

NORFOLK & NORWICH
UNIVERSITY HOSPITAL

NURSES LEAGUE
JOURNAL



2013

THE NORFOLK AND NORWICH UNIVERSITY HOSPITAL NURSES LEAGUE.

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE AND TRUSTEE MEMBERS.

Charity Registration Number 290546

2012 - 2013

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**THE NORFOLK AND NORWICH
UNIVERSITY HOSPITAL
NURSES LEAGUE
EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE**



Back Row

Lavinia Gordon Grey, Ruth McNamara, Anne Copsy, Elizabeth Blaxell,
Doreen Betts, Hilary Barker, Pat Legrice, Margaret Allcock.

Front Row

Mary Dolding, Betty Lee, Wendy Hobbs, Vivien Aldridge.

2013 EDITORS' REPORT

Another year has flown by. What an exciting year with the Queen's Diamond Jubilee and the London Olympics.

Once again we have enjoyed putting this Journal together. Please keep the contributions coming; even little anecdotes would be welcome. Send them as an attachment to the email addresses below or just send them by post.

Elizabeth Blaxell
elizblaxell@hotmail.com

Doreen Betts
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Doreen and Elizabeth with Vivien Aldridge hard at work inserting Journals into envelopes ready to post to members. Photo taken by Mary Dolding who also helped.

A MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

It seems impossible to think another year has past since I wrote my piece for the journal.



Looking back over the year it was the summer that brought the nation together. First came the Queen's Diamond Jubilee, when more than a million Britons ignored the rain and lined the streets of the Thames, then the Olympics gave us a startling opening ceremony and epic feats by Team GB. Few thought the Paralympics could top that - but the disabled athletes proved they were the equals of any we had seen. Those of us who were not fortunate enough to get tickets for any events found ourselves avidly watching television and screaming for our athletes to do well. All this in the wettest summer of a century, but through the strange waterproofing effect of national jubilation, it just felt sunny.

When the League was started in 1930 and for many years to follow the Journal brought news of what was happening in the hospital. It gave an insight into past activities in nursing and told us what to expect in the coming months. Sadly this is no longer the case as most of us have little contact with the hospital and present day nursing. However the hospital does have a very informative website for all you silver surfers. You can also look at the Pulse, a magazine detailing activities across the board. You may feel slightly aggrieved at the low profile that nursing and midwifery has.

As the League is going to require additional financial resources to manage our heritage and memorabilia the committee has been looking at ways that this may be achieved. We would like to propose that the following sentence is added to the Leagues Objects:

THE LEAGUE MAINTAINS AN INDEPENDENT COLLECTION OF RECORDS, PHOTOGRAPHS AND OTHER MEMORABILIA CONNECTED WITH NURSES AND NURSING AT THE NORFOLK AND NORWICH HOSPITAL(S).

Cont. A MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

If you are not coming to the AGM on May 11th 2013 and cannot support this Object please let either me or a member of the committee know. Our details are in the front of the journal and on the website.

At the AGM this year the Service and the meeting will be held in the Benjamin Gooch Hall. I am hoping that tea will be served in the Deli restaurant again, although I am uncertain at present who will be managing it as the Trust are in discussion with various outside contractors.

Finally I would like to reflect on a year of commitment, endeavour and sheer hard work by all committee members to ensure the continuation of your League.

My best wishes to you all.

Lavinia Gordon-Gray

A SHORT MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

If you are coming to the AGM would you please bring some paper with your name clearly written on it and a pen. Thank you.

Lavinia Gordon-Gray

BECOMING A TRUSTEE

If you have thought about becoming a Trustee but are unsure of what it entails why not come to one of the Trustee meetings to find out more. We meet four times a year – dates can be found on our website. Alternatively please contact me by phone, e-mail or letter.

Contact details at front of journal.

Lavinia Gordon-Gray

Norfolk and Norwich University Hospital Nurses League

Year Ended 31st March 2012

Income and Expenditure Statement

	2011/12		2010/11
<u>Income</u>			
Annual Subscriptions	870.00		925.00
Donations	830.00		1,281.85
Sale of membership Lists	2.00		16.00
AGM Chapel Collection	263.00		517.00
Sale of Mugs	167.50	Sale of Mugs	627.40
Interest recieved gross	2.56		2.56
Gift Aid tax relief	308.37	Gift Aid tax relief	388.92
Income from Investments	683.42		656.94
	3,126.85		4,415.67
<u>Expenditure</u>			
Christmas Benevolent	432.55		431.91
Flowers/Gifts/Grants	154.38		226.22
Nelsons Journey	263.00	Wymondham P Cafe	517.00
Journal	1,143.00		1,900.00
Postage (journal)	232.10		342.94
Other postage/stationery	142.70		380.04
Archive/Heritage	79.69		0.00
Catering	35.64		33.02
Petrol	123.88		88.92
AGM Expenses	59.98	80th Expenses	561.93
	2,666.92		4,481.98
Surplus/-Deficit	459.93		-66.31

BALANCE SHEET

Funds Brought forward

Barclays Community Account	2,971.35		3,040.22
Barclays Instant Access Saver	5,168.33		5,165.77
Unit Trusts & Investments	15,000.00		15,000.00
	23,139.68		23,205.99
Surplus/-Deficit	459.93		-66.31
	23,599.61		23,139.68

Funds Carried Forward

Barclays Community Account	3,428.72		2,971.35
Barclays Instant Access saver	5,170.89		5,168.33
Unit Trusts & Investments	15,000.00		15,000.00
	23,599.61		23,139.68

Hon. Treasurer M. R. Dolding Date 8th May 2012

Mrs M R Dolding

Hon. Independent Examiner Brian J Allerton Date 4 May 2012

Mr Brian Allerton

A PLEA from the Membership Secretary!



There was a rather large increase in the postage rate in 2012. To help us keep subscription rates the same please can all members pay their subscription when they receive their Journal.

Forty six reminders had to be sent out in October.

Thanks for your help in this matter.

And thanks for...

...your many letters. Many of you commented on what the journal meant to you as there were many reminiscences from the “old days”. The advances in technology impressed one of our members who had recently “been on the other side” during which time she experienced nothing but kindness. Another was touched by Nelsons Journey. Its lovely to receive your snippets of news.

Please keep them coming!

Anne Copsey. Membership Secretary.

Notes from YOU to us!

To the Editors of the N&N Journal.

It was lovely to have the account of Janet Wood’s life in the Journal.

I was in the same set as Janet as was Dorothy Piper nee Sweet. We still keep in contact with each other.

Best wishes,

Mary Sago nee Wright.

Are there any other sets who still keep in touch? We would really like to hear what you get up to and see any photographs of you together.

I really regret not keeping in touch with my set and would love to hear from any of them.

Doreen Betts (Joint Editor)

Dear Lavina,

I thought yesterdays reunion was one of the best and would like to thank you and your committee for making it such an enjoyable afternoon.

It must have been hard work.

Kind regards Pat Ellis.

THE OTHER DIAMOND JUBILEE CELEBRATION



On a spring Saturday evening in 1952 an assorted group of 14 young ladies reported to Sister Sporne in PTS house Brunswick Road, who would have thought that after 60 years we would still be meeting?

Most of us were just eighteen, but we were fortunate to have amongst us some older members who had been out in the wide world actually earning money! Others had already completed some nursing training and others had pre-nursing experience, the rest of us were straight from school.

It proved a great mix as the younger students received great support and encouragement from the more worldly members, which probably accounts for our great friendship for 60 years.

We have all kept in touch and still meet regularly, having made a vow in 1952 that we would meet in 10 years time, which we actually did and thanks to our secretary/chairman continue to have reunions which she arranges in Norwich despite our being scattered far and wide.

We now meet annually in view of our age and decrepitude and invariably have 7 or 8 members present. We celebrated our Diamond Jubilee in October 2012 with the usual lunch plus an anniversary cake and a drink or two!

We have over the years shared our life experiences, careers, marriages, births and unfortunately some deaths. The team spirit lives on. Regretfully our numbers are reduced to 8 but we still make it to Norwich once a year despite prosthetic joints, walking sticks, Zimmer frames and much medication.

These meetings would never have taken place without the splendid work of Margaret Fox (nee Bowden) in keeping addresses of everyone and giving us news of sad and happy events, also reminding us of reunion dates and locations. Long may they continue!



Beryl Eversfield 1952-55.

MY AUNTIE MY INSPIRATION

My auntie, Christina Sewell, was born on Christmas Eve 1910, the fourth child of a farm worker and his wife. My Mother was born two years later and over the next few years four more children would complete the family of Alice and George Sewell, a hard working, God fearing Norfolk couple.

Today they would no doubt be considered 'below the poverty line'. All those children in a two up two down farm worker's cottage! In those days when children left school at 14 years old, the girls were expected to go into service and the boys would go into the army, service or work on the land. In this way, the older children left home, as the younger ones arrived and that's how they managed! Boys that stayed at home and worked on the land were just 'fitted in' somewhere!



Life was very hard for country folk in those days. Accounts from both my mother and my auntie about their childhood confirm this. At school, discipline was cruel and the cane given to boys and girls alike and for the least little thing!

Christina was known as 'Chrissie' to her family. She was a mischievous child and was forever getting into 'scrapes'. This did not alter when at the age of 14 years she left school after the most elementary education and was put into service at the local 'big house'. By her own admission, she was 'not a bit grown up, just a child really' and did not find it easy settling to life in service. Chrissie had several

Continued...

posts in north Norfolk and in Norwich, so met lots of different people and got plenty of 'life experience' during this time. Her last post was as cook for a retired matron from a London hospital it was here that Chrissie learned such a lot from her employer. She was encouraged to read 'good books' and to speak properly and also given tips on deportment!

With her rather poor education, Chrissie still had a lot to learn, but expressed her wish to become a nurse. Her employer was sceptical and doubted that Chrissie had 'the necessary qualities' for nursing!

This did not deter this single minded young lady and she persevered with her enquiries and spoke to others about how to get into nursing. Her perseverance paid off and she was taken on as an assistant nurse at the Woodlands Hospital, a former workhouse on Bowthorpe Road in Norwich which became the West Norwich Hospital and is now Norwich Community Hospital.

I think the general opinion was that Chrissie wouldn't 'stick at it', but stick at it she did!

This is where her career in nursing began. She went on to do her SRN, SCM and the Queen's District Nursing Cert.

When I was old enough to understand, my mother would tell me tales of her childhood and all the things she got up to with auntie Chrissie as her playmate. She always let me know just how well auntie had done and how hard she had worked to achieved her goal.

I admired my auntie so much because not only did she have to learn all there was to learn about nursing, anatomy and physiology etc. but as she told me, she had to learn to spell properly, speak properly and write clearly, something her rather poor education had not fully equipped her for.

I am not sure of the exact date that Chrissie went to the Woodlands, but I would guess 1940 – 1941 when she would have been 30years old.

Chrissie began keeping a diary in 1944, writing every day her thoughts and concerns about her work, her fellow nurses, life on the wards and in the nurse's home. The diaries contained details about various purchases she made and the costs were noted, as she kept a tight reign on her spending!

These diaries were written every day until she became unable to write, a few months before she died. It is from these diaries that I have been able to research various incidents and experiences. Doing this, I have felt very close to Chrissie and privileged to have access to her thoughts and feelings.

Continued...

It would seem that she worked mostly on the maternity wards and was more often than not on night duty. It would appear that nurses could be swapped around from nights to days and from days to nights at the whim of Matron or Sister, without prior notice!

During the war, work on the wards continued as usual. There were always sirens going off at night and it must have been frightening to have been on night duty then, not just concern for your own safety but a huge responsibility and concern for the patient's well being too. In 1942 the Woodlands received a direct hit in an air raid; there were many casualties and fatalities. The nurse's home was hit and auntie told me that the nurse's belongings were festooned on the trees in the gardens. It's left to our imaginations as to which items decorated the branches! Patients and nursing staff were evacuated to Shipmeadow near Bungay, to the former Workhouse there and Chrissie was amongst those who went. I don't know how long the evacuation lasted as this was before the diaries started.

On Wednesday May 2nd 1945 Chrissie wrote 'Hitler reported dead.'

On V.E. day she writes 'marvelous show all around the City, Cathedral lit up, searchlight displays, everybody out!'

To celebrate, Matron sent over ice cream to the night staff 'but we gave it to the patients by mistake!'

Some of the names she mentioned in her diaries are familiar to me from my own training days, here are some examples:-

* 'I was fire watching with Sister Rusted last night'

(Who remembers Sister Rusted cycling up to Medical ward at the West?)

* 'Doctor Oliver came up to see a young boy on Ward 8'

(We all remember Doctor Oliver both from sick bay and on the wards)

* 'I watched Mr. Birt perform a Prostatectomy'

(Another name familiar to most of us)

* 'Mr. Mckee operated on me and inserted a silver plate in my arm'

Chrissie's radius and ulna were smashed when she put her arm through the folding lift door to switch off the light, and the lift moved!!! 'I was only trying to save electricity'!! (1944.)

Chrissie was so much older than the other probationer nurses when she started her

Continued...

training and that couldn't have been easy. They were not used to mature students back then and with the age gap, attitudes to life would have been quite different. Having been brought up to attend Sunday school and church, Chrissie had a very strong belief and faith. This kept her going through difficult times. Every Sunday she would walk through the Cemetery onto Earlham Road and down to St Thomas's Church, going mornings or evenings whichever fitted in best with her off duty. Prayer was very important to her and she prayed for guidance frequently.

To gain surgical experience, Chrissie had to go to the Norfolk and Norwich Hospital and live there for a while, being the first nurse to transfer from the 'West to the N&N', which we were all used to doing as part of our training in later years.

Her hospital exams and her state finals were taken in February 1947. The written state final at the N&N and the practical and oral exam at Ipswich Chrissie had already applied to do her Midwifery training at Mill Road Maternity Hospital in Cambridge and when the news came in July (what a long wait!) that she had passed her finals she left for Cambridge.

Midwifery at Mill Road seemed to go well and she sat her Part 1 finals in February 1948. To sit the exam it was necessary to travel down to London, to Russell Square. Luckily, Chrissie had an aunt living in Edmonton, so she stayed there with the family. To get to Russell Square the journey was by bus and tube, what an experience for a country girl! Whilst there she did quite a bit of sightseeing with her cousin; St Paul's, Westminster Abbey etc. There were also visits to art galleries, and the diary entry said 'I think Constable's 'The Cornfield' and 'The Haywain' were my favourites', not surprising is it that she should like these country views. She was back at Russell Square later in February to take the oral exam and she worried and prayed hard that she would pass these exams. Her prayers were answered with passes in both.

Having secured a place at Earlham Hall to do her Part 2 Midwifery, Chrissie started there in March 1948. She seemed to enjoy nursing mothers in their own homes although she writes that some of them 'left a lot to be desired'. At Earlham Hall there were beds for 'in patient' delivery and it's recorded that on 19th March 1948 a fire broke out there, in the roof above the furnace. 'Cots and patients were marshalled downstairs, the fire brigade attended and the fire was soon put out' A patient who was in labour during the fire was safely delivered of a baby boy at 9pm. Babies will be born no matter what is going on around them!

Continued...

Earlham Hall, situated in Earlham Park was a lovely place to live and Chrissie enjoyed the walled garden there, spending a lot of time sitting there studying, writing letters or knitting. She just loved the flowers and the scent of lavender and roses. Cycling around to her midwifery patients was a pleasure for Chrissie as she cycled almost everywhere anyway, miles and miles to visit family and friends. Flowers were a passion with her and she was always gathering them from the hedgerows.

Part 2 Midwifery exams were also taken in London and Chrissie went down to take hers in September 1948 and to her delight she passed! She was now S.R.N. S.C.M.

Some of the friends she had made during training were working in Somerset so off she went to work as a staff Midwife in Taunton. This was a very happy time, cycling in the beautiful countryside when off duty, and lots of babies delivered when on duty too!

Persuaded by a friend to take a post at Queen Mary's Maternity Hospital in London, she left Somerset and went down there. I think Queen Mary's must be near Hampstead Heath as it features frequently as do gardens in Golder's Green, with regard to 'gathering blackberries on the Heath and visiting the lovely gardens in Golder's Green.

After working in London for a while Chrissie decided that she had had enough of ward routine and would like to try for a District post. She was encouraged in this and at the end of 1949 was offered a post as District Nurse and Midwife in Gedney, Lincolnshire. This was as near to Norfolk and her family as she could get. The post didn't have a house to go with it so Chrissie was expected to find lodgings, which she did for a year in Long Sutton and for nearly 3 years in Gedney!

At last a Council bungalow was found for her in Gedney Dyke in 1953. It was such a delight for Chrissie to have her very own home at last and furnishing it was exciting and enjoyable experience. She loved homemaking and getting the garden sorted out. It was here that I spent many happy summer holidays as a young teenager, with Auntie 'going on the rounds'. The 'council car' as she referred to it, was black (as most cars were in those days) and emblazoned on the front doors in lovely bright colours was the Holland County Council coat of arms! I thought it was great to drive around the countryside with Auntie, people would wave to her and she would wave back and giggle and say 'I feel like the Queen'! For myself, I thought 'what a lovely job, just driving around and waving to people, and vowed to become a District nurse!!

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Chrissie's life was about to take an unexpected 'twist'. Some friends of hers decided to play matchmakers! They decided to arrange a meeting between Chrissie and a bachelor friend called Ernest. The meeting took place, then other meetings, and then an engagement and marriage in 1956.

Auntie continued with her District Nursing and Midwifery until 1966, bringing many babies into the world and comfort to her patients. After she retired from the District she did one day a week as a Midwifery Sister at the Johnston hospital in Boston. Life was very full, gardening, knitting, cooking, sewing and enjoying holidays with Ernest.

I'm not sure how many years Chrissie worked at the Johnston but in 1980 she and Ernest moved to Norfolk so she would be nearer to her brothers and sisters.

The years spent in retirement in Norfolk were very happy and active years. It was good to have them living nearby, especially when Ernest died in 1997 age 91 years.

Auntie was a very independent, hard working person with a strong Christian belief, never afraid to speak out and say what she thought, which often landed her in trouble but was much loved by us all. Sadly she had a stroke in 2000 and died a few months later in February 2001.

I loved and admired her so much, to think what she had achieved from such humble beginnings was due to her dogged determination to stick at it and succeed.

I aspired to be like her, started my training at the N&N and eventually became a District Nursing Sister. It was lovely to be able to share my experiences with Auntie and to compare them with her District Nursing days.

She was my inspiration and she lives on forever in my heart.

Heather Parle (Ellwood 1961-64)

100th Birthday

Miss Bea Taylor.

On June 17th. 2012, Bea celebrated her 100th birthday at Ashfields Nursing Home, Rackheath. Bea has been a resident here for two to three years. Bea's niece from Devon visited with other friends, to celebrate the important day. The Queen's telegram also arrived.

I have been visiting Bea since I have been a member on the Executive Committee. When I first started she would have long conversations about nurses she knew at the Norfolk and Norwich Hospital. Some times when I am with her, I feel that she has some recognition of me, but does fall asleep quickly.

Elizabeth Blaxell and I visited Bea in October and presented her with a lovely bouquet of flowers from us all. I like to think she had an idea that we were from the Norfolk and Norwich Hospital.

On December 15th I took her Christmas flowers and card from us all Unfortunately she was having an afternoon siesta when I visited!

It is a pleasure to visit Bea throughout the year and we will continue to do so.

Pat LeGrice.

BETTY SILVESTER (NEE LARTER)

(1941-1945)

Betty was born at Bacton on January 29th 1923. She was the youngest girl of four children. When she was two she was looked after by her Granny who was



caring for all the children because her father was ill in bed due to being gassed in World War 1 and her Mother had a “dickey” heart. Friends who were visiting Granny saw how difficult things were for her and offered to take one of the children for 2 weeks. They were going to take the middle child but she cried so Betty being a bit forward said “I’ll come”. During that fortnight her father died. Betty’s Mother then wrote to the friends and asked if they could look after Betty for a bit longer as she wanted to recuperate and take the rest of the children to London to see her parents.

After about a month when her mother had returned, it was decided that Betty should live with “Auntie and Uncle” as she began to call them and then later “Mum and Dad” although she still called her mother at Bacton, “Mum”. They were very kind to her.

They ran the Post Office and a smallholding at East Ruston.

Betty passed the 11+ and attended North Walsham High School for Girls. There was very little traffic on the roads in the 1930’s. She cycled seven miles there and seven miles back to school, biking in all weathers. She recalls that once in a storm she had lightning dancing on her handlebars.

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One day on the first day of the summer term, Betty cycled to school with her winter hat which she never put on until she reached the town. She should have had her panama hat on. One of the teachers saw her and reported her to the Headmistress. She was sent home to get her panama and she arrived back at school at 11 o'clock. It was a French lesson and the teacher said "Betty I think you have done enough today. You had better sit at the back of the class and have a rest".

Betty left school on 31st July 1939. She took her gymslip off on the Friday and went to the Cottage hospital (in the same town) on the Tuesday and put on a nurses uniform and walked onto the men's ward.

The Day staff consisted of: Matron Samson, Day Sister, Auxiliary Rose and two probationers. Betty arrived at 2pm and was taught how to put on her uniform, which was a blue dress, starched collar, square cap, apron and white sleeves which were fastened with little safety pins. Tea was at 4 o'clock, then on to the ladies ward. The ladies were washed and bed panned before visiting time. In those days the bedpans were made from porcelain and heavy. They had to be warmed in the sink and about 3 were



carried at a time with covers in between. Betty got all the ladies enthroned and feeling very pleased with herself she traipsed off to the men's ward with the bed pans. Fortunately sister stopped her and said "Where do you think you are going with those nurse?" "Betty said "I've got all the ladies on the bedpans and I am now going to do the men!" Sister said "Don't you realise they have bottles?"

The surgeons came to North Walsham Cottage hospital from the Norfolk & Norwich hospital. They performed mastectomies and hysterectomies amongst other operations. There were two private wards, an emergency ward with 2 beds, a children's ward with 3 cots, a maternity ward, men's ward and female ward each with 7 beds. There was also a Theatre, X-ray room and a treatment room for physiotherapy. Four doctors attended from North Walsham.

Continued...

One of Betty's jobs in the Theatre was to clear up and tidy the sluice room and dispose of the waste in the buckets. On one occasion after a mastectomy, the sister brought the bucket for Betty to dispose of the contents which still had some Spencer Wells attached. Betty shoved it in the stoke hole to be burnt. When the theatre staff checked the instruments after wards they found they were missing ten Spencer Wells. Betty couldn't detach them so she naturally thought they were disposable. She did not get into trouble for this as Matron Samson was very fair and said it was not her fault as they should have removed them in theatre.

After two months (at the age of 16 ½) Betty went on night duty. She was entirely on her own. Matron slept upstairs and had said that if she was at all concerned to call her, but after about a month a night sister was employed. This was at the beginning of the war. The ARP warden slept in the treatment room every night as "the powers that be" decided that the hospital was vulnerable.

Another time Betty made the mistake that was common among young nurses; which was taking the false teeth from the men and putting them altogether in a bowl to be cleaned. She then had no idea which set belonged to which person and so went round to each man and said "Take your pick!"

Betty started her training at the N&N in 1941. She was in Miss Bea Taylor's first PTS group. During this time she only went on a ward one evening a week followed by one morning a week. Three months in PTS. She spent a whole morning learning how to clean a bathroom and flush a toilet and where the sewage ended up; also taking in a visit to a sewage farm. The sluice room was a misery; cleaning the bottles with Lysol and lead shot (and no rubber gloves). Also the horrible job of cleaning the sputum mugs.

Her day started with a bell ringing at 6am. Breakfast was at 6.40am. Prayers in the Chapel and on to the wards for 7am.

The night nurses had to cook all the breakfasts and be cleared away before 7am. The patients had their own eggs and the night before the nurses went round and asked them how they wanted their eggs cooked. They also cut all the bread and butter and in between all this, do the general nursing which included 4 hourly back rounds and admit emergency patients.

During the Blitz one bright moonlit night in June, incendiaries were dropped on the hospital. Soldiers from the Scottish Horse carried the patients down from the wards to the kitchens. Then the Fire Brigade came to put the fire out on the wards and the water seeped into the kitchens and flooded them. So the soldiers had to come back and carry the patients onto the front lawn which was bathed in

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moonlight, waiting for the buses to arrive (with the seats taken out so the stretchers could go in) and they went off to Newmarket. There was no electricity or water for several days.

In 1942 Betty met her husband, Vic. He was a patient on Orthopaedic Block having fractured his femur playing football. He was a patient there for three months. He went to Woodbastwick Hall to convalesce. Eventually he was demobbed and returned to work at Fenners who made belts and pulleys. All nurses after they trained had to do six months for either Emergency Medical Services, Midwifery or TB nursing. Betty went to Yorkshire to be near her fiancé and worked in what had been a Mental hospital. This had been taken over by the General hospital and it received badly wounded men from the battles of the Rhine.

Betty was then offered the job as Day sister at North Walsham Cottage hospital and stayed there for about a year. When she married Vic in 1946 they went to live in Cleckheaton, Yorkshire, in a flat in a large house where she had a job as a filing clerk in the office downstairs. She had her first child in 1947 at North Walsham cottage hospital. She stayed in Cleckheaton for two years and then Fenners built 20 houses for their key workers in Hull. After the children had grown up Betty became a part-time community nurse 5 mornings a week going into different hospitals to find out which patients were being discharged and then visiting them in their homes within seven days to make sure that meals on wheels and various treatments were carried out. Betty retired when her husband retired.

Betty has written many interesting and amusing articles for the journal over the years. She is very active, enjoying birdwatching and painting with watercolours and, until recently, ran a Chat club. Betty has a fantastic sense of humour and I always enjoy listening to tales from her training days. At the time of writing Betty is looking forward to celebrating her 90th birthday in January.

Elizabeth Blaxell

Happy Retirement.

The fated day arrives, all goodbyes are said, and off you go into the great unknown of retirement.

What now?

Take a year off altogether. Pack your bags and go travelling. Maybe Africa, India or what about a cruise.

One deserves it!

But then, oh dear what then?

After wallowing in self indulgence, the years of service to ones fellow creatures nags at your conscience. Maybe go on the nursing bank, but how out of touch one feels and somehow not so agile any more Kneeling down to dress those leg ulcers..... Its difficult to get up again!!!! Oh dear the answer is voluntary work! What can one do?

Well I joined a group of drivers connected to the local surgery taking people to hospital and to and from appointments. I also drove for several years the community bus, with a little bit of school bus driving too!

My most time consuming activity is helping to run a weekly lunch club, great fun with a lunch thrown in for good measure. Sometimes looking back I wondered how I had time for work!

Is there any reward for all this activity? No of course not..... however much



Continued...

to my surprise I was nominated to attend the Queen's Jubilee Garden Party at Sandringham this year in 2012.

What a fabulous day. Weeks of rain preceded a glorious, sunny, but chilly day on Tuesday 12th June. The Queen was accompanied by Prince Andrew as Prince Philip was in hospital at the time.

Everybody there was dressed in their finest flowery hats and high heels, smart lounge suits for the men. Not a dull colour was seen.

Anne Murat nee Storey 1959-61

“Living well with dementia”

Sister Zena Aldridge of Elsing Ward

Sister Aldridge is the first person in the region to make a switch from mental health nursing to a senior role in the acute hospital setting. She was a buyer in London before working as a nursing auxiliary at the old N&N prior to qualifying as a mental health nurse in 2003.

Zena joined Elsing Ward in 2011 as a staff nurse after working in the community and specialising in crisis intervention for mentally ill older people. She is now studying for a Master's degree in mental health. Her appointment in 2011 is the latest in a series of new initiatives at the NNUH designed to improve services for patients with complex physical and mental health problems predominantly dementia.

This came about with the 2009 Department of Health dementia strategy – “Living well with Dementia”. The aim was to ensure better knowledge about dementia and remove the stigma, ensure early diagnosis, support and treatment for people with dementia and their family and carers. In an ageing population there is a need to change perceptions of society and organisations and develop services to meet changing needs better. The needs of the patient and their carer have to be addressed and ongoing work is taking place to look at provision of care, skill mix and knowledge base within the Trust.

Continued...

Changes are under way to make Elsing Ward more environmentally and user friendly to patients, carers and their families. Money has been made available, approx £30,000, from the Health Innovation and Education Cluster to change the environment on Elsing Ward. Ipswich Hospital has been given close to £250,000 from the same source. They have made changes such as, removing the nurses' station, adding sofas to encourage engagement, using colour to define spaces, adding activity areas and altering lighting and signage.

NNUH staff have visited a number of hospitals learning valuable lessons from others making the changes. This has led to the introduction of red toilet seats, split meal service and open visiting especially at meal times along with cognitive stimulation therapy and dementia awareness training for all staff at the hospital.

Links have been made with outside agencies such as Age UK (previously Age Concern) to create information packs for carers dealing with dementia but also offering practical support with information about benefits and support groups. The charity now sits on the Dementia steering group at the NNUH. Currently Elsing staff are working with others to produce more relevant documentation for the client group to make it more person centred. Networks are being developed with other acute trusts in the area to share good practice and innovative ideas. The perception of others needs to change to ensure that the patient and carer experience is positive. Staff must learn to enable patients to maintain the skills they have retained instead of concentrating on the skills that are lost so that people can live well with Dementia.

The presentation was well received by Members who asked several interesting questions afterwards.

£303 raised in the 2012 Hospital Chapel collection was given for equipment to forward their project with the patients on Elsing Ward at the Norfolk and Norwich University Hospital.

Record of Presentation by Ruth McNamara.



IT'S A MYSTERY... SOLVED!

Do you remember this picture from the 2012 Journal? We found out who she was and here is a bit of her story...

Nude Model Quits Her Job.

"I cant do night duty as well"

The part time job that the red haired student nurse took on to eke out her pay made temperatures rise among the Hospital Officials. Margery Carlton modelled in the nude for an art class in Lowestoft. She then saw by the hospital roster that she had been booked for a spell of night duty.

Margery found that evening modelling and night nursing did not mix. She gave up the hospital.

Margery aged 26yrs. and pretty said in Norwich last night; "I started the nude modelling to add a few shillings to the £6 a week I got at he Norfolk and Norwich Hospital.

"The strain of studying for my final nursing exams, plus my modelling would have been too much with night nursing.

"I take my finals in a fortnight and if I pass I shall become a nurse again.

"Other nurses in Norwich do nude modelling at night to earn a little extra. We have to live."

A hospital spokesman said, " We do not like our nurses to take on other jobs. They are regarded as dedicated people. They can only do one job properly."

Daily Express. May 30 1962.



A Day in the Life of District Nurse

...or to be more up to date, Community Nurse, but patients who I visit still relate to the word “District” nursing rather than “Community”. Ever since my training at the University of East Anglia, I’ve wanted to become a Community Nurse. I had my first opportunity when I lived in Northern Ireland, which was a very good starting block. Recently I’ve been working in East Anglia/Essex with a very busy team.

Like everything else in the 21st Century, community nursing has become computerised. The organisation I worked for, banished folders in patient’s homes, so it was paper free. I quickly adapted to the new computer system, but for other nurses it was difficult, especially for those who were not used to computers. We use a specific programme where the case load is available to access and where all our visits are allocated out to each nurse. This system allows us to check our daily list of visits on our portable tablet/laptop, and to document what we have assessed, evaluated and carried out. However there are a few issues with using these tablets, one being the battery life, which is meant to last all day, but frustratingly does not!

We start work at 0800, which is a very acceptable time to begin. First and most importantly we visit patients with diabetes to administer their morning insulin and to give any advice or reassurance relating to their condition.

After these visits are completed, we have the task of organising the rest of our visits throughout the day according to priority. The work load can be very varied from day to day. It is also challenging and problem solving, which is what I enjoy. Sometimes when going to a patient’s house I don’t know what to expect, in one case a barking dog which sounds huge, but turns out to be a little terrier, or in another case, a house full of birds in cages with feathers everywhere! In some houses it is important that I don’t sit down or wash my hands, as I may obtain more bacteria by doing so, but is necessary to use my hand gel instead and to turn down any offer of a cup of tea!

The work load for the day will consist of leg ulcers, which is a large part of my work and one of my favourite skills. I constantly reassess and re-evaluate leg ulcers, which may involve compression bandaging, and when necessary to carry

Continued...

out referrals to the Tissue Viability Nurse. Other visits can include injections, taking blood, and other wound care, such as post-operative. During the day I also receive urgent calls to visit doctor's surgeries, which can include catheter care. It is essential that I involve patients with the planning of their care, and to give them choices. It is always a good feeling, when a patient is relieved of their pain and anxiety, and grateful for the care I've delivered. One particular lady who stands out, was always worried about her leg ulcer and other day to day problems she faced, which had no relevance to her ulcer. At the end of the visit she would always thank me for dressing her ulcer, listening and reassuring her and giving her peace of mind.

A vast amount of my work also consists of pressure ulcer care. This involves assessing and grading the pressure ulcer, which allows me to decide on the most suitable dressings to use and which equipment to provide in order to prevent further break down of the ulcer and to primarily heal the ulcer.

As a community nurse it is my duty of care to have a holistic approach to my patients care. For example, I have been assessing a pressure ulcer and by communicating effectively with my patient other concerns have risen, such as the patient is struggling to wash and dress independently. It is my responsibility to then refer these patients to either Social services, or to other health care professionals, such as physiotherapists and occupational therapists. I am the patient's advocate, where I discuss and coordinate their care between themselves, their relatives and other health care professionals in order to maintain a high standard of care.

Palliative care is also a crucial part of my case load, where it is my responsibility to provide a duty of care to palliative patients which meets their wishes. Community nurses work with other members of the multi-disciplinary team to provide a care plan to relieve suffering in all areas of a patient's life and to meet their needs. This can involve discussing and relieving any anxieties felt by the patient or family members, administering medication via a syringe driver and providing appropriate equipment. These are all responsibilities of the community nurse. It can be emotionally challenging but also very rewarding when making a difference to their quality of life and providing support for their relatives.

As a Community Nurse I am primarily working on my own and it is therefore vital that I work on my own initiative. However, I'm also working as part of a supportive team, which includes a very knowledgeable and approachable Band 6, which makes a difference to my work load. Some days can be stressful; trying to complete the work load and ensuring that a high standard of care is constantly

Continued...

delivered. Some days my team can have a case load of about 13 visits or more each, and some of those visits will have 4 new patients, which means a lot more computer work to complete....We can easily spend the same amount of time on the computer as we do visiting patients, and there is never enough time in the day. I really enjoy Community Nursing; the variation of work, caring for people in their homes and preventing them from being admitted into hospital, the autonomy of community nursing and making a difference to patient's care. I certainly wouldn't change it for a high flying, well paid boring office job!

Alexandra French. nee Blaxell 2005/8.

The Edith Cavell Memorial.

Every year in October people from the Nursing profession join together to commemorate the life of Edith Cavell.



This picture from Barbara Baker 54/58 taken sometime between 1945-48 depicts District Nurses at the memorial outside the Cavell Home on Tombland.

Continued...

The Edith Cavell Memorial.

The photographs below are from the memorial service in October 2012.



New Lease of Life for Hospital Chapel



For patients (and nurses) at the old Norfolk and Norwich Hospital it was a place to pray and seek comfort, but for years it has stood empty.

However, the old chapel at the former hospital site could be set for a new lease of life, after plans were lodged to make it available for community life.

The chapel, a listed building which dates back to 1879, has been boarded-up since the site of the city's hospital was developed.

Charles Church Anglia, a division of Persimmon Homes, which transformed the old hospital buildings into homes, has lodged redevelopment plans with Norwich City Council.

The company is seeking permission to refurbish the interior of the chapel so it can be used by the community, with toilets and a kitchenette put in the 19th century building.

With the chapel a listed building, English Heritage has been consulted over the proposed changes and have sent a letter to City Hall stating that they have no comments to make over the plan.

Vicky Manthorpe from the Norwich Society, welcomed the refurbishment plans. She said "Fielden and Mason are conservation architects and I know they have been working on these plans for some time. It's nice to have something left from the old Hospital and we very glad to see an attempt to bring a building back into use.

Article by Dan Grimmer. Eastern Evening News 29th October 2012.

Photo by Steve Adams.

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Happier Memories of The Chapel



Memories from a retired Doctor

I was asked to write an article for your journal. Perhaps it would be best to tell you a little of my background. I was a medical student from 1967-1972 at the London Hospital Medical College (LHMC). I did a one month elective at the N&N. During that time I correctly diagnosed tuberculous epididymitis in a haemophiliac in Dougie George's clinic. My first job was as House Surgeon at the London Hospital (Mile End) after which I became House Physician at the West Norwich Hospital. The latter was in Chest Medicine (Drs. Sutton and Couch) and Geriatrics (Dr. Adams). After that I spent about nine months as SHO in Medicine in Bedford. Then I returned to Norwich as SHO in Obstetrics (August 1974-January 1975). This involved working with Tony Bentall, John Carron Brown, Roger Martin, Alan Byles and Moira Kelly. Any of you remember them? Then I became a partner in General Practice on Dereham Road, Norwich until July 1978. I decided that was not what I really wanted so I went to Nottingham to train in radiology until 1984, when I became a consultant at the James Paget Hospital.

Rather than trying to find one overwhelmingly interesting story, I thought I'd write about several tales which have stuck in mind. If the article is too long then I expect bits will be excised or perhaps split over more than one issue.

While I was a student, the most senior of the senior registrars said that he saw in OPD a girl of 15. Her mother demanded a termination for her, but the girl insisted she was not pregnant. On examination a head was appearing at the perineum! The senior registrar delivered the baby and the girl's mother got her way; the pregnancy was indeed terminated. He told another story of a woman complaining bitterly of a discharge. Her GP said all was well, but in desperation, after several consultations, sent her for a second opinion. In OPD nothing abnormal was found, but she insisted she had a discharge. The senior registrar told her that a small amount was completely normal and that if she had any less then she would squeak when she walked!

During my time on block 4 at the West Norwich, a lady of about 50 was admitted with vague symptoms, but she took to her bed and became paralysed. Initially nothing abnormal was found, except in the history. She was very religious, a Spiritualist I think, and her husband said she had been cursed by the lady next door, who was a witch. A psychiatrist, Dr. Noble, came to see her and pronounced her to be mentally normal. My bosses didn't believe that. Then she became unconscious.

That afternoon it was discovered that she had systemic lupus erythematosus. She failed to respond to very large doses of steroids, but began to improve on azathiaprine. She took a year to recover.

I saved one life while working on block 4. A farmer's wife was admitted and was very hypotensive with no obvious cause. I suspected septicaemia, took blood cultures and started antibiotics. The blood cultures grew a heavy growth of some organism. She recovered quickly and neither she nor her husband said 'thank you'. I guess we are all used to that.

I was in the staff rest room on the delivery suite of the maternity block at the N&N. It was 9pm on a wet and windy night. My wife, still in her duffel coat with the hood pulled up, came in to visit. The night superintendent, Miss Le Mesurier, walked in and said, "Oh, is this your brother?" The pectoral bulges, usually a dead give-away, were perhaps hidden by the thick coat.

One very wet winter night, 9pm on a Sunday, I was on-call in General Practice. There was a call to the West Earlham estate to a 16 year old girl, a patient of the other practice I was covering. Her mother said that her daughter had had colic for three days. The mother had gone to the chemist and bought "gripe water". On the Sunday evening, the daughter went to the toilet and called to her mother, "Mum, there's somefing comin' the uvver way." When I got there I found her in the lower of two bunk beds in a room about 12' long by about 6' wide. She was covered in an open weave blanket. Blood was smeared on the wall. The baby lay between her legs with the cord snaking up inside her. What would you have done?

After a time in Nottingham, I became senior registrar. One duty was to supervise the junior registrars. A new Indian registrar with very poor English was about to start doing a barium enema on a lady aged 29. In those days we worked to the 10-day rule, but the appointment staff and the radiographer and the nurse had forgotten to ask about her LMP. The registrar did ask and was told "about three weeks ago". So he looked for something that would allow him to proceed. "Are you on pill?" "No." "Do you have coil?" "No." "Have you been sterilised?" "No."

Then he looked her in the eye and said, "Any chance of sex?" The patient spluttered, "What?" The registrar repeated the question! The radiographer and nurse were unable to help since they had tears streaming down their faces. What he meant, of course, was 'had she had any opportunity for sex'; perhaps her husband was working away for several months.

Also in Nottingham was the A&E x-ray request form which said, "Please x-ray this policeman's left foot. Dropped accident sign on foot." Prior to a barium meal, a patient should be nil by mouth for several hours. First on the afternoon list at 2pm was a man in his early 20s. His stomach was full of fluid. Might he have gastric outlet obstruction? I asked when and what he had last drunk. The answer was "four pints of beer in the lunch hour".

At the James Paget Hospital (JPH), water started dripping through the ceiling in the corridor outside the adjacent office to mine. Someone put a bucket on the floor to catch the drips. The bucket was inspected when it was a quarter full. To everyone's horror it was very red, blood red. The urology theatre was immediately above and the newly laid floor was defective, allowing bladder irrigation water to seep through the floor and our ceiling. Just like a Hammer horror film.

I do like dabbling with languages and accents. I noticed that my next ultrasound patient had a very Middle Eastern name. I walked into the room and he looked the part. I said, "Salaam aleykum. Kiif halaq." He said, "kuloo kwois, shukran." I said, "Afwan." Not a word of English spoken. He must have been very surprised, but not as surprised as I was when he said, in a broad American accent, "Where did you learn your Arabic?" It turned out that his father was from the Middle East and his mother was American.

Many years ago I was performing a leg venogram on a lady who had just flown in from one of the southern states of the USA. She was here to look after her daughter who had just had a baby and had never been to the UK before. After a while I asked if she had difficulty understanding the local accent. By that I meant the Norfolk and Suffolk accent. She said it was very difficult for her to understand. Then I wondered if she meant my (pretty standard English) accent was difficult. Sheepishly, she said that I was also difficult to understand. With her agreement, I finished the procedure using my caricature version of an American accent. I asked if that had been any easier to understand. She beamed gratefully and said that it had been much easier.

I hope there was something of interest for you there and I hope you haven't been too shocked, but that's the way it happened.

Philip Lawrence Consultant Radiologist (retired)

A Visit to Cromer Hospital



During the summer it was agreed by the Nurses League that surplus mugs celebrating the 80th Anniversary of the Norfolk and Norwich Nurses League be given to trained staff at the new Cromer Hospital.

Elizabeth Blaxell and I arranged to meet with Helen Lloyd, the Operational Manager of the new Hospital to receive them. Whilst we were there she kindly showed us around the new hospital which has been built on the site of the old hospital.

The new hospital is light and airy, but has no beds! The accident and emergency department is Nurse led. The new clinics cater for children, diabetes, ophthalmic, vascular and 8 renal and dialysis machines, which they are hoping to increase to 12.

We both enjoyed our most informative visit and admired the new building. We were given an invitation to the open day, but unfortunately were unable to attend.

Pat LeGrice.

I'M FINE, THANK YOU

There is nothing the matter with me.
I'm as healthy as I can be.
I have arthritis in both my knees
And when I talk, I talk with a wheeze.

My pulse is weak, and my blood is thin
But I'm awfully well for the shape I'm in.
Arch supports I have for my feet
Or I wouldn't be able to walk down the street.

Sleep is denied me night after night,
But every morning I find I'm alright.
My memory is failing, my head's in a spin
But I'm awfully well for the shape that I'm in.

The moral is this, as my tale I unfold,
That for you and me, we're all growing old,
It's better to say "I'm fine" with a grin
Than to let folks know the shape we are in.

How do I know that my youth is all spent?
Well, my "get up and go" just got up and went.
But I really don't mind when I think with a grin
Of all the grand places my "get up" has been.

Old age is golden; I've heard it said;
But sometimes I wonder as I get into bed
With my ears in the drawer, my teeth in a cup,
My eyes on the table until I wake up.

Ere sleep overtakes me, I say to myself,
"Is there anything else I could lay on the shelf?"
When I was young my slippers were red,
I could kick my heels right over my head.

When I was older my slippers were blue,
But still I could dance the whole night through.
Now I am older, my slippers are black,
I walk to the store and puff my way back.

I get up each morning and dust off my wits
And pick up the paper to read the obits,
If my name is still missing, I know I'm not dead
Then I fix me some breakfast and go back to bed.

Changes to Membership

New Members

Ms Carol Brand 1970-72

Mrs Kathy Carter nee Bruce 1967-70

Mrs June Patterson nee Francis 1970-72

Lee Siw Woodhouse nee Shu (Service)

Deceased

Mrs Catherine Edwards nee Kelly 1943-46

Mrs Dorothy Piper nee Sweet 1941-45

Mrs Mary Richardson nee Comyn 1938-42

Resigned

Mrs Sylvia Beuzekamp

Mrs Susan Bryce

Deleted as no payment in 2011 or 2012

Mrs M Bray

Mrs Christine Brown

Mrs Rhona Drew

Mrs Sandra Harmer

Mrs J Harvey

Mrs Marian Lusher

Mrs S Pettit

Mrs Janet Ramjeet

Mrs M Swan

Obituary

Dorothy Piper nee Sweet 1941-45

Mary Sago kindly let us know of Dorothy's death. Mary and Dorothy trained together and always sat together in school. They became firm friends and had stayed best friends ever since, always being there for each other. Dorothy had been in poor health for sometime. She leaves a son and three grandsons.

2012 AGM SNIPPETS



