



Newsletter 2008

THE ST GEORGE HOSPITAL GRADUATE NURSES' ASSOCIATION

President's Report

This year we face somewhat of a dilemma, our Association is at a cross roads, do we somehow carry on with ever reducing members, or do we wind up our Association?

Over recent years the number of graduates attending has been declining, this of course must happen, since in fact we have had no graduates since the mid eighties.

Last year the attendance at our Annual General Meeting (AGM), was very small and when election of officers was called, the usual response was no takers, however the committee agreed to stay on and Joan and I volunteered to occupy the Presidency and Secretary positions for one year, and organize a function to celebrate 100 years of nursing at The St George Hospital.

A suitable venue for what may be our last reunion has been organized at the St George Leagues Club. We notified 300 members by mail of our intention and asked for their response, and subsequently received a positive reaction so we have gone ahead with preparations.

Many thanks go to those who have over the years given of their time and expertise to this Association, their names are too many to list but we all know and appreciate your efforts.

We all have enjoyed many happy reunion days and will cherish the memories of our days at St George.

I would like to personally thank Joan for her organizational skills, in bringing this day to a successful conclusion, and to the members of the committee for their contributions, and time.

Thank you, to all the Graduates for their friendship over the years, those training days are forever etched in my memory as I am sure they are in yours, they were good times.

I wish you all good luck, continuing friendship, and good health for the future.

Sheila Carter (Nee Thomson RN), President, 2007–2008

100 years
of nursing at St George

COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Sheila Carter
President

Dorothy Coker
Vice President

Joan Wagstaff
Secretary

Beverley Carruthers,
Treasurer and Reunion Secretary

Committee

Barbara Dickin

Estelle Green

Susan Leahy

Yvonne Williamson

NEWSLETTER 2008

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Treasurer's Report

To save you having to read two boring bits, I have joined my portfolios together in one report. On a financial note, I will only mention that an excerpt from the 2007 audit is attached. This is to show that the books have been audited. Now all years has been accounted for.

The 2007 AGM and reunion must count as a success if you counted the feeling in the room but a failure in turns of numbers. Due to the smaller number, instead of our usual wandering and scattered seating arrangement for lunch, we tried to have everyone seated at tables. We had just enough room to move between them and so the juggling of plates was avoided. We tried a new caterer too, with mixed results. The great food but maybe not quite what we expected. 2008 promises to be a very different occasion. Barbara, Joan and Sheila joined the committee specifically to make the 100 year celebration of nurse training an event to remember. If all goes according to plan it will be a wonderful day. For those who cannot make the day, we will ensure that the next newsletter has lots of details. Joan Wagstaff also took on the receiving of replies and the banking – both are time consuming jobs and I wish to thank her for relieving me of those tasks. Now if someone will volunteer for next year...?

Beverley Carruthers, Honorary Treasurer & Reunion Secretary

News and Greetings

Sylvia Bennett (nee Smith 1974) Greetings from England. When we returned to Sydney earlier this year, I was pleased to have contact with several friends and colleagues. Once back in UK we were travelling again with a nautical theme – visiting several northern ports in the Netherlands, Viking port of Roskilde in Denmark and Bristol in England. We saw Terry's family in Cheshire and Yorkshire. My family gathered in the south to celebrate significant birthdays. Shortly we fly to Spain to visit my sister & brotherinlaw. Enjoy the 100 year celebrations and the year ahead.

Dorothy Engel I was sent a page from her training days and I laughed out loud when I read it. Who amongst you was forcefully told by Sister Murray to "GET OUT OF MY SIGHT"? I will place the letter with all the other great stories that have been sent in. Eventually the collection will be placed with the nursing memorabilia in the archive and library. Bev

Sally Roberts (nee Ghent)

Sally wrote from her home in Harrington Harbour, on a small island in the Gulf of St Laurence River in Quebec,

Canada. She arrived there via England, Newfoundland Canada with the "Dr Wilfred Grenfell Association". Sally met her husband there – a widower with four young children. They married two years later and had a son. The Roberts visited Australia in early '07 but missed Sally's group reunion held in November to celebrate 40 years since graduation. Loretta Lancaster made sure that she received photographs and details of the event. "I hope you have a great reunion. I'm really sorry I can't join in the fun". Contact can be made with Sally via email – ghents@globetrotters.net

She would love to hear from anyone.

The following people sent "greetings or well-wishes"

Pamela Clark (nee Jackson 1962)

Jean Frame (1953)

Barbara Kendrick (1933)

Fay Loom (nee Walker 1964)

Gwen Stokeld (1961)

Ian Twemlow (1979)

Vale

Betty Pettit (nee Miller 1.6.1929–18.8.2008)

In 2006 Betty was diagnosed with Motor Neurone Disease and on 18th August she died peacefully at Castle Hill.

Betty did her General training at St George 1947–51, followed by Midwifery in Melbourne and Mothercraft at Vacluse Tresillian, after which she returned to St George for a year as a registered nurse.

She spent two years at the Melbourne Bible Institute and several years working with the Australian Nurses Christian Movement before undertaking a social work course at Sydney University.

After working in Perth and Melbourne, Betty joined the Social Work Department at St George, becoming Senior Social Worker, and Director of Allied Health prior to her retirement in 1994.

Betty will be remembered for her cheerful, friendly manner, her concern for others, and her strong Christian faith. A thanksgiving service, attended by many *St Georgians* was held on Tuesday 2nd September 2008.

Joan Walker

Beryl Elizabeth (Beth) Breakwell (26.4.1940–20.8.2008)

Beth undertook her general nurse training 1958–62 and then Midwifery at The St George Hospital before obtaining a Midwifery Nurse Educator degree from the College of Nursing.

Beth then attended Bible College in Sydney and became a missionary with the Sudan Interior Mission. She went to Nigeria in 1973 as the Principal of the Midwives Training School in Egbe. While she was there her students topped the national exams three consecutive years with 100% pass rate. She returned to Australia in 1979 and in January 1980 multiple sclerosis was confirmed, she was unable to return to Nigeria.

Beth worked in the office of SIM until she retired due to fatigue. She lived in Frank Vickery Village until a major MS episode left her unable to walk and she moved to a Brighton-le Sands nursing home.

In 2006 Beth moved to Mirinjani Nursing Home in Canberra to be near her brother and his family. She remained well, except for the MS and twice went on a holidays to the south coast. Beth was planning to go again this year but unfortunately she had a stroke on 16th August and after refusing treatment passed away on 20th. Beth planned her service years ago and it was a celebration of her life. Three of her great nieces did the bible readings.

Supplied by Lorraine Breakwell (nee Townsend)

Faye Ann Brooks (30.1 1935–24.12.2007)

Faye died in the Intensive Care Unit of St George Hospital. Flowers were sent on behalf of the association. As an associate member, Faye served on the committee for many years and was a fount of knowledge regarding the activities and personnel connected with St George.