

Former employees share hospital memories

The small group has assembled and once seated the stories flow freely.

Jean Morrison, Audrey Milward, Lorraine Stephenson, Nora Tuck and Millie Blackett are five former employees who had an opportunity recently to meet and reminisce about their many years as employees at Georgetown Hospital.

Jean Morrison and Audrey Milward were switchboard operators. Their personalities and kind ways were all part of the unique character of Georgetown Hospital. Both Audrey and Jean, who was known as "Mama Jean" and occasionally referred to as "The Boss'm" have repertoire filled with touching stories of hospital life during the 70s and 80s.

"We were busy, covering the switchboard, admitting and billing areas but it was not uncommon for us to find the time to put on a pot of tea for patients facing stressful situations," says Audrey.

Jean recalls a patient who arrived at the switchboard in a very nervous state. "She was being admitted for surgery and I feel that if we hadn't spent that extra time with her in calming her down, she would have most likely have gone."

That little bit extra did go a long way. The patient finally agreed to her surgery and, shortly after her recovery, sent flowers thanking Jean and Audrey for their kindness.

For nursing staff, like Lorraine Stephenson, she was actually on board at the Hospital three weeks before it officially opened. "We were extremely busy preparing the Hospital for its June opening and called upon outside helpers to assist us in making beds. It was an active and exciting time."

Lorraine's nursing duties

began in the Hospital's Nursery and eventually moved into supervisory. Prior to her retirement in 1980, she was the head nurse on the Medical ward. One of Lorraine's fondest memories is of Dr. O'Dwyer, a surgeon who was also with the Hospital during the 1960's.



"He would often come into the Hospital during the night to offer us his assistance. He would help us turn patients in bed, or give us a hand to help walk elderly patients recovering from surgery."

There were many other members of the nursing team including Nora Tuck and Millie Blackett who provided her expertise to the Medical and Surgical wards.

Millie's career also included handling the Ambulance runs for the Hospital. These are special ambulance trips for patients who were being transferred to tertiary hospitals. For these cases, a nurse was required to accompany the patient in the ambulance.

And while Millie has retired from the Hospital, she has remained an active member of the Auxiliary. "I am now a youth volunteer trainer with the Auxiliary and really enjoy working with these young people."

So, it's hats off to these, and other past employees. Your dedication and commitment to Georgetown and District Memorial Hospital have not been forgotten.



Past staff members from as far back as the 60's got together over the piano to sing a few songs and reminisce about the good old days. Left to right,

Nora Tuck 61-77, Millie Blackett 70-87, Lorraine Stephens 61-80, Jean Morrison 70-89 and on the piano Audrey Milward 70-85.

Hospital Labs high tech

Back in the olden days, waiting for the results of a culture swab or blood test could take hours and even days.

In today's Laboratories, such as the one at Georgetown Hospital, high-tech automation has changed all this. Gone are the tests where "a little of this and a little of that" are chemically mixed together to produce a lab result. Now computer technology can provide accurate results in considerably less time. For many routine tests, results can be available within minutes.

"This is particularly crucial for surgical patients," explains Debbie Cock, Georgetown Hospital's chief technologist. "A doctor can do a biopsy while the patient is under an anesthetic. Within a very short time, the Lab has the completed test results back into OR (Operating Room)."

Debbie, and the Lab's 12 person team, work with Dr. Bruce Thomson, Pathologist and long-

time staff member at Georgetown Hospital.

For Debbie, she has over 16 years of Lab work experience, 11 of which have been spent at Georgetown Hospital. "When I first arrived at the hospital, all Lab work was conducted manually. However, since the late 1970's we have expanded."

The results of this growth?

Newer, more automated methods of testing mean faster turnaround times and shorter patient stays.

As well as conducting Lab tests for the Hospital's in-patients, the department also handles out-patients who make up about 60 per cent of the Lab's workload.

Debbie and others in the Hospital's Lab agree that, "The small-town atmosphere at the Hospital is important because it gives us a sense that we are truly making a strong contribution to patient care."



Teenage volunteers

Feb. 11/85 - Left to right, front: Christine McIntyre, Susan Graham, Nancy Parker, Betty York, Jo-Anne Sigurdson. Left to right, back: Mrs.

DeBoer, Helen Van-Klink, Yolanda Weiner, Diane Schenk, Rita Van HarMelen, Vivian Perry and Mrs. Goudekettering. (Photo submitted)

Georgetown Hospital - 30 Years

TD

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