



# St Vincent's Hospital Medical Alumni Association

Welcome to the Summer 2021-22  
e-newsletter of your association

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## Where are you? Please please help us

Keeping track of our members is a big problem for our secretary. Every time our e-newsletter goes out, we find several 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](mailto:Susan.MABILIA@svha.org.au)). Alternatively, if any reader 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, 2022

Calling all golfers! The St Vincent's Medical Alumni Association golf day for 2022 will be held at Green Acres Golf Club in Kew on Friday 4 March. For more information and to register please contact Sue Mabilia ([Susan.MABILIA@svha.org.au](mailto:Susan.MABILIA@svha.org.au) or tel. 9231 2304).

## Australia Day Honours

We congratulate the following St Vincent's Hospital Medical Alumna who was awarded Australian honours on Australia Day, January 26, 2022:

### **Professor Prudence Ann FRANCIS AM**

For significant service to medical research in the field of oncology, and to education.

## Obituaries

### **Paul Campion Maher MBBS, FRCS**

3/10/1937 – 1/10/2021

Paul Campion Maher was born on 3 October 1937. The name Campion was taken after Saint Edmund Campion, a famous Jesuit priest in the 16th century. Paul was born and raised in Kew, Victoria and was educated by the Jesuits at Xavier College. On leaving school in 1956 he took a 'gap' year and travelled overseas to London and thence to Europe.

While he was travelling through Germany with a friend, Father Len Egan, he was involved in a car accident sustaining a head injury with loss of consciousness and a severe injury to the lateral popliteal nerve just below the knee. Some American soldiers travelling in the car behind took him to a nearby American Army hospital. From there he was transferred to the

Royal National Orthopaedic Hospital in London where the damaged nerve was repaired by the famous orthopaedic surgeon, Sir Herbert Seddon, with almost complete recovery of the nerve function.

He returned home to Melbourne and commenced the medical course at Melbourne University in 1957, graduating in 1962. He then worked for two years at St. Vincent's Hospital as a junior and senior resident medical officer. In 1965 Paul travelled to Korea and worked with the Blue Nuns as a doctor and in 1966 he joined the St. Vincent's Melbourne team in Vietnam at the time of the Vietnam War. The following year he travelled to London and studied for and passed the primary FRCS (Edinburgh) exams either in London or perhaps in Dublin. In 1968 he spent time in Boston as well as some time in Inuvik, Canada on the Arctic Circle, returning to London in 1969 and 1970. In 1971 he came back to Melbourne and took up a position as Surgical Registrar at the Alfred Hospital working for Professor Hugh Dudley that year and again in 1972.

Following his time at the Alfred Hospital, Paul returned to London and worked as a Surgical Registrar at St. Mary's Hospital in 1973 and 1974. Already it was clear that Paul was on a unique journey throughout the world and uncertain as to what he should do. By this time he had met Joan Hatch who had been a nurse at the Alfred and so he decided to return to Australia and took up a post as a Salaried Surgical Officer at the Canberra Hospital in the ACT. It would be fair to say that Paul's professional life was already fitting a definition of peripatetic.



In 1976 Paul married Joan Elizabeth Hatch. It was the most important decision he ever made resulting in an excellent marriage. Their first child, Jonathan Champion, was born on 27 November 1977 when they were living in Canberra. A second son, Joshua Emmanuel, was born in Canberra on 5 November 1979. They continued living in Canberra until 1982. In 1978 Paul and the family also spent time in Adelaide where Paul worked for Dr Jim Watts at the Flinders Medical Centre studying breast surgery.

In 1982 they returned to Victoria and Paul joined a medical practice in Maryborough where he worked as a GP and general surgeon. Their third son, Jeremy Sebastian, was born on the 12 April 1982. In 1987 the family left Maryborough and decided to travel around Australia with their boys. Paul worked in locum positions notably in Kalbarri on the west coast of WA as a GP and in Geraldton as a surgeon.

In 1988 they returned to Victoria and purchased a home in Carisbrook where Paul worked as a GP and fully enjoyed the home and family life. However in 1991 he became restless again and went to Rockhampton Base Hospital in Queensland where he did a course in Accident and Emergency Medicine, the field in which he worked for the next twenty years. He returned to Carisbrook and from 1992 to 1994 worked in the A & E Department at the St. John of God Hospital in Ballarat. Then in 1995 he travelled north again and spent some time working in the A & E Department at the Gold Coast Hospital. He then returned again to Victoria and moved from Carisbrook to Ballarat where he worked from 1996 to 1998. In 1999 Paul and the family returned to the ACT and he worked in the A & E Department of the Woden Valley Hospital (now known as the Canberra Hospital) until 2002.

In 2003 they returned to Victoria and bought a charming bluestone home high on a hill at Chewton near Castlemaine. In that same year Paul and Joan went to Broome in Western Australia where Paul worked as a locum in the A & E Department of the Hospital. In 2004 they returned to Victoria and Paul took up a position in the A & E Department in Bendigo and continued there until 2007. In 2006 he did a course in Palliative Care gaining a Post-Graduate Certificate in Palliative Care.

In 2008 at the age of 71 he partially retired, living still in Chewton and doing occasional locum work in GP practices in Castlemaine. In that same year however Paul and Joan went to the Solomon Islands and Paul worked there for about six months. He had volunteered to work at the National Referral Hospital in Honiara helping to establish a triage system in the Accident and Emergency Department.

At about that time Paul felt that he was unable to carry on working as a doctor due to short term memory loss. His mental decline continued slowly with a diagnosis of Alzheimer's disease leading to admission to a residential Care Unit, Simpkin House, in Bendigo. Until the very end Paul remained caring for others, checking pulses and various spots on other residents and occasionally joining the Staff on team handovers. Paul died on 1st October 2021 just two days short of his 84<sup>th</sup> birthday. Thus ended an extraordinary life of a doctor forever on the move.

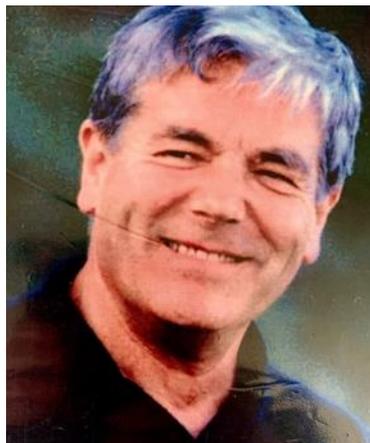
*Contributed by Dr Jonathan Rush, assisted by Joan Maher. Dr Jonathan Rush AM, MBBS, FRACS, FAOrthA is a former Head of Orthopaedics at St Vincent's and a contemporary and friend to Paul Maher.*

## **William Richard McLeod (Bill) MD, FRANZCP**

28/3/33 – 2/10/21

Bill McLeod was a man of great integrity with an enormous compassion for others, especially those struggling with poor mental health, a pioneer of psychotherapy and research into the therapeutic use of psychedelics.

Bill was fortunate to have had the opportunity to follow his true passion, the study of the human mind. Raised in the 1930's by a single mum on the outskirts of Melbourne, he left technical school early to undertake an apprenticeship in industrial chemistry with ICI in Yarraville. The family lived in Dandenong during his early childhood, and his mother Margaret commuted all the way to Deer Park for work, riding year round on the rear of the red rattler trains because she could not afford the fare. The long commute for a single mum was hard on the family, with sister Margaret placed with a foster family and Bill cared for after school by local priests. Later his mum remarried and his brother David Finlay was born. Throughout life Bill felt a keen responsibility to care for his younger siblings and was always very protective of them.



From a teaching position at Swinburne Technical College he applied to undertake a B.A. in Theology at the University of Melbourne, and was accepted into Queen's College on a scholarship where his ability was quickly recognised. He shared a room with fellow theology student Andrew McCutcheon and was taken under the wing of Professor Calvert Barber. Andrew and Bill were encouraged by notions of service to explore progressive politics, forming enduring friendships with Philip Knight, Michael Heffernan, Barry Jones, Evan Walker, Brian Howe and the Labor party Participants group.

Professor Barber encouraged Bill to pursue his interest in medicine, and he transferred his studies to the faculty of Medicine. Whilst at University he was active in the student christian movement where he met and later married the love of his life Margaret Stuckey (Maggie). The unexpected arrival of baby Elizabeth in his fifth year of medical school placed enormous financial hardship on the family as they were solely reliant on Maggie's Ph.D scholarship.

There was no question of Maggie quitting her doctorate in biochemistry, despite this being the expected practice of the times. To supplement their income, Bill worked hauling wheat in the Mallee each summer, brutal physical work that took a huge toll on his physical health in later years.

During his residency at St Vincent's hospital their second daughter Fiona was born. In his second year he was fortunate to work with Keith Henderson, soon to become head of the new neurosurgery unit. At this time there was no registrar, and so Bill, as a junior resident, operated with Keith night and day forming a close relationship and developing a strong desire to pursue training in neurosurgery. However, perceiving the pressures of surgical training on a young family, Maggie asked him to spend more time at home and he chose instead to pursue the study of the mind through psychiatry. After attaining his fellowship of the RANZCP he worked under John (Jack) Cade at Royal Park Psychiatric Hospital. Jack was a pioneer in the treatment of bipolar disorders and had a profound influence on Bill, encouraging him to explore alternate forms of treatment for mental illness and sparking interest in the potential use of psychedelics. During this time the family expanded and son Andrew and daughter Sarah were born.

In 1970 Bill took up a position as Associate Professor in Psychiatry at Auckland University, with clinical appointments at Auckland and Oakleigh Hospitals. During his time in New Zealand he pursued his interest in psychedelics with a research focus on the tryptamine derivative bufotenin, and introduced psychotherapy as a treatment modality to Auckland Hospital, confronting traditional practices at the time.

The family returned to Melbourne in 1977 where he took up the superintendency of Royal Park Hospital. He continued to advance the use of psychotherapy during his tenure, and continued his research. He was fascinated by cross sectional imaging of the brain demonstrating early changes associated with schizophrenia and used this new knowledge to comfort families struggling with the burden of guilt associated with this illness.

He was appointed Chief of the RANZCP in 1978, and worked with fellow reformers Dick Ball, Ross Kalucy and John Ellard to transform training in psychiatry for Australasia. He taught and mentored a generation of trainees, and is still remembered with great affection by many.

Bill moved into private practice in the early 1980s where he continued to care for patients with challenging mental health issues. His practice of medicine was remarkable for the fact that he was unafraid of the most confronting aspects of mental illness and remained an anchor for many patients in their times of deep distress. He explored the role of early childhood trauma, deeply grounded in his own early life experience, and understood the potential for healing of all the modalities he explored.

Bill retired from practice in his 70s and remained a critical thinker and intellectual inspired by human potential to the end. His care and compassion touched thousands of lives. He was deeply curious, fascinated by many fields of study and he saw beauty in many things. A loving man, he was immensely proud of his children and grandchildren, daughter Liz and granddaughter Lilly following him into medicine. He was thrilled, at the end, that his research is now being revisited, and that he made a real contribution to the study of that most mysterious of all domains, the human mind.

*Contributed by his daughters, Dr Liz McLeod MD, MPH, FRACS, Paediatric Colorectal Surgeon, and Ms Fiona McLeod AO, SC, Barrister.*

## **Anthony Charles Wilson MBBS, FRACS, FACS**

3/12/1941 - 29/8/2021

Anthony (Tony) Wilson was born in Ballarat in 1941 during the war, lived there on a farm whilst his father served in New Guinea and then later moved to Balwyn from where he attended Xavier College. At university, he resided at Newman College with many peers who would later work at St Vincent's, building unique bonds and a strong culture of collaboration.

He commenced at the St Vincent's Clinical School in 1962 and completed his residency working in the University Department of Medicine under Professor Carl de Gruchy and in the Department of Surgery with Professor Dick Bennett, with whom he maintained a long friendship. He completed his general surgical fellowship and then commenced training in the exploding field of cardiothoracic surgery under Mr John Clarebrough. He joined the group of pioneers in a time of exponential growth in this medical field that was truly cutting edge in the early 1960s and 70s as it moved from thoracic surgery (largely for tuberculosis and lung cancer) into the complex cardiac bypass, valve replacement and coronary graft surgery that is more routine now. He then moved with his family to the Mayo Clinic in Minnesota, USA and also trained at the Royal Children's Hospital to further develop the many skills required. He returned to St Vincent's, Peter MacCallum Hospital and the Royal Children's Hospital as a consultant surgeon in 1975. At that time, St Vincent's hosted the University of Melbourne Hospitals Open Heart Surgical Unit.

Tony was a skilled, dedicated, kind and compassionate surgeon with renowned judgement. He had a clinical practice that is unusual now. He was able to work broadly as an adult and paediatric cardiac surgeon, and a thoracic surgeon for lung cancer care as well as in upper gastrointestinal surgery, partnering with Mr Jack Kennedy to treat oesophageal cancers. He was also an international leader in pacemaker implantation. With his St V's colleagues, he also developed a program providing cardiac care to patients from overseas, especially from Mauritius.

Known around the theatres simply as ACW, he was a long time Director of Cardiothoracic Surgery and the Director of the Cardiothoracic Care Centre which included the cardiology unit at a time of great expansion with the movement into the new hospital and the recruitment of a range of cardiac surgeons and cardiologists, helping build the service into what it is now. He led a very collaborative surgical unit, ward and theatre team that developed a strong culture of respect and friendship amongst the many cardiology, ICU, theatre and anaesthetics staff involved in the management of these patients. A true egalitarian, all staff and patients were treated equally with respect and care.



He was one of the early cardiac surgeons at Cabrini and Epworth hospitals and then established the unit at St Vincent's Private Hospital. He and the late Dr George Hale worked tirelessly to have the planned Victorian Heart Transplantation Service based at St Vincent's – a decision that eventually went down to the wire. The growing St Vincent's Open Heart Unit provided care to many Victorians from referrals from as far as Warrnambool, Albury and Sale as well as many from the Peninsula, Box Hill, Geelong and the St George's heart units. He pushed the development of the more highly specialised thoracic surgery team, with St Vincent's now a leading centre for the treatment of lung cancer.

He trained a generation of cardiothoracic surgeons from Australia and abroad and took this role as a gift and a great responsibility. Many of the current St V's senior staff rotated through the Open Heart Unit and he gained enormous satisfaction in being a part of their career development and success. The OHSU was often the place where many interns had their first chance to operate by "taking a vein". In his senior role at St Vincent's, he was honoured to be included amongst the mentors and peers that he felt so much respect for. He also felt greatly privileged to provide health care to many staff and their families over the years. There are many stories about his decisive and at times heroic actions and of many patients who came back years later to thank him for his care. He was later awarded Fellowship of the American College of Surgery, was a Councillor of the Cardiac Society of Australia and New Zealand and was often invited to present at international meetings in cardiothoracic surgery by his international peers.

He was a brilliant wit who entertained countless workmates and patients with asides and one liners. He loved entertaining and regaling his colleagues, friends and family with generous hospitality, endless stories and jokes. As an incredibly proud dad and devoted husband, he delighted in the exploits of his wife Ursula, his four boys and their families.

He suffered a long period of ill health and the many challenges of the pandemic with grace and dignity, expressing his thanks and love to the end. Our family expresses eternal thanks to all the friends and staff at St V's who supported him and shared many stories and photos with him in the last few months and most especially to ex St V's staff Mr Chris Targett, Dr Charles Domaigne and Mr Ian Nixon for their in-person visits and care over the years and to the many St Vincent's staff involved in his healthcare.

Tony is survived by his wife, four sons, their partners and his many grandchildren. Several of his family members also have links to St Vincent's including his wife Ursula (SVH 1966), sons Andrew (SVH 1993) and Jeremy (SVH 1994), daughter-in-law Marno Ryan (SVH 1995) and sister Diane Wilson (SVH 1968).

"Larger than life" in many ways, he will be remembered for his skill as a surgeon and for his leadership but also for his strong sense of humanity, his integrity, his sense of personal responsibility and for his friendship to many.

*Contributed by his son, Prof. Andrew Wilson, who is a cardiologist at St Vincent's Hospital.*

## **Reader's contribution**

In the last issue of the newsletter, we published an article about physician Dr John Horan who like many St Vincent's doctors served in World War II, in Dr Horan's case as a 'Rat of Tobruk'. This article drew the following correspondence from alumnus Dr Peter L Johnston (MBBS 1965) whose doctor-father was also a 'Rat of Tobruk'. We believe that it will interest our readers.

To the Editor,

I was interested in your article on Dr John Horan from the archives. I was a resident medical officer at St Vincent's in 1966 and remember him with great affection. My father, Len, was an honorary ENT surgeon at St Vincent's until 1963. He was also a Rat of Tobruk with John Horan. I can still remember him talking about 'Horan dragging his bloody gastroscope around with him'. It was an awkward and bulky instrument that proved a handicap at times, especially when they were shipwrecked in the Mediterranean.

As his resident, I remember Dr Horan most for his focus on physical signs. There were no ultrasounds, CT scans or MRIs - only X-rays in 1966. Thanks to his teaching, for over 50 years as a GP, I've always tried to make a clinical diagnosis before ordering any imaging.

One memorable incident occurred during a ward round. We were discussing a 50 year-old man who was struggling to maintain his blood pressure after a heart attack. Our registrar, Dr Michael Jelinek, suggested he be admitted to the Intensive Care Unit. It was a new department in 1966, run by Drs Brian Galbally and John O'Donovan. As residents, we referred to them as the 'resurrectionists'. ICU nurses could hear how patients were going because the monitors beeped with every pulse. John Horan's response to Michael's suggestion was 'I don't think he's fit enough for intensive care!!'

I caught up with Dr Horan years later. He was in his eighties and had taken up studying Latin. His fellow students were mainly year 12 students. While as students and residents, we used to refer to him as Sir John (he was a papal knight), he told me with a laugh that they called him 'little Johnny'.

Peter Johnston

### **Award to Melbourne Artist**

In September 2021, we learned that Melbourne artist Julia Ciccarone had won the People's Choice Award in the 2021 Archibald Prize ([Julia Ciccarone self-portrait The Sea Within wins 2021 Archibald Prize People's Choice Award \(theage.com.au\)](https://www.theage.com.au) ). Ms Ciccarone has a link with our Association as she was commissioned, on the wise advice of Ms Monique Silk, Art Curator at St Vincent's, to create a painting to mark the centenary of the St Vincent's Hospital Clinical School in 2010. Her beautiful art work, donated by the Association to the Clinical School, now hangs in the Clinical School in Regent Street, Fitzroy. A copy is displayed below. We congratulate Ms Ciccarone on her Archibald Award.



*Reproduced with the permission of the artist*

## Book Review

### **“Humanity in Medicine: The life of physician Dr Stanley Goulston” by Kerry J Breen**

*Published by Australian Scholarly Publishing Ltd, North Melbourne, 2020. ISBN 978-1-922454-17-1 (paperback, \$34.99). Available through Readings or <https://scholarly.info/authors/>*

*Reviewed by Dr Simone Strasser*

Dr Stanley Goulston AO was an extraordinary physician who made major contributions to the development of disciplines of internal medicine and gastroenterology in Australia. In this comprehensive biography, the author Dr Kerry Breen delivers a superbly researched overview of Dr Goulston’s early life, education, sportsmanship, medical training, military service, and many decades of service to Sydney’s Royal Prince Alfred Hospital (RPAH), the Royal Australasian College of Physicians (RACP), the Gastroenterological Society of Australia (GESA), and other Australian health care institutions. Beyond just providing a chronicle of Dr Goulston’s life and achievements, we learn about the ever-changing cultural, social, professional and moral environments in which he lived his 96 years. Of particular importance, the reader also has the opportunity to discover and share in Dr Goulston’s contributions to the human aspects of healthcare through his lifelong love of writing poetry, and how he sought to entwine an interest in the humanities in the teaching and practice of medicine.

Stan Goulston was born in 1915, and was a member of a prominent Jewish family that had been in Australia since 1858. Through exploring details of the family’s background, and particularly the life and contributions of his father, John Goulston, the reader gains insight into the evolving Australian commercial landscape as well as the development and activities of Jewish community organisations, particularly in Sydney. Many of the traditions, community groups, congregations and personalities that the Goulstons interacted with and contributed to, will be very familiar to members of the Australian Jewish community. Stories of Stan Goulston’s education at Sydney Grammar School and the University of Sydney would also resonate with those who went through similar education many years later.

The author devotes three chapters outlining Stan Goulston’s military service that commenced when he was a Resident Medical Officer at the time of declaration of War in 1939. The reader is taken through those extraordinary years to gain some insights into the life of this compassionate and skilled medical officer who displayed tremendous adaptability and flexibility to respond to whatever situation presented itself. He was recognised with being awarded the Military Cross from his time in Tobruk. Following advanced training in all aspects of military organisation and responsibilities, he continued with remarkable contributions to army medical services in the Northern Territory and then ultimately in London as the Medical Liaison Officer for the Australian Army Medical Service where he was the ‘eyes and ears of the Director General of Medical Services’ in Australia. Through these

years of upheaval, he sat and passed examinations for memberships of the RACP despite having no recent experience in civilian medical life.

Dr Goulston returned to family and professional life in Australia in 1947. He was appointed to the senior medical staff of RPAH where he continued until his retirement many decades later. It is certainly interesting to reflect on the hierarchical, white, male-dominated medical system that was present in Australian teaching hospitals particularly during the first part of his career, far removed from the culturally and gender diverse environment we now experience in the 21st century.

Along with Dr Bill (later Sir William) Morrow, Stan Goulston established the first dedicated gastroenterology unit in Australia, still known as the AW Morrow Gastroenterology and Liver Centre, Royal Prince Alfred Hospital. He was involved in introducing and developing many of the research structures and clinical practices that form the foundations of modern gastroenterology and it is fascinating to be taken through the evolution of many of these aspects of care and research that we perhaps take for granted. He contributed critical observations to the burgeoning field of inflammatory bowel disease. He made major contributions to the RACP, through being Censor-in-Chief and subsequently President – again it is of great interest to the reader to learn how many of our current processes in training and examination came about. He was instrumental in establishing the Gastroenterological Society of Australia over 60 years ago, today recognised as the peak membership organisation for Australian healthcare professionals and researchers working in the fields of gastroenterology and hepatology, with over 1000 members.

In addition to gleaning an appreciation of how the specialty of gastroenterology came about in Australia, we also learn how our systems of drug evaluation and adverse drug reaction monitoring came about, as Goulston was heavily involved in both, being Chairman of the Australian Drug Evaluation Committee (ADEC) for many years. The current Advisory Committee on Medicines (ACM) that provides independent advice to the Minister for Health and the Therapeutic Goods Administration, evolved from these pivotal committees that Stan Goulston devoted so many of his years to.

Clearly Stan Goulston made critical contributions to the education, training and evaluation of physicians, the development of the specialty of gastroenterology, therapeutic drug evaluation, approvals and monitoring and the dissemination of medical knowledge in Australia. The dedication to his family and home life is displayed throughout this account and should serve as a stimulus to the importance of work-life balance in achieving fulfilment while enmeshed in a busy and consuming career.

An important aspect of Stan Goulston's life was his love of literature and poetry. He wrote poetry from an early age, much of which went unpublished apart from a few that were published at various times between 1970 and 1997 in the Medical Journal of Australia. At the age of 92, he published a selection of poems in 'Poetry for Pleasure'. It is a privilege to

be able to read some of his poems that have been shared with us by Dr Breen in this book and they provide important reflections on his war experiences, the meaning of illness, and old age among others. Following retirement from active clinical practice at the age of 79, he studied poetry and literature at the University of Sydney, and later introduced the teaching of medical humanities in the medical curriculum at the university. The author highlights this legacy and laments that the teaching of humanity alongside modern science-based medical practice is 'yet to be appreciated or taken seriously by most medical educationalists in Australia'. Hopefully the readers of this book will find some appreciation of why Dr Goulston devoted so much of his time and efforts to introducing students and clinicians to this important aspect of healthcare.

This work is a credit to Dr Breen's capacity for research and interview as clearly Stan Goulston was a modest and humble man. Much of the material that makes this book so engaging needed to be gleaned from those that knew Dr Goulston best - his surviving family, friends and colleagues. The narrative that brings these many aspects of an extraordinary life together is a pleasure to read.

*Associate Professor Simone Strasser is a St Vincent's Hospital alumna who obtained part of her training and an MD in the SVH Department of Gastroenterology. She is a Senior Staff Specialist in the AW Morrow Gastroenterology and Liver Centre at the Royal Prince Alfred Hospital in Sydney and the immediate Past-President of the Gastroenterological Society of Australia.*

**\*Our policy is to publish reviews of books written by members of the Alumni Association. We can only review books that our readers tell us about.**

## **From the Archives Department**

### **An appropriate new home – the Devonshire Arms Hotel**

The hospital's Fitzroy campus has buildings of many eras juxtaposed, some purpose-built, others acquired and adapted over time to hospital use. Of the latter, the oldest by some margin is the former Devonshire Arms Hotel building on Fitzroy Street. The hotel dates back to around 1843 – very early Melbourne, pre-gold rush, when the area on the perimeter of the city was called Newtown and many of the narrow thoroughways were laid out by, and to suit the purposes of, early property owners rather than by city planners. It is thought that the pub was named to appeal to the large number of early settlers who originated from the south-west region of England.

The pub's builder and owner for more than 50 years was prominent local identity and business man Francis Clark (1820 - 1896). Clark's property holdings in the nearby area also included a butcher shop adjacent to the hotel, a bakery at the corner of Gertrude Street (also now converted to hospital use) and a valuable group of buildings on the north-east corner of Gertrude and Brunswick Streets (eventually cleared to make way for the Atherton Estate).

The Devonshire Arms is recorded as being the second licensed venue in the neighbourhood but in the 1850s was joined by a whole host of others. Fitzroy, particularly the southern portion, became known as a 'well liquored suburb'. Of course public houses in this era were not just purveyors of liquor but also vital centres of communication, business and politics and accommodation providers both for visitors and local workers. Nevertheless the State Government also realised that an excess of venues could also lead to social ills and from the turn of the century sought to reduce the number of hotels through a program of compulsory closure. The Devonshire Arms eventually lost its licence in 1920. There followed a period of residential use.



*The Devonshire Arms Hotel today*

In the 1950s St Vincent's entered a phase of major development with the planning and construction of the Aikenhead and Daly Wings and a new Convent for the Sisters of Charity on Princes Street. The Advisory Board advocated acquisition of as many properties as possible in the block between Nicholson and Brunswick Streets and Victoria Parade and Gertrude Street in order to pave the way for future growth. The Devonshire Arms Hotel building was one of these purchases, its title secured in 1960. As with a number of other such purchases, the building was leased while the hospital waited for a suitable time for development.

In the 1970s a portion of the building was given over to orthopaedic surgeon, Dr Harry Crock, for use as a research base for his ground-breaking work into the blood supply of the human skeleton. In a paper written in the 1980s, Crock outlined the layout of his lab as including four rooms "one room well equipped with photographic and x-ray development facilities... another room (housing) a fine grain Softex x-ray machine. A third room ... altered to make it potential fireproof and in this area acids and solvents are stored for the

processing of bones through clearing techniques to render them transparent after injection of blood vessels within them. The fourth room (containing) bone slicing equipment of varying types..."

By this time the hospital had already made plans to demolish the building but these were foiled by the action of heritage advocates who obtained its listing on the Victorian Heritage Register. It was identified as significant for its connections to the foundation years of the Melbourne settlement, as Melbourne's earliest known extant hotel building and as providing evidence of early construction methods and original features including pit-sawn timber, hand-made nails and lath and plaster ceilings and walls.

Harry Crock continued to use the building as his research base until it was broken into and negative media publicity ensued about the storage of anatomical specimens on site leading to the executive directive to disperse the collection forthwith.

The next phase of the building's history saw it (somewhat ironically) utilised for providing services for the treatment of and support of individuals with alcohol and other addictions. The State Government provided funding to convert the building into a facility providing accommodation for 22 people - the De Paul House non-medical detoxification unit - opened in 1988. After De Paul House moved to new premises in Brunswick Street in 2005, the Devonshire Arms became the administrative base for the Department of Addiction Medicine being a centre for direct patient treatment and for research, education, training and policy development. This continued until the department moved to newly fitted out quarters in the former Turning Point building in early 2021.

Today the Devonshire Arms building serves as the base for members of the St Vincent's ALERT and Mission teams (including the Archives and Heritage Department). The new occupants are intrigued by the history of the building and its quirky features. If you have any stories or images to share re the Devonshire Arms building we would love to hear about them via email to [Barbara.Cytowicz@svha.org.au](mailto:Barbara.Cytowicz@svha.org.au) or phone 9231 3040.

*Contributed by archivist Ms Barbara Cytowicz.*

### **News from St Vincent's Hospital**

General hospital news and the regular newsletter, Pulse, are available on the St Vincent's website <https://www.svhm.org.au/> .