



*Intel*  
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HENRY  
BURY  
Intelligencer

A severe illness almost five years ago made Betty Gray aware of what it was like to be short of breath.

Even though she taught respiratory management for four decades largely in Belleville and area, Gray had never personally experienced the nightmare of fighting for each breath of fresh air.

"Although the experience scared me, it gave me a better insight of what my patients experience on a daily basis," she said. "It's a day-to-day struggle for people with this type of respiratory condition."

The 63-year-old Gray is fully recovered from her illness and has no trouble breathing normally or when exercising.

"I'm just grateful to have healthy lungs and therefore have the ability to use them for my variety of activities," said the Rossmore resident whose home backs on the Bay of Quinte.

Gray's career has centred on people's lungs — and hearts — and she learned quickly that not everyone is lucky enough to breathe without difficulty. She has spent those years educating people on how to manage their respiratory illnesses and lead more normal lives.

"If people are more educated about their respiratory problem, then they can manage it better. I'm glad I had a part to play in that education process," she said.

The Perth, Scotland, native finished high school and took a job as a cardio-pulmonary technologist at Perth Royal Infirmary. She underwent training at Dundee Royal Infirmary under the tutelage of Sir Ian G.W. Hill, a prominent cardiologist who was also the Queen's physician in Scotland.

"The hospital was on the leading edge of open heart surgery procedures and so I had the opportunity to attend surgeries such as mitral valve replacement, which at that time was major open heart surgery. I was really lucky to be able to be in the presence of that kind of medical expertise," she said.

Gray spent almost six years at the Perth hospital before emigrating to Toronto with her family in 1964. She has

two daughters, who are both in policing.

She went to work in the pulmonary department at Toronto General Hospital in 1966 under some of Canada's leading respirologists. She was also a founding member of the Canadian Association of Cardio-Pulmonary Technologists.

Gray moved to Belleville in 1970 and basically set up the pulmonary function lab at the former Belleville General Hospital with the new equipment pur-