

Nurses find new ways to care for community

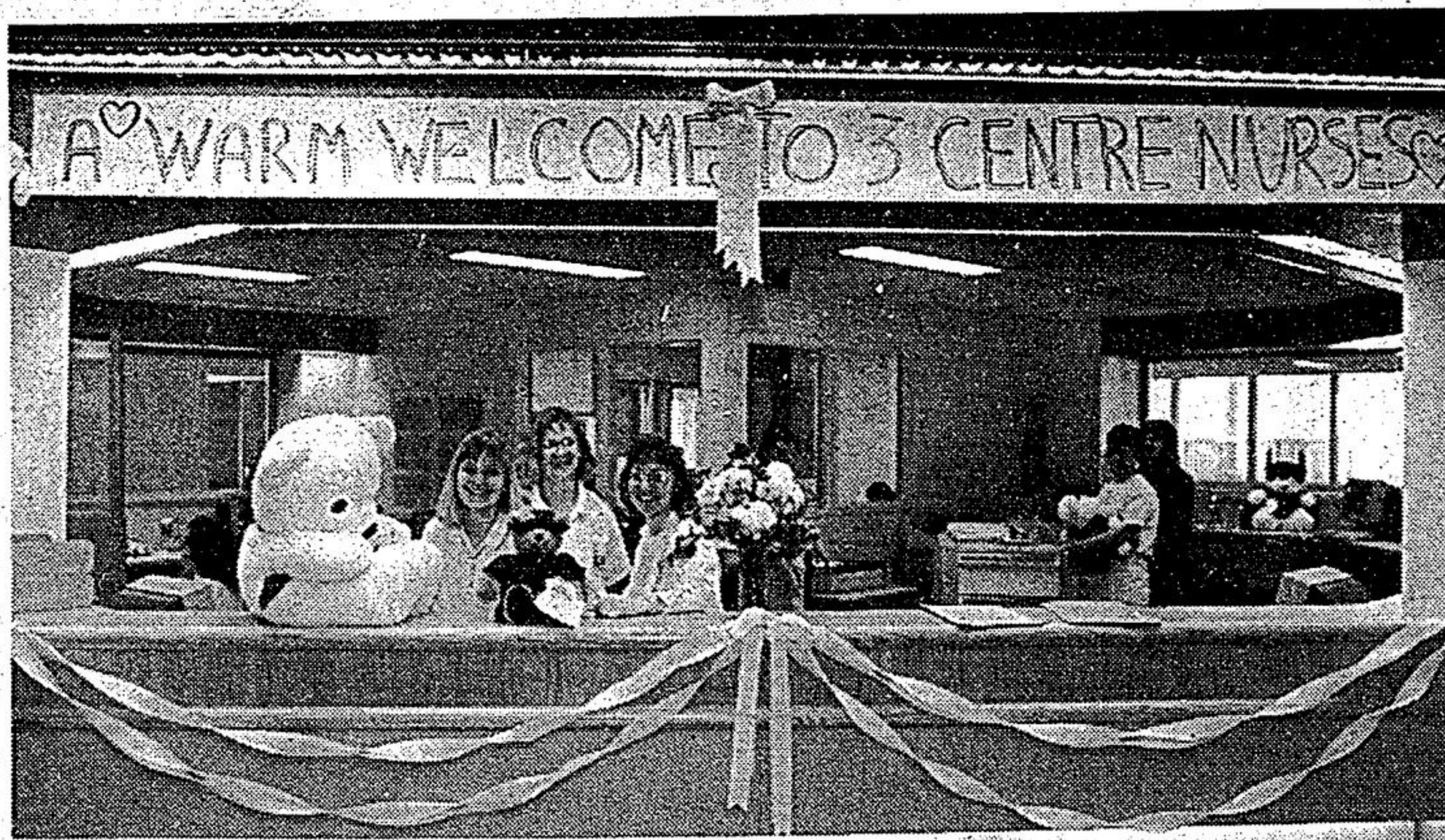


Photo Bill Lanning

These nurses at the Pediatric station were ready to welcome members of the public on their tour of the new hospital late in February. The bears are just a few of the toys donated through Markham Block Parent Toy Drive which had a tremendous response from the community. They were able to provide all the toys and small furniture which was requested. The pediatric playroom officially opens in April. Meanwhile all toys have undergone a safety inspection and are ready for whatever action Markham Stouffville tots can dish out.

By Julie Caspersen
Staff reporter

Self scheduling at a brand new hospital has acted as a magnet to attract nurses to Markham Stouffville Hospital.

In a move from management-controlled scheduling, the hospital allows its 250 nurses choice in deciding when to work. This is a first for the opening of a hospital.

Pure self-scheduling is where staff nurses construct and control their own schedules.

Designing their own schedules could even eliminate mental health days: designing your own schedule does not violate circadian rhythms. And self-scheduling helps with the self-improvement of nurses who can plan shifts around classes when they sign up for a course.

Flexibility and freedom are the main advantages to the self-controlled scheduling, which applies to any staff member working other than regular Monday to Friday shifts.

Quality care of patients comes with nurses' ability to quickly access data.

Markham Stouffville nurses will spend less time preparing plans and more time providing care, which is the basic philosophy of the nursing department.

To provide excellence in the prevention of illness, the promotion of health and the provision of patient care, coupled with a self scheduling concept, is the formula for a successful nursing staff at Markham Stouffville Hospital.

A state of the art computer system was coupled with self-scheduling to entice nursing staff.

The hospital houses a \$4.1 million computer network, the most advanced in Canada. In fact, the Ministry of Health is looking to use it as a model for other hospitals.

The backbone of the system runs through the entire hospital, allowing nurses to access patient records and lab results with the touch of a finger (and the appropriate security code). There's no need to stray from the nursing station to search for information.

Nurses need never lose sight of patients, thanks to the central design of their stations.

Another factor makes Markham Stouffville Hospital the place of choice for nurses. Primary nursing is the term used for the assigning of one day nurse and one night nurse to each patient.

A patient enjoys familiarity with these two nurses on a continuing basis, more like a family atmosphere, and more in keeping with the intimate way nurses prefer to work.



Sue Pearl-Agar, a director of nursing at Markham Stouffville hospital, took to a wheel chair during hospital construction to make sure future patients would have access to elevators, tub enclosures and sinks. The continuing care unit is designed for wheel chair access.

As well, specially equipped doors lead to an inner courtyard and garden where patients can never be accidentally locked out. Instead of taking meals in their rooms, patients will dine in a common cheerful dining room.

Making sure....



Photos: Andre Wolbert

WE WOULD LIKE TO
EXTEND
OUR APPRECIATION TO
THE COMMUNITIES OF
MARKHAM &
STOUFFVILLE
FOR THEIR CONTINUED
SUPPORT OF THE
MARKHAM STOUFFVILLE
HOSPITAL

Economist & Sun / The Tribune

Serving Markham, Unionville, Milliken, Thornhill, Stouffville, Uxbridge & Port Perry

Around town



Bets Lobban
Markham resident

When asked what the new hospital means to her, Bets Lobban perhaps represents most young mothers in this community with her reply;

"As a mother of three active boys, the ready access to emergency services for stitches and broken noses, will be a relief.

With a new community hospital, we won't have the added stress of trying to decide which hospital we would be able to find in an emergency situation.

Another advantage will be the ease of visiting people.

Being able to drop in to visit a friend or family member, instead of rearranging activities for a major excursion, will mean a lot to both parents and visitors..