



### PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

#### *Greetings to all Alumnae,*

It was great to see many of you at the AGM/ Anniversary Celebration for the classes of 1953, 1963, and 1973. Congratulations to those of you who celebrated their milestone 70, 60 and 50 year anniversaries as an RCH graduate. In my message I will summarize the business we discussed at the AGM and continue to work on.

Over the past year, we realized that the stained glass window had not properly been voted on, so we held a vote for all paid members to participate in. The final tally confirmed the majority of alumnae were interested in moving forward with the stained glass window, which we would donate to the RCH Foundation. It will be located in our RCH Nursing Archive display in the new lobby at RCH. We have been working with the artist Omanie and our alumnae member Fran Friesen from 67A, to fine tune the final design. At our Spring meeting, feedback was given to the artist as to some small change's members would

like to see. One example is she is going to add some greenery to the building, reminiscent of the ivy that was on the old 1910 building. While the stained glass window does not match everyone's individual taste, we did feel we tried to get feedback and the artist will incorporate this where she can. The other issue was after years and months of waiting to hear about our stained glass window being accepted, we were given a very short time frame by the architect/builder to give them specific measurements, requirements for lighting, framing etc. I believe it will be a beautiful testament to all the nursing students who were educated at RCH.

The RCH nursing archive display, planned for the new Acute Tower, will be located in the entry area of the new building and will share the space with the stained glass window. The size will be approximately 15 feet by 15 feet.

There was a committee that reviewed all our

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### TREASURER'S REPORT

May 31st marks the end of our fiscal year. Since last years AGM was on June 1, 2022, we have technically managed to fit two AGMs into one year. So, our balance as of May 31, 2022 was \$91,682.64. We started out by spending \$791.31 on last years AGM to cover flowers, refreshments, tablecloths, cups, napkins, cake, and copies of the nursing caps made. Within a few days of the AGM we also deposited \$1,740 of membership fees. July saw us spending \$966.46 to have our newsletter formatted and printed. In August we spent \$99.43 for postage and copies of that newsletter to be sent out. Also, in August we deposited another \$500 of membership fees. We paid out \$42 for our Safety Deposit Box in late November. In early December we saw a further \$565 in membership fees deposited along with \$1260 for the Christmas Luncheon. Our charges at the Vancouver Golf Club came to \$1673.70 which included the buffet, gratuity, and the room rental which we get at a discounted price due to our alumnus, Elsie Wrightman's membership there. So, the luncheon was subsidized by the Alumnae to the



*Christmas Luncheon December 2022.*

tune of \$413.70. Also, in December we paid \$72.83 for office supplies, postage, and fax transmissions. Late in December we paid \$425 for tuning of the piano from Sherbrooke Lounge that we donated to new Mental Health Unit at RCH. In January this year we spent \$95.30 on postage and copies. February saw us depositing another \$200 in membership fees. Following our meeting in March we deposited \$1533.53 in membership fees in April. So far in May we have deposited \$760 in membership fees. So as of May 31, 2023 our account balance is \$94,276.50. Of course, that does not cover any of the costs of the 2023 AGM or any membership fees that we collected at the AGM.

*Eva Aslin Treasurer, 78B*

## President's Message (cont.)

submissions for the display. They wanted to see the history of the school and its students as opposed to medical items. Some approved items are: pictures of the hospital buildings, students and graduates, uniforms and a few items e.g. graduation pins display. They are trying to get a special glass for this case so it will not be broken or tampered with.

There is also still a possibility that our graduate pictures will be rehung in either the HCC or Columbia Tower once their renovations are completed (which will be after the new tower is open).

We also heard back from the alumnae members who brought ideas for the final disbursement of remaining funds when we are no longer operating either as an alumnae or a charitable organization. These ideas were then discussed at our last meeting and we came up with a summary of ideas which we felt we could carry forward and with further discussion, possibly a vote next year for paid members.

There were 3 or 4 main ideas

- Have a sculpture of a nurse or a bust of a nurse done and donated to RCH. After discussion it was felt that we could do this along with the stained glass window if members chose. The idea would be possibly for something in a garden/landscaped area near the new tower.
- Supports for indigenous students in nursing. There are many ways this could be done and through different schools. There was some discussion around whether indigenous students are eligible for university/college funding from the government. Looking this up ***Debunking the myth that all First Nations people receive free post-secondary education*** on the **CBC News website**, it appears not quite that straight forward.

- There was also suggestion for funding Internationally Educated Nurses. This again could be done in many schools. The government is supporting IENs currently but we do not know the details, like how much and how do they apply for it, etc.
- There was the suggestion to support nurses in furthering their education e.g. from LPN to RN, RN to NP, specialty fields etc. This could be done by augmenting our bursary at RCH or creating a second one.



*Stained Glass Window Proposed Design*

Then there was discussion regarding a way we could support any or all these types of nursing students? Someone had suggested to me not tying the funds to a local school, as the students came from all over BC to attend RCH School of Nursing.

I researched this a bit and found what I think would be a good fit, if this is what people would like. ***RNFBC - Advancing Excellence in Nursing. <https://rnfbcc.ca/>***

The Registered Nurses Foundation of BC supports nursing students in all different areas and it is not tied to a specific school. I noticed some of the other school of nursing alumnae have bursaries here. This is something that we could work with them on as to our specific ideas e.g. priority to indigenous student, or priority to IEN, or priority to a rural student. *Food for thought!*

Your executive is carrying on, doing what we can despite some personal difficulties for some.

*Thank you, Eileen Brown, 78B*

## MEMBERSHIP REPORT 2023

**P**aid membership is down significantly this year. At present we have 161 paid members which is down from 263 paid members in 2022. Our annual membership fee of \$20.00 helps to fund events like the annual AGM, Anniversary Celebrations, Christmas Luncheon as well as the rental cost for our meeting venues. It also covers miscellaneous costs like the newsletter, postage, and photocopies.



I would like to remind everyone that only paid members are qualified to vote on Alumnae business. In the next few years leading up to the dissolution of the Alumnae, your input and votes will be

required to decide on important issues such as the disbursement of the remainder of the funds in our bank account. We encourage you to keep your memberships active until dissolution to help cover these costs and to voice your opinions. Remember to notify me when any of your contact information changes or one of your classmates pass away. I also like to keep track of reunions for the Newsletter, so please keep me informed.

I have attached a membership form, with my contact info. If you are uncertain of your due's status, send me an email or give me a call.

Enjoy your summer and hopefully we will see you at our next Fall meeting on October 18, 2023.

Please note our Upcoming Important Dates on the last page, mark your calendars now!!

*Carol Schmidt, Membership, 78B*

# Anniversary Celebrations

We had 43 Alumnae members attend our AGM/Anniversary Celebration on May 31, 2023 at the Scandinavian Centre in Burnaby. Thanks to Diane Barnhill, 71B, for booking our lovely venue. We had representation from the classes of 53B, 63A, 63B, 73A and 73B, celebrating 70, 60, and 50 years as an RCH Graduate! Congratulations!

Lots of chatter could be heard throughout the room as everyone reminisced and caught up with each other's lives. After the AGM, some of the 50 year graduates filled us in on their varied and impressive careers, including a few who are all still working! The 50 year pins and flowers were distributed to the 1973 classes and corsages were presented to the 60 and 70 year members that were present.

A big thanks to Louise Johnson, 69B, for providing the tea, cake and refreshments. Another big thanks to Myrna Bloch and Elaine Olson, 70B, for organizing and taking the great group photos. We would also like to thank the many members that came early and stayed late to help set up and take down.

Make sure you mark June 5th, 2024 on your calendars for next year's AGM/Anniversary Celebration! We hope to see you there!

*Carol Schmidt, 78B*



### 63A

*Back Row (L. to R.) Olga McDonald, Lenora Collier. Front Row (L. to R.) Joanne Thiel, Caroline Yee, Pat Reid, Jackie Ratzlaff*



### 53B

*(L. to R.) Marion Best, Ednagrace Kellie, Marilyn Parsons, May Quan*



### 63B

*(L. to R.) Carol Lee, Mary Hoodicoff, Sandra Heppell, Eileen Hamilton*



### 73A

*Back Row (L. to R.) Betty Lou Woiken, Sharon Trautman. Sandi Thiessen, Elaine Sheppard, Geri Seinen, Donna Maras, Sue Kaulbeck  
Front Row (L. to R.) Heather Gurnsey, Janet Cathcart, Jane Blagborne, Wendy Bishop, Julie Baker, Gwen Jubb*



### Alum Exec

*(Left to Right). Eva Aslin 78B(Treasurer), Diane Barnhill 71B (Secretary), Eileen Brown 78B(President)  
Carol Schmidt 78B(Membership).  
Missing: Sue Hall 76B (Vice President) Anne Kern 73B(Archives)*



### 73B

*Back (L. to R.) Audrey Walsh, Wendy Holly, Bonnie McLeod, Maureen Hornak  
Front (L. to R.) Sue VanNoortwyk, Jan Radford, Kathy Hanson, Joan Collie*

## Upcoming Reunions

69B September 2023 at Loon Lake

78B September 2023 at Harrison Hot Springs

## 72A Reunion - 51 years



*(left to right) Colleen VanOoyen, Alana Boyle, Bonita Elliott, Gail Chester, Millie Netzel, Vicki McNay, Vicki Thompson, Heather Doig, Val Hermiston, Lark Young, Marilyn Jack, Lorena Brady, Diane Fielding*

of the Chateau Victoria for appetizers and drinks and of course loads of laughter and fun. Three of the thirteen live on Vancouver Island, everyone else travelled from far and wide; Whitehorse, Grand Forks, Seattle, Quadra Island, Surrey, New Westminster, Delta and Maple Ridge. Throughout the weekend we reminisced with each other, told stories, walked, shopped, and enjoyed Victoria. The organizing committee, provided the meals with fresh baked scones, fruit and coffee each morning and a Salmon, pulled pork dinner topped off with a decadent chocolate cake for dessert.

Fifty year, RCH pins were given to those who had not been at the RCH Alumnae luncheon.

We all agreed it was awesome to see each other, catch up and keep in touch.

*Respectfully submitted  
Bonita (Milligan) Elliott, 72A*

*O*n the last weekend in October, thirteen classmates from the class of 72A met in Victoria for the weekend. On the Friday evening we all met in the penthouse

## 73A Reunion

*W*e wanted to have as many as possible to stay together over our 5 days at the reunion to mimic Residence living. We were able to accomplish this by renting an AIRBNB in Vancouver that slept 15. So, as it turns out there would be 11 sleeping there over those days, one who arranged her own accommodation and 2 who joined us for 1 or 2 of the days only. We had lots of fun, laughter and catching up as well as all the “remember when’s”. This was set to correspond with the Alumnae AGM and Celebration of our 50th. We enjoyed walking the streets of Vancouver together to get to a Pub lunch. The day of the AGM we took a limo to the event and enjoyed all the Celebration of the 50th, 60th and 70th Year Graduates. Catching up with many of the RCH graduates who attended. A lot of work and effort was put in to make it so special for us. From there the Limo took us to Queen Elizabeth Park for some group pics then dinner. We walked back to the AIRBNB on a lovely evening. The next day we spent the day at VanDusen Gardens and enjoyed lunch. The following day although some had already left



for home there were 6 of us that spent the day in Vancouver on the Hop on Hop off False Creek Ferry and lunch out along with walking the seawall. The next day we all had to pack up and head back home. Such a great time was had by all. Wonderful that we could be together again. Next time will be in about 3 years we decided.

*Sandi Thiessen, 73A*

**Class 71B 50th Reunion Celebration**

Class 71B met at the Harrison Hot Springs Hotel in September 2022 to officially celebrate our 50 year reunion. Due to the Covid 19 pandemic, it was 2 years late but there was no lack of enthusiasm. As classmates arrived there was lots of visiting, catching up, some hiking and walking to enjoy the area. The weather was perfect. It was great to hear how everyone was busy and enjoying life. Later we walked to a local restaurant for a group dinner. It was a very nice setting and we were seated so that we could see everyone and share greetings. After a delicious dinner the group thanked and applauded those who organized the reunion. Diane Hills gave out small hand embroidered pillows she made to everyone. Diane Barnhill gave out engraved pens to everyone. We thanked the husbands who came along and helped by taking lots of pictures of everyone. We continued visiting and reminiscing as we walked back to the hotel and resolved to meet every two years



going forward. Many of us met up at breakfast the next morning before leaving and agreed it had been a great time.

*Submitted by Diane Barnhill, 71B*

**MARILYN PARSONS 53B**

Congratulations Marilyn on your milestone anniversary of 70 years as an RCH graduate. It was so awesome that you were able to attend this year's AGM and celebration with 3 of your classmates. That, in itself, is a record, I'm sure!

Marilyn grew up in Trail and Fruitvale. She knew she wanted to be a nurse from the age of 6. As Marilyn was contemplating her future as a nurse, she knew of an RCH student living in her neighbourhood. She convinced her mom to invite the student nurse and her mom over for coffee so she could ask questions about her training. Marilyn's mind was made up, her only application was to RCH and she was accepted for the class of 53B. Marilyn could not wait for her new adventure in the city.

When she first arrived at RCH Marilyn lived in the Annex. She was so excited to finally have her own room for the first time in her life, coming from a large family. After she received her cap at 6 months, she was moved to Home 1 and 2 where she now had to share a room. During her final year in training, she was housed in the McAllister building. Marilyn had the same roommate for the entire time she shared a room. They became fast friends and are still in contact today.

Marilyn remembers being paid \$6 per month

the first year in training, \$8 the second year and \$10 the third year. Most of that income went to paying for black stockings and hair nets which they were required to wear. She has fond memories of Spot's Coffee Shop in Sapperton, where her classmates would go for a coke and eat the free crackers that were available. Money was tight those days so they always borrowed each other's clothes. She remembers hitch hiking to White Rock where the RCH Auxiliary provided a getaway accommodation for the students. Marilyn remembers going to work with a few sunburns!! Sick time was not allowed for sunburns!!



**WEIGHING OUT THE CALORIES AND VITAMINS —** Student nurses assist the dieticians in preparing special meals required by patients at the Royal Columbian hospital. Left to right are: Nurse C. Ferguson, dietician; Marilyn Lambert, Trail; and Rita Fair, Coquillam. The nursing class in under Nurse F. E. Benedict, RN, director of education. The '51 class of 29 nurses graduate today at ceremonies in the high school auditorium.

Marilyn's first job after graduation was on Ward F in the 1912 Building which was women's medical.

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## AWARDS AND BURSERIES

### ROYAL COLUMBIAN HOSPITAL FOUNDATION: The Gussie MacPhail Award

*Established in 2018, awarded annually through the RCH Foundation, to a nurse employed by RCH who is actively pursuing a BSN, an MSN or Specialty Certification.*

To donate, contact the RCH Foundation at **604-520-4902** or online with this link: <https://rchfoundation.com/rch-nurses-alumnae> Scroll down and you will see Gussie MacPhail Award.

### DOUGLAS COLLEGE FOUNDATION: The Royal Columbian Hospital Nurses Alumnae Award

*Established in 2018, awarded annually through the Douglas College Foundation, to 3rd and 4th year students with exceptional bedside skills. With an additional \$10,000.00 added by Mary Gordon (59B), in 2019, 8 students now qualify annually for the RCH Nurses Alumnae Award.*

To donate, contact the Douglas College Foundation at **604-777-6175** or online with this link: <https://douglascollege.ca/givealumni/foundation/donate-online>. Under Donate, click Fund Designation, Select Other, then specify Royal Columbian Hospital Nurses Alumnae Award. Fill in donor info.

## Contacts

### PRESIDENT

Eileen Brown (78B)  
604-526-1559  
[prisoners584@shaw.ca](mailto:prisoners584@shaw.ca)

### VICE-PRESIDENT

Sue Hall (76B)  
604-936-0176  
[sbhkaylacat@gmail.com](mailto:sbhkaylacat@gmail.com)

### TREASURER

Eva Aslin (78B)  
604-377-2215  
[laslin@shaw.ca](mailto:laslin@shaw.ca)

### SECRETARY

Diane Barnhill (71B)  
604-833-1872  
[dimbarnhill@gmail.com](mailto:dimbarnhill@gmail.com)

### MEMBERSHIP

Carol Schmidt (78B)  
778-789-0497  
[rchrnalumnae@gmail.com](mailto:rchrnalumnae@gmail.com)

### ARCHIVES

Anne Kern (73B)  
604-534-0893  
[eakern@shaw.ca](mailto:eakern@shaw.ca)

### FRIENDSHIP/CARDS

Marilyn McCutcheon(60B)  
604-936-8432  
[marilyncook1939@gmail.com](mailto:marilyncook1939@gmail.com)

### FRIENDSHIP/SICK & VISITING

Position Vacant

## Marilyn Parsons (cont.)



Not long after, she moved to the 1st floor, men's surgery, in the 1950 building which had opened the year she started training. She remembers working all afternoon and graveyard shifts, as the head nurse at the time assigned all the day shifts to the nurses who were married with children. On nights they were often the only RN. After tiring from all the shift work Marilyn applied for a position in the PARR (Post Anesthetic Recovery Room) and got it. She said she felt like she had died and gone to heaven at now being able to work straight day shifts. In PARR, Marilyn would have a new student to train every week. Back in those days, the janitor helped to transport the patients to and from the wards. She worked closely with the OR and Anesthetic staff, many who became lifelong friends.

In 1956 she was married and a year later, her first daughter was born. She made the choice to leave her job and raise her family but Marilyn believes once a nurse always a nurse and her training has come in handy over the years. In the mid 70's she started to work for her husband who was a dentist. She took on the task of reforming his practice and then later arranged the sale of it after he retired for health reasons.

Marilyn joined the RCH Alumnae immediately after training and has been an active member since. She still remembers the first meeting she attended where a heated argument between 2 members almost came to blows!! She has held every position except secretary. She enjoyed organizing many of the AGM and social potlucks over the years that were often held in the gymnasium in the 1962 nurses' residence building. She was always ready to roll up her sleeves and pitch in wherever needed, often driving those who did not own a car or drive (even to this year's AGM!)

Thank you, Marilyn, for all your years of selfless dedication to our Alumnae, your efforts are much appreciated by all. Seventy years as a RCH graduate, **Once a Nurse, Always a Nurse!!**

## Archive Report

In June 2023 We have had many meetings with the Foundation, your president, Archive members and others, to have an idea as to what will happen to our archive collection in the new tower. We have now been told that it will be a static display unlike the one we have now where we change the items every couple of months. We also had to get the items down to around 30, including only those items that showed the history of the RCH Nursing School. This display will also include the stained glass window. With the space allowed, we had to work within its framework. We have also been advised that the single pane of glass for the front will be the type that cannot be broken so that the items placed within will be safe from theft. It will be lit and will have the ability to spotlight items within the case. It is not only the hospital foundation involved but there are other committees that must okay our choices, such as the architects and a native committee. Still, we have made good progress. We are awaiting the next round of meetings which will be sometime in the next year. The area of the display will be located within the new entrance to the new tower. The grad pictures are still up in the air as to what happens. They are hopeful that a hallway will be available to hang them on but nothing is definite yet. We also had a photographer take pictures as they were boxed up for storage, so



RCH 1903

we have that to fall back on. Only time and space will tell. We are not taking any new donations with some exceptions because of this situation. We are however still looking for a cloak that would have been worn in the early 1940's with the salmon-colored lining--not the red of other years. We will keep going so we can leave a wonderful legacy for the hospital. The disposition of the items that will NOT be in the display will be decided when the time comes. Suggestions will be welcomed AT THAT TIME.

*Anne Kern--Archive Chair, 73B*

## In Memoriam Gone Yet Not Forgotten

Mary Jokisch (Jokisch)	74A	December 15, 2017
Dorothy Housden (Rogan)	53B	February 7, 2019
Linda McLennan (Wozniak)	74A	January 14, 2020
Mary Baerg (Klassen)	54B	June 3, 2021
Verna Kemp (Fast)	53B	April 2, 2022
Grace Weber (Hikichi)	75B	May 7, 2022
Beverley Hamm (Beckstrom)	60B	June 15, 2022
Marg Woodley (Perry)	70A	June 23, 2022
Ruth Arnold (McClughan)	57A	September 25, 2022
Mary England (Grimmer)	47B	October 27, 2022
Helen Clare (Harvey)	55A	December 18, 2022
Tobie Wiebe (Fichtner)	63A	December 22, 2022
Verna Trawin (Spaurel)	61B	January 2023
June Exworthy (Goldstone)	47A	January 6, 2023
Barbara Dech (Leger)	60B	February 7, 2023
Suzanne Caron (Kimball)	58B	March 11, 2023
Anne Hansen (Knudsen)	52B	March 27, 2023
Doreen Ensign (Underhill)	53B	March 30, 2023
Nel Lieuwen (Lieuwen)	60B	April 9, 2023
Carol Lake (Lilley)	54A	April 27, 2023
Mary Shaw (Toporchak)	49B	May 14, 2023
Barbara Scott (Smith)	57A	June 26, 2023





# The ROYAL COLUMBIAN HOSPITAL GRADUATING CLASS OF 1973



## 1973 CLASS

TOP ROW: D.Allen, B.Baranieski, S.Biggs, W.Bishop, D.Bivar, C.Bjornson, A.Blackburn, J.Blagborne, D.Bozak, L.Brown  
 SECOND ROW: F.Buck, B.Burke THIRD ROW: J.Butchart, D.Castling, E.Cavazzi, S.Chahley, E.Chrusch, Norah Stevens,  
 Director of Nursing, G.Crawford, S.Davidson, J.Dotinga, P.Duda, C.Dunbar. FOURTH ROW: D.Emard, Z.Ferguson, L.Findlay,  
 H.Genovese, A.Grimm, S.Hall, B.Hammond, K.Hanson, M.Hornak, S.Humes, S.Kaulbeck, J.Lancaster, J.Lasure FIFTH ROW:  
 D.Lingor, H.MacPherson, M.Mason, M.Mertz, R.Nivala, L.Olenik, A.Olsen, L.Plante, M.Potekal, C.Preston, S.Quain, J.Radford,  
 G.Saiko. SIXTH ROW: I.Scholl, G.Seinen, G.Sowerby, S.Steele, D.Stobbe, J.Swanson, S.Thiessen, A.Troelstra, C.Varcoe,  
 J.Ward, J.Wood, W.Wostradowski, J.Young

## Upcoming Important Dates

October 18, 2023	Alumnae Meeting	St. Michael's Parish, Burnaby
December 6, 2023	Christmas Luncheon	Vancouver Golf Club, Coquitlam
March 20, 2024	Alumnae Meeting	St. Michael's Parish, Burnaby
June 5, 2024	AGM/50 Year Celebration	Scandinavian Centre, Burnaby

