



St Vincent's Hospital Medical Alumni Association

Welcome to the Summer 2018-19 e-newsletter of your association

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Where are you? Please help us

Keeping track of our members is a big problem for our secretary. Every time our e-newsletter goes out, we find a few members who have not notified us of a change of email address. How can we possibly locate them? One way is for every member who reads this newsletter to pass it on to one other colleague or friend who is known to be or thought to be an alumnus of St Vincent's Hospital. So PLEASE do us a big favour by taking a few moments to pass this newsletter on to at least one medical friend and suggest that they provide their email address to Sue Mabilia (Susan.MABILIA@svha.org.au). Alternatively, if anyone is unsure about their membership, they can register with the Association on our web site at <http://stvincentsmedicalalumni.org.au/> Membership of the Association is free!

For members wishing to visit the Association Office, please note that Sue Mabilia has moved to the Senior Medical Staff Office, Level 2, Building A (Inpatient Services Building) at St Vincent's. Her phone number is unchanged – 9231 2304 (Mon-Thurs).

Medical Alumni Association Annual Golf Day, 2019

Calling all golfers! The St Vincent's Medical Alumni Association golf day for 2019 will be held at Green Acres Golf Club in Kew on Friday 22 March. For more information and to register please contact Sue Mabilia (Susan.MABILIA@svha.org.au or tel. 9231 2304).

Australia Day Honours

We congratulate the following St Vincent's Hospital Medical Alumni who were awarded Australian honours on Australia Day, January 26, 2019:

Professor Anne Bernadette CHANG AM

For significant service to paediatric respiratory medicine as a clinician and researcher.

Dr Michael Joseph DAVIES AM

For significant service to medicine in the field of anaesthesia, and to professional medical bodies.

(Editor's note: Michael Davies is a past president of our Association and is still our secretary/treasurer)

Dr Michael Joseph BOURKE OAM

For service to medicine.

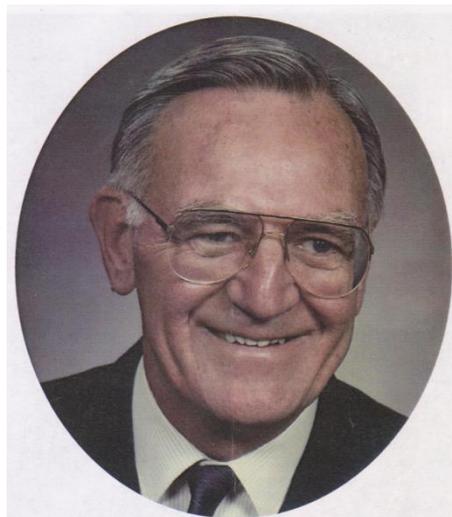
Obituaries

Professor Richard “Dick” C Bennett AM, MBBS, MS, FRACS, FRCS

24/9/1930- 2/10/2018

It is with regret and sadness that we note the recent passing of Professor Richard Bennett. Professor Bennett graduated from the Adelaide University Medical School as the top student in 1954. He was a lecturer in the Anatomy Department of the University of Adelaide in 1956-57 and a surgical registrar in the University Department of Surgery at Royal Adelaide Hospital in 1958-59. He was awarded the Fellowship of the RACS in 1959. He then went to the UK where he first worked at the Western Infirmary in Glasgow. From this base he achieved the Fellowship of the UK Royal College of Surgeons in 1960. He then did further training, particularly in colo-rectal surgery, with Professor Goligher in Leeds in 1961 and 1962. He obtained his Adelaide MS by thesis based on research into the anal sphincter mechanism. In 1963 he returned to Australia, working initially in the University Department of Surgery at the Royal Adelaide Hospital.

In 1965, he was appointed to the newly established University of Melbourne Hugh Devine Chair of Surgery at St Vincent’s Hospital. As Foundation Professor, he had to build his Department from scratch. Although initially interested in colo-rectal surgery, he and his surgical staff became involved in the early days of renal transplantation at St Vincent’s. Subsequently he focussed his efforts on breast surgery and this became his lifelong passion. In this specialty he developed a significant reputation nationally and internationally. He introduced a Consultative Breast Service at St Vincent’s in 1979, the precursor to the current day breast service, which provides high quality multi-disciplinary care, particularly to patients with breast cancer.



Over his long career Dick contributed wholeheartedly to many committees at St Vincent’s. At various times, he served as chairman of the Patient Care Review Committee, the Research Grants Committee, the Human Research Ethics Committee and the Animal

Research Ethics Committee. He also served as a member of the Electoral College, the Medical Advisory Committee, the St Vincent's Advisory Council and the hospital's Forward Planning Committee.

Particularly noticeable to his contemporaries was his ability to deal with the sometimes difficult task of serving two masters, the university and the hospital. It was always clear to these colleagues that Dick saw himself as a St Vincent's person first. He enjoyed sport and was a very competent tennis player; he especially enjoyed being recruited by the surgeons as a regular team member with John Connell and Paul Steedman for their annual tennis challenge against the GE physicians.

Whilst serving St Vincent's and the University, he also energetically involved himself in the affairs of the Royal Australasian College of Surgeons. He joined its Court of Examiners in 1972. He was a member of the RACS Council from 1975 until 1987. During that time, he served as Treasurer and ultimately Vice President in 1985 and 1986. He also served as the Editor of the College's journal, the Australian and New Zealand Journal of Surgery. He was central to the successful establishment of the College's Foundation. In 1986 he was awarded the Sir Hugh Devine Medal for his contributions to the College.

Throughout his professional life, Dick was an astute, poised and gentle man, in the true sense of the word gentle. He supported many trainees aspiring for careers in surgery. Following his retirement, Dick continued an active life, adding golf to his sporting interests. In the later stages of his life, he was afflicted by illness and disability. However, throughout this time, he addressed these issues with his usual courage, determination, graciousness and dignity.

Our condolences go to his wife, Enid and his children, particularly his son Tim, who is the current head of the department of Plastic and Reconstructive Surgery here at St Vincent's.

Contributed by Dr Simon Banting who is currently head of the Hepatobiliary/Upper GI surgical unit and head of surgery at St Vincent's Hospital

**Dr Henry (Harry) Vernon Crock AO MD MS FRCS FRACS FRCS Ed (Hon) D.Sc
(Honoris Causa) Melb.**

14/9/1929-21/4/ 2018

Henry (Harry) Vernon Crock was one of Australia's pioneer spinal surgeons with a global reputation for innovative surgical techniques and a gift for teaching and mentoring. Trained in orthopaedics, he specialised in spinal surgery and clinical research into the causes of back pain and sciatica. Harry served as Senior Orthopaedic Surgeon at St. Vincent's Hospital, Melbourne from 1961 – 1986, and then practised in London until 2000.

Harry became renowned for performing complex spinal surgery with outstanding results for his patients. Fundamental to his practice was an intimate knowledge of anatomy, meticulous surgical skill, and special attention to preservation of the blood supply.

Henry Vernon Crock, an identical twin, was born on 14 September 1929 to Annie (Doyle) and Vernon Crock. Educated by the Jesuits in Perth, Harry and his twin brother Gerard moved to Melbourne to study Medicine at Melbourne University, graduating in 1953. Harry won Gold Medals in Medicine and Surgery and the Ryan Scholarship at St. Vincent's Hospital, while Gerard was awarded the Exhibition in Medicine. Both twins were innovators in their fields. Harry became a world leader in spinal surgery and anatomy. Gerard William Crock, who died in 2007, was Australia's first Professor of Ophthalmology.



In 1957, Harry was awarded a Nuffield Scholarship in Orthopaedic Surgery to Oxford University. There, in 1958, he married Carmel Shorten, also a medical graduate of St Vincent's Hospital, thus beginning an exceptional partnership in life and medicine that would span over 60 years.

While training at Nuffield Orthopaedic Centre, Harry began investigating and describing the blood supply of the bones of the skeleton and lecturing in Orthopaedics at Oxford University. He produced all his own clinical and research photographs; his visual images depicting bone and vascular systems were exquisitely beautiful. Images of Harry's dissections are recognised as invaluable to anatomists across the world. Some remain on display at St. Vincent's Hospital in Melbourne, in the Department of Surgery.

Through his research, Harry contributed to improved spinal surgery techniques, and his five books on spinal surgery and anatomy have become essential reading for trainee surgeons.

With two young children, in 1961 Harry and Carmel returned to Australia, where Harry had been appointed Senior Honorary Orthopaedic Surgeon and Professorial Associate at St Vincent's Hospital. He was in charge of an orthopaedic department specialising in spinal surgery, a post he held for the next 25 years. The Unit under his leadership became a formidable team. Each week, at the end of each outpatient session, Harry would lead the unit consultants and registrars down Bourke Street, to the Florentino Bistro, where a friendly lunch was shared. In addition, he encouraged collaboration and cooperation with members of the other orthopaedic group at the hospital under Mr Brendan Dooley.

Harry's spinal surgery techniques and his research into the blood supply of the skeleton and spinal cord became known in many overseas countries. Visiting surgical Fellows came to work and study with him from Japan, Indonesia, India, Singapore, Canada, the USA and UK and he received many invitations to lecture at overseas orthopaedic meetings. His research while at St. Vincent's Hospital, was carried out in the historic but dilapidated Devonshire Arms Hotel which was at the rear of the main hospital. In a basic laboratory there, the painstaking anatomical studies, preparation of specimens and photography were carried out by Harry over many years, ably supported by Carmel and various research workers. From this work was published "An Atlas of the Vascular Anatomy of the Skeleton and Spinal Cord" which won the BMA Book Prize for Basic and Clinical Sciences in 1996.

Harry and Carmel returned to England in 1986 where Harry took up the position of Consultant Spinal Surgeon at the Hammersmith Hospital in London, serving until his retirement in 2000.

Harry received academic and professional recognition and civic honours throughout his four-decade career. Amongst these, he was made an Officer of the Order of Australia (1984), appointed Honorary Fellow of the Royal College of Surgeons of Edinburgh (1997) and awarded a Doctorate of Science (Honoris Causa) by Melbourne University (2008) for his contributions to surgery, the first and only surgeon to date to receive this honour.

Harry was a Foundation Executive Member of the International Society for the Study of the Lumbar Spine and its President 1984-5. In 1977-9, he was Chairman of the Facet Club of Australia (now the Spine Society of Australia). He became a Foundation Member of the

European Spine Society in 1990. In London, he and his friend and former patient, Phillip Clayton, established DISCS (Diagnostic Investigation into Spinal Conditions and Sciatica), a Charitable Trust to encourage and enable further research into spinal conditions. Harry remained its President until his death.

In Australia, Harry's patients were often poor migrant labourers who suffered from back pain and sciatica, spoke little English and had scant knowledge of the Australian legal system. He treated them with kindness, understanding and care, helping many avoid a life of disability and chronic pain. Having diagnosed and treated their conditions, he supported many of their compensation claims, often during difficult court proceedings. Harry became a skilled expert witness for those injured in work-related accidents. In 1991, he made history in a Victorian Supreme Court trial, becoming the first witness to use video conferencing to give evidence from overseas.

Harry was an avid collector of fine art and befriended many of Australia's great artists, showing an eye for talents that would gain global recognition. He also enjoyed music and theatre.

Harry and Carmel returned to Australia in 2002, following their retirement from surgical practice. Simple pleasures, such as attending the Woodend Arts Festival each year, replaced the theatrical delights he had experienced in London. In these later years, Harry enjoyed spending much of his time with his family. He is survived by his wife Carmel, their 5 children - Catherine, Elizabeth, Carmel, Vernon and Damian, their partners and 15 grandchildren.

Contributed by his wife, Dr Carmel Crock (née Shorten), and his daughter, Dr Elizabeth Crock RN, BSc, MPH, PhD, ACRN.

Dr E. Julian Keogh

2/9/31 – 10/11/2017

Julian Keogh was an understated gentleman who was passionate about the care of burn injured children. Julian was educated at Xavier College, Melbourne before studying medicine at the University of Melbourne. His clinical school was St Vincent's Hospital; after graduation he spent his first two years as a resident there. Like many of his generation, he travelled to the United Kingdom to further his surgical education and obtained his FRCS. He decided to pursue a career in Paediatric Surgery and worked at Alder Hey Hospital in Liverpool under the luminaries of Paediatric Surgery at the time.



He returned to be a Paediatric Surgical Registrar at RCH, Melbourne from September 1964 - February 1967 and obtained his FRACS. During that time, he not only worked with the General Paediatric surgeons but also trained in the Plastic Surgery department under Mr Wakefield (known more commonly as the Vicar). This training stood him in good stead for his future role as a Paediatric Burns surgeon. He was appointed as a consultant to the Burns unit in 1967. He also took on consultant positions as a General Paediatric surgeon at the Austin Hospital and St. Vincent's Hospital.

The RCH Burns unit was established by A. Murray Clarke in 1956 and became a world leading unit. In 1970, the Unit combined with CSIRO to look at the flammability of children's nightgowns. This ground-breaking work, in which Julian was instrumental, transformed the injuries seen not only in Melbourne but also around the world. This work stimulated Julian's lifelong interest in the prevention of burn injuries in children, the results of which we are still seeing today. John Solomon became Head of Unit in 1974 and Julian served as his deputy prior to taking over as the Head in 1982. Julian was instrumental in training the current generation of paediatric burns surgeons, not only in Melbourne but also the many trainees from interstate who worked with the Burns unit during their time at RCH, Melbourne.

The Australian and New Zealand Burns Association (ANZBA) was formed in 1976. Julian was the founding secretary and was responsible for developing the logo which remained unchanged until recently. He was an active member throughout his career serving in many capacities.

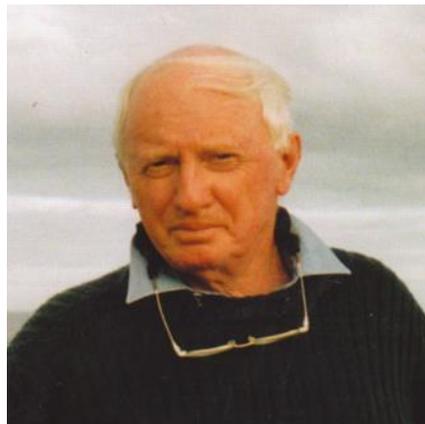
Julian stepped down as head of unit in 1996 but continued to have an active role in patient care, education and advocacy until retired in 2003. RCH, Melbourne honoured his contribution with the presentation of the President's medal and ANZBA honoured him as an ANZBA champion.

Contributed by Dr Russell Taylor who is a consultant surgeon and head of the Burns Unit at the Royal Children's Hospital.

Dr John McNamara MBBS, FRACP

27/7/1936 – 18/6/2018

It is with great sadness we report the death of John McNamara, an alumnus of St Vincent's, and of whom we should all be very proud. John is fondly remembered as a caring paediatrician who trained in medicine at St Vincent's Hospital, Melbourne, graduating in 1959, and returning to St Vincent's as a paediatric physician from 1970 to 1975. After being a resident at St Vincent's from 1960 to 1963, he was appointed as junior resident at the Royal Children's Hospital, Melbourne in 1964, where he became chief resident in 1966. Receiving two scholarships, he went to the UK, first at Newcastle then at Great Ormond Street London, returning to Australia in 1969. He rapidly rose through the ranks at the Children's, ultimately to become Chairman of General Paediatrics and was involved in planning and administration there. He had a very busy private practice, initially centred at the Mercy Hospital, East Melbourne, and later at the Children's. He became an examiner for the Royal Australasian College of Physicians, division of Paediatrics, and was involved in the College of Paediatrics for many years.



From an early age John demonstrated considerable sporting prowess, being captain of his school, St Patrick's, Sale, and his love of sport continued throughout his life. John had a close association with his family, and his holiday house at Sorrento was in great demand. John had long terminal illness, the support of which needed all the resources of his friends and family, and in some respects, his death was a release.

John leaves a legacy of the very ideals of good medicine, helping sick children and their families in a very involved and devoted fashion, often at great personal inconvenience. He taught, both directly and by example, the many junior doctors he supported. His diagnostic skills were unsurpassed. His support of research was lifelong and intense. John will be greatly missed by his family, his wife, Mary, his five children and nine grandchildren.

Contributed by Dr Justin Kelly OAM, a fellow St Vincent's Alumnus and long-serving surgeon at the Royal Children's Hospital.

Dr Vilim (Bill) Stanisich, FANZCA

13/2/1935 – 17/7/2018

Bill Stanisich was born at St Vincent's hospital in 1935. Little did he know that he would later spend most of his professional career at that same hospital. He was the first-born child of his Croatian parents who had immigrated to Australia after the First World War. They had experienced tough times and instilled in Bill the importance of hard work, education and always doing your best. These were qualities that would underpin his Anaesthetic career. He was an accomplished pianist, having been instructed at a young age by the Viennese-born pianist and composer, Leo Schramm. Bill was educated at Parade College in East Melbourne, again not far from St Vincent's.

Bill studied Medicine at the University of Melbourne and graduated in 1962. He completed his internship at Warrnambool Hospital in 1962 and then moved to Geelong Hospital where he probably developed his interest in anaesthesia. Bill started his anaesthetic training at Queen Victoria hospital in Melbourne in 1964. He then embarked on training over the next four years at the Royal Children's, Royal Women's, Royal Melbourne and Prince Henry's hospitals. In 1968, after a "grand tour" of Europe, he settled in London and passed two Fellowships, those of the Faculty of Anaesthetists Royal College of Surgeons of Ireland, and the Royal College of Surgeons. He was later elected to Fellowship of the Faculty of Anaesthetists of the Royal Australasian College of Surgeons in 1975. The awarding of these three fellowships made Bill the most qualified anaesthetist on the staff at St Vincent's.

In 1970 Bill returned to St Vincent's as a Staff Anaesthetist and he remained in that position until his retirement in 1999. His major clinical interests were anaesthesia for Orthopaedic surgery and Plastic surgery. Bill's major contribution to clinical anaesthesia was that associated with the development of Microsurgery. He worked with Mr Bernard O'Brien, a world leader in this area. This surgery was prolonged lasting anywhere from 12 to 18 hours. The potential problems of pressure sores and deep venous thrombosis as well as anaesthetist's fatigue were all worked out by Bill. Bill wrote the definitive chapter on Anaesthesia for Microsurgery in the first book about this surgery written by Bernard O'Brien in 1977. Bill became our expert on difficult endotracheal intubation in the days before fibre optics. His skill came to the fore in this situation. He was careful, meticulous in his preparation and unhurried. Thus, he was successful when others struggled.



Bill had a number of administrative duties in the Department, but by far was his skill with night and weekend rostering for staff and trainees. He was meticulously fair, making everyone do an equal share of these sometime arduous tasks. Complaints were few but usually ignored because the staff would know that his fairness was legendary. Bill was in charge of the theatres every Friday, a difficult day because the surgeons would always want to squeeze in cases before the weekend. He would frequently exclaim that the day “was a disaster”. Occasionally it was. Bill was acting Director or Deputy Director on a number of occasions and always carried out these tasks well.

Bill was a very private person and he rarely talked to the other staff about his interests or his activities. It has been revealed that he was an excellent cook, that he played the piano right up until his last months of life and retained a passion for classical music. His retirement dinner was held at the Victorian Artists’ Society Galleries in East Melbourne. He exhibited 50 of his paintings, mostly copies of van Gogh, Margaret Preston and Sali Herman, all superbly painted. In his retirement he was commissioned to paint something for the Department and chose to depict a formula one car crash. He equated an anaesthetist’s role as similar to a formula one car driver. Each was only one mistake from disaster.

In recent years Bill was suffering from Parkinson’s Disease but he managed to continue playing the piano, reading, enjoying classical music and the antics of the family’s dogs. He had two cardiac events in the past year, succumbing to the second. He is survived by his sister who is 10 years younger and who looked after him in the last 2 years of his life.

St Vincent’s celebrates 125 years of caring this year, Bill certainly made his contribution to that caring for patients.

Contributed by Dr Michael Davies, Director of Anaesthesia at St Vincent’s Hospital, 1984 - 2009.

The Association notes with regret the death of **Dr John Niall** on the 25th of December, 2018. An obituary will be sought for our next newsletter.

Book review*

“Memoir of an accidental ethicist: On medical ethics, medical misconduct and challenges for the medical profession” by Kerry J Breen

Published by Australian Scholarly Publishing N Melb 2018 pp 255 ISBN 978-1-925801-22-4

Reviewed by Dr Frank Bowden

From his early life in Bright in Victoria in the 1940s, living in a house without running water, sewage or electricity, Kerry Breen describes with humility, gratitude and even surprise, how he went on to become a practising gastroenterologist who would help change the way the Australian medical profession thinks about, inter alia, ethics, impaired practitioners, research governance, overseas trained doctors, undergraduate medical education, specialty college training and conflict of interest. This book is a professional recapping of a medical life of service to the community and the profession. Although entitled a memoir, there is not a lot of personal detail here, but there is more than enough description of his interactions with colleagues, politicians, academics and bureaucrats to make for a very lively read. Although ever the gentleman, there are many examples of the hapless, foolish and arrogant snagging themselves on the wire in the blood of this accidental ethicist.

In 1987 I was Kerry Breen’s registrar at St Vincent’s Hospital. Young doctors are anxious for praise and guidance, yet rarely receive sincere measures of either. Kerry was parsimonious with overt praise and careful in the way he delivered criticism. Receipt of the former was therefore of great value; the latter was to be avoided at all costs. To many of my peers, Dr Breen was the benchmark for ethical behaviour: over the coming decades when faced with a dilemma, I would ask myself the question “What would Kerry do?”

One day we had a patient who, I think, was refusing treatment and Kerry suggested that I take the problem to the newly appointed in-house ethicist, Nick Tonti-Filippini. When I related back the advice I had received, Kerry didn’t seem impressed but made no comment in my presence. I had to wait for this book to learn that the man who was even then a pillar of ethical practice in Victoria and who would lead the way to a uniform code of Australian Human Research ethics practice, was constitutionally suspicious of non-clinical medical ethicists in general, and of Tonti-Filippini, in particular. We learn that during his tenure as chair of the Australia Health Ethics Committee in the early 2000s, Kerry’s apprehensions are confirmed when the new Minister of Health, Tony Abbott, appoints Tonti-Filippini to the committee against the advice of the NHMRC, who wanted a second Aboriginal member. Tonti-Filippini hijacks the first meeting he attends and then reveals over coffee that he was appointed to ‘keep an eye’ on the work of the committee for Abbott.

Throughout, Kerry argues for a practical, hands-on approach to medical ethics and he suggests that the technical language of the professional bioethicist may have the

unintended consequence of excluding clinicians from the debate rather than encouraging their involvement.

The management of impaired doctors is dealt with in detail and his view that Medical Boards should be firm but compassionate with them is carefully argued. He is a strong defender of doctors' health programs and discusses the struggle to maintain funding for the Victorian program.

Elected President of the Australian Medical Council in 1987, he saw his role as 'keeping...well-oiled processes running'. But he is downplaying the part he played in reform: again, the iron Kerry appears when the Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission finds that the AMC has discriminated against an overseas trained doctor who could not pass the exams that would allow him to be registered. The case is appealed in the High Court in the AMC's favour and Kerry concludes that he was 'confident that the educational standards set were quite fair, that most OTDs were passing the examination and that the agitators had appalling knowledge of medicine'.

Unlike many Australian health bureaucracies which import administrators from the UK to solve local problems, Kerry is clearly not enamoured of the British health system. Commenting on the UK response to the Harold Shipman scandal, he writes that many of the problems faced by their medical profession 'were not universal beyond the UK'. He believes that some were due to the UK class system, 'a paternalistic attitude of doctors and the sense that the medical profession could never be wrong'. Citing the lack of patient choice in the NHS, he goes on to say that not only did the notion of patient autonomy come 'very late to the UK, it has perhaps not completely arrived even now.

It has been said that the world is run by those who show up but most of us find committee work difficult at best. In his long professional career, Kerry Breen has done much more than just show up - in fact he has often shown us all up, both as individual practitioners and as a profession. He reports, for example, that he, as Chair, was enthusiastic about Minister Michael Wooldridge's invitation to the AMC to supervise specialist medical college accreditation, contrasting this with the attitude of some fellow members of the Victorian Medical Board who had scoffed at Breen's same suggestion a few years earlier.

For me, the most powerful chapter in the book comes at the end; it deals with drug companies and the medical profession. Kerry makes it clear that conflict of interest, in all its forms, is one of the most important issues facing our profession and I would make this chapter prescribed reading for any young doctor. I was surprised to learn of the depth of his antipathy towards the pharmaceutical industry. He is dumbfounded that highly intelligent doctors believe that they, unlike every other person on the planet, are immune to advertising. I can't remember gleaning any views from him on doctors and Big Pharma when

I was his registrar, yet his description of the malign influence of the industry on prescribing habits suspiciously mirror mine, even down to fine details. This, then, is the final proof of his lifelong influence on me. Sometime in the last 20 years, I must have asked myself the 'what would Kerry do?' question.

And I'm proud to say that I must have worked it out for myself. Read this book and you will too.

Professor Frank Bowden is a St Vincent's Hospital alumnus and infectious diseases physician based in Canberra. He is the author of two books: "Gone Viral", published in 2011 and "Infectious: a doctor's eye-opening insights into contagious diseases", published in 2016. The inaugural Professor of Medicine at ANU, he is now the Director of Clinical Services at Calvary Hospital in Canberra.

***Our policy is to publish reviews of books written by members of the Alumni Association. We can only review books that we know about. So if you know of a book that could be reviewed please let Sue Mabilia know (Susan.MABILIA@svha.org.au).**

From the Archives Department

Over the years the Archives has acquired many wonderful stories about the hospital and its people. These stories are contained in the diverse records held in the collection, and transmitted in correspondence and in-person visits by researchers, returning alumni and other visitors. For example there is an oral history with Bernard O'Brien where he speaks of the beginnings of his interest in microsurgery as harking back to his days as a young doctor sewing up lacerations in Cas. Another gem is the account Mother Alphonsus O'Doherty provides us of the early years of the hospital. She recalls the care hospital foundress Mother Berchmans Daly showed for the human dignity of patients evident even in small gestures such as using white bed linen instead of the standard hospital coarse grey issue of the time and always addressing patients by title and name. She also recalls spare food being gathered up and made into parcels distributed from baskets at the front gate in the depression years.

Stories collected from the St Vincent's community as part of 125th anniversary celebrations this year include some wonderful anecdotes such as that of the doctor who was born at St Vincent's and followed her father's footsteps into a medical career at the hospital as well as that of a kitchen staffer of more than 40 years whose career at the hospital was inspired by the care that medical staff had shown to her brother and his family in the 1970s.

I am sometimes asked what sort of items the Archives is interested in collecting with one common misconception being that priority is given to old items. In fact we evaluate items against a range of criteria. Likely to be of interest is material that illustrates any of the four themes outlined in our Interpretation/Communication Policy, these being:

- the hospital's founders, the Sisters of Charity, and their work with the poor and vulnerable;
- the growth and development of the hospital from "small beginnings" as cottage hospital to today's complex organisation;
- innovation and excellence; and
- the hospital and its community.

Another question I am often asked is what the role of archivist entails. The following summary provided by the Smithsonian is, I think, a good one. "Archivists perform a wide variety of tasks. In a smaller archives, a few individuals (or one person!) may do everything while, in a larger archives, archivists may specialize in specific aspects of the work. Traditionally, an archivist works with donors or the staff of its parent institution to acquire new collections; organizes and rehouses collections (also known as processing); describes collections and writes finding aids; and assists researchers in using the collections. Some archivists specialize in the acquisition, management, description, and preservation of (particular record formats including) photographic or audiovisual materials or electronic records. Other aspects of the job may include records management, digitization, public outreach, writing, and teaching" making it a very satisfying and varied role.

At St Vincent's a significant portion of my time is spent on outreach activities. This year many of these were connected to celebration of the 125th anniversary including development of a wall timeline graphic, heritage trail map, Open House Melbourne tour, 125th anniversary exhibition and many smaller pop-up displays.

Visits and enquiries by alumni are welcomed. I can be contacted via email at Barbara.Cytowicz@svha.org.au or phone 9231 3040 (Wednesday -

Reader's contribution*

“Many a slip ‘twixt the cup and the lip”

Looking at the septuagenarian St Vincent's medical alumni now, it's hard to picture them as JRMOs (junior resident medical officers, now called interns or HMO1s), and harder still to picture them as ever having been lusty and lusting youngsters bursting for their first holiday at the end of their JRMO year. At that time, they all had three weeks of paid leave before starting their SRMO year. So here is a vignette of these January holidays during the mid-1960s.

The average annual salary of an intern in 2018 can buy twice as many VW Beetle's as the JRMO could buy in 1965. The 2018 intern can buy five times as much petrol for the dollar as could the 1965 JRMO. These calculations do not factor in HECS repayments which did not exist in 1965 because this 'study now, pay later' scheme was introduced in 1989. One of the

most astonishing differences in purchasing power is in airfares. The 2018 intern's salary can purchase about one hundred times as many return airfares to south-east Queensland as a JRMO's salary could in 1965.

Hence, it was customary for 1965 JRMOs carefully to plan well ahead for their holiday and to drive to their destination. Most JRMOs were male and unmarried and travelled by road with one or two companions who took turns as driver, covering long distances non-stop. The most popular trip was to Surfers Paradise in Queensland. From Melbourne the shortest route was north to Tocumwal then via the primitive gravel Newell Highway to Goondiwindi, fording river beds and trying not to add to the 'road kill' (the large number of dead animals by the roadside). The slightly longer and far less punishing route was via the Hume and New England Highways. The target time from Melbourne to Surfers Paradise was 22 hours but 24 hours was acceptable. With the vast improvement in the roads in the 50 years since then, the same non-stop trip of 1700 km is said to take about 18 hours.

These JRMO lads had pre-booked apartments in The Sands, which remarkably is still standing (barely) and in The Dunes both of which were on the highly desirable beachfront Esplanade just north of Cavill Avenue. The ladettes (in the mildest sense of the word), mostly nurses and physios, stayed at The Roses – a charming family friendly motel on nearby Chevron Island.

The tallest of the 1965 group of JRMOs was Andy*. He would have been a bronzed Adonis if he had been bronzed. But, like all his colleagues, he was as pale as death. All wanted a tan ASAP and recalled the useful pre-med physics teaching that although snow reflected twice as much ultraviolet light as sand, sand reflected twice as much as grass. Also that the maximum tanning effect from ultraviolet light was between the hours of 9 a.m. and 3 p.m. when the summer sun was at an elevation of at least 45 degrees.

In those days, there was already an established connection between exposure to sunlight and the subsequent development of skin cancers (SCC, BCC and melanoma) but this was rarely publicised. So, it was thought interesting to have some practical use for those physics lectures. Those peak UV six hours in the middle of the day were not misspent on grass by the JRMOs but were devoted to the sand. On the beach in front of the Surfers Paradise Surf Club there was always an old walnut of a man with a spray gun of tanning oil while sunscreens and SPF were unheard of. DIY with peanut oil or coconut oil was the routine and as was, of course, a miscalculation and sunburn was common.

On day 1, nobody wanted to be the first to retreat into the shade and by the end of the day reddened skins were starting to hurt. At least there was topical local anaesthetic. When the UV radiation faded in the late afternoon, the thirsty beachgoers repaired to the iconic Surfers Paradise Hotel beer garden with its pumping live music. Beer was bought in jugs and carried to the outside tables. Young stomachs soon reminded their owners that lunch had been overlooked and that dinner was due. It was only a couple of hundred yards west in

Cavill Avenue to El Rancho BBQ Grill Restaurant. Huge appetites were well satisfied with massive T-bone steaks and chips.

All were happy to frequent the same watering hole and BBQ every day apart from the occasional romantic assignation. An affaire de coeur deserved a more delicate arrangement and the famous Margot Kelly's Hibiscus Room was just one block away. It was the most elegant and romantic dining venue on the Gold Coast.

By day 2, Andy not only had a red raw back but had a sentinel herpetic ulcer on his upper lip. Nevertheless, all the JRMOs spent the day on the beach again because 'affairs' were urgent and Andy 'did' his front with a hat over his face.

By day 3, Andy was hors de guerre. Not only was it agony for him to lie on either his burnt back or front but he now had a new crop of ulcers on his upper and lower lips. Clearly, he had herpes simplex but there were no antivirals invented at that time. The best he could do was to use Vaseline.

By day 4, Andy's herpetic ulceration was circumoral, cracking and bleeding in places. Only a mother could have kissed him. Considering that the natural history of herpes simplex is for it to resolve in about two weeks, which was the duration of this holiday in (Surfers) Paradise, it was clear that Andy was 'out for the count'. He was doomed to celibacy for the remainder of the holiday.

In retrospect, fate had saved Andy for better things. After returning to Melbourne and taking up his SVH SRMO appointment, Andy met and married an angel.

*Not his real name.

Contributed by Dr David Cade, St Vincent's alumnus, former deputy-director of ICU at St Vincent's and former director of ICU at Box Hill Hospital.

***Reader's contribution is a new segment of our newsletter. Contributions for consideration may be submitted to Sue Mabilia (Susan.MABILIA@svha.org.au).**

News from St Vincent's Hospital

For up-to-date hospital news please go to the St Vincent's website

<https://www.svhm.org.au/>.

PS If you have read this far, please don't forget to send this newsletter to a colleague and tell that person about free membership of the Association as well as about our website (<http://stvincentsmedicalalumni.org.au/wp/>).