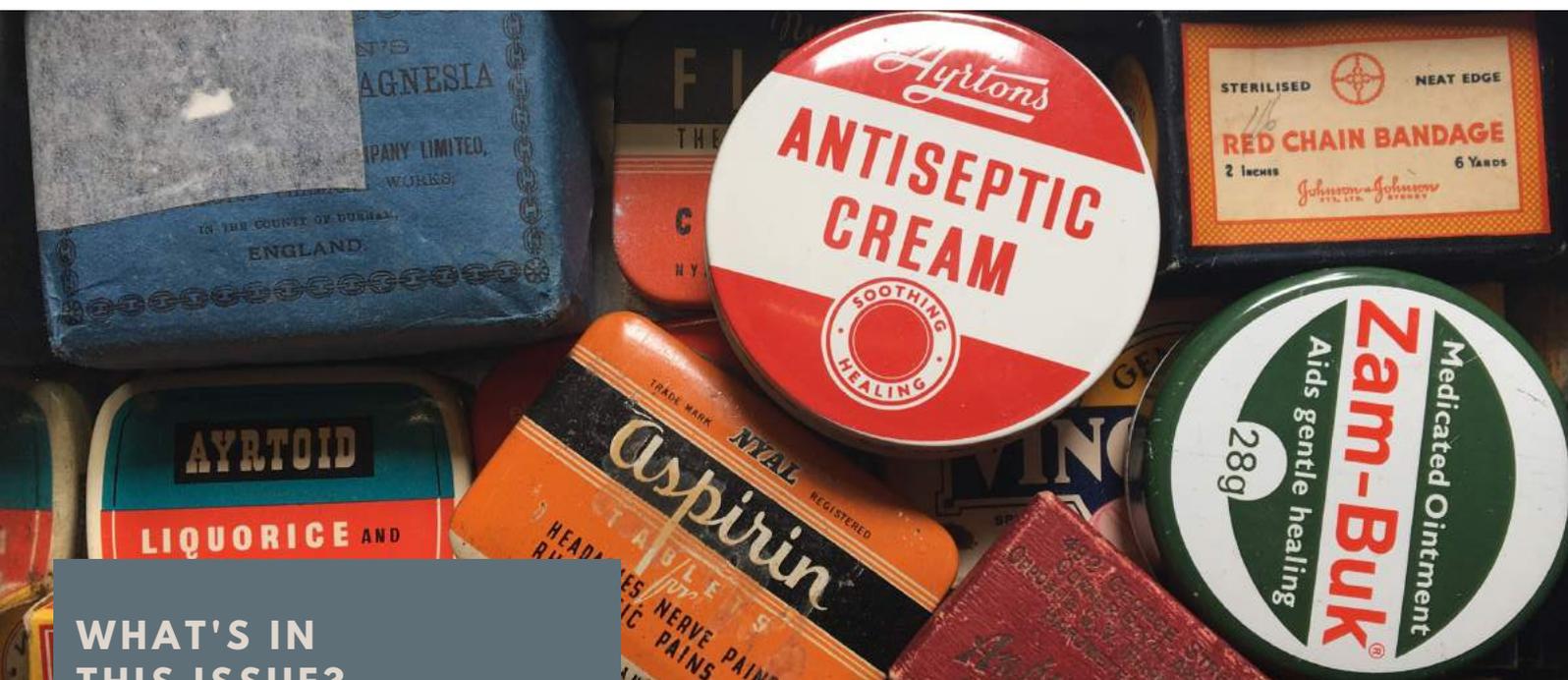




# COMA NEWSLETTER

"Aids in Gentle Healing"  
-Adapted from Zam-Buk



## WHAT'S IN THIS ISSUE?

- President's Report
- Curator's Report
- Mystery Object Pop Quiz Question

## PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Philip Thomson

The good news for COMA is that we have secured display and storage accommodation .

COMA is negotiating a 5 year lease with the Hobart City Council for the 'Semaphore Cottage ' in Princes Park , Battery Point. (This is not to be confused with the 'Signalman's House', a privately-owned renovated home at the top of the Park.) The HCC have offered the building to COMA subject to approval by the Finance and Governance Committee and subsequently at a full Council meeting.

The cottage is a two- roomed 1818 building with a semaphore mast in front of it facing onto Castray Esplanade.





## PRESIDENT'S REPORT CONT.

Philip Thomson

We have also secured the basement of the Corby's Building at 168.-170 Macquarie Street to store the collection. This has been generously offered to us by the owner , Mr Robert Scanlon. The building is currently surrounded by scaffolding with repairs following flood damage when it lost part of its roof in a storm. It also needs to be rewired , with this project delayed due to the heavy workload of TasNetworks. At this stage, we do not know the date the building will be made available for occupancy.

We are continuing to inventory and pack up the collection in readiness for moving into the buildings. This will take some months with preparation of each building , dismantling and reconstruction of shelving before we are able to start moving our furniture, computers, as well as the many boxes and objects.

It is an exciting time for COMA with much to complete before we are able to welcome visitors.

My thanks to Liz , our volunteers , the COMA committee, Jane Franklin Hall and those who have offered to help over the next few months.

Philip

Photograph credits:

Semaphore Cottage, Battery Point by Sophia Avery

Visitor at 'Pills, Potions & Pandemics', by Anna Blood, freelance photographer



# CURATOR'S REPORT

Elizabeth Bondfield

## What a year!

Looking back, despite the urgent and necessary work of inventorying and packing the collection in preparation for leaving Jane Franklin Hall, I can see that it was our collaborations with organisations like Narryna, UTAS, Beaker Street, A Pint of History and Ambulance Tasmania that helped us reach more people than ever before, and helped us keep our confidence that COMA has important, fascinating stories to tell. It's been such a busy year, but absolutely worth it.

## Collection Management

The majority of the object collection has now been inventoryed and packed. Over late winter and spring, we have had Meagan, Lily, Lucas, Teshia and Sophia working on the objects and books. A major milestone – in the object store there are now far more objects boxed than on the shelves. We will have over a thousand books registered by February. Philip, Kevin Morgan, Ralph Tapping and Dennis Ransley also worked on consolidating and inventorying the pharmacy collection.

I would like to thank new volunteers Meagan Paine and Lucas Connors, both recent University of Tasmania graduates, for their help. Meagan came to us with experience working as a volunteer at the Tasmanian State Archives. Lucas had prior experience working as a volunteer at the Maritime Museum of Tasmania, both in front of house and working with the collection. Both hit the ground running for us and have worked very hard indeed. Both are now moving onto new opportunities, but they have made a tremendous difference during their time with COMA.

Photograph credits:

Lucy Oatley and 'patient' demonstrating an AED, by Ambulance Tasmania

Lily Stojcevski and Lucas Connors at work with the book collection, by Elizabeth Bondfield



## 'Pills Potions & Pandemics' @ Narryna June 19th now extended to February 2022

'Pills, Potions & Pandemics' will now be open through the summer holidays. This might be the perfect time to visit Narryna, enjoy the lovely garden and check out our show upstairs in this wonderful heritage property.

Our collaboration with Narryna has created many opportunities for us. It has made the collection much more accessible at a time when we have otherwise been closed to the public.

Because the Narryna team are so good at public programs and events, they've helped give us ideas on creating a really exciting atmosphere and reaching new audiences, and how to partner with other organisations to make public programs really fun.

During Science Week in August, we collaborated with Ambulance Tasmania's educator Lucy Oatley to present talks. Lucy introduced AEDs to her audience with a talk 'Call, Push, Shock and everything between' while I talked about 'The Human Battery: the forgotten history of electrotherapies'.

The 'A Pint of History' team held at an event at Narryna in October, and volunteer Lily Stojcevski and I were given the chance to present ten-minute talks on healthcare and alcohol. I horrified everyone with the story of early 20th century xenotransplants and the discovery of hormones in 'Doing the Monkey Doodle-Doo: the story behind the Monkey Gland Cocktail', and Lily presented 'Just what the Doctor Ordered': Patent medicine and the Invention of the Cocktail'.

Photograph credits

Visitors at 'Pills, Potions & Pandemics', by Anna Blood, freelance photographer

View of 'A Pint of History', by Anna Blood, freelance photographer



## Corpus Tempus 28th August – 9th October

‘Corpus Tempus’ was a show curated by Dr Eliza Burke and Dr Jennifer Ayton at the Plimsoll Gallery.

The exhibition used the UTAS art and heritage collections and drew on the COMA Tasmania collection as well to explore the human body from birth to death. Again, this show offered COMA Tasmania new opportunities to see the collection presented in a professional gallery setting, and new audiences. This exhibition was also critical in helping COMA Tasmania find support in our quest to find a new ‘home’.

## A New Year - A New Home

What will the new year bring? What new stories might COMA share with our audiences?

One thing we know is that we can't do it without our friends, volunteers and supporters. Thank you for helping COMA become the best small museum it can be.

Photograph credits:

Corpus Tempus exhibition installation view, Plimsoll Gallery 2021, photo credit: Remi Chauvin

Packed and ready to go, by Annabel Johnson





## MYSTERY OBJECT POP QUIZ

(What's in the Book Edition)

This image "Tom & Jerry Masquerading in Among the Cadgers in the Back Slums in 'the Holy Land'" was published in Pierce Egan's 'Life in London', illustrated by George and Robert Cruikshank in 1821.

'The Holy Land' was the Irish quarter of London, and this image shows a busy night at a pub.

Firstly, have a close look at what might have gone on in a pub in the Irish quarter known as 'Holy Land' in the East End - how many health hazards can you count?

Second, take a close look at the lady dancing behind the man 'chucking' the chin of the girl in the foreground. What do you think might be 'wrong' with her?

Image sourced from the British Library.

<https://www.bl.uk/romantics-and-victorians/articles/tom-and-jerry-life-in-london>

For the answers, turn to page 8.





## **IN A NEW LOCATION: NEW OPPORTUNITIES**

Why support COMA now?

A new museum venue for COMA creates increased access to the collection and opportunities for our community to engage in information about health and science

COMA's new museum will be relevant to Tasmanians. The pandemic has led to unprecedented interest in health and science, and a need for science-based information.

COMA can inspire potential healthcare professionals of the future, engaging them with their professional organisations and the University.

**You can become a friend**

**Or you can make a donation**

[Click on the links above to find out more.](#)

Donations to COMA Tasmania are tax deductible.



*Tom and Jerry "Masquerading it" among the Ladgers in the "Back Stums,"  
in the Holy Land.*

Drawn & Eng'd by I.R. & G. Cruikshank.  
Publ'd by Sherwood, Neele & Jones, July 1. 1821.

## MYSTERY OBJECT POP QUIZ ANSWERS

(What's in the Book Edition)

### Health Hazards: 9 and counting

Underage drinking: children small enough to need to be in a high chair are drinking gin. A baby is drinking gin in her mother's lap. (all on right hand side)

Public urination: a little boy is urinating into a man's neglected tankard of beer. (right hand side)

Smoking tobacco (well obviously - everywhere you look)

Fleas or other parasites? (left hand side, man scratching into his armpit under his shirt)

The food? Heaven only knows what the lady centre left is cooking...

Assault: note the brawl back right, with shellaleghs, bottles and fists flying everywhere.

Not regulation staircase: lady (professional beggar?) coming down the stairs with her crutches

Prostitutes and VD: front centre. The lady in a cap and green gown dancing a jig has no nose. She has most likely lost it from advanced syphilis.

Given her position in the picture, she is probably intended as a warning for anyone considering a dalliance with the pretty girl with no top, front centre.



## **PILLS POTIONS & PANDEMICS@ NARRYNA**

Hampden Road, Battery Point Tuesday-Saturday, 10.00am-4.00pm

Narryna's Winter 2021 program, 'Pills, Potions and Pandemics', explores Tasmania's social history through the 'kill or cure' experience of pre-modern healthcare.

Narryna's 19th century residents - Captain Haig, Elizabeth Haig, their children and convict servants - were subjected to a range of treatments including bloodletting and emetics to 'even out' the balance of the four humours or liquids that were believed to regulate the body and emotions. The humours were blood, yellow bile, phlegm and black bile. They corresponded with four basic personality types: sanguine, choleric, phlegmatic and melancholic. This understanding of the body reflected few advances in medical science since the Greek philosophers of the 4th century BCE.

Houses such as Narryna, in elevated positions and open to sea breezes, were regarded as healthy. Hence George Washington Walker's decision to move his family to Narryna in the early 1850s, away from the low-lying areas of central Hobart around the polluted Hobart Town Rivulet.

Join us for this special exhibition, examining rich collections of artefacts from the collections of Narryna and COMA (Collection of Medical Artefacts) Tasmania.

<https://www.narryna.com.au>