

Newsletter 2010

THE ST GEORGE HOSPITAL GRADUATE NURSES' ASSOCIATION

President's report

Welcome to my fellow graduands and the many associates who have been able to attend this reunion. There was a warm response to the 2009 reunion with many stories told, both happy and sad. The committee received a positive response from the staff at the Leagues Club. The staff are always helpful with the organisation of tables, menus etc however the committee would always be glad to hear comments either negative or positive! Once again Judith Cornell has been a wizard as the reunion secretary and she tells me that she is looking forward to creating an electronic mailing list!

Reprinted in this edition of the newsletter is a letter of thanks from the Jane McGrath Foundation who received a donation from the Association last year. The committee resolved to nominate the Joanne McKay Foundation as the recipient of this year's donation as they too work with breast cancer sufferers and survivors however they are active in the St George and Sutherland areas. Please support the resolution at the AGM or feel free to nominate future recipients.

My sincere thanks go to the committee for their support and the time involved in organising the reunion. I wish to thank the members who support the Association and a special thank you and welcome to all those who have been able to attend this 2010 reunion. I trust that you will have a pleasant day and I look forward to talking to you as the afternoon progresses.

Barbara Dickin (Walters 1963)

Reunion report

If success can be measured by noise levels and empty plates, there can be no doubt that the 2009 reunion was a great success. The Grange restaurant at the St George Leagues Club was a wonderful venue for the day and the table settings enhanced by the boxes of beautiful white rose buds, donated by Susan Leahy, looked both festive and inviting. There were ninety three graduates booked and table allocations were made to accommodate year of graduation wherever possible, however as there were some tables with less than 10 it was possible for folk to move around.

Each of the tables conducted their own mini draw to see who was lucky enough to take home the beautiful flower table decorations and eleven very happy people (myself included) were the recipients. The Association is grateful for Susan's continued generosity.

The three lucky door prizes (Myer vouchers) were won by, Ruth Lawrence, Shirley Charlton and Joan Short respectively.

This year saw the first edition of the newsletter with a coloured cover sheet and it is also the first time it has been mailed electronically to those who requested it. The savings on postage will cover the additional cost of colour printing.



The display at last year's reunion.

News

A recent article in the St George and Sutherland Leader newspaper featured a long time St George resident **Elizabeth Gilshenen** who turned 102 years old in July. Mrs Gilshenen trained as a nurse at St George presumably in the early 1930s as she married in 1939 and raised a family of five. She is currently a resident at Jenny Lyn Nursing Home at Brighton Le Sands so I contacted the home to see whether it would be possible to visit Elizabeth and obtain an oral history.

At the time I rang I was able to speak with her daughter Dianne and regrettably Mrs Gilshenen is no longer able to communicate. Dianne was unable to provide any information about her Mother's nursing experience. She has been resident at Jenny Lyn since 2009 and up until that time had been an active gardener. She continued her church activities and made many new friends at Jenny Lyn however following a fall and subsequent hip surgery earlier this year she has deteriorated and is no longer able to communicate.

Kathryn Litchfield (West 1961) writes that she recently had a visit to the Prince Henry Hospital Museum which is housed in the restored Flowers Ward 1 which has been retained on the new housing development on the site of the old hospital. The PHH Hospital Graduate Nurses Association also own and manage the War Memorial Chapel which is in great demand for weddings and funerals. Kathryn wrote... Three 'old nurses' met our bus and after a cuppa entertained us with history and anecdotes from their days at the hospital.

They have a very big display of all memorabilia, uniforms, instruments, beds, anaesthetic trolleys and even a working iron lung. We finished the tour with fish and chips at La Perouse. I think there may be others who would be interested in arranging a tour to this beautiful spot.

Further information can be found on the museum website at www.nursingandmedicalmuseum.com.au

Di Mannion's sister Jo Ryan writes...

Sorry for the late response sometimes communication with Saudi Arabia is difficult!

Di won't be home until 18 November but she is going back to the land of deserts and abeyehs. She has seen a good deal of Saudi Arabia by now as well as South Africa, Egypt, Turkey, Lebanon, Jordan and the Middle East.

Di is enjoying the very different lifestyle and also enjoying educating the medics about good ole Aussie techniques.

Best wishes for a great reunion.

Thank you

Thank you to those graduates who forwarded donations along with their membership subscriptions, they will be put to good use.

Thank you also to Beverley Carruthers and Sheila Carter for their service to the Association via their committee membership. We are sorry to lose their services and look forward to seeing them at future reunions.

Next reunion

The next reunion will be held at 12md on Saturday 22 October 2011.



Committee Members

2009/2010

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Vice-President

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Margaret Binder (Nable)
Hon. Treasurer

Committee Members
Estelle Green (Farrell)
Kathryn Litchfield (West)
Susan O'Connor (Leahy)
Joan Wagstaff (Davidson)

Electronic Newsletter

Do you want to get your newsletter electronically?

Many members have already taken the opportunity to register for electronic mail, contact jcornell@netspace.net.au if you wish to be added to the list.

NEWSLETTER 2010

Designed by John Thrift Design
www.jtp.net.au

Apologies and greetings

Apologies for this reunion were received from a total of 80 graduates and the following messages and greetings were received.

Doris Watson (Dawes 1960) sends her greetings to all and regrets that ill health prevents her attending.

Margo McLeod (McKenzie 1964) sends her greetings to all and thanks the committee for all that they do. Margo's youngest daughter and her husband and new grandchild will be visiting from the UK at the time of the reunion.

Gwen Stokeld (1961) sends greetings and a wish that all enjoy the day.

Jan Robinson (Skimin 1961) says hello to all, she is in Hong Kong visiting her daughter and grandchildren.

Judith Fenton (Sadler 1961) sends greetings as she will be away in Hong Kong on holidays.

Celia Whyte (Cambage 1950) writes... sorry to miss the reunion this year but hopefully next year! Everyone enjoy the "tucker" and the day.

Joan Short (McMahon 196) writes... sorry I can't attend but will be in Canberra for a family function. Thank you for all the work the committee does it is much appreciated. Have a great day.

Dorothy Engel (Hall 1953) regrets that she is not well enough to attend but sends her greetings to everyone.

Mary Telford (Billing 1954) sends best wishes for a happy day.

Beryl Judd (Mackenzie 1967)

writes... I regret that I will not be able to attend the reunion but send greetings and best wishes for a wonderful day. We are still enjoying life in Dorrigo and are kept busy with the Bellingen & Dorrigo Community Markets (with Jams-Pickles-Sauces-Produce) At long last we have outsmarted the white cockatoos which devastate everyone's walnut trees each year. We now pickle our walnuts, a process which lasts from November to March. They are delicious and much in demand. We are also involved with the Bellingen seed savers group. Life here is a little "different" – but interesting. It was good to see Celinda (Ferris) and Clare (Nixon) when they visited earlier this year.

Marie Johnstone (McIntyre 1942) sends her apologies and greetings to all and she writes... During the month of August we had two special visitors, Nancy Harget (nee McCarthy) and her eldest daughter Christine. Nancy and I had a great time remembering many staff members and fellow students who helped make our training years so unforgettable. Nancy and I met on our first day at St George in 1938, became firm friends during the next four years and, in spite of the fact that she lives in Sydney and I am in Far North Queensland, have remained good friends over the years.

Nikki Positti writes... I am sorry to miss the reunion; it is a busy time of year. Family birthdays and weddings Stuart and I are even going to different weddings as they are on the same day one here in Wollongong and the other in Coffs Harbour. Best wishes to all the girls.

Noelene Wilkinson (Toohey 1958)

sends her apologies and wishes all of her fellow graduates a very happy reunion day.

Maisie Horswell (Wyness 1950) is unable to attend as she has not been well but she sends greetings and best wishes to all for a happy day.

Cecily Dobson (Hesselwood 1960) writes... sorry I can't attend the reunion, my husband is having chemotherapy and travelling is not on the agenda at this time. Please pass on my regards to all who attend.

Roma Williamson (Cambage 1950) sends her best wishes to all.

Judy Mak (Burne 1969) sends her apologies and is disappointed that she is unable to attend. She sends best wishes to all.

Nita Sagar (Gulliver 1962) sends special greetings and best wishes to you all for a wonderful reunion. We will be on holidays so I will be thinking of you. Margaret (nee Ainsworth) and Lance Hester have been staying with us and Margaret sends her warm wishes to all. Margaret & Lance live in Bayup Brook WA.

Jan Hodgson (McDonald 1962) writes... Hello everyone, I hope all is well with you and yours and that you enjoy the reunion if attending. I will not be attending as one of our Great Granddaughters is starring in the musical Annie at her school on the same day. This has been a very busy year for Jim and I, he received the Order of Australia Medal for work done for Veterans and Ex-Veterans, presented by Governor Maria Bashir at Government House and I received a Certificate of Appreciation for

Seen at last year's reunion

Volunteer and Welfare work that I do for Veterans and War Widows. I have been busy as Secretary this year helping to organise the Veterans and Ex Veterans EXPO which was held on Saturday the 16th. October, 2010. In March, April Jim and I had a trip to China and what a difference we saw compared to when we were there 22 years ago on our Honeymoon, while the culture was still to be seen China has become Westernised with sky scrapers going up every where, particularly since the Olympics were held there, we saw the Olympic Sites and the EXPO site which was held in September, however we enjoyed enjoyed the trip and Climbed the Great Wall which is amazing, visited the Terracotta Warriors the Hidden City the Imperial City, the Summer Palace, Tienimen Square and more.

Unfortunately in July August Jim spent 6 weeks in hospital after almost losing his left leg, however is home now and the skin grafts are almost healed and he is on the mend.

I was very happy to see St George football team win the Grand Final for the first time in 31 years as I have followed them since I was 16 years old. I was at the St. George Leagues Club when they won the last time and what an exciting time that was. Since moving to Lake Macquarie I follow the Knight when their not playing St George. Their Team started in 1988 when Jim and I were married.

Hopefully I will be able to attend the reunion next year and I send best wishes to all.

Regards, Jan Hodgson/MacDonald



Rhonda, Nita Gulliver, Wendy Forbes, Pat Stromberg, Jan McDonald, Estelle Farrell and Ruth Lawrence.



(The late) Pam Jackson and Rae Baker.

Reminiscing with Judy Abra

The following material is reproduced from the recent publication *The History of Bingara Health Services 1889–2010* with the gracious permission of Judy Abra and the Bingara Hospital History Group.

Page 82–83 as written by Judy:

After completing my training at St George Hospital, Sydney, I wanted to come back home to Bingara for a short time. I had grand plans of working with the Flying Doctor Service, travel overseas and gain lots of career opportunities. This is what I thought. I commenced working as a Trained Nurse at the Bingara District Hospital in 1967 and find myself still doing some casual shifts in 2010.

Along this wonderful journey, I have experienced some amazing changes, to which I am extremely grateful. In the early days Trained Nurses were called Sister; today they are Registered Nurses and called by their Christian names. Nurses Aides became Enrolled Nurses and Endorsed Enrolled Nurses. Midwives have always been Midwives. A Baby Health Nurse became an Early Childhood Nurse and their current title is Child and Family Health Nurse.

Nurses' uniforms were starched and uncomfortable with starched veils for Sisters and caps for the Nurses, and never without stockings. Now we have progressed to very comfortable styled uniforms, no more stockings or headgear, to which we are all very grateful.

In 1967 emergency equipment was very limited and I can remember being very concerned because we

did not have a cardiac monitor. At that time they were being used routinely in the Sydney Hospitals. Eventually the country Hospitals were supplied with necessary emergency equipment and today we are very fortunate to have up-to-date equipment and highly trained staff.

Heating was from open fires which the nurses had to stoke day and night. Later oil heaters were installed followed by gas heaters. Now electric split systems are used. Cooling was very difficult with just the odd electric fan and the Bonaire air conditioners (which we had to constantly fill with water). Now we work in a lovely cool environment in the summer months and warm environment during the winter. Boilers had to be stoked for hot water.

The operating theatre was routinely used weekly. It was not unusual to have emergency cases present for surgery, such as an Appendicectomy or a Caesarean Section. Very few cases were transferred to the major hospitals. This particular work was very enjoyable and extremely rewarding. The [air] Ambulance Service had not long commenced and there were no Neonatal Emergency Teams for newborns. The Flying Doctor was available, landing at the local airport. The maternity section and the operating theatre were always busy until they were closed in later years. All the sterile instruments and packs for the theatre and maternity were sterilized on site by the Nursing Staff, using the autoclave machine. Now all sterile stock comes from off site.

The general section consisted of two large patient wards, each holding ten beds, one ward for the men and one for the women. They were known as the Nightingale Wards. There was also a children's ward, two semi-private rooms and a private room. The maternity section had seven beds. Now single rooms are available with on- suites. The rooms are kept at a comfortable room temperature, a great improvement from the years gone by.

Community Health Nursing commenced in 1980 in which I worked alone in that position for five years. The Community Health Office was located in the medical records room in the administration building. It was later relocated to the Old Court House in Maitland Street, then in later years moved back to the Hospital and is now at the MPS. There were no mobile phones available. Some years later a CB radio was installed in the Community Health vehicle. After working alone for five years, another nurse was employed to share the workload. The Baby Health Nurse worked from what is now the Bingara Pre-School, and then moved to the Court House and the Hospital.

There were no mechanical lifters, electric high low beds, digital monitors, non invasive observation equipment, automatic security doors and cameras.

These are a few of the changes I can remember spanning my journey of

over four decades. I have achieved all of my professional goals, and have enjoyed working throughout these times, despite some sad but mostly very happy memories.

Editors Note

In this rapidly changing world with its reliance on technology and disposability we need to stop along the way to reflect where we have come from. Change has been so rapid over the past 50 years that we often just adapt to the altered circumstances without really stopping to think how much change we have actually been a part of. Many of the changes made have improved the quality of our health care and in many instances the development of the Multi Purpose Centres (MPS) has meant that a health facility has been retained in the community. The story of Bingara Hospital and its proud history is a testimony to the support and resilience of a country town and its community. The Hospital History Group is to be commended for ensuring that a proud tradition is continued.

The History of Bingara Health Services 1889–2010

This soft covered book was compiled and edited by the Bingara Hospital History Group and was published by them with the assistance of the Bingara Branch of the united Hospital Auxilliary.

Copies may be ordered by forwarding a cheque for \$40.00 (includes postage and handling) to: Judy Abra,
Bingara Hospital History Group,
PO Box 92 Bingara NSW 2404

Can you help please?

A volunteer is required. The committee is looking for a person who is familiar with the use of social networking (Twitter, Facebook etc) to assist in trying to locate many of the last graduates from the hospital. The message below from Caroline alerted us to the fact that it is possible to reconnect using this medium however none of the existing committee has the expertise to undertake the task. If you are able to assist please contact one of the committee.

Pat Franks (Stromberg) asks if anybody knows the whereabouts of Kathy Dennis (Scott 1958–1962).

Celia Whyte asks if anybody has news of Eunice Owen a 1951 graduate. Please contact the reunion secretary if you know where Eunice or Kathy are these days.

Karen Challand (Ross-Moore, PTS January 1980) contacted the Association after seeing the advertisement in the RSVP section of the Sydney Morning Herald. Regrettably she is unable to attend but is interested in hearing from any of her fellow trainees and she may be contacted on kazwithpazaz@gmail.com

Caroline Dennis (Koelma PTS February 1981) writes that she is looking forward to attending the reunion and adds ... that a few of our group remain good friends but it is Facebook that has recently put most of us in touch with one another. We are spread across NSW and it seems 5 are living in Queensland.

I have taken on the task of putting a reunion together, as I enjoy that kind of thing , and although we do not yet have a definite date, it will most probably be early March 2011. We are keen to spend a weekend together on the Gold Coast, where one of our group now owns and runs a restaurant called "The Signature Dish". After all, 30 years is worth celebrating! If you know the whereabouts of any of this group please contact Caroline on 0411 427901 or by email at cdenn62@bigpond.net.au

The photo below was supplied by Caroline who is seated first on the left.



News from 1962

Country visitors at graduation



Mrs. G. Gulliver came from Casino to see her daughter, Nita, graduate from St. George Hospital last Thursday.

With her nursing certificate, newly-graduated Sister Gulliver received the hospital's gold medal for highest marks gained during the four year training course.

She also gained first places in Ear, Nose and Throat nursing (Group 2), in Paediatrics and Nursing of Sick Children (Group 1), and in Ophthalmological Nursing.

Other country visitors included Mrs. M. Crawford and Mrs. A. Larkin (mother and aunt of graduate Kae Crawford), of Kyogle.

Sister Crawford, with graduate Dianne Symons, will also stay at St. George for midwifery training. Robin Symons, is in her second year's training at St. George.

Weddings soon

Seven of the remaining 11 graduates have decided upon their wedding dates.

Those who plan to marry soon are Sisters:

Margaret Barton, Dorothy Burgess, Marion McIntosh, Jacqueline Peasley, Pamela Sheppard and Rhonda Thorgood.

Last week's ceremony – the second graduation in the hospital's 70th anniversary year – was held in the Nurses Lounge.

Chairman of the Hospital Board (Mr. W.F. Crabtree, M.L.A.) and board members, Senator D. McClelland and Mr. J. Maddox, and the Medical Superintendent (Dr. D.M. Storey) congratulated Matron E. Harper and Tutor – Sister Ainsworth for their work during the year.

Prizewinners

Winners of graduation prizes are:

Nurse J.R. Field (J. McLeod Memorial Prize for combined highest marks in medical, surgical and Gynaecological nursing, and the St. George Hospital Prize for Gynaecological nursing).

Nurse R.L. Stubington (J.J. O'Keefe Memorial Prize for surgical nursing)

Nurse C.D. Moore (Matron Prichard Prize for second highest marks over four years).

Nurse P.D. Ray (Principles and Practice of Nursing – Senior, Group 1; Pediatrics and Nursing of Sick Children, Group 2).

Nurse C.A. Saggs (Principles and Practice of Nursing – Senior, Group 1; Medical Nursing).

Nurse I.I. Grigulis, Nurse V.J. Beekman, and Nurse C.A. Steele (Principles and Practice of Nursing – Junior; Groups 1, 2 and 3, respectively).

Nurse Steele also gained the October 1961 Preliminary Training School prize.

Nurse G.A. Hodgkinson (Anatomy and Physiology).

Nurse N.M. Currey and Nurse P. Weate, (Bacteriology and Principles of Asepsis – Group 1). Nurse Weate also gained the July 1961 Preliminary Training School prize.

Nurse P. Dal Pont (Bacteriology and Principles of Asepsis – Group 2).

Nurse J.W.D. Smith (Ear, Nose and Throat Nursing – Group 1).

Nurse T. Walgre and Nurse L. King (Preliminary Training School – January 1962 and April 1962, respectively).

Nurse B.M. Bushell and Nurse P.J. Phillips, who gained the W.J. Binns Memorial Prize for Obstetrics in Groups 1 and 2 respectively, have left St. George but returned for the presentation.

Nurse Bushell has joined the Rockdale Mobile Nursing Service.

Source: St. George and Sutherland Shire Leader, Wednesday, August 8, 1962. Kindly provided by Rhonda Hall (Stephenson).

Deaths

Jillian Collins (Needham) passed away on 19 February 2010.

Lois Webb passed away in 2010.

Patricia Brady (Tierney 1954) late of Narromine & Ulladulla lost her battle with Acute Myeloid Leukaemia on the 13 April 2010.

Susan Leahy's Mother passed away on 2 September 2010.

Dorothy Coker's son Don Phillips died in September 2010 after a long battle with cancer.

Pamela Clark (Jackson 1963) passed away in the last 12 months.

Book for sale

The Healing Saint

From time to time the committee receives requests for copies of the History of St George and since we do not have copies, the official order form is reproduced for your convenience.

The Healing Saint: A 100 Year History of the St George Hospital

The 1890s found the civic fathers of the three local councils of the time, seriously concerned about the hygiene, health and medical aspects of their constituents. The situation came to a head when two railway workers critically injured at Rockdale had to be transported by horse and buggy to the closest hospital, Royal Prince Alfred. One victim died on the trip and the other survived for a few short hours only. An appeal went out to St George residents to raise funds to establish a local infirmary of sufficient capacity so as to provide some semblance of a chance to hang on to life.

And so this wonderful history proceeds from Chapter One: The Beginning 1892 to November 1894 to Chapter Twelve: The "The" that makes the St George Great until the conclusion – 1994: Looking to the Future.

Copies are available for purchase from St George Hospital – for further information please phone Community Relations on 9350 2686 or complete the order form below.

PLEASE CUT ALONG LINE

Name: _____

Address: _____

_____ Hardcover copies @ \$39.95 (plus \$3 postage) of The Healing Saint

_____ Softcover copies @ \$24.95 (plus \$3 postage) of The Healing Saint

Please find enclosed my cheque, made payable to St George Hospital, or

Please debit my: Mastercard Visa

Signature: _____ Cardholder's Name: _____

Card Number: _____ Expiry: _____

Send your completed order with payment to:
Community Relations Department
St George Hospital, Gray Street, Kogarah NSW 2217