



President's Report

Easter has been celebrated, and a quarter of the year has gone. I always feel that things start to get serious following Easter when the excitement of the promise of new beginnings and new resolutions have faded and thoughts of tax returns and elections start to dominate our thoughts and the media.

Serious thoughts are with the ACHHA Management Committee members this year with the threat currently facing us with regards to the future of the Heritage Village and, with that threat, the future of the Hospital Museum. Errol and I attended one of Mayor Strelow's information sessions, and could understand the RRC's problem, but hopefully the real importance of the Village to the Rockhampton Region in the long term will prevail and we will see only changes that will enhance what is already there.

In the meantime it is business as usual, and we have already had our first school tour through the Hospital - two groups with approximately 20 students in each from the Bluff School. They were a delightful group of children who were attentive and interested. It was a pleasure to have these children at the Museum.

Ashley has changed the display boards once again, and the current displays honour ANZAC Day, and the medical/nursing personnel who served during wartime.

There is some urgency to fast track the collation and documentation of the archive material housed in the administration area of the Museum. Elsewhere in this newsletter is a list compiled by Yvonne (our Archivist) of the areas that ACHHA members and their friends may like to assist us with. In addition to items on the list is the need to photograph every item in the museum, so photographers would be welcome to assist Errol in this venture.

Now that we can expect cooler weather, there is

to be a working bee to spring clean the Hospital, change the linen, and see if the displays can be improved upon. If able to assist please advise myself or Yvonne.

We are involved in organising the celebrations for International Nurses Day, and the registration form for the Friday evening book launch on 10th May and the Saturday Professional Development Day on 11th May are now available from our website. The Friday evening function will see Jacquie Mackay from the ABC launch the "Shades of Nursing" book and interview some of the contributors. You will recall that we made requests on behalf of the International Nurses Day Organising Committee for stories during 2012. We are pleased to say that many working and retired nurses (or the families of former nurses) responded to requests and we received an excellent set of stories about nursing in the hospitals during 60 years of the 20th Century. The book will be available for purchase on the night for \$15.00 and prepaid orders can be placed now. See the enclosed brochure for all information on the IND celebrations.

The ACHHA is not a fund-raising body, but of course we have costs to take into account, and the Organisation is reliant on grants (which have not been successful this year), membership fees, and donations, plus in kind donations in the form of volunteer time to maintain what we have, and to do what we want to achieve. The biggest cost of all is the Public Liability Insurance. In the past this has been met by the Council, but this year they have refused to refund us. If we are unable to renegotiate the MOU with the Council this will become the ACHHA's responsibility. Other costs are general administration costs, such as the Post Box, stationery, postage, computer software and maintenance etc. Members can assist by encouraging colleagues and friends to become members, or to encourage donations which are tax deductible.

Heritage Village staff and volunteers have almost completed building a sandstone fence in front of the Museum. This incorporates two of the steel Sandrock gates which were originally installed at the Canning Street entrance to the Rockhampton Hospital in 1935. We are planning a “fence party” to celebrate the completion of the fence, and the positioning of the gates. When we make suitable arrangements with Heritage Village Management, a date will be set and all members will be invited.

Some of our Committee Members have experienced health problems these past few months, and my wish is that all that will soon be in the past.

Be sure to encourage friends and visitors to come to the Museum, and enjoy its history.

Norma West
President

Volunteers Needed

The management committee urgently needs volunteers to assist with the mammoth task of sorting, cleaning, recording and storage of the vast amount of paper based archival material in its keeping.

If you could spare some time to work alongside and under the direction of a committee member in one of the following areas please let us know.

All projects have written guidelines to follow, items need sorting into identified categories and documented before the information is submitted to the office for data processing and then storage.

Projects:

- Nursing file collection, at least 5,000 files to be processed.
- Glass slide collection.
- Nurses library.
- Medical library.
- Old hospital record books.
- Hospital management records.
- Nurse education records.
- Midwifery education records.
- In-service Education records.
- Examination papers.
- Hospital management records.
- Colour photographs.

At the present time committee members work at the museum each Tuesday except during school holidays. A Thursday working bee could also be arranged.

If you would like to help in any way please contact a member of the committee, or phone Norma West 4927 7259 or Yvonne Kelley 4928 5443.

Thank you for your support of the museum to date.

Yvonne Kelley
Archivist



Forthcoming events

Launch of book “Shades of Nursing - sixty years of anecdotes and memories”
Friday 10th May 6:00 pm Rockhampton Regional Library Bolsover St. (\$10.00 per person).

Professional Development Workshop
Saturday 11th May Amy Zelmer Building CQUniversity 9:30 am—3:30 pm (\$50:00 or \$20.00 for students/retirees)

Heritage Village Mothers Day Markets
Sunday 12th May Rockhampton Heritage Village 8:00 am—1:00 pm

Association Membership
The Association welcomes your support for our activities. The Association operates on a normal financial year (July—June) and any new subscriptions paid now will be credited against membership for the 2013/2014 financial year. If you wish to join the Association, please contact the secretary, Errol Payne, by phone on 4922 3314, by email at: secretary@achha.org.au or post payments to ACHHA Inc, Box 4035, Rockhampton Qld 4700. Of course any member of our management committee outlined on the final page will be pleased to assist you to join.

Membership Fees

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| Annual | Individual | \$20.00 |
| | Couple | \$30.00 |
| Life | Individual | \$200.00 |
| | Couple | \$300.00 |

Please make cheques payable to: Australian Country Hospital Heritage Association Inc.

From the Archives

If you have visited our Museum at the Rockhampton Heritage Village, or logged on to our website at www.achha.org.au, you will have seen many of our historic photographs. However, the material on display is actually just a small part of the overall collection. In this edition of the Newsletter we have decided to show you some other examples from our sets of photographs.

Firstly, there are many examples of photographs which show young nursing sisters in full uniform. Quite a few of these are studio photographs and often they have been taken to celebrate graduation. We start with four examples of such photographs from 1926, 1937, 1940 and about 1961.

These are followed by a group photograph from around 1956 which shows the nurses with the President of the Rockhampton Hospitals Board, Mr N. F. Applin, who was a Rockhampton Magistrate, and the Medical Superintendent of the Rockhampton Hospital, Dr Graham Cavaye.



Sister Maggie McCormack (later Mrs A. Kenny) in Rockhampton in 1926. Nurses often shared their photographs in the form of postcards. This one has the watermark "Rockhampton Studios Mt Morgan".



Sister Avis Adelia Auton commenced training at the Rockhampton Hospital on 7th January 1937. The front of this photograph is annotated "With love from Avis 1940".



This photograph of Sister Margaret (Peg) Davis of the Rockhampton Hospital was taken in 1937. The back of the photograph carries the annotation "To Dear Lil from Peg Xmas 1937". The imprint on the bottom right hand corner reads "Rockhampton Studios Ltd."



Graduating Rockhampton Hospital nurses in full uniform ca. 1961. Left to Right: Ruth Phyllis, Kathryn Crosbie and Kathy Nolan.



The photograph shows a group of nurses graduating from the Rockhampton Hospital ca. 1956. Front Row (L to R): Dr Graham Cavaye (Medical Superintendent), Sr Editha Haines, Matron Margaret Graham, Mr N. F. Applin (Hospital Board Chair); 2nd Row: Thelma Ball, Jill Grindlay, Jeannie Neilson, Iris Collins; 3rd Row: Helen Anderson, Jenny Green, Evelyn Jones; 4th Row: Jill Austin, Jan Daniels, Mary Rattenbury, Unidentified midwifery graduate, Unidentified midwifery graduate, Val Smyth.

Rockhampton Hospital Doctors

Photographs of the medical staff who worked at the Rockhampton Hospital between 1960 and 1983 are another feature of our collection. The original photographs were framed and were hanging in the Doctors' Common Room at the Hospital. While the framed versions have not survived, we have been able to prepare quite good copies of many of the photographs which fortunately carry the names of all who were present. We plan to display this collection at the Museum in the future.

The photographs will be of interest to Central Queenslanders because many long-serving local doctors completed their post-graduation internships at the Rockhampton Hospital before entering private practice.

The set of photographs and the associated captions tell a number of stories about the 23 year period 1960—1983. For example, we see the growth in the number of doctors from 7 in 1960 and 5 in 1961 with no women doctors, to 29 in 1983 with 5 women. In some cases the photographs of the doctors are supplemented with photographs with their wives. We note that it was not until the early 1970s that women were identified by their own initials ie Mrs T. A. Sale becomes Mrs V. B. H. Sale in 1971. We also note the dramatic shortening of the length of women's skirts in the early 1970s.

We are also relieved in retrospect because all of our early historic photographs are in black and white and have survived in relatively good condition. The colour photographs from the 1970s are of dreadful quality as many of us know from our own photo collections.

The photograph we have chosen to illustrate the set in our collection is from 1963.



Resident medical staff at the Rockhampton General Hospital in 1963. Back Row (L - R): Dr P. T. Sheridan, Dr R. Barker, Dr P. Moran, Dr G. R. Mundy, Dr W. J. Wilson; Front Row (L - R): Dr M. R. O'Hara, Dr G. K. H. Yap, Mr T. A. Sale (Medical Superintendent), Dr A. W. Agnew, Dr L. J. Major. Note that at this time specialist surgeons were addressed by the title Mr rather than Dr.



Young nurse lost at sea

Another of the photographs in our collection is this one showing Nurse Rowena (Rene) Gordon in 1918 or 1919.



According to the newspapers of the day, Rene, who was born on 14 July 1900, was a native of Proserpine. She lost her parents when she was about three years of age and her only relatives were Mrs Wilson Gordon,

a cane farmer at Proserpine and a cousin whom she had spoken of as a resident of Sydney. Rene was appointed to the staff of the Rockhampton Hospital on the 30th of August, 1918. In mid-1919 she made the fateful decision to take a trip on a Government steamer the Llewellyn to visit friends in the Bowen area.

The Llewellyn which was taking supplies from Rockhampton to Bowen, disappeared in a gale on 17th July 1919. Despite an extensive search neither the ship nor any of its 12 crew and two passengers including Rene as the only woman was found. However, one of the searching ships found a great deal of wreckage near St Bees Island east of Mackay. Sadly, this wreckage included a woman's nightdress labelled "R Gordon" and a 12-15 cm lock of a woman's hair jammed in a knot of a damaged life jacket. The wreck of the Llewellyn was finally found in 1997, 45 km east of Mackay and is now a protected recreational dive site.

The President of the Rockhampton General Hospital Committee, Mr T. B. Renshaw paid tribute to Rene at a function to welcome the Medical Superintendent (Dr F C Wooster) when he returned to the hospital after serving in World War 1.

In proposing the toast to "The honoured dead" Mr Renshaw said: *"During the last few days, we have lost one of our staff. Until a few days ago we had amongst us Nurse Gordon, one of the brightest, most cheerful, young probationers. She was ever ready to do her work and ever willing to carry out the duties allotted her. Dr Richards in speaking to me the other day, told me that during the influenza epidemic none carried out her duties more faithfully than Nurse Gordon. It seemed to him that the more she had to do the better pleased she was."*

Association contact details:
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Patron: Dr Con Primmer OAM

Elected Office Bearers

President: Norma West
Secretary: Errol Payne
Treasurer: Kay Smith

Archivist: Yvonne Kelley

Committee Members

Lorraine Antonello
 Nancy Crapp
 Tom Dewar
 Del Leitgeb
 Carol Mclver
 Bill Mclver
 Jocelyn Philp
 Ashley Reid