

Monuments Honouring Nurses In B.C.



Public monuments honouring nurses exist in various cities, including a famous statue of Florence Nightingale in central London and a well-known monument to Jeanne Mance in the center of Montreal.

A request for funds to restore a stained-glass window honouring World War I Nursing Sisters in Vancouver's Canadian Memorial Church led **Nina Rumen** of the B.C. History of Nursing Group to start a project, in mid-1991, to begin to identify and document nursing memorials in Vancouver. By May 1992, she had identified and photographed eight public memorials to nurses – three stained glass windows, three statues, a frieze, and a hospital building. Nina's photographs, originally compiled into a booklet album by **Glennis Zilm**, showed these eight memorials. The monuments represent nursing sisters esteemed by the public or by individuals who knew and admired the nursing profession.

In 1996, Nina Rumen was joined in the project by **E. Brenda Flynn** and the two continued to identify and document other monuments. A poster version of the monuments was made by Brenda to show at the International Conference on Nursing History held in Vancouver June 12-15, 1997.

Another version of the album was prepared later by Glennis Zilm at the request of Lt. Col. (Retired) Harriet ("Hallie") Sloan, Honourary Chair of the Nursing Sisters' Association of Canada, for a project involving the history of Nursing Sisters in Canada. This smaller version of the album merely showed the monuments that were specifically dedicated to the Nursing Sisters.

Copies of these early booklets can be found in the BC History of Nursing Society archives.

During the next decade the BC History of Nursing Society expanded its website and **Sheila Zerr** and her grandson Patrick created a digital version of the monument booklets for an online exhibit. More photographs and information about other monuments located in the Vancouver area was added by **Beth Fitzpatrick** and **Helen Shore**.

The BC History of Nursing Society continues to seek out and identify other public "images of nursing" across the entire province. For further information please contact **Margaret Scaia through contact us on this website**

Jean Matheson Memorial Pavilion

This pavilion, shown below, built in 1946 at Shaughnessy Hospital, originally was a 100-bed unit for patients suffering from tuberculosis who returned from World War II. The building was named in honour of Jean Matheson the second matron of Shaughnessy Hospital and an early expert in the nursing of tuberculosis patients. In recognition of Matheson's role in caring for tuberculosis veterans, it was named the Jean Matheson Memorial Pavilion and an oil portrait of Miss Matheson in uniform was hung in the entrance lobby.

The building, whose exterior shell was designated a city heritage building, was closed in 1994 and in 2008 was remodeled to become the Mental Health Unit of BC Women's and Children's Hospital/Health Centre. Despite protests Matheson's name was removed from the building.



Nursing Sister Jean Matheson (1872-1938)



Jean Matheson was a dedicated Canadian career nurse of the early 1900s, whose roles as a nursing leader and particularly as a Nursing Sister during and following the First World War deserve recognition. She received the Mons Medal, the Victory Medal, the Royal Red Cross and the King George Jubilee Medal for her wartime service. Following her service overseas as matron of World War I's No. 5 General Hospital, she became the second matron of Shaughnessy Hospital serving from 1919 to 1937.

After World War I, Miss Matheson began work at the Fairmont Military Hospital at 33rd and Heather. In 1920, when the main Shaughnessy hospital building opened, she moved there; since senior staff lived in the hospital in those days, she had a small suite in the hospital and was available almost all the time for patients and staff who had deep affection for her. She retired in 1937 and died in Winnipeg in 1938. Her body was brought back to Vancouver for burial in Mountain View Cemetery near the graves of "her boys" – the veterans who had died at Shaughnessy.

Following an initiative by the BC History of Nursing Society the portrait of Miss Matheson, which originally hung in the Pavilion, now hangs in the nearby Brock Fahrni Pavilion, which still has some long-term care beds for Veterans. This Jean Matheson oil portrait was done by Steffens Colmer Studio, Vancouver, B.C.

Research for the above note on Jean Matheson was done by Glennis Zilm from various sources, including the B.C. History of Nursing Group files on Matheson and the preparation carried out for a nomination of Miss Matheson for a designation as "Person of National Historic Significance" by Parks Canada.



2009 BC History of Nursing Society members at Brock Fahrni Pavilion

Frieze Depicting Nursing Sister and Injured Soldier

Shaughnessy Hospital (now UBC Hospital, Shaughnessy Site)

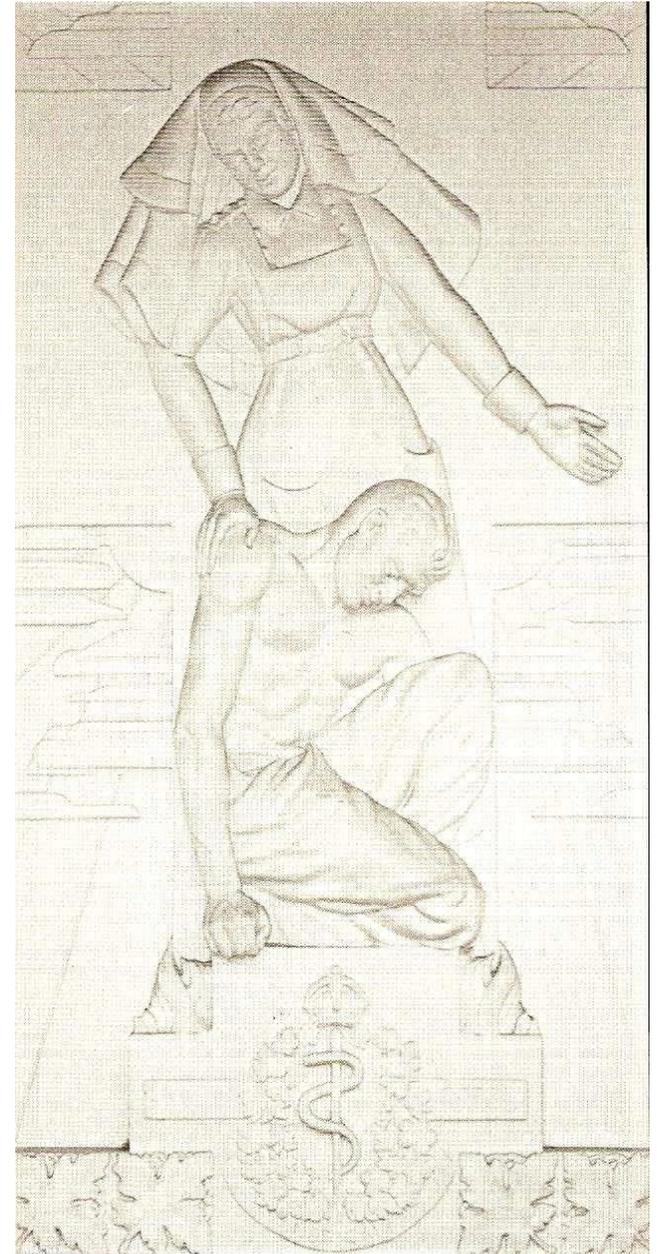
This two-panel marble sculpture, by Beatrice Lennie, one of Canada's top sculptors of the 1940s, was commissioned for the original Main Entrance of the 1940 Shaughnessy Military Hospital building, erected by the federal government. The inscription reads: Canadian Medical Corp. The cornerstone was laid by Ian MacKenzie, P.C., K.C., Minister Pensions and National Health, 17 Oct. 1940.

Edith Beatrice Catharine Lennie (1905 - 1987) studied at the Vancouver School of Art under various great Canadian artists and at the California School of Fine Arts, San Francisco. As a sculptor, she also executed significant commissions for the Hotel Vancouver lobby, the exterior of the College of Physicians and Surgeons in Vancouver, the exterior of the Lipsett Indian Museum in Hastings Park, Vancouver, and the pylons of the Patullo Bridge in New Westminster

One of the two panels showed a nursing sister assisting a wounded soldier; the other depicts a surgeon lifting a wounded soldier. The man who posed for the wounded soldier was apparently a Leigh Fraser; Mr. Fraser visited the hospital site in November 1996 and told Alison Osbourne, Community Liaison Officer of Children's Hospital that he had posed.

The 1940 Shaughnessy Military Hospital was closed in 1992 and the buildings integrated into the Oak Street campus of Children's & Women's Health Centre site. The building with the original entrance is now named the Shaughnessy Building. Beatrice Lennie's sculptures can still be found at the sides of that original entrance; now overlooking the outdoor courtyard of the cafeteria.

In 1999, the B.C. History of Nursing Group established a note card showing the Nursing Sister panel to commemorate the 100th Anniversary of the Canadian Nursing Sisters who accompanied troops to the South African (Boer) War in 1899; the card was dedicated to future nurses who will face the challenges of the next millennium



Corner Statues Cathedral Place (1990)

Cathedral Place Office Tower, Georgia and Howe Streets.

In 1929, the Vancouver Medical-Dental building, an art deco-style skyscraper of the era designed by McCarter Nairne and Partners, was built on the corners of Georgia and Hornby Streets in downtown Vancouver. At about the 10th-story level, the building was graced with 11-foot-high, terra cotta statues depicting a Nursing Sister of World War I, one on each of the building's three visible corners.

Architects John Young McCarter (1886- 1981) and George Colvil Nairne (1884-1953) had both served overseas during World War I. McCarter was seriously wounded and credited the Nursing Sisters with saving his life. They founded their architectural firm in 1921, and when they obtained the contract for the Medical Dental Building, they decided to honour the Nursing Sisters. The sculptures were designed by Joseph Francis Watson. A local joke among the medical users of the building was that the statues represented the Rhea Sisters – Gono, Dia, and Pyo.

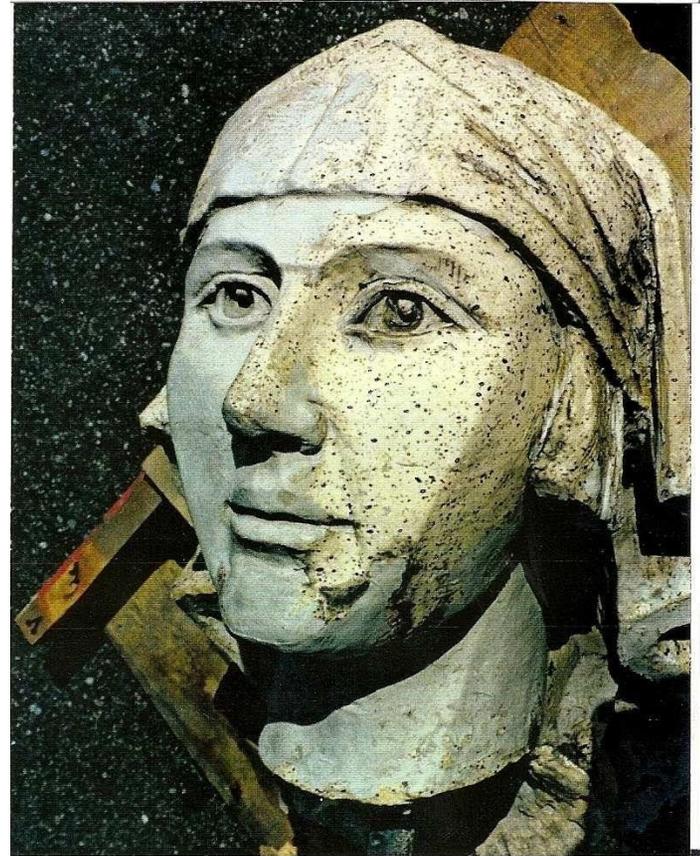


Terra Cotta Statue Head

(1928) Formerly Medical Dental Building, Burrard and Georgia Streets

In 1989, the aging, but still striking, building was imploded to make way for a new 23-storey office tower. The Shaw Tower at Cathedral Place is a dramatic post-modern structure designed by Vancouver architect Paul Merrick. Cathedral Place was developed through a joint venture with Sir Run Run Shaw of Hong Kong to realize a long-time dream of Charles Shon to redevelop the Georgia Medical-Dental Building site creating an enduring architectural landmark. A public campaign was raised to save the original statues for the new building. However, as these proved both extremely heavy and difficult to remove from the original building, replicas had to be made. When the new tower opened in 1991, the replicas were mounted at about the third-storey level, easily visible from the streets.

Mario Tinucci of Ital-Decor arranged to make the castings so that new fiber-glass figures could be made. Ital-Decor took one of the originals (the one least damaged) and re-molded it to make it “whole,” then made fiber-glass replicas for the building. The patched original now is on display at their premises on Hastings Street.

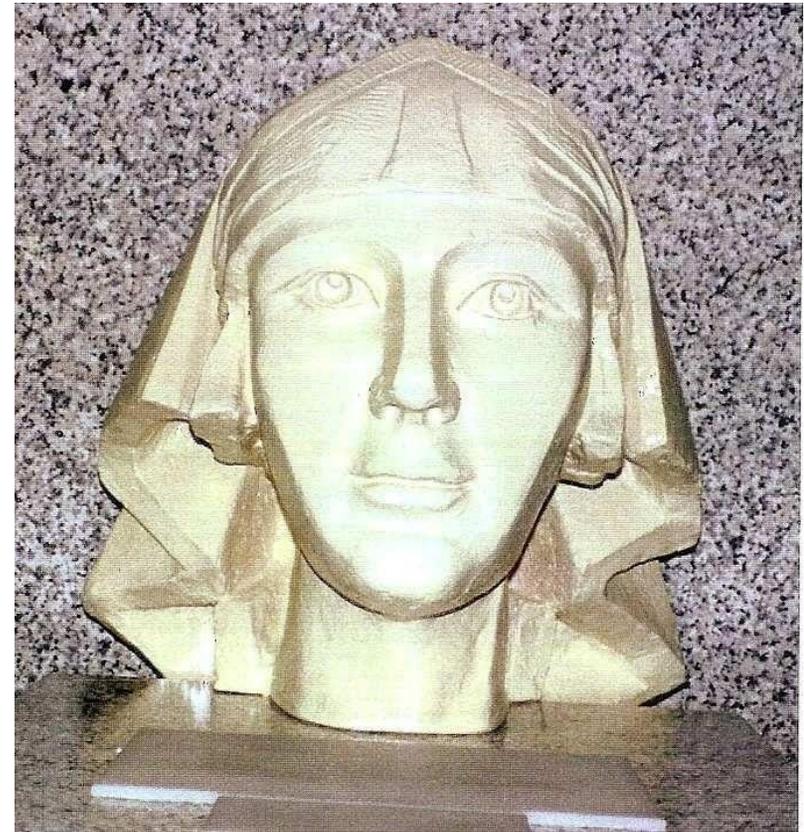


Nursing Sister Head (1990)

Cathedral Place Office Tower, Georgia and Howe Streets.

In 1992, the Vancouver Museum took the least-damaged head from one of the broken statues for safe-keeping; this was also patched and repaired and is held for display by the Museum. A fiberglass replica of the head also is on display in the lobby of Cathedral Place.

In June 2003, replicas of the same statues were made to adorn the new Technology Enterprises Facility (TEF) III on the University of British Columbia campus. This building was designed by Chernoff Thompson Architects, who apparently liked the statues. TEF is a commercial venture for the University and is associated with the University- Industry Liaison Office (UILO) at the University of British Columbia (UBC); this office is responsible for licensing technology and assisting spin-off companies in various aspects of formation and financing.



For more information: <https://miss604.com/2015/04/georgia-medical-dental-building-and-cathedral-place>.

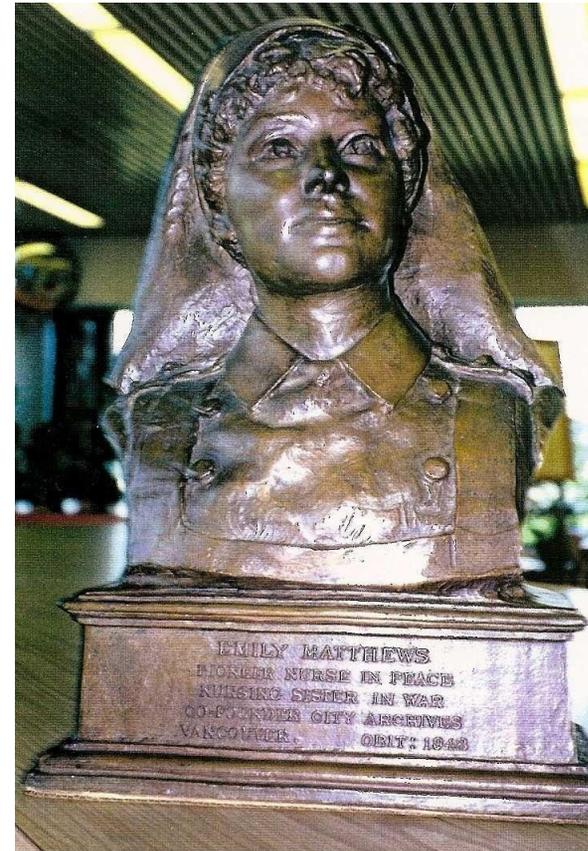
Bronze Sculpture Emily Eliza Edwardes Mathews (1952)

Vancouver City Archives, 1050 Chestnut Street

This 21-inch bronze head of Nursing Sister Emily Eliza Edwardes Mathews, by British Sculptor Sydney March, honours her as co-founder, with her husband, Major James S. Mathews, of the City Archives of Vancouver.

Emily Eliza Edwardes was a 1902 graduate of the Vancouver General Hospital. She served as a nursing sister in England during World War I and was mentioned in dispatches for her services. She had her own business as a nurse therapist prior to her marriage in 1920. Following her marriage, she assisted and supported her husband in collecting, cataloguing, and preserving Vancouver documents, memorabilia, and artifacts of Vancouver – the start of the City's Archival collection.

Although she is credited for her work in supporting her husband in the development of the Vancouver Archives, little is known about her.



Marble Sculpture, Student Nurse (1960's)

University of B.C. Woodward Memorial Library

This marble, life-size statue of a student nurse was made by well-known Vancouver sculptor Herbert Apt. The story goes that this statue was in front of St. Paul's Hospital but, because of some re-building, the statue had to be moved. The statue was to be given to the University of B.C. School of Nursing, to be erected in front of its proposed new building, but this was not happening, so Dr. William Gibson said that he would arrange for it to be kept in the UBC Library until the School of Nursing could find a home for it. This information came to light during research for a book on the history of the UBC School of Nursing for its 75th anniversary (1994) and the statue was located.



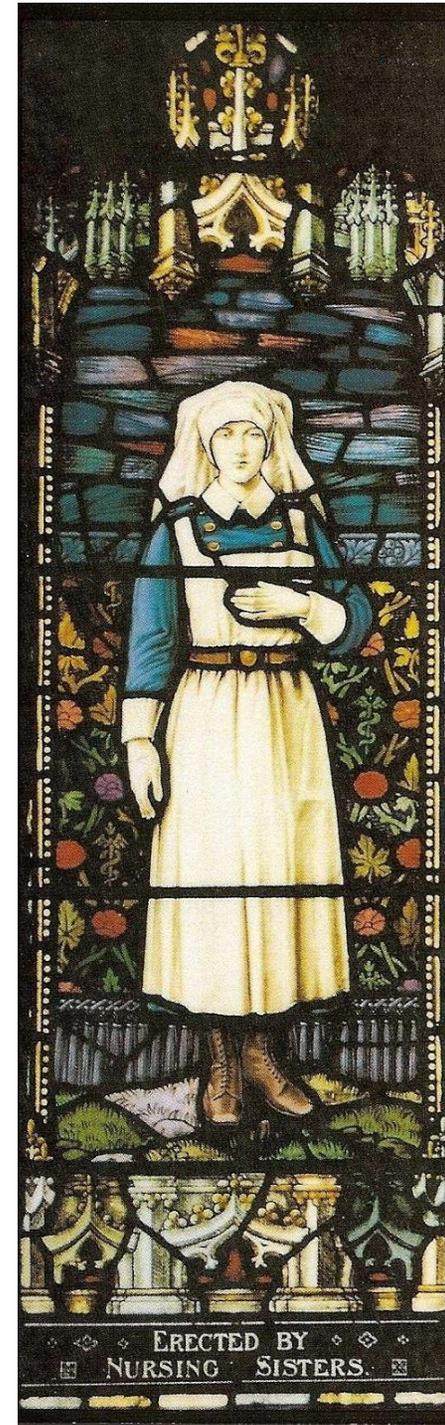
The Nurse Memorial Window (1928)

Canadian Memorial Church, 15th Avenue and Burrard Street

This stained-glass window, erected by the Vancouver Unit of the Canadian Nursing Sisters Association, honours Nurses who served in World War I). It is one of 15 windows in the Canadian Memorial Church, was erected as a "Memorial to Peace."

Designer of the window was Jack Ramsdon of the British Society of Master Glass Painters.

In 1989, the window needed restoration and a note card showing this picture was produced by the Nursing Sisters Association, Vancouver Unit, to raise funds to restore the window and provide for its perpetual maintenance. By 1992, sale of these cards had also provided funds for a scholarship through the Canadian Nurses Association. In 1992, the B.C. History of Nursing Group took over distribution of these cards to promote nursing history.



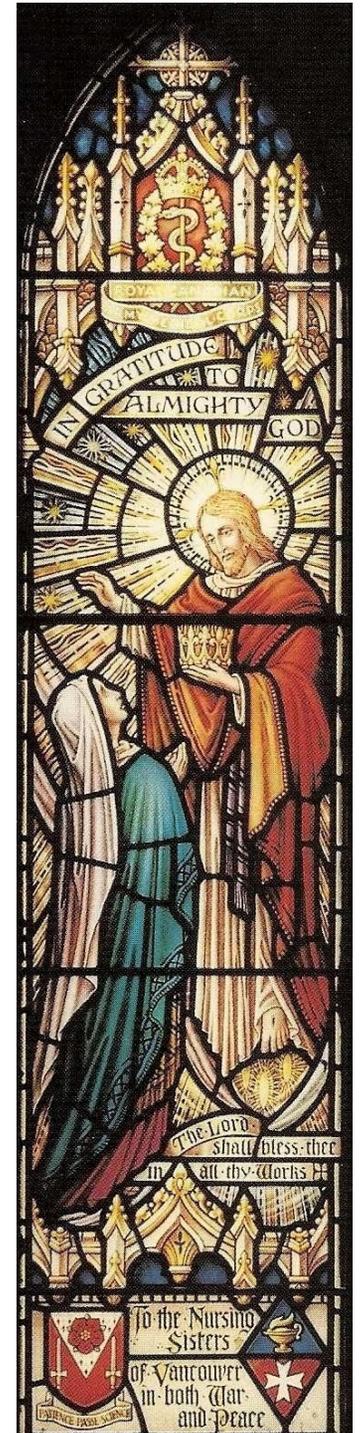
Nurse Window (1950)

Christ Church Cathedral, Burrard and Georgia Streets

Designed and funded by Major J. Mathews, Vancouver City Archivist, as a memorial to his wife, Emily Eliza Edwardes Mathews, this stained-glass window is a tribute to the nursing profession in Vancouver. Nursing in Vancouver dates to 1873, when the first lay nurse began providing care in her home.

The Canadian Nurses Association met in Vancouver in 1950 and attended the unveiling.

In 1996, the B.C. History of Nursing Group developed a note card based on this window as part of its ongoing promotion of nursing history. The card also commemorated the History of Nursing International Conference, which held its meeting June 12-15, 1997 in Vancouver; an interdenominational evensong was held in the Cathedral on June 14, 1997.



Florence Nightingale Window

St. Mary's Anglican Church, 2940 West 37th Avenue

This stained-glass window of Florence Nightingale (1820-1910) was dedicated in 1986 by Canon Whinfield Robinson, an Anglican Rector, in memory of his wife Doris ("Dorie") Comley Robinson.

Doris Comley was born on June 21, 1907 in Ladysmith, on Vancouver Island, and met her future husband while they were students there. She graduated as a nurse from the Ladysmith General Hospital in 1929; as this was a small school of nursing, she also attended Vancouver General Hospital for pediatric and obstetric affiliations. She and Whinfield were married on June 8, 1931.

The window, made by G. Maile and Son, Canterbury, England, makes use of other stained-glass windows at St. Mary's Church.

A photograph of the window was used for the fourth card in a series produced in 2000 by the B.C. History of Nursing Group to recognize nursing monuments in Vancouver. Funds raised from this card support the Archives Projects of the Group. The photograph was taken by Edward Trody of Vancouver.

The photograph has also been used, with credit to the Church, the B.C. History Group, and the photographer, by the Canadian Museum of Civilization in its presentation on Nursing (2004-2006). A Christmas card featuring the window was also reproduced by the School of Nursing, King's College, University of London in 2006.



Isabelle Maude Hill Memorial Fountain

Located at the Family Respite Centre Health and Home Care Society of BC
2711 East 49th Avenue, Vancouver, BC

Isabelle Maude Hill was born c. 1871, in Hillsborough, Ontario. She graduated from the Hamilton General Hospital, Ontario in 1900. In 1901, Isabelle went to the Victorian Order of Nurses (VON) training school in Montreal to learn to practice home nursing. She came to Vancouver in 1901 to become the first permanent VON nurse.

Isabelle Hill also played a pioneer role with the anti-tuberculosis society where she was the first nurse in B C to devote herself full time to this work. She set up a free clinic, sponsored by the Rotary Club, where she did case finding and follow up visits. Her nursing and organizational abilities were recognized, and she was sought as Matron for community hospitals in Sumas, Washington (1909) and Port Alberni, B. C. (1913).

Isabelle Maude Hill died in St. Mary's Hospital in New Westminster, B. C. on February 19, 1936 at 65 years of age. She is buried in a New Westminster cemetery, in a grave without a stone or marker.

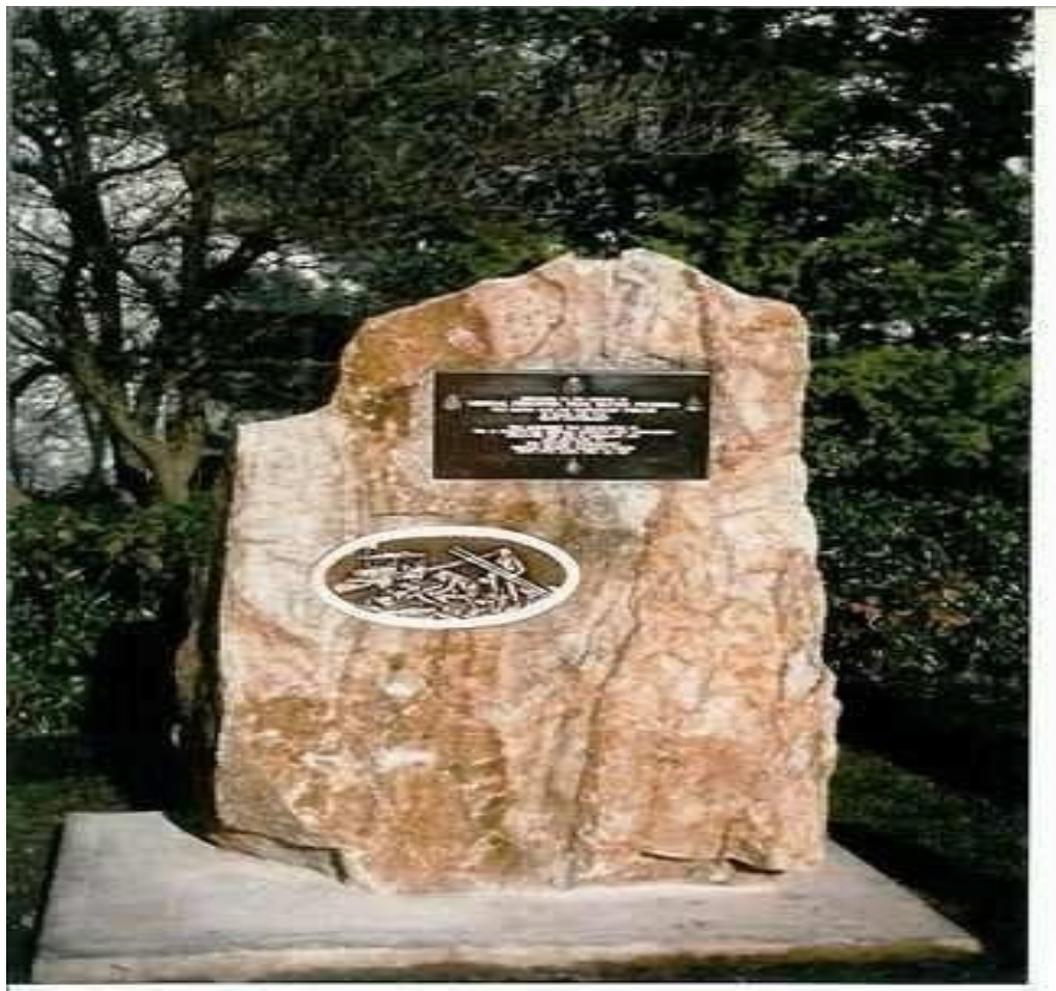
The Isabelle Maude Hill Memorial Fountain, **sponsored by Helen Shore**, was unveiled in June 2006 and stands as a lasting reminder of a nurse who helped lead the way for the VON and for the nursing profession in this province.



Monument to British Columbia Military Medical Services Personnel

This monument was established by the 12 (Vancouver) Medical Company Unit Associations and dedicated in 1995. The plaque reads: “Dedicated to the Memory of Medical Personnel who served with the Canadian forces in Peace and War “Militi succurrimus”.

St. Vincent’s Hospital has since been demolished. The monument now has a place in the garden of Brock Fahrni Pavilion.



Memorial Fountain to Nurse Mildred Neilson

This small fountain is located in a grove of trees in the National Section at Ocean View Cemetery in Burnaby, B.C.

The inscription reads:



**Erected by the citizens of Trail, BC to the memory of
Nurse Mildred Neilson 1890-1925
So greatly loved**

Neilson was a young nurse, a 27-year-old graduate of the Vancouver General Hospital, who was working in the Trail Tadanac Hospital when a Nelson man, a WWI veteran and businessman, entered the nurses' home one morning and shot her to death. The story is told that the killer was known to Neilson's family and had been asked to deliver a tin of cookies to her by her mother in Vancouver. The killer then shot himself, recovered from his wound, was subsequently tried, found guilty and sentenced to death.

The town was shocked at the callous deed and smelter employees collected over \$1,300 as a memorial fund to the popular girl. The photo below is from the Stuart Thompson fonds, City of Vancouver Archives.

“When Humans Bleed”

Dedicated to the Pioneer Nurses of British Columbia 1900-1919
placed in memory of Margaret Kennedy Campbell, by son, Henry Campbell, May 1999

Original location of Monument was at VGH, 899 West 12th Avenue, but was moved to present location just outside VGH Emergency



Ethel Johns, Person of National Historic Significance

1879 – 1968



This plaque was sponsored by the BC History of Nursing Practice Group in 2007. Recognition of Ethel Johns as a person of National Historic Significance was attained in 2009, wording for the plaque in 2010. Plaque was formally presented in a ceremony in 2015 and finally placed in the garden adjacent to the UBC Hospital February 26, 2019 where it now honours Ethel Johns, the first Director of the UBC School of Nursing, which was **the first** to offer a university degree in nursing in the whole Commonwealth.

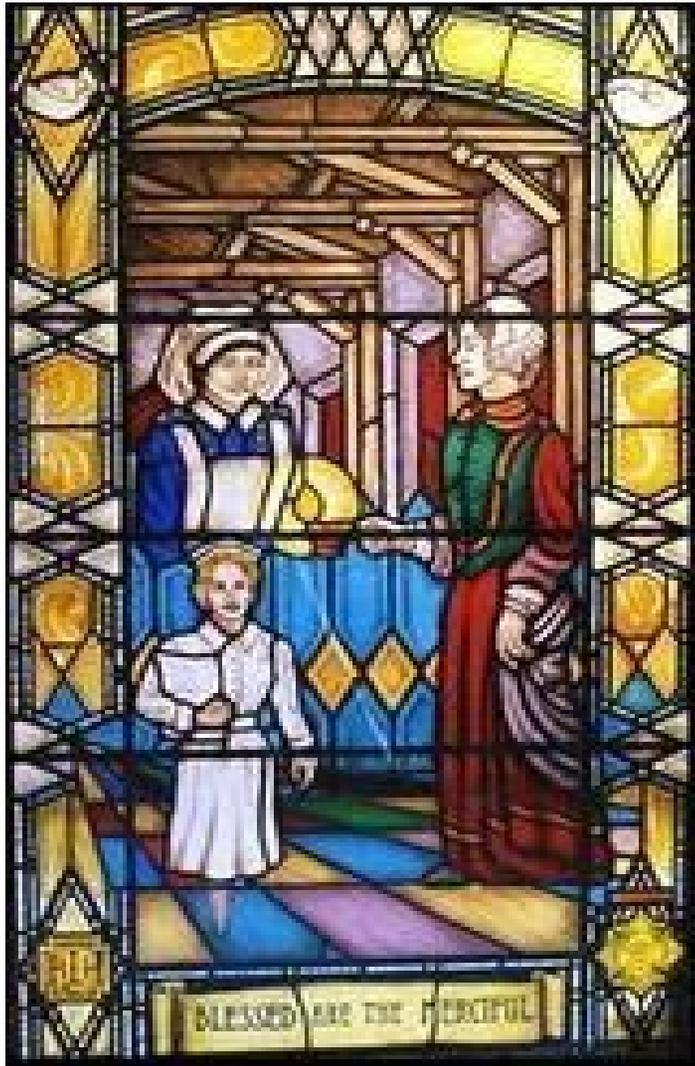
PEMBERTON CHAPEL OF THE ROYAL JUBILEE HOSPITAL



For more than a century the Royal Jubilee Hospital has touched the lives of countless Victoria families. Many heritage buildings have not survived the passage of time. The Chapel is a fortunate exception. On June 20, 2003 the Chapel once again opened its doors to reclaim its special place as a retreat for patients, staff and others; a bridge spanning *Then* and *Now*. In 2004, the Chapel received “The Heritage Building Restoration” award from the Victoria Real Estate Board, Commercial Builders Division. The award was received by the RJH Alumnae President and is now mounted at the Chapel entrance. The Chapel is open 24 hours a day and the Visitors Book attests to its continuing role in the lives of patients and their families; staff and visitors’ comments reflecting its use as a refuge for solitude and contemplation.

Source: Alumni Association of the Royal Jubilee Hospital School of Nursing

Nursing Sisters Memorial Window



This commemorative window was originated in 1984 by Nursing Sister Wherry, and created by the Nursing Sisters' Association (Victoria) with support from Padre Peter Isles and Veterans Affairs Canada. Maurice Hartle, an orderly at the D.V.A. Hospital, designed the window. Tom Mercer of Orillia Glass made the window for \$5,000 – which the Nursing Sisters raised.

The window was installed in the Memorial Pavilion Chapel, May 12, 1985. In 1995 the window was removed (for redevelopment of the Memorial Pavilion) and it was reinstalled in the new Pemberton Chapel vestibule in the spring of 2002.

The window depicts:

- A World War I Nursing Sister
- A Royal Jubilee Hospital Graduate Nurse
- Florence Nightingale
- Pins and caps from both the Royal Jubilee Hospital School of Nursing and the St. Joseph's School of Nursing Graduates.

Source: Alumni Association of the Royal Jubilee Hospital School of Nursing

ROYAL JUBILEE HOSPITAL GRADUATE NURSE



In 2003, The Alumnae Association commissioned Nathan Scott of Victoria to create an image of a Royal Jubilee Hospital Graduate Nurse. The RJH nurse statue was placed in the entrance way to the Chapel in honour of all nurses who graduated from the RJH School of Nursing during its ninety years of educating nurses. The commemorative statue recognizes and celebrates the contribution of the RJH nursing graduates to their nursing profession and history. The plaque on the base of the statue reads:

**In loving recognition of all our Graduates Royal Jubilee Hospital
School of Nursing
1891 – 1983**

Source: Alumni Association of the Royal Jubilee Hospital School of Nursing

WW1 BRADSHAW NURSING SISTERS REMEMBERED

Saanich Remembers

Through its Saanich Remembers project the Municipality of Saanich invested significant resources in commemorating the men and women of the municipality who served in the Great War.

Left: Portrait of Nursing Sister Beatrice (Trixie) Bradshaw, remembered on Saanich Honour Roll, courtesy of Saanich Archives (2007-002-004)



103rd leaving Victoria, 1916
courtesy of Saanich Archives
(2007-196-040)

Ordinary People



Five Girling brothers of the Swan Lake neighbourhood served as soldiers. **Godfrey Girling, 26**, was killed in action January 1918 while serving with the 123rd Pioneer Battalion. After Stanley Girling was wounded another

brother supplied necessary blood transfusions. Stanley lived but **Leonard Girling, 29**, died of complications resulting from the life-saving transfusions he had given.

On one single day—September 27, 1918—843 Canadians died in the fighting for Bourlon Wood in France. One of the fallen was Saanich resident **Robert Stark Little, 34**. His is one of 221 Canadian graves at nearby Bourlon Wood Cemetery.

The prescribed minimum age at which a youth was allowed to fight in the Canada Corps was 19. Like so many other volunteers, **Frank Butts** misrepresented his age when he volunteered. On snowy Easter Monday, April 9, 1917, Frank was one of 2,400 Canadians killed in the first day of the battle for Vimy Ridge. At the time young Butts' real age was 17.

Above:
Stanley and Leonard Sawyer Girling in military uniform
courtesy of Saanich Archives (2008-025-220)

Saanich Honour Roll

Beginning in 1916 Saanich Council began compiling an Honour Roll listing the names of Saanich residents who served. The roll was eventually lost and remained missing for many years but it was recovered and is now displayed in Saanich Archives.

The roll bears 355 names. The dedicated people working at Saanich Archives continue to supplement it with new names when additional Saanich soldiers come to light.

Canadian Monument, Vimy Ridge,
France courtesy of Alan Livingston
MacLeod



Heritage BC



Saanich Parks 250-475-5522 saanich.ca/parks



Saanich Remembers
Project Poster
courtesy of
Saanich Archives



For more about the men and women of Saanich who served, visit Saanich Archives or refer to the website Saanich.ca/archives to view the Saanich Remembers Project.

This Plaque stands on a pedestal at the Intersection of Cedar Hill X road and Shelbourne St., Saanich, BC



WWI BRADSHAW NURSING SISTERS

Beatrice [Trixie] Bradshaw 1892 - 1945

Beatrice [Trixie] Eugene Bradshaw is **listed in the Saanich honour roll and her photo is on the plaque above page**. She was the daughter of Sarah Payne Windsor and William George Bradshaw, born in Newfoundland and named after Queen Victoria's youngest daughter. A few years after her father's death, her mother, uncle and siblings moved to Victoria. The mother allegedly believed the girls would have to earn their own living, believing Victoria would provide them the best opportunity. Trixie enlisted with the Canadian Expeditionary Force in 1918, a year after her graduation from The Royal Jubilee Hospital School of Nursing, from a class of 13. She served at the #11 Canadian General Hospital at Shorncliffe, England. Trixie did not marry or have children, she lost her fiancée in the war. Following the war, she worked at Resthaven Veterans' hospital, Later she was the school nurse at Oak Bay for many years. She died of cancer and is buried with two other sisters in St. Luke's churchyard. A framed oval sepia portrait of Trixie Bradshaw is held by the Royal Jubilee School of Nursing Archives. A portrait of Trixie in uniform is held by the Craigdarroch Castle Archives.

Hannah Jennings Bradshaw 1891 -1984

Hannah "Nance" Jennings Bradshaw was the second daughter of Sarah Payne Windsor and William George Bradshaw. She was born in 1891 in Placentia, Newfoundland. Nance, was a stenographer, but later graduated from The Royal Jubilee Hospital School of Nursing in 1915 and went overseas with the #5 Canadian General Hospital that same year. On September 14th, 1915, Nance enlisted with the Canadian Expeditionary Force in London, England. She was stationed in Shorncliffe, England, Heliopolis, Egypt and Salonika, Greece, and Gallipoli. While overseas, Nance secretly married Major James Thomas Wall, a physician and surgeon born in Nanaimo, but from Vancouver, who also was with #5 Canadian General Hospital. After the war they lived in Vancouver and had 3 children. **Hannah is also mentioned in the Saanich honour roll from the Great War.**

Source: Saanich Archives Oral History Collection

https://www.saanich.ca/assets/Parks~Recreation~and~Culture/Images/Bradshaw_Beatrice_grave.jpg

<https://www.saanich.ca/EN/main/parks-recreation-culture/archives/saanich-remembers-wwi/residents-who-served-a-l.html>

<https://saanich.accesstomemory.org/portrait-of-beatrice-trixie-bradshaw>

