

# Joyce Finch Oral History Project

## Summary of Oral History Transcripts

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### Career Practitioners

Satisfied	Dissatisfied
Lucille Flores (1946) Charlotte Katona (1981) Leona Pearson (1961) Jane Yettke (1979)	Donna Malone (1979)

#### Lucile Flores

Lucile Flores arrived in Arizona directly from nursing school in Hutchinson, Kansas, in 1946. She worked at Pima County Hospital and Tucson Medical Center Hospital and resided in both places in hospital-provided housing, which included meals and laundry services. She was a staff nurse in obstetrics. In 1948 Lucile applied for admission to then Arizona State College upon the urging of a friend who was a medical student at Pima County, and her father. During this time she also married. Lucile's husband returned to Kansas to finish his education at a community college, and Lucile started at Arizona State College as a full-time student. She lived in the dorm and worked at Mesa Southside Hospital (now Desert Samaritan Hospital) on Saturdays and Sundays. She finished her degree in 1949 and went on to work at Good Samaritan Hospital as a Pediatric Supervisor. She also taught pediatrics for one year. Lucile worked until the birth of her first child in 1951, and then returned to work in early 1952 as an evening supervisor for the hospital. Lucile also took extension courses, taught by ASU professors and paid for by the hospital. In 1972 she went to work in geriatric nursing and took a course in gerontological nursing to prepare herself for her new role. From there Lucile decided to move to California to work in a convalescent hospital as a geriatric nurse and subsequently community hospital as an evening supervisor. Her family stayed behind in Arizona. Lucile returned to Arizona in 1973 and returned to work in a V.A. hospital as a staff nurse. This position was her last before retirement.

Lucile always wanted to stay in nursing because she and her family thought they needed the money, but it was primarily for self-satisfaction. It was something she had always wanted to do and she did it.

#### Charlotte Katona

Immediately upon graduation from nursing school in 1945, Charlotte Katona started her career in nursing as a staff nurse in the hospital where she trained in Wisconsin, pending appointment to the Veteran's Administration hospital where she had been a Senior Cadet. There was a waiting list for positions at the Veteran's Administration. Charlotte was hired at the Veteran's Administration hospital as a staff nurse and advanced through the ranks rapidly and became a Head Nurse. She was at the Veteran's Hospital when penicillin was first being used and when other scientific advances in medicine were introduced. Charlotte was slated to be transferred to

another VA Hospital, but because she was planning to marry and could not relocate at that time, she resigned. Charlotte was going to the Visiting Nurse Association, where she had had another affiliation as a Cadet Nurse. However, Charlotte was called by Deaconess Hospital to work in the Labor and Delivery Room, where she became Head Nurse after a short time. At that time Charlotte also returned to school to work on her Bachelor's degree. She worked at Deaconess until her certification as a Public Health Nurse and departure to the Milwaukee Health Department. There was a continued shortage of nurses at the VA, and Charlotte returned there in 1953 and was appointed Head Nurse on a large Surgical Unit. Putting her career in perspective, Charlotte reflected: "I essentially had had about five years of staff nursing through most of my career and I have just completed 42 years of practice, so all of it has been rather progressive."

It took 16 years—until 1964—to complete the Bachelor's in Nursing because Charlotte worked full time. Charlotte advanced to evening supervisor and then day supervisor of Long-term, Rehab, and some nursing home units. Then Charlotte returned to graduate school at Marquette University over the course of two semesters and summer school. She graduated in 1969 with a Master's in Nursing and specialty in Nursing Service Administration. At this point Charlotte left the VA to join St. Michael's Hospital as the Director of Nursing and subsequently Vice President at Patient Services. She remained at St. Michaels until she moved to Arizona.

Then the family moved to Arizona in 1981, and Charlotte began work at St. Luke's Medical Center in Phoenix as Assistant Administrator for Nursing. She retired from this position in 1986, but not from nursing. At the time of her interview with Joyce Finch in 1987, Charlotte was Chairperson for the Arizona Nurses' Association, Cabinet of Nursing Services and she was involved in other aspects of nursing professional associations.

In describing her role as an administrator who can sometimes be remote from staff, Charlotte noted:

The staff works for the patient, they didn't really work for me. My work needed to be in preparing an environment of support and facilitating their advancement and practice and creating an environment where students could have a good clinical practicum so that we had faculty around. So, some people speak to being lonely in these top positions. I never felt that way, because my Clinical Specialists were Master's prepared, as I was; my Director of Education was Master's prepared, many of my Head Nurses were advanced in their preparation to that level, as well as faculty people. So there was a lot of support. ... It was very progressive. My career has been very progressive. While I was not a staff nurse, maybe for many, many years, I had a very sound foundation. I learned how to work, I learned how to organize, I valued patient needs very much, and I always remained very clinically informed, very clinically concerned. Therefore, I think I was able to talk the language or understand the day in the life of the nurse throughout my career.

When asked how she balanced work and family responsibilities (Charlotte did not have children, but did care for her husband's two children who came to live with them when they were 16), Charlotte commented:

I worked hard and long hours, I also worked rotating shifts a lot, but I think because I was so committed professionally to my job that it was an accepted thing and we worked around it. I was not pressured at any time from my husband about, “Well, why do you have to work today” or “Why do you have to work this weekend”. I worked many weekends at the Veterans Administration; we did not have a policy of every other weekend off or every third weekend, or anything. You always had the obligation of staffing the unit first. And he also worked in retail sales and worked many evenings and worked some long hours, so both of us, I think, accepted that. We did not have weekends off together until we moved here to Arizona, until he retired because he still worked Saturdays and then some Sundays, so our life may have just been a little different than some of those people, or who have all summers off, maybe. I think some of the people who might be married to persons who have that kind of a schedule might be under more pressure. I always tried to understand that on behalf of my staff members just because my schedule could be well worked around. However, when I did work evenings, evening supervision for a matter of many months, and he worked evenings and nights, that was not pleasant. For our son who was in high school at that time; it was not nice. But, there were not choices for some of that time so you accepted that.

Charlotte worked because she liked nursing. She reflected:

I did not have babies myself that demanded my time. I’ve been active, I’ve been very healthy. I enjoy work and I had skills to offer, I saw that I was needed and I always felt that I was very needed in whatever job I held. I always felt very responsible; it was not a burden, it came very natural to me. Nursing suits my personality and my spirit, I think, very much. I enjoy people; I respect the opportunities that a nurse has to enter, if you will, into another person’s life. You have entry into another person’s life in a hospital room different than many other disciplines. You belong and you’re accepted. With that comes that obligation, I believe, to serve. So I’m very strong about the need to give.

#### Donna Malone

Donna Malone graduated from and worked at the same hospital from 1947 to 1979 in Youngstown, Ohio. She was a floating staff nurse for the first five years, and Emergency Room nurse for over 25 years. Donna preferred floating because she did not want to stagnate in a unit. She learned how to assess patients quickly in the ER and triage so that patient needs were prioritized and addressed appropriately. In 1979 Donna retired and moved to Arizona. She also stagnated there and volunteered at Desert Samaritan Hospital but not as a nurse. Donna reported that she had burnt out on nursing and felt she did not want that career anymore. Someone at the hospital learned of Donna’s RN and in 1982 Donna became a staff nurse in a medical-surgical unit, where she worked days. It was a step-down unit from Intensive Care.

Donna did not want to be a nurse toward the end of her career in Youngstown:

I think I was burned out because I was angry at all the factors of nursing. We had been involved in a unionization [effort] back [in Ohio]. We thought it would be wonderful, but we found out that it wasn’t. At least I found out that it wasn’t. It wasn’t what it was

cracked up to be...the limitations that they put on what you could do nursing—wise. You can't do this because the union says no, Well, the union can't tell me what I can do — they can give me guidelines, but don't tell me I can't do for a patient that requires it. I think I was really angry. I might just have needed a change from what I was doing.

Joyce Finch probed to find out if, in addition to issues with the union, if there were other things that bothered Donna about nursing. Donna commented:

[M]aybe there were some newer things that I wasn't quite ready for. I can't pinpoint anything like that, but there have been so many changes even in the past ten years. Leading up to that I was very receptive to changes and that,.. I can't pinpoint what might have triggered my anger. It was an accumulation of things, I think. It was just something that I couldn't cope with. I'm not very good if I can't control the atmosphere that I'm in. I think in myself that I am a good nurse. I'm a perceptive nurse. I shouldn't be patting myself on the back, but I don't believe I've ever done harm to a patient or to an atmosphere where I was, and I was afraid I might.

Joyce then probed to find out if Donna's issues might have been related to changes in the nursing profession such as the shift from hospital-based training to college education. Donna responded:

I don't think a degree would make me a better practitioner of my skills. That is my feeling; there are those that think you should go and get your degree because you're learning more. Every day to me is the learning experience. I don't think a day goes by that I don't learn something new, no matter how small, and I have never been one ... I had my education, I did it -- I'm not going to say great — but I did it well. I'm not adverse to anything new because I think nursing needs a lot of new things and there are more to go. It's a wide open field for innovation. Like I say, I really cannot pinpoint it. I always tail it back to the union and the restrictions they put on what you could do with your nursing skills; not the fact that you should have free reign with what you did, it was always within the guidelines of nursing.

### Leona Pearson

Leona Pearson graduated from nursing school in 1944, worked a number of months in her home hospital in St. Joseph, Missouri. She served as an Army nurse stationed at Fitzsimmons Hospital in Denver for about a year during World War II and decided that a career in the Army was not for her. Leona quit nursing for a while after her three children were born and returned to part-time service shortly after her third child was born in 1956. She advanced to charge nurse and then became Director of Nursing at another hospital, and worked there until arriving in Arizona in July of 1961. Neither Leona nor her husband had jobs when they arrived. Leona “got restless” and decided she had to work and by October both had jobs. They shared the one car they owned: he worked during the day, and she worked nights at Good Samaritan Hospital in Phoenix. Leona worked in the Medical-Surgical department for one year, then Intensive Care on the night shift for a couple of years. Then Leona applied for and got the Assistant Head Nurse job on an orthopedic floor, followed by an Assistant Head Nurse position in the intensive care unit, where she worked for a couple of years. Finally Leona moved to a supervisor position for the afternoon shift, where she worked for about a year. In 1962 Leona began taking classes in nursing at ASU. Some

courses were offered at the hospital, and some on campus at ASU. In 1967 the Director of the Infirmary at ASU invited Leona to work in the infirmary. She worked there for about a year and a half because it reduced the commute to work and made it easier for her to study, but Leona found this kind of nursing boring. During the summer, when the infirmary was closed, Leona worked at Camelback Hospital, returned to the ASU Infirmary in the fall, and moved on the Scottsdale Memorial Hospital. At Scottsdale Memorial Hospital, she worked in the Recovery Room and while learning this new area, worked to improve recovery room practice.

When I went there [Scottsdale Memorial] I set up a program for pre— and post—op. teaching. Kay Lewis from Good Samaritan was one of the pioneers in doing the pre- and post-op. teaching. I knew her when I was working there. I dug out her AJN [American Journal of Nursing] articles. They helped me an awful lot. Well, they were thinking about doing it before I started working there, but the way they did it ... They didn't spend the time that they needed to spend. They didn't cover the things that Kay had in her article. I don't know if they read it or not, but I felt that it needed to be revised and perfected. Working the 3 to 11 shift, the people on 3 to 11 were the ones who did the pre- and post—op. teaching. So, I set up some better guidelines for that.

In 1976, Leona moved to the Outpatient Surgery Center of Scottsdale Memorial, a hospital-affiliated center: “the first one of that kind in the whole world.” She coordinated the post-operative area. Joyce Finch noted that it sounded like a lot of what Leona suggested came to pass, or gets into the guidelines instructions. Leona agreed.

At the time of the interview in 1987, Leona reported that she was taking a course in research, for general professional development, but:

In the back of my mind I would like to do a research project of some kind and do some writing of some kind. I have a lot of information and a lot of ideas, but I'll probably take another course in creative writing or something like that before I stop all this business.

She reached the point in her program of study at ASU when she would have to study full-time; she could not do that because she had to work. Leona finished the BSN at the University of Phoenix in 1984, which had just opened their BSN program. She calculated that it was less expensive at the University of Phoenix than at ASU because she did not have to stop working.

Leona liked nursing as a career: “I never actually left nursing to do anything. I thought about it in my own mind, but I like the service, and never wanted to leave it.”

### Jane Yettke

The bulk of Jane Yettke's career took place before her arrival in Arizona in 1979. She trained in Iowa, and served as a staff or charge nurse in the Air Force (reaching the rank of Major in the Reserves), in military hospitals (Letterman Army Hospital, California; Scott Air Force Base, Illinois), in VA hospitals (St. Louis, Missouri (Jefferson Barracks and John Cochran), and in university teaching hospitals (Iowa City; Ann Arbor, Michigan). She also served in a university Student Health Infirmary (Michigan) and was a summer camp nurse (Michigan)

Jane was an Air Force nurse during the Korean conflict and was called up from the Reserves during the Pueblo incident. She also cared for soldiers returning from the battlefield during the war in Vietnam. During the police action in Korea Jane was stationed at Kaiser Air Force Base in Mississippi. During the Pueblo incident in 1968 she was initially assigned to Hamilton Air Force Base in California and was transferred to Scott Air Force Base in Illinois.

At Kaiser First Lieutenant Jane was a staff nurse in the Ear, Nose, Throat ward; and charge nurse in the Pediatrics ward until she was separated from the service in 1952. Jane also conducted training for Medics. From Kaiser, on the urging of a friend, Jane went to University Hospital in Ann Arbor and a summer camp elsewhere in Michigan. In 1953 she went back to Iowa City and worked in Orthopedics. At the urging of another girlfriend, Jane went to San Francisco to work at Letterman Army Hospital as a civilian nurse in the officers' ward. She was there for fourteen years, when her Reserve unit was recalled during the Pueblo incident in 1968. Jane was assigned to Scott Air Force Base in Illinois and worked first in the RON Ward (Remain Overnight) for patients arriving by Airevac. Jane found working with patients she would know for only a few hours frustrating, so requested and was given an assignment in the General Hospital. She was in charge of the Medical Ward.

Jane married in November 1969 and left active duty in January 1970. From there she went to work in the VA hospitals in St. Louis. Jane started in John Cochran and subsequently transferred to Jefferson Barracks, her first choice. She worked with the long-term, chronically ill patients in a combination of charge and staff positions. During days Jane was generally a staff nurse; evenings and nights as the only nurse, she was in charge. Jefferson Barracks was her last position before moving to Arizona.

In Mesa, Jane was a staff nurse at Desert Samaritan Hospital working part time evenings for six months. Then she worked at Williams Air Force Base in Mesa in a temporary Civil Service position that reverted to military at the end of a year. She was laid off from that position. Her last job was at the Los Flores Nursing Home. Jane did navigate the transition well from hospital nursing to nursing home care and decided to retire in 1983.

Jane enjoyed being a nurse, but in the end decided at the time had come to end her career:

I used to love going to work when I was working at Letterman, but I guess maybe the type of people I was taking care of or else some of the young doctors ... Maybe it was because I was getting older, maybe they thought I didn't know what I was saying or doing, I don't know. I just decided it was time to hang up my hat.

## Investors

### Family Nurse

Christine Besch (1972)  
Margaret Clements (1972)  
Katherine Day (1952)  
Eugenia Dormady (1972/1976)  
Betty Gerl (1980)  
Clara Gilmore (1961)  
Bernice Green (1955)  
Shirley Kirking (1975)  
Doris Meharry (1957)  
Elaine Sabel (1973)

### Entrepreneur

Marylou Gertz (1957)  
Jane Niccum (1973)

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Note: Eugenia Dormady arrived in 1972, moved to Georgia, and returned to Arizona in 1976.

### Christine Besch

Christine Besch came to Arizona from Ohio in 1972. She left nursing to take care of her 7 children and did not return until after the birth of her sixth child. The family moved to Arizona, where she took a refresher course at Mesa Community College to prepare for a return to hospital nursing practice. As a result of the observation of colleagues at Desert Samaritan Hospital, where she did clinical practice as part of the refresher course, Christine went to work in a newly opened nursing home. At the time geriatric nursing was in its infancy.

### Margaret Clements

Margaret Clements left nursing before moving from Illinois to Arizona in 1972 to care for her 2 children. Her last job in Illinois was in real estate; she was a salesperson and ultimately became a broker. Margaret found many of the skills of nursing, the interpersonal skills, certainly, were just as viable in real estate. Next, Margaret took a part-time job in Arizona as a staff nurse and within four months was director of nursing. From there, four years later, she went on to a larger nursing home that had pioneered the concept of different levels of care. In this nursing home Margaret was initially in-service supervisor, but grew into the position of assistant to the Director of Education over the course of the 8 years she was there. In 1984 it became law that nursing home administrators be licensed, so Margaret became a licensed administrator. Then she went to a third nursing home, which was operating under a provision license and a recent review that indicated 49 deficiencies. Margaret resigned that position. She had always wanted to complete the baccalaureate but could never afford it until she found out about the University of Phoenix, where Margaret would be able to continue working while she studied and would receive credit for professional experiences. At the time of the interview Margaret was about to return to nursing as a primary care staff nurse. When asked if she always wanted to stay in nursing, Margaret said she did, even though she did something else for a while. Her reason: "I could not be at home with nothing to do. Just so much window washing and cleaning. I felt I really needed to do something to involve myself."

### Katherine Day

Katherine Day moved to Arizona with her husband and only child in 1952 for their son's health. She reported that it was hard for her husband to find work. She worked in obstetrics or pediatrics in a number of hospitals in South Phoenix. Most of her patients were Yaqui Indians, a tribe that was not covered by the Indian Service. From there Katherine went to the Indian Hospital in

Phoenix and worked there as a staff nurse for two years. She left for personal reasons. Then Katherine worked at Good Samaritan Hospital in Phoenix for about 4 months. She left because she wanted to stay home with her son. In 1959, she returned to Good Samaritan and stayed there until her retirement in 1985. During this time Katherine worked all departments and also completed the baccalaureate in nursing and a Master's degree in Education. She took educational leaves of absence and worked part time when she was in college. At the time of the interview with Joyce Finch, Katherine had retired and was in the process of returning to nursing as a part-time Registry Nurse.

### Eugenia Dormady

Eugenia Dormady, mother of 9 children, arrived in Arizona in 1972 for the first time from her home state of Michigan. She married within six months of her graduation from nursing school, and her first child was born in 1948. Because of her husband's work, Eugenia lived in a number of states in addition to Michigan, including upstate New York, Illinois, Georgia, and Nebraska. She moved to Georgia in 1975 for her husband's work, and returned to Arizona in 1977. Eugenia worked part-time, generally nights or weekends, as a staff nurse or doctor's office nurse for the duration of her career in nursing and wanted to work full-time but because of family responsibilities, could not: .

I stayed at home always wishing that I could go back to work. But, you know, it was not an acceptable thing for the mother to go to work, unless she absolutely had to. My husband was earning an adequate living. But I always wanted to go back. My fondest thing was [nursing]. I missed nursing, I really missed it.

When asked if she had considered other lines of work, Eugenia's answer was "no":

I know that a lot of the nurses have gone into administration, things like that, in conjunction with the hospital and everything. But, that was never my interest. Maybe now that I'm older, that would be more of my interest now than it was when I was young. I do like patient—nurse care.

### Betty Gerl

Betty Gerl was one of the last to arrive in Arizona of the 25 who Joyce Finch interviewed, and, similar to Lucile, found herself working with older patients later in her career. Betty started her career in Aurora, Illinois, as a staff nurse in obstetrics. She married during this time, and moved out of town. Because there was no transportation, Betty could no longer work in Aurora. During this time she worked as a private duty nurse until the couple moved back into the city, and Betty returned to hospital nursing in general duty, medical-surgical nursing. She alternated between hospital and private duty nursing during the time that she had children. Betty worked part-time evenings until all the children were in school, and then worked full-time as a Post-Partum Charge Nurse until 1967. From there Betty worked one year as a school nurse, then two years in the hospital where she trained for two years. In 1970 Betty and her family moved to Colorado, where, after a long search, she took a position as a staff nurse in a nursing home, and then became Director there. During this time Betty learned how to drive. Because of her husband's work, they went back to Illinois, where Betty became Director of a 135-bed nursing home. Then she returned to Colorado to the same nursing home where she had worked during her previous time in



Colorado. Betty's husband's work in construction brought her to Kansas for a short time where she worked for a couple of months in a small general hospital. They returned to Illinois because her husband's parents were very ill and to take care of them. During this time Betty worked in the same hospital where she trained. She and her husband arrived in Arizona, where for two years Betty worked as a Head Nurse in a skilled nursing care facility and shortly thereafter went to work in a new nursing facility. At the time of the interview Betty was Director of Nursing at this facility.

Regarding her decision to stay in nursing, Betty remarked:

I'll probably stay in nursing, but now I'm getting to the point where I'd like to do something else, but I don't know what I think after this many years in the field I think that I would like to learn something new. I think my husband and I are going to take a computer course this fall – we feel like we need to do something different.

#### Marylou Gertz

Marylou Gertz came to Arizona from Iowa in 1957 after ten years of marriage, for her husband's health. Upon arrival in Arizona she went to work at Tempe Community Hospital, now known as Tempe St. Luke's. Marylou worked as an evening supervisor for 22 years and also implemented a class for nurse's aides that she designed for the hospital. This program existed before they were available at the community college.

She ultimately quit practicing nursing:

I'd go to the classes to learn ... because like I say back in those days I felt being supervisor I had to be able to do everything in that hospital at one time - jump in and read the monitors, whatever, which I could do. When I finally quit, one reason I quit was I couldn't keep up with all the new changes where I could do it all, because we'd bought the family business [an interior design studio]. There's too much to learn, and after having been supervisor so many years it would be hard for me to be put on the floor or desk — with things changing so fast, you know, to have the old gal sitting there and telling her what to do, that's different. I thought, well I'll just cut it, and that was it.

Marylou enjoyed nursing and would have stayed in it were it not for the family business and her husband's health issues.

#### Clara Gilmore

When Clara Gilmore arrived in Arizona in 1961, she went to work almost immediately at the Valley View Hospital in Phoenix. It was a small, general hospital in what at the time was the edge of town. Clara worked there full-time for about three months and had to leave because of childcare issues when her husband was out of town a lot for his job. Clara worked in the infirmary at Grand Canyon University for 25 years. She also earned her bachelor's degree in education with a minor in health at Grand Canyon in 1973, which was her best option, given the difficulties associated with traveling to ASU for a nursing program and having young children at home. Despite having two daughters at home, and a husband who was frequently out of town for

his construction business, Clara always worked, keeping in mind the need to weave her work around her family responsibilities:

After we moved out here my husband, who is since retired, he was in construction and he worked with the big powerhouses all over the state. So, many times he would be gone and the girls and I would be home. And yet, the only time I had problems was when I was trying to work at the hospital, and that schedule did not work with mine. Then when I started down here [at Grand Canyon University], I started out only part-time, four hours a day with the weekends off. Of course, I was on call 24 hours a day. But, the hours there corresponded to the hours that our girls were school. Gradually as they became older I became more involved in work and was able to work longer. So it worked out very well, really.

Clara worked because she wanted to. She felt she had something to contribute. She was confident that could have worked any place in town and would have been financially secure.

### Bernice Green

Bernice Green arrived in Arizona in 1955. She was a U.S. Public Health Service nurse with the Bureau of Indian Affairs, who transferred from the Indian Reservation in Rosebud, South Dakota, to the Phoenix Indian Medical Center. The nursing supervisor at Rosebud had been transferred to Phoenix and was having trouble keeping nurses, because if they were given a shift they didn't want, they'd just quit. There were many nursing positions available in the Phoenix area. So her plan was to pull in a few career nurses to stabilize the staff. Bernice was one of those career nurses. In 1962 Bernice retired. Her husband was trying to finish at the university, and she had two children at home:

...in those days there weren't daycare centers. It was very difficult to find somebody who could understand my rotating shift, my rotating days off and on call. One of my girls had had 12 babysitters, and the other one 14. They were two and four years old. It was very traumatic for them, for me, and for the whole family.

Bernice was also concerned about the quality of care at the Indian Medical Center:

...patients would be brought from the Reservation and they would be, supposedly, admitted to be worked up. Some of them would sit there for three and four months without being worked up. I got the impression at the time if they didn't keep the beds full, then they'd lose some funds. This was very traumatic, because these people had farms, they had families. It really hurt to see that happen, and I had not found any way to do anything about it.

She retired to full-time parenting and community service until about 1971 including developing program resources—a girl's club and a daycare center—in an old neighborhood that was being redeveloped. Her daughters attended the Mitchell School, which also served that neighborhood.

Bernice returned to nursing as a public health nurse for the Child Health component at a Comprehensive Education and Training Act program site in South Phoenix. The parents and the

children would be picked up at their home by bus, or other transportation, and brought to the daycare where the parents would leave the children, and they went on to school or work. She held a clinic in each daycare once a month. A doctor did physicals on those infants and children who were new to the program. A nurse from Headstart Program would come along to give immunizations. Bernice went to the two school centers, where the parents were, to interview newly enrolled students and get the medical history on their children. She taught the staff proper procedures for the care of children when they are sick and for sanitary food preparation. After about two and a half years, the program's funding ended, and Bernice transferred to her final position in a program in maternity, child health, family planning.

### Shirley Kirking

Shirley Kirking returned to nursing in 1974 when her husband became ill, and they moved to Arizona because of her husband's health. They had two sons. Previous to her marriage in 1961 Shirley had been an office nurse in an ear, nose, and throat clinic with a group of doctors. When she married and had children she left nursing and returned to nursing after her arrival in Arizona. The family came to Arizona because of her husband's ill health. The boys were about 8 and 13 years old at the time. Shirley went to work in Arizona as a geriatric nurse in an extended care facility. She worked there initially in the Alzheimer's unit and later as head nurse in the personal intermediate care unit. After about five years, Shirley left for a period of time to work at other nursing homes, and returned in 1984. When asked if she always wanted to be a nurse, Shirley commented:

I think I always wanted to be a nurse. However, since graduating I have to admit, the same as most everybody else, there are times when I wish I had gone into some other phase of work. I feel that if I were young nowadays, looking back, I probably would not go into nursing. I would probably choose something more along the line of computers, engineering, something along that line.

### Doris Meharry

Doris Meharry and her husband and two children moved to Arizona in 1957 because of her children's health problems. Her husband had left his job and was unable to find a job in Arizona, so Doris became the breadwinner as a staff nurse working days at Southside Hospital in Mesa. A few years later she went to work at the Indian Hospital in Sacaton, some 30 miles away from her home in Chandler. Doris remained at this hospital for about 20 years until 1982. Her son's wife left a premature infant, who she cared for until he was 9 years old. In 1984 Doris began work as an on-call nurse for a hospital. At the time of the interview, Doris was working part-time in the health office and clinic for a continuing care community

In general, Doris loved hospital nursing: "There were times when I thought I wouldn't stay in nursing. There were two times when I worked at Sacaton when I left for short periods. But I went back in time to be reinstated." Her reason for returning to nursing: "Most of the time we needed two incomes, and most of the time I enjoyed it."

## Jane Niccum

Jane Niccum arrived in Arizona in 1973 and began her Arizona career working for her husband, a pediatrician, as well as entering herself on the Nurse's Central Registry to work two nights a week in hospitals. She completed her undergraduate degree in Arizona in 1981 and worked in a clinic in El Mirage, Arizona. When a position in another office opened up, Jane requested a transfer because of her interest in public health nursing. Over time she worked with community and with schools, day care centers, and families. She wanted to work because she grew tired of playing bridge and being in church groups or doing volunteer. Jane wanted to work and get paid for that work. It was a way to not stay home after having stayed home with their four children.

## Elaine Sabel

After a long circuitous career as a staff nurse in a hospital, a public health nurse doing infant welfare checks for the Chicago Health Department, industrial nursing for a two-doctor practice, and a series of part-time positions as office nurse in doctor's offices, Elaine Sabel, a single mom, decided to return to hospital nursing. According to Elaine, "I could make more money working in a hospital. And I couldn't see any reason why I couldn't do it." She moved to Arizona in 1971, took the refresher course required to reach this objective, and landed her first full-time hospital nursing position in nearly 30 years—in Arizona. Elaine advanced to admitting nurse and left when the hospital eliminated the admitting nurse role in favor of a primary nurse concept, where every nurse admits her own patients. She moved into the role of crisis nursing and also conducted patient satisfaction surveys.

Though Elaine took advantage of many continuing educational opportunities over the course of her career, she took only a few college courses at Scottsdale Community College. Elaine found college difficult:

I have children and grandchildren, and friends. I do a lot of entertaining at home. So it was very hard, because I wanted to be good at it. Then the next semester I took a nutrition course, which was a real experience. I decided after that that if I have to work full—time, it was too hard for me to go to school.

## Nurse and public health education leaders

Nurse Education		Public Health	
Associate degree	Undergraduate and Graduate	In Schools	Among Native Americans
Ruby Gordon (1948)	Ellie Branstetter (1945) Rosemary Johnson (1959) Elaine Katzman (1982) Frances Knudsen (1951) Barbara Miller (1975)	Georgia Macdonough (1963)	Joan Douglas (1980)

Note: Joan Douglas' Senior Cadet Experience was in Window Rock, Arizona.

## Ruby Gordon

Ruby Gordon trained at Santa Monica's School of Nursing in Phoenix. Though not born in Arizona, her family came to Prescott, Arizona in the mid-40s from the South because her sister was asthmatic. She became a single mother and during the 50s worked a series of jobs in the

healthcare industry from a period with a health insurance company, to manager in a medical practice, to hospital staff nurse. Ruby worked her way through ASU where she earned her bachelor's degree. In the late 50s she continued in a Master's program in counseling through the ASU College of Education (a nursing program did not yet exist at ASU or in Arizona at the time). From there Ruby went on to teach biology in the Phoenix Union High School district and subsequently moved on to the Glendale School District to teach biology there. She found that high school teaching was not for her and moved on to teach in the St. Joseph's Hospital School of Nursing in Phoenix. At St. Joseph's Ruby also wrote a grant with a colleague that established a Coronary Care Unit in the hospital. When St. Joseph's closed the school of nursing, Ruby moved to Glendale Community College, where a nursing program for the western Maricopa County area was being established. Ruby represented the college at the Western Interstate Commission on Higher Education (WICHE), which was starting a five-year curriculum project in nursing at that time. That association helped Ruby develop the curriculum at Glendale Community College, where Ruby became the Chairman for the Department of Nursing. After she completed the Ph.D. in Adult Education and Administration at ASU, Ruby transferred to Phoenix College to teach nursing there, but ended up teaching in an area with which she was not familiar. As with all the other challenging opportunities that she encountered in her career, Ruby sought out traineeships and funding for them to equip her for a new role.

When asked if she was satisfied with the decision to return to nursing, Ruby responded:

Oh, yes. I look back over all of my life. I guess I'm at a time in life when I look back, as some people do. There is hardly anything that I have done that I would not repeat again. I feel real pleased with the accomplishments that I've made. I've had a lot of people who have assisted me and fostered me, and listened to me through the years. I feel real comfortable. In fact, I can't think of anything that I have done or the way in which my career has gone that I would change. I feel very career-oriented, probably due to the circumstances of having been left by myself to raise a child. I frequently chuckle to myself that I probably got hung—up on education. But, I just had some kind of zest. To this day, I have a zest effect. I applied this past Spring and participated in a pilot project the District had for VISIONS. It's like re-careering, and we each had to do something of interest. I got interested in Gerontology. In fact, I applied to ASU under the College of Public Programs. Naturally, they accepted me. They've got a lot of openings in this field,

### Ellie Branstetter

Ellie Branstetter arrived in Arizona in 1945 after having been a Head Nurse in the hospital where she trained to be a nurse. She worked in Tucson as an Emergency Room Nurse at Pima County Hospital for about six months. After a short return to her home state of Missouri Ellie returned to Arizona and worked at Santa Monica's Hospital in Phoenix as a supervisor and clinical instructor in their school of nursing. She had a year's college before she started nursing school. After a year at Santa Monica's she went to the Indian Hospital in Phoenix as a staff nurse. Ellie alternated work with the Visiting Nurse Service in Phoenix with study in Missouri and finished her undergraduate degree in public health at St. Louis University. Ellie returned to Arizona as a field instructor with the Visiting Nurse Service and became Assistant Director. Then she went off to the University of Minnesota to earn a Master's in Public Health in Mental Health Nursing. Her

motivation to pursue the Master's was her interest in teaching. Ellie returned to Arizona in 1957 and helped start the baccalaureate program in nursing at Arizona State University. As the nursing program grew from a department in the liberal arts college to an independent school within ASU, Ellie became assistant director of the school. A few years later, in 1962, she went to Chicago for her doctoral degree, which she completed in 1969. During her doctoral study, Ellie consulted with ASU on the development of the Master's program in nursing. At the time, she was the only doctorally prepared faculty in the School. She served also as Assistant Dean, as well as Chair of the Graduate Program, and taught an array of courses in her role as faculty in the school.

Ellie always wanted to stay in nursing, "because I've changed jobs from time to time,.. I think if I'd been doing the same job, I would not have. But that's the nice thing about nursing — we can change roles."

### Rosemary Johnson

Rosemary Johnson started her career as a nursing arts instructor and then orthopedic instructor in Milwaukee County. She was also a staff nurse in a hospital, a family nurse, and a school nurse. Upon completion of her Master's degree in public health at the University of Minnesota and not yet finding a position in Arizona or California, where she wanted to be, Rosemary accepted the position of Public Health instructor at the University of Minnesota. She stayed in that position until she moved to Arizona State University in 1959 to work with Ellie Branstetter in starting the program in public health nursing. As the Nursing Department grew into the School of Nursing, Rosemary's role also grew: she became Coordinator of the Public Health area of the nursing program. While at ASU Rosemary pursued the doctorate at UCLA through a sabbatical, three years' leave of absence, and a three-year scholarship. When she returned to ASU, she was in the data collection phase of her dissertation work. Because of the pressures of work at ASU developing a Graduate Clinical Health nursing program and writing a self-evaluation report for program accreditation by the National League of Nursing, coupled with the untimely death in a plane crash of her doctoral committee chair, Rosemary did not complete the dissertation. She resigned from the Coordinator of Public Health position and returned to full-time faculty status. Because she did not have a doctoral degree, Rosemary felt that for the sake of the credibility of the program, the Coordinator should be someone with a doctorate.

Rosemary thought she always wanted to be a nurse, and in junior high she wanted to change her career goals, but then she felt maternal pressure.

### Elaine Katzman

Elaine Katzman arrived in Arizona as an ABD doctoral student at Syracuse University in 1982. Her husband's early retirement from teaching prompted the move to Arizona. When she came to Arizona, she was writing her dissertation, and she and her husband started a private practice in marriage counseling. After a year she joined the faculty of the Community Health Division in the ASU College of Nursing.

When asked if she always wanted to be in nursing, Elaine's response was a qualified "no":

I can't say that I've always wanted to, to be perfectly honest. It depends really on how narrowly you define nursing too, though, to be able to answer that question. I certainly

think that even when I was doing counseling I was practicing nursing, so I can't say that at that time I would say that I didn't want to stay in nursing. It just, as I say, depends on how you define it. It's much different in private practice. Also, when I finished my doctorate it was in family studies, and I had given some thought to perhaps teaching in a human development or another kind of academic setting, other than nursing.

When asked why she worked, Elaine responded:

I always felt that perhaps a career wasn't such a bad idea for a woman. It went against, of course, my whole upbringing, my whole socialization, it went against that. But then when the Women's Movement got going in the early 70's there was support for those attitudes of mine, and so then I kind of got on the band wagon myself and was encouraging women to seek careers and to try to do both. Then as I got further into the work world and looked at it more as a career, I became more serious about it and realized what it was doing.

### Frances Knudsen

Frances Knudsen continued her career in the Veteran's Administration when she arrived in 1951 to commence work as a staff nurse in the Veteran's Administration hospital in Tucson. Her career was interrupted a number of times by the births of her five children, and she stayed home with the children for more than a few months before resuming work as a nurse. Frances' return to work was generally motivated by a financial reversal in the family, and her preference was to return to work on a part-time basis, something that the Veteran's Administration would not permit, so she worked part-time at a county hospital for five years instead. Frances decided to go to the University of Arizona and while there on a Dean's suggestion, began teaching a home nursing course to senior students in a home economics through the College of Nursing so they could go out and teach home nursing in high schools. Joyce Finch thought this an amazing course for the time, and Frances thought it amazing too that she was teaching in the university before she had a baccalaureate degree. She earned the baccalaureate in 1962, a Master's degree in 1964 at the University of Colorado, and the doctorate in 1979, all the time also an instructor of nursing and a part-time nurse at the county hospital. After she earned the doctorate, Frances also taught at the graduate level in the College of Nursing.

Frances, like Rosemary Johnson, thought she always wanted to be in nursing. When she was in her hospital program, however, she did think about going to medical school, but did not because she was afraid she wouldn't be able to manage it financially.

### Barbara Miller

Barbara Miller arrived in Arizona in 1975 from a career that grew into teaching in an associate degree nursing program in Ohio. She thought that she would find a position teaching in a community college in Arizona, Barbara was not able to find a position in a community college but was successful in joining the faculty at ASU. She taught a number of courses, including Medical Surgical Nursing. While on faculty, she pursued the Ph.D. in Educational Administration at the University of Texas, which she credited with a positive promotion and tenure review at ASU. Barbara was also widely published before she started in the doctoral program, which she

credits to a natural predilection for writing coupled with mentoring through the ASU College of Nursing.

Barbara always wanted to be in nursing, despite its challenges:

...I get very disgusted with nursing and always have. I have a friend here in Arizona who started teaching with me in '59 in the School of Nursing in Massillon [Ohio], and I just said to her yesterday, "Do you realize we're saying the same things that we said in 1959?" Whenever I look at nursing and my career, and no matter how frustrated I get, I would never change to something else.

### Georgia Macdonough

In 1963, Georgia Macdonough arrived in Arizona from Long Island, New York, where she had already earned the bachelor's degree and begun her career as a school nurse teacher. The relocation was because of her husband's job. Georgia started her career in school nursing in Arizona as the result of an informational interview that she had with a district superintendent. She introduced the teaching component into school nursing in Arizona that she learned in New York. Georgia earned a Master's degree in Counseling Education from ASU because at the time there was no nursing program at ASU. She kept current with nursing through involvement with the Arizona Nurse's Association and summer work in hospitals as a staff nurse. Because of her experience with a type of school nursing that was not common practice in Arizona at the time, Georgia was recruited by the Arizona State Health Department to serve as School Nurse Consultant. As part of this work she developed a course in School Nursing at Phoenix College, a local community college. Georgia also expanded the scope of the course so that it could be an upper-division undergraduate course and taught it at ASU. The course was not only for new school nurses but for any school nurse who wanted to increase her capacity in the field. Georgia also worked in developing a community health specialty in the nursing program at ASU. She increased her capacity by going to Colorado to prepare to become a certified School Nurse Practitioner. With the support of her employer, Georgia was able to balance the demands of work with the demands of this program. From the position of School Nurse Consultant, Georgia went on to become Director of Local Health, the liaison office between the County Health Departments and other health departments and the State. This office was also directed to take care of border health issues, to be responsible for rural health, to interface with Indian Health. Georgia spoke of a number of issues that her office was responsible to address:

Our office was, by statute, given the responsibility to chair the committee that looked at the status of nursing in Arizona and to make plans for the future. So that's the hot issue of the day in terms of nursing. In terms of state work with the counties, the issue is probably contracts — how this State Health Department can get the work in public health done in the counties by contracting so that the counties can get some money to do the job that needs to be done. We're really very much involved in those issues. In terms of Indian health, I think the big issue is the fact that we have to figure out how we can assist the tribes for members who live on the reservation, that need involuntary commitment to the psychiatric hospital, along with the issue of who pays. So we're boxed up in that because the State feels that Indian Health Service by statute has the responsibility to provide



health care for the Indians on the reservation, be it physical or mental health. They think that the State ought to be providing in—patient care for all state citizens. So we're in the middle of that kind of thing. The Border Health issue, the big one is how do we get our American citizens who go over across the line for recreational purposes and get into either illness or accident situations evacuated from across the line so that they get good health intervention, good emergency care intervention, and that's what we're working on there.

Georgia reported always being satisfied in nursing: “Especially for somebody who started out not even knowing that there was a career in nursing. I liked it once I got into it, and I never wanted to be anything else.”

### Joan Douglas

Joan Douglas began her career in nursing in Arizona during her Senior Cadet experience through Stanford University at Fort Defiance in Window Rock, an experience that she reported strengthened her commitment to pursue public health as a career. Joan returned to Arizona in 1980 with her Master's degree in public health earned in 1959 at the University of North Carolina, and a wealth of experience in public health nursing and nurse education in the Pacific Northwest and northern California. Her first position in Arizona was teaching community health nursing at the ASU College of Nursing. Joan left that position in 1983 to join the Arizona State Health Department as a consultant on long term care. From there she went to work with the Office of Local Health Service under Georgia Macdonough. Her special assignment was with the Indian tribes on health issues. Joan did general consultation and staff education. She worked as part of an interdisciplinary team to help a tribe write a preventive health block grant to develop a program with a nutritionist, and a nurse, and a community nutrition worker for high cholesterol prevention in the community. She also spent a week with the Navajo and the Hopi, and some of the local health departments doing workshops on school health, Board of Nursing law and regulations or rules, and helping community health nurses and school nurses to use each other as good resources.

Joan confessed that she didn't want to stay in nursing because she always wanted to be in public health. At the time when she went for her Master's in Public Health, she also looked into being a veterinarian, but couldn't connect public health with veterinary medicine.