



Lithotomy set, before



Lithotomy set, after

The 'very' interesting Dr Kremer

Not long after the Amor-Sanders Company in Surry Hills closed its doors in the late nineties, WJ Sanders—now once again independent—was in the process of re-establishing the business in Sydney's inner west. Dr Edward (Ted) Kremer OAM, MB BS (Syd) MRACMA, a collector of historical medical instruments and memorabilia, as well as self-taught expert in all facets of restoration walked into the new WJ Sanders workshop. He looked around and declared, 'Thank God I found you! Have I got some work for you!'

From that time on we have worked with Dr Kremer in the restoration, of many beautiful and interesting pieces from his extraordinary collection. Dr Kremer shares his extensive knowledge of restoration with our craftsmen, advising us on how far certain restorations should be taken and the treatments of unusual materials such as tortoise shell, ebony, shellac, etc. During his weekly visit to the workshop to see what interesting pieces we are working on, he also offers the staff medical advice should it be needed. It is a delight working and being associated with the doctor. These are a few examples of his extraordinary collection.

Lithotomy set

This lithotomy set was made by London instrument maker Weiss, c. 1820. The instruments, made in polished steel with ebony handles, were for removing items from the bladder. These were used by the doctors prior to the invention of anaesthesia (ouch). The instruments and the box were recently restored by WJ Sanders.



London ear trumpet

Telescopic brass banjo ear trumpet, 1800s

A beautiful banjo style telescopic ear trumpet was found in a sad state. This particular style of ear trumpet was made in the 1800s. Most were handmade out of tin or thin gauge brass, this one however is made out of brass and copper and was originally silver plated, a very rare piece indeed. It is marked with the name of the manufacturer, JH Montague, 68 New Bond Street, London, and also stamped 'English Made'.

The dents were carefully removed and then it was polished back to the base metal with extreme care taken not to damage any of the markings. It was silver plated and re-assembled. We then crafted an ivory ear piece to replace a wooden one made (badly) at some stage, thus returning this rare piece back to its original state. This is a treasure from nearly

200 years ago and will highlight a collection of old hearing aids.

London ear trumpet

Also recently restored by WJ Sanders, this style was one of the more common hearing aids used in the 18th and early 19th centuries. These bell- or dome-shaped pieces were named because of their resemblance to a London church dome. They were made in brass and silver plated and came with an ivory ear piece.

Brass and ivory syringe

This large brass and ivory syringe was made by the venerable firm of Arnold & Sons of London and is illustrated in their 1895 catalogue. The same instrument was used for multiple purposes such as wound irrigation, ear syringing, douching and other purposes.



Telescope brass banjo ear trumpet, before



Telescope brass banjo ear trumpet, after



Brass and ivory syringe, before



Brass and ivory syringe, after

The ivory nozzle and handle confirm its early manufacture, as ivory was soon replaced by metal to enable sterilisation by boiling, which ivory could not withstand. By the time the germ theory of disease was accepted and aseptic technique adopted in the early 1900s, ivory had disappeared almost completely as a component of surgical instruments.

This beautiful example has a hollow ivory handle. Its top unscrews, revealing a space used to house various sized tips, which were screwed on and off as required. The beautiful styling, proportion and decoration of the instrument attests to a time when workmanship was a matter of pride and articles like this were individually hand crafted and polished. That it has lasted so long is testament to the quality of its manufacture. Although found in a dirty, oxidised, neglected and derelict state in New York, it responded beautifully to sensitive and sympathetic restoration by the skilled craftsmen at WJ Sanders.

Human brander

One of the most historic, interesting and somewhat macabre instruments worked on at WJ Sanders is a human Savigny brander. Savigny & Co were makers of medical instruments in London during the 1800s. The practice of branding soldiers was inspired by the civil practice of branding thieves and seditious libellers in the days of Charles I. Records show that in 1717 deserters were branded with hot irons in the forehead and sometimes on the hands, but soon after this the army abolished the use of the hot iron, and introduced the tattoo method.

From about 1850, branding was done with the above instrument invented by the firm of Weiss of London. One end was shaped in the form of a letter D. The drum major pressed the instrument against the man's body and released a catch which allowed a group of needles to shoot forward and puncture the skin in the appropriate shape. The wound was then rubbed with a mixture of pulverized indigo and Indian ink dissolved in water, which left the clearest impression of all. Not only deserters were branded. Bad characters were liable to be marked with the letters D and C. This very rare piece recently given a clean up by WJ Sanders was purchased by Dr Kremer at an auction of various pieces taken off Nelson's ship HMS *Victory*. Such instruments do have an Australian connection as the records from the first fleet show a number of our first settlers on that epic voyage were branded 'D'.

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