

# ◆ HISTORY OF NURSING NEWS ◆

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## History of Nursing Annual General Meeting

The eighth Annual General Meeting (AGM) of the History of Nursing group will be held on Thursday, April 2, 1998 at the Hyatt Regency Hotel in downtown Vancouver. As is customary, the meeting is held in conjunction with the Registered Nurses Association of British Columbia's (RNABC) annual meeting. Our meeting room is on the 4th floor of the hotel and will be preceded by a continental breakfast starting at 8:30 am. (Please take note of the earlier starting time).

The highlight of the meeting will be the report from the Archives Committee (Helen Shore, Sheila Zerr, Nina Rumen, Beverly DuGas and Janet Gormick) which has been meeting since last summer to look at the feasibility of setting up a B.C. Nursing Archives facility. The report received the approval of the executive and will be presented to the membership at the AGM for general discussion and member input. Here are some excerpts from



the Archives Committee report. *Background*

Nursing history in British Columbia is rich, varied and slowly becoming better known through the efforts of the History of Nursing Professional Practice Group (HNPPG) and individual researchers. The HNPPG was organized in 1989 with a mandate to discover, disseminate and preserve nursing history in the province. In January 1998, the oral history collection consisted of more than 150 tapes, approximately fifty biographies, the names of nineteen British Columbia nurses had been placed

in the CNA Memorial Book, and nineteen biographies were entered in the RNABC Memorial Book, which had been launched in 1997. The HNPPG Memorial Portrait collection consisted of thirteen

IT'S ANNUAL MEETING TIME!

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miniatures in two cases.

### *The Dream*

The HNPPG is beginning to plan for a **British Columbia Nursing Archives** as a provincial site for storing and displaying nursing historical materials. This project will be undertaken and supported by all of the registered nurses in the province and their provincial association. It will be a long term project with a target date of the spring of 2012, to be a suitable recognition of the one-hundredth anniversary of the Registered Nurses of British Columbia. A major fund-raising campaign will be undertaken, and as the first major contributors it is hoped that each of British Columbia's registered nurses will make a special contribution. Registration as a special charity fund will be undertaken so that taxable receipts can be given to all contributors.

In the immediate future, arrangements for temporary storage of nursing historical materials is being investigated. Currently many historical materials are being housed in HNPPG member's homes making them inaccessible and subject to damage due to fire, flood and other losses. In addition, greater use of the provincial nursing association web-site will be used to make nurse biographies more accessible to nurses members, and others, throughout the province.

### *The Plan*

A sub-committee of the HNPPG has prepared recommendations to be presented to the AGM with a resolution for action by the provincial association and RNABC membership. A plan has been prepared to solicit involvement and participation of the provincial association and its membership. A fund-raising campaign will be launched with mem-

bership and association approval. Fund raising strategies and a detailed, step-by-step plan for achieving charitable status will be presented in detail at the AGM.

### *The Resolutions*

In an effort to reach the overall goal of a permanent **British Columbia Nursing Archives**, we recommend that the History of Nursing Professional Group adopt the following resolutions:

**Be it resolved that the History of Nursing Professional Practice Group:**

1. Secure a permanent BC Nursing Archives by the RNABC's 100th anniversary in 2012.
2. Approve use of profits from the International History of Nursing Conference (1997) to launch this project.
3. Seek charitable status with RNABC approval.
4. Seek support in principle from the RNABC AGM in 1999.
5. Seek financial support from RNABC members, nursing organizations, retired nurses and corporate sponsors.
6. Seek temporary, secure and accessible housing for current archival materials and develop a plan for ongoing expansions.
7. Develop a catalogue of current holdings and a plan for cataloging future acquisitions.

A copy of the full report of the Archives Committee will be sent to all members with the next issue of the History of Nursing News.

Please join us at the AGM. There will be some interesting historical displays, a chance to see the B.C.

Memorial Book, and ample time to visit with friends.

### **The President's Report: A Tribute to the Vancouver General Hospital School of Nursing**

The era of hospital based nursing education in BC will come to an end in May when the Vancouver General Hospital (VGH) School of Nursing closes its doors. In the late 1890's Superintendent of Nurses, Margaret Glendenning, was instrumental in establishing a training school. In 1899, the first 8 students were admitted. Three students had previous nursing experience, so they graduated in 1901. They were: Ray Fonseca, Eugenie (Dean) O'Connor and Mary Roycroft, who two years later purchased a private hospital. Dean O'Connor became a senior nurse at VGH and later Head Nurse. She resigned in 1903, but returned during the influenza epidemic of 1918, and accepted a position on night duty in the Infirmary. In the early years VGH students worked long hours, had little time off and attended classes at the end of a 12-hour shift. They lived in cramped, overcrowded residences, but as one student said "The most treasured memories we take with us from our residence life are those of friendships we have shared".

Several directors of Nursing are recognized as prominent nursing leaders: Helen Randal (1912-1916), Ethel Johns (1919-1921), Kathleen Ellis(1922-1929), Grace Fairley (1929-1943), and Mary Richmond (1964-1973) For 50 years, the Director of Nursing was also Principal of the School. In 1947, a new position -

Director of Nursing Education was created. The first director was Julia (Walters) Silverton (1947-1950), followed by Emily Nelson (1950-1952), Helen Mussallem (1952-1956), Beverly Witter Du Gas(1957-1965), Dorothy Logan (1965-1986) and Gail Bishop (1986-1998). There have been many internationally renowned graduates, such as Lyle Creelman, and Alice Baumgart,

When a baccalaureate degree program in nursing was initiated at UBC in 1919, VGH provided clinical experiences and the institutions cooperated in offering a combined course in nursing, commonly referred to as the "sandwich program". This continued until the late 1950's when UBC took control of their program and the two schools separated.

As nursing education moved into post secondary institutions, VGH made changes to its curriculum. In response to growing pressure for a baccalaureate degree as entry to the practice of nursing, UBC and VGH again joined forces and offered a collaborative program. The last VGH graduation was held in May 1991. From 1991-1998, students graduated from UBC with a BSN degree. During this time, VGH withdrew its support for the collaborative program. UBC will continue to offer a BSN program.

In recognition of the contribution of the more than 8100 VGH graduates, a celebration will be held from May 3-18 at VGH. Historical displays will be set up in Laurel and Centennial Pavilions. May 3-15. They will be open weekdays 11 - 3 and 1-3 on the weekends. I hope you will drop in and have a chat with the VGH Alumnae who will be in attendance. Our History Group is participating in this celebration and will have a display in Centennial Pavilion.

As this is my last report as your president, I would like to thank you for the privilege of representing you for the past four years. A special note of thanks to members of the executive and others who so faithfully attended meetings. Your patience and good humor was a god send. We do have a lot of fun - it's not all work!!

*Ethel Warbinek, President*



#### **Important Resolution Adopted by the International Council of Nurses (ICN)**

The council of national representatives of the ICN adopted a resolution of interest to national nursing associations and all nurse historians. When the council met last June in Vancouver the following resolution was adopted:

"Be it resolved that ICN support the national nurses' associations and partner organizations in their efforts to reappraise their national history and tradition of nursing; and promote the awareness of the importance of the history of nursing at the international level and disseminate findings on the history of nursing.

Further be it resolved that national nurses' associations encourage and support research on their own national histories without reservations; and promote the dissemination of research findings on the history of nursing in the training and continuing professional education of nurses."

*From The Canadian Nurse 93 (August 1997: 29).*

#### **Editor's Note:**

*Reader's will enjoy the following article submitted by Honorary Member, Esther Paulson. Esther carefully and painstakingly translated two articles, both taken from Vardfacket, the official Journal of the Swedish Health Care System. Watch for the second article in the Summer Edition of the Newsletter.*

#### **Highlights of the International Council of Nurses (ICN) Congress**

The report in Vardfacket featured twelve articles on the ICN seminars, lectures and discussions on problems and concerns of the nursing profession around the world. Comments from the Swedish perspective are interesting for Canadian nurses and possibly reflect those of other delegates from member countries at the ICN Congress held in Vancouver in mid-June 1997.

The lead article features a picture of Canada Place with the Canadian flag and those of the ten provinces and two territories, with the following introductory statement:

*Women with blue shoulder bags seen everywhere in the City of Vancouver on Canada's West Coast and flags over the meeting place (Canada Place) were the most visible signs that the ICN representing 118 countries was holding the 21st quadrennial congress here in mid-June 1997. The ICN founded in London England in 1899, will celebrate the 100th anniversary there in 1999.*

*The next quadrennial congress will be held in Copenhagen, Denmark, in 2001.*

A quote from the introductory article states: the trend to evaluate health care in terms of cost is apparent in many countries including Sweden - a pioneer in establishing its state funded health care system. The public and the nursing profession there are now asking: "Will there be sufficient funds to maintain the existing resources and quality of health care in the future?"

Equal pay for equal work was a major topic, especially for some countries in the Western world. Canada rates a separate report in *Vardfacket* on the legislation enacted in Ontario in 1987, under the heading - "Equal Pay for Equal Work: Legislation in Ontario, Canada - A Complete Failure in 1997!"

From the Swedish perspective, that Legislation in 1987, was early and unique, as the law applied to private as well as public work places and against pay discrimination for women dominated groups such as nursing. It was hoped that Canada's example would accelerate progress on similar legislation underway in Sweden at that time. The report continues - The Ontario legislation, beginning in 1987, to be implemented and enforced in 1990, was welcomed by the Ontario Nurses Association and nurses benefited by the Pay Equality Act. However, the plan was side-tracked from the beginning with problems and

opposition. The final deterrent occurred three years ago when the Ontario government was changed to a Conservative majority - dedicated to debt reduction. Cost cutting in the health care system led to closing of hospital beds and lay offs and replacement of professional nurses with unqualified personnel. The Swedish report goes on to give the stories of two Ontario nurses, both in executive positions, who refer to themselves as victims of attitudes and prejudice against pay equality for women in similar positions of responsibility. Doctors too were

accorded greater respect and consideration. The ultimate frustration occurred when the current Conservative government, in an agreement with the Ontario Medical Association, approved a generous increase for the doctors, approximately equal to the amount saved through cost cutting and lay-offs. The Nurses Association and the victims, were outraged - one of whom concluded that progress on equal pay for

equal work was destined to be slow because women must compete with the 2000 year plus tradition for men- according to the biblical quotation from the Old Testament - "the worth of a male slave was valued at 50 pieces of silver and only 30 pieces of silver for a female slave!"

#### *Euthanasia*

A separate article on the this topic was under the heading - "The Dying Need Good Care." A statement under the heading indicates the Swedish viewpoint.

*"Assisted murder and self inflicted death and euthanasia is not the right way to*



*ensure the patient's right to die with dignity. Instead there ought to be facilities for good care, comfort and consolation, alleviating pain and suffering and avoidance of high technological measures to prolong life."*

*The Inaugural Memorial Lecture in Memory of Virginia Henderson*

The memorial lecture, delivered by Dame June Clark of Great Britain, is reported in two separate articles, dealing with two themes - the need for a specific definition of nursing and the importance for the nursing profession to become involved in the politics, economics and ethics of health care.

Vardfacket, under the title - "Disputed Definition Demands Clarification" - points out that a specific definition is required to guide health care systems in assessing nursing care in terms of cost. For example is value being received for the money invested?

Virginia Henderson had recognized the need for a specific definition as early as 1961 in her book - Principles of Nursing Care which was translated into thirty languages. The definition then was:

"The unique function of the nurse is to assist the individual, sick or well in the performance of those activities contributing to health and recovery or (to peaceful death) that he would perform unaided if he had the necessary strength, will or knowledge, and to do this in such a way as to help him gain independence as rapidly as possible."

The concept of nursing care is discussed further - that it is a science as well as an art - that requires knowledge and skill to encompass what is termed as "The Invisibles" - the more subtle needs of people - the unique function of nurses to assist individuals, sick or well by detecting need for help beyond

the physical tasks of nursing- by observing, listening, detecting and comprehending signs of anxiety, attitudes and misunderstanding that might deter recovery and delay return to independence and normal life style.

I am reminded here of the writings of Ethel Johns, who in 1955-60, wrote a series of short pamphlets published by Lippincott under the title Just Plain Nursing. One of these pamphlets on The Intangibles, referred to the importance of nursing care in its broadest terms. Ethel Johns' descriptive term The Intangibles caught the interest of nurses and helped them to see the potential for nursing care beyond the physical tasks of bathing, dispensing medications and treatment as opportunities to detect, learn and be aware of other needs - some of which involved team work with other professionals. The Just Plain Nursing pamphlets were published in a small booklet at the time of Margaret Street's biography of Ethel Johns - Watch-fires on the Mountains: The Life and Writings of Ethel Johns in 1973.

One cannot help but wonder why a specific definition on the broad interpretation is still a major concern for the ICN in 1997. Like the definition of nursing, the proposed involvement of the nursing profession in economic, political and ethical aspects of health care - is not a new proposal. When the ICN met in Rome in 1957, the president was a Swedish nurse - Gerda Hoyer. She was also a member of parliament in the national government.

Dame Clark in the keynote ad-

dress observes - "It is not illogical to assume that Virginia Henderson recognized the importance of involvement in political, economic and ethical issues of health care. In her statement - "Nurses, of all the health professionals, are best qualified to act as advocates for the health needs of all people in the community: Nurses therefore should be included in the decision making, planning and reform of health care systems".

Involvement of the nursing profession in political, economic and ethical issues is referred to in various articles in the *Vardfacket* report. A short article entitled "Guide for sexual neutrality and job evaluation" is especially thought provoking and significant for the nursing profession. Phrases expressed in the English language are underlined in this translation.

The article begins with the worldwide concern about pay discrimination based on sexual orientation and observes that different attempts and methods of approach have been successful in achieving the objective of equal pay for equal work - The Pay Equity Job Evaluation Scheme begun in New Zealand and discussed further at the conference in Vancouver, resulted in a definite decision to extend the ICN project on the definition of nursing and the International Classification of Nursing Practice and Terminology now completed in the first version. These documents are to be circulated and tested in 100 countries to prove the effectiveness in promoting a universal understanding and acceptance of nursing as of equal value in comparison with

other health professions in the health care system. This project is to be completed, if possible, by 1999 - the ICN anniversary year.

The same article observes that the involvement in ethical issues might prove to be, by far, the most difficult and complex - especially on problems that impinge on social and moral standards and strong controversial viewpoints and from scientific and technological developments.

Questions asked in 1997 indicate the need for directions from ICN on measures to avoid accidents and injury and other complications for nurses in the performance of their duties. Will Virginia Henderson's definition be specific enough to address the issues arising from new roles and responsibilities that evolve for the nursing profession in a changing world? The article continues: Other questions relating to involvement on ethical issues reflect much concern. The history of nursing as a caring profession demands that more attention from the ICN be devoted, directed toward problems of sexual origin, most particularly to sexual abuse and violence against children. One thinks of the breakdown of the traditional family and values resulting in children having a single parent, same-sex parents or those with alcohol and drug addictions that are passed on to unborn children. These are serious implications for the nursing profession as time progresses toward a new century and the next ICN conference in 2001. It is significant that the article concludes with the observation that the ICN plans to collaborate with other International professional organizations in the attempt to discover how cloning will affect the health and development of human beings and how this practice will relate to the *Code of Ethics*.

At this stage I felt the need for "time out" to divert my thoughts and sense of shock. I put the kettle on for tea and switched on the TV - at the precise moment to hear the announcement about the Chicago physicist who is prepared to start cloning clinics and that he has names of potential parents and interested professionals willing to participate. This happened on January 6, 1998 and was repeated the next day in the newspapers and on TV.

This translation of the *Vardfacket* reports on the ICN concludes with the projects to be undertaken in memory of Virginia Henderson.

1. The seventh printing of her book *Principles and Practice of Nursing* with a special issue of that often quoted book, *Basic Principles of Nursing Care* which has been translated into 30 languages.

2. A scholarship to be established for research and spread of knowledge around the world on the definition and practice of nursing and the status and value of nursing as a profession.

3. A planned publication by 2001 of the 7th reprinting of *Principles and Practice of Nursing* augmented by commentaries about the full meaning and importance of health care protection written, by nurses with different geographical, social and cultural backgrounds.

A prominent notice in *Vardfacket* announces the prompt response in Sweden on the ICN project to test the "International Classification for Nursing Practice" in one hundred countries. The Swedish Health Care System (SHSTF) in cooperation with the Swedish Nurses Association, has ap-

pointed a project leader and a steering committee that includes Eva Fernvall, president of the SHSTF to begin work on the project later in the summer - the full committee to include representation from all health professional groups augmented with nurses and other officials with expert knowledge of needs and conditions in different regions of the country.

*Submitted by Esther Paulson*



### Remembering Bertha Harmer

Bertha Harmer's enthusiasm, thoroughness, and intelligence made her a leader in nursing education in the United States and Canada.

She was a graduate of the School of Nursing at the Toronto General Hospital and earned her Bachelor of Science and Mistress of Arts at Columbia University.

After many years in the United States she returned to Canada in 1929 as director, School for Graduate nurses, McGill University.

Ms. Harmer's most enduring contribution to nursing is her classic textbook, *Principles and Practice of Nursing*. She died in 1934.

## Book Reviews

Jean I. Gunn: Nursing Leader. *Natalie Reigler*, Associated Medical Services Incorporated and Fitzhenry and Whiteside, (1977). \$18.95 Order from Fitzhenry & Whiteside, 195 Allstate Parkway, Markham, Ontario, L3R 4T8

Author Natalie Reigler, herself a graduate of Toronto General Hospital (TGH) and the holder of five university degrees, has written a compelling biography of Jean Gunn, Superintendent of Nurses at TGH from 1913 until her untimely death in 1941.

Jean Gunn was born in 1882 in Bellville, Ontario and trained as a nurse at the prestigious New York Presbyterian Hospital. For over twenty five years Gunn devoted her considerable energy to numerous health and nursing issues that continue to challenge and concern nurses today: public acceptance of nursing's professional status and the need for university based nursing education, to mention two.

Jean Gunn's biography encapsulates struggles throughout nursing history to surmount "hierarchical, paternal and oppressive attitudes and behaviors of hospital trustees, medical doctors, and politicians towards the nursing profession." Nurses of today can benefit from reading Jean Gunn's

story. Her achievements show how nurses attained professional status and influence yet maintained high levels of patient care, at least at TGH. Gunn believed in broadening the thinking of her staff and embraced liberal education not only for student nurses, but also as part of inservice education for graduate nurses.

The biography originated as Reigler's Ph.D. thesis at the University of Toronto. The author explains in her acknowledgements that in order "to make this book an easier read than the thesis, I have minimized quotation marks and reduced the notes." (p.9) Personally, I would have enjoyed more detailed chapter end notes which I believe would have enriched the biography for the reader.

In conclusion, this fascinating story is a fine example of our complex yet scantily written nursing history. Nursing education can only be enriched by such biographies of our nursing leaders and analysis of past nursing issues still relevant today. It is not to be missed.

*Submitted by Jill Thompson*

Recollections: A Retrospective View of Nursing Achievements at the Montreal General Hospital 1971-1996. *Department of Nursing and the Alumnae Association of the School of Nursing of the Montreal General Hospital*, (1997). \$21.00, includes postage. Make checks payable to the Alumnae Association of MGH School of Nursing. Order from Kathy Elder, 212 Monaco, Point Claire, Quebec H9R 2R7



Margaret Lewis has provided Montreal General Hospital Graduates with a wonderful trip down memory lane. I must say some of the trip seems a little rosier than I remember. Of note are Blanche Herman and Miss McCann. These dragons watched over us with piercing eyes, making sure that our behavior was always reflecting the noble profession of nursing. I thought I'd never make the grade. Whenever I sensed I was in their presence, all my body parts convulsed, and I then did something really stupid. Most of the short history brought waves of emotions—pride, a longing for the grand old days and yes, even tears, especially when I read about Kathie Randall, a classmate who died as a young nurse and who did so much to bring innovation and fun to the Nursing Department.

The book takes those of us who were educated in a hospital based school on a nostalgic trip and reminds us of how important Schools of Nursing were to the history of Hospitals and to the development of nursing. The Montreal General Hospital employed, as well as educated, a series of influential nursing leaders, from Nora Livingston to Isabel MacLeod (Black), Helen Taylor and now Valerie Shannon. All have taken their place on the Canadian nursing stage and help to develop the practice of nursing we see today. They, like many other nursing leaders influenced all of us in small and significant ways. This book helps me remember that it is their values and beliefs that I hold today.

Much of Margaret Lewis' book describes the accomplishments of nursing

at Montreal General Hospital. They are outstanding and share the stage with all nurses in whatever school, in whatever hospital, that have built our nursing heritage.

*Submitted by Barbara Burke,  
Vice President of Patient Services, St.  
Paul's Hospital*



#### New Books

Preserving Nurses' Experiences: Guidelines for Collecting Oral Histories is a 20 page guide, written in French and English, by Arlee Hoyt McGee and C. Roberta Clark. It's purpose is to provide instructions on how to conduct an oral history interview. The aim is to help collect nursing history in order that others can learn about nurses' lives. This 1997 publication of the Nurses Association of New Brunswick Nursing History Resource Center is \$12 per copy including postage. It may be ordered from Arlee Hoyt McGee, NANB Archivist, 165 Regent Street, Fredericton, N.B. E3B 7B4

Prepared to Care: Nurses and Nursing in Alberta, 1849 to 1996, written by Janet C. Ross-Kerr, a professor of Nursing in the Faculty of Nursing at the University of Alberta, is a book that follows the nursing profession in Alberta from the mid 1800's to the end

of the 20th century. Published by the University of Alberta Press and distributed through UBC Press, the book may be ordered from UBC Press, 6344 Memorial Drive, Vancouver, B.C. V6G 1Z2. Telephone: 1-604-822-5959 or e-mail [orders@ubcpress.ubc.ca](mailto:orders@ubcpress.ubc.ca). The cost is \$29.95 plus taxes and shipping.

She Answered Every Call: The life of Public Health Nurse, Mona Gordon Wilson (1894-1981) is a full-length biography of a Canadian nurse who in her lifetime was awarded the highest honors in international nursing (the Florence Nightingale Award), in Girl Guides (the Beaver Award), and in Prince Edward Island (Island Woman of the Century). Written by Douglas Baldwin, professor of History and Canadian Studies at Acadia University, this 338 page book costs \$24.95 including postage and is published by Indigo Press. Copies may be ordered from Indigo Press P.O. Box 22031, Charlottetown, P.E.I. C1A 9J2. Telephone (902) 892-6334 or e-mail [kessler@upei.ca](mailto:kessler@upei.ca).

#### **1998 CAHN/ACHN Conference and Annual General Meeting**

The 1998 conference will be held in conjunction with the Canadian Society for the History of Medicine at the Learned Societies Congress to be held May 29-31, 1998 at the University of Ottawa. Members of CAHN/ACHN will receive registration and accommodation information in the mail from the Learned Societies Congress.

#### **Nurses Residences Recommended for Commemoration**

The Historical Sites and Monuments Board of Canada (HSMBC) have recommended five nurses residences to commemorate and interpret Canadian nursing history. The sites are

- Hershey Pavilion, Royal Victoria Hospital, Montreal, Quebec
- Ann Baillie, Kingston General Hospital, Kingston, Ontario
- St. Boniface Nurses Residence, Winnipeg, Manitoba
- Pavilion Mailloux, Notre Dame Hospital, Montreal, Quebec
- Begbie Hall, Royal Victoria Hospital, Victoria, British Columbia

One site will be selected and it may take years.

"Although military contributions of individual nurses have been recognized in the past HSMBC commemorations, other nursing themes such as professionalism and nurses work culture have gone unrecognized.

Starting in the early 1900's nurses residences represented the growing recognition accorded to nurses as health care professionals in the field of scientific medicine. By the 1920's classroom space was added and residences began to look more like educational institutions than homes. Residences provided a safe and chaperoned home for young unmarried women with common work and social interests protected from the dangers of urban life.

Nurses residences stand as monuments to the significant accomplishment of nursing leaders in their battle to be

recognized as professionals and to enhance educational standards in nursing".

*Submitted by Nina Rumen.  
(Information taken from Report to  
HSMBC by Diana Dodd, Historical Ser-  
vices Branch, 1997.)*

### Update on Riverview Archives

History of nursing member Anna Tremere recently wrote to thank the B.C. History Group for the support and encouragement she has received in her efforts to establish an archives/museum at Riverview Hospital. Here is a progress note: "As of December 17, 1997 we are now officially registered as the Riverview Hospital Historical Society. We are in the last stage of producing an Archives/Museum manual and as soon as the art work is finalized it goes to the printers. I have a large storage area that the hospital gave me for storage of everything and I have also been given an additional room for the use of the Society. By the end of January I am hoping to have both rooms set up—one for archives and the other for equipment, furniture and other museum type items. Then we will begin proper cataloguing, labeling and so forth. We have also just had a new display cabinet built—all oak and brass so it really suits our heritage theme. Much more is coming up this year as it is the 85th anniversary of the hospital."

Congratulations to Anna and the members of the Society for their hard work and dedication in preserving an important part of our nursing history.

### Faculty of Nursing Celebrates 80th Anniversary

The Faculty of Nursing at the University of Alberta (UofA) is celebrating an important anniversary this year. Two eighty-two year old identical twin sisters from the Class of 1938, Helen Sabin and Nettie Pedlar, officially launched the 80th Anniversary Celebrations in late January with the unveiling of a large mural commemorating the Faculty's long history.

The first university-based nursing certificate program in Canada was offered at the UofA in 1918 in response to lobbying by the United Farm Women of Alberta who wanted more and better health services for women and children in the province. A public Health Nursing Branch with a director and 4 public health nurses was created in the new Department of Health. The province requested that the UofA provide the nurses with the training that would prepare them for their work.

Other milestones in the history of the Faculty of Nursing include the establishment of an advanced practice obstetrical certificate program (1943) and beginning the first funded Ph.D. program in nursing in Canada (1991). Activities being held in 1998 include a book launching, anniversary alumni dinners across the country and printing of commemorative note cards. For further information call (403) 492-4404 or visit <http://www.quasar.ualberta.ca/nursing>.

### A New Historical Site

The *Dispensaire de la garde a la Corne*, a nursing dispensary that was part of a network of dispensaries in Quebec officially opened in June, 1997. It is located on highway 111, halfway between Val d'Or and Amos in the Abitibi-Temiscamisque region. *La Corne* has been recognized as an authentic historical site which has been exceptionally well maintained by its sole occupant, nurse Gertrude Duchemin, who was La Corne nurse from 1936 until 1976.

The Quebec Medical Service to Settlers (MSS), a branch of the Quebec Department of Health created nursing dispensaries in 1936 to supply primary health services to groups of settlers living in remote territories during the depression. These territories were far from urban centers and physicians refused to practice there on a permanent basis. When a new settlement was being set up, a house was built for the settlement nurse called a dispensary and was used both as her home and as the local clinic.

*From CAHN Newsletter, Volume 9, Issue 2, Fall, 1997*

### International Women's Day

The first International Women's Day (IWD) was declared at a Copenhagen conference of women in 1911. Its North American roots are often attributed to a series of labor protests between 1857 and 1912 when women in New York's garment factories challenged the long hours, low wages, child labor and horrendous working condi-

tions that marked their lives. The call for a vote for women became a part of these protests.

On March 8th, 1998 women and men around the world joined together to celebrate IWD. As part of that celebration the Ministry of Women's Equality in British Columbia is running a seven week television series on the Knowledge Network called **Women Being**. The series, examining the many faces of feminism in Canada will run Saturdays from 12:00 to 1:00 from March 7, 1998 to April 18th.

### Who Said?

*"There are more people to pick us up than to help us stand on our own two feet".* (when discussing prevention being better than cure)

*"We must not talk to them, or at them, but with them".* (on empowerment)

*"Absolute cleanliness is the true disinfectant".* (on preventing infection)

**Turn the Page to see her Picture!**



### Nurse's Week 1998

Florence Nightingale's birthday, May 12, is celebrated around the world as part of **International Nurses Week**. This year the dates are May 10-16.

Here are a few items taken from recent Newsletters from the **Florence Nightingale Museum** located in London, England:

#### *Aim of the Museum*

The Museum's Trustees adopted the following Mission Statement in 1996: "The **Florence Nightingale Museum** aims to grow as the international center for preserving Florence Nightingale's heritage and interpreting the relevance of her life and work for the benefit of present and future generations".

#### *Visitors to the Museum*

Professor Lynn McDonald of the University of Guelph in Canada was the most frequent visitor to the Resource Center in 1996. She is currently engaged in preparing a new series of Florence Nightingale's writings for publication. Distinguished visitors included Judith Oulton, Director of the International Council of Nurses, Mrs. Hitoe Kanai, founder of the Japanese Florence Nightingale Archives, educationalist Dr. Diane Mancino who guided the Helene Fuld Health Trust's top nursing scholars around the Museum, and Dr. Louise Selanders, author of a recent book on Florence Nightingale's nursing theories.

#### *The Nightingale Training School*

An exhibition on the History of the

Nightingale Training School will be held at the Museum in 1998 to coincide with the launch of The History of the Nightingale School 1860-1996, the definitive history of the School written by Roy Wake.

#### *Web Site*

Technology has come to the **Florence Nightingale Museum** with the advent of e-mail and internet access. To contact the Museum by e-mail write to [curator@florence-nightingale.co.uk](mailto:curator@florence-nightingale.co.uk). The interesting web site is found at <http://www.florence-nightingale.co.uk>.



**Florence Nightingale 1820-1910**

#### **Honoring Our Heritage**

Nurses around the world are being invited to participate in a world-wide commemorative moment in honor of Florence Nightingale's birthday May 12, 2000 at 12 noon. Distributed by the Internet, the intent is to have all nurses take time to pause, observe a moment of silence, create a healing ceremony or ritual in "celebration and dedication to the heart and spirit of nursing." The 24 hour world-wide event is designed to have nurses reflect on the legacy of Florence Nightingale and how her vision of caring and healing can be carried into the new millennium. For more information contact the American Holistic Nurses' Association, PO Box 2130, Flagstaff, Arizona 86003-2130.

For those with internet access

please visit the American Holistic Nurses home page at <http://www.ahna.org> and link to Nightingale from there.

#### Editor's note:

*Like many nurses, Ethel Johns had memorable experiences in her student days. Fortunately for us, she often wrote about these experiences so that we can enjoy them to this day.*

*The following delightful and amusing story was found in the Pupil Nurses' Annual, VGH, 1922. In an article Twenty Years On, Miss Johns addresses her remarks to the graduating class of 1922 and includes this remembrance..*

"One night, on the ophthalmic ward, I was hurrying down the corridor to do the two o'clock treatments when, to my horror, on the corrugated matting outside the door of the eye and ear operating room, I saw three leeches approaching in hideous loops. I know they were to be applied to an incipient mastoid in the morning and here they were, having escaped from their gauze covered jar, making for the front door and liberty.

Now to me a leech is as much to be feared as a boa constrictor. Did I quail? No, I got a long pair of dressing forceps and tried force. The leeches stretched in a sickening manner but remained adherent, firmly adherent, to the matting. I tempted them with test tubes of milk. They scorned me.

At last the house surgeon came along. That dauntless youth moistened his fingers with milk, the leeches twined lovingly round them and allowed them-

selves to be restored without a struggle to their jar, on the top of which I placed a dinner plate and a ten-pound weight so as to keep them within bounds for the rest of the night.

They looked somewhat battered. My efforts with the forceps accounted for that. But their appetite the next morning was unimpaired. True, the attendant otologist commented on their scars but was assured by my brave champion that they had "probably been fighting during the night".

I have never forgotten that intern. I never will. Whenever the innate superiority of the male over the female is sacrilegiously brought into question, I remember those leeches and am dumb".

*Submitted by Ethel Warbinek*



## MARK YOUR CALENDARS!

April 2, 1998 8:30-10:30 am Continental Breakfast and History of Nursing Annual Meeting, Hyatt Regency Hotel, Vancouver, B.C.

May 3-18, 1998 Celebrating the Vancouver General Hospital School of Nursing, Historical Displays in the Laurel and Centennial Pavilions. Open on week days, (11-3) and weekends (1-3).

May 7, 1998, 4-6 pm History of Nursing Executive Meeting, RNABC Building, Vancouver, B.C.

May 29-31, 1998 CAHN/ACHN Conference and Annual General Meeting, University of Ottawa, Ontario.

September 25-27, 1998 American Association for the History of Nursing Fifteenth Annual Conference, Jackson, Mississippi.

### 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. 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 1998 are: Full and Affiliate \$20; Students \$5. Membership year is January 1 to December 31. Send name, address, telephone number, and RNABC registration number or name of the educational program. Make checks to "History of Nursing Group" and send to: Don Ransom, Treasurer, #107-9310 King George Highway, Surrey, B.C. V3V 5W3

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



### THE HISTORY GROUP'S NEWSLETTER

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