

# People of influence: Dr Peter D Barnard OAM

with Glenda Hewitt for the *Gazette*

Three years ago Dr Peter D Barnard moved to Artarmon to make it easier to get to and from St Leonards where he continues with his honorary work for the Australian Dental Association. In moving to Artarmon, it turned out he has strong historical connections with the suburb.

## **Why did you come to Artarmon?**

I had been doing honorary work with the University of Sydney at Westmead hospital and my house was at St Mary's. When I cut down my working time at Westmead I increased the time with the Dental Association at St Leonards. It was taking me an hour and a half each way on the train so it made sense to move where I could be closer to the office.

## **Did you have Artarmon in mind?**

No, I just wanted somewhere between Chatswood and North Sydney. One September Saturday morning I came to look at units at Wollstonecraft, St Leonards and Artarmon. When I walked into the Broughton Road unit there was a fellow sitting working on his computer who did not lift his head and I thought 'that looks like me'. Then I walked outside and liked what I saw. I made an offer and that was it.

## **Did you know at the time you had strong family connections to Artarmon?**

When I walked in here I easily felt it was home. I recognised the Broughton Road name and thought it was probably named after the family but they had lived in other parts of Sydney. I didn't know at that stage that this area was an estate that Thomas Broughton, my great, great grand-father, bought from Gore. The estate was divided up when they were doing the railway station at Artarmon in the late 1890s. That's when the streets were named Broughton, Tindale, Stafford and Muttama. Muttama was the name of one of the two sheep stations Broughton had in the Murrumbidgee area. Tindale was for his wife Jane, Stafford was for Mary Stafford, his mother.

Thomas Stafford Broughton was colonial born in 1810, the son of Thomas Broughton and Mary Stafford. In 1820 he was admitted to the male orphan home with the consent of his mother. When he grew up, Thomas, a tailor, opened a drapery shop in George Street around 1840. He became a magistrate of the colony in 1844 and at 36 he was elected mayor of Sydney. By the time he was 43 he was listed as a gentleman. He died in 1901.

It is quite interesting that Thomas Broughton named the street after Mary as she was a convict and for many years the next generations of the family chose to ignore this fact! Neither did they publish that Thomas's wife Jane was daughter of John Tindal, a convict who later did very well for himself in the Penrith area.

## **When did you start taking an interest in the family history?**

It was a combination of the street names and when I moved. I had to throw out things and I was mindful that my elder brother tossed out everything when he went to live with his daughter in Perth.

Previously my collection focus had really been on the 4000 dentistry related books which were accepted by the University of Sydney when I retired in 1997. Unfortunately the collection was dispersed when the University no longer had room to accommodate it. I've managed to rescue a few boxes which are at the Dental Association but it's hard to make people realise the historical importance of the documents which had been collected over my academic and teaching career.

## **You've had a long and distinguished career ever since winning the Andrew Watson prize for the highest marks in chemistry when you completed high school in 1949!**

I'd forgotten about that! More recently in 2002 I was the first dentist to be appointed an



Honorary Fellow at the University of Sydney. I was also honoured to receive the OAM for service to the community in 2007.

## **The OAM was related to your work in epidemiological studies and education?**

I've had a fortunate life. My work has meant that I have been able to go to many countries and meet many wonderful, people. I've also been privileged to be able to supervise some 260 post graduate students over the years. They came from everywhere – India, Malaysia, Indonesia, the Middle East, China, Hong Kong, the Pacific Islands, Australia, Sri Lanka...

## **What did you teach?**

My area was prevention, such as fluoridation and public health dentistry through government or community health services. When I started the course in 1961 it was only one of four of its type in the world so I got to know many people.

## **It sounds like you have given back as much as has been given to you?**

I've met so many wonderful people. I cannot get over how, despite dentistry being quiet and sedate, the people I've met in the course of dentistry career have done such amazing things.