



MENTAL HEALTH LEGACIES: The Riverview Hospital Suitcase Project

The UBC School of Nursing Consortium for Nursing History Inquiry Health History Lecture & Display by Anna Tremere, RPN, President of the Riverview Historical Society

On January 10, 2017 Anna Tremere presented an intriguing lecture on the Riverview Hospital Suitcase Project. On loan from the City of Coquitlam Archives, the project was on display in the UBC School of Nursing from January 10 – February 28.

The suitcase project was created to honour the legacies of two women whose lives were impacted by mental illness. It tells of their individual journeys and of the effects of mental illness on their lives, families, and relationships from the mid-1940s to the mid-1960s. In her public lecture Anna Tremere explained how the project was created and she shared the background

of the two women’s lives against the backdrop of the history of Riverview Hospital. It is based on a time period from the mid 40’s - mid 60’s. Anna related how in 1945 there were 4,051 patients (Female - 1,694 / Male - 2,457) in residence at Essondale (renamed Riverview Hospital in 1965). At that point Maintenance Expenditure was \$1,437,497.52 and the yearly per capita cost entailed \$467.81

Society had been impacted by the war, economic hardships and uncertainties. There were staffing shortages in all departments, medications were minimal, psychiatric therapies were limited,

also in this issue



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newsletter committee

Lynne Esson (chair), Beth Fitzpatrick, Ethel Warbinek, Sheila Zerr, Naomi Miller, Glennis Zilm, Lenore Radom. The BC History of Nursing Society Newsletter is published 3 times per year.

SUBMISSIONS ARE WELCOME.

Deadline for the Summer Issue is May 15, 2017. Please send submissions to: Ethel Warbinek
ethel@ethlwarbinek.com

YOU ARE INVITED TO OUR *AGM*

APRIL 13, 2017 CRNBC BOARD
ROOM 4:30-19:00



SAVE THE DATE

CHILLIWACK 2017

Join us at the 2017 BCHF conference, hosted by the Chilliwack Museum and Historical Society.

May 25 - 28, 2017

CHILLIWACK
MUSEUM & ARCHIVES



Glass jars prepared by George Thornton to promote Chilliwack produce at the Chilliwack Fair, 1910s. [Photo: 1999 5 2]

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

KATHY MURPHY

Well we survived an unusual white winter and are looking forward to blossoms and blooms. For those not living in the lower mainland area of Vancouver, it has been a challenging winter.

The Annual General Meeting will be held Thursday, April 13, 2017 from 4:30 pm at the CRNBC. All members are invited to attend but should let us know as a light supper will be served.

The members of the BC History of Nursing Society are hopeful that the Ethel Johns Plaque, recognizing the first Director of the UBC School of Nursing, will be placed in the chosen spot in the next few months. The actual date will be put on the BC History of Nursing website as soon it is determined.

The new BCHNS website has many changes so it is worth checking it on a regular basis to keep track of our activities. Please click on www.bcnursinghistory.ca.

We are always looking forward to involving others in the work of the Society. If you are interested, please consider joining us at the annual meeting or contacting us through the website.



EDITOR'S DESK

LYNNE ESSON

When writing this, we are experiencing another wet and cold day. For British Columbia this has been a long, cold and dare I say miserable winter. My sense is that many of us are wishing for those early days of spring and the long hazy days of summer.

In this edition of the newsletter, we cover Mental Health Legacies: The Riverview Hospital Suitcase Project, along with an update on the UBC consortium for Nursing History Inquiry.

We hope you enjoy the variety of news articles and encourage you to continue checking out our NEW website at www.bcnursinghistory.ca.

Please continue sending your news and articles for our next edition of the newsletter. Let us hope that the warmth of spring will soon be upon us.

MENTAL HEALTH LEGACIES: CONTONIED FROM COVER ...

consisting mainly of hydrotherapy, coma insulin therapy and electroconvulsive therapy. The Annual Report of 1947 noted that “a gradual change was taking place in psychiatry in that it was coming, at last, into its rightful place. Advances in treatment were noteworthy but demand for services was far in advance of facilities for carrying it out.” Admissions were increasing and the general buildings were steadily becoming more overcrowded. All departments were expanding to address the needs of patients and endeavoring to cope with increasing patient counts. Occupational Therapy was of great benefit and Recreational Therapy was considered an essential part of treatment. Due to their illness or family circumstances many patients lost contact with family and friends. The Social Service Department was expanding and every effort was being made to increase their staffing level. They provided a significant role in contacting family members, obtaining a social history and assisting the patient and family for an eventual return home.

In Riverview’s history 1950 has been referred to as the Renaissance year, marking the beginning of a new phase in the treatment of mental illness in BC. The Crease Clinic of Psychological Medicine had opened the previous year, separate in its administration, staffing and allied departments. Wards were much smaller with higher staffing levels and admissions were of three to four months duration. The Essondale population continued to rise with all wards overcrowded and basements and attics in all buildings being used to house patients. It was stated in the annual report of 1954 that “mental illness remained the single greatest problem in the national health picture, with more than half the nation’s hospital beds being devoted to the care of the mentally ill.” The introduction of antipsychotic medication in the mid ‘50’s was considered a major breakthrough. For many patients serious symptoms disappeared or were sufficiently diminished that they could now benefit from therapeutic programs. Coma Insulin, sleep therapy, foam and sedative baths were all being discontinued. Wards were being opened, staffing levels were increasing and allied departments were expanding to provide additional resources. The organization of a Volunteer program was viewed as one of the finest achievements. Annual sports days, begun in 1948, carnivals, weekly dances and movies and an even greater sense of community and supportive care was emerging. About a decade later, in 1954/55, Essondale counted 3,524 patients (Female 1,672 / Male 2,852) in residence, with a Maintenance expenditure of \$4,685,444.76 and a yearly per capita cost of \$1331.94. The Crease Clinic counted 267 residents. It was during this decade that the women whose stories were represented in the display were admitted to Riverview Hospital.

The suitcase display relates the story of two women admitted to Riverview Hospital in the 1950s. By displaying personal items found in these women’s suitcases left behind at Riverview hospital, such as hairbrushes, note pads and clothing, one gets

a sense of the patient’s personal story. Anna explained how one of the two women also had a family member at the hospital. Her brother was also admitted shortly after her, and diagnosed with schizophrenia. While admitted the women received various treatments, but their personal items such as notebooks and a small toy piano also throw light upon the women’s lives and family background. The personal items in the display represent pivotal points in the women’s lives, allude to their personal and family background and make their personal experiences and day-to-day life on the hospital wards real.

During the 1960s Riverview hospital gradually changed, shifting towards deinstitutionalization and the beginnings of the advocacy and consumer movement. Very different from the lives and institutional circumstances the two women had faced, in the 1960s mental health centers were being established in communities throughout the province to provide outpatient care and boarding home programs were being expanded. Advances in psychopharmacology saw greater numbers of patients returning to their homes or community facilities. By the mid 60’s the patient population had dropped to three thousand. There was increased emphasis on psychosocial rehabilitation, vocational services, open wards, ward meetings, and community connections for those in hospital. In the early 1960, patient numbers had decreased to 2,689 patients (Female – 1,252 / Male – 1,437) while maintenance expenditure had increased to \$8,054,536.00 with yearly per capita cost of \$2,938.71.

Two notecards that were included in the display outlined the women’s history, the reason for hospitalization and their experiences with mental illness. The display and lecture provided an intimate and very personal glimpse into the history of mental health care. The display was available until the end of February 2017.





“From Far and Wide: The Next 150.”

The Canadian Society for the History of Medicine and the Canadian Association for the History of Nursing will hold a joint conference on May 27 to 29 at Ryerson University (Toronto, ON) in conjunction with the 2017 Congress of the Humanities and Social Sciences.

**THE
NXT150**
congress 2017
OF THE HUMANITIES AND SOCIAL SCIENCES



2017 NURSING HISTORY *Symposium* Arts, Crafts & Healing

BY: G. Boschma

On March 2nd, 2017, the fourth Nursing History Symposium was held in the School of Nursing under the umbrella of the UBC Consortium for Nursing History Inquiry. The symposium examined interconnections between arts, crafts and healing in the history and the current practice of professional work. Key note speaker Sasha Mullally from the University of New Brunswick and three panel members, Megan Davies from York University and Alison Phinney and Helen Brown from the UBC School of Nursing explored ways art and craft have been taken up in various approaches to healing and within understandings of well-being and health promotion, whether from historical or current days' perspectives. The symposium provided ample opportunity to discuss and reflect on these important and critical connections, which, amidst the pressures of today's health care can easily be overlooked or undervalued. The topic engaged the audience of many community members, faculty, students, and members of the BC History of Nursing Society and friends of the School in vivid debate following the presentations.

Sasha Mullally's presentation highlighted the history of therapeutic craft and explored connections between holistic ideas of health and healing, creative imagination and therapeutic work and rehabilitation. Her early research has investigated the way middle class women in New England used "therapeutic craft" as a tool for rural community uplift and social and economic rejuvenation in the early twentieth century. In recent years, Sasha also has begun a new research project that examines the history of "therapeutic craft" and creative work in the early years of North American occupational therapy. In this new study she explores the way early 20th century occupational therapy programs utilized creative work as a form of physical, mental and spiritual rehabilitation. Her lecture was drawn from this project, entitled: "To 'Inoculate with the Bacillus of Work': George Barton and the Making of Occupational Therapy, 1914-1923." The presentation related how proponents of occupational therapy came from a wide variety of backgrounds, including nursing, psychiatry, social work, general medicine, vocational education and various fields within the arts and crafts. George Barton, industrial designer and arts and crafts patron, coined the term "occupational therapy" while organizing the first meeting of the National Society for the Promotion of Occupational Therapy (NSPOT). He hosted the inaugural meeting at his sanatorium, aptly named Consolation House, in upstate New York in 1917. The first

NSPOT conference drew interest from across North America, and was an organizational turning point. Using Barton's publications, memoirs and correspondence, Mullally showed how the healing potential of "therapeutic craft" prompted individuals like Barton to found a new field of practice. By understanding Barton, his Consolation House program, and how clinicians responded to his ideas, Sasha Mullally noted how we are able to gain deeper insight into what many have called OT's "multidisciplinary heritage of caring," unique within rehabilitation medicine and nursing.

Three panel members responded to the presentation as a lead in to discussion with the audience. Helen Brown drew from her involvement in a recent federal prison initiative, called Work 2 Give, in which incarcerated men make items (e.g. furniture, toys, and drums) for First Nations communities in rural and remote BC. Their artistic work impacts the men in ways that foster health and healing. Helen discussed how crafting art-full objects can catalyze human connection within and beyond prison walls, facilitating reciprocity with Tsilhqot'in communities that empower the men to re-imagine themselves and their future. Megan Davies spoke to the history of artistic therapeutic approaches in dementia care. She highlighted several key points from Sasha Mullally's talk and also provided her with a classic work on occupational therapy. She also drew from her own research on the history of dementia care and the use of music therapy as an innovative multi-disciplinary rehabilitation therapy program developed at Valleyview at former Riverview hospital for elderly geriatric residents. Another project relevant to her commentary was the documentary project, *The Inmates Are Running the Asylum: Stories from MPA*, a larger research website project showcasing multiple educational, artistic and mental health related projects. Finally, panel member Alison Phinney shared insights from several art related projects which identify the capacities of older people for successfully coping with the functional consequences of aging and disease. Her projects highlight what can be done in partnership with families and communities to support frail older people both within and outside the traditional health care system. At the lunch following participants could enjoy a display of the BC History of Nursing Society and a book display by UBC Press of recent works in nursing history.



GRADUATE STUDENT RESEARCH SYMPOSIUM

MAY 3, 2017



The Graduate Student Research Symposium provides an opportunity for graduate students to share innovative projects, scholarship, and research in a dynamic, interactive, and supportive setting.

The 2017 GSNA Graduate Student Research Symposium is scheduled for Wednesday, May 3, 2017 at Irving K. Barber Learning Center. This year's theme is "Engaging with Nursing Scholarship: Act Locally, Think Globally".

+ FOR MORE INFORMATION AND TO REGISTER VISIT: <https://nursing.ubc.ca/graduate-program/GSNA/graduate-student-research-symposium>



Nomination of: Ethel Warbinek FOR HONORARY LIFE MEMBERSHIP - BCHNS

Nominated by Glennis Zilm, Seconded by Nan Martin



Ethel Warbinek's contributions to the development of history-of-nursing-related archival documents online is only one of several major accomplishments and this alone warrants the honour of a life membership in the BC History of Nursing Society. Most recently, she has been responsible for organizing, cataloguing, and making the

list available for our website the collection of more than 200 oral history tapes. This collection was started in the mid-1980s for the Registered Nurses Association of BC; the task of taping oral histories was taken over from the association when the Society was formed in 1989. Our new tapes were added to the collection in the RNABC library. Recently, the former RNABC Library was closed and the whole collection turned over to BCHNS Archives. Ethel did at least 20 oral history interviews herself, and has been putting these directly onto CDs. Now, however, with the assistance of the Archives Committee and our part-time archivist, Ethel has managed to make the entire list, with summaries, available and it will soon be accessible for researchers, historians, and families. Her current project is to review the cassette tapes and assess their suitability to be transferred onto MP3 files (the latest technology) so they will be more easily used. This process has been a daunting, labour-intensive, time-consuming task that she carries out almost unnoticed.

Also of major note, again almost unknown to others, is her assistance with the organization and assistance in summarizing the 222 biographical files of BC nurses to be placed on our website. She did additional research to update existing files and these, plus the new ones, also often are solicited and researched by Ethel.

In fact, carrying out major tasks almost unnoticed is Ethel's specialty. After co-writing *Legacy: History of nursing education at the University of British Columbia 1919-1994*, she undertook to organize, make available, and help catalogue the School of Nursing archival documents, ensuring that the original docu-

ments became part of the main UBC Library Archives system. In addition, to preserve more of the history of the School and to protect other vital Nursing papers assembled for this book but not suitable for the UBC Archives, she arranged for these to be turned over to the BCHNS Archives, forming an important collection (titled the "UBC Nursing Historical Collection"). She then proceeded to organize and help catalogue these documents to ensure that they are useful to researchers.

As if these three major achievements were not enough, Ethel has served almost continuously on the Executive of the BCHNS since it was first formed in 1989 as an RNABC professional practice group. She served several long terms as president and vice-president, finally retiring, under protest from the members, from executive positions in 2016. For several years now, she has edited each summer issue of the BCHNS Newsletter. Most recently, she has been extremely active with the Society's Archives Committee; the new Chair of the Archives committee has emphasized how helpful and knowledgeable Ethel has been. All those years, she was concurrently serving in executive positions in other organizations, such as the Canadian Association for the History of Nursing and the Vancouver General Hospital School of Nursing Alumnae Association. For the past several years, she has been chair of the VGH Alumnae Association's archives committee, again ensuring that its archival collection, one of the finest in Canada, is properly catalogued and its contents listed or available online. As well, she has served for the past several years as publicity chair and as co-editor of the annual newsletter for its more than 1,000 VGH alumnae members.

Much of her nursing history work has been carried on since she "retired" after a full-time career in nursing education. After graduation from the UBC School of Nursing in 1957, she joined the faculty of the VGH School of Nursing and in 1970 joined the UBC School of Nursing faculty. Her excellence as a clinical nurse and the depth and breadth of her professional practice, made her a great nursing educator, administrator, coordinator, mentor, and researcher. Among other undergraduate teaching innovations, she developed and presented BC's first television continuing nursing education program; this one-hour show was developed for BC Knowledge Network back in its early days when it first aired provincial continuing education.

She received research funding for some of her clinical work, including a Canadian Nurses Foundation grant to prepare a Clinical Teacher Observation Guide. She wrote many nursing papers on clinical nursing or nursing education research for professional journals. As well, she is co-author of a history of nursing of the RNABC's Richmond-Delta Chapter (1967-1997) and co-author of two chapters contributed to a major nursing history text published by the Canadian Museum of Civilization.

All this while happily married to husband Rudi and raising five children.

When she retired from UBC, she was awarded the position of Assistant Professor Emerita of Nursing. In 2005, she received the RNABC's Award of Distinction in Nursing. Her other honours include a UBC Alumni Association Nursing Division Award of Distinction (1997). She received an honorary life membership from the VGH Nursing Alumnae Association in 2001.



Happy 90th Birthday!



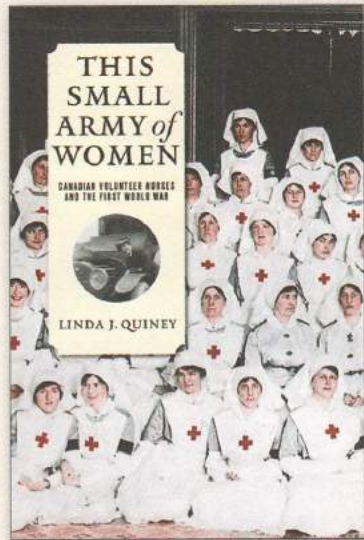
Naomi Miller



Marjory Ralston

BOOK RELEASE: This Small Army of Women

CANADIAN HISTORY



This Small Army of Women

Canadian Volunteer Nurses and the First World War

Linda J. Quiney

With her linen head scarf and white apron emblazoned with a red cross, the Voluntary Aid Detachment nurse, or VAD, has become a romantic emblem of the Great War. This book tells the story of the nearly 2,000 women from Canada and Newfoundland who volunteered to “do their bit” overseas and at home. Well-educated and middle-class but largely untrained, VADs were excluded from Canadian military hospitals overseas (the realm of the professional nurse) but helped solve Britain’s nursing deficit. Their struggle to secure a place at their brothers’ bedsides reveals much about the tensions surrounding amateur and professional nurses and women’s evolving role outside the home.

LINDA J. QUINEY is a historian and retired lecturer and serves as an affiliate with the Consortium for Nursing History Inquiry at the University of British Columbia.

NEW RELEASE

May 2017

320 pages, 6 x 9"

39 b&w photos, 2 charts, 10 tables

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978-0-7748-3073-7 **LIBRARY E-BOOK**

Canadian History, History of Medicine, Women’s Studies, Military History

MEMBER NEWS

Member Carol Harrison of Terrace has a just released book: *Miller Bay Indian Hospital: Life and Work in a TB Sanatorium* (Victoria: First Choice Books). This is Carol’s second book; her first, *A Passion for Prevention: Public health nursing in Skeena Health Unit, 1937-1997*, was published in 2011. We are hoping that she will be able to attend a forthcoming meeting of BCHNS and present on her book. Watch for a book review in the next issue.

BCHNS member Sally Thorne, assistant dean, **UBC Faculty of Applied Science**, and **UBC Nursing professor**, has been recognized by Sigma Theta Tau International, the Honor Society of Nursing, and has been named to the International Nurse Researcher Hall of Fame. In the citation, Dr. Thorne is recognized as an international leader in the application of qualitative methods in solving problems and translating knowledge into practice. She is author of three distinguished texts on these subjects. In recognizing her contributions, Sigma Theta Tau International noted that she has

also published 27 book chapters, 128 papers in peer-reviewed journals, 57 invited commentaries and editorials, and 56 non refereed papers and reports. She will be inducted into the 2017 International Nurse Researcher Hall of Fame on July 29, 2017 during the 28th International Nursing Research Congress in Dublin, Ireland.

SCHOLARSHIPS

SCHOLARSHIP AWARD Courtenay Devane, UBC Doctoral Nursing Student, was awarded \$1,000.00 for her research “A Historical Analysis of Peer Support within Mental Health”. This historical work will inform her dissertation research involving exploration of the PsychoSocial Rehabilitation (PSR) role within acute mental health care. Ultimately, this historical lens will contribute to a chapter in her final dissertation work.

BOOK REVIEW: By Glennis Zilm

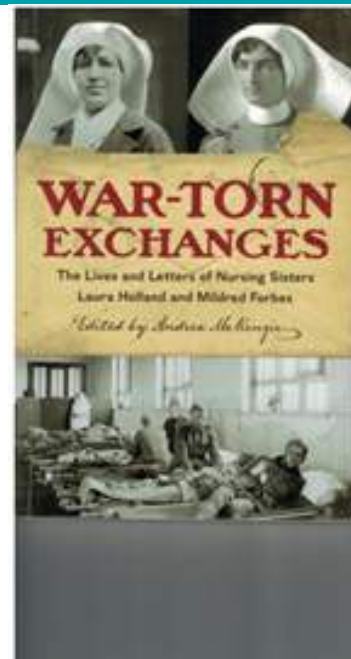
McKenzie, Andrea. (2016). *War-Torn Exchanges: The Lives and Letters of Nursing Sisters Laura Holland and Mildred Forbes*. Vancouver: UBC Press. \$95.00 Hardcover (ISBN: 9780774832533) \$32.95 Paperback (ISBN: 9780774832540); 268 pages.

BC History of Nursing Society members may be particularly interested in this beautifully edited and annotated collection of the First World War letters of Laura Holland and Mildred Forbes. In her later life, Laura Holland came to BC and took high level posts, becoming BC's first nurse to hold a high advisory position in the ministry of health. She was also a lecturer in the University of BC School of Nursing during its formative years, and was instrumental in the development of the department of Social Work at UBC.

It was through intervention by members of the BCHNS that Laura's collection of letters was donated by the family to the UBC Archival Collection and so became available to historian and York University English professor Andrea McKenzie. McKenzie also relied on the BCHNS Archives and on individual members of BCHNS for information and contacts. Combining the letters of the two nurses increases the depth and value of this valuable - yet exceedingly readable - examination of war and its effects.

Both graduates of the Montreal General, the two nurses became best friends long before joining up. The letters, written to family (Holland) and friends (Forbes), covers their four years of overseas duty and describe how this inseparable duo cared for each other through sickness and health, air raids and bombings, unrelenting work in dire situation, and adventuresome leaves. Especially interesting are descriptions of the conditions of their work in Greece (Salonika and Lemnos) to presentations at royal palaces in Britain and from the deadly devastations of Gallipoli and casualties of Passchendaele (scenes of heavy Canadian casualties) to daily incidents and reassurances to family and friends.

Definitely worth reading!



Archival Corner

Our oral history recordings

By Francis Mansbridge and Ethel Warbinek

Did you know we have over 200 interviews of BC nurses in our Archive? Many years ago they were saved on cassettes and later on CDs. Today's technology recommends they be saved as MP3 files. Thanks to the generous assistance of the UBC Archives the first 15 cassette tapes have been saved in this format. So we are in the process of reviewing all remaining cassettes to determine which ones are suitable to be saved as MP3s. Francis Mansbridge – our able archivist – has summarized all the recordings and they will be posted soon our website.

The following is a summary of interviews of Joan Doree (1919-2016)

Joan describes the rigid atmosphere in training where any fraternization with interns, residents or doctors was forbidden. The influence of the nuns emphasized obedience and hierarchy. The student stipend was \$5 a month and taken back for breakages. She describes her care of burn patients during WW11 at Basingstoke England. Supplies were in short supply. She goes on to describe the care of patients with tuberculosis and the duties of being a public health nurse before Medicare. She focused the remainder of her story on child health centres, prenatal classes and services to the poor.



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Special thanks to all who contributed to this issue of the BCHNS newsletter

Next meeting April 13, 2017

Articles, news, and ideas for items to be included in the Summer 2017 issue should be sent to
Ethel Warbinek: ethel@ethelwarbinek.com