INTERVIEWEE: Brenda Nevidjon  
DATE: July 13, 2005  
PLACE: Ms. Nevidjon’s Office; Hanes House

This interview speaks to a variety of topics that may interest researchers, including Duke University School of Nursing, the Hospital and the Health System, and women’s leadership. Nevidjon, a 1972 graduate of the Duke University School of Nursing, is able to speak about the history of the school and about the changes that were occurring in nursing education at the time. She says that the School of Nursing faculty in the late 1960s and early 1970s was visionary in its emphasis on community-based health: “...They weren’t preparing us for the job after school when we graduated. They were preparing us for the job that was going to be there at the end of the...”
On April 17th the Archives exhibited at the School of Nursing Reunion Weekend event. We had a great turn-out and met many alumni, who graciously shared their stories and memories as they perused the images, artifacts and memorabilia on exhibit.


At the beginning of September, Dr. R. Sanders Williams, senior vice chancellor for academic affairs, launched a web project focusing on the history of Duke Medicine as told through personal accounts and photographs. The Archives staff worked diligently with Creative Services to provide images and captions for the website’s photo gallery.

Over the last few months you may have noticed several articles and videos relating to the history of the Bell Research Building. Inside Duke Medicine utilized the Archives in their research and included archival images to help illustrate the history. Some of these images included the original Bell Research Building, Joseph and Dorothy Beard, and William Lynn.

Currently, the Archives is gearing up for the School of Medicine Alumni Weekend, where we will once again present an exhibit on October 17th. Please stop by and see us there!

If you would like to learn more about any of the events or exhibits mentioned above, if you have suggestions for future projects or ideas for utilizing the Archives’ wealth of resources, please contact Adonna Thompson at adonna.thompson@duke.edu

What Happens to Materials once they Reach the Archives?

Each year, the Medical Center Archives accession between 650 and 700 linear feet of materials from faculty members and departments across Duke Medicine. That’s the equivalent length of approximately 2 football fields! The Archives only accepts records of enduring value, which are records that have continuing usefulness or significance based on the administrative, legal, fiscal, evidential, or historical information they contain, justifying their ongoing preservation.

When materials reach the Medical Center Archives, the head of technical services accession them into a database called Archivists’ Toolkit, which keeps track of information about the materials, the transferring departments, and the donors. Archives staff then moves the boxes to a secure, climate-controlled stacks area, where they remain until the head of technical services processes them.

Processing occurs at different levels. Modern records that have already been placed into acid-free archival boxes do not require any rehousing. Archivists rehouse records that arrive in non-archival boxes or hanging folders and records that are not in good condition due to age or environmental factors. These materials are placed in acid-free archival boxes and folders. These boxes and folders are made specifically for storing archival materials and not for routine storage or shipping purposes.

Processing archivists strive to keep records in their original order. For example, if records arrive at the Archives in alphabetical order, the archivist will keep them in alphabetical order. However, sometimes archivists have to impose order on records that do not appear to have a logical arrangement. This lack of order might occur when a faculty member cleans out his office prior to retirement, or when a family cleans out a former faculty member’s home after that individual’s death. When archivists impose an order on materials, they do so in a manner that allows researchers to find items as easily as possible. For example, a box of papers might be divided into “correspondence,” “syllabi,” and “manuscripts.”

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has moved all of its resources to a new platform. All current web requests to this URL are now redirected to a new site.

medspace.mc.duke.edu
(MeDSpace)

With the adoption of a newer, more powerful and more flexible application, the Archives directed its development of digital repository projects to this URL. All of the items from the DSpace@DukeMed repository have been moved to this new platform and the MeDSpace digital repository has grown to include the following projects:

- Historical Images in Medicine (over 4,000 items from the Duke Medicine Library's History of Medicine Collection)
- Physician Assistant History Digital Collection (600+ documents chronicling the development of the PA profession)
- Administrative records from the Duke Medicine library
- A digital copy of “Davison of Duke” from Medical Center Alumni and Development
- Finding aids detailing the current holdings of the Medical Center Archives
- Oral histories conducted by Archives’ staff
- Digital versions of “Vital Research”, the newsletter of Duke-NUS Graduate Medical School Singapore.

This platform has also allowed the Archives to start collecting electronic materials from departments and programs.

digitaldukemed.mc.duke.edu
(Digital Duke Med)

Over the past seven years, the Archives has created numerous on-line exhibits. Our projects have been made available at the various URLs listed above depending on the server needs of the individual exhibition. In order to see each of our on-line exhibits, one would have to go to multiple locations. With the adoption of this URL, all current and future Archives’ digital exhibits will be accessible from one location.

These changes have been implemented to enhance user experience and facilitate administration from the Archives perspective. Additionally, all of the changes have been developed with server instructions to redirect individuals to the new locations so that users and search engines will not follow broken links. We appreciate your patience with these developments, welcome your feedback and we hope that you continue to find our resources useful and enjoyable.

On April 1, I had the distinct pleasure of becoming the new Director and Archivist for the Physician Assistant History Center at DUMC Archives. I am a recent MLIS graduate of the University of Wisconsin – Milwaukee and I have had experience working in both library and archival settings. My background is primarily with medical and scientific organizations such as the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, UNC – Chapel Hill Health Sciences Library, and Teleflex Medical. I am really excited to now be a member of the DUMC Archives team and to carry on the previous work done by others to promote and preserve PA history.

AAPA Conference – San Diego, CA

One of my first duties was to attend the AAPA Annual Conference in San Diego in May. A good deal of my time was spent manning the booth for the Society for the Preservation of Physician Assistant History (SPPAHx). While there, I promoted awareness of the Society and the PA History Center’s website (http://pahx.org). This website is the portal, which allows public access to our historical collections. I also conducted a survey for feedback on the site – what people liked and what they’d like to see more of. (If you would like to add your opinion, the survey is available at http://pahx.org.)

One benefit of working the conference booth was that it allowed me to meet the public that the History Center serves. All walks of life stopped by to meet us and ask questions – students, teachers, clinicians, administrators, members of the armed services and retirees. Speaking with the history-makers themselves, as they came by to support the Society and share their stories, was fascinating and educational. The whole experience fueled my enthusiasm for making the Center and its mission a success and for sharing the stories and educating the up-and-coming professionals on their rich and varied history.

One of the history-makers who attended this conference was Duke’s own E. Harvey Estes, MD, who received the AAPA’s first ever Eugene A. Stead Jr., Award of Achievement. Dr. Estes oversaw Duke’s PA Program in the 1960s as it graduated the first PAs, and he went on to become one of the architects of the PA profession. At a large general assembly meeting a formal presentation was given. The DUMC Archives provided many of the photographs that were used in a short movie, which highlighted Dr. Estes career. I was very proud to have had a chance to contribute to this occasion.

Back at the offices in Durham I have continued, with the help of PAHx intern, Lea Walker, to catalog the collection at the Stead Center. The eventual goal is to have the catalog, as well as pictures and exhibits, available online to the general public and interested researchers. Please continue to monitor the pahx.org website and this newsletter for further announcements, news and new materials being made available.

Please join us on Facebook! Just search for Physician Assistant History Center & “become a fan”
Oral Historian’s Corner (cont. from p. 1)

“...” In 1996, Nevidjon became the first nurse to be named the chief operating officer of Duke University Hospital. She says, “Now, as you recall, too, during this time we [Duke University Medical Center] decided to become a health system. And so I had been in the job barely at all when we were talking with Durham Regional, and then the next thing you know we got Raleigh Community.” The complexity of her role as a nurse, a woman, and an administrator of an increasingly intricate organization are plainly felt during the interview. There were difficulties due to the uniqueness of her role as one of the first women at the highest level of the Duke University Health System’s administration, but there were also opportunities: “I think I broke barriers in the organization, and I think that strengthened things for women, for nurses.” Nevidjon speaks firsthand about a time when there were more barriers to be broken for both. 

What Happens to Materials (cont. from p. 2)

The archivist might then arrange each of these series chronologically.

The head of technical services processes most of the materials that come into the archives. When available, interns from local library science and archival studies programs at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, North Carolina Central University, and North Carolina State University also assist with processing.

Once an archivist processes the materials, they create an online finding aid. A finding aid is generally a folder-list inventory of the materials that also includes biographical and/or historical information about a department or individual, a description of the materials, and subject headings that pertain to the materials. The finding aid is then posted on the Archives website for ready access to researchers. The head of technical services also creates a catalog record accessible via any of the Duke University Library websites.

Once the Archives processes, describes, and catalogs the materials, staff members return the boxes to the stacks area for safe-keeping. The materials are then only accessed for authorized reference requests.