



BC HISTORY of NURSING



BC HISTORY OF

NURSING SOCIETY



VOLUME 23 | ISSUE 1 | SPRING 2012

Winnifred Ehlers A Very Early Red Cross Nurse

BY: BARBARA BAVINTON

Miss Winnifred Ehlers was a very early Red Cross Nurse. Born in South Dakota in 1891, Winnifred moved with her pioneering family to Salmon Arm, British Columbia, where she completed her high school education. On the death of her mother in 1913 Winnifred assumed the management of the family household and the care of her younger siblings. On her Form of Application for Admission to the Training School for Nurses at Victoria's Provincial Royal Jubilee Hospital (R.J.H.) in 1915, she listed her occupation as "keeping horses for my father and looking after younger brothers and sisters". Winnifred also indicated that she had completed a first aid examination and came to the School of Nursing recommended by her clergyman and a local doctor. She promised "to obey rules and to remain full time if possible".

Winnifred entered the school of nursing of RJH in Victoria, BC in October 1916 and graduated in 1919, following a three year program under the direction of Miss Jessie MacKenzie, Lady Superintendent. This was a time of great change in the nursing profession as in 1918 the first Graduate Nurses Act (later the Nurses Registration Act), authorizing the BC Graduate Nurses Association "to set and enforce standards for BC registered nurses", was passed into law. The Superintendent of Nurses, Miss MacKenzie, was one of the key advocates for a standardized educational preparation for nurses in British Columbia and a respected nursing leader within British Columbia.

During their first months as probationers the student nurses in Winnifred's class were given six doctor's lectures per week in addition to lectures from their nursing instructor on such topics as "Care of the Inebriates and Insane", "Hydrotherapeutics",

and "Solutions and Percentages". Winnifred received a poor 41% from Miss MacKenzie for her "bedside demonstration" but scored 89% for Anatomy from Dr. Grant and 94% for Pathology and Pathological Anatomy from Dr. Dye. The RJH nursing education program was continuing to improve as it produced graduates who were passionate about the ongoing endeavour to promote higher educational standards. The professional climate was best described by Winona Orr, a 1912 graduate of RJH, in a paper she presented to the BC Graduate Nurses' Association: "The professional did not stop learning on graduation day. The rapid advances being made in the science of medicine make it imperative that the nursing profession keeps pace in its knowledge and practice accordingly. The nurses cannot afford to be behind. The physician is placing more responsibility on the nurses every day"

Winnifred Ehlers graduated into this heady climate in 1919 and immediately enrolled in further education.

After the First World War the Canadian Red Cross sought to strengthen its activities in a peace time foundation. In 1919 the BC Division decided to prepare and support public health nurses in rural districts of British Columbia by financing the Faculty of Nursing and Health at the University of British Columbia to offer a public health course for graduate nurses. In 1920 Winnifred Ehlers was one of four Royal Jubilee graduates who completed the first course in public health at UBC, graduating with second class honours.

Continued on Page 3



Winnifred Ehlers graduation from RJH. C.1919

ALSO IN THIS ISSUE



IN THIS ISSUE:

- » WINNIFRED EHLERS:
EARLY RED CROSS NURSE COVER
- » PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE PAGE 2
- » EDITOR'S MESSAGE PAGE 4
- » ETHEL JOHNS: A PROFILE PAGES 5-6
- » PUBLIC HEALTH
NURSING BOOK AVAILABLE PAGE 7
- » A PASSION FOR
PREVENTION PAGE 9



Newsletter Committee
Barbara Bavinton, Beth Fitzpatrick, Naomi Miller,
Ethel Warbinek, Lynne Esson & Sheila Zerr

*The BC History of Nursing Society
Newsletter is published 4 times per year. Submissions are
welcome. Deadline for the Summer Issue is June 15.
Please send submissions to:
Ethel Warbinek: ethel@ethelwarbinek.com*



President's Message

BY KATHY MURPHY, PRESIDENT

THERE IS A GREAT NEED TO SHARE THE WORKLOAD OF THIS INTERESTING SOCIETY, PARTICULARLY IN THE ROLE OF TREASURER AND HELPING WITH THE MEMBERSHIP FUNCTIONS. IF YOU ARE INTERESTED IN ASSISTING, YOU ARE WELCOME TO ATTEND THE NEXT MEETING OF THE SOCIETY ON MAY 31 AT 4PM AT THE CRNBC BUILDING.

The fourth Annual General Meeting of the History of Nursing Society was held on April 12, 2012. A review of the events of the past year by the various leaders and committee chairs reveals that our Society is alive and well despite the limited financial and volunteer resources. During the year terms of reference were completed for each of the committees and a detailed Treasurer's Handbook was compiled. The detailed reports from the various committees will be published in the summer newsletter.

The nomination slate prepared by Glennis Zilm was approved. Those taking leadership positions in 2012 are:

- Kathy Murphy, President, Scholarship Committee
- Ethel Warbinek-Vice-President, Biography, Oral History
- Lynne Esson-Secretary, Memorial Nominations, Co-Chair- Newsletter
- Sheila Oxholm-temporary Treasurer, Finance
- Nan Martin-Member-at-Large, BC Historical Federation, National Parks
- Julie Lapinsky-Membership
- Archives-Marjory Ralston

- Lenore Radom-Website, Programs
- Beth Fitzpatrick-Newsletter Co-Chair
- Displays-Cheryl Entwistle, Marg Saunders Boyes

As noted above, there is a great need to share the workload of this interesting Society, particularly in the role of Treasurer and helping with the Membership functions. If you are interested in assisting, you are welcome to attend the next meeting of the Society on May 31 at 4pm at the CRNBC building.

A nomination for Honourary Life Membership for Glennis Zilm was approved and will be awarded at a future event. A letter of support nominating Genelle Liefso for a UBC Nursing Award was approved. She received the award on May 3, 2012. Congratulations Genelle.

The group was also pleased to meet Francis Mansbridge, our archivist, who was appointed in the summer and has been working with Marjory Ralston at the archive space at UBC to assess and organize our current holdings.

Following refreshments, the members met with Barb Findlay Reece and Andrea Burton regarding the future of the ARNBC.

Continued from cover ...

Following her graduation Winnifred was sent by the BC Division of Red Cross to Eagle Bay in the northern Shuswap area of British Columbia, to provide public health nursing to the settlers of a vast area encompassing Sorrento, Blind Bay, and Notch Hill. All were communities close to her family home in Salmon Arm. She was one of eight newly graduated public health nurses who were dispatched around the province as part of Red Cross' new program. Cars were provided in some areas but Winnifred's domain came with a horse. Winnifred's experience with her father's horses would prove to be very useful. Riding over bush trails, across frozen lakes and mountains, she visited all the schools, treated the sick, and managed the health of the 300 inhabitants. In April 1923 when the Red Cross nurse, Miss Nina Sharp, married and retired from her position in Celista, Winnifred added those areas of the northern Shuswap to her responsibilities.

Winnifred continued to make her visits to the schools scattered throughout the vast area of her domain by horse, buggy, boat and across the ice. She gave lectures on personal hygiene, how to bathe a baby, and how to manage the everyday challenges of lice, ringworm, and goiters with a mixture of home remedies and science. She checked the height and weight of each child and monitored vision, hearing, enlarged tonsils and troublesome rashes. May Buckingham-Smith, a pupil at that time, described how Winnifred "told us how to clean our teeth with a clean cloth and salt" as many children were unable to buy brushes and paste. Dr. Scatchard accompanied Winnifred on her school visits once per year and was kept busy examining the patients she had identified for his review. During one summer Winnifred organized a camp for 30 local children supervising outdoor activities while their pioneering mothers had a much needed rest.

Although public health was a focus of Winnifred's nursing practice, she also managed the everyday first aid for the settlers, sutured wounds, and delivered the babies. If a patient required hospitalization it was Winnifred who escorted them to the nearest hospital in Kamloops, a full day's journey via the mail wagon and train. She waited there until the treatment was completed and then escorted the patient back home.

It was popular practice for the North Shuswap bachelors to visit the new Red Cross Nurse to have splinters removed or minor ailments treated while they assessed their chances at ending their bachelorhood. The new addition of a single woman to a rural community was always of interest to the local settlers. One resident described her uncles failed attempt at wooing the single Miss Ehlers. "I think my Uncle Charles queered himself with Miss Ehlers," reminisces Annie, "She made some biscuits and he remarked that they didn't compare to his sister's. When Miss Ehlers then confessed to being a poor cook, Uncle Charles put the icing on the cake. He told her it didn't matter how poor a cook she was, she would always cook well enough for him. The tart reply was that she had no intention of cooking for him!"

In late 1923 Winnifred married local bachelor Harold



1920/21 Graduating class UBC, School of Public Health. Winnifred Ehlers, 2nd row from the back, third from the right.

Keighley. Her husband had been born in India and was a veteran of the First World War before coming to work in the North Shuswap area. After their marriage they remained in Eagle Bay and Winnifred continued in her role as Red Cross Nurse until the Outpost was closed at the end of 1923 as a result of funding difficulties.

When Nurse Ehlers told the rector of the parish of Sorrento-with-Shuswap Lake that she was planning to marry, the Rev. Grice-Hutchinson attempted to garner local financial support to continue the Red Cross Outpost after Winnifred's departure. He was unsuccessful, and when the Outpost closed at the end of 1923 the district of North Shuswap lost their "tower of strength". Winnifred Ehlers later moved

to Salmon Arm where she continued her career in nursing before retiring to raise a family.

- i. Ehlers, Winnifred. 1915. Form of Application for Admission to the Training School for Nurses, Provincial Royal Jubilee Hospital. Archives Alumni Association RJH.
- ii. Op. cit.
- iii. Pearson, Anne. 1985. The Royal Jubilee Hospital School of Nursing, 1891-1982. P.41. Victoria, BC: The Alumnae Association of the Royal Jubilee School of Nursing.
- iv. Op. Cit. P.47.
- v. RJH. 1916-1919. Efficiency Record, Winnifred Ehlers. Training School for Nurses. Provincial Royal Jubilee Hospital, Victoria BC. Archives RJH Alumni.
- vi. Pearson, Anne. 1985. The Royal Jubilee Hospital School of Nursing 1891-1982. P.45. Victoria, BC: The Alumnae Association of the Royal Jubilee School of Nursing.
- vii. Hiltz, Lillian. 1967. History of the Outpost Hospitals and Nursing Services in British Columbia. P.41. 1919-1967. Canadian Red Cross Society British Columbia-Yukon. Unpublished.
- viii. Op. Cit. P.6.
- ix. Pearson, Anne. 1985. The Royal Jubilee Hospital School of Nursing 1891-1982. P.49. Victoria, BC: The Alumnae Association of the Royal Jubilee School of Nursing.
- x. Buckingham Smith, May. The History of the Red Cross Nursing in BC. Shuswap Chronicles 1990, Vol.3, P.38. North Shuswap Historical Society
- xi. Op. Cit.
- xii. Buckingham-Smith, May. My Experience with the Red Cross Nurse. Shuswap Chronicles, 1990, Vol. 3, p. 39. The North Shuswap Historical Society.
- xiii. Buckingham Smith, May. The History of the Red Cross Nursing in BC. Shuswap Chronicles 1990, Vol.3, P.38. North Shuswap Historical Society
- xiv. Nelson, Eleanor, Lewis Dorothy, & Zoretich, Mary. Pioneer Medical Services. Shuswap Chronicles. 1989 Vol.2, p.42.
- xv. Op. Cit. p.42-43.

Editor's Message

BY BETH FITZPATRICK

It is spring, the season of renewal and new beginnings in the natural world. I am reminded of William Wordsworth's poem "Daffodils" written in 1804.

*I wandered lonely as a cloud
That floats on high o'er vales and hills,
When all at once I saw a crowd,
A host, of golden daffodils;
Beside the lake, beneath the trees,
Fluttering and dancing in the breeze.
Ten thousand saw I at a glance,
Tossing their heads in sprightly dance.*

This newsletter has many "new" aspects for our readers: a new story about an early BC Red Cross nurse, new honours bestowed on several Society members, a new website that pays tribute to our Honourary members, new books in print, a new History of Nursing group in Nova Scotia, and new historical displays.

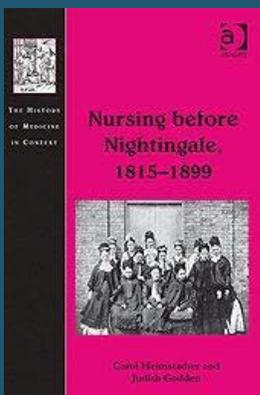
IN THE SPIRIT OF SPRING, I HOPE YOU ENJOY ALL THE NEWS!



NEW BOOK

Nursing Before Nightingale 1815-1899 is a study of the transformation of nursing in England from the beginning of the nineteenth century until the emergence of the Nightingale nurse as the standard model in the 1890s. This book investigates two major earlier reforms in nursing: a doctor-driven reform which came to be called the 'ward system,' and the reforms of the Anglican Sisters, known as the 'central system' of nursing. Rather than being the beginning of nursing reform, Nightingale nursing was the culmination of these two earlier reforms

Written by Carol Helmstadter and Judith Godden and released in November 2011, the 242 hardback is available from Ashgate Publishing ISBN: 978-1-4094-2313-3. The book is also available as an e-book.



OOPS!

The review of Francis Welwood's book, *Passing Through Missing Pages: The Intriguing Story of Annie Garland Foster*, (Winter 2001 Issue) was written by Naomi Miller. We apologize for omitting the reviewer's name.

ETHEL JOHNS: A PROFILE

BY: SHEILA J. RANKIN ZERR

EARLY YEARS 1879-1899

As a young girl Ethel Johns faced incredible challenges. She was born May 13, 1878 into a family of privilege and fame. Her father was given a classical education and prepared for service in the church. In 1888, he left his family behind, and travelled to Canada to work among the Indians. He was appointed as a teacher on the Wabigoon reserve in northwestern Ontario. He was poorly prepared for the rugged life of a pioneer settler. Ethel's mother, Amy Robinson and her younger brother Owen joined him some time later.

Ethel attended the school on the reserve where her father was the teacher. Ethel and Owen made friends with the Ojibway children and soon picked up their language. Ethel's mastery of the language allowed her to serve as interpreter for the chief.

In the early fall of 1895 Ethel's mother found her husband by a path in the woods panting for breath. He died shortly after at the age of 42. Ethel was 16. She and her mother discussed returning to England but eventually Amy Johns applied for the teaching position and with Ethel's help they would support Owen 14, and 6 year old Alexander.

Then in the spring of 1896 a strange occurrence opened unexpected doors for Ethel. A white woman, Cora Hind, a freelance journalist writing articles about life in the lumber camps, visited them. This marked the turning point in Ethel's life. Cora Hind opened up the broad horizons of the world and gave Ethel the guidance to develop her own literary abilities. It was Cora Hind's help that led Ethel to enter the Winnipeg General Hospital Training School of Nursing.

THE PUPIL NURSE

It was June 1899 when Ethel set out for Winnipeg by train. She was mature beyond her years, a good candidate for nurses training. Her father had educated her in Latin, Greek, French and History. Her nursing education was learned on the job from her medical preceptors in lecture periods and on the wards. She was placed on the wards immediately. Her only instruction on the first day, the head nurse taught her to make a bed and bath a patient.

During Ethel's first years of training, a new lady superintendent arrived, Adah Patterson, with her assistant Cassie Thompson. They were both from John Hopkins. They had been

exposed to the powerful influence of Isabel Hampton Robb, Adelaide Nutting and Lavina Dock. Adah Patterson later resigned in protest from the Winnipeg General Hospital. The administration would not meet her demands for better working conditions for the nurses in her charge.

Among the members of Ethel John's class was a strikingly beautiful Isabel Maitland Stewart who after a brilliant career as a teacher, was determined to become an international authority on the education of nurses. Isabel won the graduation prize for the highest personal proficiency. Ethel Johns was a close second.

THE REBELS

Ethel and Isabel were in their senior year when they became involved in a critical situation. They protested the dismissal of 4 of the graduate students on what they believed were insufficient grounds. A written protest was prepared by the student body and submitted to the board of directors. Ethel and Isabel were called before the board of directors for interrogation. They had broken their signed contract to obey authorities under all circumstances. They believed they would be dismissed. This did not happen and later the terms of the contract were considerably modified.

In her writings, Ethel describes the uniform she wore as a student nurse. It consisted of a blue gingham dress, made at home following the directives given. The bodice was tight and the skirt swept the floor. It had puffed out sleeves and butterfly bows. The cap was muslin with a pleated border. Margaret Street, author of Ethel John's biography, spoke of the changes that occurred in the style of the uniform before Ethel graduated. Apparently, Ethel and Isabel, once again the rebels, organized a protest for student uniform changes and were successful in obtaining a more comfortable functional style.

CAREER

At the time Ethel completed her training permanent positions were limited for the graduate nurses. Ethel first did private duty in the patient's homes in the community. She moved on to serve in a series of positions in hospitals in the Winnipeg area. She worked on her writing skills and was instrumental in launching the Winnipeg General Hospital School of Nursing Alumnae Journal. She also began writing for the new magazine called The Canadian Nurse. She became involved in efforts to promote the standardization of nursing practice. This pursuit continued throughout her career and her lifelong dedication resulted in major advancements in nursing education.

In 1914, Ethel entered Teacher's College at Columbia Uni-



versity. Sadly, lack of finances did not allow her to complete her degree. She returned to Winnipeg and became further involved with Canadian nursing leaders, one of which was Helen Randal. She served on provincial and national nursing organizations dedicated to improved standards of nursing practice and nursing education. She continued her involvement with the Canadian Nurse Journal serving as writer, in management positions and later as editor.

Ethel was appointed by the Manitoba government to serve on the Public Welfare Commission of Manitoba from 1917 to 1919. This position gave her the opportunity to share her views and criticisms of the hospital training system for nurses.

A study authored by Ethel Johns and published in 1934 in New York City, entitled "An Activity Analysis of Nursing", demonstrates the heart of Ethel John's beliefs about nursing practice. Her conclusions establish 5 critical functions of the nurse. In brief these functions are:

1. All professional nurses should be able to give expert bedside care.
2. All professional nurses should be able to observe and interpret the physical manifestations of the patient's condition including physical, social and environmental factors.
3. All professional nurses should possess the special knowledge and skill required in dealing with common illnesses.
4. All professional nurses should be able to apply the principles of mental hygiene and better understand the psychological factors in illness.
5. All professional nurses should be capable of taking part in the promotion of health and the prevention of disease.

UNIVERSITY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA

In 1919 Ethel Johns was offered the opportunity to become superintendent of nursing at Vancouver General Hospital and head of the Department of Nursing at The University of British Columbia (UBC). She arrived October 1, 1919. There was some concern by the University Senate at her lack of an academic degree. Dr. Malcolm MacEachren wrote the senate on her behalf and her appointment was confirmed. Her subsequent accomplishments, in organizing the first university nursing degree program in Canada, proved his confidence was well founded. In the final year of the 5 year hospital to university program, students were required to choose a nursing specialty, administration or public health nursing.

In the early 1920s public health nursing was developing rapidly in Canada and in British Columbia. Ethel Johns vision for university educated nurses in public health provided important foundations for public health nursing. The early UBC nurs-

ing graduates in public health were responsible for the many important programs established in British Columbia.

SUMMARY

Ethel Johns moved on to further accomplishments in 1925 including service with the Rockefeller Foundation. In this final phase of her career she is best known for her work with The Canadian Nurse Journal. From 1933 to 1944 she was appointed the first full time editor of the Journal. She spoke of the privilege which was hers watching the developments of the Canadian Nurses Association. Her contribution in her 11 years as editor was no small factor in the development of nursing in Canada.

The title of Margaret Street's biography of Ethel Johns is "Watch-fires on the mountains: the life and writings of Ethel Johns". Margaret Street explains her choice of title for the book and I quote,

"Reference is often made to the "giants" of nursing, the women who assumed leadership in the formative years of the profession. They would have been the first to disclaim heroic stature; be that as it may, they were women of superior ability, intelligence, vision, courage, and dedication. In Ethel John's view, they were responsible for blazing the trail and lighting

watch-fires on the mountains, for the guidance of those who would follow. She was one of their numbers."

References:

- Baumgart, A.J., & Larsen, J. (Eds.). (1992). Canadian nursing faces the future (2nd ed.). St. Louis: Mosby Year Book.
- Gibbon, J.M., & Mathewson, M.S. (1947). Three centuries of Canadian nursing. Toronto: Macmillan
- Kerr, R.K. & MacPhaill, J. (1996). Canadian nursing: Issues and perspectives (3rd ed.). St. Louis: Mosby.
- Personal conversation with Margaret Street, author of Watch-fires on the mountains: The life and writings of Ethel Johns, from September 1987 to September 1993.
- Street, M.M. (1971). Watch-fires on the mountains: The life and writings of Ethel Johns. Toronto: University of Toronto Press.
- Zilm, G., & Warbinek, E., (1994). Legacy: The history of nursing education at the University of British Columbia 1919-1994. Vancouver: University of British Columbia School of Nursing.

Acknowledgement:

The author, Sheila Zerr, wishes to thank Naomi Miller for her helpful editing of this article.



IMPORTANT PUBLIC HEALTH NURSING BOOK AVAILABLE ONLINE

BY GLENNIS ZILM

"Through the Years with Public Health Nursing: a History of Public Health Nursing in the provincial government jurisdiction of British Columbia," by Monica M. Green has been digitized by the UBC Woodward Libraries and is now available online. The book was originally published by the Canadian Public Health Association in 1984. It basically covered the provincial public health nursing service from before its official beginnings until the early 1970s (essentially the story of the first 60 years). This long-out-of-print but oh-so-useful book has been much sought after by history of nursing researchers all across Canada

The Woodward Library had so many requests for interlibrary loans for the book that Librarian Lee Ann Bryant, one of our Affiliate Members, recommended it be considered for a digitization project. She was in touch recently to say that it is now online. She reports that currently it "only has a very basic CONTENTdm interface" and that "at the moment, Digital Initiatives is working with LSIT on a redesign of our digital collection pages. Once this is complete, the nursing collection will be given the new treatment."

Meantime it can be accessed at UBC Library Digital Collections and Services (digitalcollections.library.ubc.ca/). Then search for history of public health nursing.

Although improvements still are to come, having the book available online is excellent. And, because the original did not have an index, the ability to use a keyword search in the online edition makes it even more valuable to researchers.

Monica Green was one of our members, and in 1992 was made an honorary life member. She died in 2004, leaving a legacy to the Society for its work in promoting research into history of public health nursing in BC.



FROM THE ARCHIVES

Anita Dickson, first vice President of the Licensed Practical Nurses Association of British Columbia (LPNABC) contacted our Society a few months ago regarding the donation of memorabilia belonging to Florence Wilson (1901-1991), the first registered Licensed Practical Nurse in British Columbia. In 1965 Florence was the first LPN to be licensed under the Council of Practical Nurses and was awarded "Registrant #1" for her dedication and contributions to her profession.

The Wilson family wished to insure that their mother's silver plate, brooch and commemorative pin, all engraved, marking her award of "Registrant #1" BC Council of Practical Nursing, 1965, was preserved. Also in the collection are a certificate, letters, and photographs.

On April 16th Marjory Ralston, Ethel Warbinek and Glennis Zilm will attend the LPNABC Annual General Meeting where Florence Wilson will be honoured and her family will make a presentation to the Society. Look for a full story and pictures in our summer edition.

ANOTHER NEW WEBSITE

WWII photos- a new website displaying the pictures of Canadian nurse, Frances Caddy, during her deployment to Italy during WWII has been developed by Caddy's nephew Stuart Mackay (Edmonton). The website contains a biography and several interesting photos from Caddy's personal collection. Mackay would be happy to hear from anyone who may have any comments about the photos.

- Website is <http://www.infoese.ca/caddy.html>
- Stuart Mackay's email address: stu_jude@telus.net

BC HISTORY OF NURSING SOCIETY HYCROFT MANSION HIGH TEA EVENT

"ALZHEIMER'S: YOU SAY GOODBYE, AND I SAY HELLO"

On March 22 at Hycroft Mansion, History of Nursing members and guests enjoyed a memorable and sensitive performance of a lyrical memoir titled *Mind and Memory: You say Goodbye, I Say Hello*. Actors Cathie Borrie (daughter) and Patti Allen (mother), portrayed the "spiritual, emotional and intellectual revelations made possible by a mind transformed by Alzheimer's". Delicious refreshments & silent auction were enjoyed by all.

Cathie Borrie is the author of the book "The Long Hello" available at: www.cathieborrie.com



Members and Guests enjoying the event



Cathie Borrie with actress Patti Allen

NEWS ABOUT MEMBERS

NAOMI MILLER WRITES: "February has been a busy and happy month for me. In previous years scant attention was paid to birthdays. This year it leaked out that I turned 85 and half of Wasa wished me Happy Birthday, plus the usual phone calls from my family around the world. I was taken out to lunch and to supper and had flowers given to me. AND we had enough snow that I was able to get out on my cross country skis. Life has been treating me very kindly. I still manage my own house keeping, gardening, driveway shovelling and so forth. My dog and I walk at least twice a day no matter what the weather. Every good wish to the volunteers keeping HON perking along."

CAROL HARRISON, one of our newer members in Terrace, whose book *Passion for Prevention: Public Health Nursing in the Skeena Health Unit 1937-1999* came out last fall, is planning some delightful holidays: to Egypt in April, followed by a visit to Paris. She also plans to attend the CAHN Conference in Medicine Hat in June.

DOROLEN WOLFS, BCHNS scholarship winner, and student of **SONYA GRYPMA'S** at Trinity Western University, is the 2011 recipient of the Margaret Allemang Society Writing Prize. Dorelen's article: (Extra)ordinary Leaders: Nurses Who Have Carved Out an Influence (Part I), is the feature article in the Spring Issue of the Allemang Newsletter.

MARY E. HILL of Cobble Hill, Manager, Child Youth and Family Programs with the Cowichan, West Shore, and Sooke units for the Vancouver Island Health Authority, has recently joined as a student member. She is working on her PhD at the University of Victoria. Mary is a "third generation nurse": her grandmother graduated in 1907 from the Lady Stanley Institute in Ottawa; her mother is a graduate of VGH/ UBC (BApS, 1948) and worked in public health nursing in BC; and Mary is a 1976 BSN graduate of UBC and a long-time public health nurse in BC. Her aunt also was a public health nurse in BC.

GEERTJE BOSCHMA (UBC faculty) and **MARG GORRIE** (BCIT faculty) presented at the Fraser Health Authority's Nursing Researchers' Cafe on March 22, 2012. Their talk for nursing leaders in the Fraser Health Authority was titled: *A Retrospective Study of the Development of Mental Health Services in New Westminster: Voices of First Line Mental Health Workers and Consumers*.

A PASSION FOR PREVENTION:

PUBLIC HEALTH NURSING IN SKEENA HEALTH UNIT 1937-97:

by Carol Harrison

BOOK REVIEW BY NAOMI MILLER

(Carol Harrison worked in the Skeena Health Unit from 1972 to 2001, except for the preschool years of her two children. She is currently an instructor of first and second year nursing students at The University of Northern BC Terrace campus.)

Northwest British Columbia had a Health Unit which evolved from Prince Rupert eastward to Hazelton. The author gives dates and facts woven in with personal experiences describing the many changes, including creation of the instant city of Kitimat. Office space or buildings were contrasts in convenience using wherever and whatever was available. (My favourite picture shows the Stewart Health Unit barely visible between huge snow banks.) Prevention is mentioned throughout but emphasized in the chapter on plagues and poxes. Transportation was, and still is, a challenge. Anecdotes of travel mishaps make the reader smile but also arouse admiration for the team members. A timeline sets pertinent events in sequence. Skeena Health Unit was absorbed shortly after 1997 into the Northern Health Authority. The bibliography names the variety of references consulted, both for medical as well as local history. This self published history of Public Health services from Haida Gwaii to Hazelton, Ke-mano to the Yukon certainly achieves its objectives.

First Choice Books 2011, PB148 pages \$20 plus \$5 mailing. Order from author 5018 Walsh Avenue, Terrace, BC V8G 4H2

Editor's notes:

This book is dedicated to Norma Morrison. Curious about who she was and suspecting that there might be an interesting story behind the dedication, I asked the author about Norma. Here is what Carol shared: "Norma Morrison is a well-known figure in Terrace--she was a public health nurse for many years and much loved. When I started at the health unit in 1972 she took me under her wing and patiently guided me (and any other new nurse who came along), never seeming to get tired of answering questions. She also seemed to be related to half the town, and knew the other half well. Her family had come to Terrace early on in its history, and her father (E.T. Kenney) was the MLA and a cabinet minister for a number of years. Norma and I travelled to Tokyo together in 1977 and to Seoul in 1989, for ICN meetings--she still talks about those trips. Norma retired, unwillingly, at the age of 65 in 1987, but continues to care for and about others. She's a wonderful woman and a dear friend,

and one of the main motivators for writing the book. In fact, the first thing I did when the books arrived was to take her a copy--she knew I was doing something because I had interviewed her and borrowed some of her pictures, but the actual book was a complete surprise to her."



1953 Health Unit



Skeena Health Unit: 1974



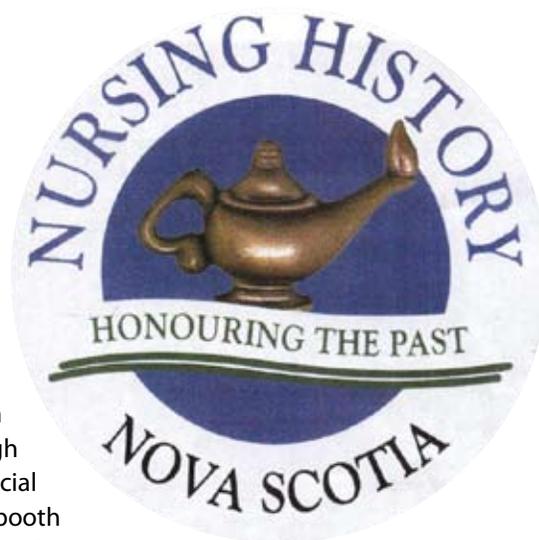
Skeena Health Unit Prince Rupert

NOVA SCOTIA HISTORY GROUP: "HONOURING THE PAST"

A NOTE FROM GLORIA STEPHENS:

"I was a member of the History group when I lived in Vancouver. I worked with Sheila Zerr in 1997 when the International History of Nursing Conference was held in Vancouver at St. Paul's Hospital. I was in charge of some of the activities at St. Paul's and developed a slide/tape history of the Hospital and had a friend compose a song which she sang for background music to the slide presentation. A great experience!

I moved to Halifax in 2001 and started a Nursing History group here in 2007. We are working hard and only have about 35 members. We are not big enough yet for a web site, nor do we have much money. We are trying to make this a provincial group covering more than the Halifax area. For the past four years we have had a booth at the College of Registered Nurses of Nova Scotia Annual meeting we give out handouts, pamphlets and display artifacts."



Editor's note: Gloria sent us an pamphlet describing the fledgling Nova Scotia group including their attractive logo. For further information contact her at gloria.stephens@ns.sympatico.ca.

NEW DISPLAYS AT UBC

BY GLENNIS ZILM

UBC Hall Display: The display case outside the Administration Office of the UBC School of Nursing currently has a display on the Administration of Medications. It shows collectibles used by hospital nurses of the late 1800s and early 1900s.

The display features some measuring tools, such as minim glasses and glass cylinders. One sign points out that nurses of that time usually carried out all the duties of today's hospital pharmacy, including ordering and storing drug supplies, preparation of solutions from concentrates, and mixing of small doses. Another part of the display features glass medicine glasses, trays, medication cards, kardexes, glass syringes, metal needles, and ceramic feeding cups. A sign reminds viewers that, in pre-IV days, more medications were administered these ways in solutions, tinctures, and tablets than is done today. Another sign reminds viewers that nurses also were responsible for the care and cleaning of all these instruments.



CAHN/ACHN 25TH ANNIVERSARY NURSING HISTORY CONFERENCE

June 15-17, 2012, Medicine Hat, Alberta, Canada

This Conference marks the 25th anniversary of the association. Founded in 1987, CAHN/ACHN has an ongoing commitment to stimulate and promote historical scholarship of nursing and health.

The Conference theme is: Places and People's Health: Exploring Nursing in Diverse Contexts. Aiming at a critical understanding of connections between place and practice, the Conference seeks to examine the history of nursing and health care in diverse geographic, social, and political contexts, including rural and remote locations, specialty areas, and various communities. Among the others whose papers have been chosen for presentation at the June Conference are BCHNS members:

- **SHEILA RANKIN ZERR**, Delta: "A Study of Two World War II Military Nurses: Hospital Training in the 1930s and Preparation for War."
- **CAROL HARRISON**, Terrace: "A Passion for Prevention: Public Health Nursing in the Skeena Health Unit, 1937-97."
- **HELEN VANDENBERG**, PhD Student, University of BC: "The Establishment of the Japanese Hospital in Steveston, British Columbia 1880-1910."
- **LYDIA WYTENBROEK**, MA Student, Trinity Western University: "Relationships of Power among Clinic Staff: The Experience of WHO Nurse Margaret Campbell Jackson in Iran, 1954-56."
- **GEERTJE BOSCHMA**, Vancouver, and Marg Gorrie, New Westminster: "Engagement with the Development of Community Mental Health Care: Nurses' and Consumers' Views and Experiences."
- **MARGARET SCAIA**, PhD Candidate, University of Victoria: "Situating the Grievable Patient."

The AMS-Hannah Lecturer for the Conference is Associate Member Carol Helmstadter, Toronto, who is presenting the Keynote address: "Military Nursing in Four Different Contexts: The Crimean War, 1853-56."

Editor's note: Thanks to Glennis Zilm for providing the above information.

LAUNCHING THE NEW WEBSITE

We invite you to visit our newly designed website at www.bcnursinghistory.ca and check out some of its features. There is a blog, a tribute to our Honourary Members, lots of photographs, and more. Be sure to sign up to get Society and website updates.

Shown in the accompanying photo are Anita (Scarlet), Lenore, and Beth.



**PUBLISHED QUARTERLY BY THE
BC HISTORY OF NURSING SOCIETY**

**PO BOX 72082, RPO SASAMAT, VANCOUVER
BRITISH COLUMBIA V6R 4P2**

**CANADA POST, CANADIAN PUBLICATIONS MAIL SALES
PRODUCT AGREEMENT 40622042**