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LA RÉALISATION DU RÊVE DE TOUTE UNE VIE

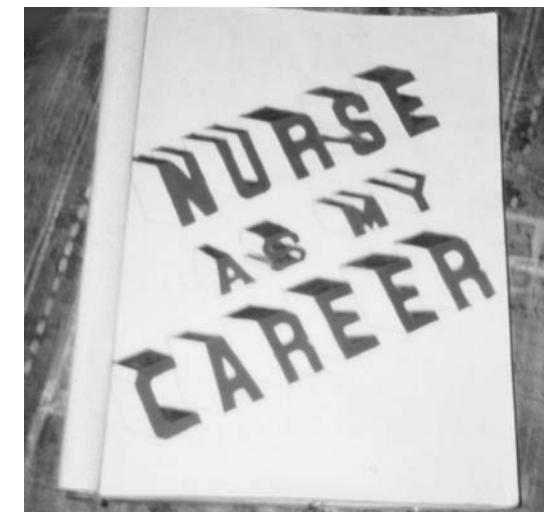
Auteure : Gloria Stephens, après une carrière d'infirmière de 43 ans, est maintenant à la retraite à Halifax, Nouvelle-Écosse. Pendant sa carrière elle a été présidente du BCORNG de 1970 à 1972 et de l'AIISOC de 1990 à 1993. Elle a reçu le RNABC Excellence Award in Nursing Practice en 1987 et a été la toute première récipiendaire du Isabelle Adams Award en 1988.

Au début des années 40, quand j'étais une fille de 14 ans en 9^e année à la Chebucto Road School à Halifax, Nouvelle-Écosse, un conseiller d'orientation nous a enseigné un cours obligatoire nommé CARRIÈRES. Pour réussir le cours, il fallait élaborer un « CAHIER DE CARRIÈRE ». La page titre de mon cahier lisait « Ma carrière comme infirmière ». En fait, j'avais choisi cette carrière bien avant l'âge de quatorze.

LIFE-LONG DREAM FULFILLED

Author: Gloria Stephens is, after a 43-year career in nursing, retired and living in Halifax, NS. Her career included acting as BCORNG President from 1970 to 1972, a term as ORNAC President (90-93), receiving the 1987 RNABC Excellence Award in Nursing Practice; and receiving the first ever Isabelle Adams Award in 1988.

In the early 1940's, when I was a 14 year old in grade 9 at Chebucto Road School, in Halifax, NS, a Guidance Counsellor taught my class a compulsory subject titled CAREERS. The credit criteria for this subject required the development of a 'CAREER BOOK'. The title page for my career book was Nurse As My Career. I had actually chosen this career long before the age of fourteen.



Cover of author's grade 9 career book

Courtesy G. Stephens

Thankfully mothers often save precious momentos. After my mother's passing, in 2001, I found my career book in a trunk. For those days when we wonder why we do what we do, let me share some of the highlights exactly as they appeared in the pages of my career book:

WHY I CHOSE NURSING – “nursing is the practical art of caring for the sick in hospitals, private homes, clinics, institutions, as well as preventing diseases. The work is interesting in all branches, varied and stimulating. The patient who has faith and trust in a nurse has a better chance of recovery than one who feels she is being cared for by a nurse for the financial part alone. I have set nursing as my goal in life and I shall work hard until I have success and achieved this goal.”

WORKING CONDITIONS – “strain of work is severe both mentally and physically therefore it requires an effort to keep oneself healthy.”

QUALIFICATIONS – “nursing is an occupation that has a lasting future, is honourable, profitable, and must be done to the best of one's ability, therefore requires higher education ... start with a High School

Continued on Page 28

LIFE-LONG DREAM FULFILLED (cont.)



Courtesy G. Stephens

50th Class Reunion

Left to Right, Back: Marion (Crowell) Hoyland, Hazel (Slocum) Voelker, Jessie (Meikle) Mader, Mora (Clarke) Sallows, Hazel (Taylor) Walker, Gloria (Webb) Stephens, Edie Bogle.
Front: Connie (Gerrard) Stewart, Manny (Schaffner) Thornton, Roma (Preece) Shaw, Edna (George) Clydon, Nancy (Devenny) McInnes, Anne (Laidlaw) Hanrahan.

diploma with university entrance marks. There is the choice of a three year Training School of Nursing in a hospital or preferably a baccalaureate degree and could lead to a Master of Nursing..... above all a spirit of service and a sincere interest in human beings of all classes and kinds are necessary to nursing.”

ADVANTAGE – “work is open to anyone regardless of colour, sex, or religion; opportunities for advancement and promotion; professional contracts and the knowledge that one is engaged in the service of mankind; and if one has what it takes – the will to live straight, plus the necessary sense of adventure and the initiative to get out of a rut and into what’s happening, the rewards of nursing will be high; you will have a pension all your life after thirty years of service – which is about as much security as you can ask for in this hazardous world.”

DISADVANTAGE – “on the whole nursing has not many disadvantages but there are a few – the work is arduous and exacting, making continual and unpredictable calls on the practitioner’s time; long hours and one has to keep learning forever.”

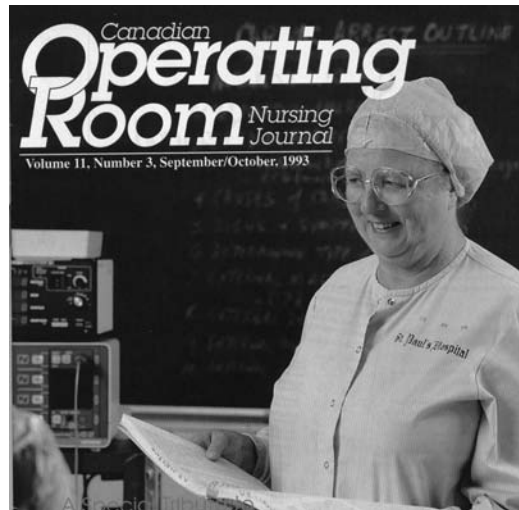
TRENDS – “nursing is advancing socially, professionally and educationally. Nurses will be needed in large numbers as practitioners and health teachers in the general health and welfare field. They will play a large important part, too, in any health insurance plan that is brought into action in the country, – surgery is taking a tremendous stride forward; new drugs are used, new techniques are developed – nursing in the future promises to become a boom profession. To the person suited to the life, nursing has nearly everything.”

REWARDS – “the greatest reward of nursing is the satisfaction attained in saving a human life – other rewards – promotion, attractive pay, travel, adventure and above all, a sense of rich achievement and the realization of the importance of your vocation.”

HISTORY – (of course Florence Nightingale was mentioned in another passage) “In 1943, the census taken showed that there are in Canada, 50,000 trained professional nurses.”

REQUIREMENTS – Physical: good health; strong nerves; good feet. Social: cheerful; intelligent; sincere; have an interest in people.”

Finally we were asked to describe a vision of our future. Here is the start of my life-long dream – interesting that it is the operating room...



Courtesy Health Media Inc.

The author as featured on the cover of Sept/Oct 1993 CORNJ

“VISIONARY FUTURE OF 1952”

It was about ten-thirty one stormy December night when the shrilling of the telephone wavered through the night air. I was sitting in an easy chair in front of a crackling fire reading a book, when aroused by the phone. I got up to answer it, “Hello, hello, is that the nurse, Miss Webb, said the voice at the other end, excitedly. Be ready in fifteen minutes and I’ll pick you up. There is an emergency call in Brandford”. I knew by the voice it was Doctor Welland and was ready in ten minutes. It was a grand feeling to know I was able to help and give my services to someone in need.

In a few minutes the car was outside and as we drove through the blinding snow to Brandford a small village, ninety miles away I took a glance back through the years of preparation for this moment to come, a time when I will be of use to the human race in relieving the suffering.

The Doctor finally broke the silence by telling me about the patient. He said how this boy’s father owns a sawmill and how the boy, while playing near the saw, slipped and fell. There will have to be an operation as soon as possible; we will have to make our own operating room. As we rounded the next bend, lights could be seen through the snow. We reached the house in a two-hour drive because of the blizzard.

At about two a.m. the same morning the Doctor and I came out of the make do operating room to be met by the boy’s mother and father, “Is he alright? You were in there so long. It was the greatest thing that ever happened to me, to be able to say to them; “Your son will live and to make things still better, we saved his leg.”

The storm has died down now so the Doctor left for the city, but I stayed and had a good cup of tea and had a rest after the long night. I’m staying here until Danny has completely recovered. Then after being recommended by the Doctor, because of my surgical ability, I am going to be his assistant in the operating room. “At last after long and continuous years of study, I find myself on the threshold of nursing!”

50TH YEAR REUNION

The 50th year reunion of the Victoria General Hospital Nursing School Class of ’53 was held at the home of Gloria (Webb) Stephens, in Halifax, Nova Scotia on September 12th and 13th, 2003.

The house was decorated for the occasion with celebratory balloons, posters featuring old pictures, write-ups, and other sentimental items, along with a banner reminding us “Doesn’t Time Fly When You’re Having fun?”

Several said it was a homecoming, as well as a reunion, because the house had been a home away from home, under the care of Vida D. Webb, for the entire class during the three years program – Gloria Webb had been the only Haligonian in the class.

Out of a class of 22 students, 14 travelled from BC, Ontario, the US, and other parts of Nova Scotia to attend. Of the eight who were unable to attend five had passed away, after battles with cancer, and three were unable to travel due to illness. Seven husbands also attended.

One of our instructors, Sylvia Nott travelled in from Boston for the occasion. Each alumnus received a Victoria General Hospital (VGH) crested china plate, featuring a 50th year rosette, as part of the roast beef dinner on Friday night.

Our entertainment included a Harbour Trip, games with prizes, a comedy skit by classmates portraying Florence Nightingale and the VGH Director of nursing, and a rousing old fashioned sing-song with two members of the Eric Bowers country music group on guitars and piano (note on August 12, 2003, Eric Bowers was inaugurated into Nova Scotia Country Hall of Fame) along with dancing by several energetic folks.

All good things must come to an end – our reunion concluded with the singing of Auld Lang Syne and a promise to meet again in two years.

Here’s to MEMORIES!!! 🍁