



GLORIA STEPHENS AWARD FOR EXCELLENCE AS AN EDUCATOR OF PERIOPERATIVE NURSING

This award was established at the suggestion of and in collaboration with Ms. Gloria Stephens, and presented for the first time in June 2009 at the ORNAC National Conference, *The Depth of Perioperative Nursing...What Lies Beneath* held in St John's NFLD.

Gloria Stephens recognized as a young girl that her future career would be in perioperative nursing. As a Grade 9 student at Chebucto Road School in Halifax, NS, she was required to develop a 'CAREER BOOK'. The title page for Gloria's book was "*Nurse As My Career.*" She pursued this dream and graduated from the Victoria General Hospital School of Nursing, Halifax, Nova Scotia in the class of '53 and began her nursing career in Halifax as a public health nurse.

The following are highlights of her outstanding perioperative nursing career:

- Member of the original Neurosurgery team, Victoria General Hospital, in Halifax
- Team leader for Neuro, Ortho, and Plastics at St. Paul's Hospital, Vancouver, British Columbia
- In 1960 assisted in developing the Open Heart Program for St Paul's Hospital, (Forester, 1993), and was the scrub nurse on the first open-heart surgery. For this she received a "Recognition Plaque" in 1985 for her involvement in this pioneering procedure (AHSAMNS, N.D)
- Founding member of the British Columbia Operating Room Nurses Group (BCORNG) in 1968 and was President of BCORNG from (1970 – 1972)
- Authored the first written standards for patient care in Operating Room in 1972, and was awarded the RNABC Innovative Nurse Award of that year
- Founding member of ORNAC and was President from 1990- 1993 (Foster, 1993)
- 1 of the 3 members of the first ORNAC Standards committee, published in 1986 and was Chair of the ORNAC Standards committee from 1986-1996 when Technical Standards and Competencies of an OR nurse were added to the document
- Chair of the 1988 ORNAC National Conference, and ORNAC International Conference, 1991, held in Vancouver BC
- Chair of the initial ORNAC Research and Education Committees
- Authored 19 articles/editorials and co-authored two further articles for the then Canadian Operating Room Nurses Journal (CORNJ) now known as the ORNAC Journal from 1987 –2004, covering a variety of topics such as *Using ORNAC Standards Effectively, Technology and its Effect on OR Nursing*, (1992), and the *Expanded Role of the Operating Room Nurse in the Perioperative Practice Setting*, (1993)
- Compiled the information in the 1991-1997 Communiqué published by ORNAC
- Authored the history of BCORNG and ORNAC (AHSAMNS, N.D)
- Consultant and advisor in the development of the perioperative nursing course at the British Columbia Institute of Technology (BCIT), (AHSAMNS, N.D)
- As ORNAC Past President was the focus of a Tribute article in 1993, *Tribute to Gloria Stephens immediate past president*, (Forester, 1993) and assisted in the development

of the national perioperative certification exam with the Canadian Nurses Association (CNA), with the inaugural writing of the perioperative certification exam in 1995, (AHSAMNS, N. D).

Gloria has always been passionate about perioperative education. To this end, she developed the nursing OR Program at St. Paul's Hospital, Vancouver to the level of receiving university credits toward a nursing degree for the graduates and she was a consultant and advisor in the development of a perioperative nursing course at the British Columbia Institute of Technology (BCIT).

The following are the awards highlighting her nursing career:

- 1994 YWCA Woman of Distinction award for Education as a mentor to high school girls
- 1973 RNABC Vancouver chapter *Innovative Nurse Award* for writing the first *Standards of Operating Room Nursing Care, 1972*
- 1987 Registered Nurses Association of BC (RNABC) *Excellence Award in Nursing Practice*
- First *Isabelle Adams Award for Excellence in Perioperative Nursing* awarded by ORNAC in 1988
- 1990 RNABC *Excellence Award in Nursing Education*
- 1992 BCORNG Award of Excellence
- *ORNAC Drake Thompson Editorial Award, 1995,* for *The Perioperative Nurse Assistant to Anaesthetist*
- ORNAC Recognition Plaque in 2009

Upon retirement Ms. Stephens returned to Halifax from Vancouver and has continued to give her time and energy to nursing. For example, she was the President of the VGH, School of Nursing Alumni 2010-2012 as well initiated and acted as the President for the Nursing History Nova Scotia who hosted in 2018 Canadian Association for the History of Nursing (CAHN). She is active within her church as Secretary of church sessions and Treasurer of the United Church Women's. Other recent activities include working on the planning committee of the Royal International Tattoo in 2018 and presented Nursing Sisters stories from World War I. Remains as the manager of the Victoria General Hospital, Halifax (VGH) nurses archives.

One of Ms. Stephens' more recent contributions to perioperative nursing includes being a co- presenter with her longtime pal Muriel Shewchuk at the 25th National ORNAC Conference, *Harnessing Our Power* in Niagara Falls, ON. This was a plenary session held on Monday, May 1, 2017, *Evolution of ORNAC Standards of Practice, Competencies and Certification, "Perseverance to Professional Excellence"*, which was then published in the December 2017, *ORNAC Journal* as an article. This presentation

and the subsequent submission of their presentation as a journal article were the last two contributions Gloria and Muriel made together for ORNAC and perioperative nursing.

Ms. Stephens most recent endeavor during the year of *The Nurse and Midwife* (2020), was to publish a book “*Remembering Nurses Who Served*” , the story of 200 nurses, along with descriptions of the battles they served in about the nurses who have served our country from the Halifax, N. S. Victoria General Hospital School of Nursing which includes WW1, WW2, Korea, and Vietnam; the book is dedicated “to all nurses who have served in wars and those still serving” (p. iii, Stephens, 2020).

References

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