



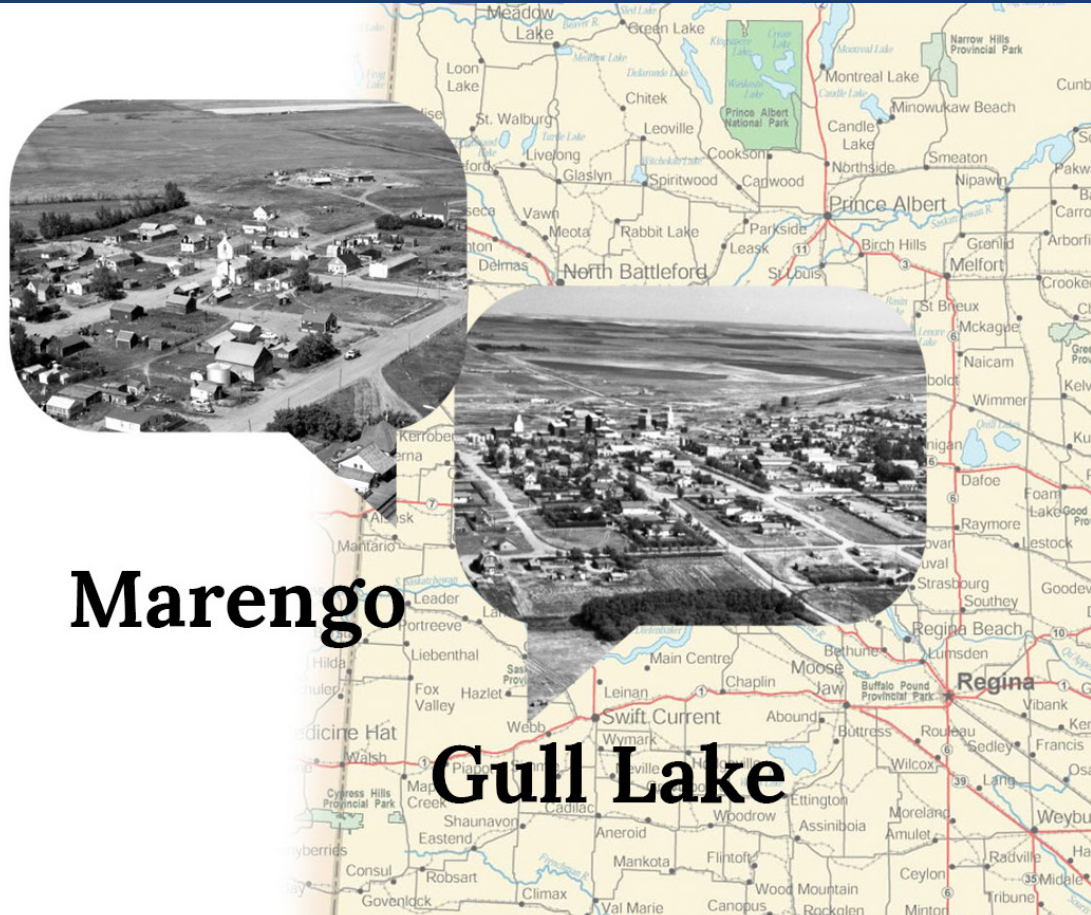
HOLY CROSS HOSPITAL SCHOOL OF NURSING

ALUMNI NEWSLETTER 2023-24

There must be something in the Saskatchewan water!

*20 grads
came from
these two
small towns!*

*Learn more
on the back
page*



EXECUTIVE REPORT
PAGE 2

ALL IN THE FAMILY
PAGE 7

TREASURER'S REPORT
PAGE 14

EXECUTIVE LISTING
PAGE 3

MEMBERSHIP REPORT
PAGE 10

ANCESTRY PROJECT
PAGE 16

SEPTEMBER LUNCHEON
PAGE 4

COURTESY COMMITTEE
PAGE 13

NURSES IN PROFILE
PAGE 18

EXECUTIVE REPORT

ELAINE MCKIEL ('61)



Overall, 2023 can go down in history as another successful year for our alumni as we carried on with what we like to do while also welcoming innovative pursuits. Being a non-election year, the Executive remained the same as published on our website. This group of committed volunteers, who do enjoy getting together, met in-person in February, August, and November and by email in May to review, discuss, and plan alumni activities. General Alumni meetings including the AGM were held in March, June, and November. The September luncheon at the Carriage House Inn repeated its 2022 success with many thanks to Pat Bowers, Pat Jeffery, and Marie Sushelnitsky.

The number of people at the general meetings and luncheons fluctuated. Those attending are a direct outcome of Yvonne Stappler's consistent, dedicated fan-out phoning system. Thankfully, the number present at the AGM in March was sufficient to constitute a quorum so the revised version of the Holy Cross Hospital School of Nursing Alumni Constitution and Bylaws were voted upon and approved as circulated. In looking back, the pre-Christmas luncheon has tended to be the least attended, so the Executive considered omitting this one. However, feedback

encouraged us to maintain it and not to let the unpredictable weather dictate what we do! The low numbers notwithstanding, it was great to see those of you who were at each meeting. I would love to see more of you at our upcoming meetings in 2024 on March 6th, June 12th, and December 4th... and yes, we are looking forward to our annual banquet at the Carriage House Inn on September 15th.

In 2022, we added a member-at-large position to our Executive. This has proven to be a good addition as Pat Hnatiuk, who has been in that role, undertook special responsibilities such as exploring and securing the acquisition of lifetime membership pins. We also created a special honorary past-president position for Rita McWilliams in recognition of her many years as president and past-president, and the historical information she has in addition to advice that she provides. We continue to enjoy her presence and input at our Executive meetings.

The April, 2023 newsletter was another great success. Not only did it generate an increase in our active memberships and donations, we also received many positive comments. Many, many thanks to Sharon Iversen who compiled it with input from a wide range of sources.

More accolades are deserving to Pat Bowers for her diligence in keeping our membership records current, and to Pat Jeffery and Pat Bowers who continue to keep our history updated with additions to the ancestry records, often from remote and unexpected sources.

Our Holy Cross Hospital School of Nursing bursary is given annually to an undergraduate nursing student at the University of Calgary continues to grow through investments by the UCalgary fund development office and our annual donation. We awarded an in-house bursary to Pat Jeffery who used it to subsidize an education program training members to use an AED at the Wilson Coulee Observatory near Okotoks.

The Nuns and Nightingale statue in front of the "old" Holy Cross Hospital continued to stand proudly after its spring landscaping rejuvenation by Curtis Hornberger. He will keep it tidy again this spring of 2024.

Last, after 7 years serving on the Executive as Recording Secretary, Vice-president, and President, I am moving into the less active position of Past-president. As you've read above, ours is an active Alumni which engages in activities that make a difference to nursing and to the broader community, so to have held those positions has been both a privilege and a pleasure.

Pat Jeffery is our new president elected March 6th.



***New incoming president
Pat Jeffery***

EXECUTIVE & COMMITTEE

2024 Executive:

President: Pat Jeffery
Past-president: Elaine McKeil
Vice President: Vacant
Honourary Past-president: Rita Williamson
Recording Secretary: Marie Sushelnitsky
Treasurer: Sheila Padley
Member-at-large: Patty Hnatiuk

Directors of Standing Committees:

Membership: Pat Bowers
Newsletter Editor: Sharon Iversen
Contacts Committee: Yvonne Stappler
Courtesy Committee: Dolores Bramall
Archives Committee: Dolores Bramall
Banquet Registrar: Pat Bowers

KEEPING MEMORIES ALIVE

SEPTEMBER LUNCHEON CARRIAGE HOUSE INN

PAT BOWERS (STARK '61)



It was a very successful luncheon!! The whole ballroom was a great venue and gave us a reception area for mingling and visiting. I love the “noise” of classmates greeting and laughing together! Some have not seen each other for years; some see each other regularly—but it seems just like yesterday when we get together to catch up with what has been going on in our lives!! Having the whole ballroom also allowed a lot of space between the tables and we were not crowded! A display of our alumni and its activities, developed by Marie Sushelnitsky and Pat Jeffery was well received.

Our theme was “Keeping Memories Alive” and our MC Marie Sushelnitsky did a fantastic job of helping us remember our time as students in our School of Nursing. The food by the Carriage House chefs was delicious again! Special thanks goes to Nikki Lyons, our Carriage House liaison. She was fantastic to work with and helped tremendously with the planning of this luncheon.



We will continue with the cash bar in future events as we did in the past at our evening banquets. In addition, since people wanted coffee during the reception and it is not usually served until dessert, we will add a coffee bar as well. You can look forward to having a reception area and appetizers again as it gives folks a chance to mingle and visit prior to the served meal. Many attendees leave early for the drive home or to attend class activities.

We had 140 registered and 129 attend. We had guaranteed 130 so that was our cost. For the last two years the Alumni has subsidized the cost of the luncheons. Unfortunately, with rising costs the Executive has decided to raise the cost of the luncheon to \$50.00 per person for 2024.

I really do love my alumni job as Registrar—especially when I see the excitement and fun that the attendees have as they reconnect with their classmates. I also like being able to put faces

with names. It is also great to see the elder grads meeting with the younger grads. Over the twenty years that I have had this position, a system has been developed to make the process run smoothly. Volunteers help with the registration tables - thanks to Caroline Johnson (Thumlert '61), Marg Guta (Christianson '61), Yvonne Stappler (Elliot '67), Penny Stathonikos (Burton '71). Thanks also to Sheila Padley (Carleton '64) for being my "gofer," helping wherever I needed her!



My hardest job in the planning for these banquet/ luncheons is the seating plan. It is not a 'sit anywhere' situation—grads want to sit with their class. The usual tables hold either 8 or 10 places. If more register for a class, it creates chaos! Do I use a bigger square table that holds more? That makes it harder for those to visit as it is far away from each other. OR do I divide the group into 2 smaller tables, again, making it harder for them to visit? I can use a larger (maximum 11 person) table, but it adds to our cost. Another factor is the grads who are late registering for the event. Once we give the final seating plan to the venue, 10 days in advance, any changes add a cost. So please plan well in advance so we do not have to refuse your attendance.

Somehow it all does seem to come together, and we have great events.

Note: Unless I am told differently by the registrant, I place you with the class you graduated with. If you wish to sit with a particular group, let me know on the registration form! I know that some grads started with one class and ended with another, so please let me know which class you want to sit with and it will be arranged.

**Next Special Luncheon
will be September 15, 2024.
Registration form is included
with this newsletter.**

**Save the date!
See you soon!**

KEEPING MEMORIES ALIVE

By Marie Sushelnitsky

***We planned, we phoned,
mailed, and e-mailed too.
It was time for our annual
Alumni “do.”***

***We registered, hugged,
laughed, and cried.
While so many memories,
we were able to keep “alive”***

***We “tasted”, “ate”, and
we “sipped some brew”.
We visited and friendships
were there to renew.***

***Information, presentations,
and we sang our song too.
Awards were given
and displays were viewed!***

***The afternoon ended,
our feelings were strong.
Seems like another year to wait
is very long!***

***Make your plans
and contact your friends,
to return next year,
and do it all again!***

***We all will continue
to work and to strive,
To keep our precious
“Memories Alive”!***



***As soon as [the newsletter] came,
I sat down and read it and didn't
get up until I had read every word.
Unfortunately, I am getting a
little forgetful, so I'll have to read
it again. I'm looking forward to
it. Thanks to all of you who works
so hard to keep us informed and
together.***

- Gene McCarthy (54)

***I am so grateful to be able to stay
in touch through the newsletter.***

Thank you!

- Winona Rouleau (54)

ALL IN THE FAMILY

Joan Scott-Bell ('53)

Pamela Scott ('79)

Although our class finished and graduated in August, we were called the class of September 1953. In August I started working at the Grace Hospital, a Salvation Army Maternity Hospital helping unwed mothers. On December 5th, 1953, I wed Bob Scott. After I was married, I worked as the office nurse for Dr. Melling for one year. We started our family, so I had to stop working, as in those days pregnant women did not work. I was an at home mother until the early 1980s. I took a three-month refresher course at Foothills Hospital to get back to nursing but didn't go back to work. I was active in the Holy Cross Hospital Nurses Alumni Association and was president 1980 to 1981. While president I struck a History Book Committee, and we published *Nuns and Nightingales* that year. In 1992 Bob and I moved to Lacombe to retire. - *Joan Scott*

I was not sure what I wanted to do after High School yet I knew what I did not want to do. I didn't feel ready for university but knew I had more potential than a life career as a cashier at Woolco. Mom, in her wisdom, had an application for the Holy Cross sent to me. I completed it and was soon moving into residence. It was hard work, and much fun. After graduating I got married and moved to work at St. Mary's Hospital in Trochu. At that time it was a 15 active medical beds and 15 extended care beds. When the marriage failed, I returned to Calgary and worked at the Grace Hospital, Post-Partum. At this time, I completed a BSc from the University of Alberta. Wanting something more challenging, I then went to work at the Foothills Hospital, vascular-thoracic, EENT. I found government cutbacks made working more difficult, so I made changes. I became a Dental Hygienist, training in Vancouver, and remained there for 22 years working in the dental field. During that time, I completed a Masters in Christian Studies and a Master of Divinity. In 2012 I moved to Strathmore to serve as the minister at Strathmore United Church. In December 2023 I retired from full time work, have taken three months off to



Joan Scott - Grad '53



Joan & Pam



Pam Scott- U of A Grad '85

travel, and will start part-time, offering Pastoral Care at a church in Calgary.

Every five years our Class of '79 has gathered to celebrate, and I look forward to those gatherings. The friendships forged are dear and long-lasting. My niece, who is a graduate nurse from the University of Calgary, comments on the friendships both mom and I had/have with our classmates –it is something she did not experience at the university.

- *Pamela Scott*

Penwarn Twins

Jeannette Prost and Joan Bruch ('74) (submitted by Jeannette Prost)

Looking back to the time after high school we both remember feeling unsure of the next step, so we worked and repeated a chemistry course to improve our marks. We did.

My mother always wanted to be a nurse but with five children close in age, and being widowed, it just wasn't possible. I remember attending an open house at the Holy Cross School of Nursing. We both applied and were accepted. We resided on different floors in residence, and it certainly was not a hassle having a twin there. At times people sometimes mixed us up - in fact in our graduation yearbook our names are incorrect.

Joan worked for a time at the General Hospital but overall, her career in nursing was short lived. She studied education and worked as an elementary school teacher for a time. She then chose to stay at home to raise her two children, a son and daughter who are both lovely people.

My career path also diverged to a Kinesiology degree. I had various jobs including ski instructor and camp nurse. In 2000 I completed the nursing refresher course and for the past twenty years of my working life I worked as a Case Manager for AHS Home Care. I have two wonderful boys

We both enjoy traveling and love our menagerie of cats.



*Jeanette & Joan, or is it
Joan & Jeanette?*



THE PIN QUEST

PATTY HNATIUK (BAIRD '70)



At a 2023 Alumni Executive meeting, discussion about the Alumni Life Membership award pin prompted me to offer help. There was only one pin remaining and it was to be awarded at the annual Alumni Luncheon in September. Birks, the provider of the pin, was no longer producing the pin. Thus began my quest! After several inquiries and a few dead ends, I was made aware by Sue at Birks Calgary that the mold for the pin was no longer available.

At the August Alumni Executive meeting, I was able to present quotes from a recommended online source and from a local jeweler, The Goldsmith, provided by Tina Ross. Following discussion, the quote from The Goldsmith was accepted unanimously. I notified Tina and the process of reproducing the pin began. Frequent email updates between Tina and I followed as the process unfolded. Despite a brief supply chain issue delaying December delivery, the first pin was produced at the end of January 2024.

LIFE MEMBERSHIPS

Life membership is an honour awarded to an active member for outstanding service to the Association, the profession of nursing, or to the community.

Do you know a classmate who fits these criteria?

Through the efforts of the Ancestry Project these past years, we have learned that we have some amazing alumni members. Active members only can submit their nomination. Please consider nominating someone for this Lifetime Membership.

The name of each nominee must be supported by the signatures of 10 active members and submitted in writing to the President. The completed nomination form shall be forwarded to the Executive Committee for review and approval. Life members shall pay no dues.



MEMBERSHIP REPORT



**PAT BOWERS
(STARK '61)**

Our membership numbers have remained stable. However, of the 989 living Alumni, we have 252 who are active paid-up members. The numbers still fluctuate each year. Thanks to all who renew their memberships as this is our only funding source.

A little bit of membership history: Ten years ago, in 2013 we had 434 one of the highest numbers of members. It was an increase of 115 from the previous year. I could not find an explanation for that increase. In 2019 we had 326, and in 2020 we had 320. One of our lowest numbers was in 2009 at 241.

Help us stay connected by renewing your active membership and by attending our functions. The Alumni holds three (3) lunch meetings at the FCJ Centre and one annual banquet/luncheon each year. The dates are in the newsletter.

If you have a change in your status or you are looking for a classmate, please contact:
Pat Bowers (Stark '61) at redheadpat@shaw.ca
or 403-242-5593.



*Jasper the Skeleton with
Joan Connolly and Barb Barrett*

Donations included with Membership Fees

Each year, the alumni receive monetary donations from members and their families. The Alumni Executive sincerely thanks all those who have contributed to supporting your alumni. We apologize if anyone has been inadvertently missed on this list. (We are not a registered charity; therefore, do not issue tax receipts)

Donation total to Feb 15, 2024: \$5755.00

Fay Hutcheon (Blake '51)
Joan Scott (Bell '53)
Marion Wandio (Wilton '53)
Margaret Holubowich (Coady '54)
Winona Rouleau ('54)
Gene McCarthy (Velker '54)
Helen Kana (Fabian '55)
Mary Louise Unterschultz (Hawkey '55)
Anne Campbell (Bellak '56)
Helen Kubasek (Hugo '56)
Catherine (Kay) Olsson (Anderson '57)
Shirley Hawk (Caldwell '57)
Danielle Kuntz (Williams '58)
Marilyn Westerman (Currie '59)
Sharon Langley (Free '60)
Betty Lodermeier (Gieck '60)
Sandra Mayne (Sherlock '60)
Irene Martin (Quinn '61)
Marg Guta (Christensen '61)
Bev Wilson (Church '61)
Donna Highfield (Haslam '61)
Irene Thompson (Hilliard '61)
Joey Stewart (Leier '63)
Sylvia Davis (Carr '64)
Loretta Darango (Clary '64)
Patricia Sirbaugh (Peszat '64)
Edwina Madill (Shackleton '64)
Gail Blue (Zakariasen '64)
Judy Danyschuck (Dahl '65)
Joyce Wills (Albrecht '66)
Jan Tennant (Kimber '66)
Marion Jesson (Zaborowski '66)
Lois Reifenstein (Ernst '67)
Valarie Fritz (Nadon '67)
Anne Ardiel (Duckmanton '69)

Karen Murdock (Lubbers '69)
Anya Donaldson (Van Haaster '69)
Marie Sushelnitski (Maloney '70)
Wilma Hunter (Schaay '70)
Marie Judd (Heikkinen '71)
Irene Aasen (Wearmouth '71)
Bea Violini (Tinevez '72)
Lesley Caddy ('73)
Isabel Nordquist (Sauter '74)
Vivian Ramsdan (Wegreen '74)
Jeanie Culligan (McKnight '76)





Solidity Tea, 1948

Donations made in Memory of Alumni Members

Marcella Schwenk (Seredynski '57): in memory of Margaret Howarth (Stephenson '57), Anne Busch (Silbernagel '58), Dolores Lockie (Chaput '57), & Yvonne-Marie Johnson (Zanny '57)

Billie Askey (Nicholson '57): in memory of Margaret Howarth (Stephenson '57)

Estate of Denise Mackness Charleton (Prefontaine '63)

Carole McLean (Mosier '66): In memory of Ilene Porter (Brummond '66)

"She was a great support to me during my cancer treatment in Kelowna and we weren't able to attend her service."

Pat Bateman (McGonigle '69): in memory of her sister Sheila Walroth (McGonigle '69)

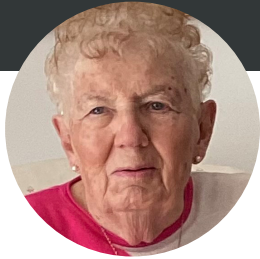
"Lovingly missed every day."

Donna Louch (Oliphant '76) & Beverly Berg: in Memory of their mother Betty Oliphant (Dorscher '51)

"She was proud to call herself a Holy Cross grad & enjoyed the many Alumni functions. May her donation support & honour the continuing role of the Alumni."

2023-24 COURTESY COMMITTEE

Remembering Alumni who have passed away



DOLORES BRAMELL
(TENCH '58)

If you are aware of an Alumni member or family member who has passed away, please inform the Courtesy Committee: Dolores Bramall (Tench '58) dbramall@telus.net.

RIP 2024

Dolores Lockie (Chaput '57)
Pat Johnson ('59)

RIP 2023

Olinda Droz (Frasch '46)
Martha (Meg) Giesinger (Fridgen '51)
Diana Gonsalves Norford (Paulhus '53)
Evelyn Fleming (Taft '54)
Vietta Johnson (Clifford '55)
Dolores Fitzsimmons (Deck '55)
Ann Schofield ('55)
Lena Scott (Tessari '55)
Yvonne-Marie Johnson (Zanny '57)
Betty-Lou Markle (Hess '58)
Betty Fox (Stevens '58)
Edna McDonell (Woitte '60)
Joy Bekker (Cushing '61)
Marilyn Serada (Platzer '61)
Gail Barton (Manders '63)
Denise Charlton Mackness (Prefontaine '63)
Marilyn De Pena (Carr '64)
Suzanne Truba (Thomas '64)
Ilene Porter (Brummond '66)

RIP PRIOR

Sister Bernadette Bezaire ('42): 2016
Marion Grafton (Woodley '43): 2021
Vivian Andersen (Boomer '44)L 2019
Elizabeth Cooper (Widdop '44): 2019
Frances McMahon (Cullen '46): 2022
Roberta Robinson (McAllister '47): 2019
Ermeline James (Neilson '47): 2015
Ruth Bill (Jacobsen '48): 2020
Naomi Ledene (Johnson '48): 2019
Marie "Doris" Williamson (Knight '51): 2021
Anna Niven (Kloepfer '52): 2022
Marilyn Butts (Shaw '64): 2022
Sharon Wikeem ('64): 2022
Lourinda Thompson (Conklin '65)
Della Robertson (Kelly '74): 2021

RIP Family Members

Helen Maclsaac (Hourihan '54): Husband
Anne Cherry (Reiffenstein '56): Brother
Kay Olsson (Anderson '57): Husband
Myrna Gehrke (Phillips '57): Brother
Dolores Bramall (Tench '58): Husband
Marlene Johnson (Dannewald '60): Husband
Lucille Hagel (McGlynn '61): Brother
Jacqueline Zacharuk (Kennedy '61): Husband
Irene Thompson (Hilliard '61): Son-in-law
Jean Youngstrom (Perry '62): Husband
Sylvia Davis (Carr '64): Son
Sylvia Davis (Carr '64): Sister
Lois Reiffenstein (Ernst '67): Husband
Debra McFadden (Smith '76): Mother
Mary Ellen Speers (Douslin '77): Husband
Karen Giese ('78): Husband

TREASURER'S REPORT



**SHARON IVERSEN
(KOVACIK '78)**

Revenue as of January 31, 2024, was \$16,533.66.

Thanks to your generous donations and annual membership dues, our alumni is doing well financially, however we cannot kid ourselves, although strong and feisty, the number of members will understandably decline over the years, and so will our income. Careful budgeting will be necessary to maintain a comfortable cushion that allows us to do the things we want.

In this spirit, we have decided to print the newsletter in black and white – except for the front and back cover. We have also increased the cost of the luncheon, just 5\$. Our social gatherings are an important way to connect, so we feel every effort should be made to continue them at a reasonable cost.

When paying your membership dues, luncheon registration fees or donating, we accept cash or cheque ONLY. Our bank account does not allow for e transfers or credit card payments since this adds a significant expense. Cheques and cash are old school and yes, they still work!

Big thank you to Sheila Padley (Carleton '64) our new treasurer as of March 6, 2024. I just know she will do an awesome job. I am stepping down as treasurer to focus on the newsletter, it is a project I truly love to do.

***You all did a great job on the newsletter, it is so nice to keep up the others. Thank you!
- Donna Highfield (61)***

Bursary Update

University of Calgary Faculty of Nursing student recipient for the Holy Cross School of Nursing Alumni Bursary for 2023 was Mariejoe Andres, \$2,100 Bachelor of Nursing (BN-Degree Holder), Faculty of Nursing

Mariejoe Andres writes:

I am currently in my final year of the Bachelor of Nursing, degree-holder program. I am very grateful to have been chosen as the recipient of the Holy Cross Alumni Association Bursary. I previously completed a BSc in immunology and infection, however, I longed for a career that would allow me to have more direct interactions with patients. I found that the Nursing program allowed me to utilize the skills and knowledge I had acquired from my previous degree, while also being able

to provide direct, relational care to others. Last year, I decided to move to Calgary to pursue these passions. As a working student pursuing her second degree and living in a new city, this award helped me overcome many financial barriers and served as a powerful motivator to continue pursuing my future goals. It has truly made an unforgettable impact on my life, and I will forever be grateful. Thank you."

In-House Holy Cross Alumni Bursaries

Patricia Jeffery (Jensen '78) was the recipient of a Holy Cross School of Nursing Alumni Bursary for 2023. She received \$500 to put towards the following education session.

I have been a member of the Royal Astronomical Society of Canada (Calgary centre) for many years. To escape the light pollution of the big city, our observatory is located a half hour drive south of Calgary. The remoteness of the site allows us to enjoy dark skies, but should an emergency occur, it would take over 30 minutes for an ambulance to arrive.

Our observatory not only serves our membership, but also hosts frequent tours for the public. As a nurse, I felt we owed everyone a level of safety while marveling at the night sky. Thus, I was tasked with purchasing a first aid kit and an AED: automated external defibrillator.

Several of our older members immediately expressed concern regarding operating an AED and some had never taken a CPR course before. Thus, on October 29th, 2023, I organized a CPR and automated external defibrillator course at our clubhouse. Not only was I (and my fellow instructor) able to alleviate their fears, but we made the world a little safer place by teaching a core group of astronomers the necessary skills to resuscitate someone until help arrives.

I wish to express my sincere gratitude to the Holy Cross School of Nursing Alumni for their Bursary program. It helped cover some of the costs of putting on the course; a course that could save a life.

ANCESTRY PROJECT



**PAT JEFFERY
(JENSEN '78)**

Known as the "Ancestry Project", this massive undertaking was originally started in 2007 by fellow alumni Lucille Horne (Hawkins '62). This 17-year odyssey has revealed many amazing stories. Holy Cross grads have worked in every aspect of nursing. While bedside, management and teaching are areas that immediately come to mind; others have flown the skies as flight attendants, started their own business, travelled to the far reaches of the world to provide care to the less fortunate and at least three tossed their caps into the political arena. The result of hundreds of hours of hard work and gallons of coffee, we have so far managed to collect 1069 biographies (44%).

What is the significance of the Ancestry project? Well, each biography captures a specific moment in time; of what nursing and life was like back in the 1920s, 30s, 40s, 50s etc. Historians will be able to utilize this information minus any identifying markers for research.

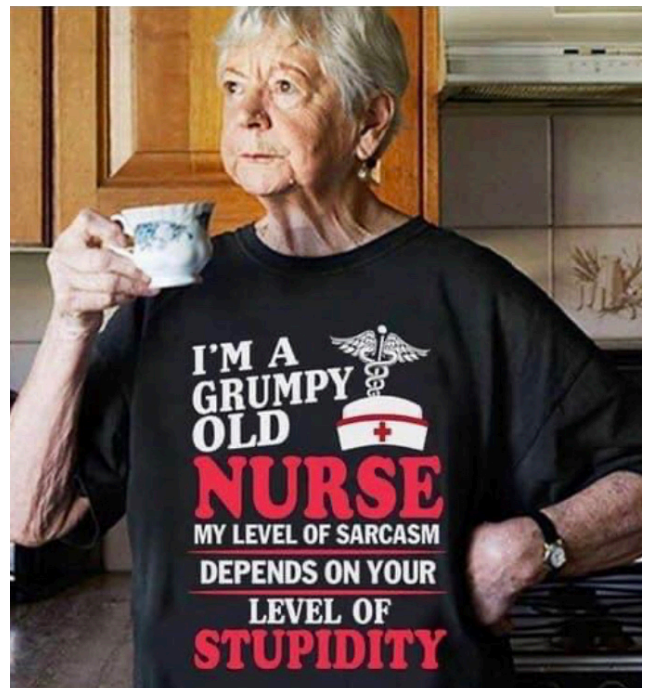
Unfortunately, over the past year, the number of grads forwarding their biographies to us has slowed to a trickle. Some grads have long since passed away, and sadly their life stories died with them. We don't want to learn about your life's journey from an obituary. We would much rather hear it directly from you.

Our website www.hxhnursing.com has an easy to fill out form. Things to include are your date and place of birth, where you grew up, what you did after nursing school, did you ever work as a nurse and where, any higher learning as in obtaining a degree, awards, hobbies, interesting things you have done. Photos would be wonderful too.

If you don't have access to a computer, just write down your history and mail it to:

Ancestry Project c/o Pat Bowers (Stark '61)
327 Deer Run Crescent SE Calgary AB T2J
5N9 or to her email: redheadpat@shaw.ca

As a member of the second last class ('78), I will continue to update the Ancestry database for as long as I am able. At some point in the future, the data (electronic and hard copy) will be stored at the University of Calgary to be added to other Holy Cross historical archives.





Cool facts we have learned (so far) about our graduates

Advanced Education Degrees obtained:

Bachelors: 113

Masters: 45

PHD: 8

Lawyer: 1

Medical doctors: 5

Order of Canada: 1

Nuns: 39 / Ponoka affiliates: 8

Lifetime memberships awarded: 77

Grads that helped with the war effort: 47

Grads with family members who also attended the Holy: 280

Largest class: 1964: 81

Smallest class: 1913: 4

Oldest Grads:

105.59 years, Rita Andrews nee Cassidy '39 (1917-2022)

12 other grads lived to be greater than 100 years old.

As of January 2024, at least 950 Holy grads are still alive and kicking.

25 are between the ages of 95 and 99 years old and 4 are over 100.

According to Stats Canada, only one person in 5000 makes it to 100. The fact that we've now had 17 out of 2426 grads surpass that mark is truly unbelievable.

Nurses in Profile: MARY DAHLQUIST ('48)

When I was 5 years old, I knew I was going to be a nurse. The year was 1930. Both my cousins and my aunt were nurses, and two members of good family friends, the Blacklocks, influenced my career choice.

I was born in Medicine Hat, AB and raised on a farm 16 miles southeast of Taber. Our father raised Charolais cattle and grew wheat. My brother Lea and I attended Cromwell Elementary 4 miles from our farm. On school days my horse George pulled a two-wheel cart that carried us back and forth and at recess we fed and watered him.

In 1945 I moved to Calgary to start nursing school at the Holy Cross Hospital. I was so excited. My roommates were Carolyn Albridge, and Eva Florendine. After graduation in 1948 I worked at the Taber hospital and in January of 1949 Ruth Jacobsen and I worked at the Prince Rupert General Hospital. That was a big adventure but not as big as our decision to move to Hawaii to work as nurses in Honolulu. I worked in a men's ward, a women's ward and then a surgical department.

When the supervisor left to get married, I was promoted to supervisor. I lived for a while on the hospital campus however my friends all wanted to be closer to the beach, so we found an apartment near Waikiki. Over the 2 years I worked in Hawaii I persuaded many of my Canadian friends to come live in our apartment and work at the hospital. We loved living so close to the beach and I swam every day before or after my shifts.



When we decided to return to the mainland, we booked passage on the SS Lurline and sailed for southern California where we eventually found jobs at the Santa Monica Hospital. I was on the IV team and did EKGs. My friend Margaret and I rented a studio apartment, met many new friends, and enjoyed ourselves.

Over the next few years, I worked In Milwaukee, Wisconsin at a Girl Guide camp, and Great Falls, Montana where I



met my husband Maury; he was a pilot in the US Air Force. At the time I was a supervisor in the emergency department. We were married in Taber August 25th 1956.

Our first child was born in Montana, while the other four were born in Seattle, Washington. For 20 years I was away from nursing while I raised our family.

In 1980 I went back to work as a staff nurse at Virginia Mason Medical Center in Seattle. I became board certified in orthopedic nursing and worked on neuro and orthopedics, and it was there I met so many of my dear and lifelong friends.

In 1993 I retired, and soon after Maury sold his dental practice and he retired too. We always enjoy our time together whether it's traveling or staying home.

These days, I like to get up at 5 am, and go for a 3-mile walk. Keeping active is very important to me. I miss nursing, the patients, the doctors, the hustle and bustle of the hospital but most of all I miss my co-workers and dear friends.



Thank you for the great newsletter I always look forward to receiving it, I especially love to read the nurses in profile section.

- Anya Donaldson (69)

Nurses in Profile: IRIS EVANS ('63)

I was born in Calgary, eldest in a family of four children. Our parents were dedicated teachers, focused on providing education and determined to make the best of us all. Mother believed I should be a nurse, a career choice that would allow me to have 'free' room and board and would put the least amount of strain on a slim family budget. I vacillated between nursing and teaching, but in the end, Donna Hall (Currie) was also planning to enter nursing at the Holy Cross and we left for the city, me a rather naïve but eager teenager, and Donna the best pal in the world. In my youth my parents gave as generously as possible to the community, sharing vegetables from the garden and contributing wherever they could. I was blessed to live in Stavley, a community of generous, caring, and delightful people. I studied piano and become St. Vincent's' organist from at aged 10 until I left for the Holy Cross.

Nursing school provided a venue for learning that taught me I wanted to lead. I was Class President for my 3 years and as such, Valedictorian. I learned the importance of listening to others and finding solutions. Saying hello to people on the street, saving enough for chips and gravy at Andy's, and wishing for more independence was all part of the journey. I respected the nuns and marveled at our role models, shaping my opinions of what I liked and trying to accommodate what I didn't.

I was proud of Dr. Miller embarking on open heart surgery, and I remember how handsome and bright he was. I think the best part of training was the friendships that held us together and built our strengths.



I married in 1964 and within 6 years we had 3 beautiful sons, my pride and joy. Though I nursed at the Rockyview for 18 months, my desire was to be with my sons. This led me to teach piano, babysit for others and enter consumer contests, somewhat successfully. As a result, my family were raised here in Sherwood Park, and I became an active community volunteer. I was VP of Fundraising for Sherwood Park Minor Hockey and focused on making our community a special place. Many people urged me to run for public office launching 18 years of service as School Trustee, Councilor, Reeve and taking



leadership on issues like property taxes and regional economics.

Later my 15 years as a cabinet minister were spent in portfolios including municipal affairs, health, finance, employment and immigration, international relations, and children's services, where I spent a wonderful 4 years and learned so much.

In serving vulnerable children and families I feel I made my best contribution, and my nursing values and discipline helped me embrace the challenges. Politics is a rewarding albeit tough way to live and I am glad that the years spent there were at the end of my career.



Life today is busy, and I celebrate the arrival of a great grandchild and one more coming. I'm blessed to have my sons, their beloved wives and grandchildren, all Alberta residents, healthy and living well.

My sweetheart and I pray daily and hope that our next travel plans bring us new horizons and many bright sunrises to thank God for!

***The newsletter is so informative and enjoyable to read. I know it must take a lot of time and effort to produce such a project.
- Patricia Sirbaugh (64)***

***I always look forward to the newsletter and enjoy reading it cover to cover. Many thanks to the executive for all of your hard work and dedication.
- Violet Underwood (56)***

Nurses in Profile: RUTH NAOMI NAKAZWE SIMAKUNGWE

by Brenda Schultz (McIntosh '75)

Ruth came to Canada from Zambia to train as a nurse. This opportunity came about by way of Rev. Oakley Dyer, from St. David's United Church, Calgary. The Dyers met Ruth when they were in Zambia. Prior to acceptance into the Holy Cross School of Nursing Ruth attended William Aberhart School in Calgary to upgrade some courses.

Ruth was diligent in her medical studies, and I admired her determination to succeed in a foreign country. Her desire was to return to Zambia after completing nursing school. She felt a responsibility to return to her family and also to be of service to her country.

I met Ruth when we moved into residence, and that was the beginning of a special friendship. She was fun to be with, and was keen to try new things. Although nervous about it, she even went ice skating with me, and of course fell on her tush! Ruth often came home with me to Edmonton, to spend time with my family; she also enjoyed going to the farm at Strathmore, with our classmate Pam Cote.

Ruth worked for a few months after grad at the Holy Cross and then returned to Africa. In May 1976 she began her seventeen year long career with the Zambia Flying Doctors Services (Z.F.D.S.) in Ndola, where she attained the position of senior nursing officer.

In 1988 she married Denis Simakungwe, who was a government official. They had



two sons, Sula and Kuzipa, and also a daughter: baby Ruth. Their precious little girl was stillborn and Ruth found this so deeply painful.

Ruth's husband died of a heart attack in 1994, and she was left to raise the boys. It was a trying situation for Ruth, and life's events went from bad to worse. She was evicted from the government housing where she and her husband lived, and ended up poverty stricken without food and shelter. She fell into a state of depression.

Good news came in 1997: the William

Aberhart graduation class of '72 was celebrating their 25th reunion. When they heard of Ruth's desperate situation, the grad committee appealed to their classmates for funds to come to Ruth's aid. The Holy Cross class of '75 as well as other Holy Cross alumni graciously contributed to these funds. For this, Ruth was truly appreciative.

My last letter from Ruth was in October 1997. Although she had endured many difficult life situations, she said things had started to turn around for her. Her sister and brother-in-law had provided her and her boys not only with food and shelter, but also their genuine love and support. She expressed her thankfulness to God and to the loving people He had put in her life. She felt ready to return to the work force. Ruth took a course in Advanced Designing, Cutting and Tailoring in 2001; she planned to first work with a tailor, and then branch out on her own.

Sadly Ruth passed away of cervical cancer in December, 2001.

I remember Ruth was so happy to come to Canada and train as a nurse. Ruth embraced her life in Calgary with such enthusiasm and I know she was grateful for the opportunity to live and study at the Holy Cross. She was a kind person and I think a most caring and compassionate nurse. We were indeed fortunate to have this gracious fellow student to work with, and to learn alongside her!



***Love getting the newsletter
and I read it cover to cover.
- Candace MacNeill (68)***

Nurses in Profile: ELAINE MCKEIL ('61)

I wonder how many people look back on their life as a nurse and think it unfolded “pretty much as I planned” or “pretty much as I expected”. I am not one of those people. I did not independently or predictably choose my nursing path. One of my early memories was hearing my father tell me that I would become a nurse. I don’t remember ever questioning it. Mind you, I grew up in the era when a girl graduated from high school, she was expected to become a nurse, a teacher, or a secretary. I knew only a select few who took a different path. So, to be told that I would be a nurse was a fit with the times and I was okay with that. Subsequently on September 8, 1958, I moved into the nurses’ residence at the Holy Cross Hospital School of Nursing and my journey through the learning landscape of nursing began.

In my first week, I learned that two of our instructors, Mrs. Whitworth and Mrs. Meeres, had a BScN. Until then, I didn’t know that nurses got degrees. Perhaps that was when the seed for advanced education was planted in me. In the meantime, I set about learning many skills in a range of settings not all of which applied directly to nursing practice. For example, during my rotation in the OR, I spent a Saturday morning in the CSR mending rubber gloves. I became very adept at flipping gloves through the air then squeezing them to locate the leaks so I could fix them. Six decades later, I still use that technique.

While I was knowingly acquiring designated nursing skills, I was unknowingly learning things about myself. I enjoyed my time in the ER but in retrospect, what I valued most was not the time in the emergency rooms but



those days when I was the central dressing room nurse who went throughout the hospital changing dressings. I was responsible for organizing my schedule. Every day was different. It didn’t follow the daily routine of report, then morning care, then coffee, etc., all completed ideally within a set time frame. I now recognize that the regimented structure on patient care units, albeit efficient, was one factor that ultimately turned me away from continuing as a general duty nurse. A bigger factor, though, was my time in TSO (Teaching Service Office) in 3rd year. I thrived on the opportunities to be involved in curriculum review, teaching first year students in the classroom, supervising students on an orthopedic unit when Miss Green was away. Here again, each day unfolded differently. It was then that the seed that was planted back in that first week grew to see the light of day and my goal to become a nursing instructor became a conscious pursuit.

My learning landscape during those three years wasn’t limited to formal instruction.

After the end of a shift, it was common to shed our bibs and aprons and “rehash” it with each other in the lounge. Now, I think of those times as the 5th floor learning lab. We learned a lot from each other as we talked about our experiences.

I didn't go directly to university upon graduation. I thought back to my first day in obstetrics. We were touring the department when a patient cried out from her room. Mrs. Baruta, the instructor, went to the patient and the next thing I saw, she was delivering the baby in the bed. She wasn't “only” the instructor; she was a clinician. So as I new RN, I remembered that and I knew that I needed to be able to demonstrate clinical skills to my students; knowledge gained from books wouldn't be enough. To that end, I embarked on five years of general duty in Wetaskiwin, Fredericton, Toronto, and Edmonton. I hadn't planned for it to be that long but nursing enables one to move around both clinically and geographically and I took advantage of it.

From Edmonton, I went to McGill for a BN degree, then back to the Holy Cross as an instructor followed by two years at the Calgary General. Once again, I had no definite plans beyond teaching nursing but changing times prevailed. Nursing education moved from hospital programs to colleges. My position at CGH was phased out so I ventured far away to the Royal Melbourne Hospital School of Nursing in Australia; to a system that didn't include clinical instructors. My role was restricted to the classroom and nursing skills lab, which was not a good fit with my beliefs about nursing education. After close to two years, I came home.

Back in Calgary, I discovered that a growing body of nursing knowledge had led to a much wider scope of practice for nurses. This meant

that, to stay in teaching, I needed graduate education, so I went to UBC for a master's degree in Adult Education followed in due course to U of A for a PhD.

In 1981, I was recruited to the Faculty of Nursing at U of C where the teaching and service landscape was vast. I moved into leadership positions, initially as the Director of the Learning Resource Centre and then Associate Dean of the Undergraduate Nursing Programs. I served on research and professional committees locally and nationally, often starting as a committee member then becoming the chair. I was a consultant to and reviewer of nursing education programs across Alberta. I reviewed manuscripts submitted for publication to a variety of nursing journals. I became more involved with our Holy Cross Alumni, eventually as president. It was a busy life.

In 2008 after a time in Doha, Qatar to commence a UCalgary BN program there, I retired (sort of). These days, I continue to mentor students, review manuscripts, and do some committee work but not as much.

When I look back, I see that my nursing landscape has come full circle, starting at the Holy Cross Hospital, and now symbolically ending there as I hand over the reins of our Alumni president to a new leader. In retrospect, mine was a very fulfilling, albeit unplanned, nursing landscape.

Nurses in Profile: LINDA HUDSON (BOYD '78)

I chose a career in nursing because I enjoyed working with people, and it was a job I could utilize no matter where I moved. Many areas of nursing appealed to me. Following graduation in 1978 I accepted a full-time position in pediatrics at the Holy Cross. I was delighted and loved my job.

In 1979 I married Jim, my high school sweetheart. Consistent to my previous thoughts we moved out to a small work camp half an hour east of Brooks. What a change for this city gal. All you could see was prairie, cows, sunrises and sunsets. We made wonderful friends and memories.

In January 1980 the Home Care program started. I was hired to see clients on farms, colonies and small towns north of Brooks. It was a great experience. The idea of supporting seniors in their homes to age in place was born.

To spread information about the program, Home Care nurses attended the senior's monthly coffee get-togethers and presented wellness and health promotion sessions. It was a success and our referrals increased. The program evolved to include early hospital discharge and palliative care support utilizing a wide range of nursing skills - everything from health promotion, pain management, surgical follow-up and peritoneal dialysis.

Rural nursing had challenges, most importantly accepting clients in their own environments. I remember clearing pets out of a bedroom to make a sterile area.



In the 1990's I started taking courses towards my degree. It was a challenge balancing a family, acreage and working part time. After two years I found the support of five nurses who were also working on their degrees. Together we achieved our distance degrees from the U of C in 1995. One of my challenges was using dial-up internet and the computer.

My degree opened the opportunity to work both in Public Health and Homecare. Being on call for both departments on weekends was a challenge. Thinking back it was an early form of Health Link. Public Health became my new passion.

In 1998 we moved to Lethbridge, and I was hired as a Public Health generalist nurse. Several years later I became a School Health Nurse and later the coordinator of the school team. School Health was expanding in the province and offered health teaching and support for children with health needs.

In 2006 I took on the role of the Educator for the Public Health Nurses in the region.

I found this role challenging and satisfying. It included developing an orientation program, providing ongoing education of the nurses and being the liaison with the college and university.

I completed my career as one of the managers for Public Health Nursing in the south zone. I loved my nursing career for the challenges, variety, and allowing me to work with people!



Retirement is wonderful. Jim and I enjoy spending time with family and friends. Keeping active skiing, golfing, kayaking, biking, and gardening fills our days. Our son, daughter and grandchildren live in Lethbridge. Our daughter Sandy is a Public Health Nurse in the Sexual Health Department.

THE CASE OF THE MISSING NEWSLETTERS

By Marie Sushelnitsky

We are looking for the following missing editions of the Holy Cross School of Nursing Alumni Annual Newsletter. We need:

- Edition from 1984
- Editions from 1968-1973
- Editions from the 1940s, 50s & 60s up to and including 1966.

If you can provide any of these newsletters (or copies of them) please contact:

Marie Sushelnitsky (Recording Secretary)
#2416, 2330 Fish Creek Blvd S.W.,
Calgary, Alberta T2J 4W6
403 278-4722 or 403 651-9423

*I continue to be
so impressed with
all of you and the
outstanding work
you all do.*
-Sharon Langley (60)

There must be something special in Saskatchewan water

Look at all these grads from two small towns in the province!

Jaqueline Dube ('32)
Evelyn Cowie ('40)
Mary Cowie ('41)
Jeanette Crye ('41)
Olga Stasiuk ('49)
Evangeline Stasiuk ('51)
Martha Fridgen ('51)
Millie Fridgen ('54)
Margaret Coady ('54)
Elaine Faubert ('63)

Mary McCue ('33) GOLD
Katherine Dyer ('33) SILVER
Bella Daniel ('36)
Margaret MacLennan ('37)
Alice Estabrooks ('41)
Anne Lopeter ('42)
Enid Charman ('43)
Marjorie Shilling ('51)
Marian Hall ('51) GOLD
Joyce Douglas ('53) GOLD



Marengo

Gull Lake

