

WINDOWS IN TIME

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE UNIVERSITY OF VIRGINIA SCHOOL OF NURSING ELEANOR CROWDER BJORING CENTER FOR NURSING HISTORICAL INQUIRY
VOLUME 20, ISSUE 2 OCTOBER 2012



U.Va. President Theresa Sullivan and Dr. Bjoring with Center Staff, Associates, and Affiliate



President Sullivan

FROM THE DIRECTOR

A Clear Vision, a Bright Future: The Eleanor Crowder Bjoring Center for Nursing Historical Inquiry

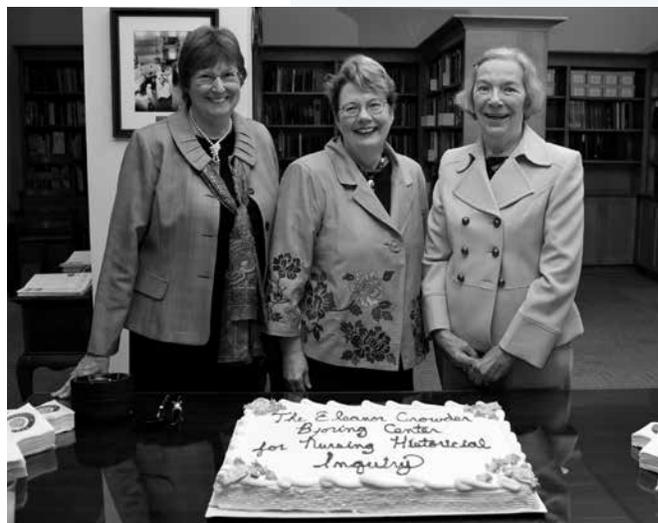
With this issue of *Windows in Time*, we celebrate the renaming of the CNHI to “The Eleanor Crowder Bjoring Center for Nursing Historical Inquiry (ECBCNHI).” It is indeed a joyous time, as the endowment of our Center has been 20 years in the making. That endeavor has been dependent on the contributions of all of our supporters, particularly gifts from “The Brodie Group”—both collectively and individually, William and Lorraine Albrecht, Lucie Kelly, and Rita Chow. Most recently, Eleanor Crowder Bjoring, PhD, RN, a long-time friend of the Center and historian of nursing, donated a significant gift to help us reach our endowment goal of \$1.2 million. In recognition of her generous contribution and her goal to see the Center endure into the future, on September 18, 2012 we re-named the CNHI the “ECBCNHI”—hereafter also known as “The Bjoring Center.”

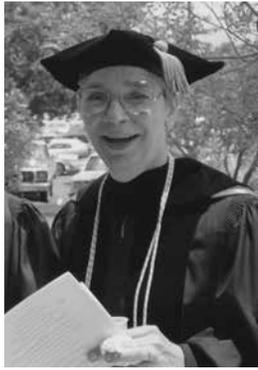
In 1969, Eleanor Crowder Bjoring declared her intention to become a nurse historian. She had already proven herself in the field of nursing, having served as a disaster relief polio nursing during the 1952 polio epidemic, a U.S. Air Force flight nurse in both the United States and Korea, and a nursing instructor in India, among other professional assignments. When she returned to the University of Texas (UT) for her baccalaureate degree, Dr. Bjoring discovered what would become her true passion: uncovering and teaching the history of nursing. She subsequently earned her BSN, MSN, and PhD, and taught at UT for nineteen years, during which time she established a center for nursing history there. Subsequently, Dr. Bjoring directed

IN THIS ISSUE:

- 1 FROM THE DIRECTOR**
A Clear Vision, A Bright Future: The Eleanor Crowder Bjoring Center for Nursing Historical Inquiry | Arlene W. Keeling
- 3 CENTER NEWS**
- 5 NEWS & OPPORTUNITIES**
IN NURSING AND MEDICAL HISTORY
- 6 FEATURE**
Bridles and Babies: Couriers and Nurses in the Early Years of the Frontier Nursing Service | Anne Z. Cockerham, PhD, RN, CNM, WHNP
- 10 CENTER CONTRIBUTORS**

Arlene Keeling, President Teresa Sullivan, and Eleanor Crowder Bjoring





Dr. Bjoring

the graduate nursing program at Penn State University. During her distinguished career, Eleanor Crowder Bjoring authored *Passing the Legacy: A History of the Last Fifty Years of the School of Nursing of the Hospital of the University of Pennsylvania*. A member of the American Association for the History of Nursing for many years, Dr. Bjoring was one of its chief fundraisers, always a central presence at the Association's infamous dinner auction. Indeed, her ability to raise funds for history has become legend.

With Dr. Bjoring's support, and with the support of all of the Bjoring Center's friends and colleagues, the ECBCNHI has a promising future. Now financially secure, the Center will continue to grow, in size, in activity, and in reputation. Promoting excellence in historical scholarship is one of our goals, and with Dr. Anne Cockerham as our 2012 Brodie Fellow; UVA PhD history graduates, Dr. Barb Maling, Dr. Deborah Gleason and Dr. Nena Patterson, joining us as new Center Associates; and the recent addition of Dr. Pamela DeGuzman as our Bjoring Center



School polio immunization clinic, c. 1955

Policy Affiliate, we are well positioned to increase the number of grant applications and publications coming from the Bjoring Center. Another goal is to continue to process collections and make them available to scholars, both at the Bjoring Center itself and on the internet. With grant funding from UVA's Jefferson Trust, Assistant Director Mary Gibson and I, along with Pam DeGuzman and a cadre of doctoral and undergraduate students, are designing an interactive website to highlight the Milio papers, an important collection that focusses on a community-based nursing clinic in Detroit in the 1960s. Ensuring that new nurse scholars are prepared with an understanding of nursing history and have the skills they need to undertake historical research is a third goal, and to that end, nursing history is included in both the undergraduate and the graduate curriculum at UVA's School of Nursing. In addition, with Assistant Director Dr. John Kirchgessner's position on St. John Fisher College Wegmans School of Nursing faculty, we have been able to connect via internet to students there in the presentation of our history forum series.

Expanding the Center's focus of scholarship to include the study of international nursing history and broad themes in healthcare history is a fourth goal, and to that end, Dr. Barbara Brodie, Professor Emerita and former Director, is chairing our Second International Agnes Dillon Randolph Nursing History Conference, March 15 and 16, 2013. Our fifth goal: to promote the Bjoring Center within the school, the university, and the surrounding community, is enhanced by a recent contribution from Dr. Lucie Kelly to fund new equipment and mannequins for the Bjoring Center's window display. Thanks to Dr. Kelly, the win-

Student nurses with history of labor and delivery nursing poster

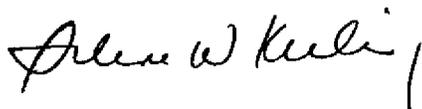


The Eleanor Crowder Bjoring Center for Nursing Historical Inquiry (ECBCNHI), established at the University of Virginia in 1991 to support historical scholarship in nursing, is dedicated to the preservation and study of nursing history. The development of advanced clinical nursing practice, and the clinical specialty organizations that represent the various practices, is a major focus of the Center. The goals of the Center include the collection of materials, the promotion of scholarship, and the dissemination of historical research findings.

dow now is equipped with a LCD screen to show slides providing some historical context and explanation of the display.

Today, with the recent Institute of Medicine report on the Future of Nursing calling for nurses to work at the full extent of their training, and health policy in the forefront of our political debates, nursing history matters. As our colleagues Pat D'Antonio and Julie Fairman argue: "History infuses health reform debates, helping us explore tensions and inconsistencies. ... History provides a critically important perspective if we are to understand and address contemporary health system problems."¹

Today, we have a unique opportunity to use nursing history as evidence for practice. For over a century, nurses in the United States have been "working at the full extent of their training"—as Public Health nurses in the 1910s and 1920s; as Bureau of Indian Affairs nurses in the 1930s; as Frontier nurses in Appalachia in the 1940 and 50s; as nurse practitioners in urban and rural clinics and migrant camps, and as nurse anesthetists in critical access hospitals throughout the United States. In all of these areas, over the course of the 20th and into the 21st century, nurses have provided access to care to many Americans to whom it otherwise would have been denied.² Preserving, documenting, and disseminating that historical evidence is the first step toward changing health policy. To that end, the Eleanor Crowder Bjoring Center for Nursing Historical Inquiry can make a significant contribution.



Arlene W. Keeling

¹Patricia D'Antonio and Julie Fairman, "Guest Editorial: History Matters," *Nursing Outlook*, 58 (2010): 113–14.

²Arlene W. Keeling, "Conclusion: Toward a more equitable system of health care," in *Nursing and the Privilege of Prescription, 1893–2000*. (Columbia, Ohio: The Ohio State University Press, 2007): 156–57.

CALL FOR ABSTRACTS

**The Second Agnes Dillon Randolph International Nursing History Conference at The University of Virginia, Charlottesville, Virginia
March 15–16, 2013**



In recognition of the diversity and quality of the nursing scholarship across the world, the Eleanor Crowder Bjoring Center for Nursing Historical Inquiry is hosting the second Agnes Dillon Randolph International Nursing History Research Conference. The conference will be held at the University of Virginia School of Nursing. The keynote address will be presented by Barbara Brodie, PhD, RN, FAAN, Professor Emerita and Randolph Award recipient

Abstracts are to be submitted electronically and are due no later than November 15, 2012.

Hotel accommodations have been made with Courtyard by Marriott University/Medical Center 1201 West Main Street, Charlottesville, VA. 22903. Further information, including directions for electronic submission, is available on the conference website: <http://www.nursing.virginia.edu/research/cnhi/events/randolph-2013/>.

Digital History Project Updates

The SHANTI site, an interactive site that showcases the Center's collection of Caroline Benoist, a Mississippi public health nurse, will be available this fall at: cnhi-benoist.nursing.virginia.edu.

Digitization of the Nancy Milio Collection is underway. The project will use Shared Shelf, a digital cataloging and file sharing data base. This project, funded by a Jefferson Trust grant, will result in a website with indexed files and analytical paragraphs about collection themes.



Anne Cockerham and Arlene Keeling

Staff Presentations & Publications

Brodie, B. “Hurting and Caring: Conflict in Nursing Burned Children from a large School Fire—1958” (paper presented at the Danish Society of Nursing History and the Danish Museum of Nursing History International Nursing History Conference, Kolding, Jutland, Denmark, August 9–11, 2012).

Cockerham, A. and Keeling, A. *Rooted in the Mountains; Reaching to the World: A History of the Frontier School of Nursing, 1939–1989.* (Louisville, KY: Butler Books, 2012).

DeGuzman, P. and Keeling, A. “Addressing disparities in access to care: Lessons from the Kercheval Street Clinic in the

1960s,” 12 (4) *Policy, Politics and Nursing Practice*, 12(4): 199–207 (originally published online March 21, 2012).

Gibson, M., Keeling, A., and Kirchgessner, J. “Nurses in Coal Towns, Migrant Camps and Schools: Bringing Health Care to Rural America, 1920–1950” (panel presentation at the Danish Society of Nursing History and the Danish Museum of Nursing History International Nursing History Conference, Kolding, Jutland, Denmark, August 9–11, 2012).

Keeling, A. Book review [Fanning, Patricia J. *Influenza and Inequality: One Town’s Tragic Response to the Great Epidemic of 1918.* Amherst and Boston: University of

Massachusetts Press, 2010], *Nursing History Review*, 21, 2013. 137–139.

Kirchgessner, J. “Mountaineers, Immigrants, and King Coal: The Intersection of Three Cultures and the 1907 Monongah Mine Disaster” (paper presented at the Bread & Roses Centennial Academic Symposium, Lawrence, MA, April 28, 2012).

Kirchgessner, J. Book review [Weaver, Karol K.] *Medical Caregiving and Identity in Pennsylvania’s Anthracite Region, 1880–2000.* University Park: The Pennsylvania State University Press, 2011], *Nursing History Review*, 21, 2013. 134–135. ■

NEWS & OPPORTUNITIES

IN NURSING AND MEDICAL HISTORY

Call for Applications

The American Association for the History of Nursing (AAHN) offers four awards for completed research, each presented annually at the Fall Nursing History Conference. Only AAHN members are eligible to apply for these awards. Deadline for award submissions is May 15 of each year.

Teresa E. Christy Award—to encourage new nursing history investigators, and to recognize excellence of historical research and writing done while the researcher was in a student status.

Lavinia L. Dock Award—to recognize outstanding research and writing produced by an experienced scholar in nursing history who submits a book

Mary Adelaide Nutting Award—to recognize outstanding research and writing produced by an experienced scholar in nursing history who submits, most often, a post-doctoral research manuscript or article.

Mary M. Roberts Award—to recognize outstanding original research and writing in an edited book of nursing history.

Additional information: www.aahn.org/awards

Conferences

American Association of the History of Medicine
Atlanta, Georgia
May 16–19, 2013
Additional information:
www.histmed.org

The Southern Association for the History of Medicine and Science
Charleston, South Carolina
February 21–23, 2013
Additional information:
www.sahms.net

Calls for Abstracts

Canadian Association for the History of Nursing
University of Victoria
Victoria, British Columbia, Canada
June 1–3, 2013
Abstracts due November 30, 2012
Additional information:
www.cahn-achn.ca

The European Association for the History of Medicine and Health
Annual Conference
Lisbon, Portugal
September 4–7, 2013
“Risk and Disaster in Health and Medicine”
Abstracts due: Dec 1, 2012
Additional information:
www.eahmh.net

2012–13 Nursing History Forums

McLeod Hall #5060
Noon–1:00 PM

October 23, 2012

*Addressing Health Care Disparities in the Great Depression:
Nursing in the Migrant Camps, 1935–1943*

Arlene W. Keeling, PhD, RN, FAAN

Director, The Bjoring Center for Nursing Historical Inquiry

November 13, 2012

*Adventure and Service in Khaki and White:
Frontier Nursing Service Couriers, 1928–2010*

Anne Z. Cockerham, PhD, RN, CNMW, WHNP-BC

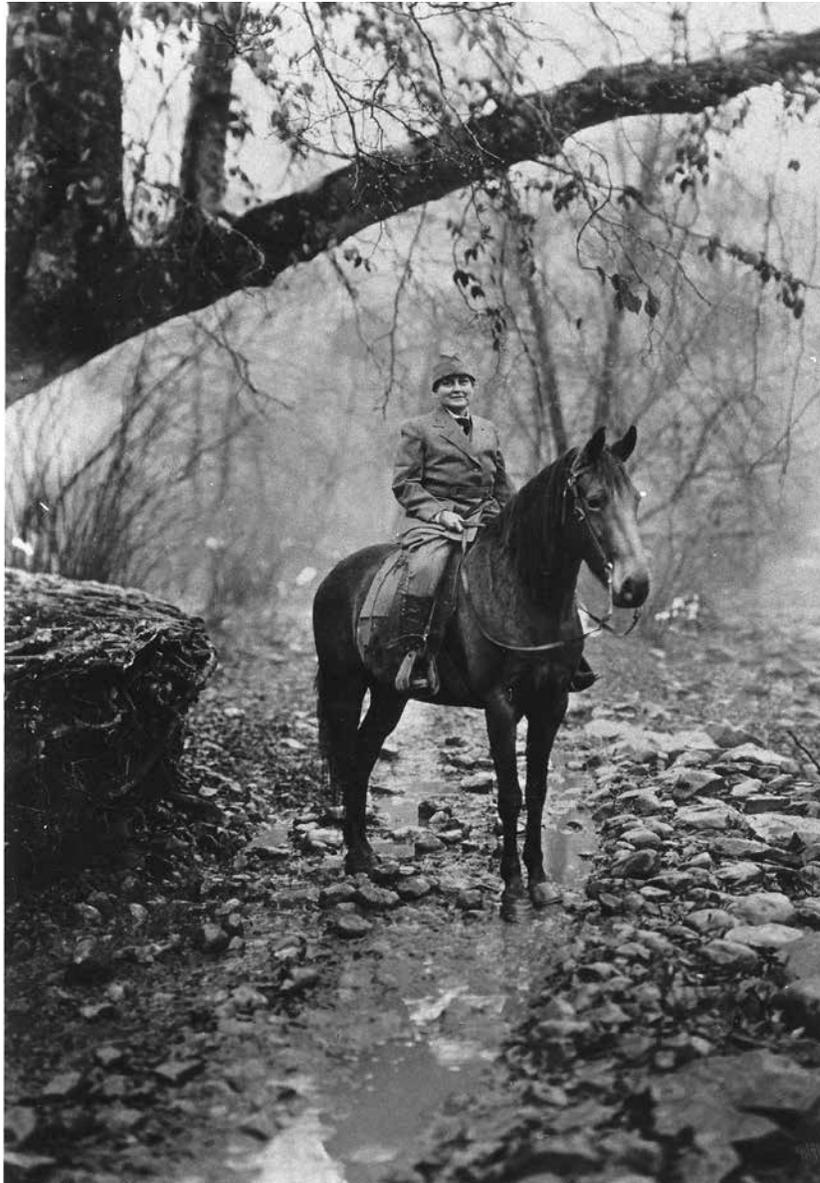
2012 Brodie Fellow

February 5, 2013

To be determined

April 16, 2013

To be determined



“We first rode up ‘Hell-for-certain’—a horribly rough creek about eight miles long. [Soon] we got into a great primeval forest extending for many miles in all directions with trails leading in a most confusing zigzag.”

ABOVE: Mary Breckinridge, Wendover Collection, Frontier Nursing Service
FACING PAGE: Nurse Anna May January, Wendover Collection, Frontier Nursing Service



Bridles and Babies:

COURIERS AND NURSES

in the Early Years of the Frontier Nursing Service

ANNE Z. COCKERHAM, PHD, RN, CNM, WHNP

*This Courier Service is a remarkable part of [Frontier's] work. Girls in their late teens and early twenties, many from luxurious homes, go for a period of about two months at a time and believe me, they work. I have seen them cleaning out and whitewashing stalls, currying horses, poulticing and bandaging injured legs. They save doctors and nurses long horseback rides by carrying messages, and by bringing sick children into the hospital. They are constantly and effectively busy and what do you think? They pay for this privilege!*¹

As readers of this publication gleaned, the couriers of Mary Breckinridge's Frontier Nursing Service in Eastern Kentucky were getting national acclaim in 1941. In existence for less than a decade and a half, the courier service had established itself as a critical part of Frontier's work and people outside Mary Breckinridge's inner circle of friends were taking notice. Indeed, Frontier nurses could not have carried out their work without the courier service.

After Mary Breckinridge established the Frontier Nursing Service (FNS) in the mountains of eastern Kentucky in 1925 she soon realized that she needed help of a different kind than her British-trained nurse-midwives could provide. Breckinridge envisioned that the system of "girl chauffeurs" the American

Committee for Devastated France used after World War I could work for the FNS. The girl chauffeur system, in which non-medical volunteers assisted nurses and physicians, provided transportation, and carried out chores, was the inspiration for Frontier's courier service.

Frontier nurses relied on the couriers in important ways and one of the most immediate was to avoid getting lost. Indeed, couriers often knew the unfamiliar wooded mountain trails well and the nurses were grateful for their guiding presence. Even as a veteran of navigating the mountain paths, Mary Breckinridge appreciated the presence of her courier's guidance when she undertook a five-day district nursing center circuit in 1929. According to Breckinridge:

*I had a courier with me because I was going to try out a different trail the next day in going over to the nursing station at Big Creek at Red Bird River in Clay County, distance of nearly twenty-five miles. We first rode up "Hell-for-certain"—a horribly rough creek about eight miles long. [Soon] we got into a great primeval forest extending for many miles in all directions with trails leading in a most confusing zigzag, and it was this territory in which [the courier] guided me.*²

¹ *The Lilly Review* (September 1941): 3, Frontier Nursing Service Collection, University of Kentucky Libraries, 85M1, Box 35, folder 28.

² "Rounds," *Quarterly Bulletin of the Frontier Nursing Service, Inc.* 5, 2 (September 1929): 5.

More than a decade later, when Barbara Webster served as a courier in 1941, she recognized that her presence was valuable to the nurses. Barbara recalled: “All the time we were there to be someone for the nurses to ride out at night with or to go on a case with so that they wouldn’t have to go alone. We were there to be a companion to the nurse.”³

The couriers also offered emotional support to the hardworking nurses as they went about their challenging tasks. During her 1946 courier service, Patsy Lawrence buoyed the spirits of the nurse through a heartrending situation:

There is no doubt that the nurse on duty along with me suffered over the interchange we had with a family in the mountains. There was a mother who had just given birth to a 7-pound baby and whose throat was blocked from proper swallowing. She had had other babies with the same problem and they had died. The nurse with me pleaded to take their baby to the hospital in Hyden to have a simple operation on its throat. We were about to take that baby on our horse to do just that when the father walked in. He said “if the Lord wants my baby to die, I must not stand in its way.” He would not let that baby out of his house. The mother cried and cried and we left so unhappy that we could not save that child’s life.⁴

Indeed, the nurses were under tremendous pressure to heal ill patients, maintain their professional demeanor, and adhere to the cultural norms inherent in working with mountain people. Doing all that took its toll on nurses. According to Patsy, “Everyone looked upon you as if you just had all the answers. You represented Mary Breckinridge’s wonderful Frontier Nursing Service and so you were an angel in disguise.”⁵ Having a courier at her side each Frontier nurse added emotional reserves to accomplish her work.

Although the iconic image of a courier was one of a young person saddling a horse or ferrying supplies, couriers also served as Frontier nurses’ extra hands in many situations. A *Frontier Nursing Service Quarterly Bulletin* article described this aspect of courier duties by saying, “as a novice Nurse’s Aide, there is a new



Mary Breckinridge: Wendover Collection, Frontier Nursing Service

satisfaction in boiling water for the baby’s bath, or helping set up for the school-house typhoid inoculation clinics.”⁶ And births were one of the most coveted nursing assistant experiences for couriers. Martha Bull Webster and Florence Rawleigh thrilled at the experience of accompanying nurses when they attended births in mountain homes. Martha fondly recalled handing supplies to ultra-capable Helen Browne (whom everyone called “Brownie”) and entertaining small siblings while a woman safely delivered a healthy baby in her mountain cabin.⁷ In dark cabins, lit by only a lantern and a fireplace, Florence supported the nurses’ work by holding a flashlight during births. After a baby’s arrival, the nurse would gently place him in Florence’s arms to weigh and dry. Not only did her actions benefit the Frontier nurse, some of Florence’s fondest memories of her time as a courier came from being there to assist in her own way during a birth.⁸

Although births were memorable and exciting, health needs of the families in Frontier’s service area extended beyond deliveries. Thus couriers sometimes had an opportunity to assist the nurses in less joyous work. When a 1941 influenza epidemic temporarily sidelined most of Frontier’s nurses and staff, couriers pitched in and ran the administration of

³ Interview with Barbara Webster, Frontier Nursing Service Oral History Project (Hereafter FNS OHP), 1979OH164 FNS 065, Louis B. Nunn Center for Oral History, University of Kentucky Libraries (Hereafter LBN COH, UKL), p. 7 of transcript.

⁴ Interview with Patsy Lawrence, FNS OHP, 1979OH147 FNS 054, LBN COH, UKL, p. 5 of transcript; Patsy Lawrence, email to author, March 15, 2012.

⁵ Interview with Patsy Lawrence, FNS OHP, 1979OH147 FNS 054, LBN COH, UKL, p. 5 of transcript.

⁶ “Courier’s Catalogue,” *Quarterly Bulletin of the Frontier Nursing Service, Inc.* 18, 1 (Summer 1942): 21.

⁷ Interview with Martha Bull Webster, FNS OHP, 1979OH162 FNS 063, LBN COH, UKL, p. 17 of transcript.

⁸ Florence Rawleigh, interview with author, February 13, 2012, p. 3 of transcript.

Hyden hospital.⁹ Two senior couriers, Freddy Holdship and Jean Hollins, then took the Red Cross nurses' aide training course to mitigate the effects of the severe wartime shortage of nurses.¹⁰

Although Barbara Webster missed out on deliveries during her 1941 courier service, she offered other valuable services to the nurses and their patients. In addition to giving her experience as a nurses' assistant, one situation gave Barbara an up-close view of a life-and-death struggle: one stormy night a mountain man arrived at the clinic pleading for nursing care of his family, most of whom were desperately ill with measles. After riding a long mountain trail up to the family's home, Barbara and the nurse found nearly a dozen sick people piled into three beds, some suffering from pneumonia. According to Barbara: "that night my help was in washing and cleaning them up, taking temperatures, trying to make them more comfortable, and seeing what could be done for them."¹¹ Working as diligently as they could but also realizing the limits of their influence on the tragic circumstances, Barbara remembered, "That was before penicillin in those days ... [we provided] fluids and told them what they should be doing to alleviate this. But then it was just in the lap of the gods whether they survived the pneumonia or not."¹²

During her 1941 courier service, Allyn Johnson Shepherd developed a fresh perspective on the multifaceted ways in which Frontier nurses cared for their patients amid the challenges that some mountain women faced. When a nurse took a young mother and her newborn home from the hospital, the nurse asked Allyn to come along and help. When the small party arrived at the girl's cabin Allyn recalled:

... there was no one home and it really surprised me that here was a very, very young girl, with a tiny little baby, and nobody home to greet her. The house was cold and it was a real eye-opener to me. I had never thought that could happen to a human being. There was no water in the house and I can remember going down the bank of a stream to get a bucket of water and bring it up and heat it up. I was just so impressed with the way [the nurse] went about doing things. It didn't



Courier Susan Adams Bissell, 1932 courier: Wendover Collection, Frontier Nursing Service

take much more than about a half hour and we had that house as cozy and as warm and inviting as it could be and had that young lady settled in there. The nurse just took the things that were available at the house and made a place for the baby to sleep and helped the young girl, teaching her some of the things she needed to know.¹³

Mary Breckinridge's plan to recruit volunteers to assist nurses, care for animals, and escort guests—all the while giving these young adults priceless real-world experiences—turned out to be wildly successful. Frontier's courier program allowed more than 1,500 young people to live, learn, and serve in the mountains of Eastern Kentucky between 1928 and 2010. Many couriers consider the weeks or months they spent with the Frontier Nursing Service to be among the most meaningful times of their lives. Couriers justifiably felt proud of their role in facilitating and augmenting Frontier's nursing work as the nurses were able to accomplish far more with a courier to guide and assist them. ■

⁹ Mary Breckinridge, *Wide Neighborhoods* (Lexington, Kentucky: The University Press of Kentucky, 1952): 273

¹⁰ Breckinridge, *Wide Neighborhoods*: 273

¹¹ Interview with Barbara Webster, FNS OHP, 1979OH164 FNS 065, LBN COH, UKL, p.7 of transcript.

¹² Interview with Barbara Webster, FNS OHP, 1979OH164 FNS 065, LBN COH, UKL, p. 8 of transcript.

¹³ Interview with Allyn Johnson Shepherd, FNS OHP, 1979OH141 FNS 048, LBN COH, UKL, pp. 6–7 of transcript.

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We would like to extend special thanks to all of our contributors.

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Sharon W. & Robert T. Utz
Susan Andresen Winslow
Cynthia Worrell and
John Sanborn

Miss Trina Vecchiolla

Elizabeth Mechling Younger

RECENT ACQUISITIONS

American Association for Pain Management Nursing additions to the CNHI American Association for Pain Management Nursing Collection

Carol Chandross nursing texts

Janet Colaizzi personal papers

Susan Donckers U.Va. School of Nursing Class of 1967 photograph

Carolyn J. Eberhart "The Shifting Sands of Cam Ranh Bay R.V.N. 1965-1972: a True Story of the U.S.A.F. Combat Nurses"

Emergency Nurses Association additions to the CNHI Emergency Nurses Association Collection

Dianne Greenhill items from collection of Ruth Neil Murry, former Dean of the UTHSC College of Nursing; National League for Nursing Education publications; Report of the Committee on Nursing Education; Committee of Beard, Biggs, Goodrich, Nutting, Wald, Welch, Winslow; and other publications

Kal & Julie Howard glass thermometers

Frances Kerr personal papers, memorabilia and photographs of Jane Shrum, graduate of Guys Hospital in London, and her career as a nurse in South Africa, South America and the UK

Barbara Parker books and papers pertaining to nursing research

Dorothy Phillips photographs and videorecorded interview pertaining to nursing experiences c. 1940s

Catherine Ratliff nursing books and uniform pieces

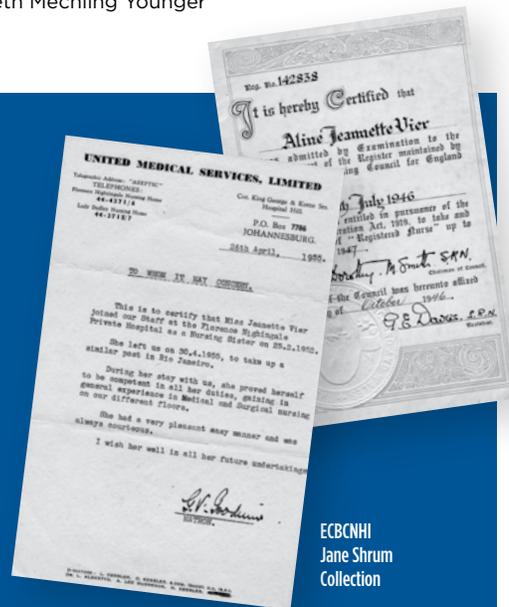
Margarete Sandelowski course material and memorabilia from Beth Israel Hospital School of Nursing

Geri Syverud nursing textbook, 1923

Nancy K. Tilman student nurse uniform, c. 1964

Sharon Utz Red Cross First Aid book

Shirley Gordon Webbink textbooks and student nurse uniforms, c. 1958



ECBCNHI
Jane Shrum
Collection

Eleanor Crowder Bjoring Center for Nursing Historical Inquiry

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Windows in Time can be found on EBSCOhost and Gale Group, Inc. databases.

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Nurses with bicycles, ECBCNHI Jane Shrum Collection