

PARRAMATTA & DISTRICT NURSES & MIDWIVES

2020: Year of Nurses & Midwives



**CITY OF
PARRAMATTA**



Front cover image: *Two nurses from the Parramatta Mental Hospital dated 18/10/1951*
(Source: State Library of New South Wales, digital order no: d2_01567)

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This book has been compiled in honour of this year being the '2020 International Year of the Nurse and Midwife'. Substantial research was undertaken by Research and Collections team at the City of Parramatta focusing on the critical contribution nurses and midwives have made in Parramatta throughout history. From the arrival of the Sisters of Charity from Ireland in January 1838 offering care and assistance to female prisoners in the Parramatta Female Factory to present day nurses and midwives working in the public Western Sydney Local Health District (WSLHD) including Cumberland Hospital, Westmead Hospital, as well as in private medical practices.

More information and stories on these local nurses and midwives can be found on our website www.arc.parracity.nsw.gov.au

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We thank everyone who has helped in any way to bring about this book.

INTRODUCTION

2020 has been named *The International Year of the Nurse and Midwife* by the World Health Organisation. This year marks the 200th anniversary of the birth of Florence Nightingale – the world's most famous visionary nurse and leader.

Florence Nightingale has been described as a caring and trailblazing British nurse, statistician, social reformer and leader of improved health care who is widely regarded as the founder of modern nursing.

Nurses and midwives are the cornerstone of health systems, providing skilled and compassionate care and leadership around the clock. Over 50,000 nurses and midwives work within NSW Health hospitals and health services, providing safe, quality care for the people of NSW. Across NSW, midwives support the birth of almost 100,000 babies each year and support the maternal and newborn health.

This, *The International Year of the Nurse and Midwife*, gives us a unique opportunity to recognise and highlight the work and contributions of nurses and midwives to patients and to the health system.

The International Year of the Nurse and Midwife celebrated in 2020, a year that saw the most significant public health event for more than one hundred years in the COVID-19 virus pandemic, is an appropriate time to reflect on the fascinating history and significant contributions of nurses in hospitals within the Parramatta local government area, and beyond.

This publication is a reflection of the journey of nursing and midwifery from the early European settlement to modern day.

Neera Sahni

History of Nursing in Parramatta

Michelle Goodman



Group of nurses (Source: City of Parramatta Council Local Studies Photographic Collection, LSP00061)

The concept of 'nursing' is fluid. Many Indigenous societies, including the traditional custodians of the Parramatta area, the people of the Darug Nation, do not separate out the role of the 'nurse' in their holistic approach to health. In Western societies, the term 'nurse' has been used historically to describe a range of caring occupations, including uncertified midwives and those employed to care for healthy young children.

The term 'nurse' also has a gendered history, with a feminisation of the role occurring during the nineteenth century, perhaps most potently illustrated by the declaration of pioneering British nurse Florence Nightingale that 'every woman is a nurse'. Of course, reintroduction of men to the nursing profession was well underway by the mid-twentieth century.

The specific focus of this chapter, drawing from research by the late local historian John McClymont's *Medical History in Parramatta*, is the historical context of nursing care provided in medical hospitals in Parramatta.

The 'Tent' Hospital, 1789 – 1792



*The 'Tent' Hospital at Parramatta, c. early-1790s.
(Source: State Library of New South Wales)*

In November 1788, the primary settlement of Parramatta, known as 'Rose Hill' until 1792, was established upstream from Sydney Cove, under the Colonial rule of Governor Arthur Phillip. The settlement saw about 800 convicts land, many of whom were in poor health from their imprisonment in Britain prior to transportation, and their long journey to the Colony.

Within a year of settlement, a temporary 'tent' hospital, comprising of two long sheds with an overarching thatched roof had been constructed. The hospital was built primarily to treat outbreaks of dysentery among convicts (members of the military who fell ill were treated in their barracks).

The 'tent' hospital was a roughly-built structure, 80 feet long and 20 feet wide, capable of accommodating two hundred patients. The hospital's 'tent' structure was probably gradually replaced with timber walls and a thatched roof.

Conditions in the 'tent' hospital were desperate, and hygiene standards were almost non-existent. Indeed, Captain Watkin Tench recorded in mid-November, 1790:

"A most wretched hospital, totally destitute of every conveniency. Lucky for the gentleman who superintends this hospital, and still more lucky for those who are doomed in case of sickness to enter it, the air at Rose Hill has been generally healthy."

It was on this site that the story of hospital nursing began in the new colony with the doctor in charge, Surgeon Arndell, being assigned convicts to nurse the sick. At this early stage, male attendants supervised male patients, and female attendants supervised female patients.

The Second Parramatta Hospital, 1792-1818



The town of Parramatta, c. 1792. (Source: Parramatta Heritage Centre website)

By 1792, it was apparent that the conditions in the 'tent' hospital were so dire that a new hospital structure was required and in the April of that year Governor Phillip laid the foundations for a new hospital. Comprising two wards, one each for male and female patients, the hospital was 80 feet long and 20 feet wide, built of locally made bricks. In December 1792 patients from the 'tent' hospital were transferred into the new building.

Located to the north of the first hospital, the new infirmary was about 100 meters from the Parramatta River bank, "convenient to the water". To prevent "any improper communication with other convicts" it was enclosed with a paling

fence, with space around the hospital "so that the sick would have every advantage of both air and exercise".

Convicts selected to assist in the hospital were usually those too old or infirm to undertake arduous duties in the normal workforce. Deployment of convicts in 1806 show that the roles of nurses were undertaken by seven convict women. No reward was given to them for this work other than their usual living allowances of food.

Parramatta Colonial Hospital, 1818 – 1848



The Parramatta Colonial Hospital, by Joseph Lycett, 1824.

(Source: State Library of Victoria)

Less than twenty years after its construction, the second Parramatta Hospital was in a very poor state of repair and Governor Macquarie came under pressure to provide more appropriate medical services. Macquarie commissioned a new Colonial Hospital, which was completed by September 1818. The hospital was located facing Parramatta River, to the east of the second hospital.

Governor Macquarie's own written description of the hospital reads:

"A hospital built of brick, two stories high with an upper and lower verandah all round with all the necessary out offices for the residents and occupation of 100 patients with ground for a garden and for the patients to take air and exercise in, the whole of the premises being enclosed with a high strong stockade."

The Colonial Hospital consisted of four wards, three of which were for female patients, and one for males. It contained fifty beds, although it was recorded the average number of patients during the years 1841 and 1842 was between sixty and seventy, making necessary to make up beds on the floor.

Convicts continued to be selected to provide nursing care at the hospital. 'Midwifery cases' were at this time cared for at the hospital within the Female Factory in North Parramatta.

The Macquarie Hospital, 1848 – 1897



Parramatta District Hospital, Parramatta, view of rear exterior of two storey building, ca. 1870s - 1900s (Source: City of Parramatta Council Local Studies Photograph Collection, LSP00800)

When the transportation of convicts to the Colony ceased in 1848, the hospital transferred from Colonial administration to management by a local committee. The first committee meeting appointed two well-known local doctors to superintend the hospital. An advertisement lead to the successful placement of a hospital matron, who undertook administrative, rather than pateint care

duties. During 1848 a cook, a wardsman, and a nurse and washerwoman were appointed.

In the 1860s, the Macquarie Hospital was described as having comfortable, cool rooms, with high ceilings. A library of books for was available for patients to browse, and games of draughts were played with the patients by the master of the hospital.

At this time, the vocation of nursing was poorly paid and low status. Nurses, regarded as little more than general housemaids, underwent no formal training. With the advances in medicine however, the need arose for skilled assistants who could interpret the necessity for cleanliness and orderliness and undertake the routine daily medical instructions required by medical staff.

The first training school for nurses in Australia commenced at Sydney Hospital in 1868, eight years after Florence Nightingale began her renowned training of nurses at St Thomas's Hospital, London. The first Nightingale-trained nurse to be appointed Matron at Parramatta was a Mrs Pearson, who commenced duty on 1 March 1876. In 1877, Matron was given the authority to suspend any employee under her charge and manage the administration of the hospital.

With the health needs of Parramatta continuing to increase, in 1882 a new two-storey wing was added to the Macquarie Hospital and in 1884 a separate pharmaceutical dispensary was established under the care of the matron.

In 1888, when extra funds became available for the hospital following a bequest, it was decided to appoint a secretary to care for the daily administration and thus allow the matron to focus on supervising management of the nurses and other hospital staff.

By 1891, the hospital had two wards for male patients, one ward for female patients, a private ward and nurses' quarters. However, the financial downturn during the 1890s saw stringent economies throughout the hospital due to the financial depression of the times. In 1892 Matron Greenwood is recorded as having reduced the dispensary drug bill considerably, and she was highly praised in that year's hospital Annual Report.

In 1896, Nurse Rutter was appointed Matron and brought the profession into great respect through her managerial and medical skills. When in 1906, she was praised for the thoroughness of her work, the Board of Directors recorded that the doctors regarded her as equal in ability to a resident surgeon. Matron Rutter retired in 1912, after 16 years in the position.

Parramatta District Hospital, 1897-1943



Parramatta District Hospital, c.1940s. (Source: City of Parramatta Council Local Studies Photograph Collection, LSOP00157)

Medical care needs in the Parramatta area continued to grow and on 24 January 1896 Viscount Hampden, Governor of NSW, laid the foundation stone of the first section of the new Parramatta District Hospital building. This section was completed by the December of that year at a cost approximately £1,200, and comprised of two large medical wards and an infectious isolation ward. Patients were transferred from the old Macquarie Hospital to the new building in January 1897.

The second section of Parramatta District Hospital was completed in 1898-9 and it is assumed that at this time the old hospital was demolished. In August 1901 the final remains of the 1818 hospital, the old stables, doctors' residence and smoking shed were removed, bringing to an end the long era of the Macquarie Hospital.

The Parramatta District Hospital building was located to the west of the old hospital, also facing Parramatta River, in a composition of three blocks built in the Federation Queen Anne Style. The central block was two storeys, with a hipped roof of Marseilles pattern terracotta tiles, and on the ridge-line were two massive chimneys, each with six terracotta chimney pots. The block was three-bayed, with louvres to the upper windows and on each side there were spacious verandahs. A contemporary description reads:

"A hospital up-to-date in every respect... large and commodious wards... male and female surgical, male and female (medical) – an infectious ward – private wards – an excellent operating theatre – also a splendid administrative block, well-furnished throughout."

From as early as 1910, there were plans for the construction of additional living quarters for the nurses at Parramatta District Hospital. Nearby Brislington House had been rented from the Brown family for nurses' accommodation, but over time this provision became increasingly insufficient. Plans were made in 1923 with the Public Works architect to build two storeyed accommodation for 28 nurses, located to the west of the hospital. Designed with verandahs twelve feet wide, it included a dining room, sitting room, kitchen, toilets and bathrooms, in 1925 the nurses' accommodation was finally opened.

Over coming years, Parramatta District Hospital required enlarging and the succeeding years saw numerous alterations and additions. In 1926 a casualty room, a staff dining room and accommodation for the matron and the resident medical officers were added. The 1930s saw the depression years resulting in the curtailing of costs with building, wages and salary cuts.

Jeffery House, 1943-1990s



Jeffery House, c. 1970s. (Source: City of Parramatta Council Community Archives)

A multi-storey building, in the 'modern' style, to accommodate increasing health services needs, was opened on the Parramatta District Hospital site in 1943.

By 1945 the Parramatta District Hospital Board began discussing with the Hospitals Commission the necessity for improved maternity services. Consideration was given initially to the conversion of the top floor of the new building into a dedicated maternity ward. However, it was finally agreed that a separate prefabricated maternity hospital wing would be constructed, which was eventually opened by opened in November 1955.

In September 1956, Mr PH Jeffery, who had been chairman of the Parramatta District Hospital Board for 26 years, did not seek re-election. In April 1957, the Board resolved to call the main building Jeffery House in honour of his loyal and untiring service.

Complementing the modernised buildings of the hospital, this period also saw significant changes to the conditions for nurses at the Parramatta District Hospital. The employment of married nurses, which had been introduced during the Second World War due to staff shortages, was continued. In addition, male nurses began to be employed, with Board minutes of 1945 recording the successful application for employment as a nurse of a Mr Shaw. In 1946, nurse's hours were reduced to 40 per week, and, by 1967, it was decided that nurses were no longer required to 'live-in'.

The Parramatta Hospitals, 1978 – 1990s



*The Westmead Centre under construction, c. 1977.
(Source: City of Parramatta Council Community Archives)*

The increasingly complex health care needs of the growing Western Suburbs of Sydney led to the announcement in the early-1970s that a state-of-the-art teaching hospital would be constructed in the Parramatta local government area suburb of Westmead. The Westmead Centre accepted its first patient on 1 November 1978, and was officially opened on 10 November, by the Premier of New South Wales.

In February 1978, it was announced that Parramatta District Hospital would be fully integrated with the Westmead Centre, and the Board of Directors would comprise three from the Parramatta Board, three from Sydney University and six from the general public. By the end of 1978, all acute health services had been relocated to the Westmead Centre, and the old Parramatta District Hospital building began accommodating rehabilitation services.

Westmead Hospital, 1990s onwards



Westmead Hospital, c. late-1990s. (Source: City of Parramatta Council Archives)

In 1991, all health services were moved out of the old Parramatta District Hospital building. In 1995 the building was decommissioned and redeveloped into the Parramatta Justice Precinct. The Parramatta Community Health Centre, located in Jeffery House, still operates on part of the original site.

In 2016, a major \$1.1billion upgrade of Westmead Hospital was announced. The Westmead Redevelopment Project, now nearing completion, will transform the precinct into an innovative, contemporary and integrated centre which will continue to deliver high quality healthcare for decades to come.

Nurses and midwives at Westmead Hospital continue to provide world-class professional health care services for the people of Parramatta, and the wider Western Sydney community.

The Nurses of Parramatta



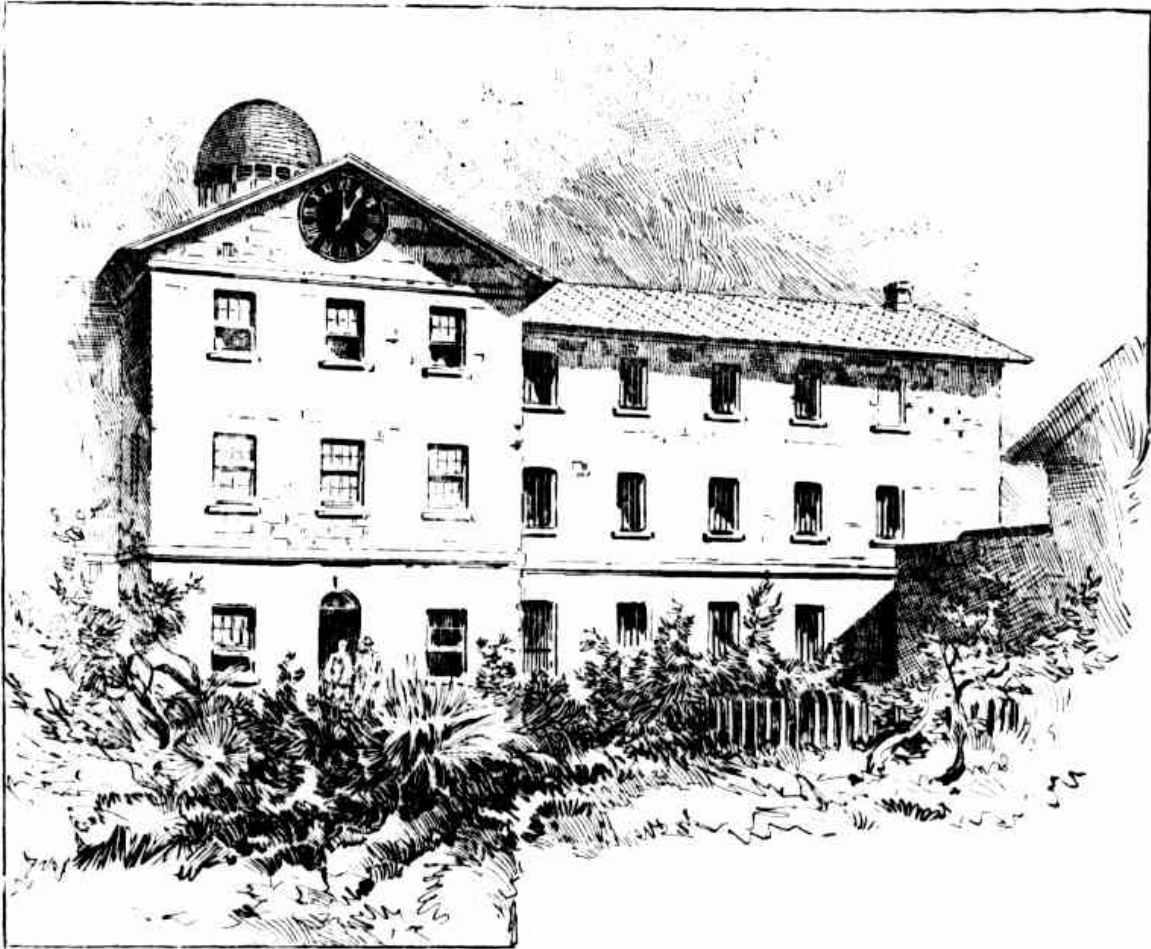
*Nurses on duty in Westmead Hospital's Emergency Department, c. 2019.
(Source: Western Sydney Local Health District wslhdh.nsw.gov.au)*

The nursing profession traces a fascinating history through the medical hospitals of Parramatta. From the unnamed men and women who worked in the dismal conditions of the first 'tent' hospital, and the untrained midwives delivering babies at the Female Factory, through to the professional nurses and midwives of today, providing specialist care in increasingly complex medical settings.

The International Year of the Nurse and Midwife celebrated in 2020, a year that saw the most significant public health event for more than one hundred years in the COVID-19 virus pandemic, is an appropriate time to reflect on the fascinating history and significant contributions of nurses in hospitals within the Parramatta local government area, and beyond.

Parramatta Female Factory, 1800-1840

Emma Stockburn



(Source: Parramatta — past and present, *Illustrated Sydney News*, 3 October 1889, p. 18. Retrieved from <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article63622071>)

The First Female Factory, 1800 – 1820

The first Female Factory, built in 1804 was located above the Parramatta gaol and was on the space that is now Prince Alfred Square. The top floor was meant to give a safe place as well a location to work for unassigned convict women.

It also served as accommodation for those newly arrived in the colony. Governor King stated that the place could be for industry as well as a confinement. Well-

behaved women were chosen by settlers to undertake the work as servants and housekeepers. While those considered to be "*incorrigible*" of the convict women were sent to work at the Factory.

Here the women worked at looms, weaving various materials, including woollen fabric, sackcloth, linen, sail cloth and hemp. In 1806, 72 convict women were employed in this way.

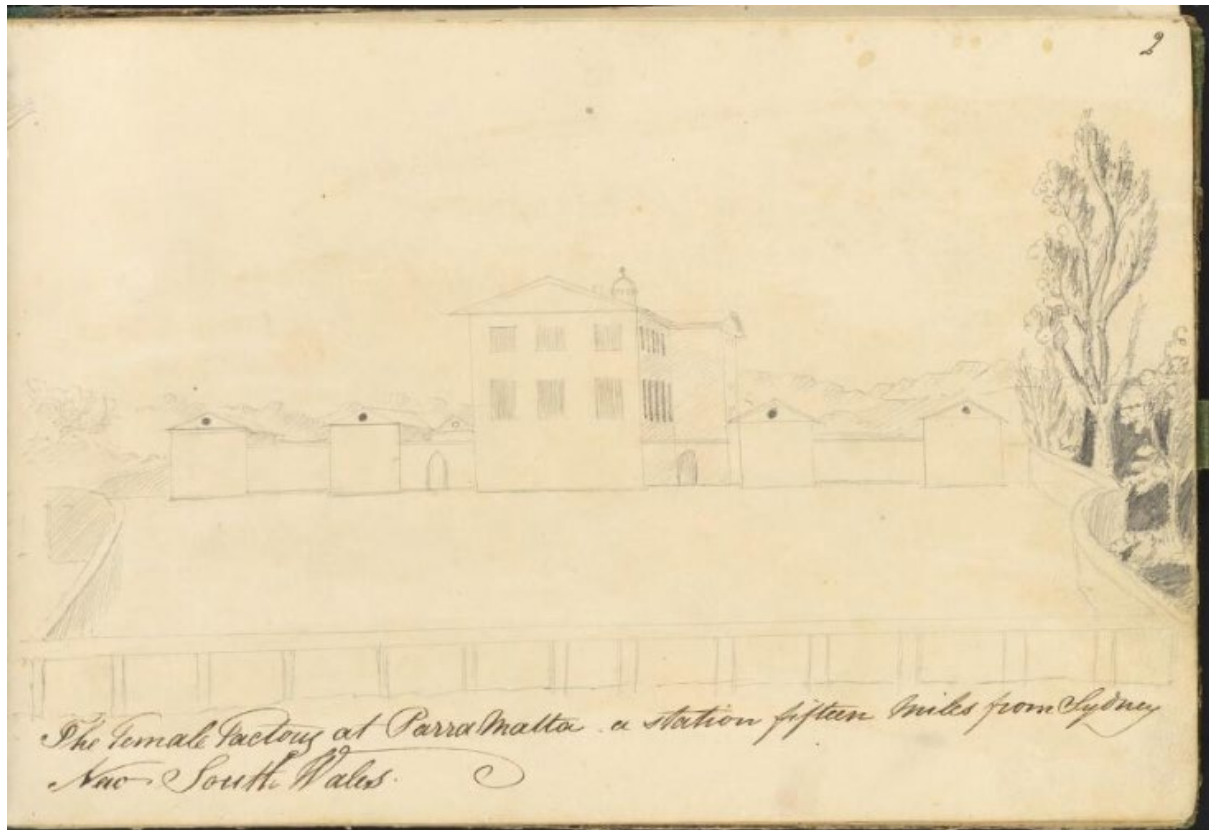
This same year Governor King expressed much concern over the state of women who worked and lived in the factory. He saw them as '*thoroughly depraved and abandoned*.' In between 1803 – 1813 under the supervision of George Mealmaker and then Benjamin Barrow, various selection policies and categorisations of character were used to separate the women there. This amounted to them being placed in different class groups, determined by their 'behaviour'. It was not until 1813 that an official enquiry was made into the treatment of the women at the factory. The enquiry was specifically made into the professional behaviour of Doctor Luttrell, the surgeon overseeing the Factory at the time, and he was found lacking in care and concern for his charges.

Large numbers of female convicts continued to arrive in the colony, including 89 Irish women on the *Caanda* in 1817. This also included women with eleven children. The factory was not equipped with cooking facilities, security and accommodation was increasingly over crowded and unhygienic. To this the women who worked at the looms preferring to stay in Parramatta town. All of these aspects led to Commissioner J.T. Bigge to express his horror at the failures of the factory to care for the women's physical and moral health.

For more on the First Female Factory, Prince Alfred Square, 1803 – 1821:

- <http://arc.parracity.nsw.gov.au/blog/2015/08/12/the-first-female-factory-prince-alfred-square-1803-1821/>

The Second Female Factory, 1821 – 1840: Laying-in and midwives



The Female Factory at Parramatta, a station fifteen miles from Sydney, New South Wales, 1823? [Charles Harry Roberts] (Source: National Library of Australia, Bib ID: 2175607)

The problems faced by the colony's female convicts presented an issue for Governor Macquarie. In 1817 one of his many letters asking for formal assistance to build a new work and living situation for the female convict population, was given attention. It was then that Macquarie asked Reverend Samuel Marsden for his advice and thoughts. Marsden had been highly critical of, not only the factory itself but also the women held there and living in Parramatta. Calling them '*immoral and destitute*' seeing many of them as concubines giving birth to illegitimate children. Moreover, it had been this condemnation that had been one of the reasons Macquarie had written to England for assistance with a solution to these problems.

The second Female factory was commissioned by Governor Macquarie in 1816 and was designed by Francis Greenway on a plan similar to the Hyde Park convict barracks. Marsden had given the Governor plans of workhouses in Yorkshire as his contribution to a solution to the colony's predicament.

The foundation stone was laid on 9 July 1818 by Governor Macquarie and by 1822, the new female factory was ready. A large stone building that included accommodation for 172 women, working space for weaving and looms, storage rooms, accommodation for some staff and large kitchens.

By 1827 the factory was home to 366 women. This number was but a small number when compared to the 803 who had passed through the stone walls over the past six months of the same year. These women were at the factory for a number of reasons and in 1824 the Factory had been seen as the first laying-in hospital in New South Wales.

By 1829 the factory was one of only two places that treated women of the colony who needed medical attention. A great number of these women needed assistance throughout pregnancy, birth and with infants. The Factory had become known as a lay-in hospital and a quote from a member of the public offers a colourful phrase of the time. The Factory "it is a favorite...and desirable place of seclusion for those convict females who are in that state, in which, Ladies wish to be who love their Lords". Many settlers sent their pregnant convict servants back to the Factory hospital to be cared for. To this, the role of government-employed midwives was seen as an important one. To the extent that Colonial Surgeon Patrick Hill thought, the Female Factory could be a place to train midwives. Midwives were employed in New South Wales, at the Factory in between 1822 to 1839. These seven women were paid for their work and appointed with recommendation's from colonial surgeons and or the superintendent of the Factory. These women did not always have easy lives but were respected. They are part of the history of Parramatta and the profession of midwifery and nursing.

For more on the Second Female Factory, 1818-1848:

- <http://arc.parracity.nsw.gov.au/blog/2015/07/28/the-second-parramatta-female-factory-1818-1848/>

Mary Jones

Emma Stockburn

Mary Jones was the first midwife to have been called to assist at the Female Factory. She arrived in New South Wales in 1814 on the *Wanstead*, under the name Mary White. In the 1814, Muster, she was registered as being employed as a midwife and having one child. Mary had been sentenced to transportation for seven years. She and a companion were convicted of theft after they admitted to stealing thirty yards of muslim fabric. Ms White married Joseph Jones in 1815 and they were married at St John Church, Parramatta. It can be seen in the Colonial Secretary correspondence that Mary received a salary for the role of midwife in 1822 and 1824.

Parramatta January 15th 1822

Sir

This is to Certify that Mary Jones -
Free Woman of Parramatta has been doing the
Duty as Government Midwife at Parramatta - from
the First of October to the Thirty first of December 1821 -
and has made application for a quarter's Salary at
the Rate of Twelve Pounds per annum - as ^{ordered} ~~confirmed~~
by His late Excellency Governor Macquarie -

To D^r Arcey Wentworth Esqr
Treasurer of the Police Fund }

Henry S. Myers
S. O.

M. Brisbane

Colonial Secretary's Papers, 1788-1856 15th January 1822.

It is believed that Mary was the first midwife to be employed by the government to work at the Female Factory. She would have also been called to assist at the hospital and the gaol. She resigned in 1828 and at that time was still officially employed as Government Midwife.

Mary Mumford


Emma Stockburn

Mary was employed as a domestic servant near London, and while there, she stole from her employer. This included personal items from her mistress and some household goods. She was seen by a local man, put on trial on the 11th February 1827 and sentenced to fourteen years and transportation to the colony. She was thirty seven years old when she begun her journey on the *Harmony* and arrived in Sydney in late 1827.

From the start Mary was assigned as a nurse at the Sydney Infirmary on Macquarie Street. And then in 1828, she was given a recommendation by the Female Factory Committee to the Colonial Secretary, to work as a midwife at the Factory. As a midwife for the Female Factory Mary was given off-site accommodation and compensated with a salary of twenty pounds. She resided at Mr Harveys cottage and she practised midwifery services here, as well as the Female Factory and the hospital.

NOTICE.

MR. MUMFORD respectfully takes leave to apprise the Ladies, and Public in general of Parramatta and its Vicinity, that she intends practising as MIDWIFE, and trusts that her having been employed in that capacity for several years in the Female Factory without even one accident occurring, will be a sufficient encouragement for them to employ her.

 Residence, Mr. Harvey's Cottage, opposite the Roman Catholic Chapel.

Parramatta. 4th June, 1833.

Mary's time as a midwife for the Female Factory was a checkered one. From 1829 to 1837 she was employed as midwife twice, but also spent time in the factory for neglecting her work and for concealing provisions. Then in 1830 she found herself 'living in a state of prostitution in Parramatta.'. And yet throughout these years she was also given recommendations and character references from Dr James Bowman and the Surgeon in charge of Parramatta Hospital, Mathew Anderson. These instances speak of the uncertainty in the lives of midwives as well as the good work they did.

Mary final assignment at the female factory as a midwife was in 1838. Mary gained her ticket of leave in 1841 and it seems she married and moved to Maitland. Evidence of this can be seen in an advertisement placed in the Maitland Mercury of 1843.

Midwifery.

MRS. MARY GORDON (late Mumford) respectfully begs leave to acquaint the females of Maitland that she has commenced practising as Midwife, and promises the utmost attention and care shall be applied on her part to those individuals who may honor her with their commands. Respecting her conduct and qualifications, she has in her possession a Certificate from Surgeon Anderson, of the Colonial Hospital at Parramatta, under whose superintendence she attended the delivery of more than *nine hundred women* in eight years.

In consequence of the great depression of the times, Mrs. G. requires no higher fee than 10s., leaving it to the generosity of those who can afford it to reward her services as they find her deserving.

Shamrock Cottage, West Maitland. 935

Here we can see tell of an experienced and kind midwife, who has a solid reputation amongst medical professionals and a generous nature. Mary Gordon/Mumford passed away at 75 and on her death certificate; her profession is listed as midwife.

Elizabeth Donohoe

Emma Stockburn

Elizabeth Donohoe arrived in Sydney in 1836, on the ship *Roslyn Castle*. She had been sentenced for seven years for stealing. At this time Eliza/Elizabeth was twenty-nine years old and already widowed. She had been sent to the Parramatta Female Factory on arrival like many who found themselves in Sydney. Ms Donohoe had been performing the duties of a midwife in the absence of any official position before she was appointed in the role in 1839. Elizabeth was paid one shilling and had been given the position by the surgeon in charge of the Factory and Matron Bell.

Ms Donohoe was the last midwife appointed to the Factory as in 1839 the Sisters of Charity started working at Parramatta. Elizabeth received her Ticket of Leave in 1840 and her Certificate of Freedom in 1843.

CERTIFICATE OF FREEDOM.	
No. <i>43/503</i>	<i>30 March 1843</i>
Date,	
Prisoner's No	<i>36/170</i>
Name	<i>Eliza Donohoe</i>
Ship	<i>Roslyn Castle</i>
Master	<i>Richards</i>
Year	<i>1836</i>
Native Place.....	<i>Dublin</i>
Trade or Calling ...	<i>Servant</i>
Offence	<i>stealing wearing apparel</i>
Place of Trial	<i>Dublin City</i>
Date of Trial	<i>5 February 1835</i>
Sentence	<i>seven years</i>
Year of Birth	<i>1807</i>
Height	<i>5ft 1 1/4 in tall</i>
Complexion	<i>ruddy & freckled</i>
Hair	<i>brandy</i>
Eyes	<i>hazel</i>
General Remarks...	<i>lost canine teeth in upper</i>
	<i>delivered of 3 sons mark of a scald on lower left</i>
	<i>arm both arms buckled</i>

Mary Jackson

Emma Stockburn

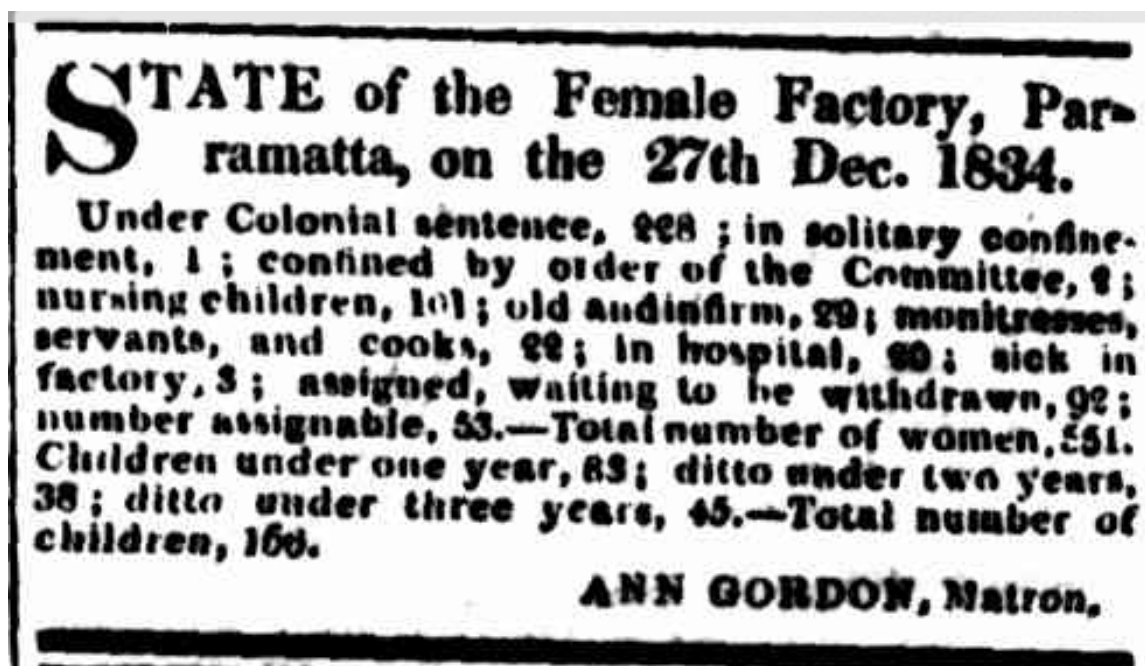
Mary Jackson, who arrived on the *Diana*, was quickly sent to the Female Factory. In 1833 she was the midwife there. It is not known exactly how long she was at the Factory or in the role of midwife. But during this time she was paid eight pence per diem. By 1841 Mary was living at Petersham in Sydney.

STATE of the Female Factory, Parramatta, on the 16th February, 1833.
Under Colonial Sentence, 186; solitary confinement, 2; confined by order of the Committee, 8; nursing children, 84; old and infirm, 7; mistresses, servants, cooks, &c. 16; in hospital, 6; sick in factory, 4; assigned, waiting to be withdrawn, 103; number assignable, 0; total number of women, 416; children under one year, 49; under two years, 23; under three years 31; total number of children, 103.
ANN GORDON, Matron.

Margaret Murphy

Emma Stockburn

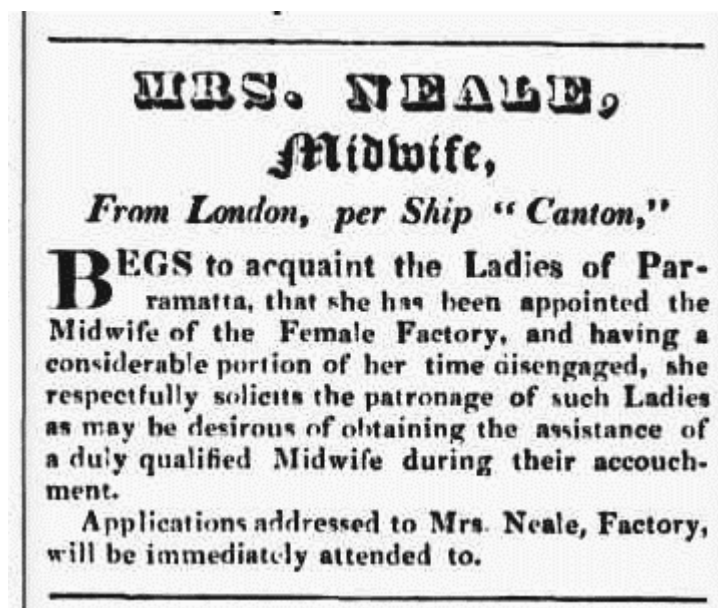
Ms Murphy was a free immigrant who was employed as a midwife at the Female Factory in Parramatta in 1835. According to records, she had qualifications and references as to her position. Margaret didn't serve for very long as the midwife at the Factory and left the same year, in 1835.



Mary Ann Neale

Emma Stockburn

Mrs Neale arrived on the 8th September 1835, in the colony on the ship the *Canton*. Mary was an assisted immigrant and was employed as the Female Factory midwife when she arrived. While it is not known if she had official training for her role she may have and at least had experience working in London.



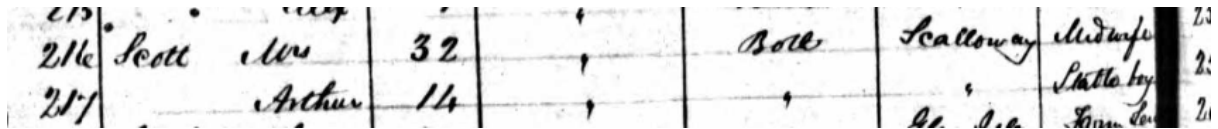
The advertisement above is from November 1835, in it Mary is telling the colony of her employment and readiness to assist ladies outside of the Factory. Mary worked both as a government employee, for this she was paid fifty pounds, light and fuel, and as a private practitioner. Mary left the employ of the Factory in March 1837 and began work in Sydney, King Street.



Elizabeth Scott

Emma Stockburn

Elizabeth Scott arrived in the colony with her son Arthur in 1838. They had travelled on the Lady Kennaway. Ms Scott was listed as thirty-two years old and a midwife and Arthur was fourteen and a stable boy, as seen above.



A handwritten passenger list from the ship Lady Kennaway, dated 1838. The list is organized into columns for names, ages, and professions. Elizabeth Scott is listed as a midwife, and her son Arthur is listed as a stable boy.

No.	Name	Age	Profession
216	Scott Mrs	32	Midwife
217	Arthur	14	Stable boy

On her arrival, Ms Scott was given a glowing recommendation from the ships Surgeon Dr Robert Waugh. That Elizabeth was 'an accomplished midwife....peculiarly qualified for the Government Establishment'. . This praise was added to by J.D. Pinnock, an immigration officer who stated, the governor 'might appoint her to one in which her service may be made available for the public benefit'. Elizabeth was appointed to the Female Factory and her son was given employment with Mr Pinnock. She held the position at the Factory for a year.

Parramatta Lunatic Asylum, 1848-1878

Neera Sahni & Anne Tsang



Since the first transfer of patients in 1846, the site has remained home to psychiatric and mental health for Western Sydney, although it has undergone several name changes. These name changes also reflect changing attitudes towards mental health over the last 150 years. Up to 1878, it was known as the Parramatta Lunatic Asylum. From 1878 to 1916, it became the Parramatta Hospital for the Insane. Between 1916 and 1962, it was referred to as the Parramatta Mental Hospital, while from 1962 to 1983 it was the Parramatta Psychiatric Centre. From 1983 up to the present, it is known as the Cumberland Hospital.

On 28 December 1849, a notice was published, stating that a portion of the Invalid Establishment at Parramatta had been appointed a public asylum for the reception and custody of lunatics. The Convict, Lunatic, and Invalid Establishment had replaced the Female Factory when it closed at the end of 1847, leaving only invalid or insane inmates still resident.

Personnel were appointed to staff the institution on 1 April 1848, and although separate personnel lists were published for the Convict, Lunatic, and Invalid

Establishment, and for the Lunatic Asylum, Parramatta from 1850, the same senior administrative and medical staff were listed as appointed to identical positions in both institutions. Edwyn (also Edward) Straham and his wife Elizabeth Straham were appointed Superintendent and Matron (until her death and Jane Burn replaced her). By 1856, no personnel list was recorded for the Convict, Lunatic, and Invalid Establishment as it was no longer listed as a separate institution.

From the outset, Parramatta Lunatic Asylum consisted of a free, and a criminally insane division, with separate registers kept for persons admitted into each. On 31 December 1873, the Parramatta Lunatic Asylum contained 704 free patients, 45 criminal patients (confined under the provisions of the *Criminal Lunacy Act 1860*), and 36 convict patients (accommodated within the free division, but as British convicts maintained at the charge of the Imperial Treasury).

By the mid-1850s the former Female Factory buildings were occupied by lunatics and aged and infirm invalids. The classification and separation of spaces within the main Female Factory building remained, with the aged and infirm invalids of both sexes occupying the southern side (former 2nd class convict spaces) and the male lunatics occupying the northern side (or 1st class areas). The female lunatics were also housed in the old three-storey Cell Block built by Governor Gipps. This remained the principal accommodation for female lunatics until 1883.

In 1868 Dr Frederick Norton Manning described Parramatta Lunatic Asylum as unfit as a residence for those mentally afflicted, with its "gloomy and ill-ventilated cells and their iron-barred doors." Although a new storey and separate cells had been added to the criminal division building, by 1868 this was full, and overcrowding of the free division remained unallieviated. In June 1885 a new hospital building was completed, and the old central Female Factory building, described as an "unsightly and ruinous pile" was demolished.

For more information on the history of the "Parramatta Lunatic Asylum" 1848-1878:

- <http://arc.parracity.nsw.gov.au/blog/2015/08/12/history-of-the-parramatta-lunatic-asylum-1848-1878/>
- Recreational Facilities of the Male and Female Lunatic Asylum <http://arc.parracity.nsw.gov.au/blog/2015/08/10/male-and-female-lunatic-asylum-recreational-buildings/>

Jane Burn

Anne Tsang



*Jane Burn, Matron of the Parramatta Lunatic Asylum, ca. 1880s
(Source: Parramatta Heritage Centre Library Local Studies Photograph Collection,
LSP00073)*

Jane Burn was appointed matron of the Parramatta Lunatic Asylum on 1 June 1865 following the death of former Matron Elizabeth Statham in 1864. The late Mrs Statham was previously Matron Superintendent of the Parramatta Female Factory before it was re-purposed as an Asylum for Lunatic and Invalid Convicts in December 1848. James Robertson Firth was appointed Storekeeper at the same time as Jane, succeeding Edward Statham, widower of Elizabeth. The first Surgeon Superintendents were Dr Patrick Hill who died a few months after taking up the position in 1852, and Dr Richard Greenup (1803-1866) who joined the asylum as medical superintendent in July 1852 at a salary of £600.

During Matron Burn's administration of the female division of the asylum, which lasted for 28 years until she retired in 1892, there was never a hint of impropriety or corruption on her part

In 1878, the Parramatta Lunatic Asylum became known as 'Parramatta Hospital for the Insane'.

Matron Burn retired on 5 October 1892 under the Civil Service Act 1884 and received a civil service pension of £98 and 2 shillings per year from 1 September 1892 when she was 72 years old. It was reported in the newspapers that even in 1912, when she was in her nineties, she was still receiving a pension.

Parramatta Hospital for the Insane, 1878-1916

Anne Tsang



The new entry to the Hospital for the Insane in 1900. The 1861 Criminal Ward and enclosing walls dominate views into the site. The Visitors' and Administration Block has not yet been constructed. (Sources: State Library of NSW)

As a result of the *Lunacy Act 1878*, the 'Parramatta Lunatic Asylum' was renamed the 'Parramatta Hospital for the Insane'. Under the jurisdiction of the first Inspector General for the Insane, Dr. Frederick Norton Manning (1839-1903) conducted two comprehensive reports (1868 and 1877) which challenged the current mental health care system. His harsh criticism of the Parramatta Institution, led to many substantial new developments and rebuilding across the institution between 1878 to 1900, including:

- in 1877 to 1880: a kitchen block, assistant superintendent's cottage and stores building associated with the Female Weatherboard Division were constructed;
- in 1877 to 1883: construction of the new Female Division buildings at the former Vineyard Farm consisting of six large weatherboard wings linked by a central pavilion;
- in 1879 to 1880: a sports oval and cricket ground

- in 1880s: Pine Cottage was constructed for the Assistant Medical Officer;
- in 1880s to 1890s: an isolation block was constructed facing the Parramatta River;
- in 1883: a morgue;
- in August 1883: demolition of the 1839 solitary cell block was approved following the relocation of the women to the Female Weatherboard Division—the walled yard was converted to an enclosure for vegetable gardens for men diagnosed as criminally insane;
- in 1885-1886: demolition of the three-storey Female Factory dormitory building was also approved with the stone possibly recycled in the 1885 two storey No 1 Male Ward and the clock tower incorporates the clock from the Female Factory dormitory building which was demolished 1885-1886 after the remaining men were relocated to the newly completed asylum block;
- circa 1886-1887 to May 1891: the Amusement Hall was commenced and reputedly constructed by patients and staff; when it opened it was commented that there was no amusement hall comparable to it in Parramatta;
- in 1889: Ward 5 was constructed for incontinent patients;
- in 1889-1890: Male ward 4, a substantial ward block was constructed for dangerous and refractory non-criminal males. In 1901, it was subsequently extended;
- circa 1890: the former dormitory building of the Third Class Penitentiary was enlarged by construction of a wing to its east ('Wet and Dirty Ward'/Ward 8) and a verandah was added;
- 1893: a large kitchen complex for the male division was completed;
- circa 1895 to 1897: the Ward 2 was constructed; and
- circa 1899: a Nurses' Home (now Jacaranda House) was constructed.

The hospital was noted for its landscaping, which, along with animals, was an integral component of treatment of people experiencing mental illness. One commentator noted its fine park containing a kangaroo enclosure between the Parramatta Gaol and nurses' home in the early years of the twentieth century as well as deers, emus and other creatures.

In February 1898, Dr. Eric Sinclair (1860-1925) replaced Dr. Manning as Inspector General of the Insane. Dr. Sinclair had his own ideas about the design of hospitals, which he thought should be less institutional and more like a community of homes. New buildings such as the admission ward built in this time demonstrated this notion—separate buildings that were related to each other as a coherent group. Buildings constructed between 1900 and 1910 include:

- Main administration building in 1910 (now the Mental Health Sciences Building);

- The Admissions Block in 1908, where people could be admitted for observation and assessment prior to discharge or placement—it consisted of a central admissions building, a female admissions ward and a male admissions ward;
- Staff dining room and kitchen in 1908;
- Nurses' home (Jacaranda House);
- Chief Attendant's residence;
- Small weatherboard waitresses' cottage;
- Deputy Superintendent's Office.

In 1900, Dr. William Cotter Williamson was appointed the Medical Superintendent for the Hospital of the Insane. With an active interest in horticulturalism and the Sydney Gardening Movement, Williamson was instrumental in the improvement and enhancement of the grounds, ordering 48 trees and 248 shrubs for the Hospital a year after his appointment, which helped, shaped the gardens and encouraged the beneficial effects of gardening, planting and the outdoors for patients.

- The main entrance to the Hospital was relocated by 1906 after the purchase of allotments situated between Albert and Factory Streets, and after the completion of the new admission block in 1909 the entrance grounds were remodelled.
- The construction of more new buildings precipitated a new phase of planting. Williamson encouraged additional ornamental gardens on the western side of the site. He probably consulted with Joseph Maiden, Director of the Botanic Gardens, concerning suitable trees and by 1910 had succeeded in replacing the paling fence between the Hospital grounds and Parramatta Park replaced by iron fencing.
- Many of the *Washingtonia* palms along the roadways across the site were probably planted between 1910 and 1920, and it is known that more trees were delivered to the site from the State Nursery during 1917.

Formal training of nurses and attendants at Parramatta began in 1890-91 and as observed by the Inspector General of the Insane in 1893 as being well established. The first trained matron in the Hospital was Frances Georgina Spencer who replaced Matron Jane Burn upon her retirement.

Frances Georgiana Spencer

Anne Tsang



Miss Frances G. Spencer, circa early 1890s. (Source: Parramatta Heritage Centre Libray Local Studies Photograph Collection, LSP00071)

Following the retirement of Mrs Burn, Miss Frances Georgiana Spencer was appointed Matron of Parramatta Hospital for the Insane on 1 September 1892 by the Governor and Executive Council at an annual salary of £160. Matron Spencer was born in 1862 in Birmingham, Warwickshire, England. She was the first formally trained matron of the hospital; having been trained at St. Bartholomew's Hospital in London in August 1887 to May 1891 under the Nightingale system and had worked as a Sister at Carrington Convalescent Hospital from September 1891 to February 1892. She resigned in July 1893 from Parramatta, to take up the position of matron at the Thomas Walker Convalescent Hospital in Concord West.

In June 1899, Miss Spenser was intimately involved in the establishment of the NSW Trained Nurses Association, which by October became known as the Australasian Trained Nurses Association (ATNA). She was also appointed to the first Examining Committee of the ATNA that year. The ATNA established and maintained a register of nurses and did not admit "mental nurses" until 1911 when the first registration examination of mental nurses occurred in July 1911 with 12 nurses passing.

Maggie Gertrude Quinn

Anne Tsang



Miss Quinn is standing in the middle Parramatta Hospital for the Insane, view of staff in costume for a fancy dress ball, circa 1908.

(Source: City of Parramatta Council Local Studies Photograph Collection, LSP00070)

Margaret 'Maggie' Gertrude Quinn was born on 9 February 1852. She was trained at the Coast Hospital (later known as the 'Prince Henry Hospital, Sydney') in Little Bay, N.S.W. which was established by the Board of Health in 1881 as the first government controlled public hospital in response to an outbreak of smallpox. The Coast Hospital was also where the first complete ambulance service in N.S.W. was established given the isolated location of the hospital.

Miss Quinn was first appointed in the N.S.W. Government service as of 1 November 1887. On 1 January 1894, she was appointed Head Nurse. Later that year in September 1894, Miss Quinn resigned from her position as Senior Nurse at the Coast Hospital to take the position of Matron of the Newcastle Hospital for the Insane where she also worked with Dr. Williamson.

After two years, she was promoted upon the recommendation of the Public Service Board to be Matron of the Parramatta Hospital for the Insane from 2 November 1896. Matron Quinn was the first Australian trained Matron of the Parramatta hospital.

She remained in Parramatta until under the Public Service Act 1902, Act no. 56, 1912, she retired on 13 March 1914. Prior to her retirement, there was a social gathering at the recreational hall of the Parramatta Hospital for the Insane to wish her a farewell in her retirement.

Rebecca Margaret Williams

Anne Tsang



*Nurse Rebecca Margaret Williams from Parramatta Hospital for the Insane, ca. 1907.
(Source City of Parramatta Council, Local Studies Photograph Collection, LSP00074)*

Rebecca Margaret Williams was born on 24 September 1882 in the district of Camden, New South Wales. She was the daughter of Charles Williams (1852-1905) and Eliza (nee Tomkins) (1864-1953) and was baptised on 19 November 1882 at St. Marks, Picton by Frank Elders. Her father is recorded as being a farmer on her baptism record. She was the oldest of four children including brother Charles Edward Williams (1884-1958), Annie Amelia Williams (1886-1961), and Eliza May Williams (1896-1974).

'Becky', as she was affectionately called at times, was trained at the Parramatta Hospital for the Insane. She was the sole Parramatta candidate who sat and passed the first Mental Nurse's Registration Examination in August 1911.

During the First World War, Miss Williams volunteered her services and joined the Australian Imperial Force. On 21 August 1915, she left Sydney aboard the R.M.S. 'Morea' as a staff nurse attached to the 10th Australian General Hospital. At the time, she appears to be living in Cabramatta. Sister Williams was discharged from the Australian Army Nursing Service and returned to Australia on 31 March 1919.

She was recorded as a mental nurse on the Nurses' Registration Board, Register of general nurses as of 2 September 1926 in Cabramatta. In 1934, in the Australian electoral roll, she is recorded as living on Cabramatta Road in Cabramatta and still working as a nurse.

She died a spinster on 9 February 1961, aged 78, in Manly/Dee Why, NSW. Her will and probate was granted by the Supreme Court of NSW on 12 May 1961 and Supreme Court of Victoria on 4 July 1962. After her death, her niece Mrs H. Wallis donated her original nursing certificates and photographs in 1990 for a display in the Cumberland Hospital museum.

Ruby Buchanan

Caroline Finlay



Sister Ruby Buchanan, nursing sister at the Parramatta Hospital for the Insane, ca. 1907 (Source City of Parramatta Council Local Studies Photograph Collection, LSP00072)

The Parramatta Lunatic Asylum became the Parramatta Hospital for the Insane in 1878, and in 1916 was renamed The Parramatta Mental Hospital. In 1907, when Ruby Buchanan was a nursing sister at the Parramatta Hospital for the Insane, there were many activities provided for the patients' entertainment and emotional well-being. The petty cash expenditure from 1907-1912 shows the entertainment included balls, musicals and picnics.

On the 18 August 1906, 'Patients' concert', *The Cumberland Argus and Fruitgrowers Advocate*, page 4 reported:

"Another of those high-class entertainments by Mr. James R. Dellow was given on Tuesday evening at the Hospital for the Insane, Parramatta North. The Covent of Mercy orchestra played two items admirably."

Included in this evening's entertainment was many types of musical performance, singing and dancing. *The Cumberland Argus* noted that:

"The house got up and just roared its expressions of pleasure", and ended with "Congratulatory salutations to the management".

Parramatta Mental Hospital

Anne Tsang



Dr Eric Sinclair (1860-1925) may have been responsible for the change of name to Parramatta Mental Hospital, which was in use by 1916. Towards the end of the war from 1918, the title of the senior professional administrator in mental health changed to Inspector General of Mental Hospitals (until 1961). Lunatic asylums were designated mental hospitals, although the change of designation did not infer substantially a change of function, but rather the pious hope that a change of name would compensate for the inadequacies of the system.

The Parramatta Mental Hospital was featured in the 1923 Royal Commission on Lunacy Law and Administration. The accommodation for the criminally insane came in for harsh criticism. Its inadequate services and extreme shortage of accommodation for sleeping, a direct result of overcrowding, were also noted.

It was the second largest mental hospital in New South Wales with over patients. Although in years to come the Hospital continued to become smaller as land was consolidated. In January 1931, 48 acres of land on the west side of the Parramatta River were released to the Parramatta Agricultural and Industrial

Society to establish a showground and trotting track—this land became the site of the Westmead Hospital and Children's Hospital in the 1970s. During the interwar period:

- 1920s: Artisans workshops within the Solitary Cell block Enclosure, constructed in the 1920s;
- 1928: A new nurses' home (Nurses' Home No.2) was designed;
- 1934-35: The Central Male Asylum Block was constructed to replace the Male Weatherboard Division buildings; and
- 1935: a Female TB Ward
- Between 1929 and 1932, the rustic stone rubble walls were built on both sides of Fleet Street by patients. The stone was sourced from the quarry, which was later terraced and planted out as a sunken garden. The quarry also contained hard clay tennis courts and a sports field used for hockey and soccer matches.
- Site landscaping was consolidated with no major planting taking place.

During the 1930s the perimeter of the central oval was densely planted and a line of trees stretched along the western side of the Gaol.

Post war additions to the Mental Hospital to accommodate needs and upgrade facilities include the 1948 demolition of Mrs Betts House, which had undergone substantial modifications during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, and replaced with a single storey occupational and staff amenities block (later becoming Glengariff).

- circa 1947-1950: Male Ward 9, Gungarra/Kalindyi;
- 1954: the Sports Pavilion
- 1954: a "sick and inform ward"⁸⁶
- 1955: a mortuary (now Palm House) and
- 1957: a canteen building (now Emily's—ECAV Training Centre).

Winifred Mary Tait

Anne Tsang



No. 2 Australian General Hospital (Source: Australian War Memorial, H18334) First World War No. 2 Australian General Hospital. Winifred Tait is listed as being the last nurse in the second row seated from left to right (Source: Australian War Memorial, H18334)

Winifred Mary Tait was born in 1876 in Goulburn, N.S.W. She was the daughter of Andrew McDonald and Isabel (or sabella/Isobel) McLean (Maclean) Tait of 'Hayfield', Carlingford, N.S.W. She was a trained nurse having graduated from Sydney Hospital. In 1913, she became matron at the Parramatta Hospital for the Insane, succeeding Miss E Grace Newton.

During the war, she enlisted on 25 November 1914, aged 39, having been a member of the Australian Army Nursing Service (AANS) since 1905. She embarked from Melbourne, Victoria on 2 October 1916 as Temporary Matron of No. 2 Section Sea Transport Staff aboard the HMAT Nestor A71[1] During her absence, Sister L. Lynch was acting matron of the then renamed Parramatta Mental Hospital. After she 'put in four years of hard strenuous work with the soldiers in the field', her name was listed on the Mental Hospital, Parramatta 1914-1918 Roll of Honor. Post war, she resumed her position as matron and remained in Parramatta Mental Hospital until 1935.

At a chance Parramatta Mental Hospital nurses' reunion in 1949 at the now demolished Hiawatha guest house on George Street, Parramatta, although not present due to illness, her letter of apology was read out and she was said to be living in Whale Beach. Miss Tait passed away on 9 August 1962, late of Vacluse, N.S.W., aged 86.

Mable Ellen Balmer

Anne Tsang



Nurse Mable Balmer. (Source: State Library of NSW, no: bcp_01637)

Mable Ellen Balmer (also known as 'Mabel') was born on 1 February 1898 in Waihi, New Zealand. In 1912, migrated with her father to Australia. She worked as a nurse at Parramatta Mental Hospital and as of 2 September 1926 was a registered mental nurse at Parramatta (record no. 3502, certificate no. 23/3) under section 10 (1).

In 1924, she took a series of photographs featuring the outside view as well as the interior of the wards of Parramatta Mental Hospital which can be found in the State Library of NSW 'At Work and Play' collection. A few of her photographs capture the life of nurses who worked inside the wards of the Hospital.



Parramatta Mental Hospital. (Source: State Library of NSW, digital order no: bcp_01645)



Parramatta Mental Hospital. (Source: State Library of NSW, bcp_01641)



Interior of ward – Parramatta, NSW. (Source: State Library of NSW, bcp_01640)



Interior of ward – Parramatta, NSW. (Source: State Library of NSW, bcp_01644)

Additional photos showcase her life outside of work with family and friends in the Blue Mountains and life after marriage.



*Blue Mountains, NSW. Front: Alfred Balmer, Elspeth Mackay, Mable Balmer.
(Source: State Library of NSW, 389685)*



*(Left to right): Isabel Phillips, Elspeth Mackay and Mable Balmer in Katoomba, NSW
(Source: State Library of NSW, 389686)*



Thomas and Mable Thompson (nee Balmer) posing with a 1930 Chevrolet in Humelty, near Goulburn, NSW. (Source: State Library of NSW, 389683)

In 1930, she married Thomas James Thompson in Chatswood/ Coonamble, NSW and became stepmother to his children Norma and Edna Thompson. After getting married, she relocated and the Thompsons' lived at 40 Elimatta Street, Reid ACT. Thomas worked as a clerk while Mable was listed as doing home duties according to the Australian Electoral Rolls while raising the family which would go on to include her only child – Patricia Ann Thompson (later Mrs Cornelis Degens of Wollongong, NSW). Thomas passed away on 16 June 1966, aged 88[5]. Mable passed away on 5 May 1984[6], aged 86. She was buried on 17 May 1984 in the Woden Cemetery in the Presbyterian lawn section; subsection B, headstone no. 202 (grave reference L-PR-B-202).

Sarah Ann Perkins

Anne Tsang



Nurse Perkins, Parramatta Charities' Queen 1930 winner.

(Source: Cumberland Argus and Fruitgrowers' Advocate, 13 November 1930, page 2)

Sarah Ann (or Annie) Perkins was trained at Parramatta Hospital as a mental nurse. She was certified (no. 259/2) and registered on the Australian Register of General Nurses on 7 October 1926 (records no. 3945) under Section 10 (1) of the Nurses' Registration Act, 1924.

In 1930, during the Great Depression, Parramatta had a Charities' "Queen" competition following an Ambulance competition. Nurse Perkins who was representing Parramatta Mental Hospital won and was named Queen of Parramatta charity with 48,000 votes (£200). Runner up was Miss Colahan representing Messrs G. A. Bond & Co. with 35, 679 votes and Miss Heckenberg was second runner up representing Messrs. Murray Bro. with 24, 101 votes. A total of £450 was raised.

A crowning ceremony was held at Parramatta Town Hall on the night of Thursday 6 November 1930 with the Parramatta Musical and Dramatic Company staging the event, the Buttonhole Company supplying the costumes, and a first class concert programme. The entertainment ended with a dance.

Parramatta Psychiatric Centre

Anne Tsang and Caroline Finlay



Following the complete reorganisation and modernisation of the Parramatta Mental Hospital, in 1962 the Hospital became known as the Parramatta Psychiatric Centre.

That year also saw the demolition of the circa 1863 built Criminal Lunatic Division after Morisset was designated as the State hospital for the criminally insane, and the start of construction of an admissions unit intended as a geriatric ward. The 1960s also saw a series of medical officers' cottages being constructed along New Street, a swimming pool, tennis court and Bowling Green were also constructed during the decade.

Additions were made to the nurses' home, while a nurses' training school opened at the beginning of 1964. Offering psychiatric nurses' training as well. Clinical experience for the University of Sydney medical students started in 1968. It was responsible for providing care for psychiatric patients with acute psychiatric disorders, as well as specialised services in geriatric psychiatry, psychotherapy, rehabilitation, community placement and drug and alcohol dependency.

A process of integrating men and women experiencing mental illness into shared facilities took place between 1966 and 1971.

In 1972, the large Female Weatherboard Division complex (constructed c1883) was demolished.

In 2008, The Parramatta Psychiatric Centre formed part of Cumberland Hospital and now has responsibility for the assessment and care of patients admitted from the western part of Sydney.

Avis Alma Stretton

Caroline Finlay



Former psychiatric nurse Mrs Avis Stretton, 1987.

(Source: Parramatta Advertiser, 18 February 1987, page 25)

Avis Alma (nee Byron) Stretton was born in 1921 and grew up in rural NSW in Bakara, Menindee. After her schooling, she attended Our Lady of Mercy Commercial College in Parramatta. In June 1941 she successfully completed the Commonwealth Public Service nurses' examination, and then completed her training over the next few years at the Parramatta Mental Hospital. When Avis recalled her time training to be a nurse in an article titled 'Nurse Avis relives her rich memories' in *Parramatta Advertiser* (1987, February 18, p. 25) she said:

"I trained there during the war years and really felt I was doing something to help people who realised they had an illness and were nursed back to good health. The grounds were so peaceful for the patients, many of whom worked in the gardens as therapy. We were their custodians during their periods of illness and saw them as people not as statistics."

On the 18 January 1945 Avis was formally registered as a psychiatric nurse. A few months later on the 20 October 1945 Avis married John Stretton a resident of North Parramatta. They were married at St. Monica's Church, North Parramatta, and the mass was solemnised by the Reverend J. Phelan. John had just returned from serving in the war with the Australian Imperial Force (A.I.F.) 9 Division. After marrying John, Avis left nursing and Parramatta, and moved with John to Gympie, Queensland to raise a family.

Once Avis' children were old enough, she decided to return to nursing at the same hospital where she had trained. Parramatta Mental Hospital was by now called the Parramatta Psychiatric Centre, having changed its name in 1962. Avis went on to work for eighteen years as a Charge Nurse at the Parramatta Psychiatric Centre, retiring on the 23 March 1981. [4] In the years following her retirement she stayed close friends with many of the nurses and was actively involved in the hospital's nurses and other staff reunions.

Avis was a resident of North Parramatta when she died on the 28 November 2009 aged 88. Her service was held in St. Monica's Church (the church where she had formerly been married), on the 4 December 2009, and she was buried at Rookwood Cemetery, Lidcombe.

Cumberland Hospital

Neera Sahni



Cumberland Hospital was renamed in 1983 and the position of the Superintendent of Nursing was changed to Director of Nursing. That same year, saw the release of the *Inquiry into Health Services for the Psychiatrically Ill and Developmentally Disabled* (also known as the *Richmond Report*) by David Richmond. The report focused on deinstitutionalisation and integrating community-based care networks. Some of the recommended reforms to mental health facilities included:

- Downsizing of (and closure of some) psychiatric hospitals in favour of more community based care. The mental health services at Rydalmere Hospital was closed in mid 1986 and amalgamated with Cumberland Hospital;
- Subsequent asset realisation of surplus land created from hospital downsizing to fund community based care;
- Removal of public servant status from staff, making them employees of the Area Health Boards;
- Increase in hospital fees for patients;
- That all acute psychiatric admission services be located in general public hospitals and that existing psychiatric acute services should be either relocated in general hospitals or be administered from a general hospital

- Changes to employment arrangements, and culture of those providing that care. The health services landscape of the early to mid-1980s was fraught with conflict – the movement of acute beds to Sydney's west, closure and rationalisation of some central city hospitals, the bitter dispute with the procedural specialists over Medicare and, of course, the Richmond Report.

In this environment, this led to prolonged and widespread industrial actions taken by mental health care workers including staff at Cumberland Hospital.

In 1988, The Barclay report by Dr. William Barclay, chair of the the Ministerial Implementation Committee on Mental Health and Developmental Disability produced a report for the the Minister for Health advocating for a balance between community and hospital services

In 1993, the first Australian human rights commissioner Brian Burdekin released the National Inquiry into the Human Rights of People with Mental Illness report (or *Burdekin Report*). It drew international attention to the poor conditions that exist for people with mental health conditions in Australia.

In February 1999, after six successive reports on progress for the National Mental Health Strategy, the Parramatta Rally 'A Fair Go for Consumers' campaign was organised at the Parramatta Town Hall to raise awareness of the funding gap for community mental health non-government organisation's in NSW.

In a 2002 report by the NSW Legislative Council's select committee on mental health, Brian Pezzutti highlighted a need for stronger governance to protect the needs of people with mental health problems within the wider health system

Today, Cumberland Hospital is under the management of the Western Sydney Local Health District (WSLHD). The building and surrounds are listed under the Heritage and National Trust.

For more stories on the history of the Cumberland Hospital precinct, see:

- <http://arc.parracity.nsw.gov.au/home/projects/cumberland-hospital-female-factory-precinct-1792-1983/>
- Forgotten Garden Precinct
<http://arc.parracity.nsw.gov.au/blog/2015/08/12/cumberland-hospital-forgotten-garden-precinct/>

Margaret Mary Davies Bannister

Caroline Finlay



Margaret Bannister. (Source: The Pulse, 5 March 2018)

Margaret Bannister was a Mental Health Service nurse unit manager in the Western Sydney Local Health District's (WSLHD) mental health service at Cumberland Hospital, located in Westmead. Margaret commenced working with WSLHD in January 1990 and dedicated the next 28 years of her life helping patients recover from mental illness. [1] Her tireless commitment to nursing and the local community not only brought her the highest level of respect and admiration but also endeared her to both the patients and fellow staff.

Margaret was born in Scotland on the 15 March 1947, and passed away on the 27 February 2018 aged 70 years. At the time of her death WSLHD mental health director of nursing Charles MacMillan said in 'Farewell Margaret Bannister', *The Pulse, Your Western Sydney Health News* (2018, March 5):

"Margaret's commitment and dedication to patient care was exemplary as was her dedication to the Wistaria Fete. We will all miss her".

In addition to nursing, Margaret was also the President of the Wistaria Fete from 1991 to 2017. The Wistaria Fete or 'Festival' which began in 1929, is held on the Cumberland Hospital grounds in September every year when the flowers bloom. It attracts thousands of people who are able to walk through the beautiful gardens and inspect the mental health museum. The Fete raises money, which is used to support services for the rehabilitation of the mental health patients. When asked about the Fete Margaret for the article 'Spring has sprung, time for a fete', *Parramatta Sun* (14 September 2011):

"This is the major fund-raiser for the hospital and all the money raised will go to patient care, personal items and Christmas presents. This is one way of letting people have an inside look at an institution to try to de-stigmatise mental health. It's about breaking down the barriers and encouraging the community to feel safe."

She also loved the gardens saying of the Wisteria flower in 'Blooming good springtime at Wisteria Festival' (*Parramatta Advertiser*, 19 September 2012, page 5):

"It's a beautiful flower. All you see is a blaze of lilac along with the cherry blossoms and other flowers. It's like Mother Nature's canvas of springtime."

Margaret also believed in the importance of the museum showing the history of mental illness, stating in an interview for the article 'Cumberland Hospital Museum charts history of mental health treatment'. (*The Daily Telegraph*, 21 November 2015):

"You have got to remember they didn't have the medication or treatment they have now. I think it's good to learn about the history, not just of the hospital, but of the treatment and how it's evolved into what it is today. I think it's important to understand why nursing staff advocate for patient rights because this is where they start from."

Parramatta District Hospital

Anne Tsang



Steps of the Parramatta Justice Precinct, former Parramatta District Hospital at 160 Marsden Street, Parramatta acknowledging the history of the site. (Source: Anne Tsang)

The present Parramatta Justice Precinct at 160 Marsden Street, Parramatta was the former site of The Parramatta District Hospital (1897-1943), as well as the former site of the Convict Hospital and used the same buildings the second convict hospital (1792-1818) and John Watts' third convict hospital (1818-1840s), except for the 1870s kitchen/laundry, and later was part of The Sulman Power Hospital or the fourth hospital (1890s-1999). Surrounding buildings include Brislington built on lot 98 circa 1820 by emancipist convict John Hodges on George Street and Jeffery House.

The official closing of the Colonial Hospital on 31 March 1848, and its reopening as the public Parramatta District Hospital in June – partially funded by the government, private contributions and patient fees – brought to an end an era of convict health care that all began in a tent hospital by the Parramatta riverside in 1789. It was through Parramatta locals who petitioned Governor Charles Fitzroy who granted their request on 6 May 1848 that the hospital henceforth served the community as a public hospital. But it would be decades before sufficient funds were available for the public hospital to completely shed

its former convict visage of barred windows and to acquire newly painted walls, decorative garden tiles and welcoming flower-filled gardens.

Formal education for nurses in the Parramatta District Hospital was first recorded in 1897 when at a meeting, the Honorary Medical Officers agreed to give instructions to nurses in medical and surgical subjects. Examinations were to be held and certificates issued. The syllabus introduced by the New South Wales Nurses' Registration Board was followed closely at Parramatta and the number of lecture hours allotted to each subject was adhered to quite rigidly. In the early years at Parramatta Hospital, Matron, or Deputy, was responsible for nurse education. Later, a Tutor Sister was appointed but she always had to carry out general duties in addition to her responsibilities in regard to nurse education.

A new Parramatta District Hospital building, ground and three upper floors, was planned in 1938 and officially opened by the then Minister for Health Mr. C. A. Kelly on 3 November 1943. Dr. Leslie Philip H. Jeffery was appointed the first Medical Superintendent in 1943.

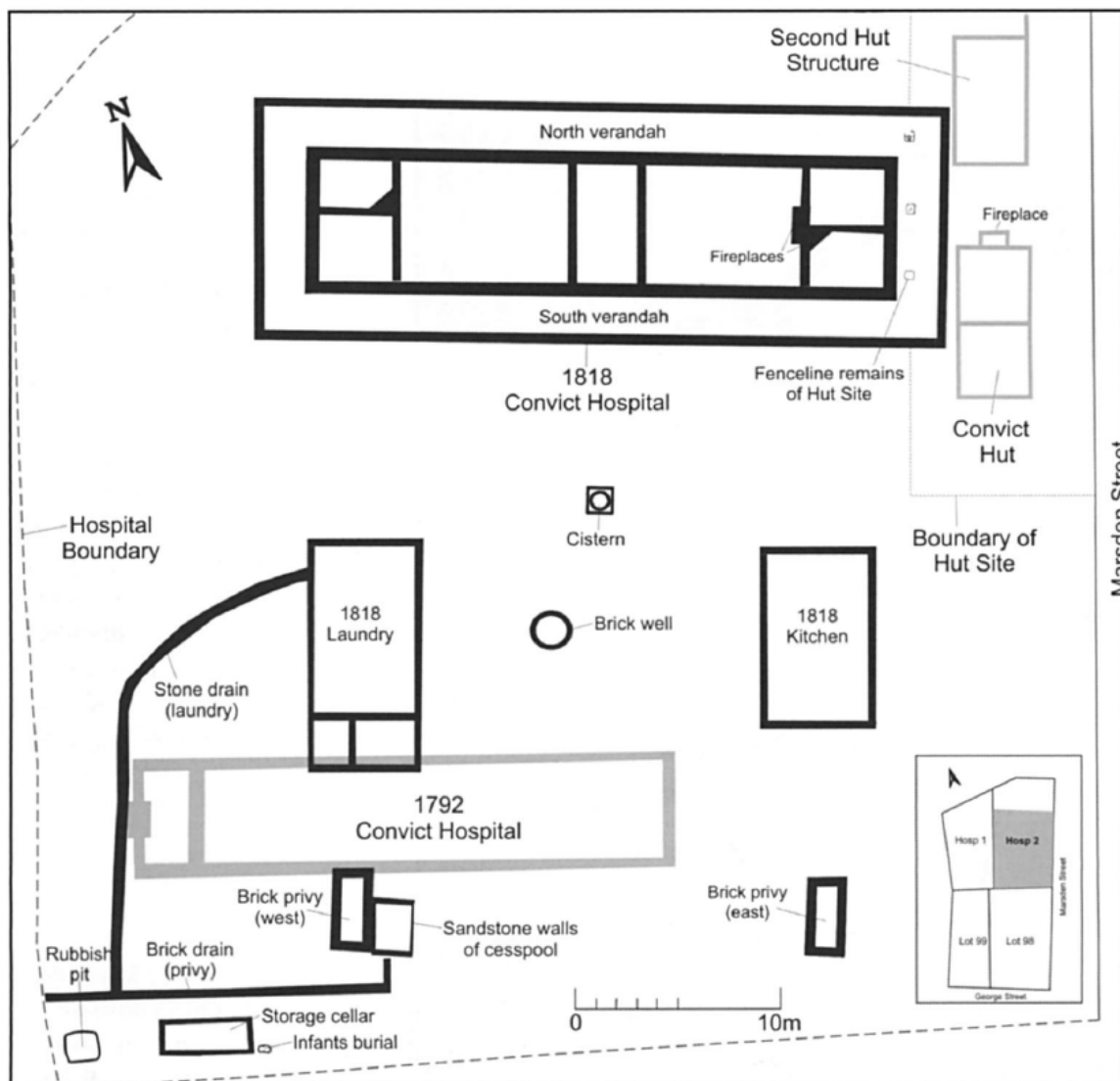
Staff shortages during the war years prevented the opening of all available beds. By June 1948, the staff had been increased to 92, and 126 beds were in use. The increased staff allowed working hours to be reduced and conditions to be generally improved.

In 1954, the Maternity Unit was opened on the third floor of the Hospital with 17 beds, 2 labour wards and a nursery. This was after many years of advocacy by Womens' organisations and prominent citizens of the lack of a major maternity facility in the area inspite of several private hospitals in and around Parramatta. In 1956, the Unit was moved to a new single storeyed building on the western boundary of the Hospital. It comprised three wings: two for post-natal wards and one for admission, preparation, 2 bed induction room, 3 labour rooms and an operating theatre and sterilising room. That year, with the introduction of the new nursing syllabus it became evident that a full time tutor would have to be appointed in order to cope with the greatly increased study programme. Miss J. Nash, a Parramatta Graduate, was appointed to the position.

In 1958, as the Maternity Unit became well established and the first training School for nurses commenced. Changes in nurses' training and Awards resulted in Parramatta District Hospital taking part in the inaugural 1972 Regional School for Midwifery Training was formed with Auburn, Bankstown and Blacktown Shire. Overall, 240 pupil midwives have so far completed their training at The Parramatta Hospital Maternity Unit, many having first obtained their General

Nursing Certificates at the Hospital and the others at hospitals in various parts of Australia. Several students had also come to Parramatta Hospital from overseas. They have all contributed to the development of the Unit and are nurses The Parramatta Hospital is proud to acknowledge.

In 1974, when Parramatta District Hospital was renamed to Parramatta Hospital to reflect the growth and expansion of the City, formal training recommenced within the Hospital.



Plan of the hospital area and the main structures from the second convict hospital, 1792-1818 (in grey) and third convict hospital, 1818-c1844 (in black).

(Source: Casey & Lowe)

In the 2000s as part of the Parramatta Justice Precinct development, the NSW heritage listed Parramatta Hospital Archaeological Site (as of 2 April 1999) was excavated. The archaeological remains were incorporated into the public courtyard. Through a variety of media including planting, paving, graphics, the

reconstruction of boundary walls and two pavilion buildings. The two pavilions were established to house exhibits, interpretation panels, in-situ relics and other aspects of the site were capped with a protective slab. The location and size of the pavilions represent the earlier buildings - second hospital and convict hut, the third Colonial Hospital and kitchen (1818-1844) and offer a place to house exhibits, interpretation panels and in-situ relics. The project won an Architects Australia Award for heritage work in 2008 and now presents a significant educational experience.

Parramatta District Hospital Nurses

The first nursing staff employed by the Parramatta District Hospital were generally untrained and in some cases illiterate. It was only from 1876 that the office of the Matron position was to be appointed to a fully trained nurse and that honour was to go to the lady recommended by Lucy Osburn (also spelt Osborne) after a request from the Committee of Management of Parramatta District Hospital.

Miss Lucy Osburn (1836-1891) was head nurse at the Sydney Hospital and its first Lady Superintendent. She arrived in Sydney in 1868 as one of the six nurses Florence Nightingale had trained in England and sent out to the Colony of New South Wales to set up a nurse training school at the Sydney Infirmary at the request of Sir Henry Parkes.

Lady Superintendent Osburn choose Emily Pearson.

Emily Pearson

Anne Tsang



Lucy Osburn and 21 nursing staff outside the Sydney Hospital, Nightingale Wing in 1870 (Source: The Australian Women's Weekly courtesy of Sydney Hospital)

Emily Pearson was one of first generation of trained nurses in Australia under the Florence Nightingale plan/fund appointed to the position of Matron on 1 March 1876 at a salary of £6.5.0 per month plus board and aparyments. According to the Register of Nurses courtesy of the Sydney Hospital, Mrs Pearson was at the time a 33 years old widow with two children (one in the Randwick Asylum). She was a native of New South Wales, and had not previously been in service. Her deceased husband had a hairdressing shop. She was also Roman Catholic and came as a probationer on 24 October 1871. Her new positioned allowed her children to live with her.

During Mrs Pearson matronage, she made many improvements to the Hospital including in May seeking the Committee to buy cooking utensils, furniture and other items sadly lacking at the Hospital; introducing entirely new attitudes in the proper care and management of the sick. Her humanising effect on the Institution, led to a donation of books, vases, a watering can for the hospital garden and an American easy chair in November 1876. The hospital was cleaned

and painted, new bathrooms, pantries, flower gardens and fencing were erected, and at the 1877 annual general meeting, more power to suspend any employee found guilty of misconduct or neglect of duty was given to the matron that by 31 October that year was known as the Superintendent.

In 1879, she re-married George Hope in Paddington and was expecting. Unsatisfied with her decision to put a Mrs Lee in charge while she recovered from giving birth to a daughter without notifying or sanction of the Executive Committee, in January 1880, she lost her appointment at Parramatta and made to resign.

She was replaced by Miss Anne Anderson (c.1832-1887), another efficient and devoted nurse trained under Osburn and recommended for the position of Superintendent/Matron. She was described in *The Cumberland Mercury* (15 October 1887, page 2) as:

"A more devoted nurse never entered the walls of an institution, and she remained there till failing health compelled her to retire. It is no exaggeration to say that this devoted lady considerably shortened her life by the manner in which she worked, day and night."

On 1 January 1881, Miss Osburn gave Mrs Hope (the former Mrs Pearson) the appointment of Matron of Mudgee Hospital. According to former Mudgee Hospital doctor and returning to Parramatta Hospital doctor Dr. Charles Rowling, he observed that Matron Pearson had made many improvements at Mudgee in its design, management and raised its hospital standards even higher.

Florence Mary Greenwood

Caroline Finlay



Staff at Parramatta District Hospital, c. 1890

Back row (standing left to right): Lewis (wardsman), Hannah Woodlands (cook), Nurse Murrell, Dr. Phillips, Nurse Pane and Jessie (the housemaid).

Second row (seated): Dr. Walter Sigismund Brown, Doctor Isaac Waugh, Matron Florence Greenwood, Doctor Walter Brown and Doctor Reginald Bowman.

Front row (on floor): Nurse Hill and Nurse McLaren

(Source: City of Parramatta Council Local Studies Photograph Collection, LSP00098)

Florence was born in 1866 in Hampstead, Middlesex England as the youngest daughter of the London based solicitor George Wright Greenwood. She was appointed Matron at Parramatta Hospital on the 10 June 1890 following the resignation of Matron Budd in May of that year. The position of Matron was held until her resignation on 7 December 1891, when she was replaced by Matron Lee.

Whilst acting as Matron at Parramatta Hospital there was a severe economic depression in Australia that lasted between 1890-1893, which resulted in severe budgetary conditions at the Hospital. In the 1892 Annual Report, Matron Greenway was praised for having reduced the dispensary drug bill considerably.

Upon her resignation, the appreciation for her diligence, care and skill is evident in the address from her fellow staff:

On this, the eve of your resigning the matronship of the Parramatta District Hospital, it is with feelings of sincere regret that we bid you adieu. During your regime, your many acts of kindness have endeared you to us all: and in parting from you a sincere and true friend. We feel that we cannot allow you to leave the walls of the Hospital without some slight token of our love and esteem for you.

Florence Greenwood became Florence Macallister when she married Doctor John Francis Macallister on April 6, 1892, at St. Philips Church Sydney. They were married by the Reverend J.D. Langley. Macallister is often misspelt McAllister and McAlister. Unfortunately not long after their marriage John died in 1899. Florence never remarried. Her bereavement was documented in the Parramatta Hospital monthly meeting minutes where on the motion of the chairman all present offered their condolences.

Florence died on the 22 June 1914 in Stanmore, Sydney, leaving behind her only son Keith Macallister. Keith at this time was reportedly studying to enter the medical profession. *The Cumberland Argus'* obituary noted that Florence had trained at Prince Alfred Hospital and that she was held in very high esteem as both a nurse and administrator. The tribute continues:

It was under her that Parramatta District Hospital started first as a training school for nurses, and under her Nurses McLaren, Hill and Kinneally (the latter now Mrs Wade, wife of Constable Wade, trained). She left the Hospital to be married to Doctor Macallister, who after filling the position of Medical Superintendent of Prince Alfred Hospital started practice in Stanmore where he died a few years afterwards. Mrs Macallister then took up nursing again, and for several years filled the post of Matron of the Newcastle Hospital, which institution she left a few months ago, when she received a splendid testimonial from the citizens, in recognition of her good work.

Eileen Corderoy

Anne Tsang



*Matron E. Corderoy. Photo by Howard Harris, Parramatta.
(Source: Cumberland Argus and Fruitgrowers Advocates)*

Eileen Tildsley Corderoy was born in 1891 in the district of Petersham, N.S.W. to parents Sydney Ernest and Georgina Kate Corderoy (later of Manly, N.S.W.). Her family was said to be a well known in Parramatta with links to former Parramatta Alderman Frederick George Allen, a well-known builder.

Eileen was trained at Parramatta district hospital as a nurse, entering as a probationer in February 1914. After 18 years of service, she has the distinct honour of being the first Parramatta Hospital Graduate Nurse to be appointed Matron in May 1932 after the resignation of Matron Viola Bellamy Morse, after 13 years of service. This was a milestone in the nursing history of the Hospital. She received a salary of £200 per annum.

Under the leadership of Matron Corderoy, many significant improvements were achieved at Parramatta Hospital including:

- the construction from 20 April 1933 to completion in 1934 of a new children's ward with 18 beds for children up to the age of seven. Named the 'Fairfield Ward', it was officially opened on 30 January 1935 by the then Minister of Health Hon. R. D. Weaver. The name of the ward was in acknowledgment of the £1,500 contributed by the Fairfield district in 1925 and total donations raised by a special committee for the ward amounted to £4,026/12/6;
- Opening of a new Outpatients Department in 1933 (near the present Accident and Emergency Centre Casualty Room). The Department included a Waiting Room, a Doctor's Consultation Room, a Plaster Room and a small office;
- installation of new X-ray equipment in 1936, replacing equipment that had been in use since 1925;
- lectured on practical nursing procedures and hygiene;
- administered rules registered nurses had to abide by according to the N.S.W. Nurses' Association;
- organised fortnightly dances in the Nurses' Home as the President of the Hospital Ball Organising Committee for nurses and aoldiers from the Wallgrove Camp during the Second World War.

After 27 years of service at the Parramatta District Hospital, she resigned in August 1941 from her position as matron to marry Frank Readett (also spelt Reddett) of Crookwell on 13 September 1941 at the Congregational Church, Mosman.

On 10 June 1973, Mrs Readett passed away, aged 82. She was a late resident of Sydney Road, Fairlight and formerly Kandos, N.S.W.

Matron Rutter

Emma Stockburn



(Source: Caring for convicts and the community, page 45)

In 1876 Parramatta District Hospital came under the management of a trained nurse. They took the title of Matron. One of the longest serving Matrons at the hospital was Matron Rutter. Miss Rutter was appointed in June/July 1894 and from that first year the hospital, which had been in some financial difficulty began to improve. Matron Rutter in her first few years as Matron improved the hospitals financial standing as well as over seeing an increase in patients and the construction of new hospital buildings.

Miss Rutter held her position at the Parramatta District Hospital until 1913. On her leaving of the position many highly complementary things were said of her.

Mayor Jago spoke of how Matron Rutter had overseen Parramatta District Hospital from a small institution to one of the best in Australia. She had the

"gained the esteem and good-will of the whole of the people of the district, and She had made it plain to all that no labour was ever too great for her to render to the practice of her profession and embracing work the noblest that could be rendered to mankind".

After her time at Parramatta Hospital, Miss Rutter became Matron at the Carrington Convalesce Home. Here she looked after over 120 patients as well as a working orchard and piggery.



Some of the Committee of and staff of the Parramatta District Hospital, 1899.

Back Row: Mr. A. E. Marsden (treasurer), Mr. T. D. Little (secretary), Mr. G. T. Erby, Mr. H. Mason, Mr. W. Muston, Mr. J. Bogus, Mr. P. Morgan.

Middle Row: Dr. W. S. Brown, Archdeacon Guntlier (Vice President), Dr. Kearney (President), Dr. Reginald Bowman, Dr. E. Cutlibort Hall, Mr. W. Swann (Vice President).

Front Row: Matron Butter, Nurse Dawson, Nurse E. Faber. Nurse Mary Faber, Nurse Raphael, Head Nurse Harrington.

(Source: Caring for convicts and the community, page 47 ; Cumberland Argus and Fruitgrowers Advocate, 18 December 1907, page 21).

Rose Butler

Anne Tsang



(Source: Graduate Nurses' Association of the Parramatta District Hospital)

In 1918, Rose Butler joined the staff of the Parramatta District Hospital as a probationer. Butler was the third daughter of William and Maria Butler, pioneer residents of Barmedman and Wyalong, N.S.W. Wyalong, being the place where she grew up and had a highly successful musical career after her family moved there during the outbreak of the Wyalong goldfield. She was described as being tall, fair, reserved and very conscientious person.

She was Theatre Sister for nine years and was a popular nurse along with Sisters Lilian Smairl and Eileen Corderoy as described in 'The Three Graces', *The Cumberland Argus and Fruitgrowers Advocate* (31 January 1929, page 14). In August 1941, she became the second Parramatta Graduate to become Matron after the resignation of Matron Corderoy. A highly esteemed and respected matron, she devoted 26 years of her life to the Hospital.



AMONG THE BLOOMS.—Snap taken on Saturday last of portion of Mr. "Harry" Davies' rose garden in Crown-street, Harris Park. From the left are Mrs. J. H. Davies, Miss Rose Butler (of Parramatta District Hospital), and Mr. J. H. Davies is in the background operating the hose.

(Source: *The Cumberland Argus and Fruitgrowers Advocate*, 26 October 1933, p. 25)

Sadly, on her return trip from a holiday visit in Melbourne, Victoria, she collapsed and died on the Albury Railway Station on Monday night 7 May 1945. Her sudden death was a blow to all that knew her. During her funeral cortege to the Crematorium, a guard of honour was formed by about 70 sisters and nurses, doctors and members of the public lined the streets of Parramatta as a tribute to her. On 2 November 1946, a memorial electric clock was unveiled by Reverend Edward Walker of All Saints Church at the Nurses' Home, Parramatta Hospital in memory of the late Matron Rose Butler.

Edith White

Anne Tsang



Matron White (Source: Cumberland Area Health Service)

*"A love of children began the career of Parramatta's "Florence Nightingale"
Matron Edith White."*

Miss White was born in Wollongong, N.S.W., the eldest daughter in a family of 4 girls and 1 boy. At the age of 19, after graduating from PLC Croydon, she started her career in nursing as a trainee nurse at Camperdown Children's Hospital. After four years' training at the Royal Alexandra Hospital for Children, she went to the Royal Hospital for Women, Paddington, and studied obstetrics.

During her appointment at Parramatta Hospital, in 1935, she was Sister-in-Charge of the newly established Children's Ward, and later she was promoted to deputy matron and Sister-in-Charge of the Operating Theatres. The sudden death of Matron Rose Butler in 1945, shocked hospital authorities asked Sister White to step into the role as Acting Matron. In 1946, she was officially appointed Matron and she would go on for another 21 years to become the longest serving Matron at Parramatta Hospital until under Government legislation, Matron

White retired at the age of 65 on 27 March 1966. Post retirement, she re-established a private nursing practice.



*Matron White with one of her small charges in the grounds of Parramatta Hospital.
(Source: Ross Thompson & The Cumberland Argus)*

Betty Schofield

Caroline Finlay



Betty Margaret Schofield, Parramatta's Woman of the Year, 1975. (Source: Women of Parramatta)

Betty Margaret Schofield was a Matron and Director of Nursing at Parramatta Hospital for almost twenty years from February 1966 to 1981. Born in 1920, Betty graduated in nursing from the Royal Prince Alfred Hospital in 1942, and attained significant nursing qualifications throughout her career including being a Fellow of the New South Wales College of Nursing and a member of the New South Wales Nurses' Registration Board. She also held executive positions on various committees relating to nursing and administration. Betty also completed a post-basic certificate in ear, nose and throat nursing at the National Hospital in London and was a registered Midwifery Nurse and Registered Mothercraft Nurse.

Many innovations occurred under Betty's leadership at Parramatta Hospital. One was the introduction of the Pink Ladies' Auxillary, which enabled volunteers to offer their services towards the care of patients. Another was the Candy Strippers, who were people that were able to work in Parramatta Hospital for a short time so that they could decide if nursing was the career that they imagined it to be.

A significant moment in Betty's career as a nurse was the Granville rail disaster, which remains New South Wales' worst rail disaster. On the morning of the 18 January 1977, eight-three people were killed and 210 injured when the Mount Victoria to Central train ran into the supports of the overhead bridge, resulting in the bridge collapsing onto the carriages. Mr N. Gilbert, Chairman of the Parramatta Hospital Board during 1977 recorded the following:

On being informed of the Granville Rail Disaster, senior officers immediately dispatched the hospital Emergency Disaster Team to the site... Meanwhile, at the hospital, every off-duty nurse and doctor had reported for duty and numerous local doctors offered assistance. Truck loads of pharmaceutical equipment arrived unrequested from the drug companies. Wards were cleared in preparation for the influx of the injured and a triage nurse was placed in the Accident and Emergency Department to classify the injured and to arrange for some of them to be transported to other hospitals. As co-leaders on this occasion, the Director of Nursing, Miss Schofield and Medical Superintendent Dr Cable, deserve great credit. The staff's effort was magnificent. They were an extremely well organised highly disciplined team and there was absolutely no panic.

In addition to her significant nursing career, Betty also dedicated herself to over 40 years' of volunteer work. This included serving on the City of Parramatta Council's Arts Advisory, Heritage Advisory and Physical Access Advisory Committees. This community service was recognised, and in 1975 Betty was chosen to be Parramatta's Woman of the Year. In 1977, she also received an Order of Australia Medal and Queen's Jubilee Medal for her contribution to the community.

On the 17 January 2000, Betty Schofield died and was buried at the Woronora Memorial Park in Sutherland, Sydney.

John Alexander McDonald

Caroline Finlay



Parramatta District Hospital Nursing Staff, 1948.

(Source: A History of Nursing in Parramatta)

This photograph shows the Parramatta District Hospital staff in 1948. Seated on chairs from left to right are Nurses Walsh, Ashmeade, Faulkner, Graham, McMurtrie, McDonald, Flack, Midgeley, Gunther and Woodcock. Standing from left to right are Nurses Watkins, Keep, Kingston, Duff, Stoddart, Ford, Sylvester, Jones, Morrow, Nayger, Sullivan, Siggs, Laney, Hold, Sheehan, Forrest, Hause and Hunter.

John Alexander McDonald (also spelt MacDonald), who was born in 1923, successfully passed his final General Nursing Certificate Examinations at Parramatta District Hospital in July 1951, making him a fully qualified staff nurse. John's official date of registration is 13 September 1951. Another male nurse George Conley, alongside Monica Duff, Catherine Sheehan, June Forsstrom, Betty Midgley, Beth Forrest, Jean Trotter and Joalla Fitzgerald also successfully passed their final General Nursing Certificate Examinations at Parramatta District Hospital at the same time.

The Cumberland Argus and Fruitgrowers Advocate (1951, May 31, page 12) reported a few months earlier that:

Nine trainees of the Parramatta District Hospital who sat for their final examinations yesterday last night entertained the matron, Matron F.M. White,

at dinner at the Commodore restaurant. The trainees include two men. One of them John McDonald, of Valley Heights, became engaged to another trainee, Miss Kathleen (Catherine) Sheehan, of Rosehill, during the four-year course.

John McDonald and Catherine Sheehan were married in Parramatta in 1951.

1948 was an important year in Parramatta District Hospital's history as it marked 100 years of serving as a civilian hospital. The year also saw a rise in staffing and beds available for the community, which had been in short supply during the recent world war. By June 1948 staff had been increased to 92, and 126 beds were in use. The increase in staffing allowed working hours to be reduced and conditions to be improved (Graduate Nurses' Association, 197?, pages 33-34).

John Alexander and Catherine McDonald are registered in the 1968 -1980 New South Wales' electoral rolls as living in Cranebrook, a suburb of Great Western Sydney. Throughout this entire period John has his occupation registered as being a nurse, whereas Catherine is registered as performing home duties.

John died on the 22 July 1993 at the age of 70. A Mass of Christian Burial was celebrated at St. Nicholas of Myra Catholic Church, High Street Penrith, and he is buried in the Springwood General Cemetery family grave. (*The Sydney Morning Herald*, 24 July 1993, page 151)

Brislington Medical and Nursing Museum

Neera Sahni



Brislington, north west corner of George and Marsden Streets, Parramatta, view of a ceremony with military figures conducted in front of house, from a sketch, 1860 (Source: Local Studies Photograph Collection – LSP00613)

John Hodges was transported to the colony in 1806, escaped in 1807 but was recaptured in Timor, and returned to Port Jackson. Subsequently, he was pardoned by Governor Lachlan Macquarie and became a land proprietor. In 1821, he was granted a liquor licence.

Early Parramatta history has it that one night, ex-convict John won the sum of £1,000 pounds in a game of euchre at the original Woolpack Hotel, situated on the north/east corner of George and Marsden Streets, in 1821.

The story goes that John, having won the money with the use of the '8 of diamonds' incorporated the '8 of diamond' pattern into a black brick mosaic pattern on the rear wall.



Museum Wall (Source: Anne Tsang 2020)

This pattern still remains and can be easily seen. The building is a solid dark brown brick residence set well back on a large raised block of land in about 1¼ acres. The entrance being central opposite the small front gate. A very large fig tree shades the dwelling on the southern side. The roof was of galvanised iron, above which brick chimneys appeared towards the rear. A surrounding fence comprised of white painted wooden tapered pickets. The residence comprised of four rooms downstairs and four upstairs, approached by a wooden interior staircase. The floors are of solid wood. The outhouses, kitchen and pantry, servants' quarters and bedrooms, a four stall stable and coach house, and a private water supply from a small well, (one of the first in the town) have all been subsequently demolished. Later a verandah was added on the southern side, replacing the original entrance.

When Hodges was found guilty of stealing stones from the Government Quarry amongst other misdemeanours, he was forced to sell the property. The following advertisement appeared in *The Sydney Gazette* on 14th April 1825 (page 4):

TO be SOLD by PRIVATE CONTRACT, a large and commodious Two-story BRICK BUILDING, situate in George-street, Parramatta, next door to Mr. NASH's. It comprises four rooms on each floor, with a variety of out-houses, consisting of kitchen and pantry, two servants' bedrooms, a four-stall stable and coach-house; and possessing other conveniences, with one of the first wells of water in the Town. The House is newly built, and the site on which it stands, comprising the garden, is near one and a quarter acre; stands most eligibly for Business, and is secured by a perpetual Grant, and can be viewed any Day.

ALSO, that desirable FARM, situate at the Seven-hills, and known by the Name of ELLIOT'S FARM. It comprises one hundred acres, the greatest part of which is cleared, and is now in cultivation, and well supplied with water in the driest seasons. There is a good House and Barn, with convenient out-houses and paddock. Payment; one-half of the purchase money down, and the other half will be made agreeable to the Purchaser, at a reasonable limit of Credit.---Application, in both the above instances, is to be made to JOHN HODGES, Proprietor, from whom further Particulars may be had.

The property was purchased by Sir Wigram Allen in about 1840. He later sold it to a Dr. W. S. Brown, a Medical Practitioner in 1857, whose son followed in 1888, and subsequently his grandson, Dr. K. S. Macarthur-Brown who also practiced medicine, while residing in Brislington.

During the mid-1960 the dwelling was utilised by the State Government as a nurses home for the nearby Parramatta Hospital.

Brislington is the oldest two-storey residence within the city limits of Parramatta. The property has been recognised as being of historical significance due to its association with notable people, playing a major role of colonial and state government in Parramatta. It was resumed by the New South Wales Government who, after letters and requests, finally restored it in the late 1990's to its former glory.

The Medical & Nursing Museum was put together in November 1983 in response to Parramatta Council's request to have a display on medicine. The Board of Directors made funds available for the establishment of the display, and members of the Graduate Nurses Association and other interested locals have been volunteer workers and guides for 30 years.

Brislington Medical and Nursing Museum pays tribute to a by-gone era, shows a "then", and "now" picture of Medical Science and Hospital Care in Parramatta.

Timeline of Brislington Hospital

1819	Ex-convict John Hodges purchases land where Brislington House now stands. Hodges wins £1,000 in card game at Woolpack Hotel.
1820	Construction of the two-storey house is commenced.
1821	The house is completed.
1825	Hodges advertises the house for sale, "a large commodious two storey red brick building comprising four rooms on each floor with a variety of outhouses".
1840	Sir George Wigram Allen purchases the house and property.
1851	Thomas Robertson resides in the house.
1857	Local Doctor Walter Brown purchases Brislington House from Sir George Allen. Dr. Brown names the house, "Brislington", after the suburb in Bristol, England. The Port Jackson Fig tree on the property was there when brown moved in.
1858	Dr. Brown marries Sigismunda, and they set-up a doctors' surgery in a down-stair front room.
1889	Dr. Walter Sigismund Brown (second son of Walter Dr. Brown) marries Margret Macarthur and they take over the Brislington House residence and practice.
1890	Keith Sigismund Macarthur Brown, (son of Walter and Margret) is born at Brislington House.
1897	Dr. Brown dies, wife passes away in 1903.
1915	Dr. Keith Macarthur Brown graduate from Sydney University Medical School.
1916	Dr. K. Macarthur Brown marries Ayesha Borthwick and they reside in Brislington.
1919	Dr. Keith Macarthur Brown after active service with the A.I.F. returns to Brislington as Dr. K. S. Macarthur Brown.
1947	The Brown family, still in residence, are informed that the Parramatta Hospital will be resuming Brislington for expansion after 92 years of family occupation.
1949	Brislington House becomes part of the Parramatta Hospital, nurses quarters.
1970	White ants and borers create major damage. Plans to demolish the structure are considered.
1977	An estimated \$40,000 to 50,000 would be necessary to restore the building.
1983	The Heritage Council issues a "preservation order" on Brislington.
1990's	Brislington is saved and is utilised as a Medical and Nursing Museum.

Doreen Hennesy

Neera Sahni



Sister Doreen Hennesy (Source: Clipping from her interview)

Sister Doreen Hennesy's experience and 20 year journey of Cardiac Rehabilitation in Western Sydney. She was working as a nurse in Westmead Hospital. This interview was recorded in early 1990s and can be viewed online via <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vF5k3HZz6Tg&t=35s>

A 20 year journey of Cardiac Rehabilitation in Western Sydney

Cardiac disease affects many Australians each year. Before the seventies, the condition, for most, spelt the end of a productive life. Today, with the advances of medicines, surgical techniques, monitoring and cardiac rehabilitation the disease is under far greater degree of control.

Cardiac Facts:

Australia has one of the highest incidents of cardiac disease worldwide. New South Wales is ten percent higher than the national average and Western Sydney twenty percent higher than State average. Western Sydney is referred to by some, as the 'Cardiac Capital of the World'.

Towards the end of the seventies, Parramatta Hospital was to develop revolutionary cardiac rehabilitation program that was to change the face of cardiac care. The sister in charge of this unit was Sister Doreen Hennesy

Sister Doreen Hennesy

"I became involved in an era of cardiac treatment when the coronary care unit first came to vogue and this was in the late sixties or early seventies. Prior to this patients were nursed in large medical wards and they were kept in bed for 6 to 8 weeks in the early sixties when I started my training. When a patient got out of bed, they collapsed and mostly died because when you are in bed for 6 to 8 weeks and someone gets you out of bed your heart rate goes up and your blood pressure falls and they obviously go into a shock situation.

In 1972 when I became the Sister-in-Charge of the Coronary Care Unit at Parramatta, cardiac monitoring and this type of thing was very new and exciting and we so conquered the cardiac arrest situation in many ways by treating the arrhythmias and this type of thing. So a lot more patients were living that would of died.

However, they weren't living. They were 'wrapped in cotton wool, they were scared, they were terrified. So I started an education program of the patient while they in hospital, explaining what the heart attack was to them in lay terms.

Dr David Cody who was the honorary director the Unit and I started early ambulation in 1975 where we were getting patients out of bed within 2 days of their admission. This was unheard of! And some people used to look at us as if we were from 'another planet'. A few months after that were found out that the earlier they got up, the quicker they got better. Some of these patients were living in units on the third floor, so I thought well why not? Make them walk up two flights of a stairs before the go home so they know that they will not get the chest pain when they walk up the two flights of stairs to their unit.

So this became a regime. So the patients had to do two flights of stairs without chest pain, their pulse was taken before, their pulse was taken after. So this was a form of cardiac rehabilitation, but it was not documented as such."

In 1977 Sister Hennesy applied for and won a scholarship to study cardiac care in other countries. Whilst in Canada she visited the Cardiac Institute at Edmonton. The institute was supervised by cardiologist Dr Televi and was built by the people of Edmonton with the aim of helping cardiac patients return to a normal life. In the months to follow her return, Sister Hennesy uses this

experience as a model to help set up the cardiac rehabilitation program in Parramatta Hospital

"In the late seventies, in 1978 we exercised the first patient, ten days after an 'infa' (infarction). It was exciting. It was everything that I ever wished to do.

It was also very frightening. Although, I had seen it all working in Canada and knew it was safe, the first patient was exercised in front of doctors from the Heart Foundation, the medical directors and physicians from Parramatta Hospital and I was just there with one bike and a little machine. That first patient did well and lived until 1997.

So within two months, I had about forty patients and I was just one staff. Then it grew and then I got more staff, more patients, at some stage we had 65 patients a day, just in a session in the evening where we used run the cardiac gymnasium. It was also really a lot of fun, the nursing staff did it in their own time and we used the hospital's equipment. Sometimes, we had up to 80 patients in an evening, just coming in skipping rope, bench stepping using some of the equipment, calathletics, all this was done by these cardiac patients".

Twenty Years after the establishment of the Cardiac Program, the original patients met at an anniversary dinner to reminisce, renew acquaintance and share twenty years of life after cardiac treatment.

Patient Testimonials:

"When I had the heart attack, I thought the end of the world had come. With the cooperation of Doreen and the people down there, I realised it wasn't the end of world."

"My thing about the clinic and those day was the confidence it gave you to things that you were never quite sure of."

"It was the single most important thing to make me realise I was not totally useless after the operation. Arrived at the exercise clinic, you have no confidence in yourself at all. They wire you up and put on the treadmill and you realise after walking about 10 minutes, they push you quite hard as well, you realise you are not so totally useless after all there is air left in you."

"Having a heart attack is a very shattering experience. When I started to go to the clinic I got confidence doing the exercises that Doreen recommended. I am very grateful to her for that."

"I think it is a big saviour to people who have had heart attacks and my heartfelt thanks to Doreen and Libby."

Dr Paul Russell, Cardiologist

"I have been in cardiology practice for 20 years and there is no doubt that over that time, I have seen some quite amazing development in the treatment of myocardial infarction and the return to work and normal activities of these patients who previously were likely to have suffered major problems. There is no doubt that over that period of time the incidents of coronary artery disease, the incident of death from coronary artery disease has declined but people still are still suffering quite frequently infarction, unstable angina, requiring admission to hospitals. There is still a strong social and psychological stigma to suffering myocardial infarction, great concern to the patient and the family and the work force. It does not matter if the patient has been in hospital for a sort period time or long period of time, it still takes considerable time and effort to have these people return to their normal levels of activity."

An important feature for treating people with myocardial infarction is try and treat them as early as possible. The earlier the treatment is started, less likely there is be large areas of damaged muscle. As a result, the outlook for the patient is much better, complications less and the chances of the patient returning to a normal lifestyle is that much greater.

The treatment of patient after a heart attack generally involves several procedures. The procedures range from invasive surgery to the use of clot dissolving drugs.

"With the use of thrombolytic drugs, the size of the myocardial infarction has decreased. One of the problems, however, is that with dissolving the clot in the artery which will happen in about 60, 70 per cent of patients there is still the underlying coronary disease. Therefore, the patient would normally have a coronary angiogram, the state of the arteries is assessed and more often then not one finds a culprit artery that is responsible for the infarction that maybe partially narrowed, 60, 70, 80 per cent narrowed. That artery is then opened with a balloon that is passed into the artery and at the site of the plaque, the balloon is inflated, the artery generally improves quite considerably with the positioning the balloon. The treatment now, is generally not only to perform the balloon but also to place a stent in that artery. It is a small, metal, lattice-like structure which is implanted at the site of the plaque. Results are considerable better with a stent being placed in the artery. The chances of restenosis of the artery are

considerably less in the next six months. It is a very, very effective way of being able to deal with myocardial ischemia following myocardial infarction."

In the angiogram shown here, dyes injected into the blood vessel of the heart, the constriction of the blood vessel can be quite easily seen. Following the angioplasty and the placement of the stent, the flow is restored to the blood vessel.

Dr Hugh Patterson, Cardiac Surgeon

"Ischemic heart disease is a very common condition, particularly in Australia and coronary artery bypass surgery is a very common operation in the management of ischemic disease. The operation for coronary artery surgery itself, we simply get a spare bit of pipe from somewhere in the body, either some vein from the leg or an artery from behind the sternum, the breast bone and we sew that onto the coronary artery before the narrowing and then onto the coronary artery after the narrowing that bypasses the narrowing and so we call it a bypass graft. Because it is the coronary artery we call it a coronary artery bypass graft. We do that for as many narrowing there are".

Stress Tests:

After a cardiac procedure carried out, the stress test will confirm the success or whether other procedures are indicated. The stress tests occur at the direction of the cardiologist. This generally happens three days after release from hospital following an infarction or five to six weeks after bypass surgery

Sister Doreen Hennesy

"This is the ECG machine that keeps a 12-lead ECG on the patient at risk before they start their exercise test. During the exercise test, they are fully monitored on 3 leads throughout the time. The reason this is done is because if the patient has a cardiac problem, the first thing we are looking for is ST segment changes on the ECG on the three lead. As well as that we are looking for arrhythmias. This the treadmill that the patients walk on. We always use the Bruce protocol which is an international protocol that was made up by Bruce from Seattle in the early 70's. The patient starts off walking at a very slow pace. At each 3 minutes, I increase the pace and inclination of the treadmill until the patient reaches his predicated maximum heart rate if it is a diagnostic test or until the patient becomes fatigued or stressed and is just feeling himself I will stop the test.

This is the blood pressure machine which is necessary during a stress test to take blood pressure at rest and each minute during the test. If the patient should develop cardiac symptoms of any kind, their blood drop and the test would be terminated. It is important so I take the blood pressure every minute.

The test is not a pass or fail thing, it is really to see that the patient can cope with exercise levels. If I terminated a test it would be due to hopefully fatigue, but could be ST segment depression on the cardiograph, it could be due to a drop in blood pressure, it could be due to the patient developing chest pain or due to an arrhythmia. If any of things this occur the test is terminated and appropriate steps are taken such as the patient is referred straight to their cardiologist who in turn if the patient had ST segment depression and chest pain at the stress test at any level throughout their program over 2 years, they would be referred to their cardiologist and in turn he would have an angiogram and either an angioplasty, stent or coronary artery bypass. In some cases just be treated with different medication."

After cardiac treatment, depending on the results of the stress test a patients are ready to join the cardiac rehab program.

Margaret Gail Davidson

Caroline Finlay



Margaret Telfer receiving The Rose Butler Award Memorial Prize, Parramatta Psychiatric Centre, 5 June 1972. (Source: Margaret Davidson)

Margaret Gail Davidson is a trained midwife and nurse. She is now a volunteer at Brislington Medical and Nursing Museum. Thank you Margaret for agreeing to share your memories.

Can you tell us about yourself?

I was born Margaret Gail Telfer in 1946 at King George V Hospital in 1946. My older sister Jan was also born in the same hospital in 1944. My mother had lost her first daughter after a prolonged and badly managed delivery. From what my mother told us – the first daughter had severe brain damage, too severe to survive. My father had to arrange to have the baby buried, as mum was still in hospital recovering! Told to go home and forget this episode in her life – that's how it was managed in her day.

Where did you grow up?

My father who was a carpenter and cabinet maker built our house in Rydalmere, which was the third house in the street. It was all bush at Rydalmere when I was 3 or 4 years old. Mum had a son named Stuart five years after my birth who was the joy of her life.

What inspired you to become a nurse and midwife, and were you ever involved in any other professions and why?

We grew up in the area and attended school in the church hall at Dundas whilst our local school was being built. I finished high school at Macarthur Girls High School, and wanted to become a nurse. I had been influenced by our next door neighbour who had been a nurse, and she encouraged me to start my training at Parramatta District Hospital (P.D.H.). My parents were proud that I had chosen this course, which I started on the 13 March 1963. I was at that time a cadet nurse and only 16 ½ years old. I went into lectures with the older nurses and stayed in that unit until I became very anxious about being in charge of the 'Burns unit' on night duty. I resigned from nursing on the 24 March 1965.

I passed the government test for "typing" and became a Repatriation Department Clerk at the King York building in Sydney deciphering medical records from World War One and Two for claims for pensions – quite interesting work. I enjoyed the freedom of not having to work weekends, evening duty and night duty, but missed my old workmates and the atmosphere of being "on-duty". I returned to nursing in 1969! Thus I had to do another 4 years of training at P.D.H., which I was prepared to do as I was now more mature and enjoyed my second bite at nursing.

How do you feel about the education and training that you received?

I was awarded The Rose Butler Award for general proficiency during my training years, plus I earned a credit in my final exams.

Which other hospitals have you worked in?

I had planned to go to England to do my midwifery training, but on arriving in England I met up with a group of girls from P.D.H. and planned to go travelling instead of studying. After having a marvellous time travelling in the summer I was advised to get a job in a large hotel, the Strand Palace Hotel in London. I applied for the position of staff sister when the position became available and I was successful in gaining that position. It meant a private flat overlooking the

Convent Garden's flower market and access to opera and symphony performances. I was on a 12 hour shift in the hotel covering Occupational Health and Safety – checking that the kitchens and the staff and hotel guests' medical attendance were properly supervised.



Margaret Telfer receiving her Midwifery Certificate, 1976. Source: Margaret Davidson

What are your memories of the supervision of the nurses? Was it rigid or hierarchical?

I then came back to Australia to do my midwifery training at P.D.H. after having visited more countries on the way home including Nepal and Indonesia. Back to work at P.D.H. again – first in general nursing as a sister in the wards until the new course for midwifery started in about 3 months. Boy how had things changed – instead of the army discipline regime I had been used to, it was much more liberated for the nurses, even the pay was better! I didn't have to live in the nurses home, and was allowed to live at home. I bought my first car and learnt how to drive – how liberating that was!

What did you feel was the community's perspective on nurses?

During training for the general nursing certificate, because you had to work so hard for a very low wage, you were respected by the patients and the general public.



Margaret Telfer outside Brislington, 1965. Source: Margaret Davidson

What was the most difficult part of nursing?

The supervision of trainee nurses was very rigid; seniority was strictly adhered to. I think the most disliked shift was the split shift which started at 06:30 until 09:30 and then 15:00 to 20:00. You were on the ward for the busiest times - showers, bed changing, meal times and dressings.

What is your proudest moment in nursing?

My proudest moment was when I was awarded The Rose Butler Award – totally unexpected!

What do you think of the current training that nurses receive, and how would you compare nursing today to previous periods?

I feel sorry for the trainee nurses who are educated off ward – they don't know how to approach the patients; assess their condition; support and educate patients. In midwifery, the care given to the patients was totally different. The normal delivery patient was kept in hospital for 7 days, the babies were showered and changed by the nurses and brought out to the mother for feeding and then returned to the nursery where they stayed overnight. They were only given complimentary bottles if needed through the night. The mothers were allowed to rest, and were taught how to bath and feed their babies. Lower

segment Caesarean section (LSCS) mothers were kept in hospital for 2 weeks to be given time to recover from surgery. Times have changed so much.

Have you stayed in touch with any other nurses?

I still keep in touch with a lot of the girls I trained with. We can take up where we left off after so many years!

Even after your retirement you have maintained a relationship with Brislington. How would you describe your connection with Brislington?

I volunteer as a guide at Brislington to explain the history of the building and show the medical instruments. When I first started nursing in my second year training, I was allowed to live in Brislington Nurses Home. I lived on the ground floor side of Brislington – opposite the Old Police Station's Court House. No Home Sister to control us, we were 'trusted trainees' and had our own laundry and kitchen.

Margaret Davidson, in response to interview questions, 2020

-9.3-

Photographs of Brislington

Neera Sahni & Anne Tsang



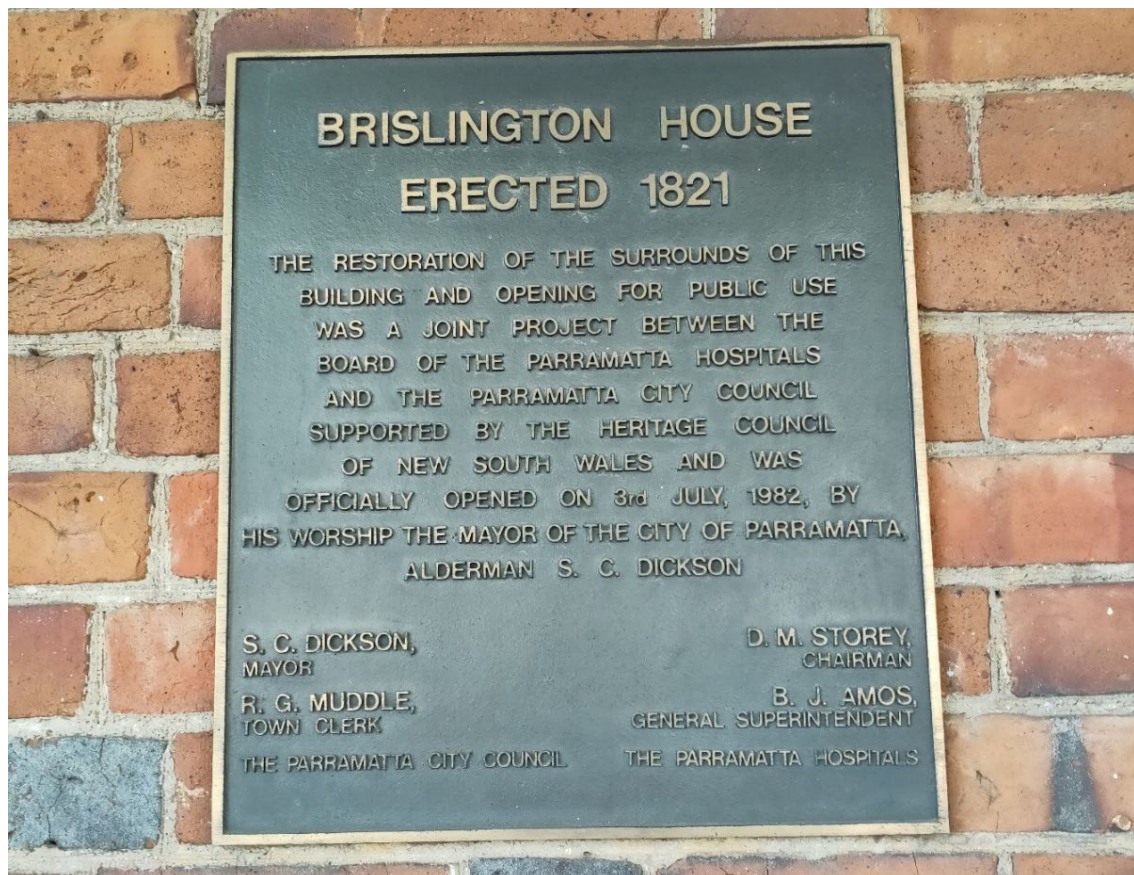
Front view of Brislington Medical and Nursing Museum from north-west corner of George and Marsden Streets, Parramatta in 2020.



Marsden Street, Parramatta side view of Brislington Medical and Nursing Museum.



House nameplate



Plaque at Entrance



Rear view of Brislington Medical and Nursing Museum with the '8 of diamond' pattern



Wishing pool



The original 1935 plaque dedicating the wishing pool to Dr Kearney.

Surgical equipment on display



Interior view of the museum exhibitions (Source: Brislington)





10. History of Nursing during War Time in Australia

Neera Sahni



Nurses accompanied the 3rd Victorian Bushmen's Contingent to South Africa in 1900: Front row (left to right) Sisters Fanny Hines, Julia Anderson, Marianne Rawson, Ellen Walter and Annie Thomson (Source: Australian War Memorial, P04544.003)

Australian nurses have been going to war for more than 100 years. Nurses often serving far from home, taking care for the sick and wounded on land, sea, and in the air.

Military nurses work under difficult conditions in remote and dangerous places. Some nurses have lost their lives serving their country and helping their fellow citizens.

Boer War (1899–1902)

The Boer War began in South Africa in 1899 and lasted for almost three years.

Military nurses at that time were unmarried, aged between 25 and 40 and were well educated, having trained for at least three years to become a qualified nurse. Nurses were not paid well so their families often supported them.

In 1899, the New South Wales Army Nursing Service Reserve was formed. It was the first Australian military nursing organisation and around 60 nurses from various Australian colonies served in the Boer War. Some of these nurses were paid by the government and others were privately sponsored or paid their own way.

Sister Fanny Hines from Victoria died in South Africa during the Boer War. She was the first Australian military nurse to die during overseas service. By the end of the war, the six Australian colonies had federated to become one nation, the Commonwealth of Australia. Julia Anderson later wrote of Fanny Hines' death on 7 August 1900:

She died of an attack of pneumonia contracted in devotion to duty. She was quite alone, with as many as twenty-six patients at one time, no possibility of assistance, or relief and without sufficient nourishment

World War One (1914–1918)

Nurses who served in World War One were exposed to the physical and mental strain of dealing with the huge number of casualties. Once a nurse enlisted, they had no choice but to serve for the duration of the war unless they got badly injured or married. About 3000 Australian women served as nurses during World War One.

Most of the nurses served with the Australian Army Nursing Service. Some served as Royal Australian Navy Nurses and some served with allied organisations such as the Red Cross and Queen Alexandra's Imperial Military Nursing Service.

Lieutenant Harold Williams was wounded at Peronne in September 1918. After his experience in a casualty clearing station at Daours, Harold recalled admiration for the nurses' work:

In large marquees, nurses, pale and weary beyond words, hurried about. That these women worked their long hours among such surroundings without collapsing spoke volumes for their will-power and sense of duty. The place reeked with the odours of blood, antiseptic dressings, and unwashed bodies ...

They saw soldiers in their most pitiful state — wounded, blood-stained, dirty, reeking of blood and filth.

The Australian Army Nursing Service (AANS) was formed in July 1903 as part of the Australian Army Medical Corps. More than 2,000 of its members served overseas during the First World War.

Australian nurses also worked with other organisations, such as the Queen Alexandra's Imperial Military Nursing Service, the Red Cross, or privately funded facilities. Nurses have worked in hospitals, on hospital ships, trains, and/or in casualty clearing stations closer to the front line.

During the World War One, nurses have served in various locations from Britain to India, including France, Belgium, the Mediterranean, and the Middle East. In early 1916, nurses were given officer status and badges of rank, although they were only paid around half what their male equivalents received. Many nurses were given awards, with eight receiving the Military Medal for bravery. Twenty-five nurses died during their service overseas.



Silver Rising Sun badge (Source: Australian War memorial)

Like the soldiers of the AIF, members of the AANS wore a "rising sun" badge on their uniforms. The nurses' badges were coloured silver, and the men's were made of brass.

After the First World War, some service nurses married and left the workforce; others took over the care of family members recovering from the war. Some took up jobs away from nursing, but many continued to work in hospitals, often in senior positions.

World War Two (1939–1945)

Thousands of Australian women registered with the Women's Voluntary National Register (WVNR) during the World War Two. Most of women were aged between seventeen and thirty-five, single and already in the paid workforce. Their male equivalents were enlisting in the services, and they wanted to be part of the war effort too. By December 1939 there were more than 26,000 women registered across the country, many of them young typists, stenographers and office workers.

When the Second World War broke out, the Australian Army Nursing Service (AANS) was the only service that women could join. As the navy and air force grew, more nurses were needed. This led to the formation of the Royal Australian Air Force Nursing Service (RAAFNS) in 1940 and the Royal Australian Naval Nursing Service (RANNS) in 1942.

More than 4,000 Australian nurses served in a variety of locations, including the Middle East, the Mediterranean, Britain, Asia, the Pacific, and Australia.

Seventy-eight nurses died, some through accident or illness, but most as a result of enemy action or while prisoners of war. By 1945, all military nurses had been appointed as officers, although many still preferred to use their traditional titles of "sister" and "matron". They were yet to be given the same status and pay as male officers.

For 30 years after the Second World War, Australian troops fought in campaigns against the spread of communism in Korea, Malaya, Indonesia, and Vietnam. Most women's services were reduced or disbanded after the Second World War, but AANS nurses continued to serve overseas.

Korean War (1950–1953)

Korea was a place that few Australians knew much about, until 1950. From 1950-53, 17,000 Australians in the Army, Navy and Air Force fought as part of the United Nations (UN) multinational force, defending South Korea from the Communist force of North Korea. After the war ended, Australians remained in Korea for four years as military observers. Since then, Australia has maintained a presence, discharged by the Australian Military Attaché. Australia's involvement in the Korean War won much praise from other nations.

From 1946 to 1956, some 140 were posted to Japan to care for Australian servicemen and their families as part of the British Commonwealth Occupation Force (BCOF) and later with British Commonwealth Forces Korea.

The AANS was granted the title "Royal" in 1948, and three years later became an army corps with the new title "Royal Australian Army Nursing Corps" (RAANC).

A peacetime RAAFNS was reinstated in 1948 and its members were largely involved in aero-medical evacuations. The development of new medical technology saved many more lives.

Vietnam War (1962–1975)

From the time of the arrival of the first members of the Team in 1962 almost 60,000 Australians, including ground troops and air force and navy personnel, served in Vietnam; 521 died as a result of the war and over 3,000 were wounded. The war was the cause of the greatest social and political dissent in Australia.

Between 1967 and 1971, 150 military and 200 volunteer civilian nurses served in South Vietnam. Their tour of duty ranged from three to thirteen months, but most stayed about a year.

In the 1970s, the first male nursing officers entered the services, and female and male nursing officers of the same rank were finally given equal pay. Women could now also continue to serve after they married or had children.

In Vietnam, nurses were usually rostered to work 12-hour shifts, six days a week, but when the need arose, they just kept working. An outbreak of malaria in 1968 doubled the number of patients in the hospital, but there was no increase in staff. Sometimes the operating theatre would work around the clock for days at a time.

Unlike the army nurses, air force nurses were not posted to Vietnam itself, but to the RAAF base at Butterworth in Malaysia. Section Officer Pat Furbank was one of 106 nursing officers who served on aero-medical evacuations (AME) between Vietnam, Malaysia, and Australia during the Vietnam War. Because of these flights, many wounded soldiers were able to get the expert medical care they needed to survive.

World War One Parramatta Nurses

Neera Sahni

Australia's involvement in World War One began on 4 August 1914. Many who joined up believed that the war would be a great adventure, but none could have imagined the scale of the endeavour on which they were about to embark. Sadly, many of these soldiers, sailors, airmen, medical support staff and nurses didn't make it home. Their courage, sacrifice, hardship and losses brought a new maturity to our nation.

Nurses who served in World War One were exposed to the physical and mental strain of dealing with the huge number of casualties. Once a nurse enlisted, they had no choice but to serve for the duration of the war unless they got badly injured or married. About 3000 Australian women served as nurses during World War One.

Most of the nurses served with the Australian Army Nursing Service. Some served as Royal Australian Navy Nurses and some served with allied organisations such as the Red Cross and Queen Alexandra's Imperial Military Nursing Service.

Australian women could serve overseas only if they joined the Australian Army Nursing Service (AANS), the Queen Alexandra's Imperial Military Nursing Service or the Red Cross. Across Australia a total of 2,861 women enlisted for duty during World War One and 513 of these were from New South Wales.

Dorothy Cawood

Emma Stockburn



Portrait of Dorothy Cawood

(Source: Parramatta Soldiers in the Great War, 1914-1919)

On the 1 July 1919, Nurse Dorothy Cawood returned home to Parramatta after 4 years' continuous service. A year earlier she had been mentioned in dispatches by Sir Douglas Haig for her conspicuous service in Egypt, France and Italy. Just before leaving England to return home, she had been awarded a Military Medal by the King at Buckingham Palace for her bravery during the action at Messines, France. She was the first Sydney woman to receive this award.

Dorothy left with the first contingent of Australian nurses and after working in France was transferred to Genoa, Italy, with the 38 Stationary Hospital where again her fine service called forth the highest praise from military officers there. It was at this time that her matron wrote the following letter of appreciation to her mother:

38 Stationary Hospital, A.P.O.L. 3, B.E.P., Italy, 31/1/18.

Dear Mrs. Cawood,

You may have received a notification from the Defence Department that your, daughter, Dorothy, is sick in hospital; so I am writing to tell you not to worry

– it's nothing serious – just tonsillitis. I hope to have her back on duty long before this letter reaches you. I want to take this opportunity, Mrs. Cawood, of congratulating you upon having such a good daughter as Dorothy. She is a most excellent nurse – one of the very best Australia has sent out. 'When I told my O.C. that I had sent Dorothy to the Sisters Hospital, he said, 'I'm sorry; I like that little girl. She does her work well, and gives no trouble to anyone. I will take care of her for you, and not let her work too hard'.

*Kindest regards. Yours sincerely,
Ethel S. Davidson, Matron, A.A.N.S., 38 Stationary Hospital.*

Extract: The Cumberland Argus and Fruitgrowers' Advocate, 5 July 1919, page 4
Her parents John and Sarah Cawood lived in Hunter Street, Parramatta but when Germany declared war in August 1914, Dorothy was attached to the Coast Hospital at Little Bay in Sydney's Eastern suburbs. In December 1914, it was announced she would be one of the one hundred and eighty-six nurses selected to work in the Nos. 1 and 2 Australian General Army Hospitals and soon after she was on her way to Egypt. While based at the No. 2 Australian General Hospital at Mena and Ghezireh, on the outskirts of Cairo, she also did some work on the hospital ships ferrying soldiers between Gallipoli and Alexandria, Egypt.

But the great test of her courage came while on duty in France. On 2 July 1917, she was under fire at No. 2 casualty clearing station in France when the Germans attacked and killed many of the patients and some hospital staff. This station had been operating as usual for nearly a year when around May 1914 the work became heavier and more staff were added. By July they had three operating tables in use and performed around 2,000 operations between July and August. In addition, many of the soldiers coming in needed intensive care as they were badly affected by mustard gas which had caused large blisters to form on the body and created temporary or even permanent blindness.

To make matters even worse, the unit was bombed on the 2 July, and Sister Cawood, along with three others, remained at their post. Afterwards she brought many of the wounded to a place of safety. The Military Medal was an official recognition of her courage and coolness under fire.

When she returned home she was greeted by the Parramatta Welcome Home Committee, family, friends and even the Mayor. In 1943, she retired and a year later, she returned to Parramatta where she lived until her death on the 16 February 1962. She had never married and was buried in Rookwood Cemetery, Lidcombe, New South Wales.

Julian Lindsay Da Silva Waugh

Emma Stockburn

Senior Commandant New South Wales Red Cross Voluntary Aid Detachment (V.A.D)



Portrait of Julian Lindsay da Silva Waugh

(Source: Parramatta Soldiers in the Great War, 1914-1919)

"I have always been so enthusiastic about the Red Cross training for girls; for not only do they learn such vitally important subjects as first aid and home nursing; but their training includes a certain amount of discipline."

Extract from The Sydney Morning Herald, 23 August 1937, page 3.

Commandant Julian da Silva Waugh was born in Balmain, New South Wales, in 1880 to John and Julian Waugh. Her father was Mayor of Parramatta from 1909 to 1910. Her mother, as Mayoress organised the embroidering of the flag presented to the Captain of the His Majesty's Australian Ship (HMAS) 'Parramatta' when it arrived on the Parramatta River in 1911.

She was one of the best known Red Cross workers who was appointed to the position of Commandant of the Parramatta branch in 1916. She served in this

position for two years before she went to Egypt in July 1918. Some of her experiences were relayed in local newspapers:

The greatest number of dishes I cooked in any one day in Egypt was 1270 jollies, custards, milk puddings and so forth. Everything was cooked in kerosene stoves, and I found them excellent. The greatest boon was that I had nothing to do with that house hold bugbear — washing-up. A couple of native boys always did the cleaning up, and they did their work well, even if they did need constant watching.

Extract from The Cumberland Argus and Fruitgrowers' Advocate, 10 September 1919, page 2.

I was the voluntary cook at the 14th Australian General Hospital, Port Said and Abbassia, and later opened a Bengers Food kitchen at the Desert Mounted Corps Rest Camp, on the beach at Port Said. I prepared as many as 1270 dishes in one day at the hospital, and part of my duty, while I was in Egypt was to take 70 of the men out every afternoon in a boat on the canal. They had afternoon tea and enjoyed what was a great treat, sandwiches of bread which had been made with Australian flour. I returned to Australia in the last hospital ship to leave Egypt, the Dunluce Castle.

Extract from The Sydney Morning Herald, 23 August 1937, page 3.

After being in Egypt for two years, she returned home and resumed her former V.A.D. position. In 1937, she became Senior Commandant of the New South Wales V.A.D. She continued her work for and support of the Red Cross during the Second World War and she saw the importance of girls being a part of this service. Miss da Silva Waugh spent a great deal of time travelling New South Wales giving talks to girls who wished to join the Red Cross, telling them many details of life as a member of the Detachment at home and abroad.

There are lots of things girls can do in detachments. Quite apart from first aid and home nursing, there are all sorts of odd jobs. The training is a tremendous asset to you, even in your own home.

Extract from The Sun, 5 May 1918, page 5.

Miss Waugh: Sister Relf has asked if there is anything else I can tell you. I just want you girls to realize that in the event of any hostilities arising here you may get a message at any time to do all manner of things. For instance, get beds, ready – say, 200 or 300- and it is your job to do it. ...you might be called upon to take over a school or a show ground and convert it into a hospital. Various

people in the country during the last war offered their homes The Mill at Moss Vale, was offered, the girls set to work and cleaned it out, collected beds, chairs and linen from all over the countryside, and in no time it was ready for occupation by twenty men and a staff. Such things as these you may be call upon to do.

Extract from The Scone Advocate, 30 April 1940, page 2.

Julian da Silva Waugh died on the 5 December 1942 after a short illness at the age of 62 years. Her funeral was held at St. Thomas's Church in North Sydney and was buried in Rookwood Cemetery, Lidcombe, New South Wales.

MISS DA SILVA WAUGH

Miss da Silva Waugh, senior commandant of Voluntary Aids in New South Wales, died on Saturday after a short illness. The funeral took place in Sydney on Monday and was attended by representatives of V.A. detachments and Red Cross personnel. Miss Waugh was one of the best known Red Cross workers in New South Wales, and served with the Australian V.A.'s in Egypt in the last war. She was a member of an old Parramatta family.

Dulce Davies Little

Emma Stockburn



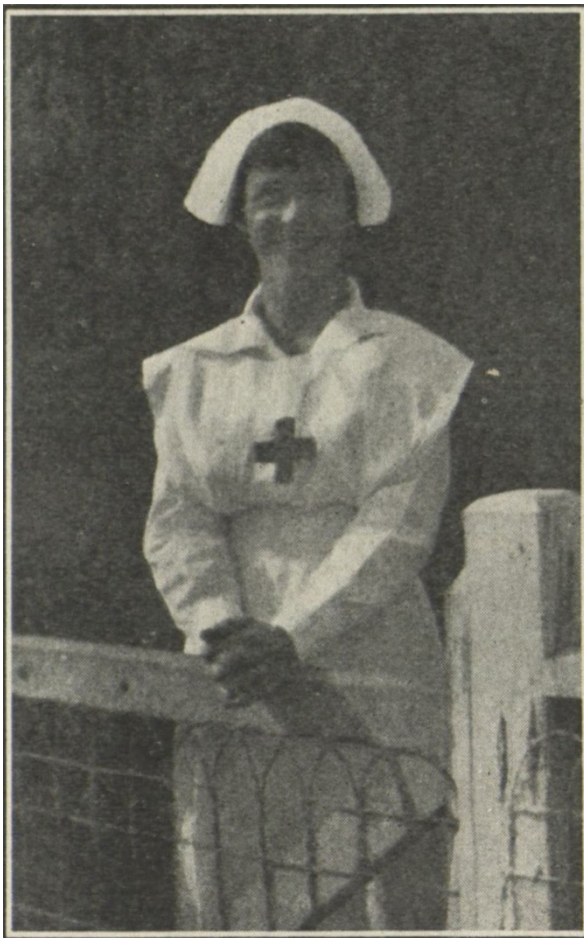
Miss Dulce Davies Little, who lived at Alice Street Harris Park, Sydney, was born in Parramatta on the 11 April 1894 to Thomas and Mary Little. Her baptism was registered at Saint John's Church, Parramatta, on the 21 April 1894.



Miss Little became the Commandant of the Voluntary Aid Detachment (which was the second detachment formed in New South Wales). It was an organisation which helped with cooking, sewing, mending and fund raising for invalid soldiers. Many Voluntary Aid Detachments worked in hospitals, hospital ships and blood banks. They received first aid and home nursing training from Saint John

Ambulance Association but many of their primary duties were unskilled work such as domestic duties and washing patients.

On the 12 April 1919, Miss Little wrote a letter to the editor of *The Cumberland Argus and Fruitgrowers Advocate*, defending the work of the Parramatta Voluntary Aid Detachment workers. The accusation was that not enough work had been done to help influenza patients in Granville during the epidemic after the war. She responds in her letter by explaining that her staff was already overwhelmed by the work required in Parramatta and in their own homes:



"I, as commandant, was asked indirectly to undertake 'flu work in Granville'. My reply was that owing to, having so many girls on duty this month, and already having been requisitioned for the Red Cross Hospital, as well as for Parramatta, that as a body I could not undertake any duties in Granville for the detachment, but if any aids are residing in Granville (there are three, two of whom are business girls) would do anything locally they could do it, unless required at Parramatta. Though we fully realise the need for assistance during this epidemic, they must also remember that our first duty lies with the Red Cross, of whom we are one section, and that our ordinary work has to go on just the same, and this month more Parramatta girls are on duty, that is monthly or longer, than on any previous occasion in its history

...Then several girls' have influenza in their own homes, and a very large per cent are business girls, and as much as we would like to help wherever, required, we cannot be in two places at once."

In May of that year Miss Little fell ill to the flu whilst caring for patients at the Dame Eadith Walker Hospital, in Concord West, Sydney. Her work was commented on by Miss Gladys Owen, joint honorary secretary of the Red Cross:

On behalf of the Red Cross executive I am instructed to thank you very much indeed for your splendid voluntary services at the Walker Hospital during the

time it was used as an influenza hospital. The wonderful services of the V.A.'s [Voluntary Aid Detachments] undoubtedly contributed to the success of the hospital, and we wish to thank all those who volunteered for the work and carried it out so efficiently.

On the 17 November 1923 Miss Little married Arthur Raeburn Sharp, an engineer, at Saint John's Church, Parramatta, and this was reported in *The Cumberland Argus and Fruitgrowers Advocate*.

A HARRIS PARK BRIDE

A quiet wedding was celebrated in St. John's Church, Parramatta, on Wednesday morning last, the contracting parties being Dulce Davies Little, elder daughter of the late Mr. and Mrs. T. D. Little, of "Pine Ridge," Harris Park, and Arthur R. Sharp, third son of Mr. and Mrs. W. T. Sharp, of Harris Park. The Rev. K. W. Pain conducted the ceremony and Mr. Cook played bridal preludes as the bride entered the church and during the signing of the register. The bride was given away by her brother, Alan, and was attended by her sister, Milla, and Mr. Rex. Sharp was best man. Only relatives of the bride and bridegroom were present at the ceremony, after which Mr. and Mrs. Arthur Sharp left on their honeymoon.

Dulce Davies Sharp died on the 23 June 1982 at the age of 88. She was living at the time in the Northern Beaches, Sydney.

Daisy Wearne

Neera Sahni



Portrait of Daisy Wearne

(Source: Parramatta Soldiers in the Great War, 1914-1919)

Nurse Daisy Wearne was born in 1887 in Sydney, New South Wales. She was 28 years old when she enlisted on the 12 June 1915 for the front with the Australian Red Cross Unit. At the time, she was head nurse of the Parramatta District Hospital. Her father was Joseph Henry Wearne and her mother was Mary, of 'Caerahayes', William Edward Street, Longueville, New South Wales. One of her brothers was also serving overseas. According to her father she had received 2 offers –

"one of marriage and the other of going with the Red Cross Hospital, and he felt that she chose the nobler".

She embarked from Sydney on 14 July 1915 aboard HMAT 'Orsova' as staff for No. 1 Australian Hospital Ship 'Karoola'. Upon her arrival in London, she wrote to *The Cumberland Argus and Fruitgrowers' Advocate* of her journey as an article 'An Anxious Voyage' published on the 16 October 1915, page 6.

We arrived here safely, after a very rough and anxious trip. We sighted a submarine two miles astern, and just at that time two destroyers came along. It was a glorious and most welcome sight. Only a couple of days before four ships had been sunk, and we saw a lot of wreckage, which made us all feel very miserable. I am well, and expect to leave tomorrow, with wounded, for Australia. Kindest regards to all.

On 12 April 1916, she became Matron-in-Chief at the 3 Australian General Hospital.

On 25 February 1919 she married Karl Frank Thompson in Hampstead, England and retired from active service. After marriage, Daisy and her husband moved to the United States of America and were living in Cleveland, Ohio until 1951.

World War Two Parramatta Nurses

Neera Sahni

Thousands of Australian women registered with the Women's Voluntary National Register (WVNR) during the World War Two. Most of women were aged between seventeen and thirty-five, single and already in the paid workforce. Their male equivalents were enlisting in the services, and they wanted to be part of the war effort too. By December 1939 there were more than 26,000 women registered across the country, many of them young typists, stenographers and office workers.

When the Second World War broke out, the Australian Army Nursing Service (AANS) was the only service that women could join. As the navy and air force grew, more nurses were needed. This led to the formation of the Royal Australian Air Force Nursing Service (RAAFNS) in 1940 and the Royal Australian Naval Nursing Service (RANNS) in 1942.

More than 4,000 Australian nurses served in a variety of locations, including the Middle East, the Mediterranean, Britain, Asia, the Pacific, and Australia.

Seventy-eight nurses died, some through accident or illness, but most as a result of enemy action or while prisoners of war.

Isabella Mary Pinkerton

Caroline Finlay



*Sister Isabel Pinkerton and Sergeant Archie Burchall in the Middle East, 1941.
(Source: The Cumberland Argus and Fruitgrowers Advocate)*

Isabella Mary Pinkerton who mainly went by the name of Isabel, was born in 1913 as the youngest daughter to Robert and Sarah Pinkerton. After finishing school, she attended the Parramatta Domestic Science School and then a business college and was in the process of developing a promising business career when she decided to change careers and become a nurse. She completed the majority of her training at the Parramatta District Hospital, and became the first Parramatta Hospital graduate nurse to enlist in World War Two. Isabel was working at Goulburn Hospital when she received the call from the Australian Imperial Force (AIF) that she would be serving her country overseas.

Before leaving Sydney in August 1940, Isabel who at the time was a resident of Wentworthville, was farewelled by a large crowd at a ceremony at the Wentworthville School of Arts. She received a wristlet watch from the Wentworthville Patriotic Committee, from the Commandant of the Wentworthville Voluntary Aid Detachment (VAD) Mrs Allen she received a handbag, and from the residents of Jordan Street, where her parents lived, she received a travelling case.

Isabel sailed with a contingent of the AIF as nurse but was quickly promoted to Sister. She served with the AIF in the Australian Army Nursing Service (ANNS). At

the beginning of World War Two, the AANS was the only women's nursing service, with the Royal Australian Air Force Nursing Service (RAAFNS) and the Royal Australian Navy Nursing Service (RANNS) forming later. The AANS however for the duration of the war remained the largest Australian nursing service, and represented the majority of nurses who served overseas.

Whilst overseas Isabel served in both the Middle East and New Guinea. Throughout 1941 she was stationed at the 1 Australian General Hospital in Palestine. In May 1941 she was under a blanket burrowed in the desert sand with four other Australian Army Nursing Sisters, whilst enemy raiders rained down incendiary bombs all around them for five hours. During this period Isabel wrote to her parents:

"When I see how daring and brave our boys are, and how they stick at nothing in the course of their duty, it makes me proud to be an Aussie."

She also added that all the nursing staff working at the hospital were in excellent health, happy and in good spirits, and she paid tribute to the Red Cross, whom she said were doing excellent work.

After two years' active service overseas Isabel returned to Australia. In June 1942 Isabel received a welcome home party at the Wentworthville School of Arts where she said *"I wouldn't have missed the trip for worlds"*.

She also added:

"Wounded Germans with whom I talked said that they soon face anything rather than the bayonets of the Diggers."

In April 1944 Isabel married Colin Roland Coutts at Scots Church in Boort Victoria. Colin had also returned from the war serving as a gunner for the AIF in both the Middle East and New Guinea. A few months later Isabel received a formal reception and a Certificate of Honour from Holroyd Council for her contribution to the war.

On the 17 March 2001 Isabel died at her home in Boort Victoria aged 87, survived by her two children Jocelyn and Robert. She is buried at Tarnagulla Cemetery in Inglewood, Victoria.

Lilian Gladys Smairl

Caroline Finlay



*Sister Lilian Smairl, Australian nurse who has been awarded the Royal Red Cross
(Source: The Australian Women's Weekly, 23 August 1941, page 8)*

Lilian Gladys Smairl, who was born on the 11 January 1898, began her nursing career training at the Royal Prince Alfred Hospital, Sydney. After working there for almost 6 years she was appointed to Parramatta District Hospital as a Sister in February 1924. In August 1936, Parramatta Hospital announced in its annual report that a new X-ray building with new equipment at the cost of almost 2,800 pounds had been completed. Lilian, who had completed a three-month X-ray course at Prince Alfred Hospital was put in charge of the machine and paid an extra 10 shillings a week.

Lilian was very independent, and by the 1930s was driving a car. She bought a Morris Cowley car with fellow nurse Matron Morse for 40 pounds, which required sand bags in the passenger seat to keep the car balanced when only the driver was in the car. [4] Lilian, who was described by the Sydney afternoon newspaper *The Sun* as having a magnetic personality and sympathetic nature, was also a keen golfer. Before her departure to work overseas Lilian had played golf for eight or nine years from a handicap of 19 at the Oatlands Golf Club on Bettington Road, Oatlands. She was one of the club's earliest women supporters.

In March 1937 Lilian left Parramatta Hospital after having worked there for 13 years, and migrated to England to enlist in the Queen Alexandra Royal Naval Nursing Service. She was registered by the London Royal College of Nursing on the 24 September 1937, and stationed at the Royal Naval Hospital in Chatham Medway, England. Whilst she was stationed at the Chatham Naval Hospital, World War Two was declared.

From the beginning of World War Two in September 1939 until March 1940 Lilian served at the Chatham Naval Hospital base and was nursing on a warship in the North Sea, witnessing some of the worst sea tragedies of the war. She described her experience in a letter, saying:

"I haven't had much sleep lately, as the drone of the planes with bangs and pom-poms isn't exactly a bedtime story...We have a very mixed bag at present, including Dutchmen, Frenchmen, Norwegians and Poles. The Dutchmen were rescued from an oil tanker and were badly burned. I am writing this letter on my bunk at midnight, and the watch has just told me that the signal is up, which means that the enemy is around. I can hear guns in the distance, and the other night between the bangs I could hear the comforting sound of our men singing in the gun-turrets."

During the Dunkirk evacuation from the 26 May to the 4 June 1940, Lilian served on a hospital ship and was injured. Her injuries resulted in her being off-duty for five months. She went on to serve on other hospital ships throughout the war including the "Vasna", and saw active service working at the Chatham Naval Hospital during the 'Blitz', the series of German bombing attacks on London and other cities between 7 September 1940 and 11 May 1941. For her service, Lilian was awarded the Associate Royal Red Cross Medal (ARRC) on the 1 July 1941. This decoration which was instituted by Queen Victoria in 1883 is bestowed on nurses in recognition of highly distinguished service.

It was also during her service with the Royal Navy in World War Two that Lilian acquired the rank of Lieutenant-Commander.

Lilian died on the 9 February 1987 at the age of 89, and is buried at Waverley Cemetery, Sydney.

Westmead Hospital

Neera Sahni



Westmead Hospital, c. late-1990s (Source: City of Parramatta Archives, PCC Photographs Collection)

The history of health services in Western Sydney began with a tent hospital established in Parramatta to meet the medical needs of convicts, military personnel, and early settlers in 1789.

In 1877, the Parramatta Horticultural Society and in 1885 the Central Cumberland Agricultural and Horticultural Society was formed. These societies held agricultural shows in the Westmead area and it is possible that these shows were held on the current site of Westmead Hospital, although this is contested.

In March 1930, the Parramatta District Agricultural and Horticultural Society obtained use of the current site of Westmead Hospital by a grant from the Department of Lands. Then site was known as the Parramatta Showground. From 1955 - 1968, the Parramatta showground was used for the well-known and popular Westmead Speedway. After the Speedway closed, the circuit was briefly used for harness racing. The 'Parramatta Trots' ceased around 1973 to make way for the construction of Westmead Hospital in 1974.

As the population of Sydney's west expanded, the services provided at Parramatta District Hospital became inadequate to meet demand. In order to provide the services required Westmead Hospital, initially known as the Westmead Centre, was constructed.

Westmead Hospital is a major tertiary hospital in Sydney. On 29 April 1974, then Prime Minister Gough Whitlam proposes a major hospital to meet western Sydney's growing healthcare needs. Construction of this hospital started on 6 June 1974 and finished in late 1978. New South Wales Premier Neville Wran opened Westmead Hospital on 10 November 1978.

This 975-bed hospital forms part of the Western Sydney Local Health District, and is a teaching hospital of Sydney Medical School at the University of Sydney. According to 2016-2017 data, Hospital provided more than 1.5m occasions of care to outpatients, in addition to approximately 107,000 inpatients. Annually, there are over 21,000 medical operations, almost 5,800 births, and more than 75,000 presentations to emergency department. Westmead hospital serves a population of 1.85m people and is located on one of the largest health and hospital campuses in Australia.

In 2002, work started on a major expansion of the hospital called the WIN Program. It includes a new facility for NETS, the Brain Injury Unit, a new facility for Women's Health and Newborn Care and the new E Block for intensive care and allied health. This extension work finished in 2006 and services are available to the public.

In 2012 due to the growth and change in Sydney's west, the need to invest in health infrastructure became a priority. Westmead Hospital, Western Sydney Local Health District and Government begin planning for expansion. Blacktown and Mount Druitt expansions started in 2012. The emergency department at Westmead was expanded to meet growing demand.

On 6 November 2013, NSW Government approved 1 million dollars for further expansion to better serve growing community and to provide a world-class hospital facilities.

In 2015, work started on a car park to replace parking areas, electrical upgrades to secure current and future power needs, expansion of the existing Emergency Short Stay Unit (ESSU) and the Healthcare for Older People Earlier (HOPE) unit to meet increasing demand for services.

On 6 October 2015, New South Wales Premier Mike Baird unveiled the "world-class health city", central concept design for stage 1 of the \$900 million Westmead redevelopment.

In 2016, a new road, Dragonfly Drive, built to ease congestion along Institute Road and to become the primary access point into the Institute Road car park. A new helipad constructed on a platform, above the top floor, of The Children's Hospital at Westmead car park on Hainsworth Street.

"The new helipad was designed and built overseas to specification for Westmead and was delivered via air freight in separate components. It is a seriously heavy piece of infrastructure!"

In 2017, with the \$60million investment at Westmead precinct, University of Sydney strengthen its partnership with the Westmead precinct. This partnership will provide for new education facilities, upgrades to existing spaces, and a suite of new academic programs and initiatives.

In 2018, pathology relocated to new purpose-built facility, the ear, nose & throat (ENT) and audiology departments moved into their new home and in February Westmead Connectivity Centre, an initiative to match job seekers with local employment opportunities was opened.

In 2019, new and refurbished clinical spaces were connected and the expanded facility transformed into a contemporary facility with a new main entry.

2020 - Sky is the limit above Westmead Health Precinct. Onlookers watch the blue-sky transition into night as the more than \$1 billion Westmead Redevelopment achieves a significant milestone when a test helicopter lands on the new Central Acute Services Building (CASB). In May Westmead Health Precinct's new Central Acute Services Building handed over for early usage.



Artist's impression of the upgraded Westmead Hospital, 2018 (Source: Westmead Hospital Redevelopment Project website)

Westmead Hospital is the principal referral hospital for Western Sydney, renowned for its comprehensive, highly specialised and complex services. Currently undergoing a multimillion-dollar rebuilding program, Westmead Hospital will become one of the largest health, education, and research & training precincts in Australia.

Nurse Noeline Rozanc

Neera Sahni



Nurse Unit Manager Noeline Rozanc (Source: Michelle Goodman 2018)

Nurse Unit Manager Noeline Rozanc's experience at Westmead Hospital in 1980's as a trainee nurse. Interview was recorded in August 2018 and can be heard on our website at:

<http://arc.parracity.nsw.gov.au/blog/2020/05/11/noeline-rozanc-her-early-years-at-westmead-hospital/>

"My name is Noeline Rozanc and I've been working at Westmead Hospital as a nurse, commencing my training here on the 3rd March 1980. I first came to Westmead in 1979 when I was a Year 12 student at a High School in Bathurst. I'd never heard of Westmead, I had to look it up in the street directory. Came here for my interview in 1979 and was really quite surprised to see this building.

It was a huge brick and concrete monolith. When I walked into the main entrance, it wasn't like walking into a hospital at all, it was like walking into an airport terminal. It was carpeted and had this huge woollen wall hanging. There

was a bank in there, there was a coffee shop. It was a place that was really quite not what I had expected. I had my nursing interview and I was successful in my application to be a student nurse at Westmead and started here in March 1980, and had a variety of different jobs in nursing, mostly at this hospital. So as a girl from the country coming to Westmead in 1980 for my training, I needed somewhere to stay and the hospital accommodation complex which is a couple of hundred metres up the road wasn't completed, so a number of us were allocated to stay in the old prefab Maternity building at the old Parramatta hospital which was a shared bathroom, shared kitchen and your own bedroom with a metal bed, metal bedside table, metal cupboards and we walked over to Westmead Hospital through Parramatta Park every day for the first three months of our training because for the first three months we had lectures here in the Education block at the hospital.

So as a person from the country that had lived out on a farm, all of a sudden being in Parramatta was a really exciting thing. There was a pub across the road from where we stayed, so a lot of the nurses used to go and sample the wares there but we could also go to the local shopping centre, which was Westfield shopping centre and Parramatta Leagues Club as a place to go out and some of the different taverns so a lot of us from the country really enjoyed the night life. We had some rules in relation to the nurses' accommodation where we were staying. You had to be in by midnight, there was a curfew but of course there were always ways around the curfew of sneaking in or unlocking the door.

So Parramatta was quite a different place back in the eighties, this is in the days when we had telephone boxes, no mobile phones. There was no such thing as an ATM so if you didn't go to the bank and get your money out on the Friday, you had no money to go out during the weekend. But it was also a place that for me it was so easy to get to other places. (You know) I could walk down to the railway station and catch a train into the city, so I enjoyed Parramatta, I enjoyed wandering around Parramatta. Then after our first three months at the hospital, the accommodation complex was finished and so the group of 30 of us that was staying in the nurses' home or the maternity unit at Parramatta Hospital were able to move into the accommodation here at Westmead. And it was unit style accommodation which was very different from the nurses' home at any of the other hospitals.

So what we had here at Westmead was a four bedroom unit, each with your own bedroom, two bathrooms, a washing machine and a dryer, and a kitchen and a furnished lounge area. So that was fairly luxurious and quite different to other nurses. Westmead Hospital itself was very new and very modern and state of the

art and we had a lot of equipment here at this hospital and a lot of services that weren't available at the other older hospitals. The clinical exposure we had at Westmead was fantastic – it was a hospital that was new, it was exciting. We had a lot of very junior registered nurses and we were one of the first hospitals where we had students training that didn't wear a veil. The registered nurses didn't wear a veil, but the student nurses did wear a cap and I actually liked that. It didn't matter, there was no such thing as a bad hair day, because it was all covered under your hat.

We all rotated through different clinical wards and so we had experience in a variety of areas. We had intensive care areas, we had surgical areas, medical areas, and we had oncology wards so I enjoyed all of my rotations. There was always things to learn in every different area. Back in those days we were really quite strict with how we referred to other registered nurses. We never called registered nurses by their first name and we didn't refer to them "Sister", that was a little bit different in that time as well. We would call them "Mr" or "Mrs" or "Miss", so as a student nurse I never ever called a registered nurse by their first name.

So Westmead hospital has changed a lot over the years. When I first came here it wasn't like walking into a hospital at all. It didn't look like a hospital, it didn't smell like a hospital. The wards were very bright and very modern with lots of different colours that at the time we thought that was just amazing. As a nurse at Westmead hospital in the eighties I've had a lot experiences and opportunities that I may not have had in another hospital due to my age. I was quite a young Nursing Unit Manager, but we also had a lot of structure and processes around our ... and procedures and policies that guided us in what to do."

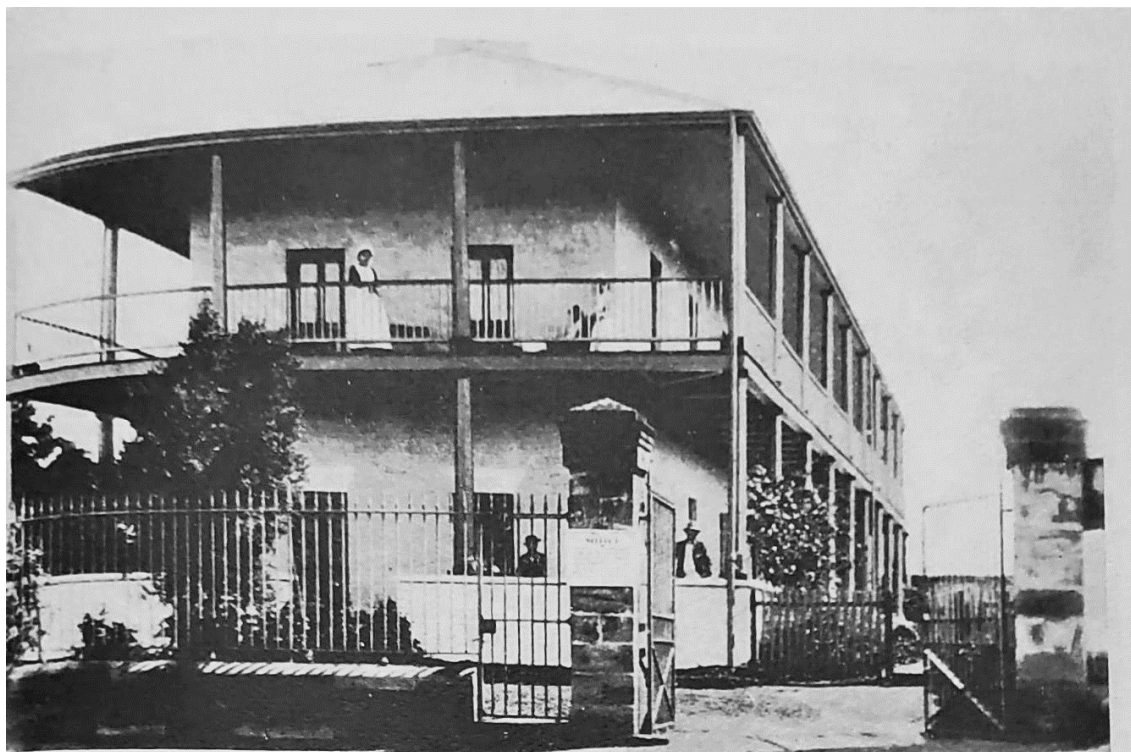
Images of Nurses and Midwives from Parramatta & District

Anne Tsang, Caroline Finlay, Emma Stockburn & Neera Sahni



Committee, Medical and Nursing Staff of the Parramatta District Hospital, 1911
Standing (left to right): Mr. Peter Morgan, Nurse D. Wearne, Mr. H. W. Meggitt, Very Rev. T. O'Reilly P.P., Messrs. T. D. Little, G. T. Erby, J. Arundel, C. Summons, Nurses I. Dawson, E. Emmott and E. Samuels. Seated: Dr. W. S. Brown, Dr. J. Kearney, Mr. C. J. Byrnes, Mr. H. B. Cowper (President), Miss E. Fuller (Matron), Mr. W. W. Bodenham, Dr. E. Cuthbert Hall. Front Row: Nurses M. Brown, L. Kidd, P. Trayhurn and L. Alkin.

(Source: The Jubilee History of Parramatta, page 122)



Parramatta District Hospital 1880

(Source: The Cumberland Argus and Fruitgrowers Advocate, 27 June 1896, page 7)



*The Wisteria Gardens at Cumberland Hospital being enjoyed by nurses of the day.
c.1940s (Source: Pinterest)*



Standing (left to right): Sisters Rooney, Gilmour, A. Barrett, Crawford, Yates, Smith, Wallbank, Callan. Seated: Sisters Daly, B. Barrett, Monteath, Mackay, Matron Edith White, Sisters Pfingst, Armstrong, Purnell, Hammond, Cox.

(Source: The Cumberland Argus and Fruitgrowers Advocate, 4 August 1948, page 13)



Psychiatric nurses of Parramatta Mental Hospital, 18 October 1951.

(Source: State Library NSW, 224420)



Westmead Hospital saw an average of 150 patients when it opened; now it sees thousands (Source: Western Sydney Local Health District)



Parramatta baby health centre, 1964. (Source: State Library NSW 247411)

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Back cover image: *Staff at Parramatta District Hospital, [ca. 1890]*
(Source: City of Parramatta, Local Studies Photographic Collection, LSP00098)

