

Welcome to the 26th issue of the *Charlies Alumni Newsletter*. Unless otherwise indicated, text is by the Editor.

EVENTS COMING UP

- **Tuesday 19 July 2011**, 1pm: Please come to the new Archives in T-Block (the old engineering workshops on Verdun St). See enclosed flyer.
- **Wednesday 3 August 2011**, 5pm – 6pm, Joske Seminar Room, 8th-floor G Block: Please come to a retirement function for **Dr Agatha van der Schaaf**, nuclear physician, who first worked at Charlies in 1967 (and who is one of our members). Also you might like to come to Mangiore in Hampden Road for a casual dinner after the hospital function. There is an open invitation to all and tables will be booked as required following rsvps. Please RSVP for EACH of these to Maria Collica on 9346 4339.

RECENT EVENTS

- **Ida Gallop**'s birthday was on 7 February. She has STILL not come good on her promise to record her life history.
- Our 2011 AGM and Oration were on 14 April, the Oration being *A Walk Through Hospital History* by **Mr BAR Stokes**, neurosurgeon. BARS delivered a collection of interesting personal recollections covering many decades in the health care system in Perth. Somehow he overlooked the occasion early in 1967 when a half-dozen group of fourth-year medical students turned up for his bit of the introductory clinical course at RPH and he sent home the one who had turned up without a tie (thank goodness it wasn't me). There was no unpleasantness about it - it was simply a matter of standards and of respect for the patients we were about to see. And, I think, for the Charge Nurses onto whose wards we were venturing. Unfortunately not all our teachers had the ability to make a point so politely.
- **Gaye Reeves** has finally joined us!

FROM OUR ARCHIVIST

[Marian W Mackay, Hon. Archivist, and Crew]

We are now established in our new premises and thought it would be nice to invite our members to come in and touch base. Betty Whiley will be sending out the official invitation and we in the Archives sincerely hope that you will be able to attend. However, if this is not possible please note that we are usually open on a Tuesday 10am – 4pm. Best to telephone 9339 1987 on the Monday prior to your visit.

The new premises are in T Block, this is very convenient for the visitor's car park, enter that from Verdun Street, there is a charge but it is very close to our premises. See sketch on flyer.

We are still organising things but I think there is enough to ensure you enjoy your visit. The new premises are really good and I would like to thank all the management and staff involved in getting us to this stage.

We virtually kicked the Handymen out of their home, took a lot of sweet talking to get round that one. They poor b.....'s are in the basement of A Block. (Like the Colo-rectal Surgeon, where the sun don't shine.)

Come along and relive some memories, see faces long gone and hopefully meet some colleagues.

FROM SCGH

[Susan Clement, Magnet Program Manager]

This year's Rotary Nursing Excellence Awards were presented recently. Pictured below are three winners: *Olive Anstey Nurse of the Year: Leigh Faulkner*, SDN Gairdner Rehabilitation Unit; *Enrolled Nursing Excellence: Sandra Green*, Short Stay Unit; *Graduate Nursing Excellence: Amy Fowler*, Emergency Department.



And here are all the nominees, but **not** in the order named: Carole Donaldson, Leigh Faulkner, Karen Howden, Thuy Le, Anne Matthews, Laura McLeod, Tenille Bontempo, Gabrielle Dielesen, Amy Fowler, Laura Philpott, David Poole, Sandra Green and Vanessa Todd:



FROM SCGH, QEIIMC, NMAHS, DOH.

What follows is extracted from various documents.

10 Feb 2010:

Dr Robyn Lawrence has been formally appointed as the Executive Director, Sir Charles Gairdner Group.

All correspondence (including emails), reports, publications and other written materials produced by WA Health should be written using Australian English.

8 March 2011:

WA Health professionals will be able¹ to create and manage internal referrals with the click of a mouse thanks to a new electronic eReferral system, based on the existing eConsult used at RPH. Under the new system, consultation instructions and patient information can be logged, recorded and stored in a secure and accessible network system, allowing reports to be easily generated for work load management, accountability and tracking patient information and history.

As one of the building blocks of the national eHealth reform, eReferrals will help solve current issues with the paper-based system including time lags and loss of information. It will also help meet Four Hour Rule targets, leading to improved patient care. SCGH will be the first site to implement the new system in June 2011, followed by a phased roll-out to all other metropolitan sites. For training or to find out more, contact **Tony Dunlop** (0413 612 274).

8 March 2011 (sic):

Congratulations to **Harry Stark** for winning this year's *Be Like Bernie Award*. Bernard "**Bernie**" **Hewitt** was a Charlies HSA until his passing in January 2009. This award, recognising Bernie's altruistic qualities, is awarded to a Support Worker nominated by their fellow Support staff members. Harry is a valued member of Patient Support Services and of the G51/G66 "family." He is retiring soon² and he will be greatly missed.

**7 April 2011:**

Sadly, on Wednesday 30 March we lost a much loved nursing colleague, **Vivienne Sprigg**. Until very recently Viv had been the Executive Director of Nursing and Midwifery at Mercy Hospital in Mt Lawley. Prior to this Viv worked in a number of very senior nursing roles within WA Health, principally at Sir Charles Gairdner and at Rockingham Hospitals.

New WA Health Style Guide is now available: Our corporate Style Guide is designed to govern and guide the production of communication materials across the WA public health system and the shows the correct way to apply logos, formatting, colour and fonts. New features include:

- revised colour palettes for design

¹ Almost forty years after it was first mooted.

² Who is going to contact him and invite him to join us? You?

new templates and logos to download
 help with meeting accessibility requirements
 updated typography guidelines
 guidelines for correctly applying the State Government badge.

All staff, as well as design suppliers to WA Health, must follow these guidelines for all communication and marketing materials.

25 May 2011:

Anne Matthews, acting Patient Safety Team Coordinator, recently won the Injury Control Council of WA's *Excellence Award in Falls Prevention*. Normally CNS of C16, Anne and her team have achieved a significant falls reduction of 35% – the largest at SCGH despite the difficult cohort of patients. Anne has also helped develop a Falls Programme that not only reduces falls but the risk of injury to a patient if they do fall, as well as being current Chair of the Falls Prevention MDT Committee and working with SquiRE to assist in delivering education, advice and support.

Staffing Update:

- **Dr Victor Cheng** has been formally appointed as the Executive Director of Medical Services, Sir Charles Gairdner Hospital, effective immediately.
- **Dr Anne-Maree Lynch** has been appointed Head of Department of the Poisons Information Centre, effective immediately.

Library Update:

The following online tutorials now on the Library Page of ChIPs:

- Best Practice Online Training Tutorial for Clinicians
- Best Practice Online Training Tutorial for Junior Doctors (suitable for all staff).

2 June 2011:

Sir Charles Gairdner Group Human Research Ethics Committee - Expressions of Interest: The HREC reviews research applications involving human participants to protect their welfare and rights, guided by relevant standards. As a member, you can make a difference by representing the opinions of the community through reviewing and evaluating research proposals, and addressing important ethical issues in research.

7 June 2011:

Charlies Excellence in Service Awards: The first Award presentations will be held on Friday 17 June at 7.30am in the Joske Seminar Room, 8th Floor, G Block. This month's **individual** nominees are Denise Brown(Haematology); Angela Glatz (Patient Support Services), Trish Grimm (Ward G73); Julian Hedzik (Ward G73); Carmel Hughes, (Psychiatry); Laura Philpott (Ward G74); Giovanni Rizzi (Ward C16); and Jeremy Willmott (Ward G51). **Team** nominees are Charlies Coffee Cart/Recharge @ Charlies; Gairdner Voluntary Group; and the Liver Transplant Unit.

21 June 2011:

Charlies Excellence in Service Awards: The winners of the first Award presentations were **Trish Grimm** (Ward G73); and the **Gairdner Voluntary Group**.



24 May 2011:

A four-megabyte (lots of colour pictures) 5-page .pdf progress report on QEIMC redevelopment was issued. I have it electronically and can email it to you if you wish, but it would probably be better to view regular updates online at:
<http://www.nmahs.health.wa.gov.au/BuildingProgram/QEII/index.html>
 I'm not sure if the 4MB progress report appears there...

RESEARCH NEWS

Since the last issue of this Newsletter I have received 39 emails/bulletins/letters from the SCGH Department of Research. Some of these are of great significance to anyone interested in research: if that includes you, get yourself on the emailing list. Email me if in doubt about how to do that. **Peter Thompson** has really revolutionised research at SCGH - **Brian Lloyd** showed great wisdom in engineering his appointment through the proper procedure.

FROM THE COMMITTEE (Extracts from Minutes)**18th January 2011**

- Sale of the History book. KM advised that no copies were sold at the November 2010 long service awards ceremony. It was suggested that discount-priced copies be offered to internal buyers who wish to give to retiring or departing staff. Agreed to sell the paperback version at \$20 for this purpose.
- Display cabinets in Watling Street. BW still chasing cabinet makers for quote. PW suggested another possible tradesman; BW will follow up.
- SCGH Ex-Trainees funds and membership. Sue Davis had briefly responded to earlier queries about funds: she will establish how much money is in the Trust account, and advise Paul Woods. The reply made no reference to the membership database. However, Sue confirmed she had located the key to the Olive Anstey Display Cabinet, and would hand that over.
- Alumni logo. BW circulated 4 draft versions created by SCGH graphic designer Blake Manners. BW will take Committee members' comments back to Blake for further work-up.
- MM met with Dr Victor Cheng, A/Exec Director Medical Services, about securing parking permits for the Archives volunteers each Tuesday. Dr Cheng noted MM's suggestion, and also proposed that the Alumni seek publicity for the Archives when the move is complete.
- Kerry noted that bank fees were exceeding the interest earned on deposits. She recommended investigation of alternative accounts, and examination of the cost to accept credit card payments (for memberships or for book purchases).
- Kerry Mordaunt announced she would step down as Treasurer and as a Committee member.

[Ed: As far as I know the Committee has not met since, although as Cecily is on Long-Service Leave until September I'm not sure...]

RULES OF OUR ASSOCIATION: MEMBERSHIP

There still seems to be a misconception among hospital staff that membership is available only to retirees. Please do anything you can to promulgate the truth. The requirement for current staff members is that five cumulative years of service (spread over any period) is enough; for retirees two cumulative years is enough. "Staff" is interpreted very liberally!

ANNOYING THINGS

From the midnight which ended 9 June 2011, AIMS³ reports lost any privilege against production in court cases (presumably not retrospectively?). That in itself is annoying enough, but what really annoys me is that I was informed by the Australian Medical Association and my medical defence association, not by the Medical Board of Australia, the Health Department of WA, or any of the other forces which conspired to introduce the system. In general I am strongly in favour of such systems, but this change was not required and will be counterproductive.

Similarly, Psychiatrists must now report psychosis induced by stimulants. A very good idea, but who told me? Was it the Medical Board of Australia, who now charge FIVE times what the Medical Board of Western Australia used to charge despite delivering a service not one-fifth as good? No, the MBA didn't tell me – it was the Australasian College for Emergency Medicine.

PLEASING THINGS

- Son Jasper, 3 July 2005, amazed that the family had eaten absolutely everything which I had BBQd: *That's the first meal we've ever finished – excluding Acts of Dog!* [referring to the family Rottweiler].
- While son Crispin was living with us, he was making a cup of (white) tea on the black kitchen bench when a little milk splashed over the side. When it dried it left an image about 20 mm high – see at right.

Crispin's comment: *If it had been a bit better people would have come from all over the place to worship our bench-top!*

It's neither right nor left, but pretty good for complete chance!



SILLY THINGS ETC

For a definition of Paraprosookian sentences see <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Paraprosookian> (or your local dictionary). Here are some examples:

- I asked God for a bike, but I know God doesn't work that way. So I stole the bike and asked for forgiveness.
- Do not argue with an idiot. He will drag you down to his level and beat you on experience.
- I want to die peacefully in my sleep, like my grandfather. Not screaming and yelling like the passengers in his car.
- The last thing I want to do is hurt you. But it's still on the list.
- If I agreed with you, we'd both be wrong.
- War does not determine who is right -- only who is left.

³ AIMS = Australian Incident Management System, the system used to report nasty or potentially nasty events/circumstances in hospitals. Its effectiveness depends upon anonymity and immunity of the person reporting.

WHAT ONE DOES IN RETIREMENT

UV filters and Digital Cameras

At our Christmas BBQ I discussed with a few members whether digital cameras benefit from ultraviolet filters, as do old film cameras (blue skies go darker). In essence, the web says “not much”. Digital sensors are not very sensitive to UV “light”. However digital sensors *are* very sensitive to infrared radiation, and many manufacturers put an IR filter in front of the sensor to compensate for that. My own is still sensitive enough to clearly show the IR output from remote controllers, which is a good way of telling whether your remote controller is working. Simply point your camera and the remote control at each other, and watch the camera’s display while your third hand sends messages from the remote controller. If you can’t see it flashing, either you’ve got a very expensive digital camera or your controller is not working (maybe the batteries are flat).

Having read all about it, I decided to buy a polarizing filter – they are good for photographing underwater scenes from above. However, in common with many digital cameras mine has no facility to attach any sort of filter without preventing the lens from coming out when you switch it on. And since then it’s broken.

BOOKS

I can recommend these:

- **Not your ordinary doctor.** **Jim Leavesley**, Allen & Unwin, 2010.
Jim is a local doctor and raconteur whom I met via the Riley Motor Club in the early seventies. You’ll enjoy this book, which is very easy reading and full of surprises and ghastly historical facts. It will make you glad you’re alive this century and not a few hundred years ago.
- **The Ascent of Science.** **Brian L Silver**, Oxford University Press New York, 1998.
Without doubt this is the most easily-readable compendium on science that I have EVER read. It covers all branches of classic and modern science, from biology and chemistry to sub-nuclear physics and cosmology. Logic, quantum mechanics, chaos theory, relativity and anything else you can think of is clearly and simply explained, together with the trials and tribulations of the people involved and the social histories of their times. I particularly like the way he mentions that sub-nuclear physics is totally irrelevant to anyone other than a few hundred researchers, and his repeated descriptions of the decades-long rejections suffered by virtually all those breaking new ground.

Within the space of a few pages, he explains the classification of over 400 elementary particles (like electrons, positrons, protons, quarks, muons, etc) and elegantly summarises them in what amounts to a small periodic table. The book is littered with useful homely facts like the average speed of an oxygen molecule, the number of times it bumps into another each second, and the speed of the electrons in your TV set (7% of the speed of light).

By the time you finish it you’ll understand everything around you except women. And, to be honest, I still don’t understand why over 90% of the chewing gum spots I see on the pavement are perfect circles, while less than 1% of my carefully-contrived “circular” pizza bases are anything of the sort.

- **Maths 1001.** **Richard Elwes**, London: Quercus, 2010.
In 1001 short easy-to-follow paragraphs, the entire scope of maths is simply

explained. Strange attractors will hold no fears for you by the time you finish this book. The publisher refers to *Science 1001* as being another in the series – I'm searching for it.

- **The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-Time. Mark Haddon**, recently. This is a brilliantly-scripted book which will give you deep insight into the problems faced by some people. A must-read for anyone contemplating having children.

- **At Home. Bill Bryson.**

Bill Bryson has written heaps of books, some fiction and some fact. This book covers centuries of English social history, but is fluently written in a style which makes it hard to put down. For example at one point he side-tracks to a story about the last dodo:

... human being — a species of organism that is capable of unravelling the deepest secrets of the heavens while at the same time pounding into extinction, for no purpose at all, a creature that never did us any harm and wasn't even remotely capable of understanding what we were doing to it as we did it. Indeed, dodos were so spectacularly short on insight, it is reported, that if you wished to find all the dodos in a vicinity you had only to catch one and set it to squawking, and all the others would waddle along to see what was up.

The indignities to the poor dodo didn't end quite there. In 1755, some seventy years after the last dodo's death, the director of the Ashmolean Museum in Oxford decided that the institution's stuffed dodo was becoming unpleasantly musty and ordered it tossed on a bonfire. This was a surprising decision as it was by this time the only dodo in existence, stuffed or otherwise. A passing employee, aghast, tried to rescue the bird but could save only its head and part of one limb.

As a result of this and other departures from common sense, we are not now entirely sure what a living dodo was like. We possess much less information than most people suppose — a handful of crude descriptions by 'unscientific voyagers, three or four oil paintings, and a few scattered osseous fragments' ...

Elsewhere he describes the polymath Cavendish:

... Cavendish is a book in himself. Born into a life of sumptuous privilege — his grandfathers were dukes, respectively, of Devonshire and Kent — he was the most gifted English scientist of his age, but also the strangest. He suffered, in the words of one of his few biographers, from shyness to a '*degree bordering on disease*'. Any human contact was for him a source of the deepest discomfort.

Once he opened his door to find an Austrian admirer, freshly arrived from Vienna, on the front step. Excitedly, the Austrian began to babble out praise. For a few moments Cavendish received the compliments as if they were blows from a blunt object and then, unable to take any more, fled down the path and out the gate, leaving the front door wide open. It was some hours before he could be coaxed back to the property. Even his housekeeper communicated with him by letter.

Although he did sometimes venture into society — he was particularly devoted to the weekly scientific soirees of the great naturalist Sir Joseph Banks — it was always made clear to the other guests that Cavendish was on no account to be approached or even looked at. Those who sought his views were advised to wander into his vicinity as if by accident and to '*talk as it were into vacancy*'. If their remarks were scientifically worthy they might receive a mumbled reply, but more often than not they would hear a peeved squeak (his voice appears to have been high—pitched) and turn to find an actual vacancy and the sight of Cavendish fleeing for a more peaceful corner.

His wealth and solitary inclinations allowed him to turn his house in Clapham into a large laboratory where he could range undisturbed through every corner of the physical sciences —

electricity, heat, gravity, gases, anything to do with the composition of matter. The second half of the eighteenth century was a time when people of a scientific bent grew intensely interested in the physical properties of fundamental things — gases and electricity in particular — and began seeing what they could do with them, often with more enthusiasm than sense. In America, Benjamin Franklin famously risked his life by flying a kite in an electrical storm. In France, a chemist named Pilatre de Rozier tested the flammability of hydrogen by gulping a mouthful and blowing across an open flame, proving at a stroke that hydrogen is indeed explosively combustible and that eyebrows are not necessarily a permanent feature of one's face. Cavendish, for his part, conducted experiments in which he subjected himself to graduated jolts of electrical current, diligently noting the increasing levels of agony until he could keep hold of his quill, and sometimes his consciousness, no longer.

FROM THE EDITOR

Contributions are always welcome (subject to editing!). Either:

- *email me at my **spanking brand-new email address***: lastewart7@gmail.com (my old cbcn address will continue to work for quite a while)
- *write to me*: Dr Lindsay Stewart, 111 Boas Avenue, JOONDALUP WA 6027
- *telephone me*: (08) 9301 4432.

VALE

With regret I note the deaths of:

John Black

John was, to my knowledge, the only non-medically-qualified person ever elected a member of the SCGH Clinical Association (ie the medical specialists on the staff of SCGH). Trained as a physicist, he was involved in human physiology and neurology, biophysics, nuclear medicine, radiation physics, mathematics and computing. I had the privilege of working for him in 1984 and learnt much from that time.

He had a long string of qualifications including most recently (I hope I remember correctly) one of only six DSc degrees awarded by UWA. He will be sadly missed.

Gladys Heedes

Gladys spent much of her working life as a pharmacist at Princess Margaret Hospital for Children, including running the statewide Poisons Information Centre there before it moved to Charlies around the year 2000. Tributes published in *The West Australian* indicate that she was a larger-than-life person in many circles.

Rea Hitchins

The success of the SCGH School of Nursing owed a lot to Rea. I hope that one of her colleagues might write a lengthier account for a future edition.

Viv Sprigg

Another larger-than-life character, one who seems to have departed well before her time. Again, I hope that one of her colleagues might write a lengthier account for a future edition.