



Margaret M. Allemang Society for the History of Nursing

July 2009

FEATURE ARTICLE

FOR SERVICE TO HUMANITY: The Museum of Health Care's Tribute to Nursing

Paul Robertson, Curator

A former nursing student residence in Kingston, Ontario has once again become a place of nursing education – at least in the historical sense. The Ann Baillie Building, located on the campus of Kingston General Hospital and now the Museum of Health Care at Kingston, is the venue and subject of the Museum's newest gallery dedicated to nursing history.

One of the most exciting exhibition projects ever tackled by the Museum, *For Service to Humanity: Nursing Education at Kingston General Hospital* explores the training, work, and residence life of the more than 3000 students who attended the KGH school between 1886 and 1974. The gallery also provides a location to showcase parts of the Museum's nearly 800-item collection of nursing uniforms, notebooks, instruments, photographs, and memorabilia.

Finding one's roots

In an effort to communicate more effectively the Ann Baillie Building's significance as a National Historic site commemorating the history of nursing education in Canada, the Museum has created an inviting space for interpretive exhibits and audiovisual components that help bring the original function of the building back to life.



Constructed in 1904 as the Nurse's Home, the Ann Baillie Building is the oldest of the residential buildings associated with the KGH school. The KGH apprenticeship-style training programme was typical of nursing education once found in hospital schools across the country.

The new nursing gallery's display is arranged in themes exploring the nature of the nursing profession, curricula, hospital work, life in residence, and school traditions. A key feature of the two-room gallery is a Spartan, yet cosy student bedroom restored to 1930. The voice of its student occupant – a senior nearing graduation recording her memories of training at KGH in a letter home – greets visitors to the room.

In 2004 the Museum began distributing its Memory Book questionnaire to capture graduates' personal recollections. As an extension of the Memory Book, an oral history programme was launched in 2008 to give "voice" to nursing graduates and nearly twenty oral history interviews with nursing graduates from the 1930s to the 1970s have been recorded to date. We have encouraged the nurses to recall memories of the challenges they faced at school balancing education and work, of the lifelong friendships they have forged, and of their commitment to the nursing profession.



This rich legacy of information is an invaluable resource to the long-term work of the Museum. More importantly, it preserves the stories of those who have contributed to the evolving story of Canadian nursing over the past century. Funding has now been confirmed that will allow us to turn some of these oral interviews into short video vignettes to complement the artefact displays.

When additional funding becomes available, the Museum plans to launch a complementary website that will explore the history of nursing education in the Kingston region as it evolved in religious and secular hospital schools, and in a psychiatric hospital school, community college, and university.

We owe a huge debt to the KGH Nurses' Alumnae who have been supportive of this project from the beginning, helping with funding, serving on the advisory team, and coordinating the oral histories with graduates.

For further information: <http://www.museumofhealthcare.ca/exhibitions/forservicetohumanity.html>

To check the Museum's on-line catalogue of nursing artefacts:

<http://db.library.queensu.ca/hosmus/index.html>

Photographs: Details from *For Service to Humanity: Nursing Education at Kingston General Hospital*, Museum of Health Care at Kingston (MHC photos, 2009)

HISTORY OF THE SUDBURY NURSING ORAL HISTORY PROJECT

Joyce Schroeder MacQueen

Background

In late November 1997, five nurses, mostly retired, met and formed the Sudbury History of Nursing Group which affiliated itself with The Margaret M. Allemang Centre for the History of Nursing. Group membership fluctuated between five and ten members.

Purpose, Rationale and Significance of the Project

Nursing in Sudbury, as in other places, is losing its past, forgetting its struggles and its accomplishments. Because of radical changes in nursing practice in the last decade new graduates are unaware of what ordinary nursing care was like in the past. The Sudbury History of Nursing Group chose to respond to this challenge by establishing an oral history project. Our goals, in keeping with the Allemang Centre's were:

1. To preserve the history of nurses and nursing in the Sudbury area,
2. To provide a data base for researchers and students working on nursing history.

Planning our Oral History Project

We began by developing an understanding of oral history - its philosophy and contribution to the broader field of history. We shared materials about oral history and examples of oral history. We attended Dr. Linda Ambrose's class on oral history. Linda stressed that in feminist oral history, the interviewee was in control of the interview. It was her story and the interviewer was there to help her tell it, not to impose the interviewer's interests. We kept this in mind as we developed our instruments and began interviewing.

We envisaged our project as three phases.

Phase One was the development of instruments and interviewing retired nurses.

Phase Two was having the interview tapes transcribed. At the end of 2003 we decided we needed to begin transcription. This is a costly process and involved us in fund-raising. One of our members loaned us money to begin and we were able to borrow a transcription machine.

Phase Three was editing, compiling, printing and binding the interviews and placing them in archives.

In the beginning The Allemang Centre for the History of Nursing gave us \$700 to buy a good tape recorder and start the project. This covered the cost of most of the interviewing. Once we began transcription we needed to raise some money. We raised just over \$1500 mostly in the Sudbury-North Bay area and have received an additional \$1500 from The Allemang Centre for the completion of the project.

Instrument Development and Testing

We developed a **Consent Form** based on a form approved by a Laurentian University ethics committee dealing with human research, and with the advice of Dr Linda Ambrose, Laurentian University Department of History.

We modified a **Biographical Profile Form** based on that used by the British Columbia History of Nursing group. This eased the interview process because relevant dates, etc. were already listed and the interviewer could focus on feelings, beliefs, attitudes.

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We developed and tested an **Interview Questionnaire**. The first questionnaire was too broad. Nurses who had been retired many years, needed help remembering various dimensions of their nursing, such as technology, relationships, nursing process. We found that elderly nurses objected to being asked about on-the-job sexual harassment, a term that had come into use later in their lives. We eliminated the use of 'sexual harassment' and asked more generally instead about relationships.

The original questionnaire was hospital focussed. Because many of our interviews were with public health nurses, we modified the document for an **Interview Questionnaire for Public Health Nurses**.

Grown children whose mothers had been nurses, presented us with some of their deceased mothers' nursing artifacts. We developed a **Biographical Profile Form for a Family Member** to give us the provenance of these artifacts, and perhaps give some satisfaction to family members.

We developed an **Information for Interviewers** protocol to standardize and ease the process.

Interviewing Sudbury Nurses

We began by interviewing retired nurse friends and acquaintances, and then nurses recommended by other nurses. We tried to begin with those who had nursed in Sudbury the longest. Some nurses refused to be interviewed, and one of the interviewees asked to remain anonymous. Otherwise, they were all prepared to have their data identified. Unfortunately, in a few cases, nurses died while we were organizing a suitable time for the interview.

Arranging for an interview was not always a simple process. Retirees, both interviewers and

interviewees, travel, are tied up with family, experience illness, need time for medical treatment, and generally have extremely busy lives. By the time we had completed 42 interviews, 7 or 8 years had passed and we decided to quit interviewing and bring the process to completion.

Our focus was on nursing in Sudbury, though not all participants had trained in Sudbury. We had interviewees who trained in the 1930s, 1940s and 1950s prior to Helen Mussalem's *Spotlight on Nursing Education, The Report of the Pilot Project for Evaluation of Schools of Nursing in Canada* (Ottawa: Canadian Nurses' Association, 1960). Two of our members were from the class of 1966 from the Marymount School of Nursing (Sudbury General Hospital of the Immaculate Heart of Mary) which was after the Mussalem report and some years before hospital schools of nursing were closed. They interviewed a number of their former classmates, some of whom were still nursing. In the early 1970s the two hospital schools of nursing closed and a regional school was opened. We have one interviewee from this program which represented the new order: students could be married, have children, live out of the school residence. Our interviews thus represent a broad spectrum of nursing history in Sudbury.

Conclusion

We believe that this is a valuable project. We have recovered and preserved some of the history of nursing in Sudbury. Some of the nurses that we have interviewed are no longer able to be interviewed. The nursing education described in some of the interviews seems to have come from another planet when compared to today's education. Nursing itself has changed dramatically, and we have collected the stories of what it once was. We believe that students and researchers will find in our project a mother-lode of data for their work.

NEWS ITEMS

CAHN CONFERENCE MAY 2009

Carol Helmstadter

This May the Canadian Association for the History of Nursing met jointly with the Canadian Society for the History of Medicine at the Congress of the Social Sciences and Humanities at Carleton University in Ottawa. CAHN is planning to meet every second year with CSHM because the joint meetings have been so successful and so broadening for both societies.

There were close to 50 papers presented in concurrent sessions, nine of them given by CAHN members ranging on topics from psychiatric nursing to nursing in the nineteenth century Canadian West, Florence Nightingale, domiciliary nursing in Montreal, recovery room nursing and nursing education. Judith Leavitt gave the CAHN-AMS Hannah Lecture on the experiences of fathers with childbirth in mid-twentieth century America. She argued that their admission to the labor and subsequently delivery room was a major step forward in the process. Angus McLaren gave the AMS Patterson Lecture on the responses of patients and doctors in England to artificial insemination from 1918 to 1948. He demonstrated that while some saw the procedure as a solution for infertile couples others saw it as threatening Christian morality, traditional gender relationships and the respectability of the medical profession. There were a number of excellent student papers and a very fine paper on medicine in the American Civil War which won CSHM's Segal Prize.

As always, the conference offered opportunities to see old friends and meet new ones. There was a very nice dinner for all delegates in the Market area of Ottawa, a special lunch for the students, and the book launch accompanied by champagne and strawberries, which has now become a tradition of CSHM meetings. Of note among the new books launched was *Place and Practice in Canadian Nursing*, a series of papers presented at the excellent Hannah Conference in Ottawa several years ago.

Next year we will meet at the University of Manitoba for an all CAHN conference. The call for abstracts is up on the web and we hope there will be many submissions. We have met in Winnipeg twice before where we had a very warm and convivial reception and lots of excellent and stimulating papers. It will be a real treat and we look forward to seeing lots of you there!

NURSING SISTERS' ASSOCIATION - TORONTO UNIT

Judith Young

The association's spring dinner was held at the Royal Canadian Military Institute, Toronto May 22, 2009 with several veterans of World War II present along with family members. At my table was Elsie Dandy, a 1941 graduate of the Hospital for Sick Children who was happy to share some of her experiences of serving in Europe. Also present was Ann Lynch and her daughter. Anne served in the hospital attached to Monteith Prisoner of War Camp near Iroquois Falls, Ontario. Her family is anxious to find out more details about the camp to supplement Anne's reminiscences. Other World War II veterans I talked to were Gerry Geroux and Helen Kerr. The Toronto Unit welcomes new members. Membership is open to individuals interested in the aims of the organization. It is not necessary to have served in the armed forces. The current President of the Toronto Unit is Evelyn Kelly and Audrey Nettleton is secretary/treasurer and newsletter editor.

BOOK REVIEW

A Life Consumed: Lilly Samson's Dispatches from the TB Front
by Diane Sims

Joyce Schroeder MacQueen

“In 1923 Lilly Samson, a teacher in a one-room school in Goulais River north of Sault Ste Marie, contracted TB. She was 20 years old and engaged to be married. A year later she entered a sanatorium in Gravenhurst, Ontario. She died there in 1927. Before she did, though, she wrote a series of letters that her niece Diane Sims has made the centrepiece of a remarkably moving and thought provoking look at TB in Canada in the 20s.”

Combining Lilly's letters and her knowledge of family history, Diane Sims has painted a picture of life for a young woman diagnosed with tuberculosis in the 1920s and admitted to a private Canadian sanatorium. We see her relationships with nurses, doctors and other patients and gain an understanding of the roles the staff played in the patients' lives. We experience medical decisions and treatments through Lilly's eyes. Her letters also give a brief but telling comparison of tuberculosis treatment in the private sanatorium where she resides and the public sanatorium nearby.

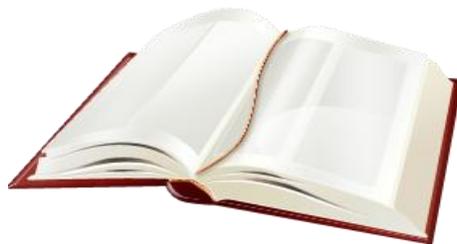
In a brief closing chapter of this 200-page book, Diane Sims examines the role of poverty and class in our failure to eradicate tuberculosis in our world - “eight million people will contract TB this year; three million will die.” She is donating any royalties from the book to TB treatment.

This book is a must-read for anyone interested in the history of nursing, of tuberculosis and of women's lives in 1920s Canada.

The book is available from Your Scrivener Press, 465 Loach's Rd., Sudbury ON P3E 2R2

Or at www.yourscrivenerpress.com or info@yourscrivenerpress.com

Cost \$19 (\$24.95 including tax and shipping)



HISTORY OF NURSING WRITING PRIZE

The Allemang Society is offering a prize of \$500 for the best essay in the history of nursing written by a student in the year September 2009 through August 2010.

Criteria for submissions:

1. The paper may deal with any topic in the history of nursing in any period and in any country.
2. Papers should be a minimum of 8 pages, and a maximum of 25 pages in length including footnotes.
3. Both undergraduate and graduate students may submit.
4. The student must be enrolled in a university or community college in Ontario. Students **from any faculty, including nursing, social science, humanities and science**, are invited to apply.

The deadline for submission is **June 30, 2010**. The prize will be awarded at the 2010 AGM.

Papers may be submitted either by email or in hard copy. Electronic copies should be in Microsoft Word and include academic affiliation, address, telephone and fax numbers. Students submitting in hard copy should send three copies. The first copy should have the name, academic affiliation, address, telephone, fax and email. The accompanying two copies should have no identification.

Please send papers to:

Lynn Kirkwood
570 McCann Road
Portland, ON K0S 1V0
Email: Kirkwood@rideau.net

UPCOMING MEETINGS

ALLEMANG SOCIETY FOR HISTORY OF NURSING

AGM Saturday, September 26, 2009 at 3pm.

The Annual General Meeting will feature **Christina Bates**, historian at the Canadian Museum of Civilization. Her topic: **“Starched White Bibs: Moulding the Student Nurse’s Body, Behaviour and Identity”**.

CANADIAN ASSOCIATION FOR THE HISTORY OF NURSING

2010 ANNUAL MEETING, WINNIPEG, JUNE 18-20

“Continuities, Contingencies and Fault Lines: Nursing 100 Years After Nightingale”.

CALL FOR ABSTRACTS

Deadline January 8, 2010

2010 Annual Meeting, Winnipeg, June 18-20

Continuities, Contingencies and Fault Lines: Nursing 100 Years After Nightingale

CAHN Program Committee invites proposals for papers which explore the diversity of practitioners who have performed caring work and laid claim to the title “nurse”; the nature of their practices; and the ways in which ideas about nursing have been challenged, transformed, dissolved and reconstituted across space and time. Abstracts on other topics are also welcome.

Send abstracts by e-mail to: CAHN2010@UMANITOBA.CA

Or mail to: CAHN 2010, c/o Marion McKay
Helen Glass Centre for Nursing
Faculty of Nursing
University of Manitoba
Winnipeg, MB R3T 2N2

See www.umanitoba.ca/nursing/CAHNconference2010 for more information.

MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL

Remember to renew your membership for 2009. Your support is needed to carry out our mandate of information sharing to promote and preserve nursing history.

OBITUARIES

Burcher, (Elizabeth) Betty “Betty Anne” - (b. November 21, 1949). Betty died July 5, 2009 from complications following a procedure to repair an aneurysm. Betty earned a Bachelor of Arts (Honours Sociology) in 1971 from the University of Waterloo and later a BScN (1976) and MSc in Nursing (1992) from the University of Toronto. A celebrated public health nurse, Betty worked for many years for the Department of Public Health, Toronto, attaining senior positions including manager of the Teaching Health Unit, of Health Information and Research, and of Health Planning. In 2002 Betty joined the Faculty of Nursing, U of T, earning teaching awards and the deep respect of her colleagues and students. Betty was generous, caring, respectful, energetic, and intelligent; passionate about public health, nursing, social justice, and woman’s rights. She liked to garden, hike, quilt, and play the piano. She enjoyed people and was keen to help, all with a sense of humour, punctuated by an infectious laugh. A scholarship in her name will be established at U of T.

(Excerpted from the The Globe and Mail, July 8, 2009 and L. Bloomberg Faculty of Nursing notice 17/07/09).

Burridge, Faith RN passed away peacefully at North York General Hospital on June 18, 2009, at the age of 85 years. She graduated from McKellar General Hospital (Fort William) in 1946; her life-long commitment to nursing commenced in Toronto. Starting in private practice, career opportunities led to positions at Sunnybrook and Western General Hospital. Thereafter, Faith was a dedicated nursing employee at Scarborough General Hospital for 27 years. She is still remembered as the last of the “floor walking supervisors” in management. She challenged all to question why, gave strength to be assertive and demonstrated leadership skills. Friends knew Faith as fearless to take life as it comes, courageous with her health challenges and encouraged others to be involved with life. Her philosophy; life can be simple. In the

community she was an active volunteer with Arts Scarborough, Salvation Army-awarded 25 year service, Knit for Kids, Crescent School Ladies Guild-life membership and the Progressive Conservative Party. Her interests were music performance, rug hooking, patron of the arts, birds, and a Toronto Maple Leaf Fan to eternity. As a unique contribution for the advancement of medicine her wish was respected to bequeath her body – for anatomical studies at U of T and eyes for research – Trillium Gift of Life.

(Excerpted from The Globe and Mail, July 4, 2009).

Chapman, Dr. Jacqueline Sue succumbed to illness on July 9, 2009 at Lakeview Manor, Beaverton; one of Canada’s most noted nurse researchers. Her doctoral studies led to care improvements in neonatal nurseries. Jacquie obtained her BSN from UBC in 1958. She quickly advanced to head nurse roles and then to instructor positions at UBC and at several American universities. Jacquie earned her MSN from Case Western Reserve University in Cleveland and a PhD in Nursing from New York University. She became a full professor at the University of Toronto and was part of the team that established the PhD in Nursing. She was the first nurse in Canada to be awarded the prestigious National Health Research Scholar Award. Jacquie garnered many honours including being named an American Nurses Foundation Scholar and being invited to be a Founding Fellow of the Nightingale Society. In retirement she became an active member of her church and community sharing generously in the lives of those around her. She maintained a special passion for infants, children and education. She was an ardent traveller and enthusiast of the Arts. She will be remembered and missed by many; particularly by the “grandchildren of her heart”. (Excerpted from Toronto Star, July 11, 2009 and L. Bloomberg Faculty of Nursing notice 17/07/09).

Greenwood, Gladys (Mac). Born in Omemee, Ontario on September 22, 1922, she died peacefully in her 88th year on June 30th, 2009 at Sunnybrook Hospital. After attending Reaboro SS #7 and Lindsay High School, she graduated from the School of Nursing at the University of Toronto in 1944. Mac practiced as a nurse in Toronto until the birth of her first son. After raising her children, she continued her career as a nurse in the public health system and in service to George Brown College. Her philanthropic work included the Heart and Stroke Foundation, Women's Opera Committee, and the Rosedale United Church where she was a member of the congregation. Mac was a respected player in Toronto's bridge community and a long-time member of the Rosedale Golf and Country Club and the Badminton and Racquet Club, where she will be missed by her friends. (Excerpted from The Globe and Mail, July 2, 2009).

Harris, Mary Margaret (Colwill) died peacefully at home in Vancouver after a brief illness. She was born in Arthur, in 1923, one of twelve siblings. Marg graduated first in her class from the Guelph General Hospital as a registered nurse in 1947. She was a union



organizer and was the President of one of the first nurses' unions in Ontario. She ended her career as Vice President of Nursing of Toronto's Trillium Health Centre (Queensway General). She and Aussie (predeceased) will be remembered by fellow members of several Canadian Armoured Corps Sergeants Messes in the fifties and sixties; and by friends and golfing companions of the Woodlands and Castlemere courses in Toronto. (Excerpted from the Toronto Star, June 13, 2009).

Morrison, Cherene Diane (Abbott), RN BN PHN – died suddenly but peacefully at South Haven in Huntsville on Sunday, June 14, 2009 in her 69th year after a long struggle with Parkinson's Disease. Cherene will be missed by her extended family and former work colleagues. She was a graduate of the Toronto Western Hospital Nursing School (1964) and McGill University (1966). A 25-year employee of the City of Toronto Public Health Department, she worked earlier at 4 other Public Health units. A very dedicated and respected nurse who during her later career specialized in parenting education for single mothers and breast feeding support. In 1994 her peers awarded her the Nancy Blackburn Award for outstanding contributions to community health. President for many years of the Moss Park (Central Toronto) Skating Club. In 1966 she was Volunteer of the Year for the COS of Skate Canada. (Excerpted from the Toronto Star, June 17, 2009).

Stinson, Mildred (nee Conlon), died peacefully at the Kingston General Hospital on Monday, May 25, 2009, in her 91st year. Mildred graduated as a registered nurse from the Toronto General Hospital and was very proud to serve overseas as a nursing sister in the Canadian Army during WWII. (Excerpted from The Globe and Mail, May 28, 2009).

Editor Newsletter

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Dorothy Wylie. Please contact her regarding news items, short articles, announcements, etc. All contributions are welcome.
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