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**We hope you enjoy our feature in the coming newsletters of how life was through the past 100 years for patients, staff and those that lived in the surrounding area.**

## Acknowledgments

I would like to express utmost thanks to Dr Andrew Bamji who kindly gave his permission for the historical photographs and some of the text that was in last month's newsletter and for allowing this to continue throughout our centenary year. Without his brilliant work with the Gillies archives most of this knowledge would be lost.

Thanks also to Colin Cope, Head of Estate Development at Queen Mary's for the more recent photographs enlightening us to how the redevelopment works are progressing.



## Watch this space..

Budding young artists have had their brilliant work displayed at the hospital. All will be revealed in next month's edition.



## Tales from the 1920s

"Around the 1920s my husband and his parents were living in Windsor Road (now called Haven Close), which is at the bottom of Watery Lane. At that time there were still a lot of severely wounded men from the war in Queens hospital as it was still a military hospital. Welfare personnel were visiting many houses locally, asking if they had a spare room so that wives or families of the wounded could stay overnight or longer whilst they visited their loved ones, most of which were terminal. A lot of the patients and their families were not local and came from all over the country.

My husband can remember that he and his brothers slept in one room and his parents kept

one room vacant purely to help these people out over several months. Some of them returned many times until sadly their loved one passed away. I can recall my mother in law saying she sprung up some long term friendships from this."

*Memories from Valerie Smethurst*

## News in brief

**Floors** - We apologise if the floors along the main corridors are not always looking their best. Due to the building works and the weather this is an on-going struggle and we aim to keep them as clean as possible. If you see any problems please call the Helpdesk on 4030.

## 1964 - The Huts, part 1

"I was employed at this old ranch style looking hospital when I was 18 years old. My job was operating theatre porter and my main duties were fetching patients from wards and returning them after their operations. Over the years that I was there I graduated to an orderly, as they were called then, and finally as the current hospital began to emerge, I became Senior Operating Department Assistant. I was responsible to the Anaesthetist and had a team of six technicians.

Back to the old huts to the year 1964. The operating theatres of which there were two were situated right in the middle of a semi circle of wards. The open sided corridors, known as duck boards, were wide open to the elements and on a cold winters day, when the wind and rain was blowing across the corridors we brought the patients up covered over with an umbrella. As I remember there were two main Consultants, one medical and one surgical. Dr Reeve, medical, who had a very nice car which he parked up by the main entrance and Mr Clark, surgical, who had quite a large black car with large running boards, often seen with the passenger door secured with string! In the semi circle there were eight wards, both medical and surgical and ward nine was a private ward. One ward which stands out in my mind was ward eight which was men's orthopaedic. It had a veranda as it was situated on the edge of a corridor which led down to another part of the hospital. On a fine summers evening the staff would push about three beds from the ward out to the veranda. They were mostly young men who had motor cycle accidents, hence they had a leg or two elevated which sometimes caused wise cracks from staff and visitors passing by.

In those days to be able to call a Doctor they had metal boxes fitted into the ceilings of the duck boards which held numbers and each Doctor had their own number. If they were required switchboard would light up their number for them to respond, that was the quickest way to contact the Doctor as there were no mobile phones or bleeps. If you have ever watched the TV programme the Royal you would get a good indication of how the old Queen Mary's system worked.

At the top of this semi circle were the staff canteen and the kitchens where the food trolleys for all the wards were kept until the time for them to go out. Further in towards the entrance was the casualty department and on the opposite side was the switchboard where the staff put in a plug when a call came in. Further on to that was the small admin block and an office for the lady almoner, a word that has been long forgotten in these days. That corridor then led out of the hospital towards Frogmal House, which acted as a staff residence for the Housemen and Registrars and on the other side of the path was the Matrons office. I can still see her now, Miss Redding, striding from her office in her maroon uniform and white hat to do her daily ward round, where I am sure the ward sisters when they saw her coming quaked in their shoes. Everything had to be absolutely precise and perfect."

*Memoirs of Gerry Hosking*



### Your news and questions

If you have any interesting news from Queen Mary's new or old you would like to share, views about anything within this newsletter, or any questions you would like to ask about what is happening around Queen Mary's, do get in touch. If you would like this newsletter emailed to you please do let us know. Contact details are: [denise.webb@nhs.net](mailto:denise.webb@nhs.net) or you can telephone on **020 8308 3013**.