



Museum Matters

Volume 4, Issue 3

September 2020

IPSWICH HOSPITAL MUSEUM Inc.

Committee :

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

Chairman's Chatterings

Over the past months the Museum has been publishing and posting around the Ipswich Hospital stories of dedicated nurses who have had a connection with Ipswich Hospital. In reading this edition you will read about more of these dedicated men and women who have made a huge contribution to their communities and in return have found fulfilment in genuinely caring for people from all walks of life. On reflection it is humbling to read the stories of past nurses who have suffered as a result of their ongoing commitment to their patients and in many instances succumbed to the very illnesses their patients were facing. Today we have read that many Ipswich Hospital nursing staff have also had their lives impacted through nursing patients with Covid 19. Many nurses have recently had to undertake separation from loved ones via isolation and/ or quarantine and all have cheerfully returned when permitted to take up their role again in the provision of care for their community. It is very encouraging to know that the current nursing staff at Ipswich Hospital have shown themselves to be as dedicated and committed to the profession of nursing as their forebears.

Inside this issue:

Meet the Museum Volunteers	2
Pioneer Bush Nurse	3
Where are the Nurses?	3
Catherine Evans Prize List	
Where are they now?	4
Management Minutes	4
Little Tidbit	4

Orthopaedic Ward Evolvement

The Orthopaedic Department has seen many changes.

Orthopaedics started to gain its own identity at the hospital with the arrival of Dr Ted Reye as Orthopaedic Surgeon in 1961. Orthopaedic patients were nursed at one end of the surgical wards – males on the top floor and women below on the first floor. The building was at the end of East Street and no longer exists.

The first dedicated orthopaedic ward was opened on the fourth floor of a newly completed tower block in 1979.

Judy Blinco, now one of the museum's volunteers, became charge nurse of the ward in 1982 – a role she continued until 2015.

She recalls that most of the patients were confined to bed. Sponges, pressure care, bedmaking, preparing patients for meals, assisting with feeding and meeting personal needs were a large part of the day. Equipment was cleaned and sterilized on the ward. Cotton balls and combine dressings, the standard, were prepared (cut, rolled, and packaged) on the ward and then sent to theatre for autoclaving. There were lots of weekend chores - cleaning, counting, restocking – and many books to fill out - the sponge book, the temperature book (temperatures were written into a book and later transcribed into the patients notes), the nurses report book (nurses did not write in the patient notes). The patients - mostly young men having had accidents and staying for weeks or months—were usually responsible for lining the books up.

The first total hip replacement by Dr Ron Tilbury created great interest. Special elastic stocking were used and the abduction pillow was also a new concept.

“I can still see the crowd of doctors around the bed that first evening as all the intricacies of the case were discussed,” Judy recalls.

“With the move to the tower block we really missed our verandahs but the air-conditioning was a godsend. The other gem of the tower block ward was the huge plant room that was invaluable for the storage of all the extra equipment. The nurses thought it was home to a friendly ghost until one of the staff was bitten on the finger by a possum.”

The patient profile was changing. Trauma was being operated on more quickly and length of stay was dropping.

Total hip and knee replacements became more. Spinal fusions were done for a few years. In the 80's the orthopaedic ward in the tower block was constantly full to overflowing.

A move to 7D in the new ward block in 1998 saw inpatient numbers dropping. Over the next 15 years the throughput of patients escalated to a point where it was common to change over 50% or more patient a day.

“In all the hustle and bustle it was always good to be able to return to the patient, help them with their shower, clean their teeth, comb their hair, listen to their story and make them comfortable,” Judy says. Currently orthopaedics is housed in 5F in the East Street block, a move made in 2013.

Some interesting statistics show the enormous changes not only in the practice of orthopaedic surgery and care but also in the physical layout of wards.

Pre-1979 the ward had only two toilets. Currently there are 22 toilets on the ward. One shower has been surpassed by 22 showers, two hand basins has increased to 51.

The ward now contains 17 single rooms and 3 x four bed rooms, compared to 2 x 16 beds as part of open surgical wards.

Meet the Museum Volunteers: Part 1

The Ipswich Hospital Museum can only exist because of the work of volunteers in ensuring that the hospital's history is recorded and maintained. In this issue Museum Matters highlights these former nurses who bring their knowledge, interest and expertise to keeping our history alive. Please note that these women are humble and modest and reluctant to be showcased but the Museum Matters "editor" felt it was important to illustrate their stories as part of the museum's history and as part of the International Year of the Nurse and Midwife.

Jane Kingston



Christina Marre



Elizabeth McNalty



Judy Blinco



Jane is Secretary of the Ipswich Hospital Museum. She has had a long connection with the Ipswich Hospital. Her mother worked at the hospital on the domestic staff from 1970 until 1983. The weekend after Jane completed senior her mother came home to tell her she had found her a job working in Pathology. Her mother (probably wisely) thought there was no way Jane would sit around at home waiting to start nursing at Princess Alexandra Hospital. She worked as a Pathology Assistant with well known pathology staff, Dr McAdam, Mr Delbridge, Joe and Peter.

Jane's great-great grandfather came to Ipswich in 1839 as a guest of the Crown. Her great grandfather, grandfather and mother were all born in Ipswich.

After completing her training, Jane studied Intensive and Coronary Care Nursing in Melbourne. She worked overseas for a few years and returned to work at RBH moving into Nursing Education.

She has undertaken Critical Care Certificates, Diploma of Nursing Studies, Bachelor of Nursing and Master of Education.

She relishes researching and learning and highly recommends being a volunteer at the museum.

Born in Bangalore, India, Christina's father was an Army Officer and her mother a retired nurse. As many of her parent's siblings were nurses, she always wanted to "join the club". When her family immigrated to Australia she fulfilled her dream and started nursing training at the Royal Perth Hospital in October 1967.

After graduating she married and moved to Canberra where she joined the District Nurses. This began her love of holistic nursing, feeling privileged to become a part of many people's lives and to watch them overcome illness and sometimes to assist them to move on from this life to the next in a dignified and inspiring way.

Christina worked with Blue Care in Townsville and in different centres until she retired. While working in Mount Isa, she attended two Palliative Care Nursing Conferences, representing nurses who care for the dying and their families in the "Bush", in Oslo and Jerusalem and learned new ways of nursing and making life easier for those at the end stage of life.

She feels blessed to be a member of the dedicated volunteers at the Hospital Museum endeavouring to keep our history alive.

Christina is Treasurer of the Ipswich Hospital Museum.

Libby was born in Warwick but grew up and went to school in Toowoomba. She trained at St Vincent's in Toowoomba, and did her midwifery at the Mater and Maternal and Child Health at St Paul's Terrace.

Libby came to Ipswich Hospital in 1972 and was the nurse in charge of the Operating Theatres for 39 years, seeing many changes in that time.

She remembers the days of basic instrumentation long before disposable equipment and no protective equipment such as plastic aprons, goggles and face shields. In some operations bodily secretions of all kinds soaked though gowns to staff's skin. Gloves were patched and sterilised for reuse. Furniture and facilities were scarce and theatre staff limited.

"Motor bike riders seem to travel from all over Australia to crash outside Ipswich—theatres dealt with a good deal of trauma."

In 1979 the old theatres were demolished and four new operating rooms built in the tower block.

During her nursing career Libby saw three Health Ministers go to jail.

She is now the backbone of the Ipswich Hospital Museum with her fount of encyclopaedic knowledge of the Ipswich Hospital.

Judy grew up in Crow's Nest and attended Ipswich Girls Grammar for two years before starting her General Training at Toowoomba Base Hospital in 1968. After completing midwifery training in Melbourne, she returned to Ipswich as a registered nurse in the Male Surgical Ward in 1973. Apart from a year overseas she worked at Ipswich Hospital until her retirement as Nurse Unit Manager of the Orthopedic Unit in 2015, a role she held for 33 years.

She continued her studies in clinical care and orthopaedics and completed a Master's degree in Health Care Management. She sees her greatest reward in nursing as being able to help and care for patients and in seeing the new nurses grow and develop into competent caring professionals.

The male surgical and intensive care ward was a daunting area for a new nurse. "It was a busy ward and we worked long and hard. While I enjoyed all areas, I found myself drawn to orthopaedics. I was interested in the ropes, the knots, the splints, the angles, the forces and how managing them affected the fracture and the patient comfort. What nurses do and how they do it can make a huge difference to the wellbeing of the orthopaedic patient."

Judy's work with the hospital museum centres around the accurate identification, cataloguing and recording of all museum items.

Pioneer Bush Nurse

An Ipswich Hospital trained nurse, who went on to a long career as a pioneer bush nurse, was still registered in her 80s.

Beatrice Marie Nielsen was born at Tiaro, near Maryborough, in 1886, as one of 13 children.

She did her initial general nursing training at Ipswich Hospital before studying obstetrics at the Lady Musgrave Hospital in Maryborough, and child welfare at the Albert St Clinic in Brisbane.

This training prepared her for a career which spanned more than 40 years in Queensland country areas and northern New South Wales. During this time she was matron at Quilpie, Harrisville, Boonah, Woodford and Biloela Hospitals. She retired in about 1950.

Regarded as a pioneer in bush nursing, Beatrice was recognised with a life membership of the Australian Trained Nurses Association.

After retiring she lived at Wellington Point for more than 30 years. Her interests included gardening, bowls and music and she taught many children piano and organ playing. She was an active member of the Wynnum Christadelphian Ecclesia.

In her 80s she re-registered as a nurse to look after her younger brother, Jim, at home. At that time she was believed to be the oldest registered nurse in Australia.

Miss Nielsen spent her last days at Canossa Private Hospital in Oxley before passing away in 1982.

A scene in the orthopaedic ward showing a patient in traction. On the left is Sr Jan Wilton. The student nurse is unknown



Where are the Nurses?

A hard-covered exercise book in the keeping of the Hospital Museum, “**Instructions for the Trained Staff**”, is filled with typed sheets of instructions, rules, regulations and standards for nurses in the wards during the early 1950s.

Nurses had to read the instruction book and sign at the back that they had done so.

Matron Wilcox obviously held a tight rein on the running of the hospital as shown by these snippets from the book.

“The night sister has reported to me that the nurses are not sleeping in their own beds. This practice must cease immediately, otherwise the nurse concerned will be classed as absent without leave.”

“Doctor Trumpy’s orders are that no ward is to be left without a second nurse.”

“From the reports submitted to me by Nurses Marsden, and Mizen, regarding patients getting out of bed, it was obvious to me that the nurses are not obeying orders issued by me, which are: ‘No ward must be left without a Nurse-in-charge.’ In these reports, it was stated by both nurses: ‘When were having supper, the patient got out of bed’. Will you please see, in future, that no ward is left without a nurse. Each nurse must have her supper alone, if there is no nurse to relieve her.”

“Anaesthetic cases, blood transfusions, transfer of patients, or any unpleasantness between the staff and patients, must be reported to Matron”.

“Soiled blankets must be sponged clean by the Nurse. No blankets are to be laundered without matron’s permission, and when this is obtained they are to be sent to the laundry only on Thursdays. When a blanket is required next to a patient, an old one must be used.”

“The cutlery in each ward is displayed each night in the Day Room, and is checked by the

Sister on duty. If any cutlery is missing, the Nurse responsible must look in every locker and bed, and most important she **MUST LOOK IN THE PIG-TIN AND GARBAGE CAN.**”

“When instruments, thermometers, syringes, etc., are to be replaced, the broken article accompanied by a slip marked Ipswich Hospital, is sent to Matron’s Office in the morning with the Nurse who brings the Cutlery Book.”

“Fans are to be switched off each night before 11pm. Also they must be placed in a conspicuous position to avoid accidents with the Night Staff.”

“All soiled linen must be washed by the Nurse responsible for the changing of the bed before sending to the laundry.”

“Nurses are not allowed to wear cardigans on duty in the wards, but they may be worn to and from the ward. Extra warmth is worn under their uniforms, plus their capes.”

“Will the sisters in charge of the wards please see that the nurses’ daily notes are not used as scribbling paper. Scribbling pads are supplied to the wards. Any sister requiring same please order them on Monday, Wednesday or Friday.”

“I would like to draw the sisters attention to the cupboards in their wards. On looking through some of the cupboards they appeared to me as though they are not receiving the attention they should. Every Sunday, between two and four o’clock, the nurses on duty are responsible for the cleaning out of all cupboards. Will the sisters please see that these duties are carried out? All day room cupboards are cleaned by the day room nurse daily.”

“Nurses are reminded the boiler is for the use of soiled linen from gastro enteritis patients only, and NOT for general soiled linen. Also when the boiler is not in use there must be sufficient water let in it to cover the element. Any nurse disregarding these instructions will be reported to me.”



Night nurses having fun in the 1950s—despite Matron Wilcox’s edicts.

Where Are They Now?

For a period of 36 years the Catherine Evans Memorial Prize was awarded to a graduate nurse completing her four years general training.

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. The prize was a badge with the hospital crest and the words "Catherine Evans Memorial".

The first Catherine Evans Memorial Prize was awarded in 1956 by Dr Trumpy to Joy McElwaine at the 1956 graduation ceremony. The last recipient, in the final graduating class of Ipswich Hospital trained nurses in 1992, was Maria Van de Weyer.

"Museum Matters" want to follow up on the careers of these outstanding nurses. Are you one of them or do you know any of them?

Catherine Evans Memorial Prize Recipient List

1956	Joy McElwaine	1974	H. McKenzie
1957	Thelma Lotz	1975	Ruth Handyasyde
1958	Merle Jackson	1976	J. Pinch
Mar 1959	Kathleen Hayes	1977	B.L. Anderson
Dec 1959	Lynette Holmes	1978	H.L. Huth
1960	Glenys Mary Hobbins	1979	C.I. Price
1961	Esme Jensen	1980	K.F. Dick
1962	Heather Middleton	1981	C.A. Horton
1963	Melva Walsh	1982	Christina Logan-Moore
1964	Daphne Pocock	1983	D.J. Markham
Feb 1996	Valmai Bradford	1984	R.L. Pike
Dec 1966	Pamela Jane Blair	1985	C.R. Van Dyken
1967	Emily Weatherhead	1986	O.A. West
1968	Margaret Bailey	1987	K.J. Mott
1969	D.L. Lane	1988	V.A.G. Mather
1970	Valerie Haughton	1989	K. Gough
1971	Cheryl Powter	1990	M. Zerner
1972	Cheryl Weston	1991	Delwyn Hyde
1973	Cheryl Dawson	1992	Maria Van De Weyer

Ipswich Hospital and Benevolent Asylum Management Minutes 1863-1876

From meetings of the Acting Committee with the following present at all meetings: Lt. Col. Gray, Messrs. Bell, Watkins, W.M. Smith, & the Rev. Lacy H. Rumsey.

Thursday, August 13, 1863

- Francis, a patient, who had been discussed for some misconduct but whose general conduct was declared by Mr. Heeney to have been good, was re-admitted with an admonition.
- Some misunderstanding having arisen respecting the admission of a lady to see her brother, a patient under very peculiar circumstances, it was ordered that the said lady, Miss Knight, be allowed access to her brother at any time during which the hospital might be open.
- Mr. Rumsey paid over to Mr. Watkins a cheque for £5, received by him for the hospital from Mr. Simpson.
- Mr. Rumsey was instructed, in conjunction with Mr. Heeney, to order from Dowden a case for the reception of the newly arrived surgical instrument;

cost not to exceed £10

- Mrs. Rae was again called in and interrogated about her husband, without any satisfactory result.
- A truss, for Doyle, ordered.
- A pair of scales, with weights, for postmortem examinations ordered.
- A grant of 10/. To [illegible] Thor Brohan, about to leave the hospital, ordered.

Thursday, August 27, 1863

- Certain improvements to the shelves in the dispensary room, and a pair of steps, ordered.
- A complaint brought by Mr. Heeney against the servants was enquired into, and Mr. Raymond referred to, and requested to look into the matter.
- A pair of boots ordered for Rooney.
- £4 ordered to be paid to Mr. Heeney on account of salary.
- Mr. Rumsey was instructed to take measures, in conjunction with Mr. Faircloth, for getting at Rae; and Mr. Raymond was also directed to take certain steps with respect to Mrs. Rae.

- Mr. Bell was requested to communicate with Messrs. Holdsworth of Sydney, requesting a kitchen stove.

Thursday, September 10, 1863

- Resolved that information be laid, with a view to Col. Gray's being requested to enforce a warrant for the apprehension of – Hogan, for desertion of his infant child now in the hospital.
- Mr. Rumsey was requested to write to Mr. Graham, Superintendent at Jondaryan, about Rae, said by his wife to be engaged there in shepherding.
- Mr. Rumsey was requested to write again to Redbank about their promised subscription: as well as to the Colonial Treasurer, about the poundage fee, now due to the hospital.
- Arrangement for Hogan's child to be placed in the father's hands were suggested, and left to Mr. Smith to be carried out.

CONTACT US:

www.ipswichhospitalmuseum.com.au

Email: info@ipswichhospitalmuseum.com.au

Find us on:  [facebook](#) Friends of Ipswich Hospital Museum

Phone: 04292995178

Little Tidbit

From the Queensland Times

The Ipswich Hospital called tenders in November 1880 for the following items: 1. Port Wine per doz. or per gallon; Brandy per gallon, Geneva per case; Ale and porter per doz and per hogshead. 2. Groceries and sundries. 3. Furnishing Funerals—including cemetery fees—hearse and coffin (stained black) at per adult and at per child under 8 years. 4. Milk per quart.