

HISTORICAL FACTSHEET No 17

School of Nursing

When the Baschurch Home opened in October 1900, the only trained nurses were superintendents Agnes Hunt and Emily Goodford. However, as the number of child patients increased, so did the need for more nursing staff. As early as May 1901, a visitor to the Hunt family, Miss Teresa Fraser, was pressed into service to lend a hand at the Home. She went on to complete 20 years of nursing!

Faced with a staffing shortage and a lack of funds to employ trained nurses, the superintendents decided to start a training school. Their pupils were generally well-educated girls from the age of 17 upwards. They received no salary, and had to provide their own uniforms, but were given a good grounding in the care of crippling diseases. It was intended that after one year the pupils should go on to a 'proper' hospital in order to gain an official nursing qualification. In 1910, the Home became a registered training centre for massage and Swedish remedial exercises, which gave those who took the examination an official diploma in what came later to be known as physiotherapy.

Nurse training continued after the hospital moved to its present site. The blend of nursing and physiotherapy education started at Baschurch came to be known as a 'Conjoint' course and continued for many years until separate Schools of Nursing and Physiotherapy were established within the hospital.

At first, the School of Nursing existed in makeshift buildings. Originally the only lecture room was a redundant operating theatre formerly used by Sir Robert Jones. In 1953 an existing building was modified, and named the 'Sister Wood School of Nursing' after Dorothy Wood, a well-respected member of the nursing staff who had taught many students over the years since she first joined the staff at Baschurch in 1917. In 1967 an extension was added, comprising lecture and discussion rooms, a library and office space. The School of Nursing went through several changes of management over the years, due to reorganisation of nursing education at national level. This was eventually taken over by the universities, and in 1995 nursing education at Oswestry was affiliated to the School (later Faculty) of Health at Staffordshire University. Teaching continued in the School of Nursing building until 2007, when it was demolished to make way for the Orthopaedic Research for Children Centre (TORCH).

The nature of nursing students at the hospital has changed greatly over the years. At one time, many were pupils studying for the old State Enrolled Nurse qualification. Nowadays, there are specialist courses for qualified nurses in subjects such as orthopaedics, spinal cord injuries, and mentoring. The hospital also provides placements for students preparing for their first degrees and diplomas.

Principal Tutors/ Senior Lecturers 1950 – 2008

Miss E. Bennetts	1950-1952
Miss B.A. Burr	1952-1955
Mr Len Hodgkinson	1955-1973
Miss Jocelyn Williams Jones	1973-1988
Mr Clive Rock	1988-1995
Miss Moira Hartley	1995-2008

Sources

1. *Hunt, A.G. The story of Baschurch. Oswestry: Caxton Press, [1925], p 40-2*
2. *Carter, Marie. Healing & hope: 100 years of 'The Orthopaedic'. Oswestry: The Robert Jones and Agnes Hunt Orthopaedic and District Hospital NHS Trust, 2000, p 11, 12, 69*
3. *Orthopaedic Illustrated No 8 1967, p 5*
4. *Communic@te May 2007, p 1*
5. *Nursing Sub-Committee 7 November 1950, minute 10; 3 Feb 1953, minute 83; 9 June 1953 Matron's report*
6. *The Orthopod No 1 December 1955, p 3*