

No shortage of work for pharmacist

By MARG HAYLOCK
Staff Reporter

PICTON - To Florence York Boyce, 85, women's lib is just the modern phrase for the independent spirit that, in 1919, carried her to success in an unusual career for a young housewife of her day.

An honor graduate of the College of Pharmacy in Toronto, she was one of three women in her class and the only married female student. She was the only woman of the class to later attend the University of Toronto and earn a bachelor of pharmacy degree.

"I became a pharmacist because of my father-in-law," said Mrs. Boyce, who retired from part time work at local drug stores just a few years ago.

"My father-in-law was a pharmacist and so was my husband but he had worked in the States and his qualifications were not accepted here."

Mrs. Boyce, who had been working in her father-in-law's drug store in Sydenham, enjoyed her job so much that she decided to return to school to become a full fledged pharmacist.

"At that time you put in four years as an apprentice and a year at school. Today it is almost the opposite," she said.

Born in Leeds County, at the town of Jones Falls, Mrs. Boyce was raised in Prince Edward County and is a graduate of Prince Edward Collegiate Institute. She

met her husband when both were lodgers at the same boarding house here and moved to Sydenham after her marriage.

When her father, a Prince Edward County resident, became ill, Mrs. Boyce and her husband, Harold, sold their Sydenham store and returned here to retire.

"I had had 28 years of it then," said Mrs. Boyce, discussing her career.

Her retirement was shortlived, however. A former high school classmate, Lorne Pickering, who owned a drug store, gave her name to fellow druggist Sam Teasel, when he fell ill with the flu and needed help.

Teasel decided to recuperate in the south and after his return to town seldom came to the store. Mrs. Boyce kept her temporary job for a year. Other local druggists learned she was a registered pharmacist and she was asked to work in each of Picton's four drug stores on many occasions after her first job here.

Mrs. Boyce said when she started her career as a pharmacist, prescriptions began with crude drugs that were ground with a pestle and mortar. Penicillin and other antibiotics had not been discovered and the best cure for a cold was epsom salts and a hot water bottle.

Mrs. Boyce, who holds a 50th anniversary certificate received in 1969 to mark her long career said one thing has not changed in pharmacy since 1919. Doctors are still notoriously poor writers.



Rx for success

Pharmacist Florence Boyce, 85, of Hill Street, in Picton had the right prescription for success in her chosen career when she allowed her enthusiasm for her job to overshadow any

misgivings about entering a traditionally male profession. One of her proudest possessions is a certificate that marks her 50th anniversary as a pharmacist, issued to her in 1969.

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