



NEWSLETTER

AUGUST 2020

Notes from the Secretary

We have decided to give our President, Lorraine, a leave pass for this newsletter. Instead, I will bring you up to date on what has, or has not, been happening.

There is no need for me to tell you that the whole world has been turned on its head by Covid-19. One of the first activities closed down as early as March was the volunteer parts of museums, galleries etc. The reason was that many (most?) volunteers are in the older, more vulnerable, age groups. However, it didn't take long until most other activities were shut down as well. For safety reasons, our Tuesday volunteer group has been in recess and our committee has not been meeting.

Unfortunately, the Rockhampton Regional Council has decided not to reopen the Heritage Village this year. Reasons given include the relative absence of tourists while borders are closed, as well as the fact that the Village is surrounded on the western and northern sides by huge road construction projects. Only one entrance/exit is available at the moment. Council has assured us (and the people of Rockhampton) that there is nothing sinister in the closure, and that behind the scenes planning is underway to enhance the Village experience when it reopens. Our Museum is on a separate lease within the Village, so we are still entitled to visit if we wish. I have been out a couple times to collect and deliver materials. The Village's permanent staff are still in place, and there has been contract work going on continuously. In particular, the spending of the money which the Village has received to enhance lighting is well in progress. With all the dust generated by the roadworks, there will be a major cleaning job to be done before the doors are opened to the public again.

Meanwhile, our presence on the internet has resulted in a small but steady stream of enquiries right through the lockdown. In fact, some people who were locked away found time to go back to their family history projects, hence generating queries for us.

Another item of news is that we were awarded a

\$5,000 grant in March by the Gambling Community Benefit Fund (i.e. Casino money which the Government skims off for community grants). We have now spent this money and acquitted the grant which has provided two additional display cases and a complete upgrade of our computing equipment which was last upgraded in 2013. We look forward to sharing the benefits when we are back in operation at the Village.

Please remember to check our website www.achha.org.au every now and then. I regularly add new photographs. In particular, go to the <Our Collections><People> page on your computer, tablet or phone. Click or tap on a photo to see a larger version and read the story. Then click the back arrow to return to the photos page.

Stay Safe!!

Errol Payne

75th Anniversary of the end of World War 2

After six long years of fighting, World War 2 finally wound down during 1945. The first major breakthrough was the signing of the German Instrument of Surrender on May 7th 1945. The final step for Australia occurred on August 15th 1945 when Japanese Emperor Hirohito announced the surrender of Japanese forces. The final surrender document was signed in Tokyo Harbour on board the *USS Missouri* September 2nd 1945.

As a matter of interest, our Association's former Patron and distinguished Rockhampton Obstetrician and Gynaecologist, the late Dr Conrad Primmer, was in Tokyo Harbour on his ship, *HMAS Ipswich*, at the time of the signing. The *HMAS Ipswich* was 100 miles from Tokyo when Japan surrendered, and was sent into the harbour to make sure it was free from mines and other hazards before the other ships arrived. Dr Primmer had joined the Navy at age 17 and it was after his discharge in 1946 that he began his study of medicine.

I am planning to feature information and photographs in the next Newsletter for some of the local nurses and doctors who served in World War 2.

More photographs!

Our collection seems to have a limitless supply of photographs. Here are a few that I have been processing recently.

Miss Marianne Dowling

Marianne Dowling is one of the nurses researched by Ashley Reid in her World War One project. She was born in Yaamba, just north of Rockhampton, on 30th May 1885 and later lived in Rockhampton and attended the Allenstown State School. She trained in general nursing at the Brisbane General Hospital between ca. 1907 and July 1911 and in midwifery at the Lady Chelmsford Hospital in Bundaberg in 1924 -1925. As World War One began, Marianne joined the Australian Army Nursing Service on 1st Apr 1916 and commenced work as a Staff Nurse at the Rosemount Military Hospital in Brisbane. She enlisted for service abroad and left Australia on 1st Apr 1916 on RMS "Kashgar". She served in the Victoria War Hospital in India and the British General Hospital at Salonica. In 1919 she was posted to AGH Sutton Veny in England. She returned to Australia on 6th Sep 1919 and was discharged from service on 24th Dec 1919. After the war, she served as Matron at the Gladstone Hospital for a time before being appointed as Matron at the Yeppoon Hospital when it opened on 19th Aug 1922. She served in that role until her death in a Sydney private hospital on 14th Oct 1939.

The first photograph of Marianne as a young nurse is in the form of a postcard. On the back Marianne has written "With best love from Marianne".

**Rockhampton Hospital Chest Clinic building 1981**

This Rockhampton Hospital Commonwealth Government funded Chest Clinic building was opened in 1959 and 30 TB sufferers were relocated from the Westwood Sanatorium. This was part of the Commonwealth's plan to try to eliminate TB and other chest-related diseases. The bottom floor was occupied by the Commonwealth Pathology Laboratory. The building served many purposes over the years.

Association Membership

The Association welcomes your support for our activities. If you wish to join our Association, application forms are available from Committee members, from the Contact us page of our website www.achha.org.au or by emailing secretary@achha.org.au

Please make cheques payable to Australian Country Hospital Heritage Association Inc. and post to ACHHA Inc, Box 4035, Rockhampton Qld 4700 or pay by direct deposit to our Westpac Membership Account BSB 034-210 Account No. 23-3836. To enable us to identify you, please use your family name plus Mem (for membership). Any of the Committee members listed on the final page will be pleased to assist you.

Membership Fees

Annual membership is \$20.00 for an individual and \$30.00 for a family. Life membership is \$200.00 for an individual and \$300.00 for a family.

Donations

Our Association (ABN: 86 751 554 596) is registered with the Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission. If you wish to make a tax-deductible donation, pay as above or by direct deposit to our Museum Account BSB 034-210 Account No. 23-3844. Identify yourself by your family name plus Don (for donation) and make sure we have an address for your receipt.

The second photograph shows Marianne later in her career as Matron of the Yeppoon Hospital.



Mater Hospital Graduation

Margaret Pocock (née Smith) is one of Ashley’s near neighbours. She has donated a number of photographs to our collection. This one is part of a set of Mater Hospital graduation ceremonies from 1957. The four nurses in the photograph are Sisters Joan Callghan (Left), Margaret Smith, Mary Pelin and Shirley Bloxsum. Behind them is Monsignor Tiernan and Dr James Bruce Gordon. Dr Gordon was Medical Superintendent of the Rockhampton Hospital from Jan 1924 until Jan 1931.



Rockhampton Hospital 3rd year nursing students

In the next photograph we see four third year nursing students at Rockhampton Hospital in 1945. The nurses identified in the photograph are: Back Row (L to R): Frances Kahl, Joan Marguarite Paxton, Esma May McMurtrie; Front Row: Avery Dawn (Dawn) Carson, Evelyn Carswell, Mavis

Warnock, Heather Weir, Carmel Moran, Vera Anne Marie Hanschen.



Rockhampton Hospital Nursing Graduates 1946

The final photograph in this set shows four of the above students on their graduation day in 1946. They are (L to R): Heather Weir, Carmel Moran, Esma May McMurtrie and Joan Paxton.



Wells/Water Tanks at the Rockhampton Hospital Errol Payne

During my 20-year involvement with ACHHA, I have heard mention of the old well in the grounds of the Rockhampton Hospital from time-to-time. The origin and history of the well was unknown, but came into sharper focus in early 2018 during preparatory work for the construction of the new hospital carpark.

The contractors, Woollam Constructions, encountered a buried concrete cap while drilling for a pier. When this was exposed, it revealed what was identified as a well or tank. Woollam raised concerns with the Queensland Department of Environment and Science (DES) about possible contamination. After investigation, these fears were allayed. However, on 1st Feb 2018, DES was advised by Rockhampton Hospital staff that the feature or its contents may be considered to be archaeological artifacts. DES responded on 7th Feb 2018 “recommending that the feature be thoroughly

recorded and investigated by a suitably qualified heritage consultant. It was further advised that the removal of the feature (if required) should be supervised by a heritage consultant as some artifacts or information may only become evident during demolition”.

Subsequently, Converge Heritage + Community (Converge) was commissioned to undertake this work. (1) After documentation, approval was given to fill the feature with non-binding screen crushed granite to ground level, then bridge with a “concrete foundation with board piers over”.

Converge included a number of photographs of the feature in their final report. These are examples of the eastern feature partially excavated.(2)



Figure 11: Fill mostly removed

It is believed that at least the top meter of this well/tank was demolished in 1986 when the original hospital building was demolished. Before this, it is estimated that the well was approximately 8 m deep and 4.4 m in diameter. This would have had a volume of 122,000 litres or 26,800 gallons. The grey coating is a cement render used to stop the tank from leaking.



Figure 12: Detail of brick laying at base of feature



Figure 19: Western feature with part of fill removed. Note rendering with brick lining behind.

On 15th February, a second, smaller, well/tank was found to the west of the one above. This photograph shows a view of the “western feature”

On 26 Feb 2018, DES advised, in part, that:

“The feature appears to be an underground water tank dating to the mid to late 19th century and was probably used in conjunction with the other nearby water tank that was reported to the Department on 18 January 2018. This interpretation of the discovery is supported by the proximity and the two finds, historical newspaper articles, the construction technique and materials used.”(3)

Converge was not required to provide further detail on the history of the structures. However, they did consult with Peter Moss and Jayson Robinson at the Hospital as well as Norma West and Yvonne Kelley.

Following further research using the newspapers on Trove, there is no doubt that these features are underground water tanks constructed in 1866 when the original Port Curtis and Leichhardt District Hospital building was built. A useful starting point was a detailed article about the hospital’s structure, operation and benefits and shortcomings published in The Morning Bulletin in 1883.(4)

The specific comment relevant to this story reads:

“The water supply is all that is required, the fluid being laid on, besides which are two large underground tanks, with pumps, capable of supplying the institution for several months.”

Knowing that the tanks were in place early in the life of the hospital, I went back to the construction of the hospital in 1866. £10,000 had been allocated for the project which took its first patients on 15th Jul 1868.

In the minutes of the Hospital Committee published in The Brisbane Courier on 10th Feb 1866 the assignment of contracts to tenderers was under discussion. (5)

“The minutes of the last meeting were read and confirmed, and the Committee proceeded with the

consideration of the following tenders for the erection of the new hospital building, sent in to the Secretary. G. L. Thomas and Co, carpenters, and finishing work, £1299; William Reynolds, brickwork, £1800 two tanks and drainage, £335; John Ferguson, the whole work, including tanks, £2637; M. D. Robertson, carpenter's and finishing work, £1143; Powell and Robertson, the whole work, including tanks, £2509; Powell, brickwork, £1056; tanks, £310. A tender from John Armstrong, for the entire work, including tanks, for £2331, but stating conditions with respect to excavating, was rejected, owing to the tenderer not having named his sureties.

Mr Feez moved and Mr. Grant seconded, the acceptance of Powell and Robertson's tender. Mr. Sandel, as an amendment, moved the acceptance of the tenders of G. L. Thomas and Powell. Mr. Mulligan seconded the amendment. The motion was carried by the casting vote of the Chairman."

The nature of the wells is given further clarity in an account of a legal dispute which arose during construction. (6)

"Thompson and Watley v. W. Powell. - A claim for £29 4s. for work and labour done, in excavating for brick tanks for the Port Curtis and Leichhardt Districts Hospital. Defendant was the contractor with the Committee of the Hospital, for the construction of the tanks, and sub-let the excavating to a man named Watt, who had employed plaintiffs.

Watt was afflicted with ophthalmia before the termination of the work, and was obliged to throw up the contract, which was resumed by defendant, who as plaintiffs alleged, agreed to become responsible for the wages due to them, and the percentage due to Watts, who was paid seventy-five percent on the work he performed.

An agreement, signed by plaintiffs and defendant was produced, by which His Honour held that defendant was responsible for what was only due to Watt, and not for what Watt might owe plaintiffs. Defendant's case was that Watt had been overpaid to the amount of £18 3s. His Honour gave a verdict for defendant, with costs for three witnesses."

As expected, without a reticulated water supply, rainfall was an important source of water to fill the tanks at no cost. However, the resident surgeon, Dr Callaghan, complained to the Hospital Committee in November 1869 as follows: (7)

"Dr. Callaghan called the attention the Committee to the water supply at the Hospital; the tanks were very low, and the carting of water would be very expensive.

He noticed that the gutters were too small for the great body of roofing, so that when rain fell three parts of the water shot off and was lost; it was therefore necessary that something should be

done. After some little discussion the matter was referred to the building Committee."

An example of the ongoing discussions is this extract from 1878 minutes: (8)

"Mr. Ferguson stated that the Improvement Committee had met with regard to the water supply. He had got the Town Surveyor to furnish particulars of supplying the Hospital with water. From the document it appeared that the fall from the bottom of the reservoir to the building was 31 feet 4 inches, but that there was a total header fall of 47 feet 4 inches.

By one estimate the cost of laying down pipes would be £336 14s., but with 1.5-inch pipe the cost would be £435 12s. It appeared that the cost of a tank would be about £200.

In reply to a question Dr. Salmond stated that there were 18 feet of water in the large and 14 feet in the smaller tank. The President requested Improvement Committee to consider the subject and bring up a report upon it."

We do not know when the tanks were taken out of service. But we do know that that the water supply to the hospital was still under discussion in 1891 and probably for many years after that. Rockhampton's water supply became more secure as pumps were improved and the Yaamba water supply came on line in 1926.

During the examination of the wells, a number of items of glassware and crockery were found. Some of these were photographed and all were donated to our collection. These artifacts will be described and discussed in a future Newsletter.

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- (1) Simon Gall, Base Hospital Features, Rockhampton, Archaeological Monitoring, Queensland Health, Converge Heritage + Community, 2018
 - (2) Ibid., pp. 10, 12
 - (3) Ibid., p. 2
 - (4) 1883 'THE P.C. AND L. DISTRICT HOSPITAL, ROCKHAMPTON.', *Morning Bulletin (Rockhampton, Qld. : 1878 - 1954)*, 18 Jan, p. 2. , <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article52023561>
 - (5) 1866 'WEEKLY EPITOME.', *The Brisbane Courier (Qld. : 1864 - 1933)*, 10 Feb, p. 5. , <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article1262252>
 - (6) 1867 'Friday, December 6.', *Rockhampton Bulletin and Central Queensland Advertiser (Qld. : 1861 - 1871)*, 7 Dec, p. 2. , <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article51572095>
 - (7) 1869 'HOSPITAL MEETING.', *Northern Argus (Rockhampton, Qld. : 1865 - 1874)*, 20 Nov, p. 3. <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article214284043>
 - (8) 1878 'HOSPITAL COMMITTEE MEETING.', *The Capricornian (Rockhampton, Qld. : 1875 - 1929)*, 16 Mar, p. 4. <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article65767338>

Rockhampton Hospital Nurse Graduation Ceremony 1938



The photograph shows a group of nurses who graduated from the Rockhampton Hospital in 1938. The photograph was accompanied by a list of names which was complete in terms of identifying all nurses but not all first names were given and there were some slight mis-spellings of surnames. This list below has been updated with the aid of Rockhampton Hospital nurse training records held at the Country Hospital Museum. Those present are: Back Row (L to R): Mary Bellert, Pauline Hutchinson, Isabelle McIntyre Smith, Jessie Corrie, Margaret (Peg) Davis, Mona Joyner; Front Row (L to R): Eileen McGuane, Margaret Bennett, Vera Catherine Hoelscher, Marjorie Shelton, Doreen O'Laughlin, May Sloan.

In 1938, the Medical Superintendent was Dr J. B. Ross and the Matron was Miss Sarah Maud Green. The photograph is by Rockhampton Studios Ltd.

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