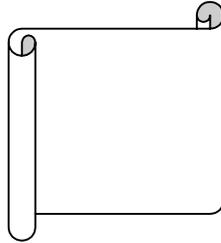


MARGARET M ALLEMANG CENTRE FOR THE HISTORY OF NURSING



NEWSLETTER

OCTOBER 2001

Next Meeting

The next meeting, on October 20th 2001, will take place at our usual location (the RNAO). You are invited to afternoon tea, and to meet some of the 1947 graduating class of the Hamilton General Hospital School of Nursing. Please refer to the enclosed notice for details.

An update on Riverdale

Organization of our collection at the Riverdale Hospital was put on hold this February due to an earlier than expected start of the hospital's building programme. We knew that the initial space assigned to us was temporary, but did not expect such an early move. The new space we have been allotted is very small and does not allow for the setting up of displays, or for the organizing of materials. We do hope to negotiate something better. The Riverdale Executive does remain committed to helping us open the Centre and to including us in their long term plans. In the meantime, we have not been idle, but have been generating ideas for furnishing and setting up a Centre. In

this we are being advised by Elizabeth Kovac, who has had much experience in working with charitable organizations. Acquisition of materials is also ongoing.

Collection Highlights

You may remember in the last newsletter we described materials donated by the family of Norah Crozier (Carleton) and by Ruth Hughes. We plan to continue highlighting certain of our holdings or new acquisitions in subsequent newsletters.

World War Two Nursing Sisters: Oral History Project

In this project, directed by Margaret Allemang, sixteen nursing sisters and one physiotherapist talk of their lives and experiences in World War Two. The interviews are wide-ranging and tell us much of the hardship and sorrow of war, but also of the excitement, for these young women, in serving their country overseas. There are anecdotes unlikely to be found in conventional history books such as the nurses' use of "black

humour” to cope with the death of soldiers near the front, the problem of facilities for women when a Casualty Clearing Station (mostly men) was on the move, and the difficulties of caring for prisoners of war. The nurses describe service in Canada, England, North Africa, Hong Kong and throughout Europe: a unique view of war through the eyes of young women. Some were close to the front lines in a Casualty Clearing Station, others were in hospitals in England and Canada, one was taken prisoner in Hong Kong. Allemang Centre members Louise Jamieson, Margaret Mills and Eva Wannop are among those interviewed.

Copies of the transcripts and tapes, which are almost completed, will be placed in the Allemang Centre: an important part of our varied collection related to nurses and war.

The Mick Collection

Photograph albums and scrapbooks, which belonged to Irene and Delta Mick, visually detail the wartime experiences of these two sisters as they served with Canadian General Hospital No. 15 in England, North Africa, and Italy, and provide an interesting link with the World War Two transcripts. Although the sisters were not interviewed, another nurse with No. 15, Betty Pense (Neil), has vividly described the work of the unit (Allemang tapes). Norah Crozier (Carleton), featured in the last newsletter, served with No. 15, also Bernice Seeds who recently provided some interesting anecdotes about Delta and Irene Mick. One of the albums contains a labelled group photo of all the nurses in the unit.

CAHN Conferences

The annual conference of the Canadian Association for the History of Nursing took place this past June in Winnipeg. The well-attended conference was held in the impressive new nursing building (named after Helen Glass) on the campus of the University of Manitoba. Allemang Centre directors Carol Helmstadter, Gloria Kay, Kathryn McPherson, and Judy Young all presented papers. The keynote address (Hannah lecture) was given by Meryn Stuart).

Next year’s CAHN conference will be held jointly with the Canadian Society for the History of Medicine in **Toronto May 24-26, 2002**. Please see the enclosed notice for details regarding the call for papers. Note the deadline for submission is November 16, 2001.

Norah Parker - in memorium

A member of the Allemang Centre since its inception, Norah died on March 21st 2001. Born in Saskatchewan, Norah received her training in psychiatric nursing at the Ontario Hospital, Hamilton. Subsequent education included a BA from Victoria College, University of Toronto, a Masters in Psychology from McMaster University, and a PhD from the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education. Norah worked as a psychologist for the Board of Education but subsequently her career centred on the Faculty of Nursing, University of Toronto. As a professor, she was influential in many developments at the school.

New Webpage on Nurses caps

The following information was just received from Tina Bates, historian at the Canadian Museum of Civilization:

A new webpage on the topic of the nurses cap is part of the Canadian Museum of Civilization's new and improved website. Called, *Symbol of a Profession: One-hundred Years of Nurses Caps*, the webpage and current exhibition at the Canadian Museum of Civilization are based on a selection of 167 caps donated by Gloria Kay to the museum. This collection is the most comprehensive of its kind in Canada, representing every province, and dating from 1895 to 1983.

The webpage will explore the evolution in nurses cap design, the significance of cap bands and the capping ceremony, the labour involved in cleaning caps and how this influenced material and design, and some speculation about the demise of the nurses cap. *Symbol of a*

Profession can be found at:
www.civilization.ca/hist/infirm/inint01e.html

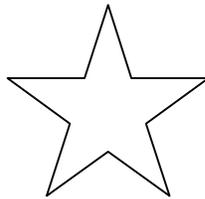
In French at:
www.civilisations.ca/hist/infirm/inint01f.html>

National Nursing Forum

Allemang Centre President Carol Helmstadter has recently assumed a two-year term as President of CAHN. This past summer, she attended the CNA National Nursing Forum as the representative of the history of nursing group. She reports that much of the discussion at the Forum centred on the problem of lack of value accorded to nursing work and the need for nurses to articulate this concern.

Meetings

Following the Annual General Meeting April 21, 2001, members enjoyed an excellent presentation by Cynthia Toman on oral history.



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