



Woodward, known then as Nurse Garrish, on Jipp, the first horse she ever rode, and Toby, the first dog she ever owned

Nursing... 'was never just a job'

By Pamela den Ouden

In the 60 years since Vi Woodward entered nurses' training at the Vancouver General Hospital, there have been a lot of changes in nursing. But one thing that hasn't changed are people nurses deal with. "We still have two arms, two legs, the same circulation," said Woodward, who first came to Cecil Lake in 1938 to staff the Red Cross outpost there. "Babies still come the same way as when I was delivering them."

"I'll never be anything else. It was never just a job to me. I don't remember ever hesitating to give first aid. I feel I've done something with my life. Nursing is such a wonderful profession."

She said she'd originally wanted to be a doctor, but didn't have the wherewithal to finance her training. "People used to ask me why I didn't go back to school and become a doctor, but in the Dirty Thirties, you just didn't

before in my life, but someone brought me a horse from the abbey, and I learned to ride."

Woodward said she was riding along one day and saw a large black animal in the road. "Nobody told me the horses were scared of bears. Just as I realized what it was, my horse turned around and we were going the other way."

She said the community was very supportive, and even after she had married and had children of her own, and was no longer nursing at the outpost, many still looked to her as the nurse.

"There were lots of families in the area. You could always stop for lunch."

She said one of the bright spots in the community was the three young men who taught at the schools. She married Welsh homes-teacher Dick Woodward in May 1941.

Woodward's reminiscences were filled with names of pioneering families of the area: Dr. Kearney, with whom she worked; Monica Storry; Agnes Ailing; Red Cross nurse M.



Woodward with North Peace Pioneer Museum display of bed, uniform and instruments from the Red Cross Outpost Hospital in the Thirties

doctor, but in the Dirty Thirties, you just didn't go back."

After graduation from the three-year nursing program at VGH, Woodward said she worked parttime, when work was available. "I was 'night float' on the maternity ward there and worked on the men's surgical ward, and that experience stood me in good stead later."

When she saw an ad for a nurse for Red Cross outpost nursing services, she applied and the next month was on her way by train from Vancouver to Edmonton and Dawson Creek. From there the mail truck took her to Fort St. John.

"This was quite an adventure I had set out on," said Woodward. "It was so cold, about thirty below."

One of the many bachelors in the area, George Lin, arrived with his homemade cutter and team of horses to take her the last 18 miles to Cecil Lake. "He gave me a canvas hood that had just a slit cut for the eyes and told me that would break the wind."

Woodward said the trip across the Beatton hills took about 12 hours. "The challenge was there. I don't think anything could have deterred me."

Woodward said melting snow for water and keeping the wood stoves going became part of her daily routine. The outpost was not only the medical centre of the community, but also the social and religious centre, with a chapel upstairs. "The Cecil Lake church hadn't been built yet," said Woodward.

Her duties included visiting homes and three area schools. "I had never been on a horse

Storrs; Agnes Ailing, Red Cross nurse; Mrs. Groger and Mrs. Cuthbert of the Women's Institute; Miss Claxton and the Brebandary Goff Outpost Hospital. "There'll be some oldtimers who will remember that one," she said.

She remembers meeting Father Emile Jungbluth as he made his rounds. "He'd have his goggles on, and come along his motorcycle. My horse jumped the ditch to get out of his way."

Woodward said a large part of her job was learning how to cope. "You had to use a lot of instinct in those days. You had to improvise. You might not have had the knowledge or equipment you needed."

One of her most memorable experiences was delivering a set of premature twins that weighed three pounds and three pounds, two ounces, one cold winter night in December. "We only had Aladdin lamps. I'd feed the babies with a medicine dropper."

Woodward said many people she has nursed over the years still keep in touch with her. "There's lots of 'my' kids around. Some of the kids I delivered are grandparents now."

She said she still has the letter she received from the Red Cross when she left the outpost in 1941. "They paid me one month's salary as a bonus, and that was \$120."

After the war, the family farmed in Cecil Lake and then in 1959 moved into Fort St. John. "Dick took over as yardman at the Department of Highways, and I went back to nursing, at the hospital," said Woodward. She retired in 1972, but said she is still a nurse.

JAN 31, 1990

DUP



LESS THAN a day old, baby Mason Franklin Sheh sports a bib that tells the world, "I'm a born non-smoker." The registered nurses of the Fort St. John General Hospital and the Peace River Health Unit gave the bibs to all babies born at the hospital during National Non-Smoking Week. Making sure the bib looks just right is Barbara Godberson, RN, and Franklin's mom, Donna.



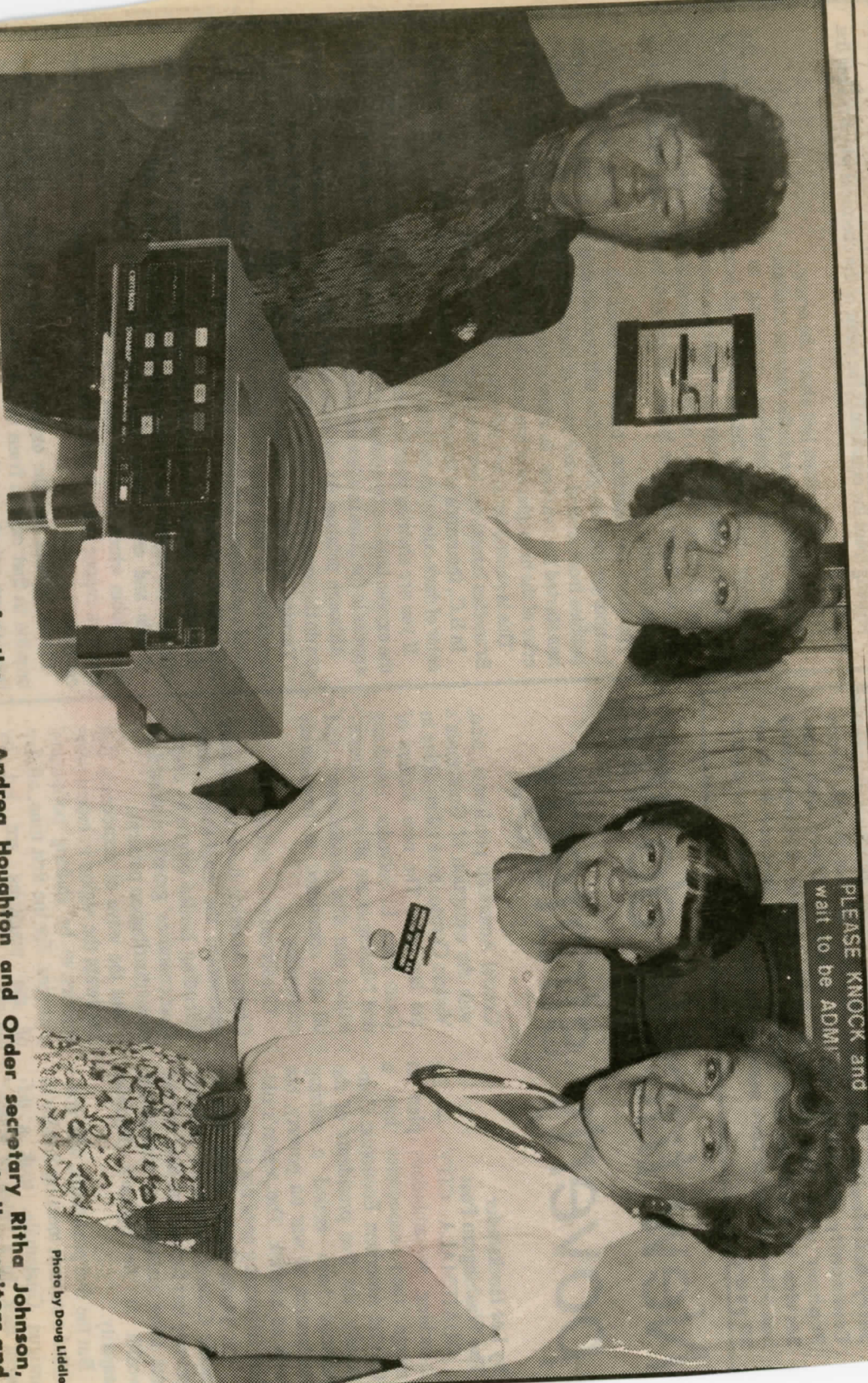
HOSPITAL
OCT 5, 1990 DJP

Linda Gentles of the Fort St. John Hospital Board of Trustees appeared before the Royal Commission

on Health Care and Costs on Thursday to discuss the problems facing the hospital.

Photo by Paul Cowley

PLEASE KNOCK and wait to be ADMITTED



The Order of the Eastern Star donated \$5500 to pay for the Fort St. John General Hospital's new intensive care monitor, Wednesday. Joan Lietka (left) of the Order, pediatrics' head nurse Muriel Bryant, director of nursing

Andrea Houghton and Order secretary Ritha Johnson, stand with the machine which automatically monitors and records blood pressure and pulse rates. Money was raised through the Order's annual quilt sale and bazaar.

Photo by Doug Liddle

LOCAL

Candy Stripers put in over 2,000 hours

By Bhreandain Clugston
Alaska Highway News
The Fort St. John Candy Stripers capped off their year with an awards ceremony at the Fort St. John Senior Citizens' Association Hall on Sunday.

The Candy Stripers, so named for their candy cane colored uniforms, were rewarded for more than 2,000 hours of volunteer service with the hospital and other health related organizations.

In their 23rd year, the Candy Stripers are junior volunteers ages 14 and up who lend their services to local health organizations. The Candy Stripers make beds, change

diapers and serve on intermediate wards. Volunteer co-ordinator Donna Jeffrey, a former Candy Striper herself, said the program provides helpful work experience for the volunteers.

Jeffrey said that while only 20 to 30 per cent of the girls seek future

employment in health related fields, this year's volunteers have shown greater interest in making their careers in health related services. Jennifer Gibson was awarded the Peace Lutheran Care Centre award and Trishia Bullar won the Julia Hellum award for personal quality,

attitude and maturity for her volunteer work. Dana Lennox was awarded the hospital bursary. Presented with pins for 300 hours of volunteer service were Trishia

Buller and Christina Field. Bullar has put in 316.25 hours in her four years with the program. Field has logged 318.75 hours in two years.

MORE RESULTS TUESDAY



DUP

JUN 11, 1990

Photo by Scott Crowson

To mark the beginning of the Candy Strippers annual capping and awards ceremony on Sunday, the eternal flame was passed from girl to girl. Here, Marilyn Thiessen (right) watches as Bobbi Tompkins passes on the flame to Tammy Gwilt's candle. See story on page 3.

DUP



Photo by Pamela den Ouden

Kay Unger, left, pins on Candy Striper Sadie Walper's cap

Candy Stripers get their caps

Junior volunteers were honored at the 23rd annual capping and awards ceremony of the Fort St. John Candy Stripers.

Co-ordinator Donna Jeffrey said the girls, who are between 14 and 18 years old, have given more than 2,000 hours in volunteer time since last October at the Fort St. John General Hospital, the Peace Lutheran Care Centre, and the Child Development Centre.

Trish Buller won the Julia Hellum award for excellence. Volunteers were awarded caps and pins for hours served. For 250 hours: Trishia Buller, Christina Field, Dana Lennox. For 200 hours: Stephanie Allen, Jennifer Gibson, Noemi Loro. For 150 hours: Tanis Carl, Renee Gwilt, Tammy Gwilt, Jody Palmer, Bobbi Tompkins.

Lila Blackwell, Treena Crook, Marilyn Thiessen and Sadie Walper.

Irene Ross, infant development consultant from the Child Development Centre, spoke to the volun-

teers about opportunities in physiotherapy. Andrea Houghton, director of nursing at the hospital and Kay Unger, president of the hospital auxiliary, presented the awards.