
◆ HISTORY OF NURSING NEWS ◆

SPECIAL EDITION

APRIL 1995

HISTORY GROUP CELEBRATES FIVE YEARS

The History of Nursing Professional Practice Group held its annual meeting on Thursday, April 6, 1995 from 9 to 10:30 AM at the Hyatt Regency Hotel in Vancouver. This marked the Group's fifth anniversary as a professional practice group of the Registered Nurses Association of B.C. and represents a successful launching of an interest group concerned with promoting and preserving nursing history.

The Group's inaugural meeting was in May 1990, one month after RNABC's Board approved the idea of a professional practice group for nursing history. A small group of charter members had formed nearly a year before to set up an interim executive and to work on constitution and bylaws.

Thirty members and guests attended the first official annual meeting. Founding member **Nora Whyte** spoke on "History of Provincial Public Health Nursing in B.C. 1939-1959," showing wonderful slides of nursing activities from this period. **Margaret Street**, author of *Watch-fires on the Mountains: The Life and Writings of Ethel Johns*, now deceased, was present and was elected the Group's first honorary life member.

Since that time, the Group has honored three other nurses in this way for their outstanding efforts in history of nursing in B.C.: **Monica Frith Green** of Victoria, former director of public health

nursing with the Provincial Public Health Service and author of *Through the Years with Public Health Nursing*; **Esther Paulson**, former director of nursing at Pearson Hospital and Senior Nursing Consultant for the B.C. Division of TB Control; and, this year, **Mary Richmond**, professor emerita of nursing, University of Victoria, former chair of RNABC's history advisory committee, and a founding member.

The Group's objectives are:

- * to provide a forum for those interested in history of nursing in B.C. to exchange ideas and information;
- * to stimulate interest in history of nursing in B.C.;
- * to promote study of and research into B.C. history of nursing;
- * to assist in preservation of historical nursing materials;
- * to encourage teaching of history of nursing in educational programs;
- * to further objectives of RNABC by stimulating professional activities and interests of members, promoting awareness of problems and needs, and interpreting policies and thinking of the Association, especially in the area of history of nursing.

This Special Edition of *History of Nursing News* highlights the Group goals, objectives, and activities. As well, it may spark your interest in joining the Group or in assisting it to promote history of nursing activities in the province.



MEMORIAL NURSING PORTRAIT COLLECTION

A special and outstanding project of the History of Nursing Group is the **Memorial Nursing Portrait Collection**. This unique fund-raising project provides a special way for tributes to be offered to friends or family members while providing a way to inform others about nursing history.

Special Fund- Raising Project

The brainchild of charter member Sheila Zerr, this collection has grown since its inception three years ago and provides a wonderful display that can be taken to hospitals, agencies, and public events. Most recently the display was in Victoria as a special feature at the Royal B.C. Museum's Tribute to Women's History. There it attracted much attention to the contributions of nurses to history and history-in-the-making.

The display has also been used as part of a program for teaching history of nursing at schools of nursing throughout the province.

A "memorial portrait" for the collection consists of: a small, framed portrait of the individual being honored; an individually designed, hand crafted, miniature doll representing a figure from nursing history; and an inscribed plaque with the individual's name. An illustrated display book accompanies the collection, providing background information on the honored individual and the nursing figure represented by the doll.

In addition to providing a visual and lasting tribute to a friend or family member, the collection raises money for the History of Nursing Scholarship Fund. Sponsors of a portrait make a tax-free charitable donation of \$500 to the fund.

The Scholarship Fund is under a separate charitable foundation to support education in history of nursing, but is administered by the History Group. Annual interest from the fund is earmarked for bursaries and scholarships for nursing students or nurses in educational programs who undertake a history of



nursing project as part of the course. The first award or awards (approximately \$500) will be offered in fall 1995 or spring 1996.

A portrait can be sponsored by an individual, a family, or a corporation. The sponsor provides the photograph and selects the nursing figure and costume design for the historical doll.

Among the memorial portraits in the collection are:

- * a Salvation Army Nurse doll honoring the memory of James William Rankin (1911-1992),
- * a Nursing Sister, World War II doll honoring Helen K. Mussallem, former executive director of the Canadian Nurses Association, and
- * an Emily Susan Patterson doll honoring Emily Susan Patterson (1873-1909), the first nurse in the Vancouver area.

For further information about the Memorial Nursing Portrait Collection, please get in touch with Sheila Zerr, Chair Portrait Committee, 5333 Uplands Drive, Delta, B.C. V4M 2G3 or Phone 943-3012 or with Ethel Warbinek, History Group President (538-5066), or with any member of the HoN Executive.

MEMBERSHIP CONNECTIONS

The History Group has about 80 members, most of them in the Vancouver or Victoria areas, where there are regular meetings, usually with guest speakers on history of nursing topics. As well, there are members throughout the province and across Canada whose main connection is through the four regular newsletters (8 to 16 pages) a year. Most members work on individual history projects, but appreciate the network involvement.



INTERNATIONAL HISTORY OF NURSING CONFERENCE

June 12/15, 1997
Vancouver, B.C.

CAHN/ACHN 10th Annual Meeting

Meeting prior to the International Congress of Nurses (ICN) Meeting being held June 15/20, 1997 in Vancouver.

Join Canadian nurses in cooperation with the British Columbia History Group to:

- * attend international sessions, panels, papers on nursing history and historical research
- * meet at historic St Paul's Hospital
- * tour Vancouver's nursing historical sites
- * take a guided tour to beautiful Victoria

Call for Abstracts Spring 1995

Registration Information Spring 1996

For further information:

Sheila J. Rankin Zerr
Chair, Planning Committee
5333 Uplands Drive
Delta, B.C. V4M 2G3

International

Conference in 1997

SPECIAL HISTORY GROUP PROJECTS

Oral History

Origins of a special Registered Nurses Association of B.C. interest group or committee for nursing history go back to the Association's 75th Anniversary in 1987. Freelance writer and nurse Mary Nicol was hired to head a special "Oral History" project. She purchased recorders and tapes and formed a committee to interview B.C. nurses. When RNABC discontinued funding for the project, the committee became part of the History of Nursing Group, which continues to fund from three to 10 new tapes a year. About 125 oral history tapes are now available.

Committee members learn techniques of interviewing for oral history purposes. Tapes are copied onto master disks for storage and copies are then entered in the RNABC's Helen Randal Library collection. Tapes are catalogued and cross-referenced so information is more easily available to researchers and historians.

Biographical Files

The History Group has undertaken to provide biographical profiles and photographs of well-known B.C. nurses to be used for research purposes in the RNABC Library. The project is intended to help researchers obtain accurate information on nurses from one central source. The Biographical Committee designed forms, obtains information and photos, with consent forms and other releases, and arranges for collection of the information. These files help historical researchers obtain data as birth dates, dates of graduation, employment records, and so on. The files now are being coordinated with the Oral History interviews.

In Memoriam Books

The History of Nursing Group has been the research arm for information on B.C. nominations for the *Memorial Book* of the Canadian Nurses Association. Group members write the profiles on B.C. nurses whose contributions to the national nursing scene were significant during their lifetimes and submit these for nomination to CNA by RNABC's Board. In 1994, at the urging of the History Group, RNABC decides to set up a *B.C. Memorial Book* to recognize nurses who made significant contributions on the provincial scene. The History Group has been asked to determine the criteria and develop a list of names. Once these have been established, work will begin on the various profiles for the B.C. book.

Membership Information

If you would be interested in joining us, please get in touch with any member of the executive. Full (voting) Members must be paid-up practicing or non-practicing members of RNABC. Non-nurses may join as Affiliate Members. Student Members must be enrolled in a nursing education program or be Registered Nurses enrolled in a graduate program.

Dues for 1995 are: Full and Affiliate \$20; Students \$5. Membership year is January 1 to December 31. Send name, address (including postal code), telephone number, and RNABC registration number or name of the educational program. Make cheques to "History of Nursing Group" and send to: Ethel Warbinek, President History Group, 2448 - 124th St., Surrey, B.C. V4A 3N2

Please

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