

**MANITOBA  
GERONTOLOGICAL  
NURSING ASSOCIATION  
CELEBRATES 20 YEARS!**

**1984 - 2004**

**Compiled by Lynne Mitchell-Pedersen**

**The author wishes to thank everyone who so willingly answered so many questions during the preparation of this document. There are gaps in this story. There may be names or stories passed over that should have been included. Apologies are hereby extended and certainly, no offense is intended. Anyone wishing to come forward with additional information for future inclusion will be welcome. Please direct all information to the Newsletter Editor or to the current President of MGNA.**

**Writing this document has been a pleasure! Again, my thanks to all!**

**Lynne Mitchell-Pedersen, R.N., B.A., Ed.D.**

**April 23, 2004**

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

Introduction: .....	1
Chapter I: The Beginnings.....	1
Chapter II: The Next Step .....	3
Chapter III: Manitoba Gerontological Nurses Interest Group Becomes MGNA .....	6
Chapter IV: Conference Memories .....	21
Chapter V: Conclusion .....	26

## Tables:

Table I: Education programs .....	9
Table II: MGNA Bursary recipients .....	11
Table III: MGNA Nursing Distinction Awards .....	12
Table IV: Honourary Membership Awards: .....	12
Table V: Membership .....	15
Table VI: Executives - 1983 - 2004 .....	15
Table VII: National Conferences on Gerontological Nursing .....	19

# MANITOBA GERONTOLOGICAL NURSING ASSOCIATION CELEBRATES 20 YEARS!

## Introduction

The story of the Manitoba Gerontological Nursing Association begins in a somewhat complicated way. Chapter I explains that complication as it tells the story of our first steps taken in 1982. Chapter II will describe the formal structure created in 1984, whose 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary we are now celebrating. Chapter III will highlight leadership, political endeavours, and education programs. It will track our growing professional strength. Lastly, it will document how we have honoured our own members. Chapter IV highlights memories from our 1984 and 1995 Conferences, while Chapter V gives a short conclusion to the story.

## Chapter I: The Beginnings

A bright day for nurses who care for older people - and for older people themselves! May 3, 1982! 75 nurses gathered in St. Boniface Hospital Auditorium to declare their intention to form a Manitoba Gerontological Nursing Interest Group! They wanted to support themselves and each other for the multi-faceted work they do!

The gathering of 75 nurses on that day in May, 1982 thereby marked the vibrant beginning of our vital organization. The Manitoba Gerontological Nursing Interest Group was born - the pre-cursor to the MGNA! Twenty two years later, MGNA is thriving.

How did this come about? There are unsung - dare I be politically incorrect and use the word, 'heroines' in this story! Lois Abbott, then Director of Geriatric Nursing at St. Boniface General Hospital (in the days when hospitals still had Directors!), ever creative and ever a leader with a broad world-view, was one. She saw the need and the potential for our organization. Another was Jan Dick, then Vice-President of St. Boniface General Hospital (in the days when St. Boniface had Vice-Presidents!), who supported this vision and authorized the cost involved.

Lois, Jan, and Lynne Mitchell-Pedersen, then Clinical Nurse Specialist in Geriatric Nursing at St. Boniface Hospital, saw the need for this organization as a precursor to a Canada-wide association. Lynne put forth a call to all nurses interested in creating an organization. 75 nurses responded! They collectively declared their desire to create an organization that would provide:

- support for ourselves in the work we do, work which is difficult and often not valued by other health professionals.
- a vehicle whereby we could define together our knowledge base
- a forum for advancing our own education
- a means whereby we could promote and share the results of research

### Our Beginning Structure

The Manitoba Gerontological Nursing Interest Group was thereby created! The first two years of our organization saw us riding something of a roller-coaster. The March, 1982 meeting selected a committee of four people to develop a structure. The committee included Janet Porth, Sandra Stec, a third nurse who worked for a private agency, and was chaired by Lynne Mitchell-Pedersen.

### Alone or With MAG?

The committee met over a period of time wrestling with our concern about how best to create a structure that would meet the needs of nurses, yet not undermine the power, value, and presence of the interdisciplinary Manitoba Association on Gerontology. After all, Geriatrics has always led in valuing interdisciplinary care for older people and in making interdisciplinary practice a reality. Margaret Redston, another unsung heroine of Geriatric Nursing in Manitoba, then with Manitoba Department of Health, particularly advocated for us to link ourselves somehow with MAG. The committee, in consultation with many other nurses, chose to link with MAG as a way to demonstrate our value for an interdisciplinary focus. All interested nurses were invited to join the MAG. We saw ourselves as a loose collective within the MAG, although we no longer met separately as an Interest Group. Lynne Mitchell-Pedersen sat on the Board of MAG to speak for the nurses and sat on the Education Committee. Sandra Stec and Sonja Lundstrom later joined the MAG Board to speak for our Gerontological Nursing Interest Group.

MAG Board members, to honour the energy that nurses were showing, gave us priority in choosing clinically-based topics for educational forums. 'Incontinence' was one of the first topics chosen for an education workshop. Nurses crowded the room for that program!

The voices of nurses working with older people were now being heard. How did the next steps in the development of MGNA unfold? A short digression here tells the story, as the development of MGNA is closely linked with the development of the Canadian Gerontological Nursing Association.

## Chapter II: The Next Step

### First National Conference on Gerontological Nursing

Excitement was growing on another front! In spring, 1983, members of the Faculty of Nursing at the University of British Columbia sent out a Call for Papers for a National Conference for Gerontological Nurses. Faculty members, Elaine Gallagher and Marilyn Jackson co-chaired this Conference, held June 7 - 10, 1983. 400 nurses from across Canada attended! Manitoba nurses presented a number of papers. A momentous event! A sense of excitement close to wonder pervaded the atmosphere of that conference. We saw confirmed that we, as nurses who care for older people, DO have a body of knowledge. We DO want to base our practice on research based information! We ARE beginning to do our own research! A sense of our potential blossomed there!

A dramatic moment occurred on the final morning meeting of that 1983 Conference. All present gathered in a circle - and with a travelling hand-squeeze - declared a goal of unity for nurses working in Gerontology across our country. The group established a committee to create a structure that would establish a national association. What had already begun in Manitoba was now being reflected on a national level!

### A Turning Point For Gerontological Nursing

A second dramatic moment with implications for MGNA - was that, during that final circle of the Victoria Conference, Lynne Mitchell-Pedersen stepped forward (after Lois Abbott placed her hand on the small of Lynne's back and pushed) to offer that Manitoba would host a similar conference in May, 1984, one year later! Lois had already checked with Jan Dick that St. Boniface would back such a conference financially. We all saw this as an opportunity for Gerontological Nurses in Manitoba to unite around a project. Lynne made the offer and the Second National Conference on Gerontological Nursing, to be held May 22-25, 1984, was underway! It was co-sponsored by the Manitoba Gerontological Nursing Interest Group and St. Boniface General Hospital. St. Boniface Hospital, authorized by Lois Abbott and Jan Dick, accepted the financial risk. Lois and Lynne co-chaired this Conference and the rest is history! 800 nurses from across Canada attended! Manitoba nurses from many agencies, institutions, departments worked very hard on a number of committees to make that conference happen and it was a glorious success from every point of view. Again, Manitoba nurses presented many papers, which then became part of the published Proceedings!

### 1984, A Very Successful Conference

The crowning achievement of that 1984 Manitoba Conference was that - since the committee selected in the previous Conference in Victoria was unable to move forward for various reasons, a new committee was established to found a Canadian Gerontological Nursing Association. Lynne Mitchell-Pedersen, Clinical Nurse Specialist, St. Boniface General Hospital, was the founding President, with Jessie Mantle, as Vice-President, Marilyn Jackson, as Secretary, both the latter from the Faculty of Nursing, University of Victoria, and Lois Abbott, Director of Geriatric Nursing, St. Boniface General Hospital, as Treasurer. Manitoba's commitment was clear! Lynne's job was to

lead the development of a constitution to be presented for ratification by the membership. The Third National Conference on Gerontological Nursing, scheduled for Hamilton, Ontario, June 18-21, 1985, hosted by the Gerontological Nursing Association (Ontario), became the forum for the discussion and ratification of the new Constitution and By-Laws. Robert's Revised Rules of Order became Lynne's Bible for the next year! The national committee struggled with issues inherent in how best to structure an organization that will ultimately link a national association with a number of provincial associations. A meeting during the Third National Conference in Gerontological Nursing, June 18-21, 1985, Hamilton, ratified the constitution and the Canadian Gerontological Nursing Association became an official structure!

### MGNA Officially Born

Manitoba nurses on all the committees of the 1984 Second National Conference on Gerontological Nursing need to take a bow. They created a highly successful 1984 Conference, thereby playing a tremendous role in the development of our national association, as well as developing the underpinnings of MGNA. What became clear as the 1984 Conference reached such a successful conclusion was that we, as nurses caring for older people in Manitoba, needed our own structure to meet our own needs. We had worked well as part of MAG in one way. We were certainly able to come together as a team to make a great conference happen!

After the Conference, there was a strong sense that we nurses needed our own separate group. We had shown vividly that we could work together creatively and fruitfully! Sonja Lundstrom, Staff Nurse, St. Boniface General Hospital, and Sandra Stec, Nurse Clinician, Health Sciences Centre, now took charge! They called together all those interested. They wrote a Constitution and By-laws to be ratified by the group. What had been the Manitoba Gerontological Nursing Interest Group became, in 1984, the Manitoba Gerontological Nursing Association, its title mirroring that of the Canadian Gerontological Nursing Association. Sonja was its first President! And the rest - as they say, is history!

### A Successful Conference, Not An Easy Task

Building a Conference in 1984 was a different story from what such a task would comprise today! Remember that this was the pre-computer, pre e-mail era. We had no Conference Planning Company to guide us. Nurses from the first conference in Victoria started a structure. We built upon it. We had no Application Forms, no forms upon which abstracts were to be submitted - everything had to be created from scratch! Sandra Stec, in charge of the committee for Registration, remembers almost missing the opening session held at the Winnipeg Art Gallery on the first evening, because she and her helpers were swamped with registering 800 people, doing all the writing by hand! Prior to the Conference, Lynne recalls staying up all night for two nights running, doing the final proof reading of the program before it went to final printing. Jacqueline Champagne, Administrative Assistant in the Department of Geriatrics at St. Boniface Hospital, served as Systems Coordinator. She drew by hand on graph paper all the rooms at the Winnipeg Convention Centre to scale, marking down all the needed room

arrangements and furnishings - only one of her tasks! The Conference was a monumental undertaking. Many nurses gave freely of their own time and many institutions and agencies gave freely of the time of their staff to support this process.

Lovely memories prevail from many different aspects of the conference. Lynne remembers that Susan Cumming, along with her Social Committee members, arranged for us to listen to beautiful music played by a string quartet during the banquet. Sonja recalls a highlight of the banquet evening with Percy Haines playing the piano while nurses danced around the tables, waving napkins and singing!

### Two Wonderful Results From the Conference

The first bonus resulting from the Conference was that we nurses recognized the need to have an association to meet our own goals. The second bonus resulting from the success of the 1984 Conference was that it made a profit. The Conference donated \$3000.00 to CGNA and \$1000.00 to MGN Interest Group. In September, 1984, once all Conference accounts were settled, a further \$6000.00 was given to CGNA to front-end future conferences and an additional \$1000.00 was given to MGN Interest group. The financial basis for MGNA was thereby established. MGNA was able to set a reasonably small membership fee and has been able to thrive on a small membership fee to this day! MGNA created opportunity for Associate membership, so that interested persons who were not R.N.s, could join. Interestingly, a physician, Dr. Colin Powell, was one of our first Associate members.

### MGNA, A Reality

So MGNA was born! What needs to be remembered here as well as the events themselves is the undercurrent of pride and recognition that our body of knowledge was being valued as the MGNA's and CGNA's structures unfolded. Before 1982, nurses who cared for older people were often seen, even by other nurses, and sometimes especially by other nurses, as needing no particular knowledge base. A comment overheard in an elevator one day reflected the prevailing attitude, "To work with older people - all that is needed is to make sure enough goes in and enough comes out. Feeding and bum care - that's what it is about!" Sadly, that ignorance-laden attitude prevailed. Not any more! Two strong organizations, the Manitoba Gerontological Nursing Association and the Canadian Gerontological Nursing Association, are now in place that are helping to change dramatically the general view and value for nurses who care for older people!

Chapter III documents a number of areas of MGNA's development.



## Chapter III

### MANITOBA GERONTOLOGICAL NURSES INTEREST GROUP BECOMES MGNA!

On May 29, 1985, at the first Annual General Meeting, our name officially changed from 'Manitoba Gerontological Nurses Interest Group' to 'Manitoba Gerontological Nursing Association'! In 2004, we celebrate our twentieth year!

An organization's growth is marked by strong leadership, strong educational programs, and by strength in political advocacy. Growth is in evidence when members reach out and do networking with other groups and organizations. An organization develops along with awareness of its members' professional competency. Last but not least, a strong organization supports and honours its own members. This chapter documents a selection of the developments from each of these six domains during the past twenty years.

#### **I. LEADERSHIP:**

Leadership itself is comprised of many domains, including strong executive leadership within, leadership in relationship with other organizations, particularly in our case CGNA, and leadership around national conferences.

- Executive Leadership: MGNA has been blessed with many members' willingness to devote their time and energy by serving on the Executive, thereby making MGNA strong and useful to its membership. Table VI lists those generous people. Notice that serving as President encompasses six years - two as President Elect, two as President, and two as Past President. That speaks to dedication! Margot Christie performed this feat and then did the same within CGNA. Sandra Stec has consistently been an officer within MGNA, while, at the same time, has held highly responsible offices within CGNA! Dedication!
- National Presidents: MGNA has had three members serve as President of CGNA. Lynne Mitchell-Pedersen served from 1984-1985, Margot Christie from 1997-1999, and Lorna Guse from 2001 - 2003.
- National Leadership: During Lynne's presidency of CGNA, an organizational structure, including a draft Constitution and By-Laws, was prepared for consideration and acceptance at the 1985 Annual Meeting. One of Margot's achievements during her Presidency was to improve communication amongst provincial associations and CGNA executive. Conference calls every second month were instituted, ensuring two-way communication between the provincial and national associations. This process has been maintained. Most of the work of establishing a certification process for Geriatric Nursing, as well as joint CGNA/Provincial Gerontological Nursing Association membership was done during Margot's Presidency! Lorna Guse recalls two significant contributions from

her time as CGNA president. One was that the stage was set for a formal memo of understanding with our sister organization in the United States, the National Gerontological Nursing Association (NGNA).

Below is a copy of the CGNA/NGNA memorandum of agreement.

**The National Gerontological Nursing Association  
And The Canadian Gerontological Nursing Association**

This Agreement is entered into as of this 11th day of October, 2003 by and between The National Gerontological Nursing Association (NGNA) and The Canadian Gerontological Nursing Association (CGNA).

**Whereas**, The National Gerontological Nursing Association and the Canadian Gerontological Nursing Association are committed respectively to improving the clinical care of older people in the United States and Canada through providing educational opportunities for professional nurses, disseminating best practices, and promoting innovations in practice and evidence-based practice;

**Whereas**, The National Gerontological Nursing Association and the Canadian Gerontological Nursing Association share of vision of exemplary care for older people and a desire to unite nurses from practice, education, and research across all care settings in this vision;

**Whereas**, The National Gerontological Nursing Association and the Canadian Gerontological Nursing Association wish to develop North American collaborations to maximize their individual contributions to gerontological nursing;

**Whereas**, a preliminary joint mission statement is: Provide exemplary, culturally relevant nursing care to older people in diverse systems of home, community, and institutional care;

**Now therefore**, this memorandum of agreement is entered into by and between The National Gerontological Nursing Association and the Canadian Gerontological Nursing Association to establish a North American strategic alliance. NGNA and CGNA agree to collaborate for the purpose of providing educational programs for gerontological nurses and others interested in care of older people, regardless of their primary specialty affiliation, and to promote best practices, innovations in practice, and evidence-based practice for gerontological nursing care.

**In witness whereof**, the undersigned have duly executed this Agreement, or have caused this Agreement to be duly executed on their behalf, as of the day and year first herein above set forth.

**Signatures:**

**National Gerontological Nursing Association (NGNA)  
Canadian Gerontological Nursing Association (CGNA)**

Lorna's second contribution was to work successfully to have two more provinces choose conjoint membership with CGNA. One of the two provinces was Saskatchewan.

Lorna worked with Vicki Smart in Saskatoon to make this happen early in 2001. Saskatchewan apparently had had a provincial association at one time but it had ceased to exist. Lorna worked with Elaine Campbell in PEI, encouraging her to work with people in Nova Scotia. Lorna notes that Kathleen Klassen was President of MGNA when she was working with Vicki Smart in Saskatoon and Kathleen sent a copy of MGNA operation manual to help Vicki get started.

National Conferences: MGNA membership has participated magnificently in national conferences. Many members have presented research papers, clinically based papers, or poster projects. Others have attended as many conferences as possible, bringing fresh ideas and perspectives home with them. MGNA will soon host its **THIRD** national conference in 2007! The first, co-sponsored with St. Boniface General Hospital, was held in 1984, the second in 1995. Table VII lists all the national conferences on gerontological nursing from 1983 forward.

## II. POLITICAL ADVOCACY:

- The Canadian Gerontological Nurse, Vol. 2, No. 2, April, 1986: As an interest group within MARN, MGNA is asked to provide input to a response to the provincial "Health Services Review Committee" summary and recommendations.
- 1986: Through liaison with MAG, MGNA members are asked to write our MPs re: pensions and declining Transfer Payments.

## III. EDUCATION:

- 1988-1990: Elective courses, Master's Degree level in our specialty, are developed in the Faculty of Nursing, University of Manitoba. Cynthia Cameron, Margot Christie, Lorraine Compton, Jan Greenwood, Lorna Guse, Pam Hawranik, Belle Meiklejohn, Lynne Mitchell-Pedersen, and Janet Porth are among those who participated.
- Initially, MGNA members met monthly. In the early 90s, meetings shifted to four times per year. In 2001, the group moved to having three general meetings each year, each with an education session, plus an Annual General Meeting. MGNA now alternates between holding the Annual General Meeting with an evening education session on each 'odd' year, and a full education day with the Annual general Meeting on each 'even' year.

**Table I: Education Programs**

DATE	THEME	SPEAKER
1983	"Incontinence"	Others Lynne Mitchell-Pedersen
June 17, 1987	"The Future Is Now - - What Are the Care	

	Alternatives?"	
June 21, 1988	"Therapeutic Approaches to the Mentally Impaired - - The Issue of Today" P.M. "Professional Identity As a Service Specialty: How Do We Do It?"	Susan Astill-McNish
June 14, 1989	"Caring For the Cognitively Impaired"	Dr. David Murray, Dr. Barry Campbell, Gail Tippen, Esther Gill, Cynthia Cameron, Isabel Brunel, Myrosow Tacz
June 13, 1990	"The Role of the Public Trustee" "Parkinson's Disease - Etiology, Management, and Current Research" "Paperchase In Nursing" "Critical Nursing Behavior in the Care of the Dying"	Joanne Knowlton Dr. Wm. Davidson  Dr. Erna Schilder Dr. Lesley Degner
June 12, 1991	"A Musical Journey Into the Human Heart"	Deanna Edwards
June 10, 1992	"Humour and Healing"	Michael Ballard
June 10, 1993	"If You Can't Ride More Than One Horse, You Don't Belong In The Circus - Changes and Challenges in Health Care"	Camille Wade Maurice
1994	"Butterfly Teaching - Women In Transition"	Margaret Lavallee
1995	"Sense and Nonsense: Laughter, Lightness, and Comic Consciousness"	David Zinger
June 6, 1996	"Caught In The Middle: Nurses and Ethical Issues"	Dr. George Webster Dr. Abby-Anne Lynch
June 12, 1997	"From The Inside Out: Building Personal Strengths In Times Of Change"	Judith Hale
June 11, 1998	"A Dignified Journey: Palliative Care of the Elderly" "Ethics and Pastoral Care"	Dr. Linda Bowring Pat Murphy and Glen Hjorst
June 10, 1999,	"Building on the Past ... Looking Toward the Future"	Lorraine Compton, Dr. Lorna Guse
June 5, 2000	"Tools of the Trade"	Sharon Galloway Leona Kaban Dr. Willie Molloy Michelle Todoruk
April 24, 2001	"Polypharmacy"	Dr. Pat Montgomery
May 3, 2002	"The Upside of Falling Down: Falls Prevention and Management in the Elderly" "Walking A Fine Balance" "Stepping Steady in Winnipeg"	Cheryl Knight  Marlene Graceffo Jackie Habing

	"Before the Fall: Challenges and Successes in the Community"	Sonja Lundstrom, Eleanor Stelmack
May 1, 2003	(evening session) "When It Is Not Alzheimers"	Dr. Elizabeth Watson
April 23, 2004	"Caring For Yourself: Caring For Others"	Dianne-Joan Smith Beth Kondratuk Sonja Lunstrom Jonathon Ellerby

#### IV. OUTREACH/NETWORKING:

- October 31 - November 14, 1987: Mollie Willard and Sandra Stec join a group of 9 other CGNA members in a Study Tour of Great Britain.
- October, 1989: South Central Chapter is formed! Sustained until 1992-1993.
- Late 1980s: Active involvement with Manitoba Health Organizations.
- 1991 -1992: Goal: To encourage older people to attend our meetings.
- September 9, 1998: Swan River nurses indicating interest in creating an MGNA chapter.
- 1999 - 2001: Strategic Plan includes outreach to MAG, Age and Opportunity, Manitoba Society of Seniors, and the Alzheimer Society of Manitoba.
- February 17, 1999: Sonja Lundstrom reports being guest speaker at Iceland's Gerontological Association. She brings greetings from our counterparts in Iceland.
- May 5, 1999: An evening education session held in Selkirk, part of reaching out to membership in rural areas. Topic: "Challenging Opportunities For Communication".
- November, 1999: Sandra Stec attends CAG in Ottawa.
- November 8, 1999: Sandra Stec represents CGNA at CNA's National Nursing Forum.
- November 17, 1999: 2 members attend the MAG Annual Meeting as representatives of MGNA.
- February 16, 2000: Working toward interesting and attracting BN students to work in Long-Term Care.

- February 16 and April 19, 2000: Meeting with MAG to consider possibilities in joint working relationships. Planning joint education forum with MAG, October 10, 2000, on topic of “Influenza”.
- June 2, 2001: Outreach to group in Brandon and outreach to MAG, facilitated by Kathleen Burke. Planning joint education session with MAG.
- 2004: Education: Plan to host with MAG - relationship has come full circle.
- September 25, 2004: Outreach to rural areas (The Pas).

## V. HONOURING ONE’S OWN:

### Education Bursaries:

In 1997, MGNA invested \$20,000.00 with the Manitoba Association of Registered Nurses Foundation to establish two \$500.00 bursaries for nurses furthering their education in Gerontological Nursing.

**Table II: MGNA Bursary Recipients**

YEAR	RECIPIENT
1998	Evelyn Leferink (Graduate) Katherine Burgetz (Undergraduate) Deanne O'Rourke (Graduate)
1999	Deanne O'Rourke (Graduate) Jacqueline Petit (Undergraduate)
2000	Darryl Dyck (Graduate) Jacqueline Petit (Undergraduate)
2001	Jacqueline Petit (Undergraduate)
2002	no appropriate candidates
2003	Luana Whitbread (Graduate)

### Distinction Award:

“This award honours, celebrates, and recognizes the contribution of a nursing peer to the care of older adults and their families.” It is possible because of a generous donation from Sandra Stec, long-time MGNA member and one of the original

organizers of the MGN Interest Group (Annual report, April 1, 1998 - March 31, 1999).

**Table III: MGNA Nursing Distinction Awards**

<b>YEAR</b>	<b>RECIPIENT</b>
1998	Jacqueline Petit (Clinical) Riverview Health Centre
1999	Donna Jamieson (Education) Golden Links Lodge
2000	Ruby Laughren (Clinical) Deer Lodge Centre
2001	Beth Kondratuk (Education) Deer Lodge Centre
2002	Angela Cook (Clinical) Riverview Health Centre (Recognized for work as parish nurse, Sturgeon Creek United Church)
2003	Sandra Stec (Education) Health Sciences Centre

**Table IV: Honorary Membership Award**

<b>DATE</b>	<b>RECIPIENT</b>
1999	Molly Willard
2003	Margot Christie
2004	Lynne Mitchell-Pedersen

**VI: PROFESSIONAL STRENGTH:**

- 1985 - 1986: First year that MGNA is governed by its own By-Laws.
- April 7, 8, 1987: CNA Advisory Council made up of all national Nursing Interest Groups. Representatives hold a first meeting in Ottawa. Fran Morris attends for CGNA.
- January, 1988: MGNA Logo contest. Poh Lin Lim submits the winning logo.

- 1990 - 1991: MGNA First Newsletter!
- 1990 - 1991: Frequency of meetings shifts from monthly to four meetings per year.
- May, 1991: Participation in CGNA Task Force which produced a draft report, "Standards for Gerontological Nursing Practice".
- 1996: "Standards of Practice" published by CGNA.
- 1997 - 1999: Ann Lemieux and the Executive guide MGNA through a new strategic plan which specifies six goals:
  1. to increase the membership and representation of nurses from across the care continuum;
  2. enhance the content and scope of the newsletter;
  3. involve members in specific projects and activities;
  4. seek joint MGNA/CGNA membership;
  5. advance the specialty of gerontological nursing through the development of a Nursing Distinction Award;
  6. develop closer linkages with related organizations, that is, MAG, Age & Opportunity, and the Alzheimer Society of Manitoba.

They were successful with all these initiatives, including increasing the membership to 126!

- June 11, 1998: MGNA votes to endorse joint membership affiliation with MGNA/CGNA. Implications beyond simple membership are thereby achieved. Prior to integration, the President of each provincial association sat on an Advisory Committee. Its purpose was to offer information or feedback to the CGNA Executive. One member of the Advisory Group sat on the CGNA Executive. Following integration, the Presidents of all provincial associations became part of the CGNA Board of Directors, thereby giving strong focus to provincial input.
- Summer/98: Newsletter now Vol. 9., No.1, Mary Ann Masesar, New Editor.
- 1997 -1998: MGNA developing new brochure with computer-generated logo.
- Celebrate! Certification Process:

"The Canadian Nurses Association Certification Program began in 1991 to promote excellence in nursing specialties. Certification provides registered nurses with the opportunity to confirm their competence in their area of specialty practice. In Canada, there are 12,000 nurses holding certification in 14 designated nursing specialties." Geriatric Nursing was the 9<sup>th</sup> exam developed; there are now 14 groups certified through CNA. (CNA, online [www.cna-alic.ca/pages/certification](http://www.cna-alic.ca/pages/certification))



MGNA/CGNA have been a significant part of this process! Jessie Mantle wrote an article in the Canadian Gerontological Nurse, Vol. 4, No. 3, March, 1988, asking readers to consider the idea of certification for nurses caring for older people in Canada. CGNA, through the work of a national committee led by Deb Vandewater, Halifax, eventually endorsed the concept. Kathleen Klassen represented MGNA in developing CGNA's proposal for CNA. She and Sharon Galloway were charged with articulating the key competencies of a gerontological nurse.

- Certification Exams: The first exams were administered in March, 1999 with 28 registrants from Manitoba! MGNA and Deer Lodge Centre co-sponsored study groups, led by Beth Kondratuk and Sandra Stec, to facilitate MGNA members' preparation for the Certification Exams. Beth and Sandy are owed a big, "Thank you!" for their generous gift of their time and knowledge. To be honoured here, as well, are the staff at Crane Library, Deer Lodge Centre, who facilitated preparation of material for the study groups.
- 77 MGNA members are now certified! As of January 1, 2004, 1413 nurses in Canada have certified as Geriatric Nurses. Of those, 77 are from Manitoba! A significant achievement!
- Spring, 1999: Mary Ann Masesar developing MGNA Web Site.
- November 17, 1999: Bev Laurila represents MGNA at the MARN Invitational Forum on Continuing Competencies for R.N.s.
- April 19, 2000: CGNA requests a dual Membership card. MGNA votes unanimously to endorse joint membership.
- October, 2003: CGNA meets with the National Gerontological Nursing Association (U.S.A.). Dr. Lorna Guse (President, CGNA) speaks for Canada.

**TABLE V: MEMBERSHIP**

<b>DATE</b>	<b>MEMBERSHIP</b>	<b>DATE</b>	<b>MEMBERSHIP</b>
1985	90	1995	126
1986	70	1996	114
1987	70	1997	104
1988	166	1998	125
1988-1989	170	1999	100
1989-1990	168	2000	85

1990-1991	160	2001	?
1991-1992	125	2002	89
1993	107	2003	94
1994	?	2004	86

**Table VI: Executives 1983 - 2004**

DATE	EXECUTIVE
1982 - 1983	MGN Interest Group: President - Lynne Mitchell-Pedersen Secretary - Sandra Stec Treasurer - Janet Porth 4 <sup>th</sup> person
1984 - 1985	President - Sonja (Anderson) Lundstrom Vice-President - Molly Willard Secretary - Belle Meiklejohn Treasurer - Heather Frederick
1985 - 1986	President - Molly Willard Vice-President - Janet Porth Past-President - Sonja (Anderson) Lundstrom Secretary - Belle Meiklejohn Treasurer - Heather Frederick Publicity - Sandra Stec
1986 - 1987	President - Molly Willard Past-President - Sonja (Anderson) Lundstrom Vice-President - Janet Porth Secretary - Kay Lindquist Treasurer - Heather Frederick Publicity - Sandra Stec Education/Programs - Donna Jamieson
1987 - 1988	President - Janet Porth Past-President - Molly Willard Vice-President - Margot Christie Secretary - Kay Lindquist Treasurer - Isabelle Brunel Program/Education - Donna Jamieson Publicity - Pat Benjaminson
1988 - 1989	President - Janet Porth Past-President - Molly Willard Vice-President - Margot Christie Secretary - Kay Lindquist Treasurer - Pat Johnston Program/Education - Donna Jamieson Publicity - Pat Benjaminson

1989 - 1990	President - Margot Christie Past-President - Janet Porth Vice-President - Patricia Benjaminson Secretary - Kay Lindquist Treasurer - Pat Johnston Program/Education - Donna Jamieson Publicity - Lise Hamelin Winkler Chapter - Ray Koop & Bruce Friesen
1990 - 1991	President - Margot Christie Past-President - Janet Porth Vice-President - Pat Benjaminson Secretary - Kay Lindquist Treasurer - Pat Johnston Program/Education - Cynthia Cameron Publicity - Poh Lin Lim Newsletter - Mary Woloski South Central Chapter - Ray Koop
1991 - 1992	President - Pat Benjaminson Past-President - Margot Christie Vice-President - Sylvia Jennings Secretary - Jean Burton Treasurer - Pat Johnston Program/Education - Cynthia Cameron Publicity - Diane Kelly Newsletter - Mary Woloski South Central Chapter - Bruce Friesen
1992 - 1993	President - Patricia Benjaminson Past-President - Margot Christie Vice-President - Sandra Campbell Secretary - Jean Burton Treasurer - Berit Hack Program/Education - Donna Goodridge Publicity - Diane Kelly Newsletter - Joanne McKenzie South Central Chapter - Bruce Friesen
1993 - 1994	President - Sandra Campbell Past-President - Patricia Benjaminson Vice-President - Isabel Brunel Secretary - Donna Cobb Treasurer - Berit Hack Program/Education - Donna Goodridge Publicity - Beth Kondratuk Newsletter - Joanne McKenzie
1994 - 1995	President - Sandra Campbell Vice-President - Isabel Brunel Past President - Pat Benjaminson Secretary - Donna Cobb Treasurer - Berit Hack Publicity - Beth Kondratuk Education - Donna Goodridge

	Newsletter - Michelle Todoruk
1995 - 1996	President - Isabel Brunel Vice-President - Ann Lemieux Past President - Sandra Campbell Secretary - Linda Dando Treasurer - Berit Hack Publicity - Ruby Langhren Education - Barbara Tallman Newsletter - Michelle Todoruk
1996 - 1997	President - Isabel Brunel Vice-President - Ann Lemieux Past President - Sandra Campbell Secretary - Linda Dando Treasurer - Kathleen Burke Publicity - Ruby Langhren Education - Elizabeth Hogue Newsletter - Heather Temple
1997 - 1998	President - Ann Lemieux Past-President - Isabel Brunel President-Elect - Linda Boehm Secretary - Dorene Rosmus Treasurer - Kathleen Burke Education - Elizabeth Hogue Publicity - Wanda Andres Newsletter - Heather Temple
1998 - 1999	President - Ann Lemieux President-Elect - Linda Boehm Past-President - Isabel Brunel Secretary - Dorene Rosmus Treasurer - Bev Laurila Education - Sandra Stec Publicity - Wanda Andres Newsletter - Mary Ann Masesar
1999 - 2000	President - Linda Boehm Vice-President - Kathleen Burke Past President - Ann Lemieux Secretary - Margaret Richardson Treasurer - Bev Laurila Education - Sandra Stec Publicity - Lynn Stem Newsletter - Mary Ann Masesar
2000 - 2001	President - Linda Boehm Vice-President - Kathleen Burke Past President - Ann Lemieux Secretary - Margaret Richardson Treasurer - Poh Lin Lim Education - Sharon Galloway Publicity - Lynn Stem Newsletter - Christine Johnson

2001 - 2002	President - Kathleen Klassen Past president - Linda Boehm President Elect - Deanne O'Rourke Secretary - Anita Moore Treasurer - Poh Lin Lim Education - Sharon Galloway/Sandra Stec Publicity - Linda Stadnyk Newsletter - Christine Johnson
2002 - 2003	President - Deanne O'Rourke President - Elect - Bev Laurila Past President - Kathleen Klassen Secretary - Betty Taylor Treasurer - Denise Levesque Publicity - Nina Labun Education - Colleen Berean Newsletter - Christine Johnson
2003 - 2004	President - Deanne O'Rourke Vice-President - Bev Laurila Past President - Kathleen Klassen Secretary - Betty Taylor Treasurer - Denise Levesque Publicity - Nina Labun Education - Colleen Berean Newsletter - Christine Johnson

**TABLE VII: NATIONAL CONFERENCES ON GERONTOLOGICAL NURSING**

NUMBER	DATE	PLACE	THEME	CO-CHAIRS
FIRST	June 7 - 10, 1983	Victoria, British Columbia	theme not yet identified	Elaine Gallagher Marilyn Jackson
SECOND	May 22 - 25, 1984	Winnipeg, Manitoba	theme not yet identified	Lois Abbott Lynne Mitchell-Pedersen
THIRD	June 18 - 21, 1985	Hamilton, Ontario	theme not yet identified	Dr. Dorothy Pringle ? Donna Wells
FOURTH	May 19 - 22, 1987	Halifax, Nova Scotia	<b>FIRST THEME:</b> "Professional Dilemmas in Gerontological Nursing"	Sharon Richardson
FIFTH	May 23 - 26, 1989	Calgary, Alberta	"Caring Beyond the Basics"	Sandi Hirst Jean Miller
SIXTH	May 29 - June 1, 1991	Toronto, Ontario	"Being the Best We Can"	Dolores Cardinali Carla Pepler
SEVENTH	May 5 - May 8, 1993	Vancouver, British	"Issues In Gerontological Nursing - Caring To	Nan Martin Pat Wall

		Columbia	Question”	
EIGHTH	May 31 - June 3, 1995	Winnipeg, Manitoba	“Towards the 21 <sup>st</sup> Century: Creative Dimensions in Gerontological Nursing”	Pat Benjaminson Sandra Campbell
NINTH	May 28 - 31, 1997	Ottawa, Ontario	“The Client and The Nurse: Optimizing Resources For Care”	Reta Desmarais Bonnie Hall
TENTH	May 26 - 29, 1999	Edmonton, Alberta	“The Client Takes Charge: Gerontological Nursing in the New Millennium”	Joyce Johnston
ELEVENTH	June 6 - 9, 2001	Corner Brook, Newfoundland	“Gerontological Nursing in the 21 <sup>st</sup> Century: Looking Forward, Moving on”	Carla wells
TWELFTH	May 21 - 24, 2003	Kelowna, British Columbia	“Gerontological Nursing: Celebrating Uniqueness”	Joyce Springate Janice Stanbury
THIRTEENTH	May 25 - 28, 2005	Halifax, Nova Scotia	“Gerontological Nursing: The Future’s So Bright!”	Christina McNamara & Sohani Welcher
FOURTEENTH	May 2 - 5 , 2007	Winnipeg, Manitoba	“The Vitality of Aging: Embracing The Spirit”	Deanne O’Rourke Kathleen Klassen

These six domains all reflect tremendous activity, marking MGNA's growth over twenty plus years! What about a more personal window? Chapter IV documents a few memories from our two highly successful national conferences.

## Chapter IV

CONFERENCE MEMORIES***May 22 - 25, 1984, Second National Conference on Gerontological Nursing  
Winnipeg, Manitoba***

Memories abound. It was a most successful conference, leaving nurses who care for older people across Canada with a strong sense that we do have something to offer, that we have a body of knowledge that is valid. There is excitement about research. Although it is not clear that we used the phrase at that time, there is excitement about the concept of evidence-based practice.

Guest speakers at this conference are Doreen Norton, United Kingdom, Dr. Alice Baumgart, Faculty of Nursing, Queen's University, and Dr. Jessie Mantle, Faculty of Nursing, University of Victoria.

Doreen Norton's story is special. Doreen Norton is a prime mover in the field of Geriatric Nursing. The United Kingdom is the birth place of the field of Geriatrics as we know it and Doreen Norton is the pre-eminent nurse leader. She designed and tested the first four-level scale to measure decubitus ulcers. She had the idea for and helped to design the first moving chair for stairwell use, prompted by her struggles to care for her own mother in her own two-storey home. She participated in designing the famous "King's Fund" bed, a bed with a scissors-like understructure that allows it to go low enough for even the shortest patient to put feet flat on the floor, the only 'safe' position from which a patient can rise to standing.

Doreen Norton, in 1982, had been invited to accept the first ever Chair in Geriatric Nursing at Case Western Reserve University in the U.S.A. Her proximity prompted our committee to invite her to be our Keynote speaker. What a coup! Readers can only imagine the Conference chairs' near panic when, during the final preparation week, Doreen Norton called to say that she was very ill and could not attend. She showed her deep concern by videotaping her address. We showed the tape on two giant screens on the opening morning of the conference and her presentation, "Geriatrics - The Magnificent Obsession", was very warmly received. Doreen Norton said herself, "I was larger than life!" Her warm presence radiated from the screen and we felt privileged indeed. Lynne Mitchell-Pedersen was further privileged to visit Doreen Norton in England and to be welcomed into her home for several days.

Other keynote speakers gave us great gifts as well. Dr. Alice Baumgart spoke on "The Question of Specialization in Nursing", a most relevant and thought-provoking presentation. Keynote Speaker for the final morning of the Conference was (now Dr.) Jessie Mantle, addressing us on the topic, "Gerontological Nursing: A Canadian

Reality”.

### Every Conference Significant

MGNA's growth has always been linked to our relationship with our national association. Many MGNA members became either Founding Members and/or Charter Members of CGNA. It was a poignant moment at the 1995 CGNA Conference in Hamilton where many of us signed scrolls indicating our participation. The following article explains (The Canadian Gerontological Nurse, Vol. 3, No. 1, July, 1986).

### CGNA FOUNDING MEMBERS & CHARTER MEMBERS

“All members who joined CGNA between May, 1984 (Winnipeg Conference) and June 18, 1985 have been designated Founding Members of CGNA. Their names are on a scroll which will become part of CGNA archives. Sincere apologies are extended to three members whose names were inadvertently omitted from the scroll. The names are: Valerie O’Leary, Anne Smith, and Carla Wells. These names have now been added.

All members who joined CGNA between June 19, 1985, and June 22, 1986 have been designated Charter Members. A second scroll is now being prepared by a (Winnipeg) calligrapher, Cecil Gibson, and a photo will be reproduced in the November, 1986 Newsletter.

Both Founding Members and Charter Members have shown faith in the value of CGNA and their support in establishing the Association will be remembered.”

### May 31 - June 3, 1995 - Eighth National Conference on Gerontological Nursing Winnipeg, Manitoba

MGNA's second hosting of a CGNA Conference was likewise a great success. Pat Benjaminson, who co-chaired the Conference with Sandee Campbell, describes the event.

The 8th National Conference on Gerontological Nursing was held at the Winnipeg Convention Centre Wednesday, May 31 – Saturday, June 3, 1995. The conference was co-chaired by Sandee Campbell and Patricia Benjaminson and was a resounding success both educationally and financially. This success was entirely due to the committee members who worked for two years with dedication and humour: Cynthia Cameron and Lorna Guse – Scientific Review ; Margot Christie – Contact and Format; Berit Hack – Finance; Mary Woloski and Linda Dando – Advertising, Printing, and Marketing; Margot Christie and Jan Greenwood – Convention Centre; Janet Porth and Donna Jamieson –



Entertainment & Tours; Pat Johnston and Lori Lamont- Fundraising; Ann Lemieux and Sandra Stec – Registration; Sylvia Graham and Chris Reeves – Conference Packages; Jean Burton – Exhibits. Keynote speakers included Professor Sally Redfern, Director, Nursing Research Unit, King's College, London, England and Jane Fulton, Associate Professor, Graduate School of Business Administration, University of Ottawa. Professor Redfern was inspiring in her talk about improving the quality and organization of nursing care for elderly people. Dr. Fulton addressed the issue of the state of health care in Canada in a very interesting and thoughtful presentation. The many wonderful paper presentations were grouped under the following themes: Community Living – Expanding Boundaries; Reframing Practice; The Future of Caring – Who Will Care?; Kaleidoscope of Cultures. There were a wide variety of exhibits and poster presentations. Wednesday evening featured a Welcoming Wine and Cheese Reception. Following an education-filled day on Thursday, the Gala Evening featured a double-decker bus ride to the Hitch-n-Post Ranch. The fun-filled evening included a BBQ beef dinner, line dancing lessons, and western music. The highlight on Friday afternoon was the Celebration of Life leading conference participants in a joyful and reflective celebration of their own life process. Hosting this conference was a richly rewarding experience and the financial gain has allowed the MGNA the luxury that few other interest groups have – that of focusing on growth and development rather than on fund-raising.

### The Celebration of Life

The vision for this ceremony came from Margot Christie. It was planned by a committee with vision, led by Joanne van Dyck, and including Margot Christie, Tim Frymire, Danielle Jantzie, Ingrid Pedersen, Lynne Mitchell-Pedersen, Chris Salzen, Gen Salzen, and Chas van Dyck. Joanne van Dyck and Margot Christie wrote the following description of this wonderful event.

“A moving liturgy, incorporating aspects of various religious, spiritual, and cultural backgrounds, was held on Friday, June 2<sup>nd</sup>, 1995, creating an opportunity for conference participants to celebrate their own spirituality and their own life stages as nurses who care for older people. As well, it marked the 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary of CGNA's adoption of our constitution.

The Gathering Rite, led by litanists Karen Toole-Mitchell and Esther Klassen, was a focusing of energies, individually and collectively. A significant moment at the beginning of the Gathering honoured with a Moment of Silence the life of Donna Hinde, an active CGNA member from Calgary, Alberta, who had died the previous evening. Donna's brave spirit and her long-time contribution to nursing were remembered.

The litanists then invited us to process and experience - symbolically, the “flow” of life. The procession was led by Chris Reeves from Deer Lodge Centre, representing the bedside nurse, and by Lynne Mitchell-Pedersen, representing the Past-Presidents of

CGNA and the honorary Life Members. Together, they carried a dogwood basket woven for the occasion by Brigitte Webber, which contained Life Experience cards inscribed with the Conference participants' significant life experiences. Behind Chris and Lynne walked Nancy Bol, out-going CGNA President, and Jean Miller, incoming CGNA President.

Participants walked in pairs, holding colourful flowing strips of fabric<sup>1</sup>. The brown fabric (a very grounding colour) reminded us of our connection with Mother Earth, while the turquoise fabric reminded us of inner peace, growth, harmony, and unity. Students from Dakota Collegiate with their teacher, Ingrid Pedersen, wound through the procession touching participants with the strength, courage, and passion of the red fabric, and the faith and spiritual connectedness symbolized by the purple fabric.

As the participants passed through each Station of Life, they gathered objects in satchels which were symbolic of that stage of life. Seeds of wheat represented the beginnings of life, while flower seeds represented the blossoming of youth. At the next Station, participants chose from smooth, lake-washed stones from the shores of Lake Winnipeg, which, according to native tradition, represent the wisdom of middle age. Ripened heads of wheat represented the fruits of our labours to be enjoyed in old age, while a packet of earth represented our end, but also the beginning of the next cycle of life - a bed for a new seed. As we processed through the Stations of Life, the Northern Brass Quintet played Handel's "Water Music" and other Baroque music. Each station included a ceremonial drummer, which marked the rhythm as the participants experienced that Station of Life.

The procession entered the magnificent Manitoba Legislative Assembly building, gathering in the round on the two upper levels, looking down on the Grand Staircase. The liturgy continued with The Weaving, which began with the students creatively moving the colours of passion and spirituality through an enormous Tapestry of Life. When completed, it was raised to be the visual focus of reflection. Music was provided by an interfaith choir, consisting of members of the choirs of Harrow United Church, St. Ignatius Roman Catholic Church, Shaarey Zedek Synagogue, and the Unitarian Church of Winnipeg. The choir, directed and accompanied by Chas van Dyck, sang three excerpts from Paul Winder's "Missa Gaia" (Earth Mass).

Finally, in The Departing, participants recessed to have their satchels smudged with the ashes that remained after the ceremonial burning of the Life Experiences Cards.

In caring for older people, gerontological caregivers often focus on the past life experiences of their clients, and seldom take time to reflect on the meaning of their own. This event took on deep meaning for many as it honoured our spiritual selves, the basis of our care for others."

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1. Fabric donated by Sonja Lundstrom's sister, Linda.

## Other Memories

### A Memory from Sonja Lundstrom

“One memory I have of the 1995 conference is that we realized that CGNA was ten years old and that we should celebrate with a birthday cake. On the way to the airport to pick Sandra Hirst up from Edmonton, I whipped down to Cosco to get the biggest cake that I could get- it had a golfer on it but no one knew the difference when we adorned it with candles. We quickly cut it to serve as sustenance before everyone bade farewell and caught their airplanes home. The planning committee enjoyed a good laugh that once again we had risen to the occasion.”

This chapter has highlighted a few memories of many meaningful conference experiences. Chapter V offers a brief conclusion to this celebration of our twenty year history.

## Chapter V

### A Final Note

How do we summarize a story where so many people have played so many meaningful roles? We have documented our complex beginnings, our struggle to create an organization where we honour our own identity, and some of the events that have transpired because of our efforts.

MGNA has worked hard to meet its initial goals, named by that first committee of the Manitoba Gerontological Nurses Interest Group, the pre-cursor to MGNA. Interestingly, we no longer struggle over whether or not we have a body of knowledge or an identity. We now take those for granted! That is our measure of success! We *do* have support from each other! We can also take that support for granted! Success! May MGNA continue in the future to offer the same measure of support and care to its members as it has in the past twenty years!

### A Personal Note

"We drink from wells we did not dig!" I offer my thanks, as I recall our early days, to those whose inspiration and support led us to create MGNA! This history is intended to honour all who have participated in its development and growth! MGNA has its own momentum now. The momentum comes from the energy of all the people who have contributed over the years. That momentum is a gift to all those yet to come. I am honoured to have been part of this process. I wish for today's Executive fortitude for the tasks at hand. I celebrate the fine work that has already been accomplished. It will be important to safeguard what has been accomplished even while we look ahead. I am reminded of a quotation from the work of one of my favourite older women writers, May Sarton. She quotes an unnamed author with what seems an important message for us today,

"My [our] dream most fabulous and meaningful,  
Stand guard, stand guard." <sup>2</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> Sarton, M. (1981). The House by the Sea. New York: W. W. Norton & Company, Inc.