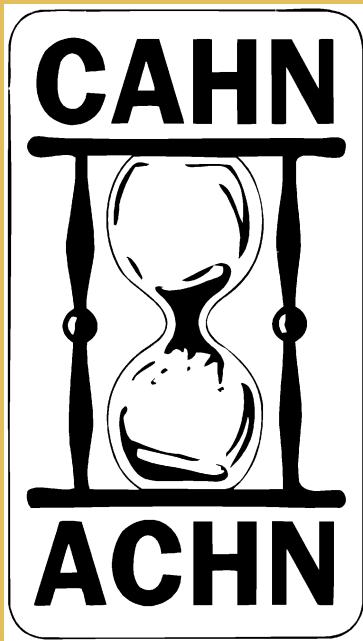


Canadian Association for the History of Nursing Association canadienne pour l'histoire du nursing

President's Message – Dr. Beverley Hicks



This will be my last address through the newsletter and it is customary to review what has been achieved and what is still to be done for CAHN. It seems in balance that there is still a great deal to do to build and strengthen the organization but I am confident that the incoming executive will continue to take CAHN into the future.

We have maintained a cordial relationship with CNA, and strengthened the relationship with the Canadian Nurses Foundation through conversations with Cynthia Toman. I am hopeful that a greater appreciation of the place of nursing history research in academia, and hence funding bodies, will be fostered.

Membership remains a concern, despite the fact that a record number of papers have been submitted for the conference, somehow this interest has not translated into ongoing membership in CAHN. This continuing interest in the history of nursing and health care should be a source of new members. The treasurer, Chris Dooley, who did an extensive analysis of the financial picture over the last three years, has cautioned that declining membership has reduced one of our sources of income.

Our conference planning is coming along nicely, but there are still conversations to be held with the Canadian Society for the History of Medicine in regards to our relationship. The "in place" Memorandum of Cooperation has

been extremely helpful in planning joint conferences. The relationship that has developed and been fostered by members of both groups working together has been beneficial, not just in joint conference years, but overall. This well-laid ground work will sustain us as both organizations move forward, continue to work together, and examine common issues such as research funding and changing membership.

The Newsletter, thanks to the young and creative editorial board, has taken on a new appearance and continues to be a source of information and interest.

The publishing of the history of CNA, to which Jayne Elliot contributed significantly, will be available online in late 2013. We hope it will be launched at the 2014 conference.

Ongoing and new initiatives are never the work of any one person, but of a team. It is the work done in the background that keeps most organizations going and I want to thank all members of the board for their ongoing commitment and dedication. I welcome the new executive and know they will continue to promote the goals of CAHN.



Inside this Issue:

- *Nursing History News*.....p.2
- *Scholarships and Awards*.....p.5
- *Nursing History Travelogue*.....p.6
- *CSHM/CAHN 2013 Poster*.....p.12
- *New Publications*.....p.13
- *Nursing History Stories*.....p.15

**Dr. Beverly DuGas
1923-2012**

It is with great sadness that we announce that Beverly passed away on November 22, 2012. Beverly was born in Vancouver and, although she worked in many different places, she remained a proud Vancouverite. Her academic career was stellar. She graduated from John Oliver High School at age 16 with the highest marks in the province. She is a graduate of both UBC and the Vancouver General Hospital School of Nursing and obtained her Master's degree from the University of Washington. Beverly travelled the globe working as a nurse educator for WHO, PAHO and other organizations. She was particularly proud of her work in pioneering distance education for nurses, both in Canada and abroad. Beverly obtained her Doctorate in Adult Education in 1969 from UBC. She was subsequently awarded the Order of British Columbia, the Order of Canada and the Queen's Jubilee Medal. Beverly was head of the nursing school at VGH for many years and loved to tell stories about her experiences there. She was an accomplished author of nursing textbooks and, after her first stroke, self-published two books full of entertaining accounts of her travels and experiences. She was an inspiration to countless nurses as well as to her vast network of friends around the world and, most of all, to her family. In lieu of flowers, donations to St. Faith's Church or the UBC School of Nursing Scholarship Fund would be appreciated.

***CANADIAN
NURSING HISTORY
NEWS***

**Dr. Helen Kathleen Mussallem
1914- 2012**

Dr. Helen Kathleen Mussallem died peacefully at the Ottawa Hospital Civic Campus on Wednesday November 9th, 2012 in her 98th year. She led CNA as its executive director from 1963 to 1981, a time of tremendous growth for the organization. Across a stellar international career she would become one of the most compelling and influential figures in Canada's nursing history, and is still Canada's most decorated nurse. In lieu of flowers, memorial contributions to the Canadian Nurses Foundation would be appreciated by the family.

For more about Dr. Mussallem's life and career see:
<http://www.theglobeandmail.com/news/national/helen-mussallem-was-a-decorated-celebrated-altruistic-activist/article5633553/>

News from the Nursing History Research Unit / l'Unité de recherche sur l'histoire des soins infirmiers Ottawa

*University of Ottawa, School of Nursing
Jayne Elliot*

The Nursing History Research Unit announces an annual scholarship of \$10,000 (maximum) for PhD, MScN, or MA students, who want to undertake a thesis project using historical perspectives of nursing and/or health, (see page 6 for more details).

Three undergraduate students in nursing are also taking advantage of the Unit's \$1000 "initiation into research" awards. These students will spend 50 hours each working closely with Unit professors, Marie-Claude Thifault, Brandi Vanderspank-Wright and Thomas Foth, on projects designed to expose them to basic methods of historical research. Students who wish to continue will be helped to apply for summer research scholarships offered by the University of Ottawa.

Marie-Claude Thifault, principal investigator, and two co-investigators, Isabelle Perreault and Marie LeBel (Hearst University) have won a 3-year CIHR grant for a research project entitled "Déhospitalisation psychiatrique et acces aux services de santé mentale. Regards croisés Ontario-Québec, 1950-2012."

Thomas Foth's new book, *Caring and Killing: Nursing and Psychiatric Practice in Germany, 1931-1943* (Germany, V&R Unipress) has just been published. This book, a revised version of his doctoral thesis, highlights the mechanisms and scientific discourses in place that allowed nurses to perceive patients as unworthy of life. (cont'd on p.4)

Jaime Lapeyre has successfully defended her doctoral thesis, "The Idea of Better Nursing": The American Battle for Control over Standards of Nursing Education in Europe, 1928-1925," on 5 April 2013. Jaime is currently on maternity leave but will also be going to the conference in Victoria, where she will be presenting at the CHA.



Isabelle Perreault and Thomas Foth presented their current research at Nursing Research Rounds in February. On 12 April 2013, the Unit is sponsoring a seminar with Karen Flynn, from the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, who will give a talk entitled "Defying Expectations: Black Nurses, Education, Training, and Work in Canada." En mai, Marie-Claude Thifault et Isabelle Perreault présenteront une communication orale intitulée « La méthode historique en sciences infirmières et son application dans le champ de la santé mentale » dans le cadre de l'ACFAS 2013 au colloque « Théorie, science et pratique infirmière : rétrospectives et nouveaux horizons ». Throughout April and May, the unit is holding "internal" seminars so that all members can present their research to each other in preparation for the joint CSHM/CAHN conference in Victoria this coming June.



Nursing History Research Update

University of British Columbia, School of Nursing
Nerrisa Bonifacio

PhD student Nerrisa Bonifacio is undertaking a doctoral research project exploring the historical roots of Psychosocial Rehabilitation. Psychosocial rehabilitation, also known as PSR is a model of care used to promote individuals with mental illness the ability to achieve personal independence; become active members in their communities; and to improve their overall quality of life. PSR emerged due to the process of deinstitutionalization that occurred in Canada during the 1960s and 1970s. Core principles of PSR were adopted in British Columbia (BC) sometime in the early to mid-1980s and has grown to be one of the leading models of care, not only in the area of mental health, but also for drug and alcohol addictions.

The purpose of this study is to explore the historical roots of PSR in BC, specifically focusing on the cities of Coquitlam and New Westminster. These two cities have been chosen because of their long-standing psychiatric history with Riverview Hospital. Riverview, also known as Essondale, was the primary psychiatric facility in BC, which at its peak in 1951 housed up to 4630 patients. To date, there has been little historical documentation on the adoption and integration of PSR in BC. Therefore, the history of how PSR emerged in the 1980s is imperative to examine how this practice has shaped, influenced and informed psychiatric care in BC over the past several decades.

Agnes Dillon Randolph International Nursing History Conference 2013

The 2nd annual Agnes Dillon Randolph International Nursing History Conference was held in Charlottesville, Virginia March 15-16, 2013. A variety of nursing history presentations were given by researchers from around the world. Dr. Barbara Brodie provided the Key Note Address on Chicago's Maternity Centre. There were presentations on global nursing, maternal-child care, nursing education, missionary history, public health, nursing in Asia and many others. Dr. Geertje Boschma from the University of British Columbia presented her work on nursing professional identity and community mental health history. Dr. Susan Armstrong-Reid presented work on nursing with the China Convoy, 1941-1951. The conference hosts provided an excellent platform to share and recognize nursing history scholarship worldwide.

For more details about the annual conference visit the [Eleanor Crowder Bjoring Center for Nursing Historical Inquiry](#) website. They have an amazing [photograph collection](#) as well as an online collection of materials about [public health nursing in Mississippi during the 1930's](#).

Canadian Nursing Collections Online

- [Canadian Nursing History Collection Online](#)
- [Nursing History Digitization project \(Nova Scotia\)](#)
- [VGH School of Nursing Alumnae Association photos](#)
- [Canadian Nurse Archives 1905-1980](#)
- [BC History of Nursing Society \(biographies and oral histories online\)](#)

Historical Walking Tour: The History of Health Care in Victoria BC, June 3, 2013, 3:00PM CAHN Conference Event

Victoria is British Columbia's oldest major city and has a long history of health care. In a 90-minute walk that spans Old Town and Chinatown the tour will discuss First Nations medicine, visit Helmcken House, point out the sites of some of the province's oldest hospitals, go to the site of Dr. Helmcken's office, pass by the sites of several pioneer drug stores, visit a Chinese herbalist shop, and discuss the first Chinese Hospital of the mid-1880s. This tour is led by prominent Victoria historian John Adams.

For more details visit: <http://cahn-achn.ca/annual-conference/>

Cost: \$20.00 cash on arrival at the tour.

Location: Royal Victoria Museum

Registration required: Please contact Margaret Scaia at mrscaia@uvic.ca or 250-598-9994 for further information or to register.

Want to share news from your nursing history organization? Please contact the Newsletter Team!

Every year the CAHN/ACHN awards two major financial awards:

- The **Margaret M. Allemang Scholarship** for graduate students (Masters or PhD level) who are studying in the field of nursing history
- The **Vera Roberts Award** for historians of nursing (academic or independent) who are working on Canadian nursing history focused on the region north of the 60th parallel.

Applications and further details about these and other awards can be found on the CAHN/ACHN website: <http://cahn-achn.ca/awards/>

The deadline to apply for both awards is early February 2014.

CAHN-ACHN SCHOLARSHIPS AND AWARDS

NEW SCHOLARSHIP OPPORTUNITY

The Nursing History Research Unit announces an annual scholarship of \$10,000 (maximum) for PhD, MScN, or MA students, who want to undertake a thesis project using historical perspectives of nursing and/or health, broadly defined. Students must be registered fulltime in a graduate program in the Faculty of Health Sciences, History, or Women's Studies at the University of Ottawa, and MScN and MA students must be in the second year of their program to qualify. The successful applicant will be notified late spring and will take up the award the following fall. Award winners may re-apply each year but are not guaranteed funding.

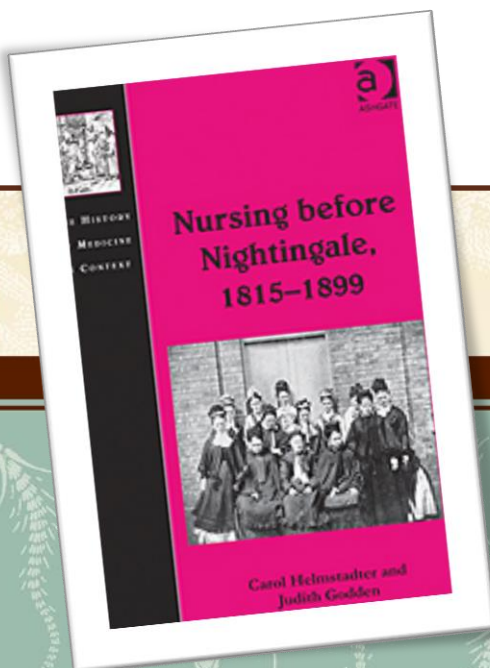
The application form must be submitted electronically to Jayne Elliott (jelliott@uottawa.ca), Research Facilitator of the Nursing History Research Unit, by 1 May of the year for which the award is requested.

For full details visit: <http://cahn-achn.ca/scholarship-opportunity-nursing-history-research-unit-bourse-detudes-de-lunite-de-recherche-sur-lhistoire-des-soins-infirmiers/>

American Association for the History of Nursing 2012 Research and Writing Awards

At the 29th annual conference, in Savannah, Georgia, the American Association for the History of Nursing awarded four awards to members for their outstanding scholarship. The distinguished Teresa E. Christy Award for Exemplary Historical Research and Writing in a dissertation was awarded to Annemarie McAllister for her *R. Louise McManus and Mildred Montage Create the Associate Degree Model for the Education of Nurses: The Right Leaders, The Right Time, the Right Place 1947-1959*. Dr. McAllister studied the creation of a new model of nursing education - the community college associated degree in nursing. This program proved so successful that it quickly replaced the traditional way of training student nurses in hospital schools of nursing. Dr. McAllister is a practice manager in a busy cardiology office and a part-time instructor at Pace University School of Nursing.

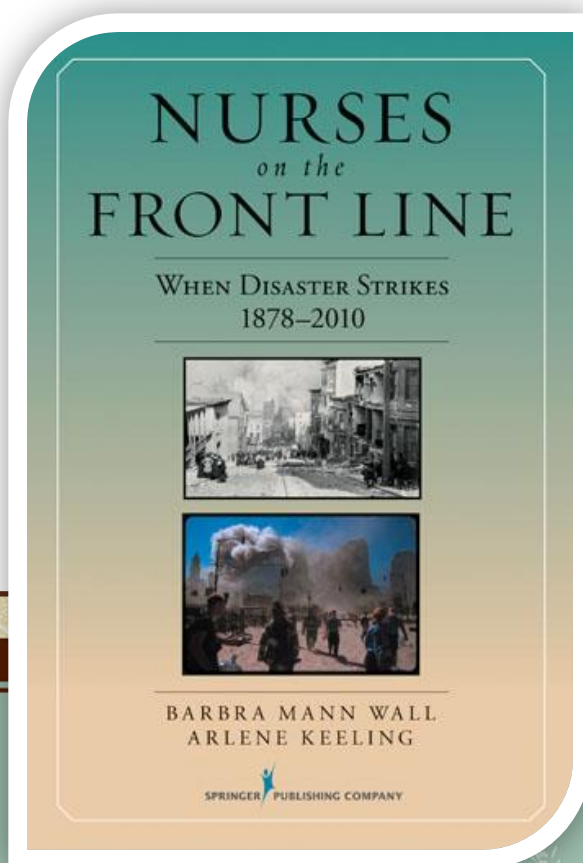
The Lavinia L. Dock Award for Exemplary Historical Research and Writing in a book was awarded to Carol Helmstadter and Judith Godden for their work *Nursing Before Nightingale: 1850 – 1899* published by Ashgate Publishing Limited. In it Helmstadter and Godden explore the practice of nurses in the early nineteenth century prior to Nightingale's founding of the famous St. Thomas Hospital's School of Nursing. Focusing on the activities of English Anglican sisters beginning in 1815, the authors' document the many contributions the sisters made in transforming nurses/nursing from ignorant and indifferent women to intelligent and competent nurses. In doing this, the researchers have dispelled many of the myths that have cast Nightingale as the sole creator of modern professional nursing. Carol Helmstadter, formerly Adjunct Assistant Professor at the Faculty of Nursing, University of Toronto publishes on nursing in the nineteenth century. Judith Godden, formerly Senior Lecturer in the School of Public Health at the University of Sydney and Honorary Associate of the Department of History is a professional historian specializing in the history of medicine. (con't on page 8)



Detailed information regarding all AAHN Awards including when submissions are due for the 2013 awards can be obtained from the web site: www/aahn.org

The Mary Adelaide Nutting Award for Exemplary Historical Research and Writing in an article was awarded to Cynthia Connolly, Janet Golden and Benjamin Schneider for their work in “A *Startling New Chemotherapeutic Agent*”: Pediatric Infectious Disease and the Introduction of Sulfonamides at Baltimore’s Sydenham Hospital published in the **Bulletin of the History of Medicine** (86, 1, 2012 66-93). This article creatively examined the intertwining of medicine, therapeutic pharmacology and the nursing of children when sulfonamides were first used in the treatment of infections. The researchers’ deft use of the children’s charts aided readers’ understanding of how the efficiency of the drug was established and why it became the standard for future studies on penicillin when it was introduced. Cynthia Connolly is an Associate Professor in the School of Nursing University of Pennsylvania, Janet Golden is a Professor of History at Rutgers University, and Benjamin Schneider is history doctoral student at the University of Pennsylvania.

The AAHN’s fourth award, the Mary M. Roberts Award recognizes the exemplary talents of nurse historians to create a book of edited readings that focus on pertinent nursing issues and events. Barbra Mann Wall and Arlene Keeling’s book *Nurses on the Front Line. When Disaster Strikes 1878 – 2010* was selected for the award. The articles selected for the book covers a wide range of disasters including a hurricane, mine explosion, night club fire, earthquake and the 1917 flu epidemic. The disasters reveal both the advances in medicine that allowed nurses and physicians to better manage the medical needs of victims and the courage of these professionals to work in dangerous and chaotic conditions. Barbra Mann Wall is an Associate Professor in the School of Nursing University of Pennsylvania and Arlene Keeling is a Professor in the School of Nursing University of Virginia.





My Travelogue of Two Canadian Historic Sites Honoring Nurses

Joyce MacQueen

In early 20th century Canada, health was seen as the responsibility of the individual rather than government. Gradually provincial governments developed health programs to meet needs that were beyond the scope of individual initiative. Thanks to Meryn Stuart, most of us know about the project in Ontario in the early 1920s to send out nurses prepared in public health to combat the high rate of maternal/child morbidity. These nurses were intended to be a “demonstration” of public health nursing. They were sent to an area that had medical doctors; they were there for a different purpose, that of health education particularly of mothers. They were limited in the interventions they could carry out because, as new health care workers, they could not encroach on any perceived medical professional boundaries. They worked in a town or district for a limited period of time when it was hoped that the local health board would carry on the practice by hiring a public health nurse. No one in Sudbury remembers Alice Linton, the bilingual public health nurse sent out on that project. This summer I had the privilege of visiting historic nursing sites in two other provinces, Quebec and Newfoundland, which demonstrate a totally different approach during the 1920s and 30s. When nurses are sent to areas without medical doctors and given a broad mandate and live in the community for years they *are* remembered and commemorated.

Dispensaire de la Garde at La Corne, Quebec (La Corne Nursing Station)

In response to the depression of the 1930s, the Quebec government’s newly-formed *Service medical aux colons* (SMC) hired nurses to provide care in rural areas without doctors. Their mandate was to promote the public health, monitor contagious disease, caring for the poor, deliver babies, extract teeth, prescribe medicine, perform minor surgery and provide emergency care. Nurse Gertrude Duchemin was hired in 1936 to provide care in La Corne and the surrounding area. In 1940, they built the dispensary-residence that is now open as a national historic site. Duchemin lived there and ran the dispensary until her retirement in 1976. This marked the close of the dispensary. She continued to live in the house in her retirement and bequeathed “an ethnological collection directly associated with the site’s history” to the corporation setting up the historic site. This site is, therefore, particularly appropriate to commemorate these rural nurses. (con’t on page 10)

Joyce MacQueen is a retired nursing educator from Laurentian University. Her work primarily focuses on Florence Nightingale, though she also spearheaded a nursing oral history project in Sudbury through the Laurentian University Archives.

La Corne is located just north of Val-D'Or and South of Amos on Highway 111. The dispensary is open to the public from late June until early September. It is set up to show the history of La Corne, the development of rural health services and the Quebec health system, and particularly the work of the dispensary nurse and her private life. This information is displayed and provided only in French, however the curator provided me with some materials in English.

The tour of this site begins in the porch. Here the early colonial years in Abitibi-Temiscamingue are shown in old sepia photos and large panels describing the history. Through the porch is the waiting room, followed by the nurse's office and examination room. The glass-door cupboards are filled with medical equipment which illustrates the procedures that this nurse carried out – delivering babies, pulling teeth, suturing injuries. On her desk is a large tin package of cigarettes; she was a chain smoker.

The living room, kitchen and family room picture her private life. The kitchen focuses on the role of women in the 1960s. The family room has three life-size papier mâché figures of a 1980s reunion of rural nurses. The hallway exhibits the beginning of the rural health services and the garage (which we did not see) shows the development of the Quebec health system. Of course, there is a small area for purchase of souvenirs including a DVD *Lieu Historique National du Canada: Le Dispensaire de la Garde vous accueille*.

Nurse Myra Bennett House (Daniel's Harbour, Newfoundland)

Nurse Bennett, then Myra Grimsley, arrived in Daniel's Harbour, on Newfoundland's Great Northern Peninsula, from England in 1921. She was an experienced 29 year old nurse/midwife and spent the next 50 years or so as the only medical person on a great expanse of this isolated coast.

Today there is a good highway through Gros Morne National Park and North along the coast to Daniel's Harbour and beyond, but in the 1920s there was no road. The only way into the area was by boat, otherwise residents travelled however they could, on foot or by horse or dogsled.

Myra Grimsley had originally planned to go to Canada's North, encouraged by Lady Grey, the wife of Canada's Governor General. However, travel to Canada was delayed because boats were filled with military personal, war brides and their children. So, Lady Grey conferred with Lady Harris, wife of Newfoundland's Governor General, and they decided that Myra would go to Newfoundland instead. (con't on page 11)



Nurse Myra Bennett



The Bennett House

Nurse Grimsley arrived in Daniel's Harbour in the spring of 1921 with a promised salary of \$1000 per year and a two year contract. Before long, funding for the project became limited and Myra was paid less than the promised amount. She also fell in love with Angus Bennett and decided to break her contract and marry in January 1922. Nonetheless, she never quit her work, though her only remuneration was from those patients who were able to pay a small fee. From then on Angus, in addition to being a fisherman and shopkeeper, became Myra's assistant and her work had priority. They were known as 'The Nurse and Angus.' They had three children and whenever Myra was called away, Angus took over the household, or if Angus was also needed, someone else looked after the children.

Angus built the house that would become the nursing clinic, and later build an addition for the clinic itself. This building is now a Newfoundland Heritage House open to the public. When you visit the house you realize how isolated the whole area was without any road and why Myra Bennett was such a strong supporter of Joey Smallwood, who brought Newfoundland into confederation and built the road into Daniel's Harbour.

We visited the Bennett House last summer. It is furnished as it was when the Bennetts lived there, and Myra's medical instruments are on display in the clinic. Two university students were receptionists for the Bennett House and answered questions as far as they were able. It was interesting to see the house and think what it would have been like 90 years earlier. The best information, including the information in this article, comes from Nurse Bennett's own words published in 2012: [My Story: by Nurse Myra Bennett, The Nightingale of the North \(DRC Publications, St John's, 2012\)](#). Nurse Bennett lived to be 100, long enough to receive many honours, including the Order of Canada, for her work.

As Canada's population is clustered along its southern border, huge areas of the North remain sparsely settled and underserved. Nurses in Canada have a long tradition of working in these remote areas, and bringing much needed care and knowledge to people living there. Vera Roberts is a more recent example of this and, though no building commemorates her, she also received the Order of Canada and her work is on-going in the research grant that she established through CAHN. It is also, however, satisfying to see nurse residence/clinics recognized as historic sites recalling the nursing that was given to isolated populations in Canada.

For further details about the dispensary house please visit:

<http://www.dispensairedelagarde.com/>

For further details on the Bennett House please visit:

• <http://www.nursebennett.ca/>



Making a trip to a historic site of significance to nursing history? Please contact the newsletter team and tell us about your travels!

2013 CSHM/CAHN Annual Conference 2013 Congrès annuel de la SCHM / ACHN

CSHM
SCHM



CSHM / CAHN Joint Conference

June 1 - 3, 2013 | University of Victoria

CONGRESS 2013 @ THE
OF THE HUMANITIES AND SOCIAL SCIENCES | EDGE



June 1-8, 2013 | University of Victoria

Featuring

Hannah Lecturer: Barbra Mann Wall, University of Pennsylvania, School of Nursing

Paterson Lecturer: Nayan Shah, University of Southern California, Professor of American Studies and Ethnicity

To register and for more information visit <http://www.ideas-ideas.ca/register> or follow the QR code above.

Nursing Costume Parade

Maltwood Gallery, MacPherson Library

May 31, 2013 | 5:00 pm

This live fashion show of nursing uniforms will be annotated with slides and presentation related to the social and historical context of the uniforms. This event is free and open to all Congress delegates.

Medical History Walking Tour

Lead by Historian John Adams

June 3, 2013 | 3:00 pm

Location: Meet at the entrance to the Royal Victoria Museum, Belville Street entrance.

Cost: \$20.00 on arrival at the tour. \$10.00 of the cost of tour will go to a scholarship award for a graduating student in the UVic Post RN BSN Diploma Program.

Registration required. Please contact Margaret Scaia at mrscaia@uvic.ca or 250-598-9994 for further information or to register.

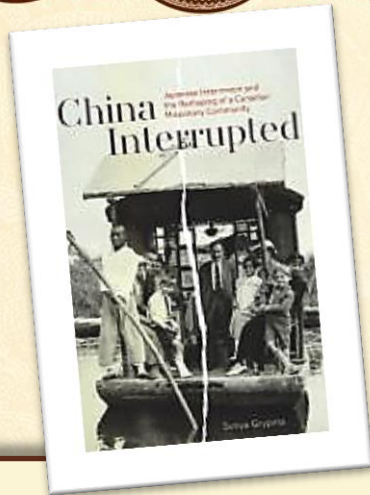


University
of Victoria



For further details please visit:

<http://cshm-schm.ca/annual-conference-conference-annuelle/>



China Interrupted: Japanese Internment and the Reshaping of a Canadian Missionary Community
Sonya Grypma

China Interrupted is the story of the richly interwoven lives of Canadian missionaries and their China-born children (*mishkids*), whose lives and mission were irreversibly altered by their internment as “enemy aliens” of Japan from 1941 to 1945.

The book provides insight into the many ways in which health care efforts in wartime China extended out of the tight-knit missionary community that had been established there decades earlier. Urging readers past a thesis of missions as a tool of imperialism, it offers a more nuanced way of thinking about the relationships among people, institutions, and nations during one of the most important intercultural experiments in Canada’s history.

For ordering information and more information about the author:

<http://www.wlupress.wlu.ca/Catalog/grypma.shtml>

NEW NURSING & HEALTH HISTORY PUBLICATIONS



Healing Histories: Stories from Canada’s Indian Hospitals
Laurie Meijer Drees

This is the first detailed collection of Aboriginal perspectives on the history of tuberculosis in Canada's indigenous communities and on the federal government's Indian Health Services. Featuring oral accounts from patients, families, and workers who experienced Canada's Indian Hospital System, it presents a fresh perspective on health care history that includes the diverse voices and insights of the many people affected by tuberculosis and its treatment in the mid-twentieth century.

For ordering information and more information about the author:

<http://www.uap.ualberta.ca/UAP.asp?LID=41&bookID=1035>



A Cultural History of the Nurse's Uniform

Christina Bates

This first and only in-depth analysis of the attire worn by the largest workforce in the health care system explores the role of the nurse's uniform in creating nursing identity for over a hundred years.

For ordering information and more information about the author:

<http://cahn-achn.ca/wp-content/uploads/2013/01/English-low-res2.pdf>

ROOTED IN THE MOUNTAINS, REACHING TO THE WORLD

STORIES OF NURSING AND MIDWIFERY AT
KENTUCKY'S FRONTIER SCHOOL, 1939-1989



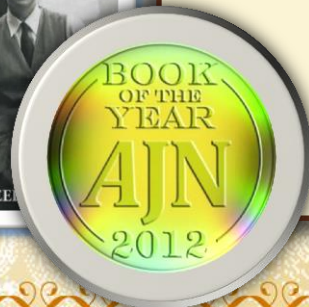
Rooted in the Mountains, Reaching to the World: Stories of Nursing and Midwifery at Kentucky's Frontier School, 1939-1989

Anne Cockerham & Arlene Keeling

The American Journal of Nursing has named this the Book of the Year in the category of public interest and creative works. The book highlights the work and offers a host of iconic images from the Frontier Nursing Service, founded in 1925. It chronicles the endeavors of rural nurse-midwives, who traveled by horse and on foot to the furthest reaches of the wilderness to deliver babies, offer vaccinations and provide health care to families – and often their animals, too.

For ordering information and more information about the author:

<http://www.butlerbooks.com/frontiernursing.html>



Nursing History Stories

From the Farms to the Far East: Nurse Missionary and Leader Margaret May Prentice

*University of British Columbia, School of Nursing
Jennifer Stephens, PhD Student*

Margaret May Prentice was born in the United States in 1892, to farmers in rural Yuma County in Northeastern Colorado. Her upbringing amongst wheat fields and cattle ranches in small town Americana was about as far away from the Asian orient as one could get. However, Margaret knew since she was 10 that she wanted to be a nurse in China. "Maggie" was the fifth of nine children. As a teenager graduating from Missionary Sunday School, she bluntly asked her father, "Do you think you could spare one of your nine children for work in China?"¹ He stumbled on his response, but eventually relented.

Margaret trained at the Colorado Teacher's College in Denver, after which she taught in rural schools for six years. She was accepted for study at the Chicago Training School for City, Home, and Foreign Missions.² After graduating with a Bachelor of Religious Services (BRS), she applied for nurse training at the Wesley Memorial Hospital School of Nursing (Chicago, IL).³

In 1924, Margaret was appointed by the Women's Foreign Missionary Society of the Methodist Church to work at the Isabella Fisher Hospital in Tientsin, North China. When she first traveled to Tientsin, China was deeply immersed in both internal and external strife due to the growing influence of Communism. Margaret was warned that she had to learn Mandarin as quickly as possible, not only for her success, but also for her safety. She dedicated 3 years as a general duty nurse, working her off-duty hours at the Peking Language School. While at this school, Margaret became close friends with several influential Chinese nursing leaders, including Faye Whiteside, Vera Nieh, and Chu-ke Wen-P'ing.

Missionary nurses, like Margaret, influenced formal nursing training in China. The Nurses' Association of China (NAC) formalized in 1915,⁴ with structures and procedures often supplied by missionary nurses.⁵ Indeed, most nurses in 1920's China were missionaries, with an estimated 700 in 1927.⁶ (con't on page 16)



Margaret May Prentice 1930s

Did You Know?

Peking Union Medical College was founded in Peking, or what is now Beijing, in 1906. The College was the result of an international collaborative between the Chinese government and several organizations including the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions, the Board of Foreign Missions of the Presbyterian Church, The London Missionary Society, and the Board of Foreign Missions of the Methodist Episcopal Church, The Society for the Propagation of the Gospel, and the Medical Missionary Association of London. The Rockefeller Foundation assumed financial control of the College in 1921.

Do you have a Nursing History Story that you would like to share? Please contact the newsletter team!

The Isabella Fisher Hospital School of Nursing became number 28 on the list of Chinese nursing schools shortly before Margaret's arrival.⁷ Margaret worked closely with several other Methodist nurses, and several Chinese nurses, to advance nursing protocol and training at the Isabella Fisher where she served as Superintendent of the School of Nursing there from 1926 to 1930 and 1931-1934.⁸

In 1934, Margaret became the Superintendent of the Hospital, a post which she cherished and enjoyed fully until 1937 when Tientsin fell under the control of the Japanese during World War II. She was forced to leave the country along with Chu-ke Wen-P'ing, and traveled to Russia, Great Britain, and the United States where the two received additional training in administration and nursing. The two friends spoke on the status of nursing in China at the July 1937 International Conference of Nurses in London.⁹ In 1938, Margaret (now called Miss Pu) returned to Tientsin and the Isabella Fisher Hospital. War between China and Japan had been ongoing for years, and unfortunately the work of professional nurses training was cut-short by the takeover of Tientsin by the Japanese. Margaret, along with all allied citizens in occupied China, was declared a prisoner of Japan. Damage by bombing caused flooding in Tientsin that immersed most of the city under water, and resources such as food, fresh water, and clothing became scarce. Staying at the Isabella Fisher Hospital, Margaret helped to coordinate relief efforts for the Chinese citizens of Tientsin.

Due to her extensive training in both education and nursing, Margaret was involved with the ongoing development of undergraduate nursing curriculum in China since her arrival in 1924. At that time, formal nursing training in China was only a few decades old with the first bachelorette nursing program established at the Peking Union Medical College in 1920.¹¹ Peking Presbyterian Hospital was the clinical portion of the Peking Union Medical College.¹² The hospital was admired for proactive collaboration between Chinese nurses and nurse missionaries in the effort to create one of the finer (if not the finest) nurse education programs in China.¹³

In 1941, Margaret was invited by Miss Vera Nieh, the Superintendent of Nurses at the Peking Presbyterian Hospital, to come and assist in the writing, proctoring, and grading of a standardized nursing exam for the students.¹⁰ This particular instance is described in great detail in Margaret's book *Unwelcome at the Eastern Gate*, and the level of familiarity and congeniality makes it clear that she had been involved with nursing curriculum development, as well as Miss Nieh, for many years. Despite being heavily restricted in her movements within China, Margaret traveled alone from Tientsin to Peking (now Beijing) with help from her Chinese friends who ensured a safe passage. However, once at the hospital Japanese soldiers invaded the exam. Margaret noted in her biographical novel *Unwelcome at the Eastern Gate* that:

One of the students was demonstrating the procedure of ear irrigation to one of the adult-sized Chase dolls, and another student was bandaging the foot of a borrowed patient, when a loud confusion of Japanese voices and heavy boots shattered the quiet of the corridors leading to the demonstration room..... The students turned pale, but otherwise appeared to pay no attention to the soldiers. (85) (con't on page 17)



Thanks to Marilyn Kay Prentice for access to and sharing of Margaret May Prentice artifacts.

Beyond a network of nurses in occupied China, it becomes clear in Margaret's writings that the profession of *nursing* created a cohesive bond between women, between nurses, and between members of the community. This was particularly important during the Second Sino-Japanese War (1937-1945) in which startling numbers of citizens were left wounded, abandoned, and homeless. Margaret was finally imprisoned in a concentration camp by the Japanese in 1942 and forced to leave China in 1943 as part of the American repatriation project.

Despite her love for the people and culture, Margaret was not able to return to China. After returning to the United States and spending some time with family, she was assigned a head nursing post at the Ganta Mission in Liberia. It was there that she lived regularly for many years, penning and typing hundreds of letters and several short booklets on topics ranging from spiritual treatises to advice for teenagers. Interestingly, Margaret advocated for the immigration of Chinese nurses, many of whom were her former students, to the United States.

As her health deteriorated she left Africa for the drier, cooler climate of Colorado in 1987 and died in Northglenn a year later. Margaret May is inspirational, not only to women as a role model for feminism and independence, but also for her dedication to the nursing profession coupled with an unwavering talent for weaving cross-cultural bonds.

Notes:

1. Margaret May Prentice, *Unwelcome at the Northeast Gate* (n.p.: Inter-collegiate Press, Inc., 1966), 1. This biography gives a detailed account of the author's experiences from 1924 to 1943 in northeastern China as a missionary and nurse in the Isabella Fisher Hospital in Tientsin, and as a prisoner of the Japanese.
2. Dorothy Bass, "The Congregational Training School for Women," in *Hidden Histories in the United Church of Christ, vol. 2.*, ed. Barbara Brown Zikmund. (New York: United Church Press, 1987). The Chicago Training School for City, Home, and Foreign Missionaries in Chicago, Illinois was the largest Methodist missionary training school in the United States in the early 1900's. In 1930 the school merged with the Garrett Biblical Institute and became the Garrett-Evangelical Theological Seminary, which still operates today.
3. The Chicago Wesley Memorial Hospital was located in the downtown core of Chicago only a few blocks from Lake Michigan. The hospital was one of the first nursing schools in the mid-West opening its doors in 1888. The hospital closed its doors after the last nursing school graduation in 1972.
4. Prentice, *Unwelcome at the Northeast Gate*, 2.
5. K. Chen, "Missionaries and the early development of nursing in China," *Nursing History Review: Official Journal of The American Association For The History of Nursing* 58, no. 4 (1996): 129-149.
6. *Ibid.*, 129.
7. Prentice, *Unwelcome at the Northeast Gate*, 2.
8. *Isabella Fisher Hospital and I Shih School of Nursing Barometer, vol. 1.* (1937), 22.
9. Prentice, *Unwelcome at the Northeast Gate*, 3.
10. Prentice, *Unwelcome at the Northeast Gate*. The writing, proctoring, and scoring of a standardized nursing exam for Chinese nursing graduates seems to center around the Peking Presbyterian Hospital, a part of the Peking Union Medical College. Margaret's friend and a Keen School graduate (Tientsin) Miss Vera Nieh was the Superintendent of Nurses at the Peking Methodist Mission.
11. Chen, "Missionaries and the early development of nursing in China," 130. Further history of early nursing education in China is provided by Gwen Sherwood and Huaping Liu, "International collaboration for developing graduate education in China," *Nursing Outlook* 53, no. 1 (2005), 15.
12. See Gwen Sherwood and Huaping Liu, "International collaboration for developing graduate education in China," *Nursing Outlook* 53, no. 1 (2005); Mary Brown Bullock, *An American Transplant: The Rockefeller Foundation and the Peking Union Medical College* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1980), xix.
13. Sherwood and Liu, "International collaboration for developing graduate education in China," 15. Also S.E. Allison, "Anna Wolf's dream: Establishment of a collegiate nursing education program," *IMAGE*, no. 25 (1993), 127-131.

Canada:

- BC History of Nursing Society
<http://www.bcnursinghistory.ca/>
- Canadian Association for the History of Nursing
<http://www.cahn-achn.ca/>
- Canadian Society for the History of Medicine
<http://cshm-schm.ca/>
- Margaret M. Allemang Society for the History of Nursing
<http://allemang.on.ca/>
- AMS Nursing History Research Unit: University of Ottawa
<http://www.health.uottawa.ca/nursing-history/index.htm>

USA:

- American Association for the History of Medicine
<http://www.histmed.org/>
- American Association for the History of Nursing
<http://www.aahn.org/index.html>
- Barbara Bates Center for the Study of the History of Nursing
<http://www.nursing.upenn.edu/history/Pages/default.aspx#chrome>
- Center for Nursing History, Ethics, Human Rights and Innovations: Purdue University
<http://www.nursing.purdue.edu/centersandclinics/cnhehri/collections.php#nurhist>

UK:

- UK Association for the History of Nursing
<http://www.nursing.manchester.ac.uk/ukchnm/ukahn/>
- Society for the Social history of Medicine
<http://www.sshm.org/>

Australia:

- Nursing History Research Unit: University of Sydney
http://sydney.edu.au/nursing/research/affiliates/nursing_history_research_unit.shtml

Denmark:

- Danish Society of Nursing History
<http://www2.dsr.dk/msite/frontpage.asp?id=109>

Ireland:

- UCD Centre for Nursing and Midwifery History
<http://www.ucd.ie/icnmh/>

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David Crawford, Librarian emeritus of McGill University has provided several important bibliographies related to Canadian hospitals, health, medical and nursing history online at: <http://internatlibs.mcgill.ca/>

Several nursing organizations have started Facebook pages/groups including the Canadian and American Associations for the History of Nursing, The Barbara Bates Center and British Columbia History of Nursing Society. Please 'Like' these pages to support nursing history and be informed about nursing history events.

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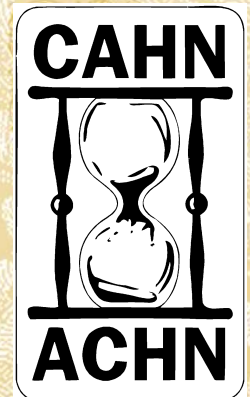
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