



QEII's part in Canberra's Centenary...

The QEII Family Centre is widely recognised throughout the ACT and regional NSW for the outstanding level of care and expertise offered to families needing its help and support.

The programs developed at the Centre over the years are recognised nationally and internationally and the ongoing education opportunities undertaken by the staff ensure that the quality and delivery of these programs remains world class.

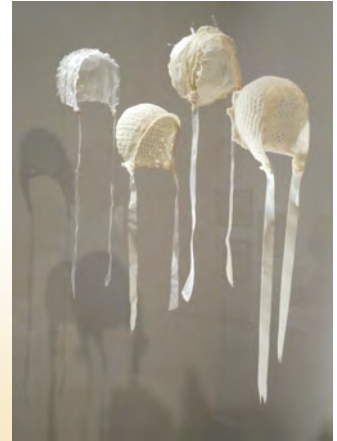
QEII's 50 years' contribution and achievements are recognised and celebrated in the Canberra Museum and Gallery 'Canberra Gold' Exhibition.

You are invited to the official opening is this coming Canberra Day:

**Tuesday 12 March 2013
10.00am to 12.00pm
Cnr London Cct & Civic Square
Canberra City**

As well as a display of historical items, visitors can admire a commissioned art work "Bonnetts to Beans" (pictured) by community artist, Gabriella Hegyes and the Wednesday Knitters Group.

The CMAG exhibition runs until 26 May. Opening hours: Monday to Friday 10am - 5pm, Saturday and Sunday midday—5pm. Admission is free.



Did you know...

There are three women in our community who have been connected to the Canberra Mothercraft Society and QEII for more than 150 years between them.

Di Fernando, Dr Helen Wiles and Rhodanthe Lipsett represent several generations of many competent and dedicated professional women who have worked at the QEII in the past 50 years. Each has shared and passed on their knowledge and experience to those following and each has maintained their commitment through their ongoing support for the work of the QEII Family Centre as it enters its second half century.



This is **DI FERNANDO** who retired from QEII in 2011. Around that time she was photographed near this hoarding at Kingston.

Di was born Dianne Joy Bates in 1946 and lived with her family at Westlake (now Yarralumla) and later in Barton. From the time of her birth her mother took her regularly to the Westlake Mothercraft clinic where she was weighed and measured and her mother advised about food and feeding at every stage.

The clinic sister was the famous Frances O'Rorke who was very significant in establishing services and practices leading up to the establishment of the QEII Home.

continued...



QEII 50TH ANNIVERSARY
Newsletter

MAR 2013



The Bates had six children in all. Di was the eldest. As each new baby came along it was a real treat for them to go to the Mothercraft Clinic. Her clinic book includes an entry for her as a healthy five year old ready to go to school.



In the 1960's, around the same time as the Queen Elizabeth II Coronation Home for Mothers and Babies opened, Di Bates had finished school and was in Sydney training to be a Mothercraft Nurse. She qualified and applied for a job at QEII and was appointed by Matron Nicholson. Di worked for several years there on that occasion and during that time stayed in one of the Bega Flats that CMS rented. It was the era when getting a flat was a new option for young women and Di and her friends enjoyed the opportunity to have their own place.



Di married and moved from Canberra to live and raise her family in New South Wales. She returned in the 1980s to work at QEII. She made the move with many of her colleagues to QEII Curtin in 1997 and while now she is "officially retired" she continues to work with families and their babies at the Centre doing casual shifts.

In 1951 RHODANTHE LIPSETT came to Canberra, liked the look of the place and decided to spend her future here. She was employed by CMS as a baby health sister and spent the next 11 years "doing her rounds" through the ACT countryside as well as working in the clinics in the city.

Rhodanthe has many wonderful stories about these years. One was about some of the particular challenges of working in Canberra. *In the*

wooden hall at Westlake there was a crisis one winter's morning. The President of the Mothercraft Society, Grace Willoughby, was rung because it had almost been necessary to chip ice off the doorknobs to get in for the early morning clinic, and the wood hadn't been split for the big fireplace to warm the draughty hall. The mothers were beginning to turn up so Mrs Willoughby was called. She grabbed her blockbuster and came over, split the wood, gathered some kindling up from the scrub around, and set the fire going. Then she said, "Now I'll make a cup of tea for us all".

In 1957 Rhodanthe took twelve years off to bring up her own three children. She returned to work at the QEII Coronation Home as a Registered Nurse. During the ensuing 20 years she became Deputy Matron.

One of her main responsibilities was running the Day Stay program. These days always began with a group discussion.

An emerging theme was Rhodanthe's mantra "There's no one right way." This idea that she had picked up early in her training in South Australia resonated strongly with her beliefs about empowerment and what helps mothers as they listen to different ideas and learn to trust their own judgment about what works best for them and their babies.

"No One Right Way" was the title Rhodanthe gave to her book that many mothers had told her they needed – good, practical help about how to look after their new babies. The book came out in the early 2000's and sold well. It has been reprinted under the new title "Baby Care" and is still selling well.

Two of her favourite programs, the CMS Scholarship Fund and the Rhodanthe Lipsett Trust Fund established by the Australian College of Midwives to benefit indigenous midwifery students are supported by the royalties from the book.

Guru, saviour, doctor: our early settler honoured





Did you know. (cont)...

Another young health professional committed to the care of babies and young children arrived in Canberra in the late 1950's. She was **DR HELEN WILES**, Paediatrician, who had had experience working in large hospitals in Sydney and Melbourne, before entering private practice in Canberra.

In 1964, following the opening of the QEII Coronation Home for Mothers and Babies, Dr Wiles and David Henchman were appointed Visiting Medical Officers there.

In the fifty years since, Dr Wiles has had an ongoing connection with CMS and QEII. After being a VMO during her professional career she joined the Council of the Mothercraft Society, including a period as Acting President. The memories and records of her work during that period shows her strong insight into the values and role of the QEII Home.

One ongoing feature of the QEII culture that Dr Wiles has always championed is the importance of continuing education for the staff. From a conversation she had with DON, Mary Kirk, in the early 2000s came the idea of the CMS Scholarship Fund. Dr Wiles was one of the early supporters of the Fund which has since enabled several staff members each year to achieve a particular educational aim.

On her retirement from the Council, Dr Wiles was granted Life Membership of the Society. She remains an energetic advocate for the work of the QEII Family Centre.



Dedicated volunteers...



As you arrive at the entrance to QEII Curtin you might notice a garden bed on your left full of hydrangea plants. This was planted in honour and memory of **Mrs Gladys Cheel**. Mrs Cheel was Secretary of the CMS from 1955 to 1970. She often visited QEII and when the hydrangeas were blooming in her garden she'd bring in armfuls of them. She was a dedicated member of the Society and worked quietly in the background on many occasions. When QE moved to Curtin she was delighted to be part of the opening celebrations and to be a part of the Crafts of our Mothers group. Mrs Cheel passed away in 2002.

As part of the Strathnairn Workshops, Nerida Barges from the Curtin community brought this photograph of her late mother-in-law, **Mrs Kathleen Barges** along with a pair of bootees and a biography by granddaughter, Joanne.

As a young widow from the Second World War Mrs Barges came to Canberra in the mid 1950's and had a wide range of interests. As a supporter of QEII, she knitted 4 to 6 pairs of bootees a month at Matron Nicholson's request— unisex, pale yellow Paton's Feathersoft wool, basic pattern with no ribbon ties. It is likely that Mrs Barges knitted up to 800 or 900 pairs of bootees for QEII babies!



Vale Kathleen Larsson...



It was with great sadness that we learned of the death of Kathleen Larsson in Sydney on the 31st January 2013.

Kath Larsson was Matron, later Director of Nursing, at QEII from 1977 to 1992 and throughout that time worked closely with the Council of the Canberra Mothercraft Society to provide services to the many mothers and babies who attended the Centre both in the residential and Day Stay components of the Home. QEII Family Centre is a highly valued and respected health facility in the ACT and Kath contributed to that reputation with distinction during her time at the helm.



We need your help...

After 16 years of good use, the children's play area at the QEII Family Centre Family Centre is due for a much needed upgrade.

Donations of a minimum of \$50 value will be gratefully received and as a contributor, you / your business will be acknowledged at the Gala Dinner, on the CMS website, in the CMS 2012-13 Annual Report and in selected media opportunities. Please get in touch if you can make a donation or know of any individual or business that may be able to help.

Book Launch...

The Canberra Mothercraft Society and QEII are very much a part of a new book **"Caring for the Community Rain Hail or Shine—The History of District and Community Nursing in the ACT 1911 to 2011 – 100 years"**.

The book is written by the Nurses History Group, Alan Foskett and Shirley Sutton and will be launched on **Sunday 24 March 2013, 2–4:30pm, Canberra Southern Cross Club, Woden**

Representatives from QEII Family Centre and the Canberra Mothercraft Society Board look forward to attending the launch. Everyone is welcome to attend.

50th Anniversary Gala Dinner

The Queen Elizabeth II Family Centre celebrates fifty years towards healthy families. The Canberra Mothercraft Society and the QEII Family Centre invite you to attend their

GALA DINNER, SATURDAY 25TH MAY 2013

Venue: Hellenic Club, Matilda St, Woden ACT

Reception: 6:30pm; Dinner & Program: 7:00–10:30pm

Cost: \$100 pp

Dinner: 3 courses;

Drinks: Wine, beer, soft-drink 6:30pm - 9:30pm

Entertainment: Fabulous vocal trio 'The Stiletto's'

Dress: Choose a decade 60's, 70's, 80's, 90's, 2000's

Fundraising: Raffles and a silent auction will be held to raise funds to refurbish the children's play area at the Centre.

Bookings: Phone the Hellenic Club on **02 6281-0899**

Please purchase tickets by 15th May

Saturday 25th May



HELLENIC CLUB

THE HELLENIC CLUB IS A MAJOR SPONSOR OF THIS EVENT

Get in touch...



Dorothy-Jane 'DJ' Gosper is the Event Coordinator for QEII's 50th Anniversary.

For all inquiries and contributions, please phone her on 6205-2322 or you can email Dorothy.Gosper@act.gov.au

Your contact details — If you have received this Newsletter by snail mail and would prefer to receive it by email, or if you would like to 'opt out', please let DJ know.

GALA DINNER

Sat 25th May 2013

Hellenic Club, Woden ACT

Bookings: 6281-0899

QEII FAMILY CENTRE

129 Carruthers St, Curtin ACT 2605

T: (02) 6205 2333

W: www.cmsinc.org.au

PO Box 126, Curtin ACT 2605

F: (02) 6205 2344

E: info@cmsinc.org.au

TOWARDS HEALTHY FAMILIES