FROM THE DIRECTOR

Creating our Future and Preserving the Past

Working with PhD students in GNUR 8230, the graduate course devoted to nursing history and an introduction to historical research methods, is one of the most exciting, fun, and challenging parts of my role as a faculty member and Director of the ECBCNHI. This semester it has been particularly interesting, as the range of topics the students are pursuing diverge widely. Most are related to the students’ dissertation area of investigation, so that they become familiar with changes over time in the state of the art of nursing related to their current work. Others choose topics related to their larger role in nursing, for example, some of our military students investigate the history of nursing in the Army, Navy, or Air Force. Among the areas of investigation the students have chosen this year are: The nurses of Pearl Harbor, Nursing in the Eighth Evacuation Hospital in World War II, nurses’ role in treating patients after radical mastectomy in the mid-twentieth century, the role of an African-American public health nurse—Imogene Bunn—in Charlottesville in the latter half of the 20th century, the inception and growth of the Emergency Nurses’ Association, the nurses’ role in cancer chemotherapy in the 1950s and 60s, the nurses’ changing role in acute cardiology during the 20th century, and nurses’ work with the Kellogg Foundation promoting health in rural Michigan.

Above: On behalf of the Bjoring Center, School of Nursing Dean Fontaine receives U.Va. President Sullivan’s mother’s World War II nursing cape. At right: Imogene M. Bunn, RN, BS, PHN.
One of the most frequent comments I hear in class is “This is not easy! Nurses are invisible!” Take, for example, the question of what nurses did in Pearl Harbor on December 7, 1941. While some stories have been retrieved through oral interviews and a questionnaire sent out by the American Red Cross shortly after the war, much remains to be documented. In fact, much is probably hidden in the memories of the nurses who served, and often when asked, what the nurses tell you is “We just did what we had to do.” That’s what nurses do—even when they were triaging severely injured men at Pearl Harbor. Clearly, nurses minimize their contributions on the frontline.

The nurses’ stories, about World War II or cancer chemotherapy, or public health, need not be lost. In fact, valuable remnants of their narrative may be hidden in diaries, letters and journals buried in attics or basements, ignored by family members too busy to investigate or unaware of their importance. Remnants of their stories may also be found in artifacts—in nursing uniforms, pins, and capes; in photographs pasted into dog-eared scrapbooks cherished by their owners, or in nursing schools alumnae magazines or reunion notes from the past. These items should all be preserved and we are grateful for those of you who have located bits and pieces of historical value and donated them to the Bjoring Center. You would be amazed at how much they are referred to as we help researchers and students alike in their quest for data.

You would also be delighted with the smiles and excitement that fills the classroom when a student discovers the thrill of finding an interesting and helpful primary source! Handling a diary or letter from a nurse who served in Pearl Harbor on that fateful day, reading a first hand account of the challenges of giving chemotherapy, or seeing firsthand the photos of the area in which the nurse worked a century ago allows students just a taste of their professional DNA—the nurses who have gone before.

Again, thank you to all who donate items to the Center! I invite you to join us on April 22 and April 29, between 2 and 5 PM both days, to hear the students’ papers. More information on the location of the room can be obtained from Linda Hanson at llh3x@virginia.edu.
2014 Barbara Brodie Nursing History Fellow

Jonathan Hagood, PhD is the 2014 recipient of the Barbara Brodie Nursing History Fellowship.

Dr. Hagood is Assistant Professor of History at Hope College in Holland, Michigan where he teaches the histories of Latin America, science, and medicine. In addition, his expertise in these areas has led to extensive research and publications related to social medicine, public health, and nursing professionalization. His current research is entitled “A Profession without Borders: The Discourse and Reality of International Nursing in the Early Twentieth Century”.

Dr. Hagood notes, “there are two principal research aims to the study: (1) to analyze the international discourse that nurses created and (2) to compare this discourse to the realities of international nursing networks and the international movement of nurses. In doing so, the project argues that individual nurses’ engagement in ‘international nursing’ changed their perception of the profession in ways that impacted and shaped both their daily practice and the development of nursing as a profession.” The Barbara Brodie Nursing History Fellowship will provide Dr. Hagood with the opportunity to explore the data necessary for this study from archives housed at New York University, Columbia University, the Rockefeller Archive Center and the Red Cross papers at the National Archives in College Park, Maryland. He anticipates that in addition to the project’s two principal aims, it will also make an innovative contribution to the history of nursing in general, as well as the limited extant literature on international nursing.

Nursing History in UVA’s Undergraduate Curriculum

Nursing history has been present for many years in the School of Nursing’s undergraduate curriculum. Originally developed by Dr. Barbara Brodie, and later taught by Drs. Mary Gibson and John Kirchgessner, Introduction to the World of Nursing has been a longstanding foundational course for UVA’s first year nursing students. Using the profession’s history as a guide, the course is designed to explore the nursing profession in general, nurses’ many roles in society and the enduring professional issues faced by nurses for over a century. However, just as the profession evolves to meet the needs of society, so too does nursing education; with the implementation of the new undergraduate nursing curriculum in the fall of 2014, Introduction to the World of Nursing will be retired. Nevertheless, history will still be “alive and well” in the new curriculum’s series of foundational courses. Known as the REAL (Research, Ethics, Advocacy, and Leadership) courses, students will take these courses in their second through their fourth years of the nursing program. The first course, Research, will incorporate history into lectures and classroom discussions, as well as writing assignments. In the three remaining courses, students will use past nursing models to explore and analyze the historical aspects related to professional ethics, advocacy, and leadership.
Presentations, Publications & Awards

FACULTY

BRODIE, B. “Poor Pregnant Women Deserve a Safe Delivery for Themselves and their Babies” (paper presented at the American Association for the History of Nursing Conference, Cleveland, Ohio, September 26–29, 2013).

GIBSON, M. E. “‘A Noble Charity’: Rainbow Cottage in Cleveland, 1891–1928” (paper presented at the Southern Association for the History of Medicine and Science Conference, St. Louis, Missouri, February 27–March 1, 2014).

GIBSON, M. E. “‘Beyond Private Charity: Virginia’s Early Initiatives to Combat Tuberculosis, 1900–1925” (paper presented at the American Association for the History of Nursing Conference, Cleveland, Ohio, September 26–29, 2013).


KEELING, A. “‘Nursing the Big Sickness’: Alaska and the Influenza Epidemic, 1918–1919” (paper presented at the American Association for the History of Nursing Conference, Cleveland, Ohio, September 26–29, 2013).


POWELL, N. “Nurses Roles in Military-Civilian Partnerships: The Fort Lewis Maternity Project of 1941 As A Case Study” (paper presented at the American Association for the History of Nursing Conference, Cleveland, Ohio, September 26–29, 2013).


STUDENT


NOTEWORTHY

Center Director ARLENE KEELING was recently appointed Co-Editor, with Barbra Mann Wall from U. Penn’s Barbara Bates Center for the Study of the History of Nursing, of a new journal, “Health, Emergency and Disaster Nursing.”

Center Associate ANNE COCKERHAM has been named as the Frontier Nursing University Associate Dean of Midwifery and Women’s Health. Dr. Cockerham has served as course coordinator and FNU faculty member for four years and will also continue to serve in her recently appointed position as Professor of History where she devotes a portion of her time to preserving, recording and disseminating the unique history of the University.
2015 Barbara Brodie Nursing History Fellowship

The Center for Nursing Historical Inquiry Barbara Brodie Nursing History Fellowship, a postdoctoral award, is open to nurses engaged in historical scholarship that advances the field of nursing history. Applications for the $3000 award are due October 15, 2014, and the recipient will be announced in December, 2014. The selected Barbara Brodie Nursing History Fellow will present a paper from their research in the Center’s History Forum series.

Selection of the fellow will be based on the scholarly quality of the investigator’s project including: the clarity of the project’s purpose, its rationale and significance, the rigor of its methodology and questions posed, and its potential contributions to the field of nursing.

The application and a curriculum vitae should be sent by email to the Center’s Director, Dr. Arlene Keeling, awk2z@virginia.edu. Applications are available on the Center’s Web site: www.nursing.virginia.edu/Research/CNHI/Fellowship.

Fall Nursing History Forums

September 9
Nursing Rural America, 1900–1950
John C, Kirchgessner, PhD, RN, PNP
Book signing and reception to follow.

October 21
A Profession Without Borders: International Nursing in the Early Twentieth Century
Jonathan Hagood, PhD
Assistant Professor of History, Hope College
2014 Brodie Fellow

November 11
A Salute to Military Nurses:
A Veterans Day Panel Presentation
The panel will feature veterans from Vietnam, Iraq and Afghanistan.

Conferences

American Association for the History of Nursing
31st Annual History of Nursing Conference
Storrs & Hartford, Connecticut
September 18–21, 2014
Additional information: www.aahn.org

Canadian Association for the History of Nursing
Annual Conference
Toronto, Canada
June 13–15, 2014
Additional information: www.cahn-achn.ca

Southern Association for the History of Medicine and Science
17th Annual Conference
Jackson, Mississippi
February 2015
Additional information: www.sahms.net

Disease, Health and the State
Society for the Social History of Medicine Conference
Oxford, United Kingdom
July 10–12, 2014
Additional information:

Quarantine: History, Heritage, Place
University of Sydney
Sydney, Australia
August 14–16, 2014
Additional information:
www.sydney.edu.au/arts/research/quarantine

Call for Papers

12th Annual Joint Atlantic Seminar in the History of Medicine
Johns Hopkins History of Medicine Department
Baltimore, Maryland
October 3–4, 2014
Deadline for submission: June 1, 2014.
Additional information: http://www.hopkinshistoryofmedicine.org/jasmed-2014
Called to Care
for Foundlings, Orphans, Unwanted and Abused Children:
St. Vincent’s Infant Asylum, 1881–1972

BARBARA BRODIE, PHD, RN, FAAN
The Madge Jones Professor Emerita, UVA School of Nursing

In the late 1800s, because it served as the hub of railroad traffic between the East and the West, Chicago was one of the fastest growing cities in the country. Each year, the city’s new industries attracted thousands of rural and immigrant workers seeking jobs and homes. Unable to keep pace with the health and welfare needs of the workers, the city’s leaders turned for help from religious organizations who provided health services. One of these was St. Vincent’s Infant Asylum.

In 1881 Sister Walburga Gehring, a member of the Daughters of Charity of St. Vincent DePaul, founded Chicago’s St. Vincent’s Infant Asylum. Sister Walburga had opened Joseph’s Hospital in 1868 and from her experience with working among the poor, recognized the plight of destitute unwed mothers who, because of the social stigma attached to their pregnancy, were unable to find medical help for themselves or their babies. Moved by their plight, four more Daughters of Charity Sisters came to the city to provide health services to these special infants and their mothers.

When it opened in June of 1881, St. Vincent’s Infant Asylum had room to accommodate twenty babies and eight unwed pregnant mothers. In addition to unwed mothers and infants, the sisters also cared for foundlings and arranged adoptions. The first foundling was brought to the Sisters by a Chicago policeman on September 9, 1881, and the first baby was adopted on January 17, 1882. By 1884 the asylum was already experiencing difficulties in caring for the many mothers seeking refuge.

To meet the growing needs of mothers and infants, a new building was opened in 1887 that accommodated 60 infants and 20 mothers and had a small birthing room. A physician was also employed at this time to deliver the babies and care for the asylum’s children. Later the same year, in recognition of the Daughters of Charity’s outstanding services to unwed mothers and their infants, the City of Chicago adopted an Ordinance that protected their institution’s legal standing and granted St. Vincent’s an annual income of $1200 to defray the costs associated with caring for the dependent children. This income continued until St. Vincent’s closed in 1972.¹

Between 1881 and 1896 St. Vincent’s provided maternity services to over 900 mothers and their newborns, in addition to

meals and lodgings for 500 poor mothers and their infants. In 1900 the Sisters began to work with pastors of the city’s Catholic churches to find married parents who were seeking a child, hoping the parents might choose a St. Vincent’s baby. The Director of Adoptions worked closely with parents interested in adopting.

**Mothers’ and Children’s Care**

From its inception, St. Vincent’s Sisters relied on the help of volunteer women to care for the children. To ensure that the children were being well cared for, in 1905 the Sisters opened a one year education program in child care. The program, developed and taught by a graduate nurse, prepared high school graduates to become child care workers in private homes or small hospitals. Annually, the program accepted 25 students a year who took courses in caring for babies. In addition, they spent months gaining practical experience in providing care to children from birth to three years old. The students’ youth, intelligence and fondness for children helped them emotionally relate to each child while at the same time, managing rooms of over 20 children. Acting as surrogate mothers the students bathed, fed, dressed and helped the children learn to talk, walk and be potty trained. As the children grew older they were encouraged to become more independent, share and play with others, and to develop their sense of curiosity. The students also had experience in the milk room where the babies’ formulas were prepared and the sick room where they learned to care for sick children. The students were helped by the St. Vincent’s women volunteers, who helped to diaper and feed the children, rock them when they were upset and play with them. Volunteers were also very active in the children’s birthday and holiday parties and often took them outdoors for picnics, walks and trips to the beach, park and zoo. Meanwhile, the Daughters of Charity Sisters and professional nurses cared for the mothers.

**Growth of St. Vincent’s and Alliance with Catholic Charities**

The need for maternity and adoption services increased during the 1920s as more unwed mothers learned of St. Vincent’s services. In response to these needs, a more comprehensive modern facility was opened in 1930. The new St. Vincent’s seven story hospital provided accommodations for 150 children and their mothers, and had a maternity and pediatric service that was staffed by obstetricians, pediatricians and graduate nurses. When the hospital opened in 1930, the St. Vincent’s Daughters of Charity selected Sister Mary Alice Rowan to be the Assistant Director for Patient Services. She was chosen for her proven leadership abilities and her dedication to helping needy children.

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Sister Mary Alice, a large and imposing woman, possessed a unique personality that engendered respect and affection from all she encountered. Filled with energy and a loud voice, she set high standards for the care of the children, and because of her ease at speaking she became the public face of St. Vincent’s. In her thirty-five years of service she found parents for thousands of children.

Under Sister Mary Alice’s leadership, the graduate nursing staff of 35 nurses provided professional care to the children and mothers and helped supervise the student nurses. They served as head nurses and taught classes to mothers on infant feeding, bathing and the care of newborns. Those who had chosen to have their babies adopted were usually assigned a St. Vincent’s nursing Sister to guide them through the delivery of their infants. Sensitive to the mother’s need to know that she had delivered a healthy baby, the Sister placed the infant in her mother’s arms and encouraged her to hold, examine it, and to talk to it. Many mothers cried and needed soothing to help them deal with their emotions. The nurse answered the mother’s questions and prayed with her and reassured her that her baby would be adopted by good parents who would love and cherish it. When a mother finished holding her baby, the nurse carried it to the nursery. Adoptive babies were not taken to see their mothers again.

To pay the debt on St. Vincent’s new hospital, Cardinal Mundelein of the Chicago Archdioceses, assumed the financial responsibility of operating St. Vincent’s and placed the hospital under Catholic Charities. This alliance allowed St. Vincent’s to operate the hospital and work with the Catholic Home Placement Services.

Societal Changes and St. Vincent’s Future

In the 1950s, when the social stigma on having a child out-of-wedlock decreased and reproductive medicine offered more effective contraception methods, the number of women seeking adoption services from St. Vincent’s also decreased. However, society’s need for help to care for its abused and abandoned children or for those living in disruptive families dramatically increased. These children and their families presented new and different challenges, and St. Vincent’s moved quickly to help them. It opened its facilities 24 hours a day and offered emergency physical and psychological care to children less than three years of age. In 1955 Vincent’s was named the official agency for emergency care for children.

In 1964 the Illinois Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS) was created and given a mandate to improve the care of dependent children in the state. The department had long viewed institutional care as being out dated and harmful to children. They favored the use of foster care families because they believed they were more beneficial for children. In 1970, the state ceased sending public funds to St. Vincent’s for the care of its dependent children, and in 1972 the DCFS ordered Chicago Police to stop bringing dependent children to St. Vincent’s. Faced with these facts it was clear to the St. Vincent’s Sisters that the state wanted to replace the hospital’s services with their own children’s services. Left with no recourse, the Daughters of Charity of St. Vincent’s De Paul announced that they would close St. Vincent’s in 1972. After ninety-one years of dedication and service to the orphaned, abandoned, and abused children of Chicago, the Sisters quietly left the building and moved to other Chicago facilities they operated that provided care to poor children and their families.

The legacy the Sisters left the city is impressive. They, with their staff, cared for 59,248 children and found parents for thousands of these children. In doing so they not only enriched the lives of the children and their adoptive parents, but also contributed to the wellbeing of the city and the nation.

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4 Etta Sacharski, personal interview with author, August 2003 and December 2013. To protect the identity of the children’s biological mothers the birth records of children born at St. Vincent’s de Paul Hospital are closed to the public. The records were made available to the adoptees in the late 1950s.


“Windows in Time” readers will likely remember the 2007 announcement concerning the release of Bjoring Center director Arlene Keeling’s book: Nursing and the Privilege of Prescription, 1893–2000. Among the chapters in this important historical survey is a consideration of nurse practitioners’ strides toward professionalization in the 1960s and 70s.

The nurse practitioner movement features in a number of Bjoring Center manuscript collections, and these represent a particular strength of the Center’s holdings. The JoAnne Peach Papers, for example, trace the career of a Virginia educator and practitioner who served as an instructor in the nurse practitioner program of the U.Va. School of Nursing, her alma mater, as well as other nursing schools. The New York State Coalition of Nurse Practitioners Collection (NYSCONP) traces the fascinating story of a nearly ten-year-long advocacy campaign to achieve legal prescriptive authority for New York’s nurse practitioners. These two collections highlight nurse practitioner education and the quest for professional recognition. A third collection, just opened to researchers this spring, underscores the national reach and interests of the profession in maturity. The National Association of Pediatric Nurse Associates and Practitioners Collection (NAPNAP) complements the personal story represented in the Peach Papers and the collective activism of NYSCONP.

Founded in 1973, NAPNAP is a national, professional association which promotes high quality pediatric and family healthcare. The organization offers continuing education programs for its members and consumer health information for agencies and the public. It authors policy and position statements relative to standards of care and public health initiatives, and it publishes a scholarly clinical and research periodical, the Journal of Pediatric Health Care, in addition to organizing an association-wide annual meeting. The NAPNAP materials here in the Bjoring Center pinpoint the five-year period between 1993 and 1997. Principally concerning administrative activities of the national office, then located in Cherry Hill, New Jersey, the NAPNAP Collection also includes some chapter newsletters, reports, and correspondence. These provide a glimpse of the range of concerns distributed across the membership at the local level. The national-office records include correspondence and reports generated by and for the permanent administrative staff as well as the annually elected officers of the association. Topics include alliances—and competition—with other professional organizations and advocacy groups, including the American Academy of Pediatrics and the American Nurses Association, national health reform legislation, professional standards of care, fund raising, chapter coordination, and the development of an internet presence—in short, all the wide-ranging administrative responsibilities of a national professional organization’s busy national office. Also featured are the records of special interest groups and task forces charged to develop and disseminate specific healthcare standards. These include studies of H.I.V., immunization, lead poisoning, and breast feeding, among many others.

As always, we welcome your visits to examine these important collections.
We would like to extend special thanks to all of our contributors.

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**RECENT ACQUISITIONS**
**Delores Alt** Gustavus Adolphus College School of Nursing photos, Little Nurse Doll, nursing texts and other memorabilia.

**Karyl Blair** Gustavus Adolphus College School of Nursing Class of 1964 notes.

**Constance L. Browne** nursing cape of Mary Hill.

**Lynn D. Van Dwermark** photographs of her mother, Constance Cooke Dixon, as a student nurse, UVA SON DIPLO 1950.

**Dianne Gagliano** papers and uniform pertaining to her career as Army nurse.

**Shirley Gullo** Clara Barton commemorative items and vintage patient care items.

**Roxana Huebscher** nursing texts, personal papers.

**Maryann D. B. Lee** U.S. Army uniform ribbons.

**Alex Miller** vintage nursing texts of his mother, Hazel E. Blalock.

**Patricia Mc Nicholl Quill** St. Vincent’s School of Nursing Memorabilia.

**Dorothy Purcell Tashjian** nursing cape, pin and texts.