

Timed Summary

Interview with Doreen Nellie "Anne" Sturm

OH 17/41

Interviewer: Joan Durdin

Date: 15.6.1988

Note: Key words shown in bold.

START TIME	SUMMARY
Disc 1	
0.00	Introduction – part of the research project for the History of Nursing in South Australia .
	Anne Sturm was born at Magill on 9.9.1914. She went to school at Campbelltown Primary School . She had an older brother and sister and led a spoilt, protected life. Her parents came from Birdwood and moved to Magill just before she was born.
3.21	Anne speaks about her wish to become a nurse from a very young age. She did her schooling at Norwood Central School until she was 16 then went to the School of Mines and did dressmaking.
4.36	She started her nurse training when she was 18 in Loxton in 1932. This was during the Depression and the family was very poor; a legacy from her grandmother allowed her to continue her education. There were six trainee nurses; it was also a midwifery training school. It was very good training and very hard work.
10.08	Anne used to faint if she had to do theatre work; she was helped through this by Sister Gault and learned to cope with it. She also worked with Sister Kitson who was an army nurse and did most of her training with her. She did a certificate course on invalid cooking at the School of Mines. The training was tough but very good. She did not attend many lectures but learned most of her skills from practical work. They got very tired on night duty and had to make breakfast for all the patients. The patients were all well cared for.
15.14	She finished her training in 1937. She roomed at the Austral House for her time at Royal Adelaide. She was very enthusiastic about nursing and loved looking after people.
16.55	Anne speaks about her midwifery training. She went to the Queen Victoria in 1938 and studied under Miss Day (Matron) and Miss Carroll (Deputy) ; she loved her training, especially because of Miss Carroll. After her training she was asked to stay on at Queen Victoria. None of the babies were ever labelled but they always got the right baby; they carried the babies three at a time up and down the stairs.
20.07	In 1940 she went to Truby King Baby Training Hospital in Victoria for a four month course. She was the private nurse for Arthur Baillieu . She stayed in Melbourne for three years because Baillieu insisted that she stay.

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23.08	Anne speaks about what she did on her return to Adelaide in 1943 after Mr Baillieu died. She went to the Ruby King Clinic in King William Street working with babies. They fed them Kariol and Karilac which was added to the milk feeding. She then went to the Memorial Hospital to do midwifery. She was invited to open the Hindmarsh Memorial Hospital which was a private hospital taken over by the Memorial. They were very difficult years and there was a lack of domestic help. She was responsible for washing and cooking. They were very busy years but she enjoyed them. Premature babies were wrapped in cotton wool and fed with a pipette. There was no maternity ward and babies were delivered on a theatre table.
30.04	There was only very limited technology in midwifery. After six months she returned to Adelaide as Matron at Mount Pleasant Hospital ; she learned a lot from the surgeon Lionel Cowling . Mothers would stay in hospital for 14 days. She returned to the Memorial in charge of midwifery then in 1950 was invited to go to Glenelg . The bed situation was desperate. The new midwifery hospital was opened by a group of doctors at Glenelg as there was no facility in that area. She stayed there for 24 years. They received a lot of help from Apex to furnish the hospital. She recruited some staff from the Memorial.
35.43	They were difficult years at the Hindmarsh Memorial Hospital which was a private hospital taken over by the Memorial. Because there was no domestic help, she was responsible for washing and cooking. They were very busy years but she enjoyed them. There were no caesarians and very few stillborns. Without a theatre any special cases were referred to Mareeba . She stayed there two years. One baby was born before the official opening. There was a big opening ceremony followed by a fete.
39.00	Anne speaks about the Glenelg hospital which delivered over a thousand babies a year. It began with 18 beds and it grew to 40 within a few years. She was the only woman on the Board and she was consulted on everything. The hospital was funded by public subscription, including fund raising by Apex and support from the community; they also had a bank loan. They built up to four labour wards, a theatre and nursery. A local lady, Mrs Mudge , donated £1,000 towards the nursery.
42.02	It had been common practice to keep patients in bed after the birth but she changed this and got them mobile as soon as possible which was proven to be better for the patients. The women recognised this and were more able to cope. Babies were kept in the nursery. They were the first hospital to start relaxation classes and to have open curtains around the beds instead of screens. They were the first to introduce colour into the hospital – blue walls. She kept abreast of things and was very observant, regularly going to Melbourne to visit maternity hospitals.

START TIME

SUMMARY

46.02 She was a member of the **Florence Nightingale Committee**. In 1958 she was in a rut and wanted to do something different. There were lots of changes and she wanted to keep up to date so she asked the Board for leave, they maintained her salary and were keen for her to do the course at the **College of Nursing** in Melbourne. She was very impressed with the College but she found the studying difficult but the tutors were good and it was a friendly atmosphere. She played golf to relax. She lived at the College. **Pat Chomley** was the Director. She received a grant from the Florence Nightingale Committee for a scholarship. She joined the SA Branch of the **College of Nursing** on her return from Melbourne.

52.32 At Glenelg all their nurses had been hospital trained and many of them were still there when she retired, had been there for over 20 years. She encouraged them to keep up with modern trends. All people should be prepared for change and there have been many changes in nursing during her time.

53.57 Anne had hip surgery two years after she retired and it was very successful. Six weeks after the surgery she drove to **Queensland**. Throughout her career everything revolved around the patient which doesn't happen so much today. People need to be prepared for change and welcome it.

End.