



**Lest We Forget**  
**Bill Smith \***

My experience in the art of what is known as writing is not vast. Over the years I have produced a few articles, some fiction, some factual, which have found their way into print. Of the two forms, one might consider the former to be the more difficult medium in which to work and the latter simply a case of assembling, then presenting the facts.

There, as the Master said, is the rub. A work of fiction although may well be contained within prescribed limits, does allow its author to create the text from his or her own imagination and create situations, invent characters and describe locations as the Muse dictates. A historically orientated subject on the other hand, demands a totally accurate account of events, peoples and places.

When I began to up-date Tom Brown Henderson's History of the Glasgow Dental Hospital and School, I discovered, as many have before me, that obtaining details of events which took place even a few years ago, is not easy. I re-discovered an old truth - namely that one cannot rely on memory, one's own and others for a description of past events. I have been fortunate in that the period beginning with the Centenary Celebrations is well documented but locating the various pieces of paper has not always been easy. I was reasonably familiar with the on-going evolution of my own department of Oral Surgery but only vaguely aware of developments in others. I must therefore offer my grateful thanks to those members of other units who kindly supplied me with up-dates on their establishments.

It occurs to me that it might not be a bad idea if each hospital unit, both clinical and administrative, appointed one of its member as a recorder of events such as staff changes, teaching methods, student and patient numbers etc. Indeed a complete picture of the clinical and social life of a department could be kept. This need not be an arduous task as it would involve simply the up-dating of a computer disc whenever it was required. Whenever a reference to a particular event was noted, a co-ordinator, possibly from the HDR Group could maintain an accurate account of the development of the Glasgow Dental Hospital and School and in so doing, record our own contribution to that institution in which we were proud to serve.

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