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Heavyweight history finds new home at the RUH

A heavyweight piece of Mineral Water Hospital history – a life-size sculpture of Ralph Allen, the man who built Bath – has been lifted and moved to its new home at the Royal United Hospital.

Ralph Allen donated all the stone to build the Mineral Water Hospital, known as the Min, from his mines on the outskirts of Bath in 1738.

His bust, carved in marble on a marble plinth, has stood in the hospital for more than 250 years. But with the sale of the Min, full name the Royal National Hospital for Rheumatic Diseases, he had to be moved – and that proved a mighty task.

Hetty Dupays, RUH Art and Design manager, said: “The bust and plinth weighed more than half a ton, so our expert art removers had to bring in special lifting gear. It was a delicate job and took a lot of time, and we’re really pleased that Ralph Allen has now joined us at the RUH.”

The statue now stands in the reception area of the new RNHRD and Brownsword Therapies Centre, which also houses a collection of historic artwork and artefacts from the Min.

Other items of historic interest from the Min are held by the charity the Bath Medical Museum. For more information visit their website www.bathmedicalmuseum.org

All services previously housed at the Min have now transferred to the new Centre and to other locations on the RUH site.

The last, the Bath Centre for Pain Services (BCPS), moved this week and is now housed in an extended and refurbished former residential building, Bernard Ireland House.

It provides specially-designed residential accommodation, group treatment areas including therapy and group rooms, office space and, in the spring next year, a dedicated therapeutic courtyard area.

The design has been planned in conjunction with staff and patients to ensure an appropriate environment, located on the RUH site but separate from the acute hospital building, in keeping with the ethos of the service to help patients live well with ongoing pain.

The new building also provides separate accommodation for patients attending Ankylosing Spondylitis or Complex Regional Pain Syndrome residential rehabilitation programmes.

Ends

Notes to Editor:

The Royal United Hospitals Bath NHS Foundation Trust provides acute treatment and care for a catchment population of around 500,000 people in Bath, and the surrounding towns and villages in North East Somerset and Western Wiltshire. The hospital provides healthcare to the population served by four Clinical Commissioning Groups: Bath & North East Somerset CCG, Wiltshire CCG, Somerset CCG and South Gloucestershire CCG.

The Trust provides 759 beds and a comprehensive range of acute services including medicine and surgery, services for women and children, accident and emergency services, and diagnostic and clinical support services.

In 2015 The Royal United Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust acquired the Royal National Hospital for Rheumatic Diseases (RNHRD) NHS Foundation Trust. The RNHRD treats patients from across the country offering services in rheumatology, chronic pain and chronic fatigue syndrome/ME, cancer related fatigue and fatigue linked to other long term conditions such as multiple sclerosis.

The RUH is changing - we have an exciting programme of redevelopment underway transforming our site and further improving the services we provide. The Trust has opened the purpose-built RNHRD and Brownsword Therapies Centre and is now working towards the new Dyson Cancer Centre. For more details visit: www.ruh.nhs.uk/about/fit_for_the_future

For more information about the Royal United Hospitals Bath NHS Foundation Trust visit: www.ruh.nhs.uk