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A Caring Profession: Centuries of Nursing in Canada

June 16, 2005 to September 4, 2006

For many, nursing is more than a profession; it's a devotion to care and humanity. From birth, throughout life and until death, nurses are there to offer their care and compassion. **A Caring Profession: Centuries of Nursing in Canada** will be the first ever major exhibition to explore four centuries of nursing in every region of Canada. It will bring together the two parallel nursing traditions in Canada, the religious Catholic model and the secular British-inspired model. **A Caring Profession** will contribute to building an understanding of the historical and current role of nurses in the health care system.

Hundreds of artifacts (from stethoscopes to nursing uniforms), documentaries and historic photos tell the story of nursing in Canada: its beginnings in 17th-century New France, the hardships and isolation nurses experienced, the increasing modernization and professionalization of health care, contemporary issues and concerns about the future.

Edna (Muir) Todd - Western Hospital, Montréal, 1916-1920



Ex voto, Hôtel-Dieu de Montréal - 18th century

A Caring Profession is made up of nine sections that explore all aspects of nursing history and practice: *Nursing in Canada*, *In the Hospital*, *At the Bedside*, *In the Home*, *In the Community*, *On the Frontier*, *On Campus* and *On the Picket Line*, and *On the Battlefield* (by Canadian War Museum guest curator, Cynthia Toman). A ninth section, *The Nurses' Station*, will be reserved for interactive presentations with volunteer nurses, perusal of reference materials and quiet reflection.

The exhibition showcases the Canadian Nursing History Collection, which includes over one thousand artifacts that were transferred from the Canadian Nurses Association (CNA) to the Canadian Museum of Civilization and the Canadian War Museum. A book co-edited by the exhibition's curator, Christina Bates, will be launched at the exhibition opening.

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