

JAN 14, 1987

1987



photo by Donna Dirksen

IT WAS A GREAT way to start the year Thursday, as Colleen Babchyshyn and Dave Dodds experienced the birth of the first baby of the

year. A beautiful little girl weighing six pounds and 15 ounces, Brittany Babchyshyn, was born at 5:25 New Year's morning.

W/P



SHE MAY not have been the New Year's Baby but Terri Jean Maxwell, or more accurately her parents Danielle MacRae and Howard Maxwell were presented with a \$25 gift certificate and a

silver spoon by Christine Oz Auger, left, president of the Fort St. John Women's Institute. Weighing eight pounds and two ounces, Terri Jean was born at 6:40 p.m., New Year's Eve.



PIONEER NURSES Honored: back, from left; Marge Garrett, Elanor Lawrence, Alice, O'Neil and Vi Woodward. Front Winnifred Johnston, Agnes Scheck, Barb Godberson, Esther Fisher and Charlotte Artemenko.

Nurses celebrate 75th anniversary

JAN 7, 1987

On December 10th, 1986 the North Peace Chapter of R.N.A.B.C. (Registered Nurses Association of B.C.) held a special Christmas dinner in order to celebrate the 75th Anniversary of R.N.A.B.C. in 1987. To commemorate this event, chapter members decided to pay tribute to the pioneer nurses of Fort St. John. Each pioneer nurse, honoured with a corsage was introduced with a brief history of nursing education and career and then asked to share some of the most memorable moments of her nursing practice.

All chapter members present felt a deep sense of pride in having the opportunity to meet these courageous women, who helped build nursing practice to what it is today. These pioneer nurses not only contributed their nursing skills and expertise but also remained in the Peace River country to raise their families and participate as citizens of this community.

The memoirs of the pioneer nurses were both humorous and informative, and we the N.P. Chapter members would like to share some of these anecdotes with the community at large.

VIOLET WOODWARD (nee Garrish)

Vi graduated from Vancouver General Hospital in 1933. Vi, an adventurous young single nurse with a sincere desire to provide nursing services to the north country was employed at the Red Cross Outpost Hospital at Cecil Lake in November, 1937. Vi worked on and off at the outpost until it closed in 1954, at which time she continued her nursing career at the Providence Hospital and was head nurse on the maternity ward until her retirement in 1972. In addition, Vi has served two consecutive terms as a director of the R.N.A.B.C. and has received an achievement award for this. In 1987, Vi will have achieved 50 years of active involvement with the R.N.A.B.C. in the Fort St. John area.

Vi remembers her trip from Vancouver to the Cecil Lake Outpost in November, 1937. She was met by the mail truck at Dawson Creek which took her to Fort St. John. She didn't have too much time to dwell on her family's opposition to her acceptance of such a far northern post between trying to keep warm in -40 degrees C temperatures and coping with her suitcase which had been run over by the mail truck. She continued

on to perform many valuable nursing services including the safe delivery of a set of very premature twins who have since grown to be strong healthy men.

MARGE GARRETT (nee Hunter)

Marge graduated from St. Paul's Hospital in 1937 and received a diploma in Public Health Nursing from U.B.C. in 1938. She arrived to Fort St. John in August, 1938 as the only Public Health Nurse in the area. Marge lived and worked from the home of Mr. and Mrs. Braden Herron until 1940 when she married and retired to raise her son.

Marge, who was responsible for providing public health services to 14 or 15 schools over a wide territory, had never driven a car prior to her arrival. She recalls "We never had a Department of Highways back then....if you got stuck, in the snow or mud you just had to get out and walk. When the weather was too cold to drive, you'd hire a "cutter"."

CHARLOTTE ARTEMENKO (nee Curtice)

Charlotte graduated from Miseracordia Hospital in Edmonton in 1938. As a young single nurse she arrived in Fort St. John in 1939 and worked in all areas of nursing at the Province Hospital until 1963. With the advent of the new hospital, she is fondly remembered as the recovery room nurse there, until her retirement in 1978.

Charlotte recalls the 24-hour train trip from Edmonton to Dawson Creek very well. It was there, sitting in the one passenger car on a freight train that she first heard the news of W.W. II's beginning.

She remembers her experiences at the old Province Hospital as being part of "one big happy family." Whenever Dr. Brown arrived at the hospital, the nursing sisters vanished into thin air, leaving Charlotte to deal with him. "I still don't know why the sister seemed to be frightened of Dr. Brown," says Charlotte. Perhaps it was because Charlotte is just the type of person who gets along well with everyone. During her spare time, Charlotte would borrow one of Father Jungbluth's horses to explore the beautiful Peace River Country.

AGNES SCHECK

Agnes graduated from Vegreville General Hospital in 1940, and two months later arrived at the Province Hospital. After her marriage, in 1943, Agnes served in the U.S.A. Medical

Agnes recalls the circumstances of her work at the U.S. Medical Corps...one of the Doctors wanted to operate and asked, "Where's Scheck?" She'd gone to Fort St. John with the mail truck was the answer. "There was hell to pay" says Agnes, "when the Doctor had to wait till I got back before he could operate." Agnes shared a rather humorous panic situation that occurred while she was working at the old Providence Hospital. In addition to caring for her patients, Agnes was responsible for keeping the wood-burning furnace stoked up in the basement of the hospital. While loading the wood stove with the heavy four foot logs, one log got stuck 1/2 way into the stove which then began smoking heavily. Of course the patients panicked when they thought there was a fire. "You had to do everything" says Agnes "you had to be O.R. assistant, deliver babies, keep the wood stove burning and make porridge in the morning."

ELEANOR LAWRENCE

Eleanor graduated from the Royal Columbian Hospital in 1946. She arrived to Fort St. John in 1947 and worked in all areas of the Providence Hospital on and off between giving birth to five babies. In 1959, the family moved to Vancouver, where Eleanor continued her education at U.B.C. and worked as a Public Health Nurse in Richmond until 1976. In 1976, she returned to Fort St. John and was employed at the Fort St. John Health Unit. After a series of promotions over the past 10 years, Eleanor is currently the Peace River Health Unit Manager for all five Health Units in the North and South Peace River District. Eleanor, was instrumental in the formation of the Graduate Nurses Group formed in 1956, and later, in 1977/78 served as vice president of the North Peace Chapter of R.N.A.B.C. in Fort St. John.

Eleanor recalls that the five-hour flight from Vancouver to Fort St. John in a small DC-3 left her feeling rather light headed. She stepped out of the plane and onto the snow and mud wearing only light pump shoes for footwear. She was married that same afternoon. About five or days after her arrival, a heavy knock on the door revealed a "Mrs. Murray" (Ma Murray), demanding to know why Eleanor was not working at the hospital, as they were so acutely short of nurses. Eleanor explained

Nurses mark 75th anniversary

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graduated in 1950. Later, she returned to acquire a Public Health Diploma. She has travelled extensively, in a variety of nursing fields during her career, including Prince George, Trail, Fort Nelson, Fort St. John, Calgary, Ponoka, Quebec and California. Esther is currently employed at the Child Development Centre and for the past four years has been responsible for the Infant Development Programme.

Esther recalls receiving a letter from Sister Marcellus at the old Providence Hospital urging her to come and help fill the void of nurses. So, in 1950, Esther and four other nurses headed north from Vancouver on an adventurous trip in an old car to answer her calling. Esther says, "After working for a while at the Providence Hospital and Public Health, I found I just wasn't ready to settle down." so she continued on in search of greener pastures. "I'm glad I did, I wouldn't miss any one of my nursing experiences...." states Esther.

WINIFREDE JOHNSTON

Winnie graduated from St. Joseph's School of Nursing in 1946. Prior to her arrival to Fort St. John in 1954, Winnie was employed for two years at Smithers, two years as an outpost nurse in the Yukon Territories as well as a variety of other nursing positions at Lower Post, St Anne's Academy in Victoria and at Dawson Creek Hospital. Winnie is fondly remembered as the Head Nurse on Pediatrics Ward for the last 12 years of her career until her retirement in 1984.

Winnie remembers vividly, her 1st day of work at the old Providence Hospital. She arrived to work for her Sunday evening shift wearing a freshly starched white uniform as well as white shoes and stockings. She was on her own that day as the nursing sisters had gone to Dawson

Creek and the Doctor had gone on a fishing trip. Before too long, she was faced with the challenge of her career having to cope with the results of a head on collision that occurred on the highway, involving 10 people. The dead, critically and seriously injured men, women and children were transported from the accident scene in a plumbing van which doubled as an ambulance. Winnie's description of her first day at work made us all realize the ingenuity, inner strength, and nursing skills that were required of the pioneer nurses to meet such heavy responsibility successfully.

BARB GODBERSON (nee Loucks)

Barb graduated in 1953 from the Oshawa General Hospital in Ontario, with the highest award for academic excellence. Barb has worked in every area of nursing including supervision both at the old Providence Hospital and the new Fort St. John Hospital. Barb has been an active member of the R.N.A.B.C. and has served as Chapter President several times.

Barb recalls touring the P.N.E. while employed at the Royal Columbian Hospital in 1954, where she picked up a few travel brochures on Fort St. John. Seeking the challenge and adventure of nursing in the far north, Barb decided Fort St. John would be a good stopover point, so she flew up from Vancouver in 1954. Landing in the mud, complete with suede shoes, hat and gloves, Barb was not impressed with the weather conditions nor what she found at the outpost hospital. However, Barb soon learned that nursing in the north had some definite advantages including the fact that the hospital was the only place in town with running water, so nurses were fortunate few who could enjoy hot showers. As well, working night shift at the Providence Hospital, provided an interesting form of entertainment in that the view from the top floor of

the hospital gave an excellent opportunity to observe the comings and goings of Fort St. John in the wee hours of the morning.

Henry the cat, the Providence live-in pet who doubled as a "mouser" created great havoc on several occasions as the nurses scrambled to hide him from the doctors view.

Barb met and married her husband Don, raised her family and continues to work on the maternity ward at Fort St. John Hospital.

EARLY NURSING IN THE NORTH PEACE:

1920 — Trained nurses from England giving volunteer nursing care: Kathleen Pck — Hudson's Hope; May Birley — Fort St. John.

1921 — Pouce Coupe Red Cross Outpost Hospital (closest hospital).

March 1930 — Grandhaven Red Cross Outpost Hospital. First RN in the area — hired from England: Miss Anne Roberts, R.N. (the late Mrs. Jim Young).

September, 1930 — Dr. W.A. Brown sets up practice in Fort St. John.

1931 — Sisters of Charity of Order of Providence established the Fort St. John Providence Hospital. First nursing sisters: Sr. Catherine de Bologne; Sr. Alfred of the Cross; Laura Murphy, RN (later known as Sister Marcellina).

1932 — Miss Elinor Claxton, RN, from England to the Grandhaven Outpost Hospital.

1935 — Grandhaven Outpost Hospital closed and relocated at Cecil Lake — Gough Memorial Outpost Hospital (with Miss Claxton).

1935 — Dr. Granet Kearney sets up practice in Fort St. John.

1935 — Peace River Health Unit established: Lucille Malkin, PHN — lives and works out of Mr. & Mrs. Braden Herron's home. Dr. Cull, MHO from Pouce Coupe, covers this area.

1936 — Miss Anges Ayling, RN, from

England joins Miss Claxton at Cecil Lake.

March 1937 — Miss Claxton dies of pneumonia.

November, 1937 — Miss Violet Garrish, RN (now Vi Woodward) arrives at Cecil Lake Outpost to work with Miss Ayling (retired in 1972).

1938 — Marge Hunter (now Marge Garrett) replaces Lucille Malkin as PHN (retired 1940).

1939 — Charlotte Curtice, RN (now Charlotte Artemenko) joins staff at Providence Hospital (retired in 1978).

1940 — Anges Sopchychyn, RN (now Agnes Scheck), to work at Providence Hospital (retired in 1979). Sister Philomena arrives.

1945 — Dr. George Cormack sets up practice in Fort St. John (left in 1957).

1947 — Eleanor Lawrence starts at Providence Hospital (now Peace River Health Unit Manager).

1950 — Esther Fisher (then Esther Neitherfield) starts at Providence Hospital (now Infant Stim at CDC).

1954 — Winefride "Winnie" Johnston starts at Providence Hospital (retired in 1984).

1954 — Barbara Loucks (now Barbara Godberson) starts at Providence Hospital (now Maternity, FSJ General).

1957 — Alice O'Neil starts on Maternity at Providence Hospital (retired in 1985).

1957 — Peace River Health Unit opened in Provincial Government Building. Public Health Nursing services to Indian Reserves in Peace River Area.

1957 — Drs.: K. Dixon, G. Westover and G. Stefanik here.

1963 — New Fort St. John Providence Hospital Opens (same site).

1973 — Sisters of Charity of Order of Providence turn over hospital to community — now Fort St. John General Hospital.

January, 1974 — Rotary Health Centre opens (Peace River Health Unit).

that her uniforms hadn't yet arrived from Vancouver. Ma Murray replied "I'll take care of that", and the next day, Eleanor was working at the old Providence Hospital with a hospital gown tied on over her street clothes. ESTHER FISHER (nee Neitherfield) Esther came to Blueberry (now Wonowon) with her family in 1945. She went on to take her training at Vancouver General Hospital and

Corps as the head of surgery department at the Kerr Military Hospital, eight miles north of Fort Nelson. After the war, she resumed work at the old Providence Hospital. Agnes was head nurse in the Emergency Department for the last 13 years of her employment until retiring in 1979. Agnes chuckles "Well I came to B.C. for the big money as nurses were being paid \$45.00 per month!"

her journey from Fort St. John to Cecil Lake in a cutter, a 16 mile distance which took from noon until midnight. When Vi arrived, she was informed that she would be on her own for the weekend and thus was left in charge of the outpost, the care of horses, dogs, etc., as well as hosting a W.I. (Women's Institute) meeting. Well says Vi "I'd never heard of W.I. in my life." Not only did Vi manage to cope with all of this, but she continued

1987
JANUARY



PROVINCIAL EMPLOYEES in the North Peace have one of the highest rates of participation in a program to donate to charities through volunteer payroll deductions. In a recent donation, June Davidson, ministerial assistant to the Honourable Tony Brummet, left, presents two cheques to Colette Blanchette, representative of the hospital auxillary. Total donations to the auxillary from government employees in 1986 amounted to \$501.64. HOSPITAL JAN 13, 1987



KINETTES DONATED proceeds from last fall's fur coat raffle to the maternity ward of Fort St. John hospital. Presenting \$1000 which will go towards the purchase of a doppler fetal heart monitor. Trudy Dakus, left to nurse B. Godberson of the ward. FEB 24, 1987

1987
MARCH



RESIDENTS ON the extended care floor of Fort St. John Hospital for the the Rick Hansen Man in Motion Tour by staging a walk-a-thon of their own through March. Each stroll down the hallway and back accounts for another turtle on the chart. The more turtles, the more money.

Hospital staff are asking the community for their support in making pledges. Shown is Janice Frezell, activity co-ordinator, left, Tom Easton, Kelli Germain, physiotherapist, and Annie Kazuba.

FEB 11, 1987



ON BEHALF of the local chapter of the Canadian Diabetes Association, president Pappy Galbreath recently presented Janice Blaskovits,

head nurse of the medical-surgical unit at the Fort St. John General Hospital with a blood monitor valued at \$200.

Hospital restricts smoking

The Fort St. John General Hospital Board of Trustees, has decided that the Hospital will restrict smoking.

With the help of the medical staff, a program has been designed and will be implemented in phases. Phase 1 will be in effect on July 1, 1987 and consists of the following restrictions on smoking:

- 1) No visitor smoking
- 2) No cigarette sales

3) Bed-ridden patients may smoke only under a physician's orders and only with the consent of roommates.

Smoking cessation programs will be developed as soon as possible in order to assist any staff member with the desire to quit smoking.

The Board will implement Phase 2 on January 1, 1988, which will further restrict smoking. We will inform the public as details are finalized.

The trustees said in a news release if is not their intention to inconvenience anyone.

"However as smoking is considered to be hazardous to one's health and as health costs continue to increase, the Board feels that it has no choice but to follow the lead of several companies, large and small, and help to promote a smoke free environment."

JUN 22, 1987

JUN 12, 1987.



CANDYSTRIPER CAPPING ceremony was held last Sunday at the Senior Citizens Hall. Attending and receiving various recognition for service were: Standing from left: Trishia Buller, Shannon Buckley, Andrea Allen, Davide Loro, Charlene Neufeld, Debbie LeBeau, Laurie, Mast,

Cheryl Jakubowski. Seated left, Megan Allen, Dorothy Wiebe, Rosanne Vowels, and Christa Alexander. In photo at right outstanding Candystriper Shannon Buckley recieved the hospital auxillary Julia Hellum award, presented by Rosalyn Baron.

JUN 30, 1987
Hospital column

**COLUMN 1
JUNE 1987**

INTRODUCTION

Our hospital is a major part of our community. In an effort to make the public more aware of the many different areas of health care offered by our hospital, the Public Relations committee of the Board of Trustees will offer a monthly newspaper column featuring different departments, staff, special events and new equipment. We will start this month with an overview.

The Fort St. John General Hospital was opened in 1963. This is a multi-level care unit with a total of 96 beds. The hospital employs 223 people in different departments from surgery to carpentry. Our Hospital is proud to be served by volunteers in many areas including the Women's Auxiliary and the Candy Strippers.

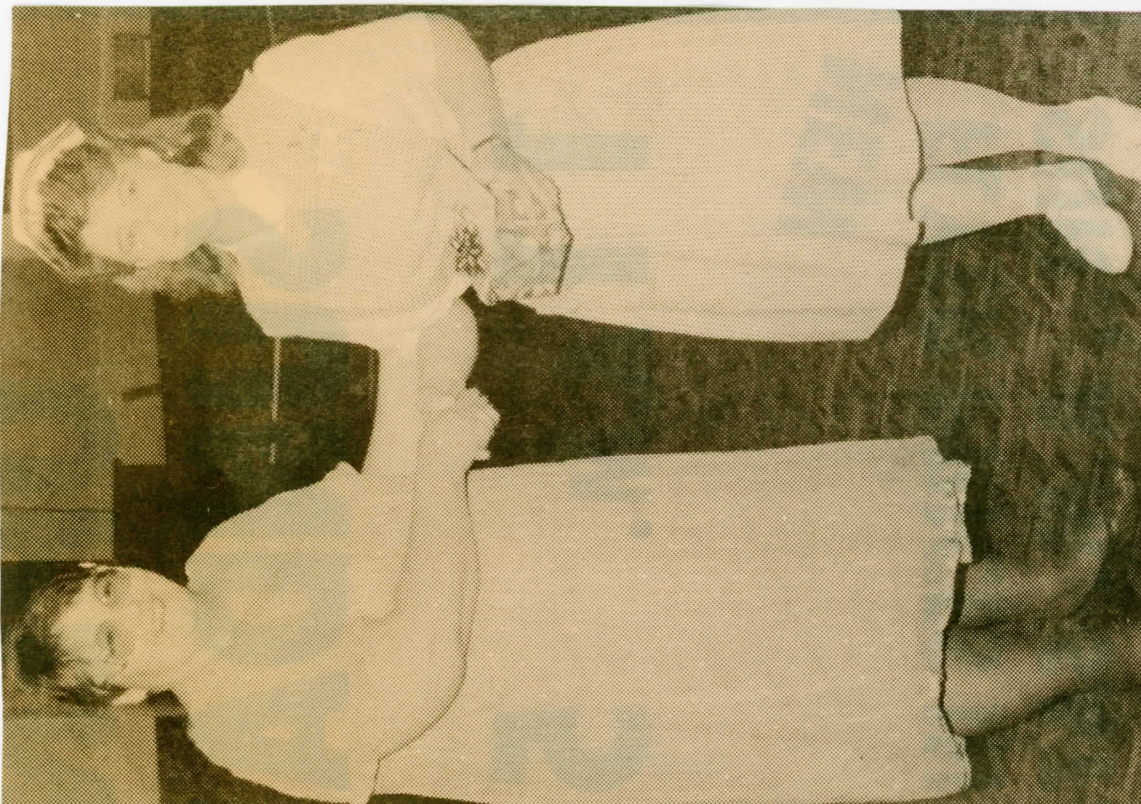
Each department has an individual department head and the day to day running of the hospital is handled by the administrator and his assistant.

An elected Board of Trustees is entrusted to direct Hospital policy and is the vital link between the Hospital and the public. Board members are elected at the Annual Meeting of the Hospital Society. You must be a Society Member for at least 1 month prior to the Annual Meeting in order to vote.

The Fort St. John Hospital is an institution to be proud of and is an integral part of the community. Our Hospital endeavors to provide the best possible health care for Fort St. John and the surrounding area.

We on the Board of Trustees sincerely hope that the occasions which you will actually use our facility are few and far between and wish to take this opportunity to wish everyone good health.

**Linda Gentles
Chairperson
Public Relations Committee
Fort St. John General Hospital
Board of Trustees**



Hospital news

COLUMN 1
JUNE 1987

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Linda Gentles
Chairperson
Public Relations Committee
Fort St. John General Hospital
Board of Trustees

JUN 3, 1987

Hospital auxiliary

The Fort St. John Auxiliary to the Fort St. John General Hospital was formed in 1932, the hospital was then called Providence Hospital. Mrs. C.M. Finch was the first president.

The auxiliary operates a Gift Shoppe in the front lobby of the hospital and offers many other services such as: Rental of TV's, Taking Baby Pictures and Making Bracelets for new born infants. Members also do haircare on Extended Care Wards.

One of our major fund raisers is the Fall Bazaar which we hold. Funds from these projects have purchased a variety of equipment for the hospital the last 55 years. Most recently 1983 — \$23,131.56 was spent for the Helipad and the Patio off Extended Care.

In 1986, \$14,000.00 was spent on a Blood Pressure Monitor, and an Examination Table. In 1986, we also purchased 4 wheelchairs at a cost of \$3,400.00. So far in 1987 we have also purchased 2 more wheelchairs at a cost of \$1,900.00.

At the present time there are 25 members and six life members. Our meetings are held on the third

Monday of each month at 7:30 p.m. at the hospital. Any one who would like more information please feel free to call Rosalynn Baron, 785-4712.

MILLIONS FOR HEALTH CARE

The British Columbia Association of Hospital Auxiliaries reports that in 1986 alone, Hospital Auxiliaries contributed \$2,449,801.00 and 1,255,724 volunteer hours to the health care facilities they serve.

Do You Know that there are 124 hospital auxiliaries in B.C. having a total membership of over 11,000 men and women?

Do You Know that there are over 1600 teenagers, sponsored by hospital auxiliaries, volunteering in health care facilities as Candy Stripers and Cadets?

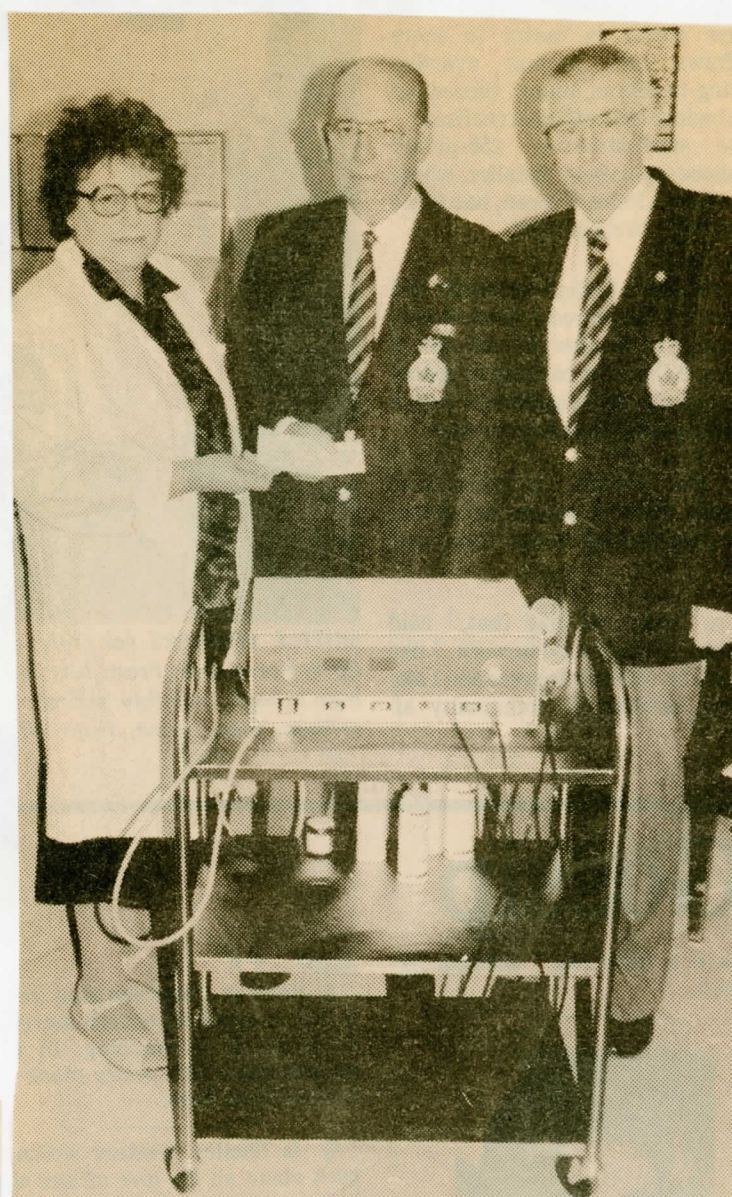
Together, these volunteers help ensure that the people in your community receive the best hospital care possible.

Millions of Dollars for equipment and comfort!

Millions of Hours volunteered by members!

Millions of people benefit!

APR 30, 1987



FORT ST. JOHN Legion showed its community spirit last week with a cheque donation to the hospital. Presenting \$2500 to Rosemary Wheeler, Director of Rehabilitation Nursing is Frank Warde, centre, and Russ Campbell. The money went towards the purchase of a Sonaplus Ultrasound Unit, a valuable tool for the treatment of sports and other injuries. Besides treating tendinitis and back pain, the machine can reduce swelling and pain, increase the blood supply and relax muscle spasm. It can also soften scar tissue.

AUG 31, 1987

1987
DECEMBER

Hospital expands training

Under the co-ordination of Andrea Houghton, Director of Nursing, practical work experience will be provided within the Fort St. John General Hospital for three different groups of Students.

This will be an expansion of the present perceptorship program, which provides Graduating Nurses from New Caledonia College in Prince George, a six-week practicum, working with a selected Registered Nurse on staff at the hospital. First year nursing students gain experience by assisting the hospital Nursing Staff with Long Term Care Residents during the summer months.

On January 1, 1988 the first year of a Nursing Program will be offered at the Dawson Creek Campus of Northern Lights College. Students

will complete their program at B.C.I.T. in Burnaby. Both Fort St. John and Dawson Creek Hospitals will be providing clinical experience for Student Nurses enrolled in this program.

In addition, in conjunction with Northern Lights College, Fort St. John Campus, the Hospital is currently providing space and practical experience to students enrolled in the Long Term Care Aide Program. These students will complete their training in February, 1988, well in advance of the opening of expanded facilities at the Peace Lutheran Care Home.

We are presently faced with a nursing shortage which is Canada-wide, making it even more difficult

to attract professional staff to outlying areas such as Fort St. John. Hopefully these programs will encourage students to study and practice their chosen profession in this area, where they have grown up.

DEC 7, 1987

Hospital W.A.

The Hospital W.A. would like to thank all the people who helped

make their bazaar held Saturday, October 31 the success it was.

Special thanks to the Senior Citizens for their hall and kitchen.

The donors for the Lucky Seven prizes were: Babies, Buggies & Bears; P.F. Computercraft; Davidsion Brothers Construction; JA MAR Trucking; D & G Oil Services; Lens Electric; Ward Pontiac; Peace Country Rentals; and Action Concrete. Thank you to all Auxiliary members and Candy strippers for their help and to the public for their support.

The following are the prize winners: tea prize, Carolyn Kraus; afghan, Rollie Manuiquet; tree skirt, Pat Rouble; tray & coaster, Naomi Gardiner; crystal dish, Dawn Davies; flower arrangement, Cathy Kosick; geese pictures, Dinah Sutton; figurine, Alice Lock; Snugglie and Stack-Um (A Ly Byk Christmas arrangement), Kathy Sutton.

DEC 2, 1987
See you all next year!
Colette Blanchette

DEC 2, 1987

Local hospital officials visit recruitment fair

DEC 2, 1987

Mrs. Andrea Houghton, director of nursing and Mrs. Millie Asling, assistant administrator, represented the Fort St. John General Hospital in Vancouver in October at the first "recruitment fair" of its kind held to attract nurses, physiotherapists and other health care professionals to non-metropolitan areas of B.C.

The event was held on October 16 at the University of B.C. Campus. It was attended by more than 200 graduating students from UBC, the British Columbia Institute of Technology, Douglas College, Vancouver Community College, as well as some experienced professionals.

The fair, which was organized by the British Columbia Health Association (BCHA) was aimed specifically for health care agencies outside the Vancouver and Victoria metropolitan areas.

Funding assistance for this was provided by Canada Employment and Immigration Commission, the

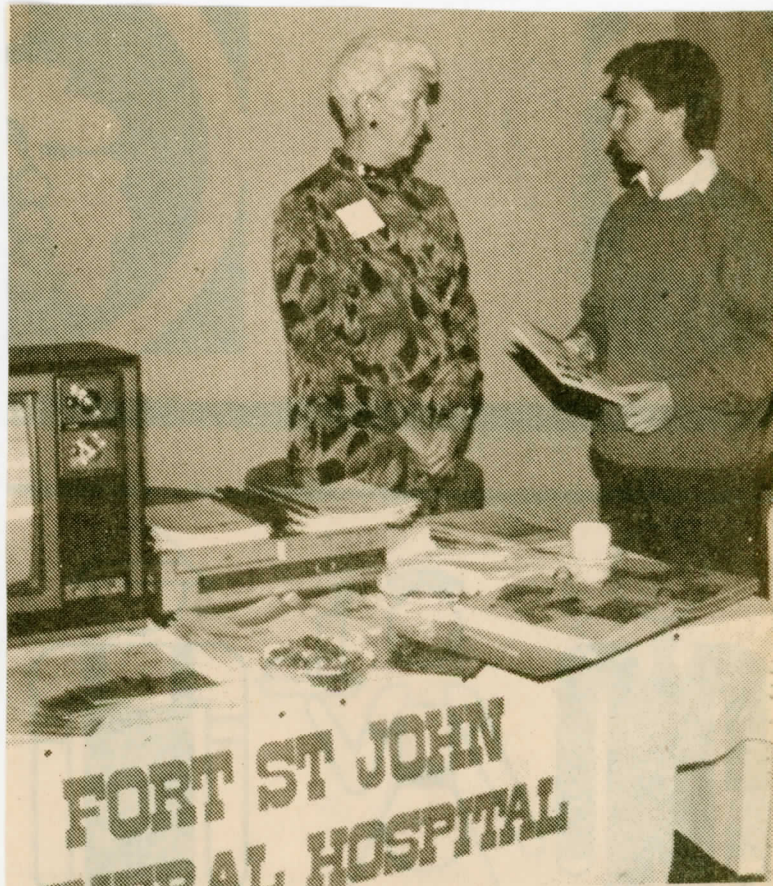
Registered Nurses Association of B.C., the Physiotherapists Association of B.C. as well as each participant. Support and assistance was given by all allied health care organizations and the ministry of health.

Each exhibitor set up a booth and with the use of videos, films, brochures, etc., was able to show the benefits of living and working in communities such as Fort St. John.

Although present vacancies were not filled as a result of our attendance, both Mrs. Houghton and Mrs. Asling felt it was beneficial in terms of being able to promote the area as a great place to live and work.

Our thanks to the community for providing information and materials for the booth.

It is too early to know how many potential applicants were found as a result but we are hopeful that students will remember Fort St. John when they graduate.



FORT ST. JOHN General Hospital assistant administrator Ms. Millie Asling talks to UBC Pharmacy Student Phil Emberley at the first BCHA-organized "Recruitment Fair" held at the University of British Columbia on October 16, which local hospital officials attended.