



NEWSLETTER

MARCH 2020

President's Report

Welcome to 2020 as we commence another decade in the life of our Country Hospital Museum! As mentioned in this Newsletter, we had a very pleasant function at the Museum on 19th November to celebrate our 10th birthday. We also used the occasion to recognise the central role of our Archivist, Yvonne Kelley, in keeping up a major effort since the 1970s to ensure that we have an outstanding collection.

I would like to draw your attention to this year's event to mark International Nurses Day. A function will be held on Friday, 15th May at the Rockhampton Jockey Club. The cost will be \$30.00 per person and will include a two course meal. Something special about May 2020 is that it marks 200 years since Florence Nightingale's birth. The World Health Organisation has designated 2020 as the Year of the Nurse and Midwife.

Another event to watch out for at the Heritage Village is the Heritage Festival on 30th May.

Our Tuesday volunteers have started work again at the Museum though they are looking forward to some cooler weather to give them a boost. It makes us appreciate in a small way, the difficult working conditions of earlier nurses working long hours in their heavy uniforms without the benefit of air conditioning.

Lorraine Antonello
President

National Library backs up our website again

Members who have joined our Association more recently, may not be aware that our website, www.achha.org.au, has been classified as a website containing information of on-going historical significance. Having obtained our approval, the National Library of Australia periodically makes a backup. If anything happens that we can no longer continue, a snapshot in time of the website will be permanently available through the National Library. The most recent backup was on 7th January this year.

Marking a milestone for nurse education in Queensland

The year 2020 marks thirty years since the transfer of General Nurse education programs from the hospital system to the university sector. In 1990, the then University College of Central Queensland admitted the first cohort of 100 students to the three-year full-time Diploma of Health Science (Nursing). By the time the first group of students graduated at the 1993 ceremonies, the course had been renamed the Bachelor of Nursing.

As a result of the change to nurse education, the Rockhampton Hospital Graduation Ceremony on 7th September 1992 marked the 104th year of graduating students from the General Nurse program at the Hospital and the final such ceremony. There were 59 general nurse graduates and 16 midwifery graduates.

Prizes were presented by the Governor of Queensland, Her Excellency, Mrs Leneen Forde.

This photo taken at the ceremony shows the then Director of Nursing Miss N M West OBE (left), Governor of Queensland, Her Excellency Mrs Leneen Forde and Mrs Meg Wilson, Assistant Director of Nursing (Staff Development).



Tenth anniversary of our Museum

Believe it or not, it is ten years since the official opening of our Country Hospital Museum. To mark the occasion, members were invited to a tenth anniversary function at the Museum on Tuesday, November 19th. The ceremony actually had a dual purpose. It was decided that it was timely for us to also acknowledge the pivotal role played by our Archivist, Mrs Yvonne Kelley, who has been the key driver for the development of the museum over almost 45 years starting in 1975. The first significant items which started the collection were three large register books containing the names and training details of nurses at the Rockhampton Hospital between 1885 and 1939, including the first nurse to complete her training in Queensland, Miss Mary-Jane Hood. Yvonne tells us that once the word was out that she was interested in collecting historical items of significance, many people started bringing such items to her. Historic uniforms started to arrive. Mr Albert Crudgington had three sisters who had trained at the hospital. In addition to many photographs, he had uniforms from 1918, still neatly folded. From these origins, a major historical and replica uniform collection was built over the years. This photograph from April 1983 shows Yvonne (2nd from right), Debbie Richards (seated) and the two nurses Leanne Perry on the left and Lisa Smith second from the left, modelling two 1918 vintage nurses uniforms which had been worn by Elsie Crudgington. Because we only print our newsletters in black and white, you will not see that the uniforms are actually pale blue and white.



While celebrating Yvonne’s contribution, we also acknowledge that Miss Norma West’s support as a senior manager of the hospital was crucial in enabling the collection to continue, and in convincing the Hospital Board to allocate space at the Hospital for the first Base Hospital Museum, forerunner of what you see today. Yvonne also readily

Money talks

There were many country hospitals built throughout Australia as settlements developed. These were considered to be particularly important in mining towns where accidents were a regular problem (unfortunately they still are). Charters Towers was one of Queensland’s wealthiest towns with its own stock exchange. This was the Charters Towers Hospital ca. 1888.



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.

Developments at Brisbane’s Shrine of Remembrance

In a recent Newsletter, Ashley Reid wrote about the major project which has been undertaken to completely refurbish the very large Memorial Crypt under the Shrine of Remembrance in Ann St, Brisbane. The intention of the project was to create a set of very special new galleries to commemorate the war service of so many Australian men and women. The fact that the project is new made it possible for the State Library of Queensland to introduce the very latest display technologies such as touch screens as part of the \$13.6 m project.

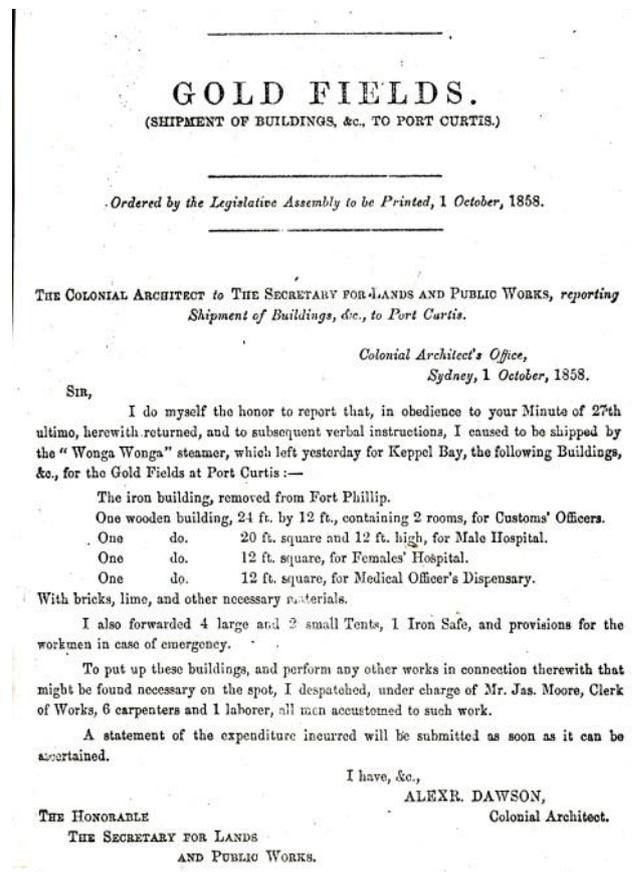
Ashley was involved through her research on World War 1 nurses because photographs of Alice Imison have been included as part of the new and very modern displays. On Ashley’s recommendation, I took the opportunity to visit, and I also recommend that if you have the chance, take a walk though this amazing modern facility which is part of a very significant Queensland War Memorial which dates to 1930. The area is surprisingly large and all of the major campaigns have been covered. Apart from the displays using new museum technology, quite a number of plaques which have been in storage are now on display. Here are photographs of just two of them.



Rockhampton’s first hospital

Yvonne Kelley’s research on early Rockhampton tells us that the first hospital was built on Block 11 which was designated as a “Reserve for a Hospital and Surgery Office” on the town plan before Rockhampton was actually proclaimed as a town on 25th October 1858. This block was on Quay Street adjacent to the river bank and the rocks between Albert and Cambridge Streets. A hospital was needed to meet the rapidly growing needs of a township being rushed by people in search of gold. As Yvonne’s research shows, this hospital was built from a number of prefabricated structures shipped from Sydney. This is confirmed in this item published on 1st October 1858 in what we would now call the Government Gazette.

The new hospital closed not long after it opened,



but public pressure soon saw it reopened with Dr Archibald Robertson appointed in 1859 as the first House Surgeon. The hospital was called the Port Curtis and Leichhardt District Hospital. A management committee of prominent citizens was appointed to run the hospital.

In 1865, this committee resolved to build a new hospital on the Athelstane Range where it was felt that the “rarified air” would be more beneficial for the patients’ recovery than the mosquito-infested

swamp area near the river. As we know, the Mayor, Captain Hunter, laid the foundation stone for this hospital in 1867. As we also know, this stone is now located in the lawn in front of our Country Hospital Museum. The new hospital on Canning and North Streets opened to patients just over 150 years ago on 15th July 1868. The name was changed to Rockhampton Hospital in 1895.

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Chairs of the Rockhampton Hospitals' Board (1925 -1991)

There is never a shortage of “new” items emerging from our amazing collection. Of course Yvonne knows they are there, but they are a surprise to newer volunteers such as myself.

From the beginning of serious settlement of Central Queensland towards the end of the 1850s until 1925 there had been several hospitals funded by public subscription, fund-raising and fees, supplemented with government grants. These included the Port Curtis and Leichhardt District Hospital, later the Rockhampton Hospital, the Rockhampton Children's Hospital, the Rockhampton Women's Hospital, the Yeppoon Hospital and the Emu Park Convalescent Home. Each of these was managed by its own committee of prominent citizens. While men dominated the Rockhampton Hospital Committee, the Children's Hospital and the Women's hospital were totally managed by women.

Hospital committees were finding it difficult to maintain the rate of fundraising required and in 1925, the Government of the day combined all of the above hospitals under a single Rockhampton Hospitals' Board. Whereas the previous hospital committees were made up of leading committed citizens, the Government now nominated representatives along with town and shire councils. The Boards became somewhat politicised with membership usually changing if the party in power changed at a State election.

Back to the collection of photographic prints. There were six of these, about 40 cm x 55 cm or larger. It turns out that these photographs of the Hospital Board Chairmen (no women!) were taken so that they could be framed and hung in the Board's meeting room at the hospital.

If you would like to view all six photographs, you can do it by going to this page on our website:

<https://achha.org.au/people.php>

Scroll down to the bottom of the photograph collection

to see them.

The Chairmen had various terms. The shortest was the first, Mr Thomas William Farnell. He was elected on 23 Nov 1925 and resigned on 14 Jan 1926. He was the Police Magistrate and found that the expectations of the role were incompatible with his “day job”.

In this Newsletter, I will discuss just one long-serving



chair, Mr Leonard Garfield Haigh.

Then Alderman Leonard Garfield Haigh, one of five Government representatives on the Board, was appointed on 08 August 1932. At a meeting on 02 June 1933, he was unanimously elected Chairman of the Board. Mr Haigh served in this position until his death on 16th February 1953. At the time of his death, Mr Haigh had held the position of district secretary of the Australian Meat Industry Employees Union since 1924. The members of his Union were the backbone of the operations of the Lakes Creek Meatworks. He served for many years as an alderman on the Rockhampton City Council and had also been Chair of the Capricornia Regional Electricity Board in its early days as an operating authority.

It's pretty clear that Mr Haigh was a very well regarded citizen. Those of our readers familiar with the Rockhampton Hospital precinct will be aware of the rose garden named after Mr Haigh which is across North Street from the hospital.

When Mr Haigh died, the Government of the day decided to appoint the local Stipendiary Magistrate as the Chair of the Board. There were three such appointments, Mr Norman F. Applin, Mr E. P. Mullins and Mr Edward (Ted) Loane who was Chair when the Hospitals' Boards were abolished

These photos give an idea of the extensive rose gardens in Haigh Park in 2020.

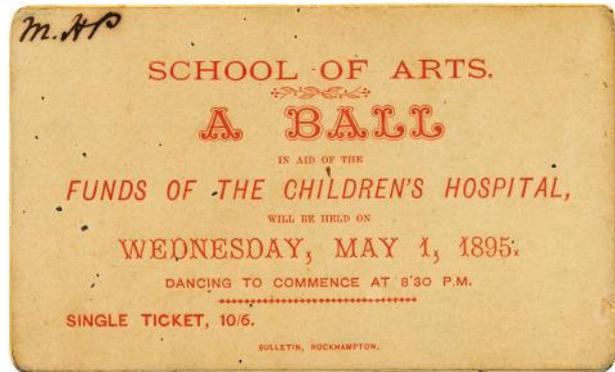


Did you know?

When our museum building was cut into four pieces and brought down the Mount Morgan Range by truck, and then reassembled, an old piano was left in position at the ward end of the building. The piano must have been provided for the nurses in the former Mount Morgan Hospital Matron and Sisters Quarters to entertain one another. There are some reports of nurses fundraising to buy such items for themselves. Unfortunately, it was in such poor condition that it was beyond economic repair.

Another small treasure!

Another item to emerge is this original ticket for a Children’s Hospital Fundraising Ball held at the School of Arts in Rockhampton on 1st May 1895.



From The Morning Bulletin and Capricornian newspapers from that time, we read that “A very enjoyable and well-attended ball was held in the School of Arts last night in aid of the Children’s Hospital. Great trouble had been taken by the committee of ladies who undertook the management, but they had the satisfaction of achieving a distinct success. An excellent supper was provided by lady friends of the institution. The night was cool, thus adding much to the pleasure of those dancing.”

Our collection also includes the full set of handwritten minutes of all meetings held by the management from its inception on 9th Jan 1891 until the hospital was taken over by the Rockhampton Hospital’s Board in Nov 1925. From the available records, we know that the ball raised £46 5s 3d. In 1895, the Committee decided that nurses would be paid 16s per week and have two weeks annual leave. Hence the amount raised would cover the salary of one nurse for the year (£41 12s). The Matron would have received about double the salary of a trainee nurse. At this time in 1895 the hospital had £713 in the bank.

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Secretary: Errol Payne
Treasurer: Kay Smith

Archivist: Yvonne Kelley

Committee Members

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 Matthew Johnson
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