



# Museum Matters

Volume 7, Issue 2

June 2023

IPSWICH HOSPITAL MUSEUM Inc.



## Committee:

Chairman: M. Parcell  
Secretary: J. Kingston  
Treasurer: C. Marre

## Chairman's Chattering

"We need museums now more than ever", is the title of an article by Rebecca Carlsson recently published on the Museum Next website (<https://www.museumnext.com>). The article outlines many reasons why museums remain important institutions to this day. Pleasingly these reasons reflect the goals of Ipswich Hospital Museum.

The lessons we can learn from past events, wonders and tragedies are priceless. In health particularly we see that treatments that were considered to be cutting edge in their day sound rather barbaric many years later. Treatments such as turpentine enemas for children or scarifying snake bites were considered very modern approaches to healthcare. This always makes me ponder what current treatments will future generations be gasping at?

The recent launch of the new display and the attendance by such a wide variety of people is a recent example of how museums build bridges across communities which in the current times is a welcome outcome. The launch saw a diverse group of people from many generations coming together to reflect on times past. Museums have the power to create unity on both a social and political level, and also on a local level. Local museums are able to provide a sense of community and place by celebrating a collective heritage, offering a great way to get to know the history of a particular area and understand local culture. However Museums need to ensure in these changing times that they are true to history and stand firm in the face of adversity. Of course, taking a stand often means that a museum exposes itself to criticism from those who disagree with their exhibits and how past events are displayed. In today's uncertain times, museums can act as an anchor in the storm. The humble museum has the power to reflect and shape our society. I would encourage you to visit our new display which is open each Wednesday from 0830 to 1130 am.

## Museum Re-opens

After a three year hiatus due to Covid-19 the Ipswich Hospital Museum is now open to the public again.

On Tuesday 6 June the museum and its new exhibition, "**Historic, Aesthetic, Scientific, Social, and Cultural Items of Significance in the Museum's Collection**", was officially opened by Jennifer Howard MP, State Member for Ipswich, and Scott Young, CEO Ipswich Hospital Foundation.

The museum's volunteers have faced a number of hurdles since early 2020. The museum was used as part of the Covid-19 testing clinic for a period of time and volunteers were not allowed on campus. Then storage facilities in Cribb House were lost when the Covid vaccination clinic was set up there and also under the carpark which was requisitioned for contractors building the new mental health unit. Most of the museum's collection was taken to The Park for storage.

About 18 months ago volunteers were able to access a large archival shed on campus and began many weeks of cleaning and clearing space to enable most of the smaller artifacts to be brought back to the hospital.

Finally the museum crew were permitted back in the museum and embarked on many months of planning and arranging a new exhibition for the opening.

During the period of closure Josh Tarrant, Museum Development Officer South East Queensland Region, was employed to provide a "Significance Assessment" of the museum's collection. This was followed by a "Preservation Needs Assessment" by Dr Michael Marendy, Conservation,

Curatorial and Training Consultant. Both have provided the museum with valuable advice and support and were special guests at the opening.

Other guests included Ipswich Mayor, Teresa Harding and two councillors, Marnie Doyle and Andrew Fechner; Pat Evatt and Lyn Birnie representing the West Moreton Hospital & Health Service; Jennifer Garcia, Head of Campus—The Workshops Rail Museum; Susann Vos, Curator & Co-ordinator Toowoomba Hospital Museum; Professor Jim and Jan Nixon, volunteers from the Marks-Hirschfield Museum of Medical History; Jayne Keogh, Public Relations Australian Naval Association and history columnist with the Sunday Mail; Steph Shannon, former Charge Nurse of Children's Ward; Dr Ted Reye, former Senior Orthopaedic Surgeon; Dr Bob McGregor, the hospital's first paediatrician; members of the Ipswich City Council Heritage Forum; and Mrs Heather Brickhill (nee Middleton), 1962 winner of the Catherine Evans Memorial Award (*see story on page 3*).



Photo above: Scott Young, CEO Ipswich Hospital Foundation, and Jennifer Howard MP, State Member for Ipswich, opening the museum's new exhibition.

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## New Exhibition Opening Ceremony



Above: Melinda Parcell (Chairman Ipswich Hospital Museum Committee), Dr Michael Marendy (Conservator) and Jennifer Howard MP, (State member for Ipswich).



Above: Steph Shannon (former charge nurse of Children's Ward), Dr Bob McGregor (the hospital's first paediatrician) and Julie McNeill (Director of Specialist Outpatients)



Above: Ipswich Mayor, Teresa Harding, and Councillors Marnie Doyle and Andrew Fechner



Above: Desley Clarke, great niece by marriage of Dr Phillip Thornton, the hospital's first official medical superintendent.



Left: Josh Tarrant (Museum Development Officer South East Queensland Region) and Danny Keenan (Heritage Advisor, Ipswich City Council).

Right: Some of the guests at the official opening of the new exhibition.

From left, standing: Desley Clarke, Susann Vos (Curator & Co-ordinator Toowoomba Hospital Museum), Dr Stewart Parkinson (IMH volunteer), Judy Andrews (volunteer supervisor, Toowoomba Hospital), Ross Blinco (IMH volunteer), Michael Kingston, Jennifer Garcia (Head of Campus, Ipswich Railway Museum), Jan Nixon (Marks-Hirschfield Museum), Barry Guest (Hospital Chaplain), Jim Nixon (Marks-Hirschfield Museum). Seated: Dr Ted Reye, Andrew Reye, Allan Waples



## Award Winner at Opening



One of the special guests at the Museum re-opening was Heather Bricknell (nee Middleton), the 1962 winner of the Catherine Evans Memorial Award. Heather, above left, is holding her award badge seated at Matron Wilcox's desk in the museum. The prize was given for general conduct, character, popularity, ward reports, practical nursing ability and examination results. The selectors were the Medical Superintendent, Matron, Deputy Matron, Tutor Sister and the Chairman of the Hospital Board.



## Dr Michael O'Rourke

The fourth Medical Superintendent at Ipswich was Dr Michael O'Rourke, who succeeded Dr David Trumpy in 1967.

Michael Geoffrey Eric O'Rourke was born on December 17, 1935 in Brisbane, the son of Michael Patrick and Irene Florence.

After graduating in 1958 he spent four years at Royal Brisbane Hospital as surgical registrar from 1959-1962 before becoming a surgical registrar at the Royal Free Hospital, London from 1963-1966. He was a Fellow of the Royal College of Surgeons Edinburgh, England, Australia and the American College of Surgeons.

While at the Royal College of Surgeons Edinburgh he was awarded the Henry Arthur Dalziel Fern Bursary in 1963.

*The Henry Arthur Dalziel Fern prize was founded in 1928 by Mrs Mary Dalziel Ferns in memory of her son Henry. In her will, she bequeathed £500 to the College to be used as bursary for students undertaking the Fellowship Examination for high marks in organic chemistry. It was active throughout the 20<sup>th</sup> Century, being awarded annually as a £50 bursary to students based on her stipulations. In 1962 the College Council amended this to award it to the student who placed first in part one of*

When he was appointed to the position at Ipswich Hospital Dr O'Rourke was a



Surgical Fellow at the Lahey Clinic, Boston, USA.

During his four years as superintendent here he served as a Major with the First Australian Field Hospital for three months in Vietnam in 1971.

He resigned from the hospital in August 1971 to set up private practice. The board paid tribute to his energetic approach to all matters affecting the hospital.

Dr O'Rourke is credited with establishing the first intensive care unit at the hospital. In 1970 he decided to establish a small intensive care ward of three beds by removing a bed from a

four-bed room in the surgical ward.

Dr O'Rourke was the senior surgeon at Mater Hospital, Brisbane, 1973-1991 plus worked as a part-time senior lecturer in Surgery and then the Clinical Tutor in Surgery at the University of Queensland.

He came out of semi-retirement as one of Queensland's most experienced surgeons to take up a four-month position as acting director of surgery for Bundaberg Base Hospital in 2005 following the Dr Jayant Patal tragic saga.

His list of distinguished appointments include: Member of the Court of Examiners (RACS); council member of Queensland Institute of Medical Research; faculty member of MSD Australian faculty of infectious diseases; member of the Court of Examiners Royal Australian College of Vet. Surgeons; member of the Board of Research Studies Australian Tropical Health Programme.

Dr O'Rourke was married to Helen (nee Salter) and they had four children, Ben, Tom, Libby and Michael.

Dr O'Rourke passed away in March 2022 at the age of 87 after a long and distinguished career.

## Intensive Care Unit

The first intensive care ward was established in 1970—instigated by the then Medical Superintendent, Dr Michael O'Rourke—by removing a bed from a four-bed room in the surgical ward. It was furnished with a desk from the nurses' home, while a cardiac defibrillator, monitors and a Bird respirator were transferred from other wards. In this improvised ward, special management was provided for certain dangerously ill patients – mainly those suffering from cardiac infarcts, drug overdose or multiple injuries sustained in road accidents.

A new intensive care/coronary care unit was included in high-rise extensions to the hospital in 1979.

The ten-bed unit was under the care of Sister Shirley Jack, who had been in



charge of the small improvised intensive care unit in the former surgical ward.

Sr Jack was a student nurse at the hospital from 1955—1959. After graduation she did her midwifery training at King Edward Memorial Hospital in Perth. After returning to

Brisbane she gained a third certificate in maternal and child welfare and worked for a short period at the Child Welfare Home, Rockhampton and then for seven years at St Helen's Private Hospital, South Brisbane. In 1969 she gained a diploma in intensive care nursing at the College of Nursing (Australia) in Melbourne. A few months in Dunedin, New Zealand was followed by a return to her training hospital in 1970. She retired in 1998 after serving 27 years in charge of the intensive care and coronary care unit.

The current intensive care unit was constructed in the late 1990s as part of further renovations to the hospital.



## Museum Volunteers

Ipswich Hospital Museum volunteers at the opening ceremony of the new exhibition-

From left: Melinda Parcell (chairman), Elizabeth McNalty, Jane Kingston, Christina Marre, Keryn Francis, Ruth Jorgensen, Ann Kan, Judy Blinco, Ross Blinco and Stewart Parkinson.

## Daughters of Loved Museum Volunteer Visit

Two special visitors were welcomed to the museum recently.

Jenny Shard and Helen Markey are the daughters of Pat Camplin, the loved and respected colleague of museum volunteers, who passed away suddenly in September last year.

Pat (Tish) was a highly esteemed secondary and adult education teacher in Ipswich for many years before her retirement and a museum volunteer for five years.

Pat is remembered at the museum with a plaque on one of the display cabinets and is deeply missed for her wit and humour, her peacefulness and kindness and willingness to help when needed. Her work researching and writing the stories of the hospital's matrons with colleague, Jane Kingston, will be the foundation of the plan to publish a book and a lasting memorial to her.



Pat's daughters, Jenny Shard (Ipswich) and Helen Markey (Emerald) in front of the cabinet that bears the memorial plaque to their mother.

## Open to the Public

The Ipswich Hospital Museum is open to the public every Wednesday 9am – 12 noon or by appointment for groups.


Visitors will have the opportunity to engage with notable artefacts and stories related to various aspects of the hospital's rich history.

The museum is located at Jubilee Building, west of the East Street Entrance to the Ipswich Hospital.

## CONTACT US:

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## Upcoming Events

The inaugural Friends of Ipswich Hospital Museum Luncheon will be held at Jets League Club on Saturday 29 July.

The luncheon will acknowledge the contribution to the museum by the now disbanded Ipswich Hospital Nurses' Association and is open to Friends of the Museum and past and present hospital staff.

Guest speakers at the function will be Chris Horton (Nurse Practitioner Heart Failure Specialist) who will present "Current practices in the Heart

Failure Team"; Dr Stewart Parkinson (museum volunteer) will offer a clinical story from the newly discovered Ipswich Hospital medical notes from 1880-1882; and Ross Blinco (museum volunteer) who will talk about the "Big Years for Nurses of Ipswich".

In September the museum will host a fundraising theatre night at the Little Incinerator Theatre.

More details will be forthcoming.