



Reunion Luncheon 2013

SATURDAY, JUNE 1st IN KNOXVILLE

This year, the Alumni Association's Reunion Luncheon will be held on Saturday, June 1, 2013. The location is St. James' Episcopal Church Parish Hall, 1101 North Broadway, Knoxville.

Arrive after 11:00 a.m. for socializing, and we will eat at noon.

The cost of each meal is \$12.75. KGH alumni dues are still \$3.00 per year.

This year, the classes of 1913, 1923, 1933, 1943, and 1953 will be featured. The program will give details of historical discoveries about the school and our alumni during the past year.

Anyone with a connection to KGH is welcome to attend and share in our memories.

If you have special dietary needs, please let us know when you send in your reservation. See page 19 for the form.

KGH Graduates Are Still Working!

At least three KGH graduates are still working.

Anna Charles (1952) works part-time for a federal agency in Arizona. Anna's daughter, also a nurse, is her boss!

Jewell Price Dietsche (1953) works for an insurance company in Oklahoma, where she drives to clients' homes and performs about 50 physicals each month.

Betty Fishburn Phelps (1953) also works as a contractor, performing physicals for an insurance company in Louisiana.

Inside this Issue

Preserving Your History	3
On the Front Page ...	6
In Memoriam.....	9
Class of 1905.....	10
On Television.....	11
Your Stories	13
Luncheon Reservation Form	19
Museum of Medicine in Johnson City.....	20

Special Points of Interest

- Photos
- Details of historical research project



Preserving Your History and Telling

As a gift to living alumni, I am researching the 879 or so women who graduated from Knoxville General Hospital School of Nursing between 1902 and 1956. This project started because of a simple request from my mother, but it quickly grew into an obsession.

My mother is **Mary McCall McNamara**, Class of 1954. My aunts are **Jo Ella Tipton McCall** (1954) and **Martha McCall King** (1955). My grandmother was **Madeline Boyer McCall**, Class of 1924. Many other important women in my life are KGH graduates. I want to honor each of them, and you, through this research.

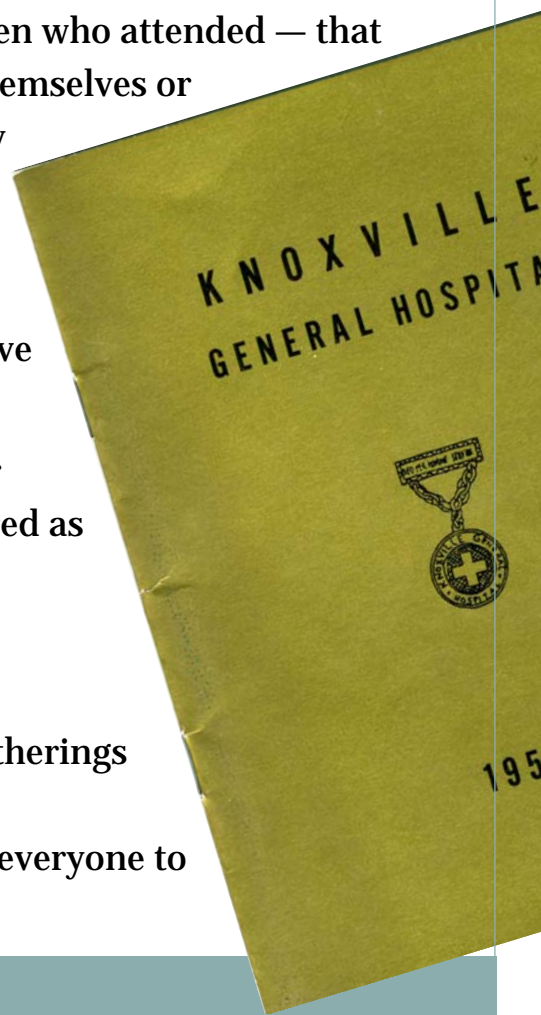
KGH nurses were amazing professionals, even if they “retired” from nursing, and their lives should be remembered.

My ultimate goal is a place where we can honor the nurses for the world to remember them. I’ve created the beginning of an on-line tribute, where I hope to have a separate page for each of the nurses. I can’t accomplish this goal without help from living alumni and the family of deceased graduates.

Everything about the school — and, especially, the women who attended — that exists today is in the hands of individuals, either the nurses themselves or their family members. Today, we have so very little in the way of tangible artifacts. We, like you, treasure the smallest reminder of KGH, because it is a reminder of you and your achievements. Even when the reminder is a displayed picture of something instead of the artifact itself, we are thrilled to have the memory available.

So, I am trying to locate and contact graduates and their family members, asking if they have anything that can be shared as a photograph, copy, or scan of a document or photo.

For the purpose of this project, I prefer to gather high-resolution scans or photos of pictures, documents, and memorabilia. We show the images at luncheons and other gatherings of nurses, and they inspire those present to talk about their memories. High-resolution makes a display large enough for everyone to see comfortably.



Your Stories . . . one Nurse at a Time

We actually don't want to accumulate "stuff." We have nowhere to store your treasures. However, that will soon change.

The Museum of Medicine at the VA Hospital in Johnson City, Tennessee, is creating a KGH exhibit to complement the Knoxville Academy of Medicine's exhibit. Right now, the KGH exhibit is in the planning stages. If you have artifacts you want to donate, please contact the Museum first. For example, they don't need twenty capes. But, they would love to have a representative example of each uniform that was worn over the decades.

Most of all, though, I'm desperate to collect your stories. I hope you will share your memories as you recall them. I would love to add them to the collection. Some of the questions I've been asking everyone include these:

- Why did you choose to become a nurse?
- Why did you choose to attend KGH for training?

(cont'd on page 4)

Form 300A
FEDERAL SECURITY AGENCY
U. S. PUBLIC HEALTH SERVICE
DIVISION OF NURSE EDUCATION


Budget Bureau No. 68-R145
Approval expires August 31, 1945

SERIAL No. 103011 16

NAME OF CADET NURSE Alva, Jo Ashe
SIGNATURE OF CADET NURSE Alva Jo Ashe
(PRINT OR TYPE)

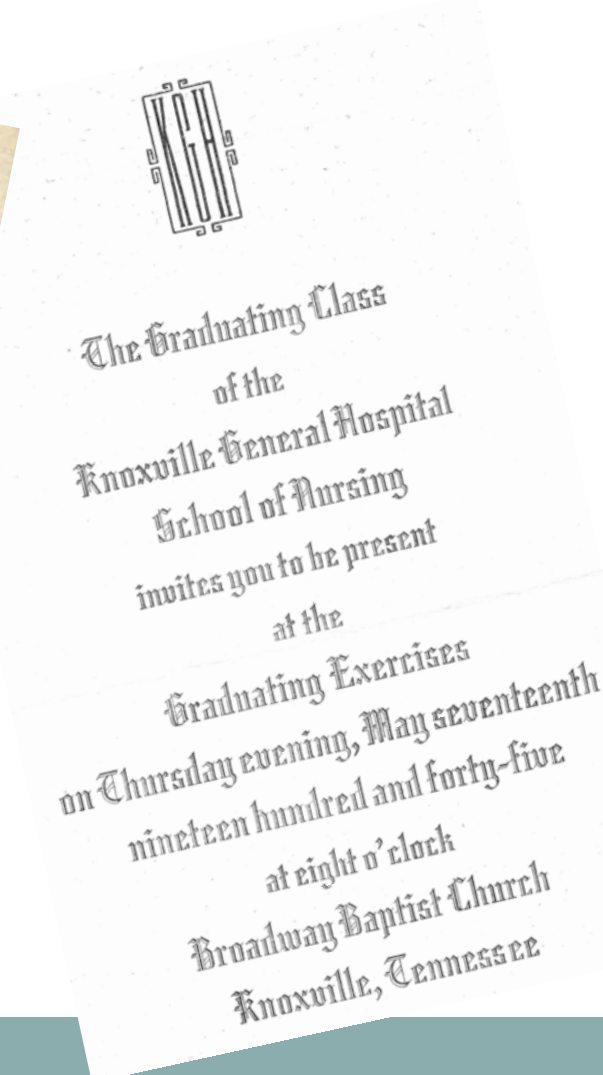
NAME OF SCHOOL Knoxville Gen. Hospt
CITY Knoxville
STATE Tennessee
DATE OF ADMISSION TO SCHOOL Sept. 1, 1943
DATE OF ADMISSION TO CORPS Sept. 1, 1943
DATE OF ISSUANCE OF THIS CARD Mar. 15, 1944
SIGNATURE OF DIRECTOR OF SCHOOL OF NURSING Jane Keller R. N.

DO NOT WRITE BELOW THIS LINE

THIS SPACE FOR CENTRAL OFFICE USE	TERMINATION DATES		
	BY GRADUATION	WITH DEFAULT	WITHOUT DEFAULT
 5/31/46			

(4400) 18-03-6 16-38240-1

Knoxville Gen. Hospital, Knoxville, Tenn



Preserving Your History ... (cont'd from page 3)

- When you look back, how the decision to attend KGH affect your life?
- During your career, how did you view yourself as a nurse, especially in comparison to nurses from other schools?
- Did you continue your education? What degrees or certifications?
- How did other health professionals view you as a nurse? How did your family and members of the community view you?
- Are you “always a nurse” — whenever someone needs attention, regardless of your age or your own aches and pains, do you rise up and become The Nurse again?
- What do you think of modern nurses and their training?
- Have you inspired others to enter nursing or other medical professions?

My reason for asking these questions is I have observed recurring themes in the stories I've heard from living nurses or the friends and families of deceased nurses.

Did you keep any sort of memory book or memorabilia from your career? I'd also like to document newspaper articles, awards, and such that each of the nurses received. Please share them with us.

We're especially desperate to get copies of the group photos that were taken when students graduated. So, if you happen to run across your group, we'd be thrilled to have a copy! Please don't assume we probably have one. We probably don't.

Did you stay in touch with classmates over the years? I've got several ladies who are proving difficult to locate. I've included a few of them in this newsletter.

Sorry to prattle on so, but this is a passion. As you can imagine, I'm fighting against death, disease, and encroaching dementia in a lot of cases.

I look forward to hearing from you when you have the opportunity.



(Ms.) Billie McNamara

P. O. Box 6764

Knoxville, TN 37914-0764

Phone:

E-mail: Knox@TNGenWeb.org



Visit KGH On-Line

<http://kgh.knoxcotsn.org>

How Do You Research Nearly 900 Nurses?

“Methodically, one woman at a time,” is the answer Billie McNamara will give you.

Refusing to give up on locating the history of KGH School of Nursing, Billie has made thousands of phone calls, sent and received thousands of e-mail messages, spent hundreds of hours reading newspapers and old documents, and pored through dozens of on-line tombstone records and other photos in search of information about the hospital, the nursing program, and the people associated with it.

Fortunately, Billie has experience as a local and family history researcher. Documenting KGH nurses gave her the opportunity to exercise her skills.

“I started with the first applicant on the list, **Ester Dodson**, and worked forward. Some were extremely challenging. Some still are a mystery. But, the quest has been incredibly rewarding,” Billie said.

The Internet has been a vital research tool. Billie checks old records, current telephone directories, and many other resources to find the connections she needs.

Billie hopes to find at least one photo of every nurse, along with obituaries for those who have passed away. Ideally, Billie hopes to interview each living nurse (mostly by phone) and find someone who can tell stories about each deceased nurse.

Two nurses from the Class of 1913 are still just names on the roster: **Mary Belle Garrison** and **Lucy Holcomb**. As recently as the Class of 1943, several ladies remain mysteries: **Evelyn Mildred Lewis**, **Willie Louise Crowder**, **Leah June Chambers**, **Helen Louise Hagy**, **Edith Christine Harmon Gordon**, **Maurene McKinney Keith**, **Mary Virginia Christian Overall**, and **Nelle Effie Grills**. Even from the Class of 1953, we can't find **Darlene Eddie “Tucson” Alexander**, **Dorothy Lee Lane**, or **Lily Mae Pennington Hall**.

Every tidbit that someone remembers about a fellow student can be critical. After looking for **Rowena Williams Shumaker** (Class of 1953) since 2008, Billie finally located Rowena's daughter in Memphis. Many graduates had fond memories of Rowena and asked about her often. Rowena had a prestigious career in psychiatric nursing before she died in 1978 from breast cancer. Her second husband, a psychiatrist named Dr. James Walker, died in Memphis in 2012. His obituary held the clues we needed.

Eventually, the “mystery” list will be on the Web site. Billie will continue whittling away at it, one nurse at a time, until every KGH graduate is documented.

On the Front Page!

‘Virtual museum’ honors Knoxville General alumni

They slept in large rooms, a dozen beds to a row. They hitchhiked so they could stash back their dime bus fares to buy fried bologna sandwiches at a nearby bar they weren't allowed to enter. They snuck out to date or get their ears pierced, risking suspension or expulsion.

And they worked, long, long days — sometimes 16-hour shifts — at Knoxville General Hospital, caring for the sick, the wounded, the contagious, black and white, poor and prominent alike.

These are the memories of **Jo Ella “Jody” Tipton McCall** and **Mary McCall McNamara** and hundreds of the other nurses who came from rural counties and even other states to attend the Knoxville General Hospital School of Nursing in Old North Knoxville.

McNamara's daughter, Billie McNamara, is determined that their memories be preserved through a recently launched effort.

McCall and Mary McNamara met and roomed together at the nursing school, which was in a large house adjacent to the hospital on Cleveland Place, near where Knox County Health Department now sits. Mary persuaded Jody to start writing her brother, an enlisted man serving in Korea, and, by the time the women were full-fledged nurses, they were sisters-in-law as well.

These days, they're also president and vice-president, respectively, of the nursing school's alumni association. For decades, the association has had an annual reunion for graduates of the school, their instructors, and the doctors and other staff who worked at the hospital, which closed in August 1956 when what is now University of Tennessee Medical Center opened.

As their numbers dwindled, the annual reunion became a luncheon at St. James' Episcopal Church. In June, about 45 attended.

PROUD TO WEAR THE WHITE CAP



The Class of 1924

It was about a month before the reunion that Mary McNamara had the idea for a program on the nursing school's history. She assigned her daughter, who has genealogy experience, to pull it together.

"She said, 'That should be easy; all our material is at UT,'" which supposedly took custody of the contents of the nursing school after it closed, Billie McNamara said. But when she called UT, "they didn't have anything" — no photos, records, or uniforms, nor the silver tea set used during the ceremony where nurses received their caps.

Billie McNamara called the university's college of nursing and other departments, the hospital, and even Lincoln Memorial University, which was at one time associated with the school, to no avail. What happened to the relics appears a mystery.

So, she thought, "if I could connect with any living people today who had Grandma's picture album or Aunt Bessie's scrapbook, that would be where the history is," she said. She began making contacts and now has "people all over the country looking through and

(cont'd on page 8)

‘Virtual Museum’ Honors KGH Alumni ... (cont’d from page 7)

sending me stuff (to copy), with the intention that we’re going to try to recreate the school’s history, one nurse at a time.”

She’s well on her way.

During its history, 1902-1956, the nursing school had 879 graduates. To date, Billie McNamara has researched 604 of them and put their stories on a “virtual museum” website, <http://kgh.knoxcothn.org>

She’s heard some “fascinating” stories. There’s public-health nurse **Eliza Baker Hix** (Class of 1943), whose Tennessee hometown of Kyles Ford collected money to buy her shoes so she could come to nursing school. (Her daughter later got a nursing degree, too, then became a pediatrician.) The well-regarded nursing school was free to attend; nursing students “paid” for their education by working long hours in the hospital.

Cherokee Indian **Mary Evelyn Lambert Luff** (Class of 1940) joined the Army Cadet Nursing Corps, as many 1938-1945 graduates did, and married a quadriplegic veteran she met while working at a Veterans Administration hospital. KGHNS graduate **Martha Rogers** (Class of 1936) developed a “healing touch therapy” that’s still used today.

Then there’s Billie McNamara’s grandmother, **Madeline Boyer McCall**, who graduated from the school in 1924 and convinced two daughters to follow in her footsteps.

“The thing that got me smitten with nursing was my mother, I guess, delivered every baby in Smithwood,” an area of North Knoxville near Tazewell Pike, Mary McNamara said. “I can remember seeing her going out the door, always with a pair of scissors.”

Mary McNamara’s twin retired to Florida, and [Mary] let her own license lapse after a long career in teaching and geriatric nursing, including a stint as administrator of Serene Manor, the nursing home partly in the former “colored ward” of the segregated Knoxville General.

Knoxville General was segregated its entire history, while its successor, UT Memorial Hospital, never was. The segregated ward was meant to be staffed by black nurses, most of them from Meharry Medical College in Nashville, since the hospital’s own nursing school did not accept black students. But because of the expense and distance, there was a perpetual shortage of black nurses, and Knoxville General Nursing School students often worked in that ward, McCall and McNamara said.

“We didn’t think a thing about it,” Mary McNamara said. “Those patients were so appreciative ... and they would just thank us for doing things that I didn’t need to be thanked for. It was just part of my job.”

Nor did they mind working in the “contagion” unit, where McNamara remembers helping with a ground-breaking procedure using ice to stop something known as gas gangrene from taking a woman’s arm.


McNamara and McCall were student nurses at the hospital in the 1950s, during a polio epidemic. McCall recalls having to hand-pump the iron lungs containing polio patients whenever electrical power went out. When Knoxville General patients were moved to UT Memorial, “they sent a caravan of hearses” from local funeral homes to transport them, McNamara said. “They thought they were being taken away to die.”

Like her sister-in-law, McCall had a long career in geriatric nursing, home-health care and teaching, but she’s kept her license current. Both said they wore their starched white nurses’ caps, a badge of honor for Knoxville General nurses, throughout their careers. In fact, Billie McNamara said she’s talked to former nurses who plan to be buried with their caps.

“If any of them were to put on their white cap and their nursing pin and their cape, they’d stand up like Wonder Woman,” Billie McNamara said. “They could be in their 90s, and that could happen. It’s amazing.”

Anyone with stories, pictures or other Knoxville General Hospital Nursing School memorabilia to share can contact Billie McNamara at knox@tngenweb.org

In Memoriam — Recent Passages



Helen Hall Jones	1940	Mar 20, 2012
Billie Hammill	1944	Jan 15, 2013
Beatrice Elrod Cope	1945	Feb 5, 2012
Fannie Sorrell Nelson	1945	May 31, 2012
Nina Cramer Showalter	1947	Aug 30, 2012
Lois Duck Hunt	1947	Sep 5, 2012
Carrie Miracle Giffin	1949	Feb 13, 2012
Betty Russell Watts	1951	Mar 7, 2012
Georgia Schubert Snyder	1951	Feb 8, 2012
Jessie Freshour Hurst	1952	July 15, 2012
La Wanda Carter Bebb	1953	Feb 5, 2013
Juanita Emery Price	1953	Feb 22, 2013
Bonnie Burnett Sobolewski	1955	Sep 18, 2012



Left to Right ~~

Front: Ada Lawhon, Mary Trigg Jackson, Lilian L. White (Director), Ester Dodson, Parley Leinart
Rear: Maud Holloway, Lois Durkee, Emma Jocelyn Snowden, Sophia Cowan

Class of 1905

We are grateful to Calvin Dodson, of Atlanta, for the photo above.

Calvin's grandmother, **Ester Adelaide Finley Dodson**, was a member of the first KGH graduating class.

Ester Dodson was a widow with one small son when she applied to KGH's brand-new nursing program in 1902. Ester went on to marry and divorce a doctor (a drug addict who died at Eastern State) and travel to West Virginia, Kentucky, and Florida, where she worked well into her 60's. Calvin provided us with copies of Ester's certificates, which he donated to the Museum of Medicine in Johnson City, Tennessee. Calvin also donated Ester's nursing pin.

Ada Christine Lawhon was a nurse in Knoxville until she retired. She never married. Ada's nephew recalls nurses, marching in red and blue capes, carrying Ada's casket at her funeral.

Mary Trigg Jackson became the owner of a small country store after she retired from nursing. Mary is well-remembered in the community.

Parley Lett Leinart was another widow with a small child when she entered the KGH program. Parley remarried and remained in the Knoxville area.

Maud Emory Holloway, a native of Johnson City, Tennessee, received an appointment to the Department of the Army nursing corps at the Presidio in San Francisco in 1905 and worked in California for nearly 40 years. Maud never married. She eventually moved to Charlotte, North Carolina, and died there.

Lois Flint Durkee was born in Rhode Island and moved to Knoxville as a young woman. She entered the KGH program at age 30. Lois and her husband, Eugene Williams, retired to Florida, where they died.

Sophia Taliaferro Cowan was born in Alabama and was 33 when she enrolled at KGH. Sophia never married. She worked in public health nursing in Memphis and Nashville, where she died.

Emma Jocelyn Snowden was born in North Carolina and worked as a weaver in a Knoxville textile mill before enrolling at KGH. Emma eventually moved to the Florida panhandle, where she worked in a state hospital until retirement. Emma died in Florida.

Nurses Remember the good old Days at Knoxville

General Hospital



Reporter: Emily Stroud

Air date: September 18, 2012

All that remains of the old Knoxville General Hospital is one building, now converted to a nursing home.

The nurses who trained at the hospital still get together to talk about old times.

It's a chance to reminisce about the Knoxville General Hospital School of Nursing.



Upper photo: **Mary McCall McNamara and Jo Ella McCall Tipton, 1954.** Lower photos: **Martha McCall King and Christine Dean Christenberry, 1955,**

They look at old photographs of buildings and classmates.

The women went to nursing school at the hospital in the 1950s and lived together in dorms on site.

"We were not supposed to go out to Wolfie's. That was a little restaurant bar sort of thing that was out on the corner and naturally we gravitated there just as soon as we possibly could," **Jo Ella Tipton McCall (1954)** said.

Christine Christenberry (1955) remembered, "They would send me to Wolfie's, which was forbidden. We were not supposed to go to Wolfie's. They would send me to Wolfie's, and I would come back with a big load of bologna sandwiches."

They have lots of tales of trying to sneak out of the dorm down a fire escape.

"I got down to the bottom of the fire escape, and I didn't realize that it didn't touch the ground. So there I was, just stuck, and I couldn't reach the ground. So then I was in a predicament of getting back up and back inside the dorm before the house mother came," McCall said.

The stories poured out 60 years later.

"I have kept up with the girls and come to the reunions and belong to the association, and it has been a good life," Christenberry said.

She said she graduated early from high school at 16 and needed something to do.

"My mom called the mayor and said, 'Mr. Dempster, I have a girl that I want to be in Knoxville General Hospital School of Nursing.' He said, 'No problem."

(cont'd on page 12)

Nurses Remember the good old Days ... (cont'd from page 11)

She'll be in. She'll be getting a letter.' And I did. So George Dempster is responsible for me becoming a nurse," she said.

She remembered a particular celebration in a locked conference room.

"The girls got together, and they said, 'We're going to have a smoke. Chris, you're going to smoke.' So they handed me a Camel cigarette. Camels, if you know anything about cigarettes. I didn't," she said. "I don't know what I did with this Camel cigarette, but I about passed out. They said, 'Oh, we've got to get her some orange juice...' It was a good lesson learned. But they thought it was funny."

Jo Ella McCall finished nursing training in 1954 and went to work as a surgical nurse.

"I thought I was so wonderful I was going to be making \$221 a month. I was rich. Ha! Back in 1954," she said.

They normally meet once a year and have had as many as 35 show up.

McCall said, "We just talk about things that happened during training that we remember and things that have happened in our lives."

They shared experiences during training then took different paths: clinics, hospitals, marriage.

"I just don't think I could have ever done anything else and I know that I would have never loved anything like I loved nursing," McCall said.

Just like they loved each other for more than half a century.

FEE BILL AND REGULATIONS

OF THE

EAST TENNESSEE GRADUATE NURSES' ASSOCIATION

OF KNOX COUNTY

(from about 1915)

<p>Nursing of Ordinary Cases..... \$25.00 per week</p> <p>Nursing of Contagious Cases..... 30.00 per week</p> <p>Nursing of Small Pox Cases..... \$35.00 to 50.00 per week</p> <p>Nursing per day\$4.00</p> <p>Hourly Nursing—For first hour1.00</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">For each Succeeding hour50c</p> <p>Two cases in one house \$25.00 for the first case, \$15.00 for the second. For contagious cases \$30.00 for the first case, \$20.00 for the second.</p>	<p>Obstetrical Cases.....\$25.00 per week</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">Charges begin at date of engagement.</p> <p>Obstetrical Cases, for delivery only.....\$5.00</p> <p>Massage..... \$2.00 per Treatment</p> <p>Medical or Ice Baths\$1.00</p> <p>Cleansing Baths.....50c</p> <p>Operations \$5.00. (This includes preparation of patient and all necessary "cleaning up" after operation.)</p> <p>All expenses, except laundry, to be paid by family.</p>
--	---

Six hours for sleep during the 24 hours should be allowed the Nurse, and two hours additional for open air exercise. Where this is not possible, and constant watching is demanded, a second nurse should be engaged.

YOUR STORIES

Here are just a few of the interesting things we've learned about KGH nurses and their accomplishments. These are so many stories to tell. And, the research continues!

Name	Class	Interesting Fact
Hartley Butt Parker	1914	World War I Army Nurse; grandson, Eric Schmidt, is CEO of Google
Sadie Forrestine Culbert Kuehl	1915	Lived to be 101, but shaved so many years off her age when she married a younger man, no one knew she was a centenarian!
Stella Myrtle Dillo	1916	World War I; buried at Arlington National Cemetery
Bertha Jane Gourley Nesbitt	1918	Nurse-Anesthesiologist; son a federal judge; daughter-in-law first female federal judge in Florida
Nellie J. Ellis	1923	Became a House Mother at KGH
Hannae Frances Bischoff Collins	1926	Became a pharmacist and owned a pharmacy in Houston, Texas, at her death
Nora Farmer Colvin	1930	Director of Public Health Nursing in Birmingham, AL; endowed a scholarship at University of Alabama
Eldora Dean Wilson Payne	1931	Moved to St. Augustine, Florida; three generations of descendants have veterinary practices there
Geneva Jenkins	1932	"Angel of Bataan," prisoner of the Japanese at Corregidor in the Philippines for three years during World War II
Hazel Arrita Boley Jones	1932	With husband, Dr. Robert Jones, ran mining camp hospital in Southwestern Virginia
Miriam Oliveros Wilson	1936	With pharmacist husband, developed chain of pharmacies in Johnson City-area, Tennessee; endowed scholarship at East TN

(cont'd on page 14)

Your Stories ... (cont'd from page 13)

Name	Class	Interesting Fact
Imogene Brown Kaserman Newton	1943	Developed the Tennessee Nurses' Association Code of Professional Ethics
Patricia Louise Welch	1943	Retired Navy Lieutenant Commander; City Councilwoman in Middlesboro, Kentucky, at her death; inspired numerous younger nurses
Mary Plaxco Webster	1943	Became Vice-President of Owosso Memorial Hospital, Michigan, in 1983
Vera Edith Mullins Murphy	1944	Son is an RN; daughter is an LPN; 8 or 10 of her grandchildren are nurses
Jennie Lynn McConnell Leland	1944	Post-graduate study at Vanderbilt and University of California; taught at UT-Knoxville and University of California
Nina Lois Cramer	1947	Missionary in Israel and South Africa; son is a physician
Roberta Hayes Webb	1948	Published author; runs 1,400-acre ranch in Texas
Betty Jean Fleenor	1949	Established Nurse-Anesthetist program at University of Cincinnati; taught there until retirement
Mary Evelyn Kidd Stansberry	1952	Became an attorney in Tennessee
Edna Mae Brown LeBow Stilwell	1952	Received Ph.D.; author; 23-year Editor of <i>Journal of Gerontological Nursing</i> ; journal writing award was named in her honor in 1998
Ruth Marie Faulkner Grubbs	1953	Published author and poet
Hilda Joan "Terry" Pickney Pitts	1953	Received Ed.D. at University of North Carolina; taught nursing at Virginia community college
Betty Tinch Brummett	1954	Son, Jeff, is a famous financial wizard in England, where he now lives
Martha Ruth McCall King	1955	First nurse to wear pants-uniform in Florida

McDowell County, North Carolina, Connection

No one can explain why a large number of the pre-World War I students at KGH had connections to McDowell County, NC. It is a great mystery!

There was already an established school at a hospital in Asheville. Yet, women bypassed it to come to KGH, a trip of 150 miles west on 2-lane roads through mountainous terrain.

Perhaps it was the promise of free tuition. Once the KGH school was established, perhaps it was the school's reputation. Perhaps graduates encouraged others from their hometown.

With help from North Carolina nursing historians, local historians in McDowell County, and others, we hope to find the answer.

Members of the Cherokee Tribe at KGH

The *Proceedings of the Continental Congress of the Daughters of the American Revolution* Volumes 51-52, dated 1942, contains the following news:

An outstanding Indian girl has been chosen to be the war nurse from this state, and she is going into training in the Knoxville General Hospital.

A few years later, the DAR journal reports that

Gertrude Bradley, aided by DAR, graduated at the Knoxville General

Hospital. She is married, and lives in Johnson City. She has done a good bit of private nursing since her marriage.

Gertrude (now Mrs. Fann, Class of 1945), still lives in Johnson City. Two other confirmed members of the Cherokee Tribe — both of whom are still living — are **Mary Ann Lambert Luff** (1940) and **Virginia Rosebud Sneed Jackson Dixon** (1941).

Many KGH graduates were from the Cherokee area. Were there other Tribal members? The research continues!



Geneva Jenkins, Class of 1932 (far right, with Patricia Neal and an unidentified soldier).

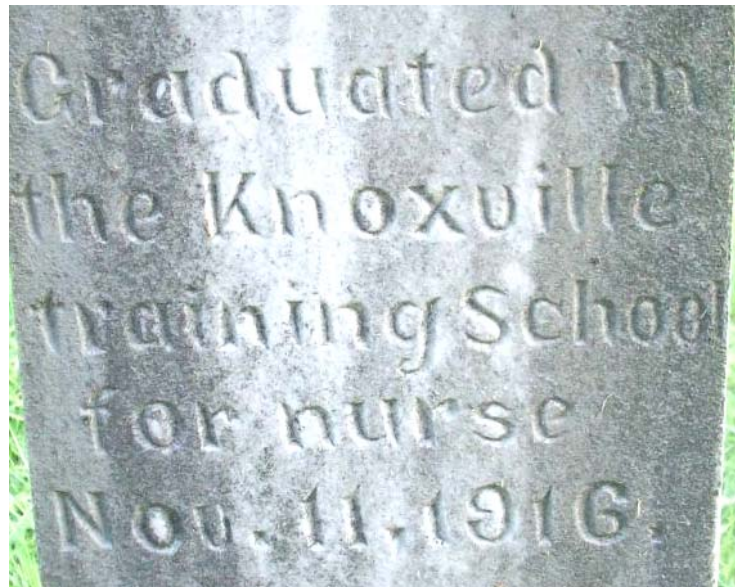
Geneva was an Angel of Bataan and Corregidor, spending three years in a Japanese prison camp at Santa Thomas, Manila, Philippine Islands. Geneva's two older sisters were also KGH graduates.

Photo source: *Knoxville News-Sentinel* Archives.

The Sad Tale of Della Gobble

One of the saddest stories we've learned while researching the graduates is that of **Della Alice Gobble**, of the Class of 1916. Just a few months after she graduated, Della died, aged just 28, of "septic peritonitis."

Della's remains were taken to Sevier County, where she was laid to rest with her family. They were so proud of Della's accomplishment, it was engraved for all time on the back of her gravestone.



"Dream Dates" for a Young Boy

Carrie Claudine Carmody Schrimsher Greer (1941) was married briefly after training and had a son, Mac Schrimsher. About 1950, after her divorce, Carrie returned to KGH, where she worked as an evening supervisor.



Many KGH graduates knew Carrie better as "Mrs. Greer."

Everyone speaks fondly of her.

Mac Schrimsher remembers hanging out in the OR area after school, where he "made thousands of cotton swabs by hand" while waiting for the end of his mother's shifts.

On weekends, student nurses would take Mac to movies downtown. He has very happy memories of always having the prettiest dates!

Trading Tokens for Food

Patricia Davis McBurnett (1947) remembers, "We were always hungry!"

Several nurses have recounted stories of exchanging their streetcar and bus tokens or dimes given to ride public transportation to UT for classes.

Students hitch-hiked or walked to classes, then cashed in their tokens and dimes at Wolfie's restaurant for food —

especially the 25¢ fried bologna sandwiches.

Do you have fond, funny memories of trades and other activities that would've gotten you "campused" if caught? Please share them with us. They are a part of your life in training, and they should be recorded.



Several Sets of Sisters and Other Relatives Graduated

Throughout its history, KGH had at least one mother/daughter pair, a few aunts and nieces, a handful of cousins, and several sister pairs.

The record seems to be sets of three siblings, of which there were several:

- Lucille (1925), Margaret (1925), and Olive (1927) **Nicholson**
- Janie (1927), Ressa (1928), and Geneva (1932) **Jenkins**

Why Was There only one Yearbook?

Patricia Davis McBurnett (1947) provided the explanation for why there was only one yearbook ever published at KGH:

Our senior year, we students decided that we should initiate Year Books for our nursing school and that I (duh) should be the finance committee.

Such books were far more expensive than we had, naively, thought. I attacked everyone I could think of — banks, businesses, doctors — and was still far short of needed funds.

One day, Blackie, a cop and constant hauler-of-patients into ER, arrived on the ER scene. He offered to take me out on his normal rounds, to see if I could collect more money.

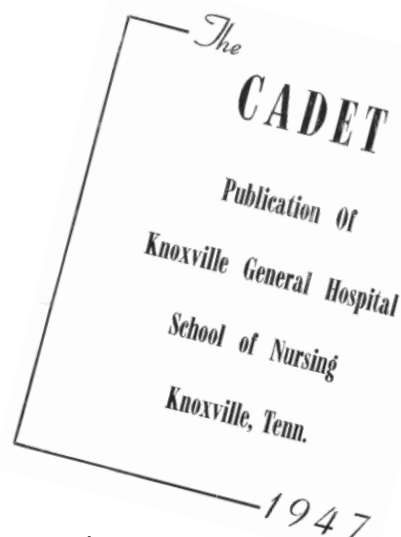
I dressed up, wearing pumps, hat and gloves. Blackie picked me up, wearing the loudest plaid jacket I've ever seen. (I was used to him in uniform.)

Have I mentioned that Knoxville usually had two churches, and — it became obvious

- Bonnie (1942), Carrie (1949), and Alma (1949) **Miracle**
- Pauline Stephania (1938), Camelia Ruth (1940), and Dorothy Grace (1944), **Hoffman**

More may be identified as the research continues. If you know of relationships — especially between early graduates — please tell us.

— at least one boot-legger at every main intersection? Some bootleggers were nominally beer joints. A lot were not.



We hit 'em all! I'd start, primly, with "I'm a student at Knoxville General and..." Blackie would say, "Wait here..." then take the owner aside for a chat. Blackie would come back with cash. We (he) collected over \$400, a fortune!!

(Had the Director of Nurses inquired where I got the money, I'd have been thrown out of training!)

As we finished our fruitful day and were checking the funds, a patrol car pulled up. The driver came over, "Hi-ed" Blackie, and gave me the once-over. Blackie told him to go away, saying "This ain't my girl. This is a nice girl!"

Why Was KGH so Popular with World War II Cadets?

While most KGH students came from within a 100-mile radius of Knoxville, some came from much farther away. Their reasons for choosing KGH vary.

One interesting story, told by **Sylvia Anne Connell Jones** (1947), explains why several Cadet enrollees came from a long distance. Sylvia's hometown was tiny Pavo, Georgia, located near Valdosta.

Sylvia finished high school at age 16 and hadn't been very far outside Pavo, except for trips to Atlanta at Christmas. Sylvia got information about the Cadet Corps and read that the last six months she would get paid \$30 a month. That was quite an incentive!

At right, Class of 1946 Cadets pictured while working in Oak Ridge are **Fanny Hackworth Taylor** from Knoxville, left, **Bernice Lee Tully** from Bristol, Va., and **Alva Jo Ashe Creech** from Lynch, Ky.

Sylvia's sister was already a nurse in Atlanta. But, Sylvia didn't want to go to Atlanta because her sister was five years older and always bossed her. So, Sylvia chose the Cadet program in Dothan, Alabama.

When she arrived in Dothan, Sylvia learned she was too young. Sylvia can't recall how she learned about KGH, but Tennessee had a lower age requirement for the Cadet program.

Sylvia recalls, "When I got through training, I peeled off my black stockings, threw them in the trash, and headed back to Pavo on the bus."



At left, members of the Class of 1945. Far right is **Fannie Mae Sorrell Nelson**. Who are the others?



Plant Nurses, Visiting Nurses, Military Officers, More

Regardless of where their careers led them, KGH graduates were trailblazers. You were extraordinary caregivers, and you thrived on being at the cutting edge of medical advancement. You were world-renowned for your skills. Many doctors said they'd "rather have one General-trained nurse than ten from Johns Hopkins."

While stationed in Africa during World War II, Dr. Newell Grady Riggins constantly complained that he wished he had a group

of General nurses there to set up a proper surgery and hospital.

Whatever you did, in medicine or in life, we honor you and want to pay tribute to your sacrifices and achievements.

At right, Dr. William G. Pollard and Eleanor Roosevelt watch Nurse **Mary Green Sutliff** (Class of 1928) demonstrate a radiation counter at Oak Ridge Cancer Research Hospital in 1955.



2013 KGH Luncheon Reservation Form

Return to Gene DeLoach Bates, 7628 Breckenridge Lane
Knoxville, TN 37938. Phone 865-922-0746

Name _____

Class _____

Address _____

City, State, ZIP Code _____

Phone / Cell Phone _____

Please reserve _____

Lunches @ \$12.75

each, totalling \$ _____

Alumni Dues @ \$3.00 \$ _____

Total Amount Enclosed \$ _____

(check payable to KGH
Alumni Association)

Your E-mail Address

Museum of Medicine at the VA Hospital, Johnson City

In February, 2013, several individuals were invited to tour the Museum of Medicine at the VA Hospital in Johnson City, Tennessee. There, we met members of the staff and board of directors. We were thrilled to learn of the Museum's interest in housing an exhibit about KGH. We were also excited to learn about their interest in preserving the history of nursing in Southern Appalachia.

We believe the Museum of Medicine is the ideal location to house our memories and mementos, as well as preserve our stories.

If you wish to donate materials or funds, please contact the KGH Alumni Association for details so we can coordinate our gifts. See page 3 for more information.



Return to:
Mary McCall McNamara
PO Box 6764
Knoxville, TN 37914-0764

2013 Alumni Luncheon

Reservation Form on page 19

TO: