

21 July 2011

For immediate release

Time to reflect on special role of nurses

RDNS (Royal District Nursing Service) - Australia's oldest provider of home nursing and healthcare services - will open the doors to its amazing 125-year history when it launches a unique online museum that is sure to capture the imagination of all who visit.

Unlike a traditional museum, the RDNS museum – 'RDNS Reflections' – is open 24 hours a day, has no admission fee, no queues or need to book ahead, and visitors can stay as long as they wish.

'RDNS Reflections' is an interactive online museum showcasing 13 decades, 7 themes and over 500 stories, artefacts and news media about RDNS.

The opening of the distinctive museum coincides with District Nursing Week (August 1-7), an annual opportunity to celebrate district nurses who care for thousands of people in their homes around the clock every day.

Acting CEO, Rosemary Hogan says that RDNS is a major pillar underpinning the health system, helping people to remain in their homes for longer and giving them increased independence, choice and control in relation to their healthcare.

"District Nursing Week acknowledges the people that make that happen on the ground: the incredible nurses and staff who remain rock solid in their commitment, professionalism and dedication to local communities," she says.

A visit to the website takes visitors on a rich, colourful and often deeply moving journey into one of Australia's oldest and most respected providers of nursing and healthcare.

Each intriguing decade of RDNS' history is covered in the on-line museum.

Interviews and anecdotes from former staff and others shed light on the often tireless and challenging working lives of nursing staff; the gradual modernisation of RDNS from its modest beginnings; stories from behind the scenes; episodes from out on the road; and the inspiring stories of the care that has been the hallmark of RDNS since its beginning.

As well as telling the story of a Melbourne healthcare icon, the museum also tracks the history of Melbourne itself, from the days soon after the gold rush through to modern times.

Virtual museums are fast becoming a popular choice for companies with rich histories who are looking to connect with their clients, the community and the world in an interactive online setting.

Melbourne's Lava Web Creations collaborated with RDNS to create a virtual museum that pays a moving and truly engaging tribute to an organisation that has played a pivotal role in maintaining the well-being and health of Melbourne since 1885.

RDNS grew from humble beginnings when, in the laneways of Melbourne, a solitary nurse set out on foot to care for the sick and poor.

"RDNS has evolved into a large, dynamic healthcare organisation that continues to deliver health, hope and greater quality of life to almost 9,500 people every single day of the year," Ms Hogan said.

“In recent times we have embarked upon a determined course of growth and diversification to establish a broader presence in community healthcare, both in Victoria and beyond.

“RDNS’ success is based on an ability to move with the times. We are committed to ensuring we continue to influence and respond to changes in funding arrangements, as well as government and community needs in order to provide quality care in responsive, timely and effective ways,” Ms Hogan said.

Today, the organisation employs almost 1,700 staff, operates in three states in Australia, as well as New Zealand, and each year provides around 1.8 million nursing visits to almost 35,000 people.

---- ENDS ----

Media contacts: Amanda Fairbairn - 0409034814
Evan Gordon – 0410 416 348

www.rdnsreflections.com.au

www.rdns.com.au