trumpy Paediatric Unit)**.

The Sunshine Ward building was then used as the Active Geriatric Rehabilitation & Assessment Unit until 1997 when it was demolished.

After the new ward block was built on this site, the children's ward moved again to it's current location and once more called the **Sunshine Ward** today.

The Jubilee Building is the oldest building on the hospital campus and after many evolutions of use now houses the Ipswich Hospital Museum in the Catherine Evans Memorial Library room; and mental health department offices and clinics in the remainder of the building.



1887—First Children's Ward (Jubilee Building)

Jubilee (children's) Ward

It is interesting to note that this year the Commonwealth will celebrate the Platinum Jubilee (70 years) of Queen Elizabeth II ascension to the throne.

In 1887 the Golden Jubilee of Queen Victoria was being celebrated.

An article in the Queensland Times, Ipswich Herald & General Advertiser on 22 May 1888 noted that “*merry-making passed off happily, and the fete at Sandy Gallop was an undoubted success.*”

But though jollity is pleasant while it lasts, it leaves no footprints on the sands of time and it was determined that something more durable than a day's gaiety should speak of the Jubilee year in Ipswich. 'Something for the children was again the central idea.

Naturally the ladies were the guiding spirits in the execution of this project and—occasionally aided by those helpless creatures usually called 'men'—they canvassed the town for subscriptions, of which they garnered sufficient to warrant them in giving the signal to proceed with the construction of a children's ward, thus giving juvenile patients a building of their won, and enabling them to be attend to independently of the adults.

The Children's Jubilee Ward is, in reality, a little hospital in itself. It stands on the northern side of the grounds and overlooks the greater portion of the town.”

The article continues to describe the measurements of the ‘fine brick

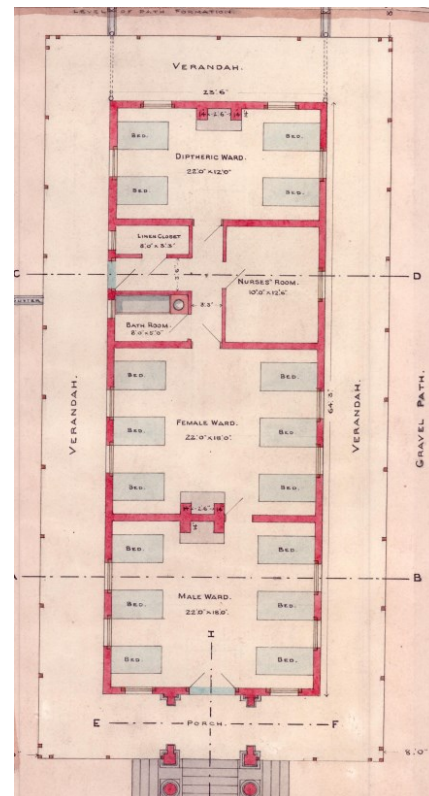
structure’ including that it had an 8ft verandah all round and the walls were painted French grey.

The first room nearest the entrance was the boys' ward with a fireplace and six windows. Next door was the girls' ward, similar in size and also with a fireplace. On the left of the passage was a bathroom fitted with every convenience and then a linen closet. On the right of the passage was the nurses' room and then the diphtheria ward also with a fireplace. The rooms were well lighted and ventilated with three ventilators on top. The article also contained a more detailed description of architectural design elements including a ‘beautiful little porch’ above which an inscription was etched “A.D. 1887 Jubilee Ward”. Over the front door a marble tablet bore the following inscription: ‘Erected by the Ladies of Ipswich in commemoration of Her Majesty Queen Victoria's Jubilee 1887.’

The article ended with:

“The cost, so far, has been £1095, and it has been, and will be, money well spent. We only regret that we cannot give, in these columns, an adequate representation of the handsome building, which will tell to generations yet unborn what Ipswich did for her suffering children.”

How gratified the Ladies of Ipswich and all others involved in the building would be to see that the Jubilee Building is still standing despite being devastated by fire in 2005.



The plaque commemorating the erection of Jubilee Building

Sunshine Ward

Building on the new Sunshine Children's Ward began in October



1934 on the site of the old children's ward, the renovated fever ward, which had been used since 1920. This building was sold for removal. Temporary accommodation was found for sick children in other parts of the hospital. This new building was one of two schemes prepared by the

Department of Public Works. The two-storey model was selected.

In July 1933 the Sunshine League, formed in 1920 by “Uncle William” (Queensland Times journalist Fred Ware) to inspire a sense of community and selflessness in young people, had raised a final £456/10/0 for the new children's ward, bringing the fundraising total to £4097/18/6. This was then boosted to £11,579/13/6 with the added government endowment.

“Uncle William” invited all sunshiners to attend the opening ceremony of the ward in July 1935—“*the fulfilment of a somewhat impossible vision we had some years ago*”. To him the ward was symbolic of a vast bond of love, representing the friendship between the League's members. In his words the Sunshine Ward for ever *will stand as a monument to the community service of the young people of West*

Moreton.

Unfortunately this was to prove not so, unlike the Jubilee Building which still stands.

In 1992 the building was listed as a significant building in the *Ipswich Heritage Study*. It was recommended for listing under the Heritage Act of 1992 in Thom Blake, Michael Kennedy, and Margaret Pullar, *Queensland Heritage Survey*, October 1996. Their report stated that the Sunshine Ward was significant: in demonstrating aspects of the development of Ipswich Hospital, in particular facilities for children; and for its associations with “Uncle William” and the Sunshine League. However, sadly, it was decided that the building was not architecturally significant in design and the Sunshine Ward was demolished in 1997 to make way for further hospital redevelopment.

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.

The letters are addressed from the Ipswich Hospital, Denmark Hill, Ipswich.

1st July 1890

My Dear Friend,

Hello again. Things have been very busy since I last wrote. We had the Governor, His Excellency Sir H. W. Norman, for luncheon on Monday last week. Of course the nurses were not invited, but we had to have the hospital and ourselves spotless for his visit. He came to lay the foundation stone for the new Women's ward, and all the dignitaries were here for luncheon in the children's ward. It was a big day. It seemed like half the town came to watch. The shops closed at midday, and there was a big football match (Australian Rules) played in the afternoon between the Ipswich champion team and a South Melbourne team. Our men reportedly suffering a creditable loss. We were too busy clearing up after all the disruption to attend.

The new ward will be built for £3,150 in 7 months. Robert Wilson's workers have already started. It makes a lot of noise and mess. The additional space will be welcome though.

The existing hospital has a very pleasant aspect from the front gate in East Street. The main building of brick and stone looks like a two-storey country house. This is particularly so because of the very pretty gardens and gravelled paths, that the gardeners keep in very good

condition. The central part is the original building built 30 years ago; its verandas and the east and west wings were added about 3 years ago. Behind the main building are: the kitchen, laundry, mess hall building, boiler house, mortuary and ablutions building.

Most of the wards are in the main building, apart from: Jubilee House, (the children's ward) a single story building beside Court Street completed only 3 years ago which is very bright and pretty; the fever ward, a very open airy timber building built further up the hill which is about 20 years old; and the Cottage, a timber and iron building built in 1864, previously used as the fever ward and now used as women's wards.

In total the hospital provides over 80 beds and is the second largest in the colony after Brisbane. The committee keep the buildings in good condition and we keep them clean and tidy but their arrangement could be better.

There are 10 male "wards" with fifty beds, 8 female "wards" with thirty-six beds, 3 children's wards with twenty beds, and the fever wards. The average number of patients on any day is about 50, but there can be more than 70 patients when we are busy. The patients vary - accident victims, the acutely ill and dying, the chronically ill, and convalescent patients. Some

patients are here for months. So the wards vary, from small "private" wards for the acutely ill or the occasional "pay" patient, up to 10 bed dormitories. With only 8 nurses we are always busy checking the wards and the patients, or relocating them as their condition changes, or in response to new admissions.

That is to be expected, but what I find most irksome are the stairs. In the Main Building the wards are on the second floor. Everything for the wards, including the immobile patients, has to be carried up and down the stairs. The matron's and the dispenser's accommodation, the operating theatre, the dispensary, the outpatients treatment and waiting rooms and the store rooms fill most of the ground floor. Thank goodness there is a dumb waiter from the kitchen to the mess hall to lift up the meals. There is nothing as bothersome as arriving in the ward to realise that you have forgotten or overlooked some small item. I now plan each trip like I am travelling to Africa.

Enough of my complaining for now.

Your friend,

Nurse Ella Banks



The main hospital building as it would have looked in 1890 when the nurse's letter (above) was written. Jubilee Building, which had been built 3 years previously is not shown but would have been to the right of this photograph.

Happy Birthday Ipswich Hospital

Ipswich Hospital is 162 years old this month. The two-storey brick building with a slate roof was completed in November 1859 and opened on 2 March 1860. The ground floor included three wards with accommodation for 13 patients, dispensary, a matron's office, matron's bedroom, a servant's room and a storeroom. The second storey had three 8-bed wards. Cellars under the ground were used as storerooms. Toilets were fitted with buckets which were emptied into a cesspit 150m from the main hospital. In 1880 a southern wing extension was added and a northern wing in 1883. Further land was acquired and in 1884 a Medical Superintendent's house was built. The Jubilee building was erected in 1887—the first children's ward. Since then the hospital campus has changed extensively.



The original fever ward after it was extended and being used as the children's ward from 1920. It was demolished to make way for the Sunshine Ward built on this site in 1934.

Right: Inside the children's ward 1927 (the old fever ward, photo left). Note the marble top cabinet in the centre of the room, used for storage and as a servery for many decades in the 20th century. Restored by the Ipswich Men's Shed after lying in storage since 1979, it now sits in the foyer of Jubilee Building as part of the Museum's collection.



Tribute to Ipswich Hospital Identities

Two Ipswich Hospital trained long-serving nurses will long be remembered for their dedication and inspiration to both the hospital and the community and we pay tribute to them.



Miss Margaret Bell Macfarlane passed away on Christmas Eve, 2021 aged 92.

She was Ipswich Hospital's Nursing Superintendent/Director of Nursing from 1967 until 1993.

Margaret grew up near Harrisville, daughter of Doris and Kenneth Macfarlane and sister of Don, Alec and Heather, who also trained at Ipswich Hospital.

She began her nursing training at

Ipswich Hospital in 1946, completing it in 1950, and her Midwifery Certificate the year after.

Margaret travelled to Victoria, Tasmania and England to expand her nursing experience. In Victoria she completed a Certificate in Eye and ENT Nursing. She obtained her Certificate in Maternal and Child Health in 1962.

In 1961 Margaret became Deputy Matron of Ipswich Hospital and served as President of the Ipswich Hospital Trained Nurses Association (now the Ipswich Hospital Nurses Association) from 1961 – 1966.

She was appointed Director of Nursing in 1967.

Ms Macfarlane said she tolerated being called "Matron" by patients but felt it was an antiquated term which did not reflect the true role responsibilities for managing a hospital's nursing services and the modern nursing profession. She was often quoted as saying "Don't call me Matron!"

She obtained a Diploma of Nursing Administration and was awarded a Fellowship of Royal College of Nursing, Australia. Ms Macfarlane was Councillor for Queensland (1965), President (1969-70), Secretary (1970-84) and Censor-in-Chief (1978-1979) of the Royal College of Nursing, Australia.

In 1994, she received the Distinguished Nursing Service Award (Queensland) and in 1995 was awarded the Australia Day Australia Medal.

Shortly after her appointment as Director of Nursing, Ms Macfarlane appointed two Deputy Directors of Nursing and lobbied for an increase in nursing numbers.

She was innovative in her approach to nursing and the role of the nurse and a leader in the transition from hospital training to tertiary education for nurses. She championed the professionalism of nursing and campaigned for nurses' responsibilities to be more patient-focused.

One of her most significant changes to the role of nurses was the transfer of domestic duties to non-nurses and freeing up nurses' time by employing domestic staff. The non-nurses took over the ward housekeeping and cleaning jobs.

Ms. Macfarlane was one of the first Directors of Nursing to have a seat on a Hospital Board of Management.

Helga McCutcheon (nee Waschier), much loved nurse educator and foundation member of the Ipswich Hospital Museum, lost her battle on January 24, 2022.

Helga immigrated from Austria at the age of 13 to live with her aunt. After completing a certificate in psychiatric nursing she began her training at Ipswich Hospital in June 1966, only having to do 2 years of General Nursing to complete her training instead of the usual 4 years. She graduated in 1968.

In 1967, Helga braved Matron Wilcox's office to ask permission to marry. Nurses, especially trainee nurses, were expected to be single and to live in at the hospital. However, with the support of Margaret Macfarlane, the then Deputy Matron, Helga received permission to marry and to "live out" with her husband, a psychiatrist at the Challinor Centre. However, she was required to maintain her maiden name and her marital status was to remain a secret to all.

In 1973, Helga became a Nurse Educator at the hospital and remained teaching until her retirement.

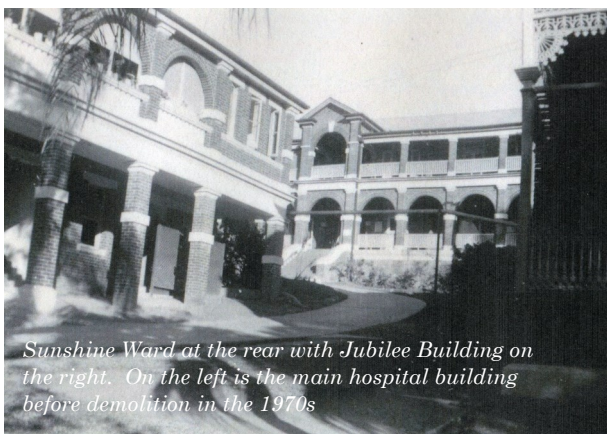
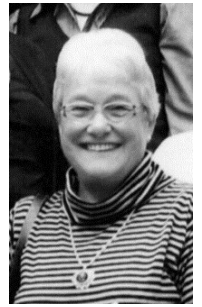
In a eulogy, written and delivered by Steph Shannon at Helga's memorial service, and developed with input from other friends and colleagues, it was said that she was a "mentor, guide and influence on so many aspiring undergraduates as well as post graduate nurses, along with young medical and allied health students. She is remembered by so many as a great role model, firm but fair - poor tolerance for 'cutting corners' and created and demanded high standards of patient care.

To the young student she appeared larger than life and her voice could always be heard through the ward. She was an advocate for further nurse education."

For many years Helga was a member of the Ipswich Hospital Ladies Auxiliary which raised funds to support scholarships for nursing education and contributed to items to improve patient comfort.

She was also very involved with the museum – contributing to the preservation of the hospital's history and its stories, and assisting with the planning and preparation of exhibitions. She also provided the museum with its 'bread and butter' money (monies for everyday necessities like pens, labels, and folders) by making jams, chutneys, and relishes to be sold at the museum and at the markets. Her donations raised up to \$500.00 each year for the museum.

But Helga's greatest passion was music and singing. She belonged to a choir formed by Ipswich Hospital staff which sang at graduation ceremonies, entertained at farewell occasions of senior staff, openings of new buildings and other special events. At Christmas, they sang carols to staff in the dining room during their meal breaks and entertained the patients in the wards.



Sunshine Ward at the rear with Jubilee Building on the right. On the left is the main hospital building before demolition in the 1970s

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