



BC History of Nursing Society

# NEWSLETTER

FALL 2018  
VOLUME 29  
ISSUE 3

## Tea & Tales



By Lenore Radom & helpful editing team Sheila Zerr & Glennis Zilm

This event was planned to celebrate & give opportunity for two of our BCHNS members who have each published very interesting books and brought to light some interesting history. A third member, Linda Quiney was unable to join us to present. Linda is author of "This Small Army of Women"

Carol Harrison, a retired community nurse and teacher in the collaborative nursing program at UNBC is from Terrace, author of "Miller Bay Indian Hospital: Life and Work in a TB Sanitorium" gave us an interesting overview of her book which, is hard to do in 15 minutes! She shared viewpoints from nurses who had worked there & patients who had spent long years there. The patients came from long distances of many first nation cultures and had to be full status to qualify for care there, so were not only isolated from their own area & families, but also alone not able to understand the language by fellow patients or care givers. Much of this history being forgotten by non-indigenous but still very much felt by the first nation people.

Sonya Grypma, Dean & Professor of nursing at Trinity Western University, and president elect of the Canadian Association for Schools of Nursing, and author of "China Interrupted: Japanese internment and the reshaping of a Canadian missionary community" Sonya shared about her research for the book and told about presenting of this paper in China. She found she had exposed a part of the history in China of which even many Chinese and Canadians were not aware. In one instance, she interviewed a "mishkid" who had been interned in a Japanese camp, but who thought they were at what we consider "summer camp"! She showed us this beautiful silk embroidery that one of the Canadian nurses mother had managed to keep during the four years they were interned.

Our third author presenting was Lisa Anne Smith, author of "Emily Patterson, The Heroic Life of a Milltown Nurse." Lisa is a Vancouver writer and a docent with the Museum of Vancouver's Education Department and a member of Native Daughters of BC

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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 Spring Issue is Feb 15, 2019.

Please send submissions to: [lynne.esson@ubc.ca](mailto:lynne.esson@ubc.ca)

## *Archival Corner*

### Treasured Uniforms

In the spirit of Remembrance, this archival corner recognizes one of the nurses from our Biographical files – Nancy Dunn – who had an inspiring nursing career.

Born in England, Nancy came to Canada and graduated from Hamilton City Hospital in 1909. She also worked in Ottawa during a typhoid epidemic that year. During WW1 she enlisted in Queen Alexandria Nursing Service and served in various locations.

After graduating from the Public Health Nursing program at UBC, Nancy became the first Public Health nurse in the Peace River country. Here she travelled by horseback in summer and cutter in winter to provide medical care. Nancy also worked in Fort Nelson and Telegraph Creek, where dog teams were often her mode of transportation.

In 1934 she was made a member of the Order of the British Empire in recognition of her outstanding contribution to nursing services. More information is available in her bio file.



# PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

KATHY MURPHY

Recently a group of ten gathered for a potluck lunch and planning session. Through the expertise of Lenore Radom, we were able to have three members join us via Skype. They were Beth Fitzpatrick in Connecticut, Ethel Warbinek in Penticton and Glennis Zilm in Campbell River.

After confirming that our objectives are still current, we reviewed our current issues which include: the need for additional members to help with displays, the ongoing History of Nursing Schools project that Irene Goldstone and Glennis Zilm are preparing, some current historical projects, the need to identify additional architecture and monuments in BC, long range planning with other nursing groups, creation of a Task group to identify possible placement of the Archives and Artifacts, and locating space for holding our meetings.

Following the meeting, Linda Quiney was able to book the Leisure Centre in her strata at Thames Court at UBC. We will be meeting there on Tuesdays from 4-6 pm (Nov. 13 and Dec. 11). Information will be posted on our website.

In this newsletter you will read of several accomplishments of our members and about our successful Tea and Tales event in September.

The BCHNS website is revised regularly so it is worth checking it to keep track of our activities. Please click on [www.bcnursinghistory.ca](http://www.bcnursinghistory.ca).

*Kathy*



## EDITOR'S DESK

LYNNE ESSON

Fall is well and truly upon us, with the autumn leaves crunching underfoot, and the sun peeking through the thinning trees, it is time to make a cup of tea, stay warm and cozy, and enjoy this fall edition of the BCHNS newsletter. Our feature article introduces you to three British Columbia authors who presented their historical research at our September event "Tea and Tales" held at Hycroft House.

I invite you to catch up on all the latest news and take a look at the BCHNS archives. As always, we encourage you to submit your news items, stories, and historical photographs for inclusion in future newsletters. I trust you will enjoy this edition, and stay warm this fall!

*Lynne*



## Teas and Tales continued from cover ...

Post#1, owner/operators of Old Hastings Mill Store Museum, Vancouver's oldest building (circa 1865). Lisa has graciously offered BCHNS a royalty percentage from the sales of her books in appreciation of the assistance of BCHNS knowledgeable member, Glennis Zilm. This book is about a woman born in the US, not formally trained as a nurse, but due to circumstances and a caring nature had learned many nursing skills & knowledge, thus becoming the "go to nurse" for everyone's health issues, often over a Doctor because of such trust in her.

The Grand Finale was the presentation by Ron Hyde, member of the BC Historical Federation (BCHF) of their Best BC Website Award for 2018. Ron brought greetings & congratulations from the BCHF and presented to Anita Petersen & Lenore Radom. This award met the criteria of being attractive, interesting, informative and a joy to explore! It consisted of a certificate and \$250.00 to the BCHNS. In turn, Lenore, on behalf of BCHNS, presented Anita, our webmaster with a \$250.00 cheque. She is the "creator" of our website, serves us for a "charitable fee", we feel, because she "loves nurses". Anita is a great support to the website committee, Beth Fitzpatrick, who lives in Connecticut, USA, Jennifer Stephens, a newly completed PhD Nursing student, and Lenore Radom [chair], we are all a Team striving to be always a "work in progress"!! The website committee wishes to express a sincere thank you to Nan Martin, who nominated us, and to Francis Mansbridge, our part time Archivist, who wrote a very complimentary supporting letter.



(From left, around the table) Marjory Ralston, Ethel Warbinek, Anita Petersen, Pauline Dunn, Myrna Bloch and Carol Harrison



(From left, around the table) Marg Shugg, Anne Williams, Lenore Radom, Nan Martin, Ron Hyde, Sheila Oxholm & Kathy Murphy



(From left, around the table) Irene Goldstone, Anne Wyness, Sue Forshaw, Noga Gayle, Valerie Reid, Kathy Mair and Sonya Grypma





*Carol pointing out on map the vast area that patients came from*



*Glennis Zilm & Carol Harrison*



*Sonya Grypma*



*Lisa Anne Smith*



*Lisa Anne Smith with Glennis Zilm*



*(From left, around the table) Lynne Esson, Catherine Haney, Sheila Zerr, Cheryl Entwistle who printed name tags, thanks!, Marie Singh, Geertje Boschma [kneeling], Glennis Zilm, Caroline Burgess*

# Website Award

The BC Historical Federation selected the BC History of Nursing for their best website 2017 award. The award would have been presented at their annual conference but the BCHNS website people were not able to attend, thus they agreed to the presentation being at our special Tea & Tales event at Hycroft mansion. Anita Petersen & Lenore Radom were on hand to accept this very generous award for the second time in our BCHNS history!

Read more on this award in the Tea & Tales news item in this newsletter!

VISIT OUR WEBSITE

[WWW.BCNURSINGHISTORY.CA](http://WWW.BCNURSINGHISTORY.CA)



On behalf of the BCHNS, I wish to extend a sincere thank you to the BC Historical Federation for selecting our BCHNS website for your 2017 award, and to Ron Hyde, attending our event for the presentation.

Sunday, September 16th at our TEA & TALES event, Ron Hyde, from the BC Historical Federation, presented certificates to Anita Petersen and Lenore Radom, for their BC Best Website Award 2017. The Award also consisted of \$250.00 to BCHNS. Lenore then presented Anita Petersen, our amazing Webmaster, with a \$250.00 cheque for her creation of the website, and strong support to the website Committee, Beth Fitzpatrick, Jennifer Stephens & Lenore Radom. They are a team which consistently strives to be a "work in progress".

We wish to sincerely thank Nan Martin for nominating us and Francis Mansbridge, our part time Archivist, for his very supporting letter.

With sincere thanks, Lenore Radom, Chair for the website committee.

*Lenore*



Anita Petersen, Lenore Radom, Ron Hyde



# St Paul's Hospital Dolls Join Archival Collection



Submitted by Shelia Zerr

Two special dolls have been placed in the History of Nursing archival collection thanks to honorary lifetime member Nina Rumen. The dolls represent the important history of St. Paul's Hospital and the outstanding contribution the hospital and the Sisters of Charity of Providence have made to nursing and the community.

St. Paul's Hospital was founded in 1894 by the Sisters of Charity of Providence. They built a 25 bed, 4 story, wood structure designed by one of the sisters. The hospital was financed by "begging tours". The Sister would solicit \$10.00 per year from workers for the guarantee of care of St. Paul's in 1907. In 1909 the Training School for Nurses was established and continued until it's closure in 1974. Nina Rumen graduated from the training school in the 1940s.

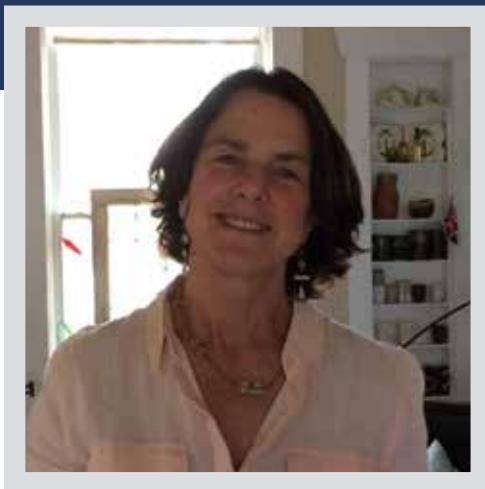
Sister Columbkil served as a member of the St. Paul's nursing staff for many years. She was fascinated by the History of Nursing Portrait Barbie Collection and wanted to have the costume of the nursing habit of the Sister of Charity of Providence represented in the collection. She dressed the doll in the nursing habit (circa 1974) with each detail of the habit carefully recreated. The doll was given to Nina Rumen on behalf of the history of nursing group.

The B.C. History of Nursing Memorial Miniature Portrait Doll Collection was established in the early 1990s to raise money for nursing student scholarships. The miniature dolls were original porcelain by Canadian artists and were designed and dressed by Sheila J. Rankin Zerr. Each doll was sponsored by donation into the collection. Each doll represented an important aspect of the history of nursing in British Columbia. Nina Rumen sponsored a doll in memory of her mother, Katherine Yarko Rumen (1904-1994). The doll was dressed in the nursing habit of the founding Sisters of Providence of St. Paul's Hospital (circa 1894). When Sister Columbkil donated the Portrait Barbie Doll to the history group archival collection, Sheila J. Rankin Zerr gave Nina Rumen a miniature replica of the Sisters of Providence costume doll for her personal use.

We wish to thank Nina Rumen and her sisters for placing these two special portrait dolls in the B.C. History of Nursing Society Archives where they will tell the story of the Sisters of Charity of Providence and of St. Paul's Hospital to future generations

# Pages of History

## Margaret Scaia



Margaret is a well-respected nurse educator and graduate of the Selkirk College Nursing Program in 1997. Margaret received the honour of Distinguished Alumni at the Selkirk College 2015 Graduation Ceremony, which was attended by her husband, her dear friend from nursing school, and three of her cherished nursing instructors.

Margaret Scaia grew up in Vancouver where she developed a love for the outdoors. Starting in 1976, she spent 30 years manufacturing outdoor equipment, primarily for Mountain Equipment Co-Op, while living in the remote locations of Hollyburn

Mountain, Read Island, and the Cape Beale and Kains Island lighthouse stations.

With historical roots in the West Kootenay, Scaia moved to Silverton in 1990 where she continued to embrace the remote outdoor lifestyle. By 1993, outsourcing of manufacturing by Mountain Equipment Co-Op made Margaret take a hard look at her future. While exploring her options, she came across the Selkirk College Nursing Program.

"It's not a profession that is biased on the basis of age or gender," she says. "It also has social relevance, so it seemed like a good bet." Margaret began her career in nursing in 1994 when she enrolled in Selkirk College at the age of 40. Graduating in 1997—where she was awarded the distinguished Governor General's Bronze medal for academic achievement—she continued to pursue her education with a Bachelor of Science in Nursing (UBC), a Master's Degree from the University of Calgary (2003), and a PhD from the University of Victoria (2013)

The study of nursing history has been a passion throughout her career. She completed historical studies about early motherhood in mid-20th century western Canada for her masters of nursing, and a study of the history of the three and four year nursing diploma and baccalaureate degree in mid-century western Canada for her PhD. She is currently active as a member of the board for the Canadian History of Nursing (CAHN/ACHN). Margaret's work has been published in several journal articles and book chapters over the years.

## SAVE the DATE!

### Nursing History Symposium 2019

Please join the Consortium for Nursing History Inquiry for the 2019 Nursing History Symposium.

- Theme: "100 Years of University Nursing Education: Looking Back and Looking Forward"
- Opening Lecture Presented by: Keynote speaker and UBC School of Nursing alumna:  
Dr. Susan Duncan, Professor & Director, School of Nursing, University of Victoria
- Date: 14 Mar 2019
- Time: 10am – 2pm
- Room: TBA

#### MORE INFORMATION

<http://blogs.ubc.ca/nursinghistory/2018/10/08/nursing-history-symposium-save-the-date/>



# Beatrice McNair Honored twice at the University Women's Club of Vancouver

On May 18, 2018 family and friends and members of several historic organizations were welcomed by the Archives Committee of the University Women's Club of Vancouver at Hycroft to celebrate the 100-year anniversary of a significant award to a deserving nurse.

Beatrice McNair, a 1911 graduate of the Vancouver General Hospital School of Nursing, volunteered for the Canadian Army Medical Corps in May 1912. She was fully integrated into the military structure and assigned the rank of lieutenant. On the night of May 19, 1918, she was on duty at No.7 Canadian General Hospital in Etaples, France when German bombing began and lasted for two hours. Sister McNair along with two surviving nurses worked through the night trying desperately to save the most seriously injured despite the danger and horror all around them. The senior officers were extremely impressed with the courage of the nursing sisters during and after the bombing. They sent a recommendation to the British authorities that the nursing sisters who survived should be awarded the Military Cross. The War Office replied "The Royal Warrant of the Military Cross does not allow for the award of this decoration to women". They offered the military medal instead which was awarded to Non-Commissioned Officers and Privates. It came as quite a surprise to the British War Office when Colonel John Gunn, commanding officer of the hospital, replied that limiting the award to the Military Medal was not acceptable to his Nursing Sisters as they were considered officers. After several more challenges to the ruling, the Canadians accepted the limitation, and in January 1919, the Military Medal was presented to Beatrice McNair by King George V. The citation reads: "For gallantry during an enemy air raid at Etaples, May 19/20 1918. She carried on her duties throughout the night without interruption, and throughout the period of the severe bombardment, which lasted for two hours Sister McNair showed great solicitude for the patients in her wards, and was wholly unmindful of her personal safety." This was the first time that a Military Medal had been awarded to women for valour on the battlefield.

On August 9, 2018 another event was held to recognize the opening of Hycroft as convalescent hospital during and after WW II as Beatrice McNair became the first matron. Beatrice retired from Hycroft in 1950 after a long and illustrious nursing career.

Permission was given by Mary Stewart and Cathy Barford of the UWCV Archives Committee to use the pamphlet prepared for the May event.



*Photo courtesy of Wendy Billingsley*



*Photo courtesy of UWCV Archives*

## MEMBER NEWS

**LYDIA WYTENBROEK** successfully defended her doctoral dissertation for a PhD in the Graduate Program in History at York University in September. Her dissertation examines the role of American Presbyterian missionaries in the development of medical institutions in Iran between 1920 and 1960. In the late 19th century, American Presbyterian missionaries began to provide medical care in Iran through ad-hoc dispensaries and clinics. By 1920, these provisional medical services were replaced by a system of hospitals and nursing schools that were designed to advance modern scientific medicine. Lydia's project explores the growth of these American-run medical institutions and the work of the American missionaries who operated and staffed them from the inauguration of these institutions in the 1920s until their closure and nationalization in the 1960s. She analyzes how gender, faith, professionalism, and nationalism animated the work of these American medical missionaries.

In a recent note, she said the defence went well, with no revisions to do, and her committee praised her work. "My dissertation ended up challenging typical histories written about modern medicine in Iran because scholars had not previously considered nursing," she said on a website at York. "By looking at nursing, I overturned the whole periodization and context of modern medicine in Iran."

She said the biggest criticism she received was that they said she "was too modest and didn't toot my own horn enough." She now is a postdoctoral fellow (in nursing and health care history) at the School of Nursing in Charlottesville, Virginia. She is working with noted American nursing historian Barbra Mann Wall, and a few other scholars. She is also sitting in and helping with a few classes (including a graduate nursing history class). Most of her time will be spent writing a book proposal and turning my dissertation into a book.

Lydia became a student member of BCHNS while just starting her master's degree at Trinity Western University. She thanks the Society for its support and credits the group for help and scholarship awards in her early years. She now hopes to apply for tenure track positions teaching history of nursing, but notes that the "job market" in this area is poor.

BCHNS honorary life member **NAOMI MILLER**, now age 93, has moved from her lovely home in the small BC community of Wasa, to Cranbrook for the winter.

BCHNS honorary life member **HELEN SHORE**, now age 93, has moved from her lovely home on West 16th to South Granville Park Lodge: 1645 14th Ave W, Vancouver, BC V6J 2J4.

**NINA RUMEN**, shown celebrating her 91st birthday, also lives at Granville Park Lodge.

Our long-time associate member **DR. SUSAN ARMSTRONG-REID** of Guelph, Ontario, has been awarded the 2018 Lavina M. Dock award for her recent book *China Gadabouts: New Frontiers of Humanitarian Nursing, 1941-51*. This prestigious award for history of nursing books was awarded by the American Association for the History of Nursing at its 2018 annual meeting in San Diego, California.

The book, published by UBC Press in July, examines previously unexplored and undervalued roles of Western and Chinese nurses in the famous China Convoy's humanitarian efforts from 1941 to 1951. This work gave meaning to the women's lives as they attempted to carve out personal and professional space in a chaotic and often hostile environment. Armstrong-Reid unearthed letters, diary entries, and other materials, as well as interviewed nurses and their families and so this book provides first-hand perspectives. It has major implications for contemporary international humanitarianism. For more information about the book, see <https://www.ubcpres.ca/china-gadabouts>.



Lydia Wytenbroek



Naomi Miller



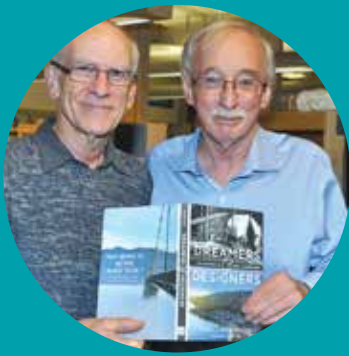
Helen Shore



Nina Rumen







# BCHNS ARCHIVIST LAUNCHES NEW BOOK

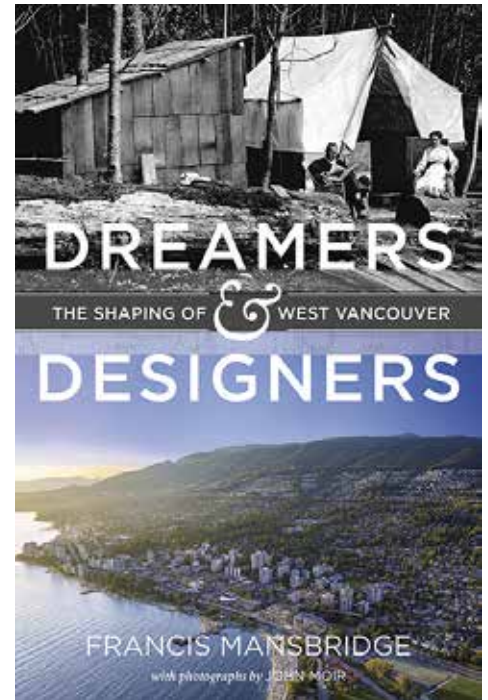
PHOTO FROM THE NORTH SHORE NEWS SHOWS (LEFT) PHOTOGRAPHER JOHN MOIR AND (RIGHT) FRANCIS MANSBRIDGE

BY GLENNIS ZILM

Francis Mansbridge, our part-time BC History of Nursing Society Archivist, has just launched another new book at the end of October. The book is *Dreamers and Designers: The Shaping of West Vancouver*, by Francis Mansbridge, compiled by John Moir. It was published by Harbour Publishing of Vancouver.

West Vancouver's beautiful setting gives it a distinct identity. Its stunning scenery and unparalleled opportunities for outdoor activity attract people from all over the world. In the book, Mansbridge traces its history from a beachfront cottage community to a highly affluent urban area. Enlivened by accounts of the major personalities involved and sidebars featuring voices of residents throughout the ages, he provides a thoroughly entertaining and readable history. He also notes how, in recent years, the Squamish Nation has also become a major player in shaping its future direction. The text is filled with archival and contemporary photographs.

Francis Mansbridge came to Canada with his parents as a toddler in 1946. In 1992, after fifteen years as an English professor, Mansbridge decided he'd rather be an archivist. He studied at the University of British Columbia and worked for many years at the North Vancouver Museum and Archives. A contributor to both newspapers and literary journals, Mansbridge is also the author of *God's Recording Angel*, a biography of Irving Layton, and editor of *Wild Gooseberries: The Selected Letters of Irving Layton* as well as four other popular local histories.



MORE INFO:

[www.harbourpublishing.com/title/DreamersandDesigners](http://www.harbourpublishing.com/title/DreamersandDesigners)

## Ethel Warbinek Farewell

Ethel Warbinek, was a founding member of the BCHNS and has faithfully attended meetings all these years, her final one being June 7, 2018.

Ethel has moved to the Okanagan with her daughter & family and her physical presence will be greatly missed here in the lower mainland, but we have not said goodbye completely as she will make the effort to attend future meetings via Skype!! Our Thanks for all you have done for the BCHNS Ethel, and our Best wishes in your new location!!





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