

Telecom employee) in 1958 and quit work to start a family. When their two children started school, she returned to the workforce.

Dearborn was hired in September of 1967 as the secretary to hospital administrator Phil Rickard.

"We didn't pay unemployment insurance during the first few years as it was deemed that hospital workers would never be unemployed," recalled Dearborn, adding it was only a special 60-cent cab ride from her Wright Avenue residence to the hospital each way.

Her first office was in a converted chapel in the basement of the WCA Wing but, in 1972, the new Hastings block was opened and various administrative offices were moved there.

"There was great camaraderie then," Dearborn said. "We had terrific parties, with the medical staff joining hospital staff at dances and other events."

Dearborn's job title was subsequently changed to executive assistant and she served two other administrators — Ray Krock and Brian Steinburg. She was 59 when she retired in the fall of 1998, just before the amalgamation of the four area hospitals into Quinte Health Care became final.

She is proud of her track record at the hospital.

"I was always pretty healthy. I believe that in 31 years, I only missed two or three board meetings. One was when I injured my knee in a skiing accident and had an operation ... I went to work in a full-leg plaster cast and used a wheelchair. It was quite a challenge," she said with a smile.

"I always seemed to be organizing something — board and committee meetings, retirement parties, long-service recognition dinners, social events and seminars. I was proficient in Pitman shorthand and took the minutes of hundreds of meetings over the years."

She helped establish the BGH Pathfinders Retirees Association in 1990 — Ray Krock was the first president — so that retirees could keep in contact with one another on a regular basis.

The association currently has about 140 members, many with 25 or 30 years of service — probably a total of over 2,000 years' service all together, she noted. In addition to bi-monthly dinner meetings, the group sponsors bus trips for shows and shopping, and raises funds to donate to the hospital and the community.

"The hospital remains a part of my life through the retirees association and we have an opportunity to share memories of our working days," said Dearborn.

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