



Medical History

Newsletter

AUSTRALIAN AND NEW ZEALAND SOCIETY OF THE HISTORY OF MEDICINE INC

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THE PRESIDENT'S PAGE

Another three months have passed and once again Derek Dow produces, like clockwork, another issue of the Medical History Newsletter. We are once again indebted to him for his diligence. He, as usual, keeps us updated with news of our Society and with titillating snippets of our discipline. Some might consider that the field of medical history is a narrow and potentially barren one, however I am repeatedly fascinated by the large number of events, of meetings, of journal articles, and of books that happen so frequently that news of them fills a publication such as this. We indeed work in a vibrant area both of history and of the health sciences: as evidence just note the numbers of students, of nimble people such as you, and indeed of aging (but not yet aged) fogeys such as myself who show an interest in it.

The big event that looms upon the horizon, of course, is our biennial conference in Melbourne. It is, as I write, only about nine weeks away—and it will have come even closer by the time that you read this. The programme is, I am reliably informed, falling into place quite neatly. The committee in Melbourne, ably chaired by Madonna Grehan, appear to have a most attractive series of academic and social components. All who have submitted abstracts will have received notifications as to their acceptance for presentation (or occasionally of refusal, for which you have my commiserations). A sub-committee vets these quite carefully to ensure that we maintain high standards and accept only items that are of direct relevance and anticipated length. They certainly deserve our thanks for their important behind-the-scenes task, the workload of which would probably astound many of our members.

Now, of course, is the time to register if you have not already done so. Financing attendance is always a challenge for many, but I think that anyone who has attended any recent medical or other professional conference will agree that the Melbourne committee has managed to keep the fees quite low. They have been well assisted in this by our conference organisers, DC

Conferences, whose efficiency and pleasant ambience many of you will recall from the Sydney conference two years ago.

The conference of course not only provides an academic and social gathering, but also is the time for meetings: of the Executive Committee, of the Council, and our AGM. Please make any suggestions that you think might improve the Society or (Heaven forbid) criticisms you have about it. I, for one, always encourage suggestions (and hope that I have broad enough shoulders to deal with criticisms). Thereby we improve our services to our members.

On a personal note, before coming to Melbourne, I shall be speaking at a meeting of the International Association for the History of Nephrology in Poland, followed by the European Renal Association in Madrid, then having an all-too-brief visit to Oxford. But, most of all, I look forward to our Society's meeting!

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ALL ABOUT OURSELVES

Members of the ANZSHM describe their life, work and interests

To be asked to contribute to 'All About Ourselves' was a bit of a shock. I regard myself as very amateur historian. In fact, in year 11 at Northcote High School, Melbourne, I came to absolutely detest history and couldn't wait to give it up for advanced mathematics in year 12. Graduating from the University of Melbourne in 1961 with MB BS, I worked for three years at the Alfred Hospital and then went to Nauru as a medical officer for the British Phosphate Commissioners for four years. In January 1969, I was fortunate to be accepted into the Alfred anaesthetic training program and gained my FFA RACS in 1971. The following year I joined Dr Kevin McCaul as a staff anaesthetist at the Royal Women's Hospital, Melbourne, eventually replacing him as Director of Anaesthetics and moving on to private practice in 1990. The Women's facilitated the establishment of an active and well-staffed research laboratory which gave rise to 70 peer-reviewed papers on physiology and pharmacology of pregnant uterine muscle.

Research experience and ageing generated an interest in history. In 2005 I was researching Pugh's contribution to Launceston and Australian anaesthesia for a chapter in a multi-author book, *Effecting a Cure: Aspects of Health and Medicine in Launceston*. Searching old newspapers, archival documents and correspondence was addictive and I realised that Pugh was a far more interesting person than previously realised. He deserved to have his tumultuous career told in far more detail. Concrete evidence of his presence 180 years ago were his 1838 Georgian home and his private hospital, St John's Hospital and Self-Supporting Dispensary.

Eight years of research and writing culminated in the publication of *Not Just an Anaesthetist: The Remarkable Life of Dr William Russ Pugh MD* in 2013 (see www.jdpaull.com.au). During that research I found that the late Dr Gwen Wilson had discovered that Pugh kept a diary during his 1835 voyage to Hobart Town. She concluded in *One Grand Chain. The History of Anaesthesia in Australia* (1995) that while diary extracts had appeared in the *Illustrated Tasmanian Mail* in December 1834 'the diary itself has disappeared'. Reading these microfilmed extracts provided an exciting and frustrating glimpse of Pugh's complex personality.

The seven-year search, through archives in Launceston, Hobart, Melbourne and the Mitchell

Library, Sydney revealed no trace of the diary. A re-reading of the extracts revealed that a Mrs Kathleen Henderson had been given the diary by her father, Robert Browne. I enlisted the aid of Mrs Aileen Pike, experienced in genealogical research, who reported that Kathleen Henderson was the granddaughter of Pugh's sister and that Kathleen Henderson had a grand-daughter who was a schoolmistress at Bradfield College in Berkshire, England. Emails addressed through the college office went un-answered, presumably because it was assumed they came from a descendant of a convict in Van Diemen's Land. A letter from the President of the Launceston Historical Society elicited an email reply from the grand-daughter. She had little knowledge of Dr Pugh, but said she would make inquiries amongst her siblings about the possible whereabouts of the journal. Three weeks later, bingo! Her youngest brother in Bristol, Alastair Henderson, had the 62-page diary.

Lengthy emails between us established that he would provide me with a CD of photographic images created by an archivist at the Bath City library. That arrived and I commenced transcription of Dr Pugh's handwritten Log and Journal. The Journal began on 8 August 1835 and ended on 28 April 1836. It was obvious that extensive notes were going to be necessary to explain to a modern reader Pugh's words and maritime comments. In June 2016 Alastair's family donated the original document to the Tasmanian Archive and Heritage Office; a copy can be found online at <http://stors.tas.gov.au/NS5489-1-1>. My annotated and illustrated transcript, titled *Persistence Pays* will be published in late June this year.

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MEMBERS' NEWS

Welcome!

Michelle Blake (TAS)
Shayne Brown (NSW)
Ming Gao (Singapore)
Julie Hornibrook (NSW)
Anne Johnson (WA)
Rebecca Le Get (VIC)
Yi Ci Lo (USA)
Ryoko Ohara (Japan)
Eugenia Pacitti (VIC)
Aileen Pike (TAS)
Peter Roberts-Thomson (SA)
Georgina Rychner (VIC)
Mary Stannard (VIC)
Ella Stewart-Peters (SA)
Anthea Sutton (NSW)
Anne Thoeming (NSW)
Patrick Walsh (QLD)
Adrienne White (NSW)

VICTORIA BRANCH NEWS

The final 2016 meeting of the Medical History Society of Victoria heard Dr Tony Atkinson talk about his experiences as a medical student in London after WW2. He had supplemented his income by working as a waiter at 10 Downing Street and as a footman at Buckingham Palace. He related extraordinary and amusing experiences, many documented in his book, *A Prescribed Life*. Tony became an anaesthetist and migrated to Australia with his family in 1956.

The first meeting of the year and AGM was held on 1 March 2017 when the Society was reported to be in a healthy financial state with over 130 members.

Dr Kate Irving, a paediatrician and historian in the field of childhood disability, presented 'Learning from idiocy: a history of institutional care for children with disability'. She described how assessment, management and public perception of intellectual disability has changed from the 'Institutions for the Feeble Minded' of the late nineteenth century and how intellectual disability was often confused with physical disability, to the detriment of the child.

On a sad note, the Society notes the death of two Honorary Life members of the ANZSHM and former presidents of the MHSV, Geoffrey Kenny at the age of 92 and Noel Cass aged 89. Both made significant contributions to medicine, history and the community, yet were noted for their humility. They will be greatly missed.

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BLAST FROM THE PAST

Medical History Australia 25 years ago

In the May 1992 newsletter editor Ian Chapple exhorted members to attend the society's conference in Hobart the following year, pointing out that it was time to consider 'the possibility of publishing a scholarly journal'. Two issues which he felt central to this were funding, and whether there was 'sufficient material worthy of publication.' It was not until the Darwin meeting in 1997 that members finally gave the go-ahead to proceed with the journal, with the first issue of *Health and History* appearing in mid-1998. In addition to five papers drawn from a symposium on writing the history of disease it included one article by co-editor Janet McCalman, based on the case books of the Royal Womens' Hospital, Melbourne. It also contained 9 reviews, covering a wide range of topics in the history of medicine.

Over the past two decades *Health and History* has flourished and grown, progressing from being the *Bulletin of the Australian Society for [sic] the History of Medicine* as it was erroneously named in volume 1.1 to become the *Journal of the Australian and New Zealand Society of the History of Medicine*.

Fears of the lack of relevant material proved unfounded and the journal has evolved into a respected vehicle for the publication of local and regional medical history.

And as an endnote to this brief outline, it is a sign of the stability of the journal that 10 of the original 16-person editorial board were still serving in that capacity in 2016.

EDITOR'S COLUMN

Contributions to the Newsletter are always welcome. The next deadline for copy is 15 August 2017. Copy should be sent to the editor, Derek A Dow at d.dow@auckland.ac.nz.

ALSO IN THIS ISSUE

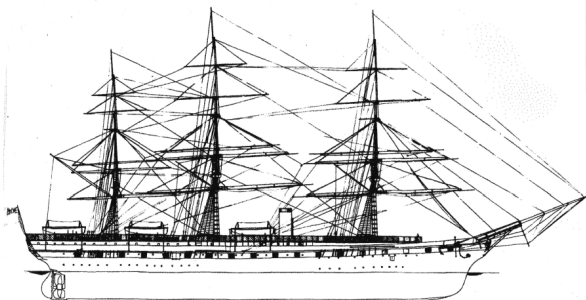
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AMPI NEWS

Ship-shape and Bristol Fashion

Readers familiar with the city of Bristol in south-west England will be aware of the dry dock that houses the steamship *Great Britain*, an iconic immigrant ship from Australia's colonial past. Recent research into the surgeons who served on the *SS Great Britain* suggests the possibility of compiling the 'medical biography' of this and perhaps other important ships from colonial times.

Completed at Bristol in 1843, the *SS Great Britain* was the brainchild of Isambard Kingdom Brunel, designer of the Great Western Railway and the mighty Clifton Suspension Bridge. Since the days of Homer, people had gone to sea in ships with 'wooden walls' - but this ship was built of iron, and was powered by a steam-driven screw propeller in addition to sails. The *SS Great Britain* made its first voyage to Australia in 1852, with 630 emigrants and a crew of 150, including its first surgeon.



AMPI participated recently in a Bristol-based project to identify all the surgeons employed on the *SS Great Britain* between 1852 and 1875, when it made a remarkable 32 voyages between Liverpool and Melbourne. While AMPI has sometimes collaborated with local historians within Australia, this opportunity to work with a researcher in England was a new experience. By joining forces we were able to identify the surgeons on all the voyages of the *SS Great Britain* to and from Australia.

All the voyages (except the first) followed the standard route used by clipper ships, going easterly around the world (Liverpool – Cape of Good Hope – Melbourne - Cape Horn – Liverpool) with a potential change of surgeon at Melbourne, usually the only port of call on the voyage.

The first, and longest-serving, of the *SS Great Britain* surgeons was Andrew Alexander, from Ayrshire, Scotland. Between 1852 and 1868 he was surgeon on no less than thirteen voyages with passengers to Australia. Eleven of these were complete circumnavigations (on his first voyage the ship returned via the Cape of Good Hope, on his last he left the ship at Melbourne). In addition to confirming Dr Alexander's presence on two voyages for which the original crew lists (held in Bristol) were missing, AMPI was able to provide information about his qualifications, his years of retirement in Australia, and his death at Talbot, Victoria in 1871.

AMPI gained much from the collaboration with Bristol, having previously no record of Samuel Archer, who made one voyage in 1857, or of Thomas Hocken, who made two trips out to Melbourne as surgeon in 1861 before settling in New Zealand. Dr Archer's immediate predecessor on the ship, the Welshman Charles Morice, had also settled in New Zealand.

Conversely, AMPI was able to assist the Bristol project with information about those occasions when an outbound surgeon left the ship at Melbourne (as in the case of Dr Alexander) and a replacement surgeon made the inward journey back to Liverpool. These replacement surgeons, hired in Australia, included William Walsh, FRCS Ireland, the most highly qualified of the *SS Great Britain* surgeons; Alfred Puddicombe, who made five trips in the late 1860s early 1870s; and Edward Ascher, a German MD who served as surgeon for the ship's final three voyages in 1874 and 1875.

In all there were eleven *SS Great Britain* surgeons who served on the Australia run. Those not mentioned above were William Smythe, who settled in Melbourne after the last of his four voyages in the early 1870s, and three others who made one voyage each. They were in their time members of an elite group, working for a prestigious shipping company in a very competitive commercial environment. Six were employed when in their early twenties, each for a single voyage. The five long-term surgeons were in their late thirties or early forties when first employed.

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Cruising on to NZ

As Stephen Due mentions, two of the *SS Great Britain* ship's surgeons later settled in New Zealand. Closer scrutiny reveals some interesting contrast and parallels. Both men came from clerical backgrounds; Thomas Hocken's father was a Wesleyan minister of Cornish descent while Charles Morice's older brother became a Church of England clergyman. The two men qualified MRCS LSA in 1859 and 1855 respectively and took to the sea in pursuit of career opportunities. Morice had intended to enter the Royal Navy but as one obituarist wrote in 1904: 'Not being of a disposition that would let him comply with the conditions imposed, he accepted an offer to join the Mercantile Medical service, and joined the *Great Britain* as surgeon.'

After six voyages, Morice tried his luck on the Victorian goldfields before heading for Dunedin in 1862. Hocken, who completed two trips aboard the *SS Great Britain*, had arrived in the city some months earlier and accumulated considerable wealth from his excursions to the Otago goldfields. It was reported that he earned up to £10 a day from grateful miners, a sum which according to the New Zealand Reserve Bank inflation calculator equates to \$1150 in 2017. This income formed the basis of the wealth which enabled Hocken to collect a vast array of nineteenth century New Zealand historical documents, which formed the basis of today's Hocken Library.

While Hocken remained in urban Dunedin until his death in 1910, Morice never lost what was described as his strong affinity for the gold mining fraternity and moved to the Westland goldfields in 1866. Although the *Grey River Argus* stated that he had 'acquired something of the nomadic restlessness of the old-time gold miner', Morice's actions belied this claim for he remained in Greymouth until his death 38 years later, raising a son who followed him into the profession and succeeded to his Greymouth practice.

Others also washed up on New Zealand's shores in the early 1860s but few had the same long-term impact as Hocken and Morice. One other who did was William Hosking of Masterton, who arrived in Dunedin in September 1863 as surgeon on board the *New Great Britain*, not to be confused with the *SS Great Britain*. The 'new' vessel – about one-sixth of the size – seemingly made but a single trip to New Zealand. Just months after berthing she was driven ashore on Tiwai Point after delivering a cargo of cattle to Bluff. Deemed unrepairable, the *New Great Britain* was cut up and sold in 16 different lots for a total of around £1000 – a sobering reminder that it was not all plain sailing for those doctors who travelled to New Zealand in the nineteenth century.

NSW BRANCH NEWS

The NSW branch is busy preparing for the Ben Haneman Memorial Lecture, a prestigious public event organised by the ANZSHM and the State Library of NSW every second year, to honour the late Dr Ben Haneman's contributions to the field.

We are delighted that Professor Alison Bashford, Vere Harmsworth Professor of Imperial and Naval History at Cambridge University, will deliver this year's lecture, titled 'The Huxleys and Medical History'; this will explore three of the more famous Huxleys: Thomas Henry, Julian and Aldous. This catered event will be held on the evening of Wednesday 23 August at the State Library of NSW, and we warmly encourage all members and friends to attend.

The NSW branch will have a strong contingent at the ANZSHM 15th Biennial Conference to be held in Melbourne at the Australian Catholic University Fitzroy campus from 11-15 July. This lively conference program also includes visits to cultural and medical history collections. We are looking forward to the event, and the opportunity to both renew acquaintances and meet new like-minded Australian and international scholars.

The branch will be organising further seminar events in 2017 at the State Library. It is calling for members interested in presenting seminar papers on health, medical or nursing history subjects to please make contact with the President John Sinclair at immedia@optusnet.com.au or on 0411 702 210. This includes PhD students who would like to present on relevant topics. Don't be shy!

We are always on the lookout for new members, so please encourage colleagues and friends with an interest in health, medical or nursing history to join. We especially welcome enthusiastic new members who would like to contribute fresh ideas to our committee.

Vanessa Witton

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The Hocken Library, Dunedin.

VALE

Noel Morris Cass, 10 June 1927 – 2 May 2017

Born in Perth, Noel Cass studied medicine in Melbourne, following in his father's footsteps. He enjoyed an illustrious career as an anaesthetist, being elected Dean of the Faculty of Anaesthetists in 1968, aged 41. By then he had published the first edition of his much-loved textbook of pharmacology, later jointly rewritten with his daughter, Lindy, also an anaesthetist. As a keen pianist, he had also established a jazz band, the 'Jazz Doctors', that continued to play until the time of his death.

Noel began his association with the Royal Children's Hospital in 1958, and was Deputy Director of Anaesthesia 1975-88. He also served on the Editorial Board of the Australian Society of Anaesthetists journal, *Anaesthesia and Intensive Care*, for 44 years, possibly the longest serving active membership of an editorial board of any major scientific journal. He established a unique research collaboration with the Monash University Department of Electrical Engineering and Professor Doug Lampard, who happened to be the banjo player in the band. With others, they developed a computer-based anaesthesia system with feedback loop control. Noel's 1972 editorial on computers in anaesthesia was written long before most people had considered the possibility.

One of Noel's great attributes was professionalism. He was a gentleman, a mentor, and a sympathetic advisor. These qualities were crucial to his long involvement with the Medical Defence Association of Victoria, as a councillor for 25 years and Vice-President for 10.

With his passion for the preservation of the history of medicine, Noel served both the Medical History Society of Victoria and the ANZSHM for many years. As MHSV president, he helped to bring about the present alliance between them, and was treasurer of the ANZSHM from 2002 to 2015, being honoured with life membership in 2011.

Noel's wife, Brenda predeceased him, and he is survived by his three children, Peter, Anne and Lindy, and their families.

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Geoffrey Charles Treadgold Kenny MB BS MSc, 1925-2017

In correspondence following her husband's death, Coralie Kenny wrote 'Geoff often said he had a fortunate life [and she] had many happy memories to treasure'.

Geoff Kenny, a 1949 University of Queensland medical graduate, taught there through two major curriculum overhauls then became a staff member of the Anatomy Department, University of Melbourne 1959-90.

For almost 60 years Geoff Kenny served Australasian medical history very well, overtly as an office bearer and loyal contributor to proceedings, and covertly, gently massaging necessary evolutionary changes. His guest editorial for *Medical History Australia* in August 2002 comprised a brief personal account of the Medical History Society of Victoria and his membership since 1959. Geoff was Secretary of the MHSV 1975-77 and President 1982-4.

The first Australian Medical History Conference was held in Sydney in February 1980 and at the third National Conference in Adelaide in 1986, the ASHM was formed with Bryan Gandevis as President and Geoff Kenny as Honorary Treasurer. *Medical History Australia* was launched in 1981 and Geoff joined Harold Attwood as co-editor from 1986-91. Their association had commenced in 1962 as relatively new members of the Section of Medical History of the Victorian Branch of the BMA: in 1986, the two collaborated to edit the third national conference proceedings, *Reflections on medical history and health in Australia*.

On a personal note, my association with Geoff extended over more than half a century, commencing as an undergraduate medical student. Geoff was unfailingly courteous and supportive and his lectures were well researched, delivered earnestly, and provided comprehensive coverage. He customarily adopted a somewhat unusual postural stance at the blackboard, with his cervical spine hyperextended and laterally rotated.

In the early 1970s, whilst working as an Anatomy Demonstrator for a year at Melbourne University, our friendship evolved and grew. One always enjoyed Geoff's greeting of, 'What ho!!', paraphrasing PG Wodehouse's Bertie Wooster. For those of us who knew him, his memory will be an indelible one.

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JOURNAL WATCH

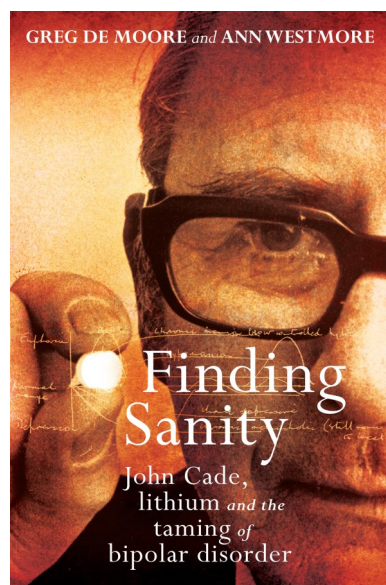
The *Journal of Medical Biography* (November 2016) contains an article on Sydney-born Dame Maud McCarthy (1859–1949), Matron-in-Chief of the British Expeditionary Forces in France and Flanders in WW1. The authors are ANZSHM member Linda Shields and her daughter Rosemary, a Brisbane historian.

Medical History (April 1917) includes an article by Sarah Hartley entitled 'Interweaving ideas and patchwork programmes: nutrition projects in Colonial Fiji, 1945–60', which contains extended comment on the contributions made by Australia and New Zealand to this aspect of Pacific health.

BOOK NOTICES

Greg De Moore and Ann Westmore, *Finding Sanity: John Cade, Lithium and the Taming of Bipolar Disorder*, Allen & Unwin, 2016. ix + 324pp.

This is the riveting story of John Cade, the Australian psychiatrist who discovered that lithium could control manic excitement. The laconic Cade published his ground-breaking findings in 1949, several years before the advent of chlorpromazine (Largactil), making Cade a psychopharmaceutical revolutionary on the world stage. Cade was fascinated by the impact of nutrients on mental health, following more than



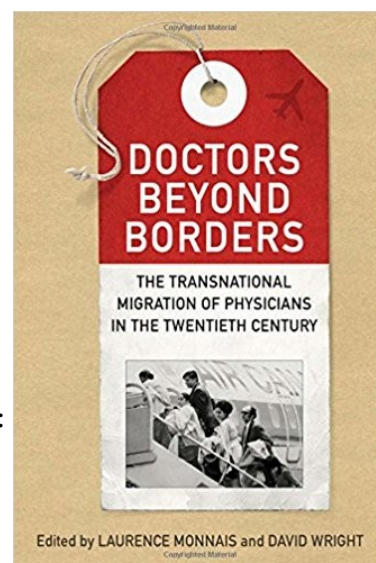
three years in the Changi POW camp where he headed the joint British-Australian Mental Ward.

Although Cade went on to win psychiatry's richest prize, and in spite of the continuing use of lithium today as the gold-standard medication for the treatment of bipolar disorder, he is

scarcely recognised in Australia. This book aims to remedy that oversight and its authors were gratified to be named in the *Spectator's* best books for 2016. See <http://www.spectator.co.uk/2016/12/best-of-2016/>

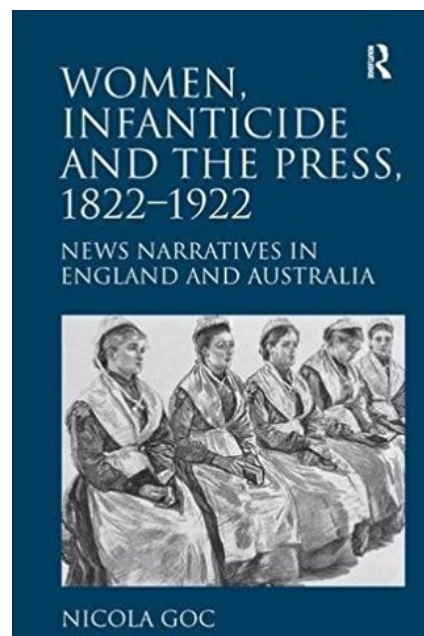
Laurence Monnaïs and David Wright (eds), *Doctors beyond Borders: The Transnational Migration of Physicians in the Twentieth Century*, University of Toronto Press 2016, 272pp.

This collection of essays incorporates two articles on Australasian topics: John Weaver, 'Pathways of perseverance: medical refugee flights to Australia and New Zealand, 1933–1945' and John Armstrong, 'A system of exclusion: New Zealand women medical specialists in international medical networks, 1945–75'.



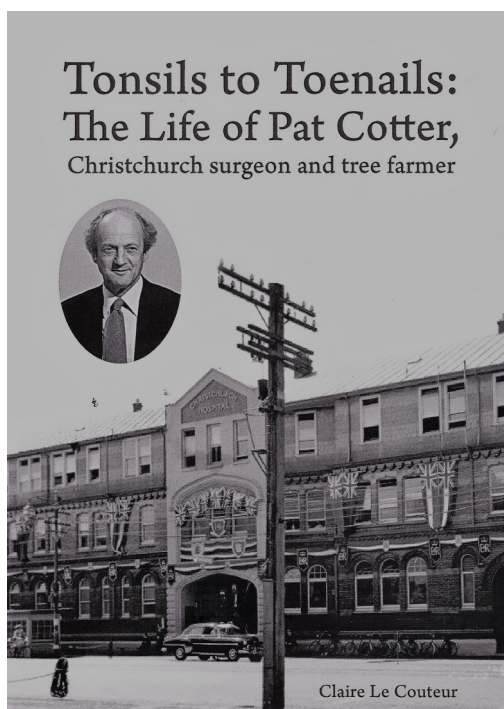
Nicola Goc, *Women, infanticide & the press, 1822–1922. News narratives in England and Australia*, Aldershot, Ashgate, 2013, 212pp.

This book by an Australian lecturer in journalism rather than history only recently came to my attention. It uses evidence from infanticide trials in England and Tasmania, seen through a Foucauldian lens, to examine issues such as the Bastardy clause in the Poor Law Act and baby farming, and the impact of infanticide on medicine, the judiciary and welfare provision.



Clair Le Couteur, *Tonsils to toenails: the life of Pat Cotter. Christchurch surgeon and tree farmer*, Christchurch 2016, 245pp.

Pat Cotter (1919-2012) was the son of a Christchurch surgeon who followed in his father's footsteps, practising in his native city for almost half a century. This biography of his life is based on recordings of conversations with Cotter and access to other materials which are skilfully woven into contextualised narrative.



Topics covered in some detail include an evocation of growing up in New Zealand during the inter-war years, medical education in Otago in the 1930s and 1940s, army service in Fiji 1945-6 (where the subject learned to enjoy gin and coconut water), surgical training in London 1947-50, involvement with the public and private hospitals systems in post-WW2 New Zealand, the pooling of surgical instruments by Christchurch practitioners, and Cotter's role in medical

education and the affairs of the Royal Australasian College of Surgeons.

The later chapters spell out his tree planting activities from the 1960s, and his other major leisure project, the collection and preservation of medical books and instruments. This began at the time of Cotter's graduation in 1943 and was formalised in the late 1970s when planning began for the eventual demolition of the old Christchurch Hospital, which dated from the early 1860s. These activities culminated with the establishment of the Cotter Medical History Trust in 1997. The Trust now houses records and other information about c.1000 doctors who have been involved in Canterbury's health services over the years, an invaluable source for historians.

JOURNAL OF ANCIENT DISEASES & PREVENTIVE REMEDIES

The year 2013 saw the launch of an ambitious new venture, intended to provide 'the historical perspective of a particular disease or diseases of the past for the contemporary understanding'. The editorial board comprised doctors, scientists and pharmacists, but no historians. Four issues of the journal appeared in the second half of 2013, 2 in 2014, and a solitary issue in 2015, the last time I checked online until this week. Topics covered in these early volumes included natural childbirth and breastfeeding, the microbial impact of 'ancient diseases' and the 1918 influenza pandemic. None exhibited great understanding of historical methodology though one hoped this might improve over time. Alas, when I checked earlier this week the journal had virtually disappeared from the ether, with only a few random articles still accessible. Perhaps a lesson for all of us, that if we want to ensure ongoing access to any new 'Open Access, peer-reviewed, academic journal' we need to retain a copy when we first read it.

Sic transit gloria mundi!

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For the latest information, visit the ANZSHM Internet Website: www.anzshm.org.au

LETTERS, PHOTOGRAPHS AND ARTICLES ARE WELCOME, PREFERABLY IN ELECTRONIC FORMAT.

DEADLINE FOR THE NEXT ISSUE WILL BE 15 AUGUST 2017.