



HUGH GRAHAM of Limehouse, a well-known equestrian, shows Bonnie Dee in the Canadian Bred Stakes at the Royal Winter Fair. The thoroughbred mare is owned by Panda Bayer Farms of Schomberg.

V.O.N.-derful

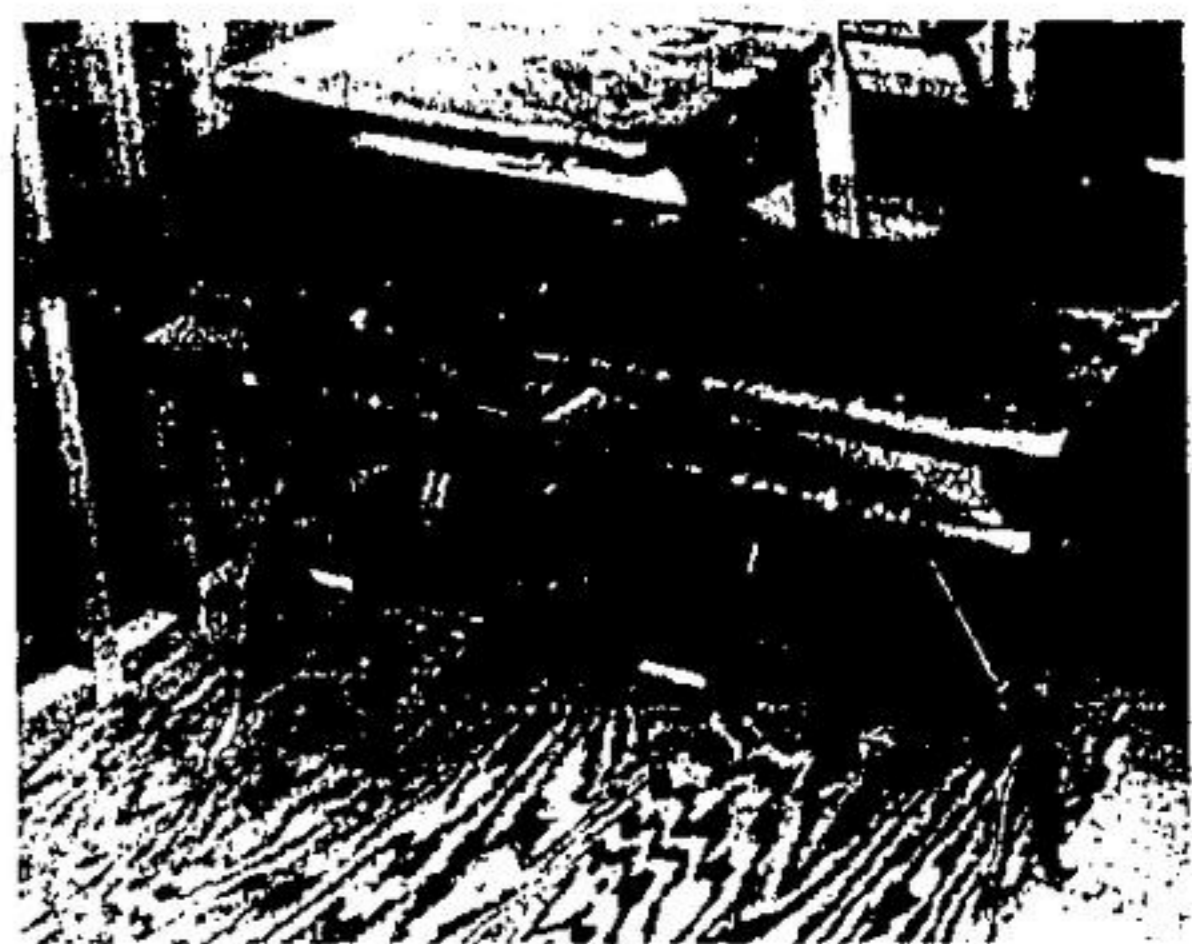
By Robin Stuart
Do you need a helping hand? Call on me. Who is me? Me could be any of the highly skilled registered nurses working for the V.O.N. (Victorian Order of Nurses).
The year 1897 should be considered a milestone in terms of improved "at home" health care for Canadians. The V.O.N., an idea nursed by women's organizations across Canada to commemorate Queen Victoria's Jubilee, became a reality.
Under the guiding hand of Lady Aberdeen, Governor General Aberdeen's wife, four V.O.N. branches were in operation within seven short months. The V.O.N. was responsible for the financing, training, and staffing of these branches. From this humble beginning 80 branches have sprung up across the country.
Available to most
"In Ontario 97 per cent of the population has the ser-

VICES of the V.O.N. made available to them," stated Mrs. M. Macleod, district director of nursing for the Halton Branch. "Only the remote north is not covered."
V.O.N. coverage has developed a long way from the early 19th century "remote cottage hospital" ways.
In Halton, the V.O.N. is managed by a 22-member board of management. Board members oversee financial matters, hiring of staff, wages, the purchase and maintenance of cars for the nurses, and public relations.
Financial support comes from grants made available by the regional municipality, plus Hamilton and Oakville United Appeal. This year an \$8,000 grant was given by the region. Hamilton and Oakville United Appeal gave \$5,600 and \$2,000 respectively.
Patient fees
Other monies are derived from the fee charged for a visit to a patient's home. This is worked out on a cost per

visit basis, estimated by the number of visits divided into the amount of money spent on supplies used during the treatment. The result is a base fee for each patient.
Fees are paid by the patient, private insurance held by the patient or government funding. There is a "sliding scale" of payment for people who can't afford the full cost of treatments, Mrs. Macleod explained.
Halton's V.O.N. branch restricts its activities to at-home nursing. V.O.N. involvement in a case could result from one of several sources. A patient may be referred by a doctor, a hospital, or even neighbors. Sometimes patients themselves request assistance. Such requests are checked out carefully before any nursing activities commence.
"Special kind"
V.O.N. nurses expertly carry out their tasks. They give injections, change dressings needed following burns or for chronic open sores, supervise mouth medications, and help out with baths. All patient work

done by the V.O.N. is under a doctor's direction. Being a V.O.N. nurse isn't an easy job. It takes a "special kind" of person.
Mrs. Willoughby of Georgetown is the V.O.N. nurse for this area. Her territory includes Britannia Road north to Erin Township, east to Peel and west to Hamilton-Wentworth. The enthusiasm with which she talks quickly indicates that Mrs. Willoughby is one of these "special people."
"I prefer to nurse in the home, more than at the hospital. Helping to keep people in their home, where they want to be as long as possible, is very rewarding," she remarked.
Mrs. Willoughby is both a nurse and a friend to the patient. Such a friendship is most important since patient and family alike often have questions regarding the illness. If something is bothering them, they like to be able to "talk things out," she explained.
Independence
"Patient Independence" are keywords in the V.O.N.

organization's dictionary. This independence is fostered by the persistence with which the nurses teach patients and their families. A patient's family might be taught how to change the dressing. On the other hand, a nurse could instruct the patient in how to administer his or her own insulin.
Mr. and Mrs. Bob Anderson of Sarah St. Milton bubble over with enthusiasm when they talk about the V.O.N. program. Mrs. Anderson is currently nursed twice a week by Mrs. Willoughby.
Mr. Anderson convincingly claimed, "My wife has lived so long because the nurses have looked after her so well." Mrs. Anderson prefers home care because of the individual treatment.
Further information about the V.O.N. can be obtained at 878-5911 or 878-5773. The hours are 8:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. Monday to Friday. A nurse can always be reached in time of emergency.
As Mrs. Anderson puts it, "These girls are wonderful!" Did she mean "V.O.N.-derful"?



At Halton Museum Pine school desks

In the days before compulsory education, double desks such as this were to be found in what few schools then existed. Made of pine, with cast iron legs which were bolted to the floor, this desk dates from about 1850 and came to the museum from Hornby. Though the students who sat at this desk had a single ink well to share, more often than not they copied their lessons on slate boards with slate pencils.
These and other school related artifacts can be seen at Halton Region Museum, Kelso.

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