

ALUMNI *News*



30-YEAR COMMEMORATIVE ISSUE

SUMMER 1980

Act No. 566

AN ACT

S. 578--Wright,

To create and establish a collegiate School of Nursing at the University of Alabama to be known as "The University of Alabama School of Nursing" and to provide for its organizational structure and control, operation, maintenance, ownership, management and control.

Be It Enacted by the Legislature of Alabama:

Section 1. There is hereby created and established a collegiate School of Nursing in the University of Alabama to be under sole management, ownership and control of the Board of Trustees of the University of Alabama for the purpose of providing a program of education and clinical training for the preparation of professional nurses. The school shall be autonomous under the direction of a dean who shall be a nurse and shall be known as the "School of Nursing" or by such other name as the Board of Trustees may determine.

EDITOR'S *News*

On February 2, 1980 the University of Alabama School of Nursing celebrated one of the most memorable days in its history — its 30th anniversary.



During the course of the day, more than 200 alumni, faculty, students and friends returned to the School to be a part of the celebration — which coincided with University-wide Homecoming events.

The 30-year anniversary celebration featured tours of the school; a display room highlighting the School's achievements; an audio-visual presentation, "Three Decades of Progress"; a luncheon with guest speaker Sister Rosemary Donley, dean of Catholic University in Washington, D.C.; and an organizational meeting of the University of Alabama School of Nursing Alumni Association.

Pages 3 through 11 of this issue detail the events of that happy day. Enjoy.

The members of the Alumni Newsletter Committee feel that the 1980 issue of the Alumni News is the finest issue ever produced — an issue that you should be proud to display along with national publications. Most certainly, it is an issue you will want to keep as a permanent memento.

We now have a bona fide alumni association — one that if it assumes its proper role can speak as a single voice to influence the direction of nursing in Alabama and the direction of the University of Alabama School of Nursing.

On page 23 is an application form for membership to the Alumni Association. President Elwynn Hale also has issued a call for active participation (see page 11). Please take time to look over the form.

On June 28, 1980 the graduating class of 1970 held its 10-year reunion in the Nursing Dormitory (see page 14). All who attended enjoyed themselves very much — many renewing acquaintanceships after 10 years. In the coming years, as part of my duties as alumni information director, I look forward to assisting in many, many more reunions.

—Gary Warner



Newsletter Committee members

Pat Cleveland, Chairman
Martha Branyon
Nevely Gardner, Secretary
Sharon Hamilton
Billie Henderson
Sandy Nelson, Secretary
Gary Warner, Editor

Three Decades of Progress

Audio-Visual Presentation

This presentation will review the history of the University of Alabama School of Nursing and describe what the school is like today.

The School of Nursing was established in 1950 as an outgrowth of the need for better health care at the time of World War II.

During the war, many individuals volunteered their services to help the sick and the injured. Many of these women began to pursue careers in nursing. Practically every hospital had its own school of nursing, but this did not continue for long. When the war ended, many women left nursing schools and hospitals to marry and rear children. This exodus of nurses created a severe deficit of nurses across the nation, including Alabama.

The Alabama State Nurses' Association soon recognized the need to attract more individuals into nursing and to upgrade and prepare nurses for positions in teaching, administration and supervision. The State Nurses' Association recommended that a survey be made and sought assistance from the president of the University of Alabama. Dr. John Gallalee, the University president, sent a letter to the Surgeon General of the United States asking that a study of nursing be undertaken "to determine whether or not there is a need for a School of Nursing at the University of Alabama and to make recommendations concerning the development of such a school, if one is needed." In response to his request, the Public Health Service sent a consultant, Miss Carrington, to conduct a detailed analysis of the need for nurses in Alabama. In her study, Miss Carrington found a severe shortage of nurses and supported the establishment of a collegiate school of nursing at the University of Alabama.

Immediately after the report was published, the legislative committee of the Alabama State Nurses' Association drafted a bill to create and establish a collegiate school of nursing at the University of Alabama. The Act was introduced

in the Senate, passed by the House, and signed by Governor James Folsom in September 1949.

The legislative act clearly stated that the school shall be known as "University of Alabama School of Nursing" and that it be an autonomous unit under the direction of a dean, who shall be a nurse. Although the Act established the school, it did *not* provide any appropriation for faculty, building, equipment, or scholarships. These had to be requested separately.

Since the establishment of a School of Nursing had been authorized by the State Legislature, the 1950-51 University of Alabama Bulletin contained an announcement that the University would admit students to the new School of Nursing as of the fall semester, 1950. Thus, the University committed itself to admit students even before a dean had been appointed; however, the search for a dean was in progress.

One of the individuals invited to come for an interview was Florence A. Hixson, who at that time was acting dean of the School of Nursing at the University of Pennsylvania. She visited Alabama and accepted Dr. Gallalee's offer of the position as dean.

Thus, when the School of Nursing first opened in the fall of 1950, not one, but three programs in nursing were initiated simultaneously.

Much enthusiasm was shown throughout the state for Dean Hixson and the new school of nursing's programs. The public acceptance of the new nursing school was clearly illustrated with an opening enrollment in fall of 1950, in all three programs, of 278 students. This enrollment was surprising for a new school of nursing.

Initially the basic undergraduate program was four calendar years in length. The students spent their first two years in Tuscaloosa, the summers and junior year in Birmingham at the Medical Center, and their senior year back in Tuscaloosa. ▶



Validates any other parts of sections three
Section 7. This act shall become effect
its passage and approval by the Governor
coming a law.

Section 8. All laws or parts of law in
visions of this act are hereby repealed.

Approved Sept. 19, 1949.
Time 9:54 A. M.





A master's program in nursing, one of the first in the Southern Region, was established at the University of Alabama in 1955. Between 1955-1978, it was the only graduate program in the State of Alabama.

As the undergraduate and graduate student enrollments in the School of Nursing increased, they outgrew the clinical resources in the Tuscaloosa area and began using more of the clinical facilities at the Medical Center in Birmingham.

Dean Hixson retired in June, 1970. However, to the students, faculty, and nurses throughout the State who came to know and respect her, she will always be known as "The Dean."

Dr. Marie O'Koren became dean in 1970. During the decade in which she has been dean, the School has grown in size and in the variety of educational programs offered.

Many changes have taken place within the School's educational programs.

One recent change was the revision of the undergraduate curriculum. In 1975, the undergraduate curriculum's emphasis changed from one focusing on illness, diseases, and dependent care, to one emphasizing health, adaptation, and self-care. To more accurately reflect the new emphasis on health rather than illness, course titles were renamed. The major courses are now: Adult Health, Maternal Child Health, and Mental Health. Community Nursing — formerly known as Public Health — is integrated into the other clinical courses, rather than taught as a separate course. Within each clinical course, students have learning experiences in both primary settings — such as clinics, or physician's offices, and in secondary health care settings, such as hospitals. Students are taught to view patients, not only as individuals, but also as members of a family and as members of a community. Thus, students in Adult Health, formerly known as Medical-Surgical Nursing, work with Adults in a variety of settings — besides the hospital. These settings include such places as nursing homes, clinics, churches, Elder garden, rehabilitation centers, and in the home. In fact, students are required

to make at least 18 home visits as part of the Mental Health Course.

Students are introduced early in their educational program to the nursing process and how to assess an individual's health status. Students are taught different types of assessment: physical assessment, mental health assessment, developmental, family, and community assessment. By the time the students are juniors, they are able to do a complete physical assessment, and by the time they are seniors, they can integrate the physical assessment findings into their nursing care plans.

In the curriculum, emphasis is placed on increasing access to health care. Two methods used to do this are health fairs and nursing clinics. Students, under faculty guidance, plan and conduct health fairs. During these health fairs, students perform screening procedures for blood pressure, sickle cell, hearing, and vision; they also do health teaching in such areas as nutrition and cancer. Through these types of experiences, students learn how the nurse can facilitate and increase public access to health care.

Another method the faculty use to increase the availability of health care is the development and use of nursing clinics. The faculty have established, over the years, several nursing clinics. The clinics are operated entirely by this School of Nursing faculty and are financed from donations and School of Nursing funds. The clinics provide basic nursing services to the residents in a particular community. The services include such things as wound care, physical examinations, immunizations, laboratory tests and health teaching.

During the final quarter of the senior year, students participate in a preceptorship experience. A preceptorship is an apprenticeship in which the students work with a practicing Registered Nurse in the work setting on a one-to-one basis. The preceptorship gives the students an opportunity to concentrate in one clinical setting. Although most students do their preceptorship in the Birmingham area, some students choose to do it in other states and countries. One student did her preceptorship in Jordan and another student did hers in

Guatemala. Another option available to the senior students is a preceptorship in a tertiary, or intensive care area.

A new required course in the undergraduate curriculum is a course in research. During the course, students identify researchable problems in nursing, develop a research design and critique research done by others. Some undergraduate students have been able to carry out their research design and have collected and analysed their data.

The graduate program, under Dr. Jean Kelley's leadership, has undergone changes in the past five years, too. The graduate program now has two distinct educational programs — one leads to a Master(s) of Science in Nursing degree, and the other leads to a Doctor of Science in Nursing degree.

While the graduate program in the beginning emphasized specialized functions, today, the Master's program focuses on the preparation of clinical specialists. Currently there are eight clinical majors, plus Nursing Service Administration. Within these majors, nurses can select speciality options such as oncology, renal dialyses, pediatric, pulmonary and adolescent nursing. The emphasis on research begun in the undergraduate program is continued on the Master's level, and to a greater depth. Master's students are expected to become actively involved in the design and implementation of research. Those students electing to do a thesis are required to design, implement, and evaluate a complete research study.

In an attempt to meet the state's need for nurses prepared at the Master's level, the school began an Out-Reach Project in 1976. This program of study provides Master level courses off-campus to students in Decatur, Gadsden, Montgomery, and Mobile.

Graduate faculty from the School of Nursing travel by motor home, or by airplane to these cities to present classes. Within the past 3 years, the master's level courses have been offered through the Out-Reach project to more than 200 students and 27 have already graduated.

A doctoral program in nursing was established in 1975, and the first students were enrolled in the

program in 1976. While the doctoral program is individualized for each student, the emphasis is on the preparation of nursing scientists, the development of nursing theory, and the generation of new knowledge. The School's doctoral program in nursing is the only one of its kind in the Southeast region and is the only professional doctorate in the entire Southern Region. Since its establishment in 1975, enrollment in the doctoral program has grown from 6 to 49 and 8 have already completed the requirements for a Doctor of Science in Nursing degree.

In addition to the graduate and undergraduate programs, the School has grown in other ways.

The continuing education programs offered by the School have expanded in scope and depth. The nurse practitioner and short term specialty training programs have been well received throughout the state.

The faculty size has also changed. The faculty now numbers 113. As the faculty size has increased, so also has their productivity, research endeavors, activity in professional organizations, and participation in community affairs. The School of Nursing building itself has changed. A two-floor annex has been added over the patio and additional classrooms have been created by redesigning some previously unused space.

Concurrent with all these other changes, the organization of the school has, out of necessity, matured and is now a more fully developed organization. Various organizational roles are now being handled by assistants and a large number of support personnel are now needed in order to operate the school and to help it meet the challenges of the present and the future.

In summary, the School of Nursing has made three decades of progress under the leadership of two outstanding deans. The history of the school is essentially the history of the people who gave their time and effort to carry on its objectives of teaching, service and research, and the graduates who provide nursing care to the citizens of Alabama. Alabama can be proud of the contributions the University of Alabama School of Nursing has made to the State and the Nation.

