



# Museum Matters

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IPSWICH HOSPITAL MUSEUM Inc.

Committee :

Chairman: M Parcell

Secretary: J Kingston

Treasurer: E McNalty

## Chairman's Chatterings

### "The Good Old Days"

Do you ever think back to a moment or a memory and think about how purely good it was? Or reflect back on a job, a friendship, a holiday and feel that, that moment was so sweet that you long to be in it again? As I've gotten older I hear people refer to "the good old days", but I am not convinced that they were truly good. However there is a growing market that is focused on nostalgia. The *Oxford English Dictionary* describes nostalgia as a "sentimental longing for or regretful memory of a period of the past". Or, as a medieval proverb, put it: "It's in the evening that we look back on the day with pleasure."

The term 'nostalgia' was invented by Johannes Höfer, a Swiss doctor, in 1688. He was alarmed by the levels of homesickness that seemed to be affecting many patients, particularly Swiss mercenary soldiers operating in the lowlands of Italy and France, in the 17th century. Höfer identified physical symptoms that included compulsive weeping, anorexia and palpitations. More recently psychologists have offered a more nuanced interpretation of nostalgia – and have concluded that sometimes it can cheer us up. Importantly, whereas the term was invented to describe longing for home, it has now come to mean longing for a past time.

It seems like everyone can look back on moments and memories in a way that is much fonder than when they actually experienced that moment in real time. I don't want to have to be retrospective to find the joy in moments. I want to strive to realize that these jobs, people, and moments bring me joy and appreciate them while they're in the present.

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## Fitting Tribute

### Ipswich Hospital World War 1 Nurses

Ross Patrick's book on the Ipswich Hospital, has a drawing of an honour board listing the nurses who worked or trained at the Ipswich Hospital who served in World War One. This took us on a journey of discovery which was completed in November 2017 with the unveiling of a plaque in the Ipswich Hospital Museum honouring these nurses.

The volunteer who championed the quest to honour these nurses in a tangible way was Mary Purser, herself a veteran of the Vietnam War and with a deep appreciation of the sacrifice and responsibilities that these women would have faced.

As plans were made for the making of the plaque and its dedication, it was considered fitting to try to find some of the nurses' descendants to come to the ceremony. So the word was passed around on social media, in the media, and by word of mouth with a list of the names of the nurses - Margaret Bourke, Eva Frances Coote, Eileen Cowen, Flora Kay, Rose Jane Langford, Emily Clarice Lilla Mardon, Clara Northall, Elsie Jane Pollock, Helen Richie, Ruth Maughan Robson, Jane Selina Robson, Muriel Violet Rogers, Annie Scott, Annie M. Watson, Margaret Young Winning. The response was overwhelming. The descendants and relatives of Eva Coote, Elsie Pollock, Ruth Robson, Selina Robson and Margaret Winning were located and invited to the event.

The unveiling was a satisfying and moving event that honoured these brave, selfless women. A presentation was given by the West Moreton Hospital and Health Service's Chief Executive Dr Kerrie Freeman. This included the reading of excerpts from a letter from Margaret Winning written from Paris to her family at home on the day war



Mary with Descendants and Relatives

was declared. Mary Purser, who unveiled the plaque, gave a tribute to the nurses and a heart-warming blessing was made by Ipswich Hospital Chaplain, Elizabetheth Ballard.

Approximately 70 people, including past and present nursing staff two of whom were nurses who trained and worked at the hospital during WWII, attended the ceremony.

The plaque was very generously donated to the museum by the local Ipswich company, Haag Monumental Masons.

### Excerpts from M.Y. Winning Letter

*We thought it much better not to get into a panic about things,... There are no 'buses running. They and all the taxis have been commandeered for service. .... I went into Paris this morning, and I passed one of the big barracks. It was like an antheap. They are mobilising with great rapidity; train-load after train-load go off, cheering...*

*Just opposite us is a cottage of a Breton. He was one of the first to go. He knew it must be, and on the day before he left he and his wife walked about hand-in-hand. She did not shed a tear only hugged her baby (the only child) for hours after he left. Late that night I looked over, and there she was alone at the gate, looking down the road he had gone! He was so young and so strong and they were so happy! ....*

*You must not worry about me. I will be all right. I have volunteered for nursing service, and may get a call any moment. (Trove)*

## Exerts from "Our Golden Anniversary 1946–1996"

## Remember When ...

I started my Nursing Training as a very raw recruit the day after I turned eighteen. I was young, naïve and completely clueless about life in the big, real world! How innocent can you be? My first day began in Women's Surgical Ward at 6am. We didn't have training schools in those days – just went in trembling with our hearts in our mouths! I was told to cut bread and butter it for the patients' breakfasts. I had a blunt knife and a dish of hard butter – and so began my nursing career! I cut and buttered bread of all shapes and sizes dependent on the sharpness of the knife and the keenness of my eye. It seemed like forever but I soon graduated to bedpans. I scrubbed them and I boiled them and cleaned them again and again and again until they shone. Woe betide you if there was any Bon Ami left on them! Then I cleaned

## Memories flood back for nurses

THE hardships of being a nurse during World War II were all fond memories for Ipswich Hospital nurses who were reunited yesterday.

It was a 50 year reunion for nurses trained at the hospital from 1943-46.

About 70 nurses celebrating 40-60 years since their training joined the two-day reunion which included an inspection of the hospital and a bus trip around Ipswich.

Gloria Luck, who now lives in the United States, was one of the special guests along with former nurses from Adelaide, Perth and Cairns.

In 1946, a shortage in nurses saw training cut from four years to three, along with equipment and facilities, but not service.

"We just had to work harder," former Ipswich nurse Bera Wilson said.

"It was sheer hell. Everyone was tired out.

"It was before the days when things were disposable. We had to mend linen, roll bandages. But Ipswich nurses were known to improvise and respected in the war effort."



□ GOLDEN REUNION: Reunion organiser Bidy Brady nee Cooney with her friends from the class of '46.

lockers, washed and filled water jugs, Ward Sister or even, sometimes, the Matron; and I learned that new nurses (and old ones too) do as they are told without question.

*Bidy Brady (Kathleen Cooney 1943 – 1946)*

## Curfew

Remember the 10pm. Curfews – every night! We were supposed to sign in and out of the Hospital at the front office but, of course, sometimes we'd duck out the side fence and barely make it back in time to fall into bed fully dressed under the bedclothes as the Evening Sister made her rounds to check we were all where we ought to be.

And there was the long-term chap in Male Surgical who's check on the nurses coming in and yell at them, "Hey, Nurse so-and-so, have you got a late pass?" Of course, Matron was just underneath to hear it all so you needed a Pass. But we'd get an 11pm pass once a week – maybe – and, on rare occasions and with a good excuse, there was even a 12 midnight pass for a Ball! Not too many of those, though!

## Teaspoons

How many times were you aching to get off duty at night and you had to count the teaspoons. There were always some missing so, in the end, you'd whip to the ward next door and, if their count had been done and was right, you'd "borrow" their teaspoons to make your count right too

## Operating Theatre

Remember when, as a junior nurse in Theatre, you had to go to Women's Surgical each morning and make a cup of tea and get two slices of brown bread, cut to the exact size, for Sr Thoms and she would eat it as she set up Theatre. And if some crumbs dropped on the surgical set-up, she'd pick them off with the forceps – and didn't we all learn to put our hands into near boiling water in OT. The sponge water was never hot

enough. AND Dr Trumpy would plant a pair of forceps or scissors under the patient on the operating table or a sponge – and you'd be searching frantically to get the count right. AND the young doctors would spray the back of your legs with Ethyl Chlo. as you walked past and if you so much as let out a cheep, Thoms would be onto you in a flash!

## Ward Tidy

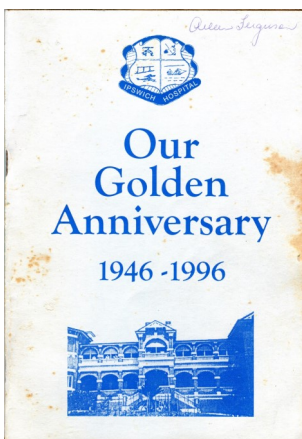
Remember the nurse tidying the Ward – smoothing the quilts, lining up all the beds and having the chairs all in the right spot. She was leaning over the bed when the patient grabbed her round the waist Her cap went flying and an icy voice said, "Not very edifying, nurse". It was Matron Wilcox and Sister Evans arriving for the inspection. We all dreaded being caught!

## Epidemic

Remember how Sr Harkness barricaded herself in Epidemic and was a law unto herself. She loved her garden and the junior was frequently sent out on the road to follow the milkman's horse and cart to collect the manure for the garden – and there wasn't a lot of hand washing done between gardening and patients – but I don't think there was any cross infection and the diphtherias, scarlet fevers and whoopers all recovered!

## Children's Ward

Remember the trials of trying to keep the babies quiet in Children's ward at night. If a child cried twice, Dr Trumpy would hear it and the phone would ring and you would have to give an account of your stewardship.





# Ipswich Hospital Plans

Conrad Gargett, Architects is an Australian Architectural firm established in Brisbane in 1890. While recent projects include the Lady Cilento Children's Hospital, and the Mater Hospital, it is the historic hospital plans they hold which excite the volunteers of the Ipswich Hospital Museum.

Conrad Gargett have allowed the Ipswich Hospital Museum to examine the plans of Ipswich Hospital buildings held in their archives.

As Conrad Gargett developed, it absorbed the practices of: G. Brockwell & Gill, Douglas Roberts, and N.L. Thomas. These practices designed buildings

for the Ipswich Hospital Board and some of their plans from the 1880s to the 1970s are preserved by Conrad Gargett.

The plans are beautiful objects reflecting the skills of the architects and draftsmen who created them. They also provide fragments of how the Ipswich Hospital grew from a 32 bed hospital in 1860 to the comprehensive Medical Complex it is today.

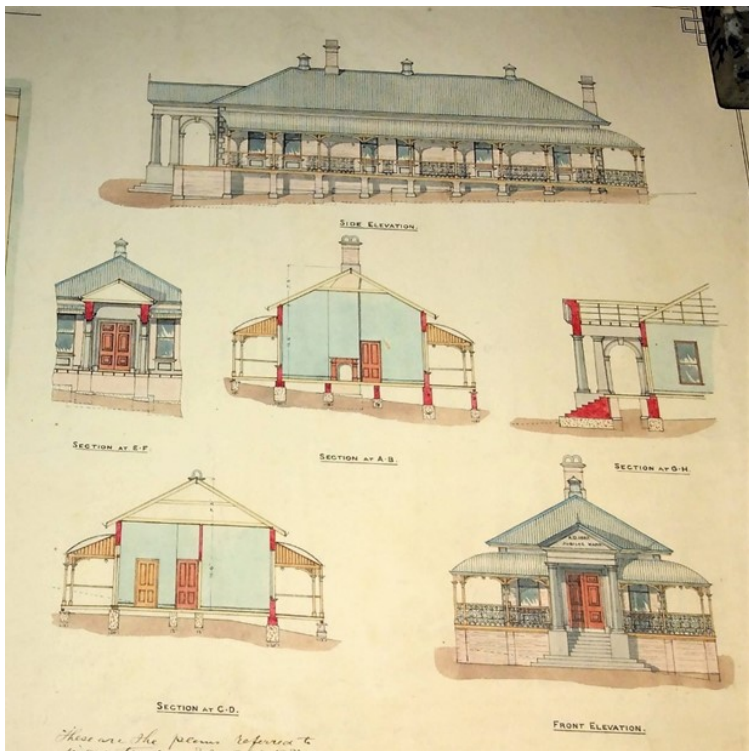
Museum volunteers will use these plans to add to the record of the Denmark Hill site.

The Ipswich Hospital Museum thanks Conrad Gargett for their generosity in

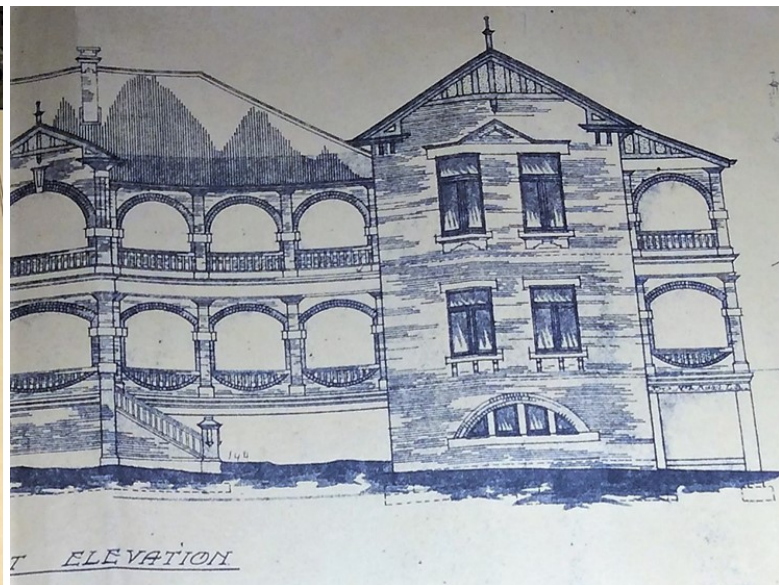
providing this access, and for their public service in preserving the heritage of our Community.



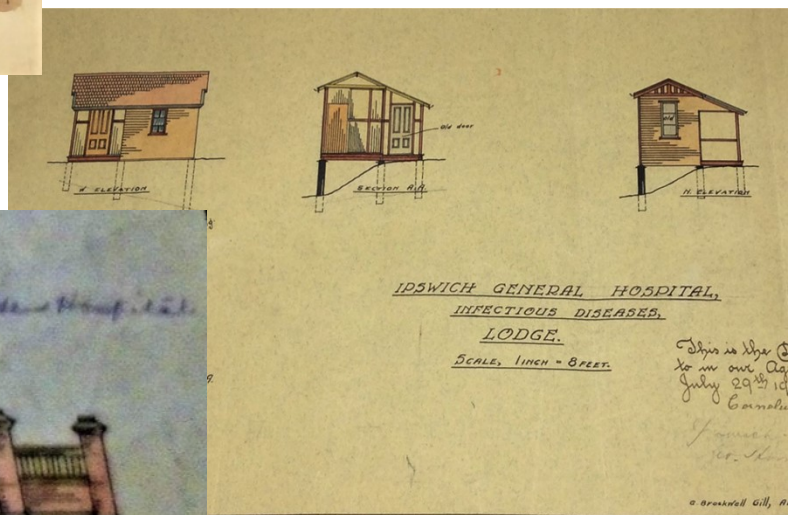
Examining Archive. : Conrad Gargett Associate Grant Bugler and Ipswich Hospital Volunteer Ross Blinco



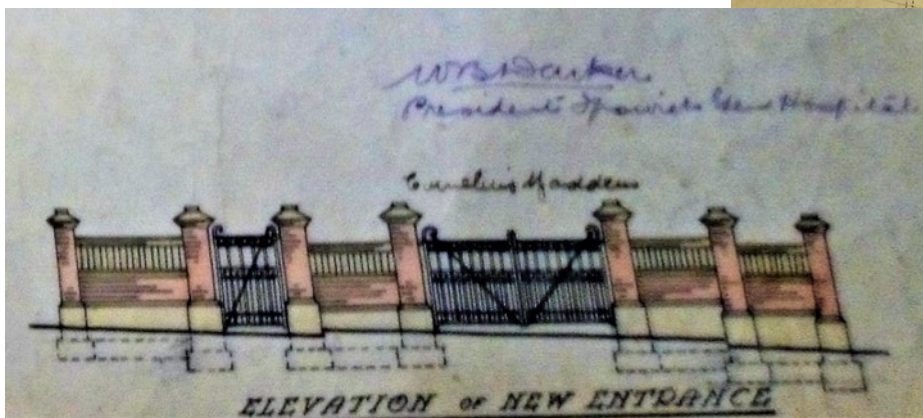
Left: Jubilee Building, 1887 (Children's Ward)  
Full copy of these plans on display in Museum



Above: Women's Ward



Infectious Diseases Lodge 1917



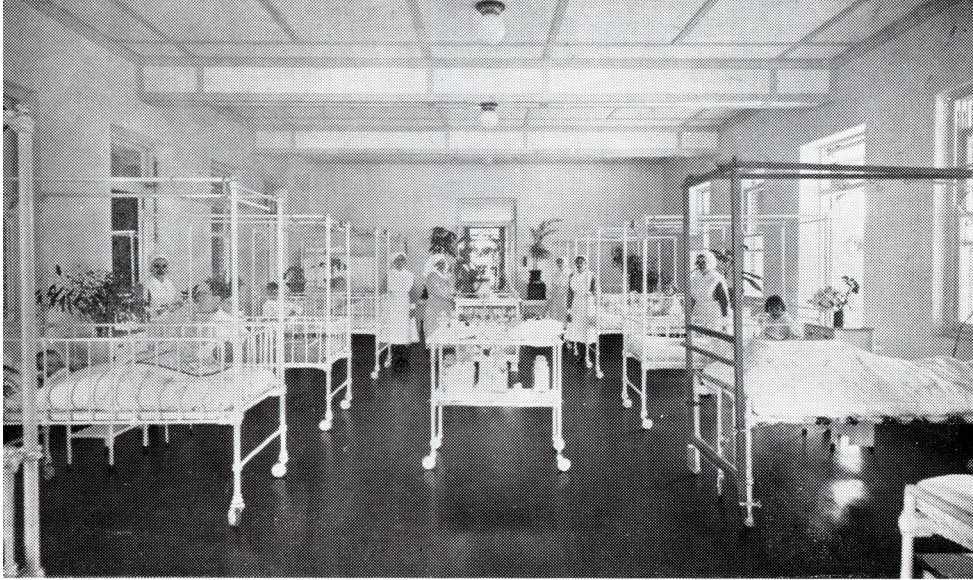
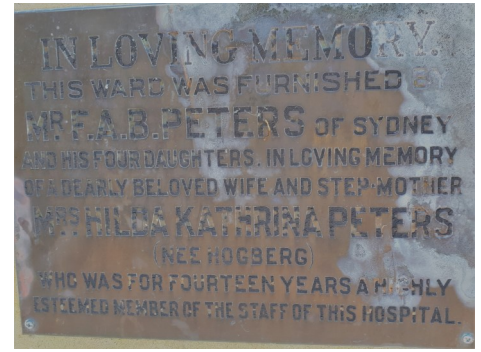
Above: Entrance Gates 1923



## The Ice-cream Connection

Frederick Augustus Bolles Peters (1866 – 1937) an American business man set up an icecream factory in Sydney and in 1923 Peters Ice Cream “The Health Food of a Nation” began manufacture. In 1927 he set up another business in Brisbane. He was friendly with Dr Euchariste Sirous a medical practitioner in Marburg whose wife in-

troduced him to Hilda Katherine Hogberg a nurse at Ipswich Hospital. They married in 1935. Hilda died four years later. She had nursed at the hospital for 13 years and in her memory Frederick donated money for the furnishing of a children’s ward in Ipswich Hospital. Mr Peters donated £100 for the purchase of ten cots each with a chair and locker, and five bassinets for tiny patients. The ward was called Peters Ward.



The interior of one of the four wards comprising the Sunshine Ward, showing some of the 22 Cots given to the hospital by the Sunshine League. In the middle distance is Sister Morton, who is in charge of the ward.

## Museum Photo Collection

At this time the Museum does not have a photo identified as Peters Ward. The adjacent photo is from the 1930’s of another ward within the Children’s Sunshine Ward. The photo is taken from “The Sunshine Book”. A record of the Sunshine League over 16 years. The Sunshine league was founded on May 8, 1920. The book marked the year they completed their task of providing, with Government assistance, a new ward for sick children of West Moreton, and the historic change in the administration of district hospitals.

Sunshine League Motto “*To Spread Sunshine into the Lives of Others*”

## Patient Behaviour Management

Ipswich Hospital and Benevolent Asylum Minutes of meeting of Acting Committee and holders 7th April 1864

The Resident Dispenser reported that James Keane and James Griffiths, patients in No 6 ward had been guilty of very disorderly conduct. The committee investigated the matter and adjudged Griffiths be reprimanded and cautioned

as to his behaviour for the future and Keane to be kept on **bread and water for three days.**

(Board Minutes 1863 –1876)

There was this great big fellow in Male Medical one time – a real bully to the nurses. We had the screen round him trying to do his back on one

occasion and he was giving us a hard time and then some. Suddenly Sister Blake flew in through the screens, picked up the dish of water and emptied it all over him. Did that ever quieten him! (and it was worth cleaning up the mess afterwards.

(Our Golden Anniversary 1946 –1996)

Neither practice recommended today



Ipswich Hospital  
Museum Inc

Ipswich Hospital  
East St Entrance



### CONTACT US:

[www.ipswichhospitalmuseum.com.au](http://www.ipswichhospitalmuseum.com.au)

Email: [info@ipswichhospitalmuseum.com.au](mailto:info@ipswichhospitalmuseum.com.au)

Friends of Ipswich Hospital Museum



**Current Display**

**Maternity and Anaesthetics**

**YOU ARE WELCOME:**  
Every Wednesday: 0900— 1200  
or by appointment (groups welcome)

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