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"In humble dedication to all those who toil
to live"

The Hospital Guardian

Official Magazine of the



HOSPITAL
EMPLOYEES'
UNION LOCAL
180

The Hospital Guardian is published six times a year by the Provincial Executive of the Hospital Employees' Union, Local 180, under the direction of an Editorial Committee whose members are:

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Opinion Page

The New Look RNs

"Given the way employers abuse the law, let's hope essential services legislation doesn't force nurses to the picket line. That would be sadly ironic, because B.C. has never before suffered a provincial nurses strike."

—(RNABC Labour Relations Chairman Doris Shepherd)

Some may have considered it an out-and-out threat. Perhaps it would be more accurate to describe it as the birth of an alternative which had not received previous consideration.

Times were changing, and with them attitudes and needs. It was a fact the Registered Nurses' Association of B.C. couldn't afford to ignore — a fact Doris Shepherd wouldn't let it ignore. In what was an uncharacteristically tough speech for an RNABC wage and policy conference, Shepherd gave the signal for what could be a real change in direction for the 12,500 nurses.

In essence, she was saying they would no longer be bullied. It was time to get serious about fighting back at the bargaining table.

This indication of a new militancy taking hold of the RNABC should be greeted with enthusiasm not only by its members, but by members of the Hospital Employees' Union and others employed in the health care field: They should realize that once all the links in a chain are strong, the chain will hold up well to pressure applied at any point.

No one knows this better than the employer. The game until now has been to squeeze the group most likely to yield in hope of setting contract standards for all groups.

It's necessary to turn back only to the spring of 1978 to see a clear example of this. The RNABC and HEU had both opted to settle contract disputes through arbitration. The RNABC indicated it was willing to sign the Stewart Award, which turned out to be inferior to the Hope Award for HEU. Subsequently the nurses had a change of mind and called the Stewart Award a bad one.

An attempt was made to use the Stewart Award against HEU. But the union wouldn't be backed into that kind of corner.

In the end, HEU obtained a better contract than the RNABC.

Over the years there has been general agreement that the RNABC has lagged behind in the area of collective agreement. But now the organization seems determined to eliminate any existing deficiency in its approach to industrial relations. It means the adoption of a tough new stance, or as Doris Shepherd said in that same speech:

"As a union of professionals, we have arrived at a critical point in our history. The coming negotiations must end the recent dangerous devaluation of nursing — and they must compensate for our members' loss of purchasing power. If those things don't happen it will soon be a lot easier to staff supermarkets than B.C. hospitals. and that affects more than nurses: it affects all health care in the province."

Doris Shepherd also said: "The government must realize that the jig is up: it can't have a free ride any longer on the backs of overworked and underpaid nurses."

This new position of the RNABC is welcomed by HEU. The hope now is that it will be permanent. If so, there may be no need for the joint council of unions HEU had advocated.

What's in a name?

To applaud the Right-to-Work movement is to insult all intelligent and fair-minded people. Yet, there is one accomplishment of this self-serving organization that deserves compliment — the choice of the words right-to-work.

Be it a slogan or title, it is a beautifully contrived deception. To the unwary, it is almost seductive. The right to work. What could be closer to man's sense of fairness? Who would not defend such a basic right?

Opponents of the movement have been winning some important battles, but the task has been made difficult by the three magic words themselves. In spite of publicity, a seemingly large number of people remain ignorant to the real meaning behind those words — to the anti-union objectives of the movement.

The trade union movement has spent some time searching for slogans of its own — to fight a battle of cute and witty words.

It is difficult to shout anything that has such a motherhood ring to it — regardless of the false premise on which it stands. What would seem to be needed more than anything is a continued education campaign, something factual and simply stated. If the truth is to win out it must be told over and over and over to as many people as possible. That is why this union and others have contributed considerable funds to the battle.

People must come to know that right-to-work actually means the right to work for substandard pay, the right to work with less and less job security, safety standards, or any real certainty about tomorrow. They must come to see it for what it is — the lever to pry apart the union shop and eventually the union itself, for lack of required representation.

The message has been clear in those 20 or so unhappy American states where it exists in the form of ill-advised legislation. Standards are pitiable.

Those who march to the right-to-work drumbeat in British Columbia do so mainly under the banner of the Independent Contractors and Businessmen Association. Glancing through the ICBA directory, it is interesting to note the comments of some of the officers. They talk about freedom to associate and the need to "strongly" unite — the very rights they would deny employees who want the protection of a strong union, their own union.

The directory contains the names and advertisements of a few firms that have done business in the past with the Hospital Employees' Union.

That business will not be repeated.



Parading Gorge pickets greeted early risers. Below, sign expresses sentiment.

solution sought

Low morale blamed for sudden walkout

When close to 150 Gorge Road Hospital employees in Victoria hit the street suddenly early on the morning of Nov. 16, it was a signal to those in the know that something had to be done about a bad situation.

"Morale is dead," said one of the signs, which, like the others, bore the ragged look of something that had been put together in a hurry to meet an emergency.

That sign in itself seemed to tell the story of the moment. But it didn't tell the whole story of a troubled relationship.

That began less than three years ago and November's eight-hour picket parade was really the third chapter. Twice before the hospital had been hit by sit-ins. There had been various complaints from the HEU members employed there, including short-staffing and reports that employees were being asked to take on extra work to accommodate the situation.

That, however, didn't seem to fit into the picture presented by the latest incident.

"It seems to be something that has been building up since May," said Unit Chairman Garry Carlson, who discovered that pickets had been on the street for 45 minutes when he arrived for work at 7 a.m. They left some of their number inside to handle any emergency that might arise.

Carlson and Vice-Chairperson Cathy Wormald said morale had reached a low point and that there appeared to be two underlying reasons: a breakdown in communications with supervisory staff and constant threats of discipline.

The last disciplinary action

had come the day before with the one-day suspension of a Practical Nurse. The suspension took effect on the day of the walkout.

Hospital Administrator William Morrison, not directly involved in the dispute, said he felt the job action had been triggered by the suspension. But Bill Muir, Senior HEU Staff Representative in Victoria, disagreed. Like Carlson and Wormald, he looked on the walkout as the outgrowth of ongoing problems in the hospital.

Not mentioned in connection with the incident — but also not forgotten — was one other factor: during the summer there was a movement among the Gorge Road Registered Nurses to join the Hospital Employees' Union for purposes of bargaining. But the Registered Nurses Association of B.C. successfully withstood the challenge by winning a representation vote by a narrow margin.

Some ill feelings were reported to have lingered well after the early October vote. But no one could really say whether this had any impact on an already low level of morale.

Whatever the case, there seemed to be at least one small ray of hope as the Guardian approached its deadline time. Representatives of HEU and the Health Labour Relations Association met after employees had returned to the job in the afternoon. They recognized the existence of a problem and agreed to hold further exploratory talks.

HEU's Muir looked on the first meeting as "encouraging."

But the solution, if there was to be one, still lay somewhere down the road.



Jimmy always had a cheery word

"The one thing I always remembered about Jimmy was that he was always dependable and willing."

Maurice Dunn, who made the comment, had been Jim McCall's supervisor in the building services division of the Cancer Control Agency.

Jim, a member of the HEU Cancer Control Unit and employee of the agency for more than 14 years, died Sept. 28. He was 59.

A veteran of the Second World War, Jim was a member of the Royal Canadian Legion, was on the Board of Managers at the Gordon Presbyterian Church in Burnaby, and over the years had organized soccer, baseball and hockey teams. A large collection of records stood as testimony of his love for music.

Survivors included his wife, Eva, a daughter, Janet,

and two granddaughters, Kim and Colleen.

Members of Jim's unit have offered thanks to all those who made donations. As a result, a cheque for \$197 went to Mrs. McCall.

They also had something else to offer — a final word about the man: "Jim will be missed by his co-workers and many friends," one said. "He always had a cheery 'Good Morning' for all."

Union gearing up for seminars

Have you ever wondered what makes your union tick?

The answer, of course, is people like yourself.

But it goes a little further than that.

The people who make the union run need to know something about the gears and the rest of the mechanism. When and where to apply oil, or a stiff

turn of the wrench, is something that requires study.

And study it will be.

The thinking caps should be dusted off in preparation for some upcoming union seminars. Earmarked for early 1980 (no dates have been set yet), they will deal with such important items as grievance procedures and duties of shop stewards.

The importance of labour education is underlined by the fact that the "teachers" themselves will be in for a little instruction.

Ray McCready, HEU's Director of Membership Services, will be undertaking a job that has been referred to as "teaching the teachers." His students will be staff representatives.

There's a price on fighting the good fight

Arbitration.

The word has a familiar ring to anyone even remotely concerned with the everyday life of the union.

It denotes a necessary function in the world of industrial relations — a means of breaking an impasse and ensuring that justice will be served.

The average union member thinks of it in terms of its results — the light at the end of the tunnel in the form of the award. What he or she doesn't see, as a rule, are the hours, days, weeks and sometimes months of preparations that go into a single arbitration case.

Or the costs.

Some of those closely in-

involved with such vital work mention this merely as a point of interest. There is no intention on their part to complain about costs or the general lack of knowledge.

They will tell you that winning battles for the membership is sometimes expensive in dollars and cents, but at the same time a worthwhile investment in the strength of the union . . . in safeguarding the rights of individual members . . . in security and the kind of peace of mind that comes with security.

A statement concerning legal costs alone in one recent grievance and arbitration case may serve as an example of what is

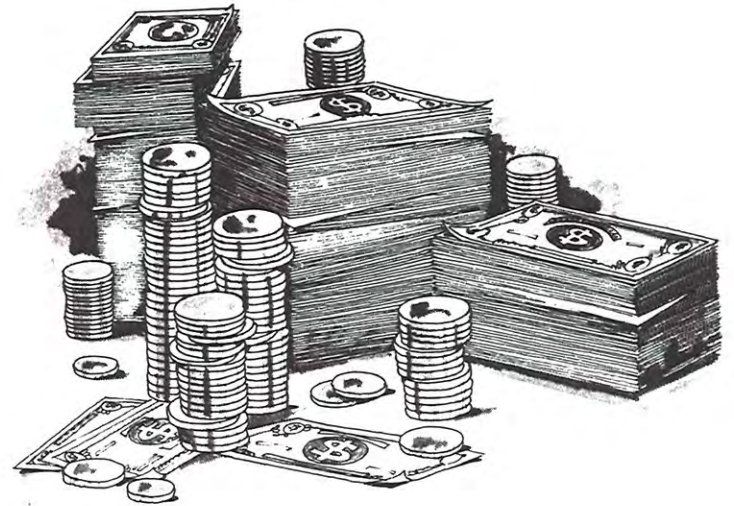
sometimes entailed in achieving justice.

The case involved seniority and promotion. It was no easy overnight victory.

On the part of the union, there was a long period of paper work and leg work, interviews, investigation, study, review and plain tough debate.

On the part of the legal firm, the statement shows that the battle began in August, 1978, and ended 13 months later.

It deals with 21 letters, 21 phone calls, six meetings and conferences, six separate studies and preparation of argument — all of it leading up to three days (18½ hours) of arbitration hearing.



The whereabouts of one of the principals was added to the list of perplexing problems at one stage. It took a phone call to Hawaii to clear the matter up.

The legal bill for this case was \$4,392.

But, as the old saying goes, that's not the half of it.

In addition to the other normal expenses involved during a lengthy grievance and arbitration procedure, there was the cost in this case of a three-person Arbitration Board. The union splits the expense of the

chairman and shoulders the entire cost of its own nominee.

"The whole thing will probably cost \$10,000 at least," explains HEU Secretary-Business Manager J. D. Gerow.

But, before you suck in your breath, consider this: the price of arbitration can run much higher than that.

A few years ago the 104 members of the Victoria Firefighters Union found themselves with a \$30,000 legal bill following a lengthy fight with the city.

When safety's the question, simply back away

You may have wondered what rights you have when confronted with the question of safety on the job — whether a reasonable doubt was enough to spur action.

If so, you will probably draw some encouragement from new regulations issued by the Workers' Compensation Board. They involve new rules and changes to the Industrial Health and Safety Regulations and will become effective as they are proclaimed.

This one, for instance, stresses the right to refuse work:

8.24(1) No person shall carry out or cause to be

carried out any work process or operate or cause to be operated any tool, appliance or equipment when that person has reasonable cause to believe that to do so would create an undue hazard to the health or safety of any person.

(2) Pursuant to clause (1) a worker who refuses to carry out any work process or operate a tool, appliance or equipment shall forthwith report the circumstances of the unsafe condition to his supervisor or employer.

(3) The supervisor or employer receiving a report made under clause (2) shall forthwith investigate the

matter and (a) ensure that any unsafe condition is remedied without delay; or, (b) if in his opinion the report is not valid he shall so inform the person who made the report.

(4) When the procedure under clause (3) does not resolve the matter and a worker continues to refuse to carry out a work process, the supervisor or employer shall investigate the matter in the presence of the worker who made the report and in the presence of: (a) a worker representative of the Industrial Health and Safety Committee; or, (b) a worker who is selected by a trade union representing the worker; or, (c) when there is no Industrial Health and Safety Committee or the worker is not represented by a trade union, any other reasonably available worker selected by the worker.

(5) When the investiga-

tion under clause (4) does not resolve the matter and a worker continues to refuse to carry out a work process or operate a tool, appliance or equipment, both the supervisor, or the employer, and the worker shall forthwith notify an officer of the Board who shall investigate the matter without undue delay and issue whatever orders he deems necessary.

(6) No worker shall be subject to disciplinary action because he has acted in compliance with this regulation or an order made by an officer of the Board.

(7) Temporary assignment to alternative work at no loss in pay to the worker until the matter in clause (1) is resolved shall be deemed not to constitute disciplinary action.

Look at life this way: Today is all you've got

(The following came across the editor's desk under the heading of "Why Worry?" but without comment or mention of source. It was recognized by the editor as an important piece of advice Alcoholics Anonymous gives to the recovering alcoholic. For the alcoholic, it would seem particularly significant at this time of year. And, for the rest of us, it also seems to have something of value to offer.)

There are two days in every week about which we should not be worried — two days should be kept free from fear and apprehension.

One of these days is yesterday with its mistakes and cares, its faults and blunders, its aches and pains. Yesterday has passed forever beyond our control. All the money in the world cannot bring it back. We cannot undo a single act we performed; we cannot erase a single word we said.

YESTERDAY IS GONE.

The other day we should not worry about is tomorrow, with its possible adversities, its burdens, its large promise and poor performance. Tomorrow is also beyond our immediate control. Tomorrow's sun will rise, either in splendor or behind a mask of clouds. But it will rise. Until it does, we have no stakes in tomorrow, for it is as yet unborn.

This leaves only one day — today.

Any man can fight the battles of just one day. It is only when you and I add the burdens of yesterday and tomorrow that we break down.

It is not the experience of today that drives men mad; it is the remorse and bitterness for something that happened yesterday and the fear and apprehension of what might happen tomorrow.

Let us, therefore, live but one day at a time.

Two more units Added to Island

The union continues to record organizing successes on Vancouver Island.

The Tahsis Hospital and Nanaimo Travellers Lodge were added to the list with notification Nov. 19 that HEU had won certification as bargaining agent for employees at both.

This comes on the heels of certification at Yucalta Lodge, Campbell River, where bargaining is underway.

Initially, the union will represent some 25 employees of Nanaimo Travellers Lodge, a long-term care facility. But the figure should swell because of expansion plans by the lodge.

At Tahsis, a tiny lumber community on northern Vancouver Island, some seven employees of the Tahsis Hospital Society are covered by the certification.

RNs win close vote at Gorge Rd.

A group of registered nurses at Gorge Road Hospital in Victoria missed by a narrow margin in an unprecedented move to join the Hospital Employees' Union.

A representation vote called by the Labour Relations Board showed 44 of the nurses in favor of retaining the Registered Nurses Association of B.C. as

bargaining agent, with another 38 voting for HEU. There was one spoiled ballot.

A philosopher is one who realizes that his creditors are even more worried than he is. —(from Unity, publication of the Hospital Employees' Federation of Australia.)



Laura Creegan (girl with guitar) has been touring B.C. and western United States with case of "Up With People." The daughter of Leda Creegan, Trail Regional Hospital LPN and active member of HEU, Laura was also a member while working at Columbia View Intermediate Care Lodge. She joined the popular music group last July at Tucson and will travel with it for a year. She sings, writes music and has taught herself to play the acoustic guitar, accordion, organ and flute. Despite her show business success (she acts as mistress of ceremonies), Laura's goal is to join the RCMP.

Little Hope held in fight for survival

King George Private Hospital was already in its death throes.

But it seemed important to the Hospital Employees' Union that the demonstration go ahead. If King George couldn't be saved, perhaps other private

hospitals could be spared a similar fate.

With that in mind, some 75 HEU members demonstrated outside the dying hospital Nov. 3. Their message was simple: King George was the victim of a

double death blow — unrealistic spending policies on the part of government, profit motive on the part of the owners.

The main emphasis was on the second point.

The union was acting on

information that the owners wanted to close the 75-bed hospital Nov. 30 and replace it with a highrise office building — something that would mean much more money in the bank account.

A rezoning of the property would supposedly make this possible.

The claim of the owners was that the provincial government's per diem rates were not good enough to meet operational costs of King George. The union has also argued against the government's tight-fisted policies, but believes the decision to close the hospital Nov. 3 was mainly a matter of profit motive.

"The Hospital Employees' Union is philosophically opposed to the profit motive in health care delivery," explained HEU Secretary-Business Manager J. D. Gerow.

It is not alone in this thinking. There is a widely held conviction that it is somehow immoral to use the misfortune of the sick and the elderly as a means of amassing profits.

The fate of King George means the loss of 75 badly needed long-term care beds and the layoff of 56 qualified health care employees, Gerow said.

The government's reluctance to step in and prevent such a closure is something that poses a threat to other private hospitals, according to the union.

"It has to be considered that we are faced with not just one King George situation, but lots of King Georges," Gerow said.

The union met with Health Minister Rafe Mair Nov. 28 but received no real promise that the government might move to take the hospital over, as has been the case in past threats of closure at other private hospitals.

Mair said he would look at his options, but that he was by no means making any promises and didn't want to raise the union's expectations.

He did indicate the government wasn't going to let itself be squeezed by those motivated by profit.

I'm not sure the government wants to be put in the position where every time a private hospital closes for any reason — but particularly where they close because they want to develop their property as an office building — that we must step in and buy them out at whatever price happens to be agreed upon.



Planned closure brings pickets out in rain at King George Hospital.

Bursary, legal aide all in the family

If the Lipscombe family of Summerland is seeing double these days it's with good reason.

Simply by chance, separate union assistance programs have brought benefits to mother and daughter.

Maira Lipscombe, a member of the HEU Summerland Unit, found herself with a frustrating consumer's problem and turned to the union's legal aid program for help.

"I wish to express my appreciation for the legal advice received from McTaggart, Ellis and Company," Maira wrote in a letter to HEU Secretary-Business Manager J. D. Gerow. "I obtained the necessary proof suggested by them in their letter, and presented this, together with their letter, to the firm involved and received an immediate cash settlement in the form of a cheque for \$300."

Then there was Maira's daughter, Jan, who was hoping for assistance in obtaining her educational goals. As it turns out, she was the winner of the Summerland Unit's bursary, which consisted this time of money raised through a flea market.

Some units, like Summerland, arrange bursaries on their own. These are apart from those offered annually as part of HEU's ongoing program of educational aid to children of members, and to members themselves.



The union has been careful to point out that it is a bursary rather than scholarship program. The feeling is that bursaries are better able to combine need and competence.

There are seven recipients of HEU's general Bursary Program for 1979-80, four of them union members, and three dependents of members.

Letters from the recipients indicate just what the bursaries mean.

"The money will mean I will not have to go as deep into debt as I would have without it," writes Wendy O'Connor, a

member of the Vancouver General Hospital Unit until August of this year. Her \$1,000 bursary will be used for studies at Douglas College.

"I believe in free education for all and I am hoping to see the day when all such blocks to an accessible education are removed," Wendy says.

Says Barbara Ann Gannon, a member of the Prince George Unit, and recipient of a \$1,000 bursary: "My financial responsibilities will be met this year and your recognition of my efforts are greatly valued."

Barbara Ann will be attending

Simon Fraser University. Both Barbara Ann and Wendy received Edward James Ashmore Memorial Bursaries named for the late HEU member.

Garry Fehr, son of Royal Inland Unit member J. A. Fehr will be using his \$350 bursary at University of B.C., and notes in his letter: "Now, without financial hassles, I can concentrate wholly on my studies."

Others receiving bursaries ranging from \$350 to \$500 are Mary MacKenzie, member of the Royal Inland Unit; Margaret Vranjes, daughter of Courtenay Unit member M. Vranjes; Peggy-Anny Juba, member of the Vancouver General Hospital Unit, and Ailin Liu, daughter of Shaughnessy Unit member Agnes Liu.

As well as the Ashmore Memorial, the bursaries on the list of seven carry the names of the Provincial Executive, Vancouver General, Royal Jubilee and Victoria General Units.

QUESTIONS
ABOUT
BARGAINING?
ATTEND
YOUR NEXT
UNIT
MEETING

SOME OF OUR MOST DISCRIMINATING MOVIE GOERS

Dear Brothers and Sisters:

Our monthly meeting was highlighted by your informative and professionally presented Convention Film. The members

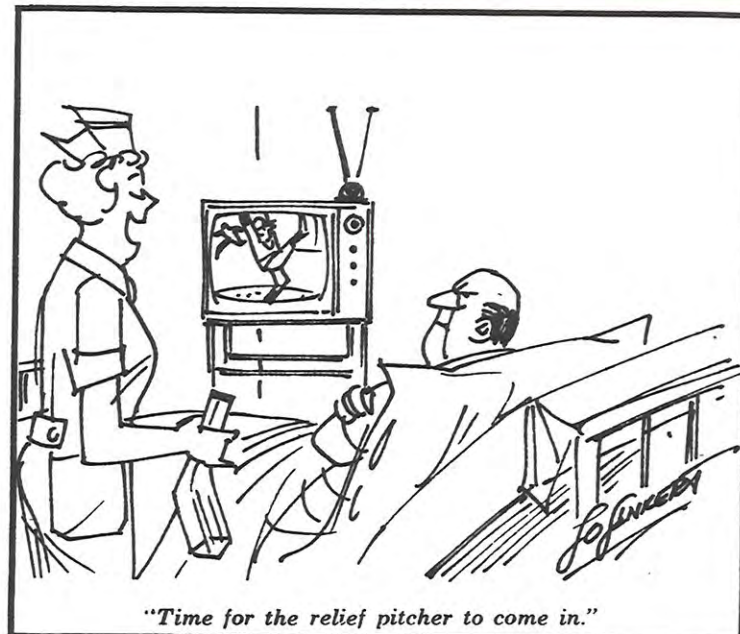
appreciated learning about the workings of our convention and look forward to future union films.

Many thanks for bringing our

1978 convention to our members.

Yours fraternally,

Kristina Skold,
Secretary-Treasurer,
Lions Gate Unit



"Time for the relief pitcher to come in."

After long delay, a time for double bargaining

Someone given to playing with time-worn adages might have called it a case of killing two birds with one stone.

But when you're talking about the uncertainties of labour relations, you have to wait awhile to see if the stone hits either target.

In this case, it was a matter of attacking both the 1980 wage re-opener dispute and the comparability formula issue at the same time. The doubling up was proposed by the Health Labour Relations Association and agreed to by HEU's Provincial Executive.

As this issue of the Guardian approached its deadline the issues were in the beginning stages of 17 allotted days of pre-Christmas hearings before the Peck Comparability Formula Arbitration Board.

Still to be dealt with is the 1979 wage re-opener. The matter has gone to the B.C. Court of Appeal. In appealing the arbitration award signed by Dalton R. Larson, HLRA has based its argument on the belief that the board erred in its interpretation of the provisions of the Anti-Inflation Act.

The comparability issue — involving comparison with



Members of bargaining committee reviewing material are, sitting, left to right: Alberta Dorval, John Weisgerber, Dorothy Patton, Gordon Meagher; standing: Jim Amos, left, and J. D. Gerow.

health care wage rates of the B.C. Government Employees' Union — was to be dealt with in two stages under provisions of the H. A. Hope Arbitration

Award of July 28, 1978. The first stage was to apply to the last Collective Agreement, the second stage to the current contract.

But, as it turned out, nothing was to move quickly. HLRA challenged the right of HEU Secretary-Business Manager J. D. Gerow to sit on the Peck

Board as union nominee. It wasn't until this September, some 14 months after the Hope Award, that the union had cleared that hurdle. The Labour Relations Board ruled that Gerow was eligible.

Because of the long delay in getting the comparability formula in place, the union was quick to agree with HLRA's proposal that it be dealt with at the same time as the 1980 re-opener.

When the union and HLRA bargaining committees exchanged positions in October on the 1980 re-opener, it was obvious that agreement was a long way off.

The union sought a wage increase of not less than \$1.50 an hour, a cost-of-living adjustment, double time for overtime and various other improvements. HLRA withheld any offer on wage increases, opposed COLA and any change in overtime. Beyond that, it proposed a rollback in severance allowance and removal of contract language dealing with the Apprenticeship Program. Job evaluation, HLRA said, should only be administered by the employer.

ambitious plan

Kids of Sunny Hill in for better deal

The Sunny Hill story is one of long, hard effort.

A sod-turning ceremony Sept. 24 capped 10 years of tough planning and negotiations with the Health Ministry and set the stage for a major face-lifting and expansion program.

If all goes well, the new-look Sunny Hill Hospital for Children should be ready for an official opening ceremony about a year from now.

It is a \$4.3 million undertaking that will lift the hospital from its present 57-bed status to 75 and add a number of features. Additions will include large physio and occupational therapy facilities, a gymnasium, indoor swimming pool, a new and enlarged pre-school and kindergarten area, classrooms and administrative space.

The existing building, opened in 1955 by Princess Margaret as a modern tuberculosis hospital

for children, is in for a complete renovation.

In addition to all of this, a minimal care unit is being constructed to provide a group home-like facility for children being prepared for discharge to their own homes, group homes, or some other more independent set-up.

Sunny Hill provides rehabilitation and extended care services for children from all over B.C. Those who come to it range in age from infancy to 19 years. They are provided with treatment programs for post-surgical rehabilitation, rehabilitation assessment and rehabilitation maintenance programs.

The plan for a greatly expanded Sunny Hill actually moved from the dream stage to reality when B.C. cabinet minister Robert McClelland (then health minister) personally turned the sod.



Sod turning for a bigger and better Sunny Hill meant a lot Laura Balatti and Connie Neuman, foreground. Laura, 14-year chairperson of Sunny Hill unit is pleased over prospect facilities hold for patients like Connie, who has been at the hospital about 13 years.

ONE...



...or the other.

The choice is yours. When you leave your job at any British Columbia hospital, you can get an application for an HEU Honourable Withdrawal Card from your Shop Steward. You can fill it out and get your card from the Provincial Office.

Then, when you go back to work, at your old job or one at any other HEU hospital, you can hand over your card and avoid paying a ten dollar initiation fee. Or you can forget the card... and then you can pay the ten dollars.

Get set for Convention



The wheels are already in motion for a convention that's still several months down the road.

Set for either late May or early June, it will be a combined biennial convention and wage policy conference. The time and place will be announced later.

Meanwhile, mounds of paper are starting to pile up at HEU headquarters as the necessary data is gathered in advance.

The union is also calling on

the individual units to begin their planning now.

"Now's the time for them to start thinking of their constitution amendments and resolutions," says HEU Secretary-Business Manager J. D. Gerow.

Resolutions and amendments must be at the provincial office 60 days before the convention. Under the same rules, notice of the convention (time and place) has to be given 120 days in advance.

Unsung hero may be you

I am the lifeblood of the economy, the key to my nation's success.

I am used. I have always been used. It was through me that they made yesterday possible, today bearable, and through me that they hope to build a bright future.

I am a symbol of comfort to the wealthy. They enjoy me for what I offer, but not for what I am. The rich man needs me as he needs shoes. And, like his shoes, I am walked on until I show signs of wear. Then I am cast aside.

I am for the most part stable, the substance of my community. I am its warmth, its soul, its sense of love. But at the same time I am anonymous, faceless, hidden by the bloated image of the powerful.

I am the one who has made all things possible for you. Yet you pass me in the street without noticing me.

I am, therefore, living proof of a society that takes all things for granted.

I am a worker.



(second
in a
series)

Suddenly, the union was a part of her

Like a lot of other people, Wanda Ricketts didn't become an ardent unionist overnight. It wasn't until some time after her third appearance in the health care field that her interest and involvement grew. Today, as a member of the Provincial Executive, she is well known to the HEU membership. Some know her for the role she has played in various phases of the union's progress — including an early victory for equality on a localized basis within one hospital department. A native British Columbian, Wanda was born in Rossland and made her initial appearance in health care at 17 years of age when she went to Essondale (now Riverview) to train as a registered psychiatric nurse. But a couple of years later she decided to follow some other avenues, one of which involved a three-year hitch in the Royal

Canadian Air Force. As might have been expected, she ended up as part of the big medical team in the service. Back on Civvy Street, Wanda made her second appearance as a hospital worker, this time as a nurses aide at Vancouver General Hospital from 1952 to 1954. After another hiatus she was back at VGH again in 1957 and has remained there 22 years. She began as a nurses aide, then moved into radiology as an assistant and in 1970 began working in the portering system. Eventually she became dispatcher of porters, a job she holds today. Wanda thinks it was about 1959 or 1960 when the union first began to have a meaning in her life. "I'd been working about three years in radiology and not really thinking much about the



WANDA RICKETTS

union," she recalls. "I hardly ever went to meetings. "Then Phil Forsha got me interested in what was happen-

ing. I have to give him credit for that. He and his wife were killed in a car accident. But it was because of him that I got started." As her interest grew, so did her participation. She became a shop steward and began attending seminars at Parksville and Vancouver. Along the way she also served as chairperson of her unit's committee for assisting the sick and as unit assistant secretary. The next step was to the Provincial Executive several years ago. While the union's major overall breakthrough in equality came in 1973, it was some four years earlier that Wanda led the successful fight for the same objective in the radiology department at VGH. "It was a fight for equal pay for equal work," she says. "We were working alongside order-

lies. They were getting orderlies' pay. We were getting aides' pay for the same work. "It was a hard struggle. It lasted a year or more, but we won in the end." Wanda's decision to mount the attack was based on the same premise that is still so important to her today. "I figure people doing the same work should get the same money." She has taken part in the organizing of nursing homes and as a result, has maintained a keen interest in developments in this more recent area of responsibility for HEU. Now that she's had nearly two decades to closely observe the labour relations scene, Wanda feels the membership has been served well by its union. "I think we're in pretty good shape," she says.

Aides laid off

Union fights threat posed by Cavell

When Edith Cavell Private Hospital started laying off Nurses Aides in October and replacing them with graduate nurses, the Hospital Employees' Union decided to act quickly on what it considered a thinly-disguised attempt to rid the hospital of the union's presence. This meant taking its case to the Labour Relations Board, and by late November the union had at least part of the answer it was looking for: in a written decision that followed a hearing, the board ruled that the graduate nurses should be in the HEU bargaining unit at Edith Cavell.

At the same time, however, the decision didn't touch on the plight of some 25 nurses aides who were still waiting in the wings after the Oct. 3 to Oct. 17 layoffs. There was no move to restore their jobs.

Union officials have noted with interest that only about 14 grad nurses were hired in place of the 25. Two other nurses aides were retained by the hospital to work the night shift.

The HEU staff people who have been involved in the Edith Cavell dispute say they have no intention of giving up the fight for the nurses aides.

The first move was to notify the employer that the union intends to negotiate on behalf of the grad nurses. It would settle for nothing less than the standard wage rates for Registered Nurses.

There was a belief in some quarters that the hospital would regret the fact it hadn't been prepared in the first place to settle for the nurses aide rates established by the Owen-Flood arbitration. Those rates, fixed at about 90 per cent of the regular hospital industry rate, would have been well below the grad nurse level.

The Owen-Flood award involved seven private hospitals and was seen as a trend-setter in that sector of the industry.

HEU Secretary-Business Manager J. D. Gerow said it was obvious the employer in the Edith Cavell case wanted to avoid the standards set by the award. As a result, an attempt at negotiating a contract fell far short of the mark. "Our argument is that this was nothing more than a thinly-disguised attempt to break the union," Gerow said.

Oratory is the art of making a loud noise seem like a profound thought — (from Unity, publication of the Hospital Employees' Federation of Australia.)

New post for Rolfe

In case you hadn't heard, the career of Bill Rolfe has passed another milestone. Rolfe, who honed his capabilities in industrial relations with both the Hospital Employees' Union and Health Labour Relations Association, has gone to the Essential Services Advisory Agency as director of research and programs. His mandate began in September. The agency is described as an independent body. It is under the chairmanship of well known mediator Clive McKee. Rolfe, who spent about four years on the HEU staff, was serving as director of technical services when he left in 1973 to fill an industrial relations post with HLRA.

Making news? Let us know

There's a great silence out there. And it's about time it was broken. Most of us are interested in knowing what is happening in the various HEU units. We'd like to hear about your social whirls (not necessarily the kind that have heads spinning), but unit activities, retirements, parties ... and special achievements. The Guardian is in need of both stories and pictures from the units. Right now there's only a trickle. We could stand a little healthy flooding. Who knows — if you've accomplished something particularly worthy at the local level it might be catching. Other

units might want to put the idea to work after reading about it. A couple of points to remember: (1) If you're relying on pen or pencil, write clearly enough for others to read without difficulty; print any names in reports and include either the first name, or at least two initials. (2) In its present form, the Guardian is not running color pictures. Color photos from correspondents can still be handled, but the process is more difficult. Try, wherever possible, to use black and white film.

Thy name is apathy

(This novel message concerning the importance of playing an active role in your union's affairs is passed along, courtesy of the Kamloops Unit.) Once upon a time there were four men who belonged to the same union. Their names were John Somebody, Jack Anybody, Jim Everybody and Roy Nobody. EVERYBODY thought he would like to go to the meeting, but he figured SOMEBODY was not friendly with ANYBODY. So NOBODY went. EVERYBODY was asked to attend meetings, to work on committees, to give his ideas and suggestions, but he thought ANYBODY would want to attend and work, and at least SOMEBODY would do it. But NOBODY did. Whenever there was a job to be done, EVERYBODY agreed with ANYBODY that SOMEBODY would do it. But NOBODY did it. Precious memories: these four men all belong to the same union and guess who got all the benefits from it? You're right, NOBODY. Don't let this happen to your union. Attend meetings, fulfill your responsibilities and reap the benefits. That way SOMEBODY can tell you what ANYBODY knows: EVERYBODY will be a winner, NOBODY a loser.



"Just as I thought. Plastic flowers and eighty-proof water."

Heavy on the Light side

By McLEOD

Man often stumbles over the obstacles of the present because of his preoccupation with the future. He would rather look ahead than down. The images in the distance may be imperceptible, but there is a certain excitement to the anticipation they engender.

It is at this time of year, when we are jolly — perhaps even giddy — that many of us turn into instant, bleary-eyed prophets.

The Guardian Guru, however, is no ordinary prophet. He is with us as we set sail into another year. And he tells us he can make the unpredictable seas of 1980 predictable.

This, then, according to the G.G., is what we can fully expect in the first year of the Edgy Eighties:

Prime Minister Joe McTeer will stand at the Wailing Wall of Jerusalem and say it is a crying shame. Not the wall, but the fact he couldn't move the Canadian embassy there. Then he will return to Ottawa and announce that he is moving the Canadian capital to Moose Jaw. Screams of protest will come from the people of Moose Jaw.

The PM's Bitter Half, Maureen, will divulge in an interview with Backhouse Magazine, that Joe is not a man after all, but a robot she built secretly with the help of Alberta oil interests. She will also express a fear that the parts may wear out before the next election.

For the 104th consecutive year, the progressive city of Vancouver will talk about the immediate need of rapid transit — and for the 104th consecutive year will do nothing about it.

President Carter will move out of the White House to make room for his wife's ever expanding personal staff, which by the end of February will number 1,314½. (The half figure denotes a midget hired to walk under chairs removing gum and spies.) In the spring the Washington Post will report that Mrs. Carter has slapped the wrist of one of her hand maidens who refused to remain at arm's length from one of her footmen. Critics will call it a knee-jerk reaction.

The Social Credit Dirty Tricks drama will come into full bloom with 477 party people confessing that they have written fraudulent letters to newspaper editors. Punishment will be swift. The 50 worst offenders will be forced to run for the Conservative Party in the next provincial election. The rest will have to submit to two months of lectures on culture by Jack Kempf and Jim Nielsen. All will promise to confine future nasty and deceptive letters to Ann Landers and Santa Claus. By summer's end newspaper editors will unite in a campaign to send fraudulent letters to Social Credit.

Alberta will solve the Canadian unity problem by dipping into its heritage fund and buying Quebec outright. It will declare Quebec a branch office, then close it and move the employees (Quebec residents) to head office where they will work for the minimum wage.

Premier Bennett will declare the news media an enemy of democracy and blame it for (a) bringing the shortcomings of his government to public attention, (b) causing a decline in public morals and depression of world markets, (c) 24 days of rain and a personal case of indigestion. When reminded of the role the media has played elsewhere, he will denounce the Washington Post for exposing Watergate and Nixon.

Alberta will declare war on Ontario and threaten to send inferior oil. Ontario will retaliate by threatening to move Toronto Argonauts to Edmonton. Truce will follow immediately.

Newfoundland will start telling Western Canada jokes. But they will be told a half hour later in Newfoundland and thus missed on the hourly news in the west.

Health Minister Rafe Mair will propose legislation for the compulsory confinement and treatment of all people with fallen arches and bad breath. Under the bill, bad breath on the streets or in the marketplace after 5 p.m. would be considered a criminal offence. Refusal to take off shoes on demand for foot inspection would also be punishable under the law. Confinement and enforced cure would be carried out at the Vancouver Island centre originally intended for compulsory treatment of drug addicts.

Bob McCartney will give night ski lessons (with or without skis) on Whistler Mountain. Henry Perkin will give whistling lessons on Skier Mountain.



Magic of Christmas comes early to New Vista View Care Home where residents happily make seasonal decorations. They are sold with money going into their own fund for parties and special outings. Employees play an active role, and here, HEU member Ann McDougal works with resident Mrs. Bansley.

popular rep departs

Bernie's Bank of the Bubbly Provides a major in Miner

The next time you feel an irresistible urge to walk into a bank vault call Bernice Gehring.

She'll not only usher you in, but sit you down and serve you a drink.

"The bar will be in the vault," she says in a matter-of-fact way about the neighborhood pub she and husband Don are about to open in Maple Ridge.

Appropriately named the Billy Miner, in memory of the first man to successfully stage a train holdup in Canada, the pub sits in an historic Bank of Montreal building at the foot of 224th Street on River Road in what is known as Old Port Haney.

The pub-goer's gain is going to be the union's loss — except at times when HEU members will be dropping by for a cool one and a touch of nostalgia. Bernie leaves her job as a Hospital Employees' Union Staff Representative (Dec. 31) to devote her full time to the quaint pub she and Don have been planning for some time in the landmark building they acquired.

Actually, she leaves more than her job behind.

There will, for instance, be fond memories of a staff representative with a winning personality — someone big on compassion, but tough when



BERNICE GEHRING
... (a liquid bank)

the situation required toughness.

The search is on for someone to replace her as staff rep in the north, a place that had become dear to her heart during her tour of duty at the Prince George Regional Office.

Bernie, who served considerable time as president of the Licensed Practical Nurses' Association of B.C., joined HEU as a staff rep in 1973 and began servicing the north about 3½ years ago. She took up resi-

dence in Prince George a year later.

"One of the great joys in my life was working in the north with the people of the north," she says.

Bernie is perhaps remembered best for the major role she played in bringing about the first real measure of equality for women employed in the delivery of health cares. That breakthrough came with the agreement that put Practical Nurses on equal pay footing with Orderlies. It also set the stage for a continuing campaign to end all discrimination in the industry.

"Bernie was instrumental in assisting the union to establish equal pay for equal work," says HEU Secretary-Business Manager J. D. Gerow. "The members are going to be missing not only a friend, but a good representative."

She is also known for being refreshingly different.

As her friends ask: Who else would think of putting a bar in a bank vault? Or naming a pub after an early train robber?

Bernie says the name idea came easily: Billy Miner's 1904 holdup occurred just seven miles north of Maple Ridge.

She promises not to follow in his footsteps. But if you want to leave a little cash in that vault...

Labour/Management workshop

By Dolores Bell
Victoria General Unit

On Saturday, Oct. 13, 1979 a "first" was held for the Victoria General Hospital Unit at the School of Nursing Auditorium, a joint workshop of management, supervisors and HEU executive and shop stewards of Victoria General. This one day workshop was arranged by the Educational Resource Centre, Director of Employee Relations and our unit to further understanding of the collective agreement and improving communication between the various parties responsible for administering it.

The introduction was given by John Farquharson, Staff Development Officer.

Bill King (MLA) was the first speaker who spoke on Industrial Relations, collective bargaining and education in regard to these items.

The next item on the agenda was a symposium on the roles of Shop Steward, Supervisor and Department Head, given by Sandy Fleet (HEU), P. Payer (Supervisor) and T. Corble (Department Head).

Question and answer period followed.

Then there was the roles of the HLRA given by B. Donahue, Executive Director J. Fair and HEU Bill Muir (Regional Rep.). Bill did an excellent job of explaining the structure and origin of the union.

Question and answer period followed.

Vivian Kirk (Secretary-Treasurer, HEU) and P. M. O'Brien, Director of Employee Relations entertained with an employee-Department Head skit. "We will have to watch that we don't lose Viv to the theatre."

An enjoyable cold plate was served at the hospital cafeteria for lunch.

Back to work after lunch, explanation was given by P. M. O'Brien on the policy of the hospital on discipline form and procedure. Bill Muir reported on the grievance procedure and arbitration including information regarding the Trouble Shooter.

Small groups were organized throughout the day to peruse actual arbitration cases and common grievances to discuss these cases and come to a conclusion and/or solution.

Joe Roberts (Trustee, Nanaimo General Hospital) summed up the day after being an observer of the activities. He gave praise and credit to all concerned with organizing this workshop.



For those who like solving riddles, this photo of a shop stewards' meeting at the home of Lions Gate General Hospital Unit Chairperson Lois Reimer will probably prove a worthy test. It's not that the people in the picture are puzzling, just that their order of appearance in somewhat hard-to-define rows may make it a great game for those who like trying to match names with faces. At any rate, here's how the material came in: Row One, left to right: Bill Wills, warden; Josie Cristobal, shop steward; Terry DeKur, shop steward. Row Two: Pat Helps, senior trustee; Rosemary Greaves, shop steward; Pauline McLellan, conductor and shop steward. Row Three: Lois Reimer, chairperson; Edith Conbay, trustee; Laura Woitas, shop steward. Row Four: Rosa Dingler, shop steward; Kay Baker, shop steward; Gloria Smith, shop steward; Mona Leaker, shop steward; Kristina Skold, secretary-treasurer; Pamela Johns, shop steward; Kathy Anderson, chief shop steward; Neil Anderson, vice-chairperson. (Missing from photo: shop stewards Helen Galan and Mike Doherty.)