



# Museum Matters

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July, 2017

IPSWICH HOSPITAL MUSEUM Inc.

Committee :

Chairman: M Parcell

Secretary: J Kingston

Treasurer: E McNalty

## Chairman's Chatterings

“Those who cannot remember the past are condemned to repeat it” (George Santayanna, Harvard intellectual). This saying of George Santayanna may be quite relevant in many areas but fortunately does not apply to healthcare. Thank goodness! Coming from a clinical background I am constantly astounded how clinicians at the time, willing applied some of the accepted treatments (I encourage you to read about the treatment of snake bite in this edition). I am convinced that like current staff at Ipswich Hospital, these past clinicians were committed and caring individuals who were seeking to put the patient first. So this challenges me to reflect on current treatments and I wonder which of these treatments will astound future clinicians?

## A Fitting Farewell

There is a lot of research that needs to be done in museum work and often you come across very interesting stories of kindness and sacrifice. One such story was of Mary Jane Daye, a nurse at the Ipswich Hospital in the early 1900s. She died of pneumonia contracted while caring for her patients.

Mary Jane was one of seven children to John and Maria Daye of Basic Pocket, Ipswich. She was born in the hamlet of Milliken in Renfrewshire, Scotland in 1869 but the family primarily lived in England before coming to Australia. The Dayes came to Australia sometime after 1872. Her two youngest brothers were born in Ipswich.

Mary Jane’s mother died in 1893, aged 52 years, and her father passed away in 1895 aged 69 years.

Ipswich was in the middle of an epidemic of scarlet, typhoid and pneumonic fevers. Mary Jane had been in charge of the scarlet fever ward for about 18 months and had worked as a nurse at the hospital for a least 5 years. She had ‘trained’ at the hospital and had been awarded a ‘certificate’ in nursing. She was thought of very highly by



Nr Northall, Mr Jackson, Nr MacFarlane, Nr Innes, Nr Walker

Dr Thornton, Mr Alcroft, Mr Thompson, Nr McManus, Nr Harlow (1891)

the medical and nursing staff of the hospital and it was reported that she carried out her duties always in a conscientious and professional manner.

Mary Jane had been attending a pneumonic patient, who succumbed to the disease, and she had been reported well when she went off duty that evening. The next morning, Sunday 3<sup>rd</sup> August, she was seized with a fit

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## “Just a few old photos you might be interested in ...”

Wow! A building ... said Marg Elvery we have heard so much about from past staff but to date had not been able to track any photos. The building was built in 1917.



In the photo the nursing staff are in front of what is now Cribb House that at the time was accommodation for the nurses working in Epidemic. Does anyone recognise the nurses or the year of the photo.

Interested - join us as a volunteer

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of shivering and was too ill to go on duty. The doctor had her admitted to the ward where she was diagnosed with pneumonia. Her condition deteriorated and on the Saturday afternoon of the 9<sup>th</sup> August it became evident she was failing. Mary Jane was described as perfectly calm and sensible and shook hands with the doctors and nurses and thanked them for what they had done for her. Her family gathered around her and at 6 o'clock she shook their hands and wished them goodbye and peacefully passed away.

Her body was placed in a "very handsome polished cedar coffin with silver mounting" and relocated to the verandah at the nurses' quarters where it was screened off to form a small compartment where family, friends and colleagues could say their final goodbyes.

On Sunday afternoon, the well-attended funeral took place. Nurses Longford, Winning, Gossling, McManus, Northall and Macfarlane (see photo Pg1) carried her coffin to the hearse where they and the other nurses followed immediately behind. Behind them followed members of the Hospital Board and the Medical Superintendent, Dr Phillip Thornton. The procession was joined by her family and progressed to the Ipswich Cemetery where a service was officiated by Reverend Doctor Pritchard.

In the regular State of the Hospital Report to the Board of Management, Dr Thornton noted in the two weeks ending August 20<sup>th</sup>, 1902 account "Nurse Mary Jane Daye, aged 33 admitted to the wards August 3<sup>rd</sup> and died August 9<sup>th</sup> from Pneumonia, contracted in the performance of her duties." And, in two weeks ending September 17<sup>th</sup> 1902 reported "The new

uniform the property of the late Nurse Daye was presented to the Hospital by her Relatives."

In another report to the Board, Dr Thornton stated that "Nurse Harlow, who contracted pneumonia while attending the late Nurse Daye and other patients, was now convalescent, and on his suggestion, was granted 10 days leave of absence".

One year later, a memorial notice was placed in the newspaper by her brother and sister stating "In memory of our dear sister, Mary Jane Daye, who died on the 9<sup>th</sup> August, 1902.

*Farewell! A little time, and we*

*Who knew thee well and loved thee dear,*

*One by one will follow thee,*

*As pilgrims through the gate of fear,*

*Which open on eternity."*

## Early Operating Theatres

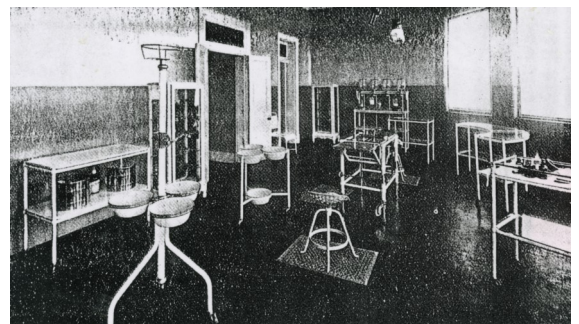
In the early days of the hospital the operations were performed in the wards. A screen was placed around the patient during the procedure. In 1899 the hospital dealt with 207 surgical cases. A designated operating theatre was opened in the north-east corner of the medical ward in 1900. A new surgical wing with a dedicated operating theatre was opened in 1913. It was described as the most up to date in Queensland. The theatre was half hexagonal in shape which enabled the room to be beautifully lit on three sides. It also had a sterilizing room, surgeons room and nurses store room. The equipment was procured from London and Sydney and was particularly described as "very elaborate".

At the time of opening Dr Phillip Thornton was the medical superintendent and Miss Pampling was the matron. The building was opened by the then Governor of Queensland, Sir William MacGregor. The Truth newspaper included this comment after the opening by the Governor,

*"Pity they didn't try the effect of one of his speeches on some patient as an anaesthetic".*



*Inscription reads "Presented to Mrs J Garget On the occasion of the laying of the Foundation Tablet of the Operating Theatre Erected in Memory of Robert Aland June 13<sup>th</sup> 1906."*



## Current Projects

School Education Resources Development Workshop for community museums is being hosted by the museum in September.

Making history relevant to students is an important component of learning opportunity that community museums can provide for students of their local region.

Presentations at the workshop will be by the Queensland Museum's Lifelong Learning Department. The workshop is supported by Regional Arts Development Fund (RADF)

grant a partnership between Queensland Government and Ipswich City Council

Photos and prints collected following multiple developments of the hospital are being sorted with the help of Ipswich Art Gallery staff. Those of historic significance will be kept by the museum. The others will be offered for sale or auction over the coming months.

## Early Ipswich Fever Epidemics

In the 1800s the disease that truly frightened people was the fever epidemic. It would sweep through a community, striking almost at random, afflicting the young and the old with grievous symptoms that frequently resulted in death. A family could be decimated in just a few weeks.

The causes of these diseases was not understood, how it was carried from one victim to the next was conjecture, and the treatments available were rudimentary.

Diseases known to cause these epidemics include:

- Malaria and Blackwater Fever. (Spread by mosquitos)
- Typhoid (Spread through contaminated food and water), also called Goal (jail) Fever because it was common in the crowded goals of the period.
- Typhus (spread by fleas, ticks and mites), a bacterial infection which was
- Measles (spread by coughing and sneezing)
- Scarlet Fever (spread by coughing and sneezing,) was a leading cause of child deaths in the 1800s. In 1859, 4 adults and 19 children on the immigrant ship "Glentanner" from Britain died from measles and scarlet fever.
- Cholera (spread by contaminated food and water.)

said to have killed more of Napoleon's soldiers in the Russian Campaign than were killed in battle. In 1852 A mother and father died of Typhus near Too-woomba leaving orphaned children. Other cases were reported in the colony and all were found to have been passengers on the ship "Rajahgopaul". There was outrage in the local press that immigration and quarantine officials had allowed these passengers to land putting the colony at risk, instead of quarantining the ship.



It was believed these fevers were spread by the miasma, (the toxic vapours and stench of filth and corruption).

Isolation was the favoured treatment to prevent the spread of the disease. Some drugs such as quinine were available; and nursing care with treatments and potions to mitigate the symptoms supported the patient until the fever had passed.

Fever wards to house the isolated fever patients were airy and well ventilated,

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## Community presentations

Once again we have been busy sharing the museum stories with the community. Cascade Gardens, U3A History Group, Alzheimers Association and student nurses from Bremer TAFE and USQ have learned about aspects of our current display Maternity and Anaesthetics and the early history of the Ipswich Hospital including some of the more obscure instruments.

The museum appreciates the opportunity to engage with the community and talk about our past and present displays, instrument collection, early history of the hospital and nursing and medical stories of our past.



*Tonsil Guillotine*

**Snake Bite Treatment** Since the hospital began a number of patients have been admitted after being bitten by a snake.

### **One Case from the North Australian, 28<sup>th</sup> December 1864**

A case of snakebite has occurred in North Ipswich to a man named Cornelius Clifford of which I think it only just to the public to send you full particulars as I considered, under Gods providence, the treatment the man received, and the attention paid to him, saved his life. The man in question was bitten by what he described to me as a diamond snake. After a lapse of two hours he was taken to Dr Challinor who slightly scarified the wound and ordered the man to hospi-



tal, the patient was getting gradually worse, and so much so that the Reverend Father Goulding, who had been watching him from the commencement, considered it his duty to administer the last rites of the church, and to send for Dr K I O'Doherty, who promptly attended and immediately scarified the hand so deeply that the man lost a pint of blood. Brandy and ammonia were then administered, and the man, supported by others was compelled to walk up and down the verandah. Stupor again, came on, and it was found necessary for a period of an hour to strike him with a heavy whip across the back to prevent him going to sleep. The man was then left in charge of Mr Heeney, the house surgeon, who remained with him for the night. I have seen the man three times, and I believe him quite recovered. There are many quack remedies suggested for snakebite, that when a really serious case occurs, it is only fair to inform the public how it has been treated and the result.

## Recent Acquisitions

Our gratitude goes to those who have contributed to the museum collection. Recently John and Jacky Aubrey have kindly donated an operating theatre table from the 1800's that was originally used in the John Flynn Hospital in Roderick St. What a precious part of the medical history of Ipswich.

Photos and badges have been donated by Barbara Stephens

and Marg Elvery.

Also received in this period was a large collection of pharmaceuticals from the London Pharmacy. More on that in the next newsletter once it is sorted and catalogued.



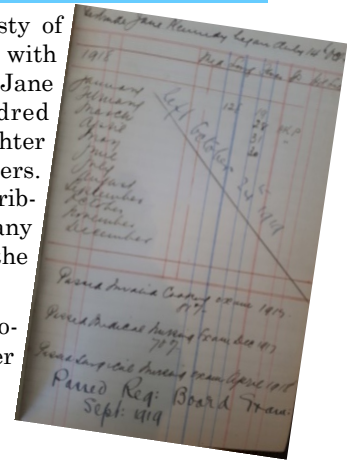
## Syd Ryder Inquiry

An enquiry was received by the museum from Syd. His story... "As an historian, I was surprised to find more than 40 people, back to 1840, who had an involvement in nursing. This stirred the researcher in me to record their history, a journey that has just begun. I was endeavouring to establish the authenticity of the claims hence my contact with the Ipswich Hospital regarding Gertrude Jane Kennedy.

As I understand it Gertrude met Reginald (Rex) Smart Cribb while he was a patient in the Ipswich Hospital. They later married and she retired from nursing but maintained an external role in the care. My connection with Gertrude is she is my 3rd Cousin once removed, and was born in Dalby in 1887 the daughter of John Kennedy and Susan Alice Brown. My research had commenced with her Grandmother Jane Brown who became matron of the Lady Bowen Hospital in 1878. Jane is my 1st Cousin 3 times removed.

What I have discovered is a dynasty of nurses in that family commencing with Jane Brown followed by Gertrude Jane Kennedy, Granddaughter, Mildred Frances Cribb, Great Granddaughter then two Great Great Granddaughters. I have no doubt they have all contributed to the care and wellbeing of many and have left a big footprint on the lives of those they touched.

Please appreciate my search is ongoing and hopefully I will discover more."



*The museum was delighted to be able to help in some small way with Syd's research.*

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often on hilltops to allow the "miasma" to safely disperse. To protect families and communities, treatment at the hospital isolation ward was preferred. Hospital staff were also at risk.

Matron Raymond died of fever in the summer of 1863 while nursing fever patients.

Providing accommodation for fever patients was a problem at the original Hospital in 1860s. 37 beds in 3 wards in the main hospital building did not provide effective isolation, so in 1863 a detached cottage with two large well ventilated rooms was erected for fever patients.

When a fever epidemic occurred that summer, this ward had been diverted to house female patients. The Hospital Commit-

tee urgently petitioned the Colonial Government for £500 to build a fever ward, and to request the loan of 3 to 6 large military tents.

Tents were provided later in the 1860s as emergency accommodation in epidemics. (Sick with fever, in a canvas tent, in an Ipswich summer, is not a pleasant prospect)

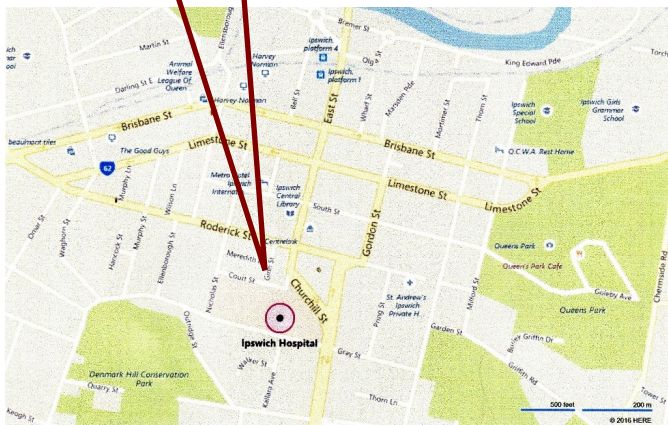
There were further entreaties to the government for funds: including "four cases of typhoid fever"; "a case of cholera was reported"; "there is now a patient under treatment for typhoid fever who from want of proper accommodation is kept on the stair landing"

In 1872 a vote for £300 for a fever ward was in the Government Estimates. A fever ward costing £400 was completed.



**Ipswich Hospital Museum Inc**

**LOCATION:  
Ipswich Hospital  
East St Entrance**



### **CONTACT US:**

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Friends of Ipswich Hospital Museum



## **Current Display Maternity and Anaesthetics**



**YOU ARE WELCOME:**  
Every Wednesday: 0900— 1200  
or by appointment

(groups welcome)

**FREE ENTRY**