



History of Nursing News

FALL 2001 VOLUME 12, ISSUE 2

Beverly Du Gas Awarded Order of Canada

Dr. Beverly Witter Du Gas, an honorary life member and former president of the B.C. History of Nursing Group, has been awarded the Order of Canada. This honour, the highest given in this country, was announced in August. She receives the award in recognition of her many contributions to nursing and health care nationally and internationally.

A native British Columbian, she received her diploma in nursing from the Vancouver General Hospital School of Nursing, then took a bachelor of arts from the University of B.C., a master of nursing from University of Washington, and a doctorate in education from UBC. She also holds an honorary doctorate from the University of Windsor. She started her career as a nursing instructor, then director, of the VGH School of Nursing. She began writing nursing textbooks during this time, and her first textbook was *Introduction to Patient Care* in 1967 with co-author Barbara Koziar; this text went through four editions and was translated into Spanish and Japanese and used in more than 40 countries. More recently she is the author of two editions of *Nursing Foundations: A Canadian Perspective*; one of her co-authors of the second edition (1999) was Lynne Esson, member-at-large of the History of Nursing Group.



Dr. Beverly Witter Du Gas

Major early milestones in her career include positions with the Health Manpower Directorate for Health and Welfare Canada and with the World Health Organization; for WHO, she held a position as a nurse educator in Chandigarh, India.

(Continued on page 2)

(Continued from page 1)

In the 1970s and 1980s, she was on the faculty of the University of Ottawa School of Nursing, serving her last two years there as Acting Associate Dean of the Faculty of Health Sciences and Director of the School of Nursing. Following retirement in 1989, she carried out international consultancies for WHO and was an invited scholar, working in China, the Philippines, and Hong Kong. She served as a consultant for the establishment of the Guru Nanak College of Nursing in India. She received the Order of British Columbia in 2000.

Members of the HON Group's Oral History Committee have interviewed and carried out taping sessions with Dr. Du Gas. Tapes giving highlights of her career, especially of her time in India, are available in the RNABC Library. She continues to be involved in the HoN Group, and is active in fund-raising for the Archives Committee.

Dr. Du Gas is recovering from surgery earlier this fall and will not attend the award ceremonies in Ottawa until next Spring.

Glennis Zilm, Ethel Warbinek

Autumn can be a bittersweet time of year as we feel summer leaving us and we look ahead to darker months. As we think of our Thanksgiving celebrations in October and especially our Remembrance Day services in November, our thoughts and feelings will also be focused on the many individuals and their families affected by the September 11, 2001 tragic attacks on the United States and its citizens.

Our concerns are for the missing and injured and for the rescue workers and the emergency medical and nursing personnel and the countless others trying desperately to help those who so badly need help. Our fears are that our world will never be the same again. Who would have ever thought a tragedy of this magnitude would overtake us.

Those of our nursing colleagues who have assisted in battle zones or behind the lines will know only too well what a challenge we all have ahead of us.



HON TABLE OF CONTENTS

Beverly Du Gas OC	1
Table of Contents	3
President's Report	4
Calendar of Events	6
Editorial	8
Summer Tea	10
Member News	11
Editorial Board, Web Site	12
Book Review	15

HON EDITORIAL BOARD

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The HON Newsletter is published four times a year. Submissions for the next newsletter are welcome.

Please submit articles * to **Naomi Miller**,
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 E-mail: naomi-j@telus.net
 Phone 250-422-3594,
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 by **November 20, 2001**.

***Guest editor, Naomi Miller, requests of members that they forward to her any of their " SPECIAL MEMORIES OF CHRISTMAS" that are nursing or hospital related - or stories, news items, announcements, pictures or other items people may wish to contribute to the next news letter. Naomi's deadline is November 20, 2001.**

The BC History of Nursing Group executive meetings take place on the first Thursday of every month at the RNABC. Meetings begin at 4:00 PM and end about 6:30 PM. Refreshments are served and all members are most welcome to attend. For further information, call BC HON president Sheila Zerr at 604-943-3012.

Regular meetings of the Archival Development Committee take place on the third Tuesday of each month and are currently held at the RNABC. If you are interested in working on this interesting committee, please call the chair, Lois Blais, at 604-224-5130.

PRESIDENT'S REPORT - 2001 SUMMER WORKSHOP

BC History of Nursing Group members and guests met on July 18th at Sheila and Ray Zerr's home to toil over the objectives set for this year's workshop:

- To identify a 2-5 year vision for each of the existing committee functions and priorities.
- To examine the priorities presented by each committee chair.
- To identify the tasks for 2001-2002.

We spent the morning listening to the visions shared by each of the committee chairs. We examined the possibilities and identified limitations. It seemed there were loads of possibilities but just as many limitations due to lack of time and personnel.

The sun broke through long enough to enjoy lunch on the sundeck. We shared our plans and dreams for history of nursing with the guests who joined us for lunch.

Work continued in the afternoon and resulted in a provisional list of tasks to address in 2001-2002. Using the priorities established in the 2000 summer workshop the tasks are:

Newsletter

- We support the editorial committee and rotating editorship of the newsletter.
- We need to address the bulk mailing issue.
- We will promote the web page and continue electronic transfer of the newsletter content where appropriate.



Lunch on the sun deck!

(Continued on page 5)

Archives

- The cataloguing system is in place for our holdings at UBC. We will promote availability of the holding listings on our web page. We will investigate the interface of our cataloguing system with the RNABC and UBC systems.
- We will attempt to have someone in charge of the display materials and the cataloguing of these materials.
- We will consider further contracts to continue the archival cataloguing. We will continue to investigate the possibility of space in Heather Pavilion.

Programs

We will promote programs and program attendance and make an effort to gain new members. Group and individual efforts will be made to make follow up phone calls and to establish a buddy system to encourage new members.

Other tasks identified

Memorial Books/Biography/Oral History/Memorial Nursing Portrait Dolls/Pages of History/Archives
We recommend coordination of these committees by:

- having the committee chairs work together on an action plan to address the RNABC 2001 AGM Resolution #3.
- revising the biography form and the committee promotion materials to attract chapter attention.
- meeting with RNABC staff to discuss issues and to map out an action plan.

Revision of Job Descriptions

We recommend that job descriptions be reviewed and revised where appropriate.

We have identified our course for the coming year. Heartfelt thanks to all members who participated in the workshop and helped set the path for 2001-2002. We look forward to another year of work, fun and camaraderie.

Sheila Zerr, July 2001



Programs and Future Events

R.N.A.R.C.
NURSING HISTORY



Saturday, October 27, 2001 at 1100h

Visit to Riverview Hospital Museum with Lunch

R.N.A.R.C.
NURSING HISTORY



Anna Tremere has graciously offered to host a tour of the newly opened museum in the Industrial Division Building at Riverview Hospital, Coquitlam, and a lunch, for BCHN members and guests. Please phone Nina Rumen at 604-733-7529 by October 17, 2001 to say if you will be attending.

If driving from the Vancouver area on the Lougheed Highway, turn left at the Colony Farm lights and follow the road to the right as it enters the hospital grounds. The main road is Holly Drive. Stay on that road until Oak. Turn left on Oak and go up the hill to Clover. It's at a stop sign. Turn left on to Clover and the Industrial Division Building is a long blue building on the right hand side. There is lots of parking around the building. The museum is upstairs. The phone number for the museum is 604-524-7521. Anna's pager is 604-443-7920.

Thank you to Anna, one of our BCHN members, for the invitation to tour the museum, for the lunch and for the helpful directions.

Saturday, December 1, 2001 at 1130h.

**Second Annual Christmas Luncheon at the Vancouver Lawn Tennis and
Badminton Club**

**Norma Fieldhouse, WWII Nursing Sister, will speak to members and guests:
"Canada's Military Nurses: Riel Rebellion to Gulf War"**

Cost of lunch is \$35.00 with a no-host bar at 1130 and lunch at 1200h. Please call Nina Rumen at 604-733-7529 by November 17, 2001 if you wish to attend. The Christmas 2000 luncheon was a great success.

(Continued on page 7)

(Continued from page 6)

February 2002

The Dumpster Saga with **Lois Blais**

May 2002

Papers given at the 2001 CAHN conference in Winnipeg by **Sheila Zerr** and **Glennis Zilm**

June 2002

BC HON Annual Dinner

THANK YOU!

A special thank you is owed to **St. Paul's Hospital, Vancouver**, for their gracious support of the BC History of Nursing Group. Their generosity in allowing us to use the Hurlburt Auditorium free of charge for the May 12, 2001 BCHN program on "Florence Nightingale: Her Life and Times Revisited" is much appreciated.

Survey of BCHN Programs

BCHN program survey forms were distributed to participants at the May 12, 2001 program and the June 16, 2001 dinner. Seventy forms were distributed with 10 replies or 14% return. Most of those responding rated last year's programs as good or excellent (although many had attended only one program.) One person offered to do phoning and one person suggested that there be more publicity in such places as the RNABC News, at RNABC chapter meetings and in the workplace. All stated they liked the programs and Saturday afternoons were the best times. No suggested topics were submitted.

Thank you to those responding to the program survey. We also thank BCHN program convenor, **Nina Rumén**, for her work in preparing, distributing and collating this survey.

Sailing, Sailing, Over The Bounding Main!!!!

Have you ever dreamed of what it might be like to set sail on a luxury cruise liner, not just for seven days, but for seven months? And get paid for it! It does seem like a dream to contemplate the life of a registered nurse fortunate enough and imaginative enough to find his or her way into the cruise ship industry.

The need is there. The facilities are sophisticated. And the personnel are highly qualified and experienced. So, how does one see the life of a registered nurse at sea as a topic of interest in a history of nursing newsletter? Well, I recently met a registered nurse from Vancouver, BC, aboard a cruise ship in the hot and humid atmosphere of the Panama Canal Zone. My request to view the nursing and medical facilities on board was graciously accepted, a time was set, and I was given a close inspection of the on-board world of nursing.

We recall that the fledging airlines industry, during and following World War II, felt the need to employ only registered nurses as its flight attendants. Their thinking was that on the lengthy flights of the day, it would be a smart marketing move to promote the top of the line preparation of the personnel by ensuring that only highly qualified and experienced nurses were the in-flight crew caring for passengers in any and all situations. Those situations could have been routine flights, requiring no more than a pillow and a blanket to sooth a passenger's discomfort. But the subliminal message really was that in the case of any eventuality, the in-flight crew could care for you and your loved ones and ensure your safety and comfort.

The cruise lines have taken a critically necessary step in creating their own emergency medical and nursing services and they reflect the concerns evident in the history of the airlines. Cruise passengers are at sea and out of touch with home for days or weeks even months at a time. The frequent stops at ports of call do not ensure that proper medical or nursing care will be easily available ashore. Obviously, if the cruise lines wish to attract thousands of passengers to their luxury liners for as long a cruise as possible, then the ship becomes a not so small city and this means not so simple facilities must be in place.

Picture if you will two thousand passengers and one thousand crew, all living within the confines of a floating resort. The potential for accidents, emergencies, disasters, even infectious diseases for any and all ages of passengers and crew is phenomenal. As the cruise line industry develops and grows, so too does the sophistication of facilities and the demand for absolutely top of the line diagnostic and medical and nursing personnel and facilities on board.

(Continued on page 9)

(Continued from page 8)

The bottom line, however, is that the emergency and intensive care qualified nurses and physicians aboard a cruise liner will care for you and attempt to diagnose your problem but you will be sent ashore at the first possible moment if you are suffering from a serious condition. That is as it should be. The "sick bay" is a temporary way station or triage but this means that you could end up in a strange country, along with your travel partner, and be facing an expensive bill and myriad concerns before you see home again. At times, English would be a second language. Once off ship, you are on your own.

The glamour of the job, the salary in American dollars, and the prestige associated with a nursing position within the cruise line industry may well be offset by the amount of responsibility that faces the staff. Personnel are trained in emergency measures and must be prepared to take charge in the event of a catastrophe on board. Sudden changes in stability resulting in injuries or, worst of all, fire and smoke, mean that large numbers of frightened passengers, some very young, very old, or with disabilities, must be taken in hand and told what to do and what not to do in no uncertain terms.

The glamour, excitement and prestige of the relatively new career of a health professional at sea is part of the future for those nurses who qualify and desire such responsibility. Starting with the fledgling airlines industry through to the cruise ship industry today, nurses' initiative can propel them into pioneering in fresh fields. Furthermore, it seems likely travel in space will continue and health and safety personnel will be among those first to live and work outside the earth's atmosphere. Nursing in space is not beyond the realm of possibility. It has arrived.

Jill Thompson
Guest Editor
September 1, 2001



History of Nursing Summer Tea at Hycroft

Twenty-three Friends of the History of Nursing Museum assembled at Hycroft, the University Women's Club of Vancouver, on Saturday, August 11, 2001 to enjoy an illustrated historical talk on early nursing history in British Columbia and a summer tea party. This event was presented as a fund raising event to support the proposed History of Nursing Museum and was both socially and financially successful.

Glennis Zilm, costumed as Mrs. Miller, a nurse who served during the Riel Rebellion, gave the illustrated talk. It was an outstanding survey of British Columbia's early nurses and institutions that intrigued and stimulated all members of the audience.

A beautiful warm and sunny day encouraged walking in the garden and enabled tea, sandwiches and pastries to be served on the patio; a lovely afternoon in a mansion of bygone days. We were happy to welcome several ladies from Hollyburn House in West Vancouver along with long time and new members of the History Group. Many of those present wore summer hats for the occasion adding to the pretty picture.



**Guest Speaker Glennis Zilm
as nurse Mrs. Miller**



**Helen Shore (left) Archives Committee;
Nina Rumen (right) Programs Convenor**

Member News

Sheila Rankin Zerr and **Glennis Zilm** prepared an article on former RNABC Executive Director Alice Wright for the "Profile of a Leader" series in the *Canadian Journal of Nursing Leadership* (see Vol. 14, No. 2, May/June 2001, pp. 27-28). If you are researching a Canadian nursing leader and are interested in writing an article for this series, check the *Journal* for more information.

Glennis Zilm did a presentation on the History of Nursing Group and on some of the Vancouver Nursing Monuments at a meeting of the Lady Vancouver Club in early May. The Lady Vancouver Club is an organization of volunteers under the umbrella of Vancouver Tourism, and members frequently act as hostesses, greeters, and information providers at conferences held in the city. Several retired nurses are members of this association, which later sent a donation to the History Group.

Verna Splane, our very own woman of distinction, was an invited guest at a brain-storming day of all the YWCA's "Women of Distinction" award winners in March. Verna, who received her award in 1984, spent a day-long session at the Bayshore looking at a "focus on the future." For part of the time, the participants broke into various smaller groups; hers had an international focus.

Ethel Warbinek and **Glennis Zilm** presented some of their research into the early days of TB nursing in this province to a group of Lower Mainland Infection Control Officers in late February. The presentation was arranged by **Jackie Ratzlaff**, who is the ICO at the Royal Columbian.

Several members of the B.C. History of Nursing Group attended a presentation by **Lois Blais** on "Ethics" at **Sheila Zerr's** University of Victoria class of "returning RNs" in March. In addition to the students, HoN members attending included: **Nina Rumen**, **Jackie Ratzlaff**, **Ethel Warbinek**, and **Barney Hickey**.

Brenda Flynn has been active in recent months lobbying on behalf of nursing during the negotiations. She also appeared at the B.C. Government's fact-finding commission on health care to make some comments on the shortages of nurses and how these might be addressed. In addition to her history of nursing activities, Brenda is active with the B.C. Nurses' Union and frequently appears in historic nursing costume at their activities.

Jill Thompson will be speaking to two groups in Kelowna in October about the history of nursing. Firstly, to new baccalaureate nursing student at Okanagan University College on the topic "Florence Nightingale: Her Life and Times" and the next day, from a slightly different point of view, to RNABC chapter presidents from the district, on "Florence Nightingale: Her Life and Times Revisited."

(Continued on page 14)

MEET YOUR EDITORIAL BOARD

The year 2000 was a banner year for the History of Nursing Newsletter. The first innovation was the creation of an Editorial Board. Co-chaired by Beth Fitzpatrick and Glenis Zilm, the Board first met in October 2000 and has been meeting regularly ever since.

For the past year the newsletter has been produced by a team of guest editors, who have given our publication a new look and style. Ethel Warbinek, Lois Blais, Jill Thompson, Sheila Zerr and Lynne Esson have each done a marvelous job of providing

timely historical news and improving the newsletter's look. Two members-at-large were recruited to join the Board: Beverly Leipter and Naomi Miller. Naomi, the former editor of the British Columbia Historical News resides in Wasa, B.C. She visited Vancouver in early May and joined us for a productive afternoon, attending both an Editorial board meeting and an Executive meeting.

Beverly Leipter, formerly Associate Professor, Nursing Program, University of Northern British Columbia in Prince George also serves on the Board. Beverly recently moved to Windsor, Ontario where she is an Associate Professor in the Nursing Faculty at the University of Windsor. We look forward to receiving her perspective on historical happenings in eastern Canada.

What else is on the Board's agenda? A zip disc is being used to archive past and future copies of the newsletter. An application was forwarded to Canada Post for Publication Mail status which would give us a reduced postage rate. And finally the Board is working with web master Kevin Lee to revise and expand the History of Nursing's web page. A very full agenda!



Naomi

Beth

Ethel

Beth Fitzpatrick
Co-Chair Editorial Board

WEB SITE UNDER CONSTRUCTION

Please note that our current web site may be unavailable for a short period of time. Web master, Kevin Lee has moved it to a temporary home where the site could more easily be accessed in order to make revisions and additions. Members of the Editorial Board are submitting current information to Kevin that will vastly improve the site and make it informative and "user friendly".

Plans are underway to expand the information posted on our web page to include scholarship fund information and application, membership information, how to order note-cards, archival holdings, up-coming programs, a photo gallery and much more. Stay tuned!

BCHN Web Site

<http://www3.telus.net/arts/bchn/>

OOPS!

**The correct address for BCHN treasurer Lois Blais is
4074 West 16th Avenue, Vancouver, BC. V6R 3E1**

The picture to the right shows part of the collection of historically and accurately dressed figures or dolls created by BC **HON President Sheila Zerr**. This group of dolls totals 15 in all and in this picture from last year are shown on display at the Kwantlen University College Library. The collection has been on display in the boardroom at RNABC over this past summer and has been of great interest to members. The dolls are a great help to us in grasping the story of the history of nursing over the past centuries.



(Continued from page 11)

Beverly Leipter is presently dedicating her time to the completion of her dissertation which is entitled, "How Women Stay Healthy in Northern Geographically Isolated Settings." Bev's research was done in northern BC and she is finishing the final chapter and promises to keep us posted. Bev has moved from Prince George, BC., and asked us to publish here that she now may be reached through her new office:

Beverly D. Leipter
Associate Professor
Faculty of Nursing
University of Windsor
Windsor, ON. N9B 3P4

Phone: 519-253-3000 (ext. 3770)
Fax: 519-973-7084
E-mail: bleipter@uwindsor.ca

Dr. Lyren Chiu, a new full member of BC HON Group, is an assistant professor and Peter Wall Institute Early Career UBC Scholar at the UBC School of Nursing. We welcome Lyren and regret she was mistakenly listed in the membership directory as a student member.

Request From a New Student Member

Cindy Milner is a new student member of the BC HON Group and is currently a master's student at the University of Victoria. Her research includes "looking at the history of disciplining nurses in British Columbia." To date, Cindy has "been able to find very little information for the early part of the study." Cindy is asking if some of our readers would be able to help with information or know of those who could do so concerning the professional conduct and disciplining of nurses between 1918 and the present. E-mail Cindy at cindymilner@home.com

Gwen Kavanagh, former director of the RNABC and a long-time former member of the HON Group, died in late September in Kamloops, BC. after a lengthy illness. An In Memoriam note will appear in our next issue. Our sympathy is extended to her family.

Nina Rumen sadly reports that a long time friend to the History of Nursing Group, **Ruth McIlrath**, passed away on September 6, 2001 at age 88 years. Ruth presented three programs to the history group and, although not a member, maintained a great interest in the work of the BC HON Group.

Ruth graduated from the Winnipeg General Hospital in 1936 and was a nursing sister in the Royal Canadian Army Medical Corp from 1942 until 1946. She was assistant matron and director of nursing at Shaughnessy Military Hospital in Vancouver from 1946 until 1976.

BOOK REVIEW

Life Lines, by Arlee Hoyt McGee

Life Lines, by Arlee Hoyt McGee. Fredericton, NB: University of New Brunswick School of Nursing, 2001. (Available for \$15. from the Nurses Association of New Brunswick (Attn: Suzanne Nevers), 165 Regent St., Fredericton, NB E3B 7B4; a copy is available in the RNABC Library.)

Arlee Hoyt McGee (a History Group Affiliate Member) has written several history of nursing monographs and biographies of nurses. Her book on consumer rights in health care (*It's up to you/ C'est votre affaire*), published in 1981, is widely used as a reference book in New Brunswick schools. She is the founder of the New Brunswick Nurses' Museum and Archives, several rooms open to the public in the NANB building in Fredericton, and is widely honored as the "keeper" of New Brunswick nurses' history.

Her long nursing career includes hospital and public health nursing and nursing education, and she was a pioneer in independent practice and in addiction nursing and served on New Brunswick's first Alcohol and Drug Dependency Commission. She currently is a part-time faculty member at the University of NB School of Nursing as well as the part-time custodian of the Museum and Archives.

Starting in 1953, she began recording her thoughts about patients, nursing colleagues, and the health care system in poetry; she called these her "life lines." These recently were published by the University of New Brunswick Faculty of Nursing in a delightful 96-page book.

The 72 short poems are exquisite gossamer strands of thought, but do, indeed, offer links to peace and meaning even when derived from stress and sorrow. A "must read."

Reviewed by Glennis Zilm



***HISTORY OF NURSING PROFESSIONAL PRACTICE GROUP OF THE
REGISTERED NURSES ASSOCIATION OF
BRITISH COLUMBIA***

The History of Nursing Professional Practice Group provides a forum for those interested in the history of nursing to exchange ideas and information. The Group, formed in 1990, strives to stimulate interest in history of nursing and promotes study of and research into history of nursing in British Columbia. The Group also encourages the teaching of nursing history in educational programs and can assist in the preservation of historical nursing materials.

Membership categories are honorary, full, affiliate and student. **Full members** must be paid-up practicing or paid-up non-practicing members of RNABC. Interested nurses and individuals not paying RNABC practicing or non-practicing fees may join as **affiliate members**. If you are enrolled in a nursing education program or are a registered nurse enrolled in a graduate program, you may join as a **student member**. Please get in touch with any member of the executive if you are interested in membership.

Dues for 2002 are: Full and Affiliate \$30; Students \$5. Membership year is January 1 to December 31. Send name, address, telephone number, or name of the educational program. Make checks payable to "History of Nursing Group" and send to: **Lois Blais**, Treasurer, 4074 West 16th Avenue, Vancouver, BC. V6R 3E1.

THE HISTORY GROUP'S NEWSLETTER

The History of Nursing News is published irregularly four times a year by the History of Nursing Professional Practice Group of the Registered Nurses Association of British Columbia. Unsolicited material is welcome, but the Editor reserves the right to shorten, reject, or edit materials in consultation with the author(s). APA style is preferred.

BCHN Web Site

<http://www3.telus.net/arts/bchn/>
(temporarily under revision)