

HISTORY OF NURSING NEWS

January 2005 Volume 15 Issue 3

VERNA HUFFMAN SPLANE, a history of nursing honorary member is acknowledged for her long and meritorious career on her 90th birthday. **! HAPPY BIRTHDAY VERNA,**

Beginning her career with the Victoria Order of Nurses (VON) she pursued a public health perspective which led her to view the family and community as the patient. This broad outlook prepared her for many leadership positions at the local, provincial, national and international levels. In the November issue of The Canadian Nurse her career was documented and profiled. She was the first principal nursing officer for Canada and a former vice-president of the International Council of Nurses (ICN). She has received many awards for her work: Queen's Silver Jubilee and Gold Jubilee medals (1977-2002), the Jeanne Mance Award (1982), the Canadian Red Cross Distinguished Service Award (1975) and the Lillian Carter Center for International Nursing Award (shared with her husband Richard 2001). Verna continues her work as she lives life to the fullest.



THREE CHEERS!!!

**REMINDER TO RENEW
YOUR 2005 HON
MEMBERSHIP**

The 2005 BC History of Nursing Membership forms will be mailed Out to you separately. Please Watch for them and renew your Membership for another exciting Activity, news filled year. Thanks For all your support in the past Year.



GETTING TOGETHER

History Group Executive Meetings are usually held first Thursday of every month at the RNABC Offices from 4pm to 6pm. All members welcome-for further information please call President Shiela Zerr at 604 943-3012

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The History of Nursing Newsletter is published four times a year. Submissions for the next newsletter are welcome. Please submit articles and news for the next issue to Beth Fitzpatrick, bethfitz32@shaw.ca or Bev Leipert, bleipert@uwo.ca by Feb. 15, 2005.



PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Sheila J. Rankin Zerr

My six month term as president of the BC History of Nursing Group begins at a time of great change within the Registered Nurses Association of British Columbia (RNABC). The B.C. government passed legislation to provide for a common regulatory framework for the governance of all health professions in B.C. Once in force for registered nursing, the Health Professions Act will repeal the Nurses (Registered) Act and place nursing under the Health Professions Act. RNABC will be called the College of Registered Nurses of British Columbia (CRNABC). Members of the history group are encouraged to visit the RNABC website www.rnabc.bc.ca to review the "Proposed Regulations for Registered Nurses and Nurse Practitioners" put forward by RNABC for consultation and review at this time. These proposed Regulations, relating to reserved titles, scope of practice and reserved actions for general and specialized registered nurse practice, have a restricted timeframe for member input before going to government. The new Health Professions Act is proposed for May 2005.

Laurel Brunke, Executive Director of RNABC, presented the proposed changes at the RNABC Leader's Conference on November 26-27, 2004. I attended this session, along with fellow members of the BC History Group. We gained an understanding of the proposed changes and the future of the RNABC Professional Practice Groups. Some of the proposed regulations of importance to the history group:

It is our understanding the proposed regulations no longer include chapters but will include regional representation as part of the proposed structure of the CRNABC Board of Directors.

- The regulations propose a structure that includes professional practice groups.
- RNABC will have an annual general meeting in April 2005 so the History of Nursing Group can plan their annual general meeting as usual.

The regulations around “Reserved title of Registered Nurse” allow the CRNBC to develop bylaws that allow for use of the term “retired” RN.

- Once the Health Professions Act is in place, the History of Nursing Group will revise their Constitution and Bylaws in accordance with the CRNBC Regulations.

The next few months will be interesting and challenging. Your input is important. Keep informed by visiting the RNABC website and help by providing input to RNABC and to the History of Nursing group when you are able.

Origin of some of our Cards

The Vancouver Courier offered an item in the November 28, 2004 issue, “Sacred sites welcome visitors.” The article goes on to explain that eight Vancouver churches are offering historical tours and three of these churches house the stained glass window from which our History of Nursing greeting cards were developed. The article does not mention the nursing windows specifically but does explain that each of the stained glass windows in the Memorial United Church on west 15th Avenue tells a story of Canadian History. One of the stained glass window pictures a nursing sister from WW1. In 1928, nurses who served in WW1 conducted a national campaign to raise \$350 for Nursing Sister window as part of the Canadian Memorial Church’s “Memorial to Peace.” In 1989, the Nursing Sisters of Canada, Vancouver Unit raised money to maintain the window by producing a greeting card. Since then the History of Nursing Group has taken over the distribution of the cards. Other stained glass windows are also on the church tours: St. Mary’s Anglican Church in Kerrisdale houses the Florence Nightingale window and Christ Church Cathedral, Anglican Church of Canada houses the stained glass window commemorating the Nursing Sisters of WW1. For more information or to purchase tickets go to www.vancouverheritagefoundation.org or call 604 264-9642.

MEMBERS IN THE NEWS



Kari Moore, a long-time HoN Group member in Victoria, has been awarded the Taras Shevchenko Medal, a national honor given by the Ukrainian Canadian Congress. The prestigious award is given in recognition of leadership in the community. Kari has been an active community worker in both Surrey and in Victoria since she took early retirement from nursing.

She is particularly active and supportive of the struggling peoples around the world, especially the people of her father,s and mother,s homeland of Ukraine. Two of her major national contributions are open-verse eulogies, both included on plaques in the Ukrainian National Centennial Memorial Park in Dauphin, Manitoba: the first eulogy concerns the 5,000 Ukrainians interned in 24 Canadian concentration camps as enemy aliens during World War I; the second remembers the great genocide in the Ukraine 1932-1933 where 7-10 million peasants were deliberately starved by the Russian regime. She also continues to raise support for students from Ukraine studying at the University of Victoria and at Lester B. Pearson College of the Pacific.

Because she was unable to attend the national presentation in Winnipeg in October, the Victoria Ukrainian community celebrated her award with a presentation on October 20 at an afternoon ceremony. Taras Shevchenko is a revered national poet of the Ukraine, and Kari says she felt deeply honored as an open-verse poet to receive this exceptional award named for him. Kari also recently completed writing her memoirs for her family.

MEMBERS IN THE NEWS (CONT'D)

JOAN DOREE – Joan was on TV discussing military nursing during WWII and her association with the military nurses Vancouver Unit and her nursing experiences during the war years and her nursing experience after the war.



JUNE NEWTON – In a article in The Vancouver Sun, June Newton and the other Nursing Sisters of the Vancouver Unit were profiled as they convened for their last meeting. The picture above shows June in 1943 and today.



NINA RUMEN- an honorary member of our History of Nursing group initiated a new way of giving a financial donation to organizations. She was profiled in the Vancouver Courier as the article explained the benefits of donating her RRIF to a charitable organization. Nina has arranged to have her RRIF donated to St. Paul's Hospital, the hospital she graduated from. By choosing a charity as beneficiary of her RRIF, taxes are eliminated, as the RRIF is passed on to the charity automatically and does not become part of her estate.



Book Review

Dr. Fred and the Spanish Lady: Fighting the Killer Flu. Betty O'Keefe & Ian Macdonald. Surrey: Heritage House, 2004. 220 pages, illus, paperback. \$18.95

The authors have written a well researched and compelling account of the infamous Spanish Flu and how it affected the lives of the citizens of Vancouver when it arrived in early October 1918. The main player is Dr. Fred Underhill, Vancouver's medical health officer, although many others are mentioned, it is primarily his story.

Frederick Underhill was born in England in 1858 and was a graduate of Edinburgh University. In 1884 he purchased a medical practice in Mission BC, and he, his wife and six children emigrated to BC. In 1897 he returned to Edinburgh to study public-health administration. This would be enormously beneficial, when 20 years later, he faced the crisis of the Spanish flu.

On his return, the family took up residence in Vancouver. His medical practice flourished as did his family of 13 children. Because Underhill was one of the few doctors with special qualifications in public health he was asked to become Vancouver's bacteriologist – an unpaid position. In 1904 he was asked to give up his lucrative practice to become Vancouver's first full-time, paid medical health officer – a job he accepted without hesitation. For the next ten years, he watched as the City's population tripled. This created serious problems, which he solved, such as organizing garbage collection and providing clean drinking water and pasteurized milk. But his real challenge was the arrival of "The Spanish Lady." When the flu appeared, the City was fortunate to have in place a knowledgeable and courageous physician.

The flu was diagnosed in Quebec in 1918 and quickly spread across the country following the railway lines from east to west. By September 1918 Vancouver's health authorities were preparing for its arrival and plans were underway to protect its 110,000 citizens. Vancouver General Hospital and St. Paul's had been on alert for several weeks.

When the first cases were confirmed in early October 1918, Underhill's primary concern was to prevent panic. To help alleviate fear, he issued daily reports to the press at a time when secrecy was the norm. Dr. Arthur Price, Victoria's medical health officer, recommended closing public places and his recommendation was acted upon by the Victoria City Council. Underhill, however, was opposed to closing schools as he believed children were better supervised in school rather than running freely around the neighbourhood. He strongly advised staying away from crowds, going to bed when experiencing symptoms and the need for ventilation, and good wholesome food. He issued a list of "Do's and Don'ts" for adults and children which were published in all the newspapers, such as keep hands clean and away from the mouth. He emphasized the importance of convalescence to help ward off the dreaded complication – pneumonia.

Seventy-two cases of the flu were reported to Underhill during the first week and the first 2 deaths noted. By October 14 Vancouver had 200 cases with more and more people becoming ill daily. Beds were at a premium and hospital staff were working long hours. Underhill was under pressure to close down the City, but remained resolute, based partly on evidence that the shutdown in Victoria had not reduced the incidence. Others were not convinced and wanted the City to reconsider. On October 18, Underhill gave in to government and public pressure and cancelled all public gatherings and non-essential businesses.

The number of cases continued to rise compounded by the large number of sick people arriving from outside Vancouver in search of medical care. The wearing of masks by the public was controversial and generated much debate. Dr Price in Victoria was strongly opposed, while Underhill recommended those dealing with the public wear them, believing individuals should be free to make their own decisions if given accurate information.

War. Armistice was declared on November 11th and the City celebrated. Underhill was worried the gathering crowds would result in an increase in flu cases, but to his great relief that did not happen. In spite of pressure to reopen the City, he refused stating it was premature as he feared an upsurge in cases. As the epidemic was abating, Underhill agreed to open the city to business on November 19th.

The 'Spanish Lady' had not taken her leave. As Underhill feared, a second wave occurred in January 1919, but by June 1919, "The Lady" had disappeared. The *Vancouver Daily Sun* published the names of the 17 sisters and nursing students who died in the line of duty. Sadly, a complete list of those who died caring for flu victims was never compiled. Underhill continued his fight against "dirt and disease". He was greatly admired and respected for his sincerity and honesty. He retired in 1930 having served as Vancouver's MHO for 26 years. He died on April 17, 1936. It is estimated the flu took the lives of approximately 4,400 British Columbians. One positive outcome was the establishment of Canada's federal health department, later Health Canada to meet the need for preventative health care and the coordination of public health.

The authors are to be congratulated on writing such a heart rendering story of courage in the face of one of the worst disasters to face the world in modern times. Betty O'Keefe was a newspaper reporter in the 1950's and worked in corporate communications for 15 years. Ian Macdonald also worked in the newspaper business for many years. He also worked in media relations for the prime minister's office and was head of Transport Canada Information. Together they have collaborated on many writing projects including six other books such as the *Merchant Prince* and the *Final Voyage of the Princess Sophia*.

Reviewed by Ethel Warbinek

CAHN CONFERENCE OTTAWA, JUNE 16-19, 2005

The annual meeting of CAHN/ACHN will take place in Ottawa at the Library and Archives of Canada in conjunction with the opening of the Museum of Civilization's exhibit: *Nursing: The Caring Profession*.

There will be an opening reception on June 16th in the evening to celebrate the opening of the exhibit. The theme of the conference will be Nursing History Collections: Technology and Nursing. The second theme, in celebration of the 100th anniversary of The Canadian Nurse, will be The Canadian Nurse and Canadian Nursing.

Keynote speakers are Margarete Sandelowski author of *Devices and Desires: Gender, Technology and American Nursing* (University of North Carolina Press: Chapel Hill, 2000) and Tina Bates, curator of the exhibit.

Abstracts related to the conference themes or other relevant topics on nursing history are welcome. **The deadline for submission of abstracts is before January 21, 2005.** Please contact Judith Young (Judithy@primus.ca) for further information.



RNABC 2005 EVENTS CALENDAR

JANUARY 2005

24 PPG Council

28 Board of Directors meeting

FEBRUARY 2005

1 Registration renewal form deadline

MARCH 2005

02 Deadline for submission of Annual Meeting issues

28 PPG Council Meeting

APRIL 2005

01 Board of Directors Meeting

18 RNABC Awards

18/19 RNABC Annual Meeting

MAY 2005

09-13 National Nurses Week

JUNE 2005

13 PPG Council Meeting

17 Board of Directors Meeting

AUGUST 2005

31 Term of Office completed for 1/2 elected Board of Directors

Donations to the BC History of Nursing Group Funds 2004

During 2004 donations to the BC History of Nursing Chaitable funds totaled \$6,517.31. Of this amount, the monies were distributed as follows: Scholarship Fund - \$805.00, Archival Fund – \$3951.31, General Fund – \$1761.00 Below is a list of the donors and big thank you indeed.

\$1000 and over – Helen Mussallem

\$0 to \$99 – Sandra Foster

\$500 to \$999 – Nina Rumen

J. Frances Sutherland
Sheila Zerr

Audrey Hamaguchi
Yvonne Haney
Freda Hart
Diane Jacquest

\$200 to \$499 – Janet Gormick

Helen Niskala
Glennis Zilm

Margaret Jones
Genelle Leifso

\$100 to \$199 – Ann Sutherland Boal

First Nations PPG
June Newton
Helen Shore
Shirley Stinson
Ethel Warbinek

Linda Lemke
Pricilla Lockwood
Margaret McGowan
Helen McDonald
Faye Meuser
Ruby Middledorp
Naomi Miller

\$0 to \$99 –

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Beth Fitzpatrick

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Heather Neumier
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Sharon Pompu
Nesta Primeau
Royal Jubilee Hospital

Natalie Riegler
Michelle Rooney
Marcia Sandford
Margaret Saunders
Margaret Shugg
Evelyn Vogayeur

Marlene Weeks
XI Delta Chapter
Brenda Yule
Working Well Occ.
Health

NANAIMO – PRESENTATION TO NURSING STUDENTS

Lenore Radom, as a 1905 Royal Jubilee Hospital graduate, Glennis Zilm, as “Mrs Millar” and Sheila Zerr, as Jeanne Manse, travelled to Malaspina University College on January 5, 2005 to present the history of nursing to students and staff. The annual BSN day is organized by 4th year students and consists of a variety of presentations to inform students of nursing program highlights. The historical presentation was based on the content of the history course “Issues in the Social History of Nursing” currently being developed at Malaspina. The major themes of nursing history were illustrated by a portrait doll display. Lenore, Glennis and Sheila gave a detailed explanation of their costumes and the period of history their costume represented. Most encouraging was the enthusiasm for the B.C. history of nursing display. Faculty and students gathered up all the promotional materials about our projects and programs. We express a special thank you to Professor Stephanie Buckingham and the 4th year students for giving us the opportunity to speak to an auditorium full of enthusiastic students and potential history of nursing members.

SUBMITTED BY SHEILA ZERR



*St. Paul's Hospital School of Nursing fonds
at Providence Health Care Archives*

In 1978 Dr. C.E. (Ed) McDonnell, an internist at St. Paul's Hospital with a keen interest in medical history, recognized the importance of preserving the Hospital's history, and organized a meeting with other individuals that shared his passion. With the encouragement of Executive Director Dr. Hugh MacDonald, Shanny Sochowski, an alumnus of the St. Paul's Hospital School of Nursing, presented a proposal to the Hospital's Board of Directors asking for support to develop an Archives. As a result, a small committee chaired by Dr. McDonnell was formed to begin the process of planning an Archives.

After several committee meetings, the St. Paul's Hospital Archives was founded in 1979, funded almost entirely by the Hospital's Medical Advisory Committee, with some funds provided by the School of Nursing Alumnae Association. These groups continued to provide funding until St. Paul's assumed that responsibility in 1984. The space for the Archives was provided by St. Paul's and for the first few years accumulated archival material was stored in the basement of the Burrard Building. When the operating theatres were relocated to the new Providence Building in 1983, the Archives was established in the former doctor's lounge on the sixth floor of the Comox Building. After two subsequent moves, the Archives, now responsible for all Providence Health Care sites, is currently located on the third floor of the Comox Building, the former School of Nursing residence.

The Archives was staffed entirely by volunteers for many years. From 1979 until 1996, Robert Gregory, retired Manager of Stores, was Archivist. He was responsible for "rescuing" much of the oldest material in the Archives' collection, including the earliest Board and Medical Advisory Committee minutes; early handwritten patient and financial registers; administrative records; original photographs; and artifacts, including many pieces of medical equipment illustrating the evolution of medical practice throughout the Hospital's existence.

Due to its close association with the School of Nursing Alumnae, the Archives assumed custody of the School's archives. The St. Paul's Hospital Training School for Nurses was established in 1907; Sister Hermyle was the first Superintendent. Fourteen young women between the ages of twenty and thirty were accepted the first year into a three-year training program involving both practical experience and lectures. The students originally resided on the top floor of Hospital, and received room, board, and seven dollars per month in return for nursing services performed as part of their training. Students had one free hour per day and one afternoon off per week; their uniform was blue with white stripes, with white apron, collar and cuffs. In 1908, a two-story building was erected at the rear of the Hospital. The second floor became the new nursing residence, complete with twelve bedrooms, one bathroom, a recreation room, and a utility room.

Graduation exercises were held October 20, 1910 at Lester Court, at the intersection of Granville and Davie streets, for eleven members of the School's original class. The Archives' collection includes the diploma of Gertrude Jenkins, the top student in the graduating class; printed on vellum, the diploma bears the signature of St. Paul's first doctor-in-residence, Dr. H.B. Gourlay, whom Jenkins later married.

In 1915 nearly one hundred students were enrolled in the School, and the nurses' residence had expanded into the first floor and the attic of the 1908 building. The Nurses' Home was expanded in 1921 to provide more accommodations and lecture space. In 1930 the School's name was changed to "St. Paul's Hospital School of Nursing," and on May 12th, 1931 a new Nurses' Home was officially opened at 1056 Comox Street. With a capacity for 200 students, the building also included a library, classrooms, and recreational spaces. Additions were made to the residence in 1940 and 1955, and the building continues to exist today as the Comox Building.

In May 1957, the School celebrated its Fiftieth Anniversary with three days of events; more than four hundred alumnae attended, including two graduates from the 1910 class. After successfully training 3,881 nurses, the School was closed permanently in 1974,

The School of Nursing material held by the Archives includes photographs; official student records, transcripts, course material, and annuals; graduation invitations and programmes; and graduating class composites and diplomas from 1910 until 1974. Among the artifacts obtained from former students are uniforms, including caps and capes; graduation pins, dating from 1915 onwards; and small medical instruments.

In 2004 Providence Health Care Archives celebrated the 25th anniversary of its founding at St. Paul's Hospital. The Archives continues to receive donations from former students and their families, adding to our understanding of the School and the women and men who trained at St. Paul's.



First class, 1907

Article submitted by Melanie Hardbottle, Archivist for St. Paul's Hospital and the History of Nursing Professional Practice Group.

Tall at UBC Site



Remember the "Four Sisters on the Medical-Dental building in downtown Vancouver, well they have surfaced after fourteen years. Three of them now stand tall mounted on the new Technology Enterprise Facility III at UBC. The UBC School of Nursing has opened an office in this building on the 3rd floor. There is some discussion whether these statues are the original ones and more searching, to determine if they are, is under way.

A BIG THANK YOU IS IN ORDER FOR NAOMI MILLER

Naomi Miller was instrumental in alerting the BC History of Nursing Group about the closure of the Victoria Costume Museum in Victoria. Due to lack of funding the museum in Victoria was not able to maintain its collection. Consequently our group obtain several nurses uniforms from several BC Hospitals, military uniform from WWII and a wonderful uniform worn by the Queen Alexandras Military Services Uniform. It is not in good shape but the good news is it is all there and a replica could easily be made using it as a pattern, adding another costume for wearing at events. If it was not for Naomi's foresight we might not have these treasure. I want thank Gwen Spearman from the Victoria museum as she packages the uniforms beautifully and delivered right to my door. Glennis Zilm, Ethel Warbinek and Lois Blais checked the three boxes and the uniforms are now housed in our UBC Archives office.

The Canadiana Costume Museum and Archives of British Columbia was founded in February 1974 by a dedicated group of men and women. Our aim was to collect and preserve garments and related accessories of the past that were worn by men, women, children and infants in Canada and in their homelands.

The long range goal was to obtain a museum building that could be used to exhibit these treasures.

This non-profit registered society has evolved over the years and we have made many moves to obtain suitable larger storage and restoration space. The collection grew in scope and size. Over the last few years our costs for rental space and basic utilities alone topped \$3,000 per month. With an aging membership and serious cuts in any available funding we found ourselves in an awkward position by 2004. We were allotted bridging funding to allow us to exist until at least February 2005. This gave us a wee bit of breathing space and the opportunity to do more serious fund raising.

In order to carry on through this year we have had to downsize the collection by half and we will have to move the collection into half the storage space that we had. As a result our costs will come down a bit but financial donations are what we are definitely in need of at the present time.

We were pleased to be able to transfer some of the articles relating to nurses in British Columbia to your organization and know that they will be treasured still. Similar transfers of specialized garments have been offered to other facilities across Canada.

Our current membership doesn't want to give up on our organization and we would love to carry on with the specialized tasks that we are capable of. We do need more members who would be interested in tackling the fund raising aspects of an organization and who have the vim and vigour of making it a viable entity for another 30 years.

Gwen Spearman, Founding member & Past President

BOOK REVIEW

Healing in the Wilderness: A history of the United Church Mission Hospitals, by Bob Burrows, Harbour Publishing, Madeira Park BC, 2004, 240pp.

Available at commercial bookstores and BC Conference Archives, #9-4615 West 10th Ave., Vancouver BC V6R 2J3. Phone: (604) 224-5162, Fax: (604) 224-5163, email: bstewart@bc.united-church.ca

This is a compelling story of the United Church's 115 year-long-commitment to rural and isolated communities across Canada. As Peter Newberry, former Director of United Church Health Services, states "it is a frontier story of amazing individual effort, adventure and generosity of a team of people dispersed across Canada joining to meet health care needs. It is also a contemporary story of the roots of our health-care system. Physicians working with United Church Health Services have made key contributions to rural training of medical students and family doctors, to pre-medicare insurance programs and to many other significant areas of reinforcement for health care that we now take for granted."

The book is organized into five chapters describing 25 year periods of the growth of health care in the remote areas of BC, Alberta, Saskatchewan, Manitoba, Ontario, and Newfoundland.

Within each chapter, some of the great medical pioneers are profiled and amusing anecdotes related. Many photographs, some never published before, supplement the text.

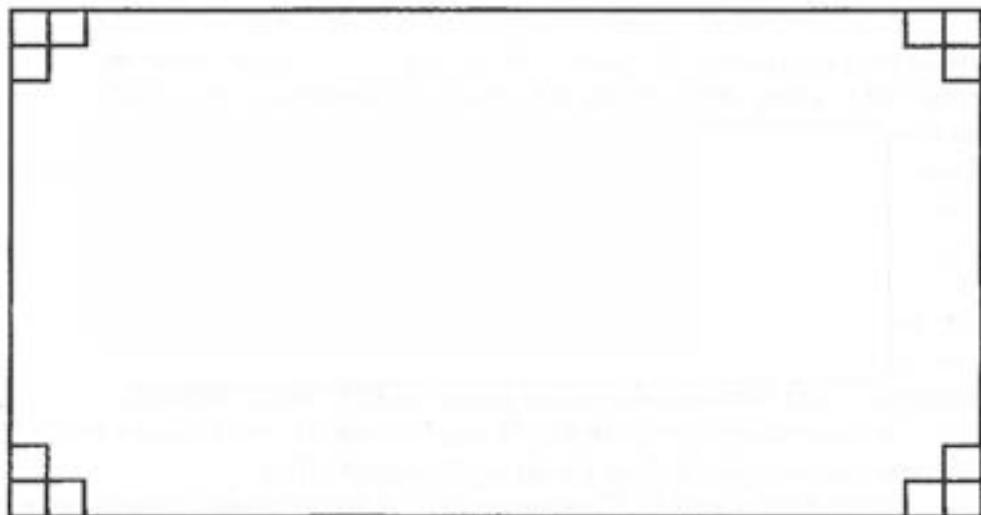
As a United Church Minister, the author knew several mission hospitals personally as missionary/captain of the *Thomas Crosby IV*, the United Church's mission boat and later as a federal social development officer.

At the recent RNABC Leader's Conference, one of the delegates proudly pointed out her image in the picture of the Hazelton staff on page 172. In fact, there are pictures and names of nurses known by many of the RNABC members.

This book is well worth reading.

Reviewed by Kathy Murphy.

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



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