

Bright, Dr. Betty

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Expert active in local groups

By Jennifer Bell

The Intelligencer

Dr. Betty Bright's retirement in the early 1970s hasn't stopped her from keeping up with the world of health care.

The gerontology expert has lent her expertise to several Belleville non-profit groups since coming to the city in 1983.

In fact, she currently serves as president of the Belleville Alzheimer Society.

Serving her community is something that's almost second nature.

Bright, born in Woodstock, Ont., received her medical degree at the University of Western Ontario in 1937. One of four women in a class of 60, she interned at Grace Hospital in Windsor "because back then, that was the only hospital that accepted women doctors," she recalled.

She and husband Charles — whom she met at Western — operated a clinic in Campbellford, after Charles retired from military service in the Second World War.

He also taught psychiatry at Queen's University and had started up a 60-bed hospital in New York state in the post-war years, which was later

sold.

Bright, who had operated the hospital's laboratory and chronic care ward, almost made it to Belleville in the late 1960s, when she applied for the position of medical officer of health to the local health unit after going back to university for her diploma in public health.

But she wasn't hired, and continued her career in New York as a gerontologist, eventually becoming director of the geriatric unit at Harlem Valley State Hospital before retiring in the early 1970s.

But retirement wasn't seditary for Bright.

She continued to lecture part-time on gerontology until moving to Belleville in 1983.

She was glad to be closer to younger brother and long-time local physician Dr. Jim Lloynes, who died almost three years ago.

But Bright (she and husband Charles divorced in the late 1960s), found plenty to keep her busy in her retirement.

She jumped into several volunteer projects, including a survey of more than 800 senior citizens organized by Community Care to determine community needs.

She was instrumental in helping to form the local Alzheimer Society and has also served as its vice-president as well as president.

Bright, a member of Bridge Street United Church (and its board of directors), belongs to the United Church Women and is a Friendly Visitor for Belleville Community Care. She has also served on the board of New Horizons, and the Canadian Mental Health Association.

Bright received the Canada 125 medal several years ago for her community involvement.

And when she's not volunteering her time, she enjoys several hobbies, including reading mysteries, traveling, knitting, rug hooking, classical music and collecting thimbles.

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