

Medical History

Newsletter

AUSTRALIAN AND NEW ZEALAND SOCIETY OF THE HISTORY OF MEDICINE INC

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THE PRESIDENT'S PAGE

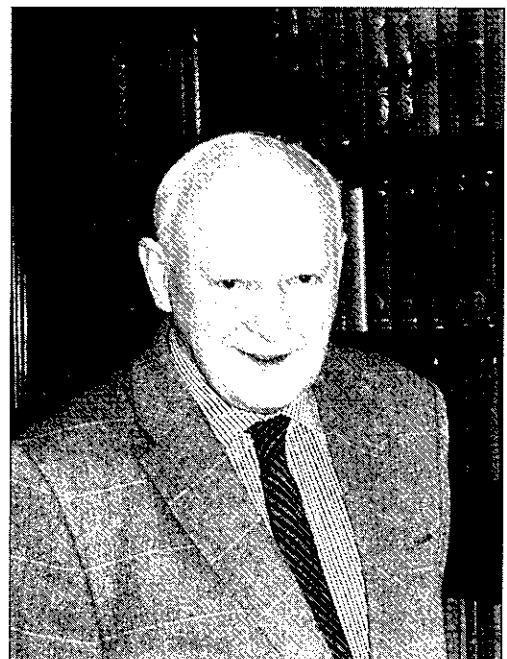
As members of ANZSHM look back on 2016 they must make their own judgements as to whether it was a successful year for the Society. My perspective is that it was indeed so (but then many may consider me biased). A major function that the Society must address during its non-biennial conference years is effective preparations for the next year's conference. Anyone who has organized a significant academic meeting will recognise the crucial importance of planning over a period of at least twelve months. I am happy to report to members that Madonna Grehan and her committee are putting excellent arrangements in place for the 15th Biennial Conference. They have scheduled it for Tuesday 11 to Saturday 15 July 2017 at the centrally-situated Fitzroy Campus of the Australian Catholic University in Melbourne. It should be both academically excellent and socially enjoyable. Its committee will have made a Call for Papers by the time that you read this. The deadline for submissions may appear far off, but remember: time evaporates over the holiday season. So I would encourage everyone to get cracking to produce an abstract of the brilliant presentation that each of you has bubbling away in your head. The Melbourne committee will publicise plans and arrangements separately so I shall not steal their thunder by revealing more here.

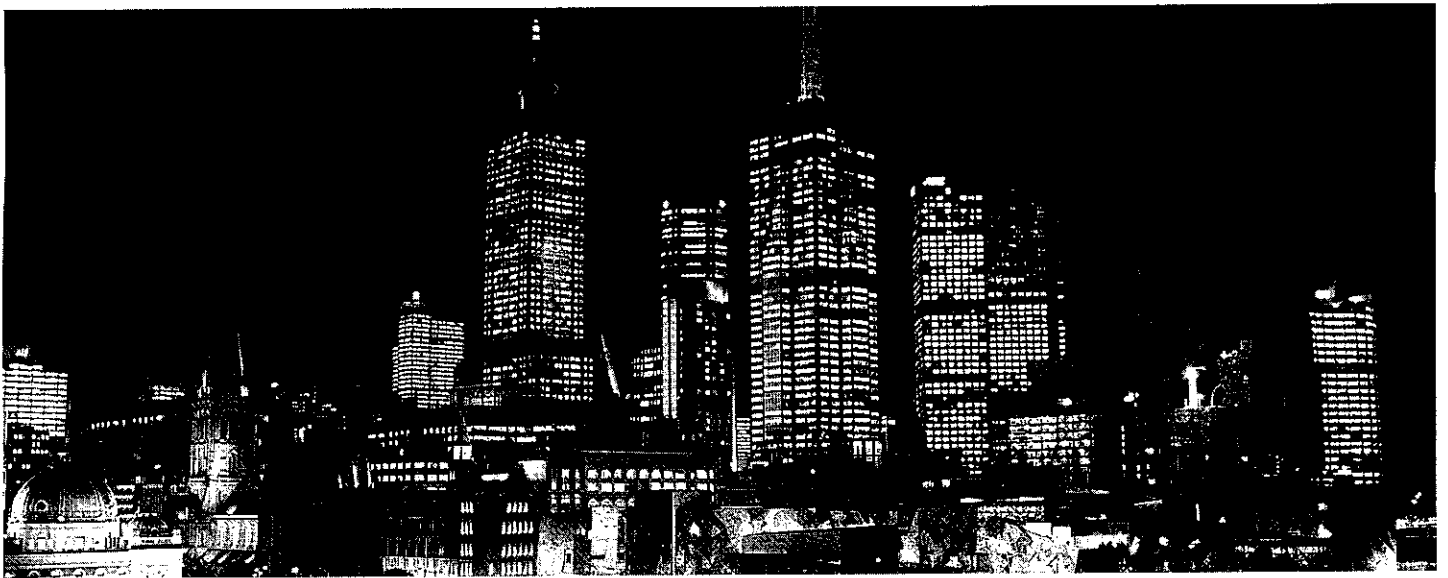
Another development during 2016 — one to which I have drawn attention in previous newsletters, but which is of such significance that it warrants further mention—is the email *WHAT'S ON in Medical History Australia and New Zealand* that Charmaine Robson has established. This bi-national publication is an extremely valuable means by which to acquaint all of our members, as well as other interested people, about the wealth of events relating to medical history occurring in the two countries. I would encourage everyone who is arranging or knows of any forthcoming medical history event to let Charmaine know about it, thereby informing us all and acquiring for it valuable publicity.

The 2016 Annual General Meeting of ANZSHM occurred in Melbourne this year, held in conjunction with a regular quarterly meeting of its

affiliated Victorian Society. I was immensely impressed with the arrangements that our Victorian colleagues make: academically excellent and socially just right. They made me, as a person from NSW, realise how much we in Sydney need to lift our game. I am very happy to report that, in part as a consequence of these observations in Melbourne, but also because of a dynamic initiative driven by Robert Clancy (ably supported by Ian Kerridge, Claire Hooker, Peter Hobbins, Catherine Storey and Paul Lancaster: all associated with Sydney University) and several others a series of quarterly seminars in conjunction with the NSW State Library is now planned. The first of these will have occurred before this newsletter reaches you. We in NSW were perhaps somewhat exhausted by arranging the 14th Biennial Conference last year, but we are at last again getting up steam. More details of these seminars will appear elsewhere. Now it is up to the other states and NZ to ensure that they too have viable local programmes!

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AUSTRALIAN AND NEW ZEALAND SOCIETY
OF THE HISTORY OF MEDICINE

15th Biennial Conference, Melbourne

Health, Medicine, and Society: Challenge and Change

Australian Catholic University, Fitzroy Campus

Tuesday 11 July - Friday 14 July | Saturday 15 July: Witness Seminar

Keynote Speakers

Prof Barbra Mann Wall, Thomas A Saunders III Professor of Nursing, University of Virginia, USA

Dr Criena Fitzgerald, Professional Historian, Honorary Research Fellow, University of Western Australia

Dr Peter Hobbins, ARC DECRA Research Fellow, University of Sydney, 2016 Merewether Scholar, SLNSW

Program Features

- Keynote addresses by prominent scholars
- Papers and other presentations on a wide range of topics
- Witness Seminar – leading medical scientists and clinicians discuss curiosity-driven research and health outcomes, from benchtop to bedside
- Gala dinner at Melbourne Museum
- Visits to museums and cultural collections

Key Dates

Call for papers opens	7 Nov 2016
Call for papers deadline	20 Feb 2017
Registration opens	3 Apr 2017
Early bird registration deadline	30 May 2017

For further Information and Expressions of Interest

Email hom2017@dcconferences.com.au OR visit www.dcconferences.com.au/hom2017
or contact conference managers DC Conferences on 61 2 9954 4400

MEMBERS' NEWS

Welcome!

Lea Doughty (NZ)
Pauline Johnston (VIC)

Vale

Professor John B Hickie, d. 12 September 2016

CONGRATULATIONS

Dr Anthea Hyslop, currently our Honorary Treasurer, was made an Honorary Life Member at the 2015 AGM, in recognition of ten years' service on the ANZSHM Executive.

Associate Professor Hans Pols was awarded Honorary Life Membership of the Society at the 2016 AGM, in recognition of twelve years' outstanding service to date as Editor of *Health and History*. Under his direction, the journal has gone steadily from strength to strength, and, through its relationship with JSTOR, is also finding an ever-wider global readership.

Dr Charmaine Robson, our Honorary Secretary, has been awarded the State Library of NSW's Australian Religious History Fellowship for 2017.

ISHM NOTES

The 45th Congress of the ISHM was held in the Faculty of Medicine in the beautiful but sprawling old city of Buenos Aires. It was cold and wet. Thanks to the artistry of the concierge of the hotel at which we stayed, my wife and I were able to obtain tickets to the ballet at the Teatro Colon the evening before the conference started. That theatre is a national icon and dates back to Argentina's prosperous era early in the 20th century. The beef and wheat-based prosperity also attracted millions of immigrants, more than half of whom came from Italy and people of Italian extraction remain a notable presence in Argentina today.

The conference convenor was Professor Ana Maria Rosso, a well-known Egyptologist and also VP of the ISHM. Many senior clinicians from the Faculty attended and read papers that covered numerous subjects. Dominant themes were the immigration era, the Second World War in which Argentina had an ambivalent part, and the turbulent post-war period when simply maintaining academic units and departments was very difficult. There was a fascinating paper on the clandestine and ultimately unsuccessful surgery on Eva Peron. As well there were speakers from other Central and South American countries, China, the Middle East, and Europe.

There was a very good simultaneous translation service in the main auditorium and that was all well organised. It was much appreciated as many of the presentations were in Spanish. Oral presentations in other venues were less so. The conference dinner was held at a tango theatre restaurant. An entertaining evening was had by all and Argentinian wines and meats dominated.

The ISHM held its AGM during the conference. The society has a new President, Dr Carlos Viesca-Trevino from Mexico, the first non-European President for many years. The next General Meeting will be held in Beijing, China in September 2017 and the next Congress in Lisbon, Portugal, in September 2018.

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POST DOC FELLOWSHIP

The History Unit of the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine is seeking a Research Fellow to work on "Progressives to laggards"? Health system reform in Britain and New Zealand, 1948-1993'. This project is part of Dr Martin Gorsky's Wellcome Trust Medical Humanities Investigator Award on Health Systems in History, and will be conducted in collaboration with Professor Linda Bryder (University of Auckland) and Professor John Stewart (Glasgow Caledonian University). The post-holder will research the comparative history of health policy in Britain and New Zealand since 1948. The Fellowship will be based in London with travel to New Zealand for archival research built in. The post will commence in April 2017 and run for 34 months. Further details are at: <https://jobs.lshtm.ac.uk/Vacancy.aspx?ref=PHP-SEHR-13>.

ALSO IN THIS ISSUE

President's Page	1
Conference flyer	2
AMPI News	4
Early NZ Surgical Fellows	5
ISHM Notes	5
NSW Branch News	6
Victoria Branch News	6
Book Reviews	7
Blast from the Past	8
15th Biennial Conference	8

EDITOR'S COLUMN

Contributions to the Newsletter are always welcome. The next deadline for copy is 15 February 2017. Copy should be sent to the editor, Derek A Dow at d.dow@auckland.ac.nz.

AMPI NEWS

Surgical Fellows in Colonial Australia

Fellows of the Royal College of Surgeons of England were inaugurated by Royal Charter in 1843, in order to 'more effectually promote the study and practice of surgery'. Under the charter it was possible for a Member of the College (MRCS) to become a Fellow, either by election or by examination. Fellowship by election was open in the first year (1843-4) to all Members, but thereafter only to Members of long standing (15-20 years) under limited conditions.

Of the 3,000 colonial doctors whose qualifications are known to AMPI, about half held the MRCS but less than seventy became Fellows. Clearly in the Australian colonies, perhaps more than in England itself, the fellowship was a mark of distinction that placed the holder above the vast majority of those who had completed the basic surgical training for the MRCS, typically undertaken by doctors entering general practice.

In the first few decades of the fellowship, there were only about 20 surgeons who came out to Australia after acquiring the FRCS by examination. One of them was William John Anderson, a Londoner educated at Harrow, Oxford, London and Paris, and later in practice in London as an obstetrician. He emigrated to NSW in 1857 when in his thirties, but failed to make his mark in Sydney, possibly due to ill-health. The official College record of his career concludes, rather bleakly, with the statement: 'He left this country to reside at Balmain, New South Wales, and died on a voyage home in 1871.'

On the whole, however, Fellows who had passed the College examination had a significant impact as colonial practitioners. A good example is that of Hugh Bell who came out in 1853 to Queensland, where he had a distinguished career. He became an honorary at the Brisbane Hospital, and a member of the Queensland Medical Board. Other prominent colonial practitioners who had passed the examination for the English FRCS were TM Girdlestone (Victoria), TM Harding (NSW), Caleb Radford (Victoria) and HC Wigg (Victoria).

The situation was rather different with men who were Fellows by election. The majority of Fellows who came out to the colonies were in this category. They were chosen with reference to their character and professional attainments, including longevity of service, so that most were already middle-aged when elected. Having qualified for the MRCS in the early decades of the 1800s, they had been trained before medical education had become truly

'scientific'. Yet there were some outstanding colonial practitioners amongst them, including ESP Bedford (Hobart and Sydney), Charles Nathan (Sydney) and RRS Bowker (Sydney and Newcastle) among others.

A number of naval and military surgeons with the FRCS came to Australia on tours of duty. Benjamin Bynoe RN, for example, made several visits to Australian shores, the first on board HMS *Beagle* in 1839. Others came out in charge of convicts. They included Henry Kelsall, John Kidd, John Lancaster, William Le Grand, Thomas McDonald, and Harvey Morris – all of whom qualified MRCS as naval surgeons in the 1820s and gained the FRCS by election in 1844, under the original charter.

In addition to Fellows of the Royal College of Surgeons of England, there were a few colonial doctors who were Fellows of the Royal Colleges of Surgeons of Ireland and Edinburgh. Notable among them were Arthur Rankin (Sydney), William Russ Pugh (Launceston and Melbourne), Thomas Christie Smart (Hobart), KI O'Doherty (Brisbane), ST Knaggs (Sydney), and finally GH Pringle (Parramatta) who, like WJ Anderson, died at sea on his voyage home to England in the early 1870s.

While the Fellows of the three Royal Colleges of Surgeons were undoubtedly an elite group, the fellowship did not necessarily imply a career in surgery. As indicated above, many of the early Fellows made their careers in the armed forces or in general practice. Indeed, the original rules of the English FRCS explicitly accommodated country general practitioners, provided they did not make any of their income as druggists. However as the century progressed, the FRCS evolved to become the hallmark of the doctor whose main occupation was surgery.

By the late 1860s, in conformity with this trend, there were a number of Fellows pursuing a purely surgical career in Australia. They included three Melbourne general surgeons: David John Thomas (FRCS England 1856), Edward Barker (FRCS England 1859) and James George Beaney (FRCS Edinburgh 1860). These men built their careers on the new techniques of 'conservative' surgery, facilitated by the development of anaesthetics and antiseptics. For superb biographical sketches of Thomas and Beaney, by the late Bryan Gandevia, see the *Australian Dictionary of Biography*.

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Early NZ Surgical Fellows

In contrast to Stephen Due's account of colonial Australia, possession of a surgical fellowship seems to have counted for little in nineteenth century New Zealand. Many of those who boasted the qualification did little more than pass through the colony, as ship's surgeons, making no use of their enhanced professional status.

As with Australia, naval and army surgeons featured prominently in this cohort; few sought medical registration in New Zealand, primarily because this was not compulsory in the 1860s when the military presence was at its height during the New Zealand Wars. A good example of this is the case of James Mouat FRCS 1852. The first medical recipient of the Victoria Cross in 1858, for his actions during the Crimean War, Mouat served in New Zealand from 1860-5 but appears to have had little contact with the civilian population.

One Fellow who did settle for a time in the colony was Henry Mahon FRCS 1844, a former naval surgeon who arrived in 1848 to act as medical officer to the military pensioners shipped out to Howick and Otahuhu, near Auckland. Mahon returned to the UK in 1856, perhaps disillusioned with his situation. While addresses from his former patients bore testimony to their appreciation, government records reveal Mahon had brought several actions against officialdom for non-payment of fees. In this instance, the status of the fellowship apparently counted for little.

A number of Fellows did not follow their trade, but sought other opportunities in New Zealand. Andrew Buchanan FRCS 1853, the son of a West Indian sugar planter and an offshoot of the Glasgow gentry, enjoyed a lucrative practice in London for more than two decades before emigrating and purchasing a 30,000 hectare sheep station in Otago in 1860. While he appears on the first national medical register in 1869, Buchanan practised only in cases of emergency.



Andrew Buchanan's Dunedin property was named Chingford after his country estate in Essex.

Like Buchanan, Alfred Eccles FRCS 1858 had amassed considerable wealth in England before heading for New Zealand in 1861, drawn by the lure of gold. The move came at a heavy cost, with Eccles' wife dying at sea on the voyage out, after 90 days of sea sickness.

Edward Hulme MRCS 1839 was another who hoped to become part of New Zealand's emerging colonial gentry when he came out in 1856. Instead he was persuaded to resume medical practice, being appointed provincial surgeon in 1857. Becoming FRCS in 1866 seems to have brought little change in circumstance for Hulme, who by that date was actively engaged in attempts to suppress unqualified practitioners, many of whom had arrived in the early 1860s gold rush.

Another belated recipient of the fellowship was Charles Knight MRCS 1832. After a short sojourn in South Australia in the early 1840s, Knight accompanied Governor Grey when the latter was transferred to New Zealand. There he became a senior civil servant until he retired in 1878. He did not practice medicine so his election as FRCS in 1869 is something of a mystery. Was it simply vanity, or a desire for enhanced professional status?

The only one of the early New Zealand Fellows to feature prominently in a surgical sense was JR Ryley FRCS 1868. A pioneer of antiseptic, Ryley claimed to have studied under Lister in Glasgow though his name does not appear on any class lists. Ryley was resident on the West Coast goldfields from 1863 to 1870, when he was admitted to the Auckland Lunatic Asylum after a failed suicide attempt. He then decanted to Fiji before settling in Australia, where he succeeded in another suicide attempt in 1884.

The sole Edinburgh Fellow to arrive in New Zealand pre-1870 was AM Edwards FRCS 1855, a former lecturer on surgery in the Edinburgh extra-mural school. After a brief stay in Dunedin, Edwards moved north to Gisborne in December 1868 to assume control of the hospital at Turanganui Redoubt during the campaign against the Maori warrior Te Kooti. The local newspaper responded effusively to his arrival: 'This gentleman left a lucrative and extensive practice at Otago, in order to give us the benefit of his great ability, when most wanted. His urbane and gentle manners render him peculiarly fitted for his present position.' Sadly, Edwards was injured in a fall from his horse just days later and died on 6 January 1869.

As with almost all the individuals who feature in this article, Edwards' fellowship brought neither fame nor fortune, nor did it serve to further surgery in New Zealand.

NSW BRANCH NEWS

There has been an exciting new direction for the History of Medicine in NSW. The executive realised that not all our members were served by the dominance of evening, single-focus discussions and so devised a survey to explore potential alternatives. This showed there was certainly an interest amongst members for short seminars where similar topics could be explored from different angles. The first of these 'mini-seminars' – Our Healthy Heritage: Health, ailing and dying in colonial Sydney – took place on Saturday 26 November 2016, at the State Library of NSW; a collaboration between the State Library, ANZSHM and the Royal Australasian College of Physicians. Judging by the numbers attending, the discussion during and after the sessions, and the quality of the presentations, this was a great success.

Dr Fiona Starr, from Sydney Living Museums (Hyde Park Barracks) spoke on Convicts in the Rum Hospital, and supplemented the discussion with many artefacts of medical interest that had been unearthed from the adjacent sites.

Professor Peter Curson reported on the epidemics of the metropolis and how each of these had caused massive social dislocation and influenced the future direction of the health of the colony.

Dr Lisa Murray, historian from the City of Sydney, who has recently published *Sydney Cemeteries: A field guide* (New South Books, 2016), delivered a very interesting insight into the sequential burial sites of Sydney Town, with some very gruesome descriptions!

Dr Rachel Franks from the State Library of New South Wales provided some hands-on explanation of how to negotiate the historical resources of the Library and concluded by demonstrating many of the 'medical' treasures across a very broad range of media held by the library.

I think that all the members who attended will agree that this was an exceptional meeting. Not only did we all get a glimpse of the stories that lie behind the conventional histories, but also we learnt a lot more about the local historical resources just waiting to be explored.

The next quarterly seminar is planned for Saturday 18 February 2017 at the State Library of NSW – a programme will follow shortly, so keep the date. The AGM of the NSW branch of ANZSHM will be held at the conclusion of this meeting.

Enquiries/RSVP for all events to Catherine Storey, cestorey@bigpond.com.

VICTORIA BRANCH NEWS

The August meeting of the Medical History Society of Victoria coincided with the ANZSHM AGM. The Victorian members were pleased to host the ANZSHM councillors at one of our regular dinner meetings. With 65 members and guests, we enjoyed an outstanding presentation by Dr Rebecca Kippen, entitled 'These Forlorn Ones' – Length of life and causes of death of Tasmanian convicts transported 1812-1853.

Rebecca described her work on the 'Ships Project' in collaboration with Professor Janet McCalman of Melbourne University. This examined the detailed data for 25,000 convicts transported between 1812 and 1853. The study has involved 70 volunteer researchers, and over 40% of convicts have been tracked to the time of their death.

Unless the convicts 'misbehaved', they generally served in the community and most remained in 'custody' for only a few years, after which they joined the workforce or moved away from Tasmania.

The convicts had a mean age of 27, with between 80 and 90% transported for theft. Serious offenders were not transported to Tasmania. While most were reasonably well-behaved (20% recorded no offences while in custody), some 20% committed 6 or more offences while under sentence in Tasmania.

The convicts had a life expectancy of 57 for men and 55 for women, compared with the general Tasmanian population of 64 and 63. Those female convicts who were 'on the town' had a lower life expectancy of 52.5, compared with 56.5 for those who did not engage in such activities.

Lower life expectancy also correlated with alcohol-related offences, time in solitary confinement, and origins in a British port city.

Deaths due to accident were more than twice the rate seen in the general population, and in women, murder and suicide was also seen more commonly than in the general population.

The study is continuing, with the promise of much more fascinating information about some of our early immigrants.

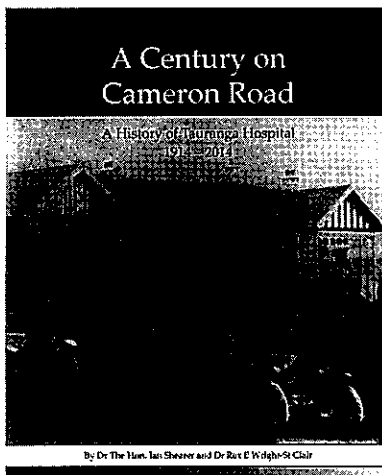
The next meeting will be addressed by Dr Tony Atkinson, who will describe his experiences as a medical student in post-war London, and later as a young anaesthetist in Australia.

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BOOK NOTICES

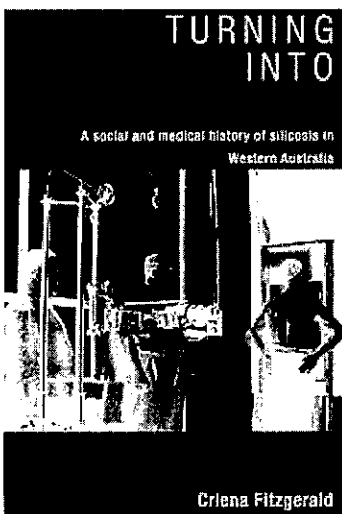
I Shearer and RE Wright-St Clair, *A century on Cameron Road: a history of Tauranga Hospital 1914-2014*, Tauranga, 2014. xiv + 304pp.

This history had a very long gestation. I remember Rex telling me in 1990 that he had completed a history to mark the hospital's first 70 years but publication had stalled because of a dispute with the hospital board over payment. That impasse was unresolved at the time of Rex's death and Ian Shearer, a former MP for Rex's home town of Hamilton, is to be commended for accepting the challenge to complete the story to mark the hospital centenary. The result is a handsome and beautifully illustrated chronicle of events, though one which pays little heed to developments in the social history of medicine



and hospitals over the past four decades. Short sections with headings such as 'hospital too small for needs', 'the boiler house', or 'complaints about board and staff' give a clear indication of the genre of hospital histories into which the Tauranga story fits.

Criena Fitzgerald, *Turning men into stone: a social and medical history of silicosis in Western Australia 1890-1970*. Hesperian Press, 2016. vii + 244pp.

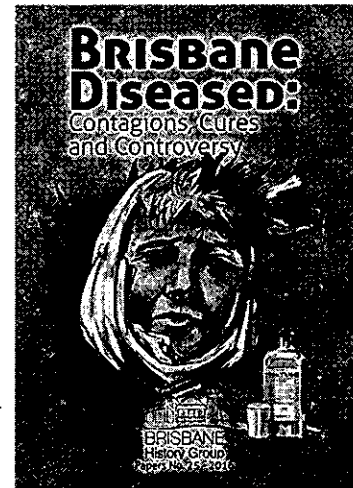


Mining has brought great wealth to Western Australia but also extracted a heavy toll on the health of those engaged in the industry. Fitzgerald's book, the title of which is taken from a 1960 comment by Dr Bob Elphick about conditions in the mining world, sheds light on the impact of silicosis on the health of miners, and on the responses of public

health officials, unions and government.

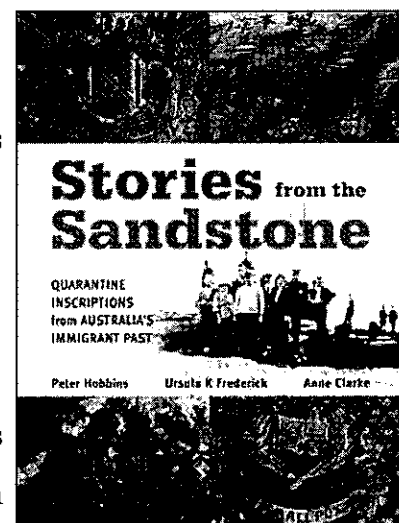
Alana Piper (ed), *Brisbane Diseased: Contagions, Cures and Controversy*. Boolarong Press, 2016. xiii + 349pp.

Brisbane has a proud record of medical history publishing, initially through the Amphion Press. This volume, a product of a 2015 Brisbane History Group seminar, maintains that tradition. The fourteen chapters examine topics such as penal settlement medical conditions, quarantine, nineteenth century STDs, infectious diseases (including the Spanish flu' of 1918, lead poisoning, quackery and spurious cancer cures, and – most intriguing of all - Brisbane's success in making surgical corsets. Three of the 12 contributors (Pearn, Rée and Thearle) are current ANZSHM members.



A Clarke, P Hobbins & U Frederick, *Stories from the sandstone*, Arbon Publishing, 2016. 304pp.

Subtitled *Quarantine inscriptions from Australia's immigrant past*, this book combines tombstone inscriptions and historical records such as diaries and letters, along with contemporary and historical images, to highlight the impact of disease on both individuals and society in colonial New South Wales.



BLAST FROM THE PAST *Medical History Australia 25* *years ago*

November 1991 marked the end of an era, as the last issue of the Newsletter to be edited from Melbourne where it had begun in 1981 under the guiding hand of Frank Forster before he passed the mantle on to Harold Attwood and Geoff Kenny. During this decade the newsletter evolved from what Harold modestly described as 'parochial sheets' to become the voice of the new Australian Society of the History of Medicine.

The Melburnians' parting advice for the 'new editorial team' was to 'find an Edna Bird and cherish her'. In Professor Attwood's case this was clearly a two-way street, for when he died in 2005 his obituary in the RACP College Roll included a reference to his 'loyal secretary, Mrs Edna Bird'.

As latter-day academics know only too well, in most institutions the luxury of a secretary is but a distant memory; the advent of the word processor saw to that. Luckily the replacement 'team' – Dr Ian Chapple of Mackay in Queensland – was able to call upon the invaluable assistance of his wife Beth. As Ian revealed when he stepped down in 2003, Beth 'had done all the typing, detected and corrected many errors, and been a most helpful participant in the entire editorial process'.

Peter Tyler, who succeeded Ian as editor, further refined the publication process by adopting Microsoft Publisher as an editing tool, and introducing illustrations (the first of which was a charming portrait of Society president Di Tibbetts to accompany her president's message).

When I took over from Peter in 2009 he airily reassured me that I would 'soon get the hang of it'. Not wanting to lose face in front an elder statesman, I kept my forebodings to myself. Even with the template of Peter's last issue to guide me, gremlins turned round and attacked me on every page. (It was only in the composition of the

preceding sentence that I learned that 'gremlin' entered the English language in the 1920s, as RAF slang for a low-ranking officer, or the enlisted man who was assigned the most onerous duties!)

Over time I have mastered the basics of Publisher, but no more. The newsletter still adheres to Peter's formatting which uses Georgia 10.4 for the body text. The reason for this idiosyncrasy remains a mystery to this day, and I can only surmise Peter adopted it in order to get a specific text to fit the page.

If only I had an Edna Bird to explain it all!

15th BIENNIAL CONFERENCE

Planning for the 15th Biennial Conference in Melbourne (July 2017) is proceeding apace. Abstract submissions have opened via the conference website portal and expressions of interest in attending are invited see <https://dcconferences.eventsair.com/QuickEventWebsitePortal/anzshm2017/csn>

Also on the conference website, members will find information about the three keynote speakers (Professor Barbra Mann Wall, Dr Criena Fitzgerald and Dr Peter Hobbins), the social events planned, and accommodation specials.

A raft of medical and health history-related collections will be open for visits and guided tours all day Tuesday 11 July and in the afternoon of Saturday 15 July, following the Witness Seminar. Among these collections are: the University of Melbourne's Medical History and Anatomy Museums and Baillieu Library, Monash University Rare Books (including the Library of Dr Richard Travers, former Rare Book Collection of the AMA/MHSV Library, the Goller Collection of AIDS material, and 18th and 19th century forensic medicine collections). More information on other collections' openings will be available in the New Year.

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For the latest information, visit the ANZSHM Internet Website: www.anzshm.org.au

LETTERS, PHOTOGRAPHS AND ARTICLES ARE WELCOME, PREFERABLY IN ELECTRONIC FORMAT.

DEADLINE FOR THE NEXT ISSUE WILL BE 15 FEBRUARY 2017.