

HISTORY OF NURSING NEWS

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Snippets of Nursing History

The Canadian Nurses' Association was officially incorporated in 1947 but its predecessors were the Canadian Society of Superintendents of Training Schools for Nurses, formed in 1907, then renamed the Canadian National Association of Trained Nurses in 1908. The name was changed in 1924 to the Canadian Nurses Association but not until 1947 was it officially recognized as a federation of ten provincial nurses associations.

"The Women Who Watch" is the translation of the Ktunaxa name for its Society of Midwives. The traditional role of midwife in Indian life was recognized by Father Leon Fouquet, the first resident Roman Catholic priest at St. Eugene Mission in the East Kootenay. These women had to live moral lives, be exemplary in cleanliness, consult with pregnant women and to forbid them to carry heavy burdens, and guide the health care of children from birth to the age of seven years. They had to meet together at least twice a year under a President and Assistant, wear a blue veil with white trimmings when in church, and, attend Mass to receive Holy Communion. Newcomers served a six month trial period before being admitted to the group. Last but not least their rules stated that any observed immorality would result in expulsion. These good women were, in essence, antecedents to public health nurses.

The Victorian Order of Nurses was formed in 1897 in commemoration of Queen Victoria's Diamond Jubilee. Fifty branches sprang up and quickly the national visiting-nurses association spread to many more communities across the land. The chief benefactress was Lady Aberdeen, wife of the Governor-General. She wished to see many cottage hospitals built and the home nursing services in place. One such hospital in BC was the Victorian Hospital in Kaslo.

Beth Fitzpatrick suggests that we make note of nursing procedures "Then and Now." An example of this contrast is cataract surgery which used to require that the patient lie quietly for three days with eyes covered and head sandbagged to prevent rolling over. Nowadays surgery is done in the morning and the patient returns to his or her home the same afternoon.

School Nurse on A Bicycle

As told to Naomi Miller by Margaret Barwis

Margaret Matthews grew up in North Vancouver and trained in the Royal Jubilee Hospital, graduating in 1943. For a few months she nursed in the North Vancouver Hospital near the bottom of the hill while she lived with her mother on King's Road at the top of the hill. The hospital complied with the demand for shorter shifts by scheduling staff for 8 hours on, 8 hours off, then 8 hours on. That was strenuous for those living in residence but worse for Margaret bicycling down to the hospital and pushing her bike back up the hill. If bad weather forced her to take the streetcar she was jostled by dozens of workers from the shipyards whose shifts coincided with hers.

In October Miss Matthews followed a friend to Revelstoke Hospital. There she quickly adapted to the diverse duties in a rural hospital. She was given a ten day X-Ray course by RCA Victor. In the OR the doctors taught the new nurse how to administer chloroform with a gentle drip. But, the mountains were hemming her in. She craved a view of a broad expanse of water. She heard that the Arrow Lakes were to the south of town. On the first Sunday she had off she hopped on her bicycle and pedalled down to Arrowhead thirty miles away. Enroute she crossed the river twice on small reaction ferries. The narrow dirt road was infrequently travelled. She had a long look at the open water and started back. The ferry operators teased her and spread the word in town about the impetuous newcomer who had made that trip of 60 miles in one fall day. Townspeople definitely associated this young lady with her bicycle.

Matthews left Revelstoke in December 43 and accepted a position in Grande Prairie, Alberta. From January '44 to the summer of 1945 she was scrub nurse, x-ray technician and midwife. The northern community was warm and friendly even though the mercury dipped below zero for several weeks each winter. (The coldest day she remembers was -48°F)

Dr. Llewelyn Jones and his colleagues contacted Margaret in Grande Prairie. They wished to hire a nurse for the Revelstoke School District. This position had been approved by UBC as an internship prior to taking the Public Health program. Although the pay was only \$100 per month (less than that of a school janitor) the doctors promised that her entry to UBC was confirmed after one year. Matthews and her bicycle returned to Revelstoke.

"The School Nurse on A Bike" started doing eyechecks and giving shots at the three schools in Revelstoke. Next the Provincial Police were pressed into service to chauffeur Miss

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Picture at left:
PHN Matthews at Lardo

Malakwa to Rogers Pass. The doctors called upon her to attend home births, to fumigate a home after chicken pox, or perhaps change dressings on an

elderly indigent. Next came baby clinics. She returned to the hospital to teach new staff members on the use of x-ray equipment. She sewed her own uniform, a navy dress with big white collar, but when cycling she donned a shirt, sweater and jodhpurs. Her big backpack was checked and resupplied regularly. In August she ordered supplies for shots to be given once school started BUT- an emergency declared by the CPR diverted the smallpox vaccine. Dr. Hamer, recently returned to Revelstoke following serving in WWII, called Miss Matthews at about midnight. A gentleman on the westbound passenger train had broken out in pustules. This created a panic. The doctor and nurse boarded the train and administered vaccine to the almost 300 travellers. Many aboard were parents of children sent from England to friends or family for safe haven during the war. Now, instead of meeting and reclaiming their children in the Okanagan or the west coast, these poor people were being sent into quarantine. Hamer and Matthews, exhausted, climbed off the train at Sicamous and boarded the eastbound passenger train at 2 am. Three days later the nurse left Revelstoke to commence classes at UBC. Dr. Hamer waved to her as she stood on the platform and called "Chicken Pox" (presumably reporting on the smallpox scare on the train.)

Margaret stayed with her mother catching a ride each day from North Van to the campus

squished in a car with four other students. She received her Diploma in Public Health Nursing in 1947. Despite having her tuition paid and receiving a small scholarship she was 'broke' and in love. She returned to Revelstoke to work in the hospital until there was an opening for a PHN. When she was offered either Nakusp or Nelson her fiancé preferred Nelson. In August of 1947 Margaret transferred to Nelson only to discover that her territory was from Queen's Bay to Gerrard and Ymir to the US border. For those distances a bicycle would no longer suffice. She was provided with a car which she navigated over the winding narrow roads.

North of Kaslo there had been no school or other service prior to her appointment. To get to the end of the lake she travelled on the SS *MOYIE* on its once a week schedule. She stayed up in the Lardo for a full week, never sure of where she would sleep each night. (One item she added to her kit was a sleeping bag.) There were baby clinics, eye checks, immunizations, examining school children, creating a massive file, and getting to know many of the residents. She returned twice to give booster shots. When the final shots were due in December Miss Matthews arranged for the teachers to assemble their pupils on "boat day". The Captain of the *MOYIE* agreed to wait at the wharf while the nurse administered the required number of needles. First stop was at Johnsons Landing. The pupils waited in the freight shed at the head of the wharf. It was chilly but the parade of youngsters were processed quickly and could put on their coats again. Next stop was Argenta. The teacher drove down in his car and, slipping frequently on glare ice, took Miss Matthews to the schoolhouse. Teacher and PHN cautiously sat down and slid from the parked car to the school. Once the shots were given the teacher drove Margaret back to the steamer. By this time all syringes and needles were dirty. Margaret went straight to the galley on the *MOYIE* and prepared to sterilize things by boiling in a large pot. She tidily pushed her used swabs into the coal stove. Unknown to her an unopened "Control" vial was in the discards. It exploded with sufficient force to lift the stove lids an inch or two. Crew rushed in to check on things - and to reprimand the shocked nurse.

They docked at Lardo. Again glare ice made every step a challenge. Margaret sat down to negotiate the stairs from wharf to roadway. A goodly number of children were at the school. Many of them had travelled from other centres to get their dreaded "shots." One little boy crawled under the desks and locked his arms and legs around the feet of two units. Margaret sent a messenger to find the youngsters mother. The lad agreed to take his needle once his mother was present. (Years later the mother recognized the PHN on the street and recalled the incident, thanking Margaret for dispelling his fear.) Miss Matthews repacked her bag and crawled back over the glare ice in the twilight to the waiting *MOYIE*.

. The other area in Margaret's domain had several mining camps near Salmo and a collection of Doukhobour families on small farms. There were guard geese and an unexpected confrontation with a heifer in heat which could barely be dealt with due to the language barrier. Baby clinics in Ymir were held in the beer parlour - the only space available - and that in mornings only. Driving conditions were often grim, yet conscience dictated that appointments must be kept. One assignment was to have all camps register bunkhouses or living space just in case Vancouver had an emergency which required evacuation of the city. That questionnaire had a very short deadline so notwithstanding a heavy snowfall Miss Matthews set out for the HB Mine. The road was blocked a short distance from Salmo. The nurse decided to walk up. When she entered the manager's office, he was astounded to see her. He read the proffered papers and snorted at the suggestions. However he filled out the forms, took Margaret to the cookhouse for a hot meal and then he escorted her back to her car. There were other adventures, too numerous to relate here.

Margaret and her intended husband purchased a one acre waterfront lot at Willow Point just outside Nelson. They spent every available off duty hour clearing the property, then designing and building a home. Margaret married Cuthbert William Arthur ('Bert') Barwis in 1949. She continued to work in Selkirk Health Unit until 1956. Ill health forced her to resign and when she returned in 1961 it was for part time work only. Now a widow and an octegenarian Margaret still lives in that home on the north shore near Nelson.

A Bad Moment

My friend Anne tells the story of when she was a student at St. Paul's Hospital c.1930. After a few hectic twelve hour night shifts all appeared very quiet one evening. The charge nurse told her to extend her supper break for 2 1/2 hours. On returning to the ward Anne got off the elevator and stepped into the nearest private room. Without turning on the light she carefully lifted the covers and slid her hand under the patient to see if the undersheet was wet or dry. Suddenly a strong hand gripped her wrist and the light was turned on. She broke free, flipped her apron over her head, and bolted from the room. The elderly incontinent patient had died while she was away. A priest awaiting surgery next morning had been transferred to that room.

BASINGSTOKE NEUROLOGICAL AND PLASTIC SURGEY HOSPITAL
ENGLAND (R.C.A.M.C)
BURN WARD - NEW YEAR'S EVE 1944

It was New Year's Eve 1944 and World War II was still raging on with many coming to the Basingstoke Neurological and Plastic Surgery Hospital - soldiers with severe burns, smashed faces, head and spine injuries and some who had broken down mentally. Also, there were some patients who had endured and survived Prisoner of War camps.

On the burn ward some of the patients were recently wounded. others were in various stages of treatment and healing. A few were tottering about the ward. All were coping with their lives as best they could.

The gloom on this 40 bed ward was oppressive. This Nissan hut with its dim lighting and two tiny primitive coal and wood stoves was dismal. At the end of the ward stood a small scrawny Christmas tree decorated with a few empty penicillin bottles painted with red nail polish - no other decorations were available.

I was the Nursing Sister on night duty (12 hour shift) assisted by a very young orderly (said he was eighteen years old but ...) Early in the evening when a Medical Officer showed up, I asked him if he would help me with some kind of recognition of it being New Year's Eve and to express our wish for an end to the war sometime soon in 1945. He agreed. We knew that this would be a feeble celebration but better than none at all.

Although alcohol was forbidden on the wards we decided to overlook the ban. Liquor was still scarce in England but I still had a mickey (13 ounces) of low grade scotch that I had brought from Canada as an emergency ration. The Medical Officer produced two bottles of beer and two "double scotches" that he managed to sneak out from the Mess Bar -(a no no!).

The three of us divided up our supply of cheer between 35 to 40 patients. The only cups on the ward were one pint mugs - no glasses. Some of the men drank their meagre "tot" neat and some asked for a drop of water. No one refused the drink.

Later in the evening a patient covered with soggy saline dressings (face, head, hands, arms & upper body) called me over. He reached out, took my hand, kissed it and said, "I'll never forget this."

At the end of 2001, remembering the terrible suffering and incredible courage of these men of my generation, I find myself crying.

Submitted by Joan Doree (ex -Nursing Sister- R.C.A.M.C.- WWII)

Lighting the Lamp":CNF raising funds for nursing history

The Canadian Nurses Foundation (CNF) has undertaken a fund-raising campaign to support the collection and maintenance of nursing archival materials at the Canadian Museum of Civilization, the Canadian War Museum, and the National Archives of Canada. CNF launched "Lighting the Lamp: A Campaign for the Nursing History Collection" in June 2001. Dr. Helen K. Mussallem (a B.C. Group member) and Lieutenant-Colonel (retired) Harriet Sloan are the honorary co-chairs. The campaign proposes to raise funds to:

- * plan for ongoing collection development
- * provide access to materials already collected through a virtual database
- * sponsor exhibits of materials, including an exhibition at the Canadian Museum of Civilization* arrange for a touring exhibit to travel to museums across Canada

The Canadian Nurses Association (CNA) hopes to be able to sponsor the touring exhibit starting in 2004, the 100th anniversary of the Canadian Nurse, and traveling until 2008, the 100th anniversary of CNA. CNA turned over its collections of historical archives and artifacts to the national museums and archives a few years ago. Recognizing the importance of these records to all Canadians, CNA signed an agreement to work with the national agencies to establish a properly organized and accessible national nursing history collection.

For further information about the campaign, or to make a tax-deductible donation, get in touch with the Canadian Nurses Foundation, 50 Driveway, Ottawa ON K2P 1E2 or phone 1-800-361-8404 or e-mail "<mailto:cnf@nursesfdn.ca>". A website is available at "[http:// www.cna_nurses.ca/cnf](http://www.cna_nurses.ca/cnf)"

St. Eugene Hospital and School of Nursing

The first building designated as a hospital in the southeast corner of the province was a log barrack building at St.Eugene Mission near present day Cranbrook. Rev. Father Coccola was pressured by executives from the Canadian Pacific Railway to build a hospital for workers building the planned rail line between Fort MacLeod and Kootenay Lake. Initially Fr. Coccola feared that he could not recruit nursing sisters to staff a hospital but he managed to persuade Sister Jean d'Egypte to come immediately from Portland, Oregon. She worked in that first building with Sister Conrad, a teacher from the school for Indian children next door. Within a few weeks a new hospital building was ready with beds for 40 patients. Sisters Melantine, Georges, Magdalene de Bethanie and St. Jacques of the Order of Sisters of Charity of Providence arrived from Montreal or Portland to nurse there. These good people were swamped in the summer of 1898 with typhoid cases. There were up to 80 patients at one time. As the earlier arrivals commenced recovery they were moved to convalesce in a giant tent. Once the epidemic was over a CPR Inspector visited and noted that there were very few deaths. What was the secret of their success ? The answer, " Cleanliness, fresh milk and good whiskey,."

The hospital was at the Indian Mission five miles away from the new railway. The community of Cranbrook was growing because of its pride as Railway Division Point. The logical place to serve district citizens was in Cranbrook. Col. Baker donated five acres of land. The next St.Eugene Hospital was opened in February 1901. This housed both patients and nurses. The yearly patient count averaged 300. In 1905 it was enlarged to become a three story building. Nurses lived on the top floor, and patient count went to 800 per year. The year 1912 saw the addition of a spacious west wing - with an elevator and an isolation unit.

The first group of student nurses commenced in 1911 instructed by Drs F.W.Green and J.H.King with Sister John Gabriel in charge. By 1927 a Nurses Residence had been built which greatly relieved congestion in the hospital., and Sister John Gabriel organized the St. Eugene Alumnae Association which was to stimulate professional .

progress and maintain loyalty to the Alma Mater. Students were sent to Tranquille Sanitorium for affiliate training starting in February 1931. In 1936 Miss Olga Belecky commenced as full time instructress, and Miss Nora Miles created a dietetic department. Trainees were sent for psychiatric training at the Provincial Hospital at Essondale between 1938 and the last class. Two classes were accepted each year in January and September. The class of four which entered in 1948 had two years in Cranbrook but finished their third year at St. Paul's Hospital in Vancouver, At Graduation in 1950 they were introduced as St.Eugene's graduates. In the nearly 40 years of operation St.Eugene's Training School for Nurses had 34 classes and 209 graduates. The alumni had annual dinners until 1994. St Eugene Hospital closed its doors on September 14,1968 replaced by the new Cranbrook Regional Hospital.

Information Courtesy Margaret (Erickson) Hutchison Class of '43

A TRUE FRIEND

*A true friend is a friend who shares whatever comes our way,
Who helps by thoughtful words and deeds to brighten up the day,
Who knows the little heartaches that lie heavy on the mind
And tries to ease the hurt of each by being extra-kind.
A true friend helps to bring the sun and take away the rain
And cheerfully convinces us our dreams are not in vain.....
And if we travelled far and wide to where the rainbow ends,
We'd find no greater riches than the love of real true friends.*

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE - THIS AND THAT - FALL 2001

The History of Nursing Group has had a busy fall. Members have participated in many activities. Some of the highlights:

- Collaboration with the Board of RNABC to promote the use of the title "retired registered nurse" as a sub-category of the non-practicing category of membership.
- Lectures and presentations to student nurse classes at Kwantlen College, Langara College, UBC students and U of Vic Students.
- Contributions to the RNABC leaders conference and nurse practitioner project.
- Contributions to nursing research projects such as Cynthia Toman's military nursing research project.
- Collaboration with school of nursing alumnae activities such as the Royal Columbian Hospital 100th and School of Nursing 75th celebrations and participation in fund raising events for the Royal Jubilee School of Nursing Alumnae efforts to restore the hospital's Pemberton Chapel.

We have members preparing for the Canadian Association for the History of Nursing collaborative congress with the Canadian Society for the History of Medicine at the University of Toronto, May 24-26, 2002. The congress theme is Boundaries, Geographies, Genres, Gender. We plan to have a good time in Toronto at the congress and hope that you will consider joining members of the B.C. History Group attending and participating in the congress. There are many added opportunities for you to share your historical projects and research. Some of the coming events are:

- Western Region CAUSN - Situated Pedagogy: Teaching in Action, February 22-24, 2002 in Kelowna.
- American Association for the History of Nursing Inc. Nineteenth Annual History of Nursing Conference, Salt Lake City Utah, September 27-29, 2002.
- Research Day 2002, Faculty of Nursing, University of Toronto, Wednesday,

April 24, 2002.

- Atlantic Region CAUSN - The Nursing Odyssey: A Path to Empowerment, April 26-27, 2002 at St. Francis Xavier University, Antigonish, NS.

We extend our good wishes to members of our group:

- Mary Richmond who has moved into the Glenwarren Extended Care Home on Balmoral Road, Victoria
- Elizabeth Andersen of Kelowna who has joined our group and has an interest in studying the historical aspects of childbirth.
- Bev DuGas continues to make progress and is completing work on documenting her 1968 doctoral dissertation work on the "process of change". This work involved interviewing all 85 directors of nursing in BC.
- Joan Doree, we are thankful is back with us, and able to join our executive meetings.

A final note, a special thank you to the Royal Jubilee School of Nursing graduate, Debbie McKittrick who donated the uniform she wore on the last day of her student training January 22, 1977. Catch a glimpse of the uniform in the RNABC lobby and take a minute to read the messages of good wishes and good career. It will bring back memories for one and all.

History Of Nursing 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 Beth Fitzpatrick, P.O. Box 444, Brackendale, BC V0N 1H0
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RUTH McILRATH

(Interviewed by Nina Rumen)

Ruth McIlrath. Born in Arcola, Sask. 1913. Nee Littlejohn. Graduated Winnipeg General Hospital, 1936. Obstetrics, Winnipeg and Vancouver. Canadian Army Nursing Sister, 1942-1946. Supervisor, then Director of Nurses, Shaughnessy Hospital, 1947-1976.

Ruth McIlrath was one of the 4480 nursing sisters serving in the Second World War. She joined Canada's first hospital ship the Lady Nelson on its maiden voyage in April, 1943. The ship sailed from Halifax to pick up wounded Canadian servicemen in England and return them to Canada. Ruth says, "The Lady Nelson had been the flag ship of the CNR but sailed as a troop ship in the Mediterranean and Caribbean until she was sunk by enemy action. She was brought up from the bottom and converted into a hospital ship."

"There is a story told about one of the doctors saying he was convinced of the need for nursing sisters when an orderly reported to him - regarding the collection of a twenty-four hour urine specimen - 'Sir, this is only a twenty-one-hour specimen. The patient couldn't hold it any longer.'

"We sailed with six doctors and eleven nurses and one matron for our estimated five hundred patients. Since it was a trial run, we were several thousand tons short of ballast. For a small ship built for the Mediterranean run, you can imagine how we bobbed around on the North Atlantic. We sailed from Halifax at noon, and by supper nearly every one was seasick.

"The beds were swing beds. If the seas rolled, the beds went with them. Equipped with bed rails and small bed tables, they gave little room to manoeuvre between them. The medications were in large bottles set in cubicles, similar to a bar. The men wore white. We wore blue uniforms, white aprons and veils.

"Even though there was considerable enemy action going across, because we were a hospital ship, we were spared. (Such a resolution had been passed by the Geneva Convention; however, there were several hospital ships that were not lucky.) We had three red crosses painted on each side of the ship and green lights every 18 inches, and so we were we were fully lit up.

"Most of the soldiers we brought back from England had chronic conditions from previous wounds. We had amputations, shell shock, post-pneumonias, T.B. We did do a few emergency surgeries such as appendectomies, and of course, there were casts to be changed and burns to be debrided.

"One of our trips was to Algiers. Three of us nurses went ashore to sightsee, leaving one nurse and a doctor on board. When we were away on the other side of town, we heard a tremendous explosion. The munitions ship tied up next to the *Lady Nelson* had exploded.

"We had been instructed to return immediately to our ship if there was an emergency. Well, we were miles from the dock, in dress uniform with felt hats, purses, etcetera.

"It was unbelievably hot, as only North Africa can be. There was no way back but to walk. The streets ran zigzag horizontally, not straight down, to the waterfront. It meant we had to walk miles to go a mile. What a shemozzle

"When we finally staggered down to the dock, the *Lady Nelson* was gone. She had put out to harbour for safety

"We finally found the Port Officer in charge of the Americans, a Commander Douglas. We wouldn't take 'no' for an answer; we felt we simply had to get out to her. He finally said that he did have a small yacht. 'But you'll never be able to board the *Lady Nelson*. There's no steel ladder.'

"We assured him there was (there wasn't) and begged him to take us out.

"Commander Douglas gave in, and while the yacht pitched and bobbed trying to get close enough to the *Lady Nelson* for us to board, we spotted the ladder. It was rope.

"I was the first to go up, and it wasn't easy. The other two followed.

"The ship had been badly damaged inside. There were no partitions left. When we walked into what had been the dining room, I wish you could have seen the look of astonishment on the doctor's face.

"'We weren't born on farms for nothing,' I said. 'We've been up lots of ladders before.'

"On board were eighty to a hundred casualties from the dock explosion; most of them severe burns. We worked hard taking care of them and delivered them to the dock that evening. The rest of our crew was there, waiting to get on the ship.

"The next morning we loaded more than five hundred military casualties and sailed, as scheduled, for England. We felt we'd done a good job.

My First Christmas in Training

My first Christmas away from my family turned out to be one of the happiest in memory. I worked on Christmas and Boxing Day on Ward B in the Vancouver General Hospital. Some of the patients had been discharged so the work load was light. To my delight I was assigned to care for two small boys in a semi-private room down the corridor. Russell, a blonde four year old recovering from burns, and Bobby, in to have his esophagus restored after drinking lye, were a lovable pair. After early routine and breakfast the charge nurse told another girl and I to take the boys to a party on Ward J (Children's Ward). Russ and Bobby snuggled side by side in a big old wheelchair. We sang lots of carols and winter songs, were entertained by clowns and a magician, then Santa Claus arrived through a large cardboard fireplace. The eyes of our small charges danced with excitement.

Lunch time. To my surprise the menu was a full turkey dinner, stuffing, many vegetables and mince tarts. When I returned to the ward I was greeted by one of my idols, Annis Hamer of Nelson. She had travelled with an accident victim to the coast (which gave her the bonus of visiting family and friends before returning to Kootenay Lake General Hospital.) That evening I went to the home of a former teacher for my second Christmas dinner. Next I travelled after a day shift with Jean E. to her parent's home in Coquitlam. Her family had deferred their dinner to Boxing Day.

On New Year's Eve I was in West Vancouver dining on a massive menu in return for baby sitting overnight. My host and hostess attended the Ball at *HMCS Discovery*. Next morning I took the children to play in a pleasant park, then back to VGH where the Nurses Dining Room served an extra special New Year's Day supper.

The buttons on my waistband had to be moved. In mid-January we were summoned to the Infirmary for a routine check-up. Miss Wittmayr sternly admonished me and told me to lose ten pound before Easter. Oh, well! I vowed to give up bedtime snacks in the residence kitchen (cocoa with toast, peanut butter and jam). The regular meals with only fruit as dessert each day were fine. Omitting pie, cake or cookies was a self-imposed challenge but buttons on the waistband moved back to a slimmer setting.

By Naomi Miller.

I remember my first introduction to Gwen Kavanaugh. (This memory was submitted by Mary Nicol.)

She sent in 7 taped interviews of pioneer nurses in Kamloops, and each one was a gem. Like all the volunteers who taped the interviews for the RNABC's Oral History Project, Gwen brought her own unique gifts to the interviews. Her tapes are in the RNABC library.

There was obviously a warm rapport between Gwen and the interviewees, and it was like dropping into tea to hear about the trains bringing in women in labour from outlying the districts.

Later when I met Gwen at the RNABC, she told me that her mother had been in charge of Obstetrics at St. Paul's Hospital, Vancouver, B.C. in the 40s. I think I remember her. If it was the same nurse, she was as calm, low-key and capable as Gwen.

Gwen sent me an autobiographical novel written by a Nursing Sister in WW 1. In her accompanying letter, she wrote how privileged she felt to belong to the nursing profession and how important she thought it was to record our history.

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I received Christmas cards from Gwen over the years. Then, in 1999, the brief note inside was in someone else's handwriting.

I phoned to thank her and learned that she had M.S. She was part of an experimental program at UBC, testing out a new drug, but she had concluded she must have been in the placebo group because she was not improving.

News & Notes

Dr. Verna Splane, a Life Member of our History of Nursing Groups, and her husband, Dr. Richard Spalne were jointly honoured in October in Atlanta, Georgia with an award for their outstanding work on the role of chief nursing officers in national agencies. The "Award for Enhancing Health Training Through Nursing Leadership and Government" was presented at the Dedication Ceremony of the Lillian Carter centre for International Nursing at the Nell Hodson Woodruff School of Nursing, Emory University, Atlanta. The Spalnes wrote a book on the role of chief nursing officers, published in 1994, and are both well-known international consultants on health care.

Corrections:

Dr. Beverly DuGas earned her RN diploma and BA degrees from UBC in 1945. (She later was declared an honorary alumni of the UBC School of Nursing.)

Her first textbook, co-authored with Barbara Kozier, was *Fundamentals of Patient Care*. She became sole author of revisions and changed the title to *Introductions to Patient Care*. *Introductions to Patient Care* has been published in many languages.

Bev's later book *Nursing Foundations* was co-authored by Emily Knor for the first edition. A second edition was co-authored by Sharon Ronaldson and Lynn Esson. Dr. Du Gas observed errors in the biography on page 1 of the Fall 2001 *History of -- Nursing News* and wished to correctly assign credit where credit was due.

Shirley Stinson, one of our members in Edmonton, has had a busy summer receiving even more awards and honours. Dr. Stinson, now retired, was a professor of nursing at the University of Alberta and, among many other things, a former president of the Canadian Nurses Association. Once again this summer, she was a member of Avon Canada's National Panel of Judges, Health & Wellness Category, for the "Women of Inspiration Awards" and an invited guest at the ceremonies in Toronto.

She also was honoured when a \$250,000 anonymous donation was made to the University of Alberta, designated "in recognition of Dr Shirley Stinson's contributions to the field of nursing."

In September, she was an invited discussant to the International Conferences on Community Health Nursing Research's Symposium in London, England and critiqued the keynote presentation, which was on "Globalization of Community Nursing."

Then, in October, she was the recipient of the University of Alberta Alumni Association's Award of Excellence. Of the over 180,000 Alumni, Dr. Stinson is the first nurse to receive ward from UAAA.-----

Cynthia Toman, one of our student members (at University of Ottawa), was in Vancouver in October to carry out interviews related to her doctoral dissertation. She is interviewing nursing sisters from World War II to identify new patient care procedures that, following the war, may have led to changes in everyday nursing care. While she was here, Nina Rumen held a tea in her honour and invited some local nursing sisters in to meet her. As well, several members of the HoN Group Executive also attended. Cynthia now has interviewed about 20 nursing sisters. Cynthia also has been invited to act as a research assistant to the nursing curator at the Canadian Museum of Civilization in Hull. The Museum is planning a touring exhibit for 2004.

For those of you on the Internet, take a look at the wonderful Virtual Museum Exhibit on Nursing Caps. This excellent exhibit is produced by the Canadian Museum of Civilization in Ottawa/Hull from a collection of 167 caps donated to the museum by Gloria Kay of Conestoga, Ontario. The display features 60 caps, and an excellent "history" about caps and uniforms. You can click on each cap and see its background, as well as information on the donor. Several of our HoN Group members supplied caps to Gloria, and some of them are in the virtual exhibit. To visit, go to <http://www.civilization.ca> then click on Exhibitions, then under the list of exhibits, click on "Symbol of a Profession." The site is beautiful, with lots of photos, and easy to use, and the nursing display is excellent and informative.

In Memoriam

We regret to inform you of the deaths of two of our members.

Jill Thompson, Membership Chair, and occasional Editor of the HON Newsletter, passed away on November 21, 2001.. She was a charter member of the group and a long-time member of the Executive Committee. Our sympathy is extended to her husband Bruce Beaudreau and family. Jill requested that in lieu of flowers or cards, donations should be made to the History of Nursing Archives Fund.

Marnie MacLean, a former Nursing Sister and a supporter of history of nursing goals died November 22, 2001. We extend our sympathy to her family.

.After several months of negotiations with Canada Post, the History of Nursing News now qualifies as Publication Mail and can be sent to members at a reduced cost. In addition, this eliminates folding, stuffing envelopes and adding stamps, a time-consuming procedure.

Member's mailing addresses will be attached to the back page of each newsletter. Please note that we now have our own mail box. (B.C. History of Nursing Group, P.O. Box #72082, RPO Sasamat, Vancouver, B.C. V6R 4P2). Correspondence sent to our Treasurer, Lois Blais should be sent to this post office box instead of to Lois' home address.

Advance Notice: Saturday, February 2, 2002. 7th Annual Ethel Johns Nursing Research Forum. For further information visit the University of B.C. School of Nursing Web site ("<http://www.nursing.ubc.ca>").

Notice

A reminder: Effective January 1st, 2002 fees for Full and Affiliate Members of the B.C. History of Nursing Group will be \$30. Student Fees Remain at \$5. Watch for a mailing in Early January.

Confessions of the Guest Editor

We have learned a lot about the idiosyncrasies of a computer while preparing this issue of HON NEWS> We are unsure whether the committee will ever let me attempt another production. I hate typos but failed in several attempts to correct electronically transmitted items. My previous experience as an editor was to collate articles submitted by others and hand the mechanical preparation over to an "expert" with a computer.

The research I have done for this issue opens the door for many more stories documenting the earlier years of BC Nursing History. At least I can promise to continue researching and writing.

We wish all members a Happy New Year and suggest that this is the year that you will write down some of your special memories and submit to the editor.

Send all submissions to : Beth Fitzpatrick, P.O. Box 444, Brackendale, BC, V0N 1H0 or phone her at 604-898-3156.
E-mail : bethfitz32@shaw.ca

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



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 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 2001 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 to "History of Nursing Group" and send to: **Lois Blais**, Treasurer, P.O. Box 72082, RPO Sasamat, Vancouver, B.C. V6R 4P2.

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