

# AAHN BULLETIN

Summer 2024

American Association for the History of Nursing

No. 124

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## President's message

The officers of AAHN are delighted to welcome you all to our 41st Annual Nursing and Healthcare History conference, to be held September 19th—21st in downtown Milwaukee, Wisconsin at the Milwaukee Marriott Hotel. Registration is now open, so be sure to register by August 25th to get the early bird rates. For more information please go to our AAHN website.

I would also like to update all of our members on the recent election of new officers. Please join me in congratulating these AAHN members who were elected to the following offices for 2024-2026. These officers will assume their new positions as of our fall conference:

President - Erin Elizabeth Spinney

2nd Vice President - Karen O'Connell

Treasurer - Mary Gibson

Director, Chair Awards - April Matthias

Director, Chair Bylaws and Policy - Charlotte Swint

Director, Communications - Bill Cessato

Director, Chair Research Review - Susan Armstrong Reid

Member, Nominating Committee - Jessica Martucci

I extend thanks to the nominating committee for all their efforts.

Sincerely,

*Annemarie McAllister*

President, AAHN

## AAHN OFFICERS

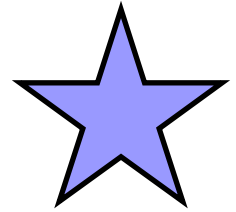
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| Anne Marie McAllister, President                             | Erin Spinney, Director: Communications   |
| Brian Riggs, Executive Director                              | William Campbell, Director: Diversity & Inclusion  |
| Audrey Snyder, 1st Vice President, Chair: Strategic Planning | Sheri Tessayman, Director, Finance   |
| Rima Apple, 2nd Vice President, Chair: Program Planning      | Kim Curry, Director: Publications  |
| Stephanie Woods, Treasurer, Chair: Finance                   | Susan Armstrong-Reid, Director, Research   |
| Valerie Sauda, Secretary                                     | Gertrude Hutchinson, Director: Member/Strategic Planning   |
| April Matthias, Director: Awards                             | Nominating Committee: Oteka Jackson-Cenales, Mary E. Larkin, Ashley Graham-Perel, Liz Rogan (Chair). |
| Charlotte Swint, Director: Bylaws & Policies                 |  |

*AAHN 41ST ANNUAL NURSING AND  
HEALTHCARE HISTORY CONFERENCE  
PROMISES TO BE A FUN AND INFORMATIVE EVENT*

**KEYNOTE SPEAKER:**

Cynthia Connolly, PhD, RN Professor of Nursing  
Rosemarie B. Greco Endowed Term Chair in Advocacy  
University of Pennsylvania  
School of Nursing

Title: "Nurses and Drug Therapy: A Complicated and Untold Twentieth Century History"



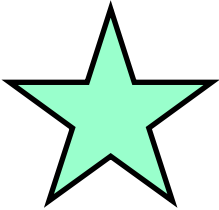
**PRE-CONFERENCE WORKSHOP**

HIT RECORD: A Pre-Conference Session on Oral-History Interviewing  
Thursday, September 19th 1:00 pm - 4:00 pm

Co-Presenters: Karen Flynn (University of Illinois-Chicago)

Ashley Graham-Perel (Columbia)

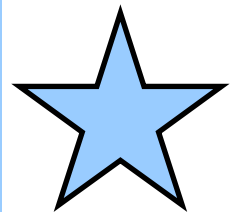
Andre Rosario (Rutgers)



**SILENT AUCTION**

AAHN will once again feature our Silent Auction. The proceeds will be equally distributed between research awards and the general fund. Deadline for auction items by September 1, 2024.

See the AAHN.ORG web site for information on mailing silent auction items.



*AND MORE....*

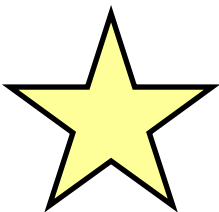
*ESTEEMED SPEAKERS*

*UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN NURSING HISTORY MUSEUM*

*POSTERS*

*EXHIBITORS*

*LOTS TO DO! DON'T MISS IT*



## MEMBER INTERVIEW:

TERRI ARTHUR, MS, BS, RN



### What is your current nursing role?

I was a full time nurse for 40 years. During those years, I worked most of the time in Critical Care but also was a nursing instructor in a hospital staff education department and clinical manager. I also created a business that provided staff education services, i.e., speakers, consulting, training classes and workshops for medical entities such as hospitals, nursing homes rehabilitation centers and even insurance companies. Before I retired, I wrote a book, *Fatal Decision: Edith Cavell WW1 Nurse*.

After I “retired” (I never really did retire) I joined the American Red Cross Disaster Team and opened up the medical services in shelters during disasters. I wrote another book, *Power Failure: A Nurse’s Story*, about one of those experiences.

So, after I retired from hospital nursing, I continued to be active with what I had created before. I continued as the Nursing Director for a business that provided workshops and a yearly 4-day convention on Workers’ Compensation on Cape Cod and in San Diego. I recruited the nurse speakers to join with the physicians and lawyers that were already speaking and applied for the nursing CNEs and four other organizational contact hours. I no longer provide education services because books have kept me busy with speaking engagements, writing articles about them for newspapers and magazines and vendor fairs. I want to get the word out about this amazing heroic nurse, Edith Cavell. My book *Fatal Decision...* has been picked up by a movie producer and is now under option to be made into a film. I am working with him as a consult for the treatment, screenplay and general advice as we go through the book to film process.

### What motivated you to join AAHN?

I joined the AAHN because I wanted to be with other nurses who appreciated the history of nursing. I felt it was important to understand how we got to where we are today and how that might apply to where we are moving to as a profession. I also wanted to bring Edith Cavell, who has been forgotten in nursing history, back to places that would be interested in her life, sacrifices and influence on the profession of nursing and the world.

### What kind of work have you done relative to the history of nursing?

I wrote an account of the life of a British nurse, Edith Cavell, who rescued about 1,000 Allied soldiers during a nine month period during WW1, while working with the underground in Belgium.

## MEMBER INTERVIEW (CONT'D)

But she also was a change agent for the profession of nursing in revising the nursing curriculum from personal care to understanding the process of why things happen. She created the first wearable nursing cap and uniform. She not only influenced nursing during her life but also after her death when her life and death influenced America joining WW1.

No book had been written about her for 50 years and none of them was ever written by a nurse. I researched for seven years to write this book. It included five trips to the UK, two to Belgium and one to France. It took me four years to write it.

### **Which nurses are most memorable to you?**

Dr. Joyce Clifford, who created a model for primary nursing at the Beth Israel Hospital in Boston in the 1990s. It reduced medical errors, improved patient survival rates, expanded the role of nursing and increased nursing retention.

Evelyn Baine, M. Ed, RN, COHN-S, who turned a small struggling health and safety committee in the Massachusetts Nursing Association into a powerhouse of improvements in the health and safety of nurses. Some of those achievements are discontinuing use of latex gloves, changing needle systems to needleless systems, changing the attitudes of management and the legal system in the issue of workplace violence against nurses, addressing environmental causes of multiple chemical sensitivities in nurses and so very much more.

### **Do you have any plans to conduct research related to the history of nursing?**

No, but I continue to take every opportunity I can to learn more about it. I recently was invited to the WW1 Museum in Kansas City, Missouri, to do a book signing. While there, I learned more about the scope and role of nursing in WW1 and discovered that it is the largest WW1 museum and memorial in the world. Who knew? I didn't.

### **If there was one thing you would like your students to know about the history of nursing, what would it be?**

To learn about the life and influence of Edith Cavell, one of the finest and most courageous nursing heroes in nursing history. After reading the book about Nurse Cavell, one nurse wrote to me, "I got my mojo in nursing back after reading about Edith."

### **Is there anything else you'd like the AAHN members to know about you?**

I had no intention of writing a book about Nurse Cavell. I came across her story quite by accident, but the more I learned about her, the more I wanted to know.

I followed my heart with this story and came to a point where I knew I had to breathe life back into her and bring her back to stand as an inspiration for all nurses. No one paid me to research, write or publish it.

**A SOURCE IS A SOURCE (OF COURSE, OF COURSE)**

I come to you this time from deep within the bowels of the Merovingian kingdoms, i.e., the kingdoms that developed in what we now know as France, Germany, and northern Italy between the end of the Roman period and the rise of the Carolingians (i.e., Charlemagne and his lot). As I navigated these sometimes stormy waters, what with people assassinating one another almost as well as did the Egyptians and Romans, I wondered how we ever find out anything about anyone.

What I mean is, most of the sources cited within the book (*The Merovingian Kingdoms, 450-751*, Ian Wood) are biased one way or the other. How are we to take them as reliable sources (vs. “fake news”) and how are we to understand what really happened?

In 2003, I embarked on an odyssey of sorts which started and ended in the United Kingdom. Yes, I went to nearly 40 Def Leppard concerts (proudly [?] standing front row stage right every time). The Irish bloke opening for the band that tour was called Ricky Warwick and one of his best songs was titled *Three Sides (to Every Story)*. The chorus expanded on that theme; the three sides are (ahem): yours, mine, and the truth. Ah, the truth must lie somewhere between your and my story...

Don't we see that in our historical sources? Even royal records or government records may be tainted with bias; someone who has an axe to grind may make a comment or note that changes how objective information is recorded therein.

During the halcyon days of my MA in history at Tulane U, I recall being in a couple of seminars that tried my patience with all this kind of thing. In one, we started with Herodotus and Thucydides (I prefer the former) then moved on to feminist, socialist, and other brands of historiography. Honestly; if I have to wade through that type of bias to get the story, I might as well go to the archives myself and read it verbatim! Just tell me what happened, please! (In another seminar, we read the Creelman interview of Porfirio Díaz, then El Presidente de Mexico. While the interview made for good reading, it was nothing short of propaganda for Díaz and intended to be such.)

In this modern – this frighteningly modern – day, I (again) turned to Google and AI to ask, “How can I determine the reliability of an historical source?” Here is an answer.

**Author:** Who is the author/authority? What credentials does he or she have that one can bank on? Was the author present at the event(s)? Or has he or she simply read everything there is to read about the topic and written something about it? And which side was the author on? If one is writing poetry and plays during the reign of Queen Elizabeth I, one does NOT write something that (a) casts aspersions on said queen's royal self or royal ancestors or relatives, or (b) celebrates the words or actions of one's political foes (e.g., Lancaster vs. York). William the Conqueror's court biographers most certainly would not have written anything favorable about Harold Godwinson!

**Accuracy:** Is the information truthful or does it reflect a bias? One has only to look at our dear friend Will Shakespeare’s writings about my beloved Richard III to see writing that is biased against someone (who did indeed have a curved spine but could not have killed his brother nor his nephews!). (Confirmed and proud Ricardian here.) When compared with information about the same person or event(s) in other sources, how does the information provided in the source stand up? Another element pops up here:

**Consistency:** Is the information in your source consistent with that in other sources reporting the same people and/or events? As you well know, dates are rather tricky. You may remember that something happened on May 12th, a Sunday, whereas that year, the 12th of May was actually on a Tuesday. But the larger question is, Are there large errors or gaps that suggest the source is inconsistent with others?

**Currency:** Did the author record the event(s) contemporaneously? Or, rather like the “sainted More,” write a book long after the fact (also in order to honor the Tudors)? Contemporaneous information is preferable but sometimes folks are too busy fighting, having babies, and/or warding off assassins to write things down for later recording. Long story short, the sooner things are written down, such as within living memory of the person(s) or event(s), the better.

**Relevance:** Is the information relevant to your purpose? For example, if you’re researching/writing about the sorry state of health affairs in Veracruz in the early 1800s, it would not do to include information about the dazzling social life in Mexico City in the same time period. If you’re researching/writing about nuns who served as nurses during the War of Northern Aggression – sorry, my Southern side snuck out there – it would not do to write about Walt Whitman’s sojourns in the hospitals of Washington, D. C., during the same time period.

**Type of Document/Original or Copy:** Hopping back to my Merovingians for a moment, one of the sources used for the book was a copy of some saint’s Vita and for this reason was labeled by the author (Ian Wood) as being less reliable than the original, for there had (probably) been emendations or revisions that rendered the information less reliable than that found in the (now lost) original folio.

When you think about it, given everything researchers and historians must go through to validate sources and make the most of them, including reporting them faithfully, it’s a wonder anything historical is ever published.

Those who come after us rely on us to report people and events reliably, realistically, and as free from bias as possible. Of course, we have our feelings about people, places, events, and so on, but we need to find room in our research and writing for Ricky’s “truth.”

**SPECIAL ANNOUNCEMENT:**

The officers of AAHN would like to congratulate **Ashley Graham-Perel, EdD, NPD-BC, MEDSURG-BC, CNE, RN**, a member of the AAHN Nominating Committee, on her selection as a Fellow of the American Academy of Nursing for the 2024 class. She will be inducted at the meeting in November.

**CONGRATULATIONS!**



## Featured Nurse Hero **GOLDIE BRANGMAN** 1917-2020



### Training

Brangman volunteered for the Red Cross in 1940 and graduated from Harlem Hospital's nursing program in 1943. She then worked at the hospital and co-founded its nurse anesthesia program in 1951.



### Leadership

She also served as the Director of the School of Nursing at Harlem Hospital, and was the first African-American president of the American Association of Nurse Anesthetists (AANA).



### Unique Experience

Brangman was the CRNA who cared for Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. after he was stabbed with a letter opener during a failed assassination attempt in 1958. She bagged him throughout his life-saving surgery so subtle changes in breathing could be noted.



### Lasting Impact

She moved to Hawaii and retired in 1987. However, she continued to serve in the Red Cross and received the Ann Magnussen Award for 67 years of service.



For further reading:  
<https://www.stpaulsschoolofnursing.edu/blog/nursing/3-notable-black-nurses-who-changed-nursing-in-new-york-city.html>  
<https://viriniacrna.org/remembering-goldie-brangman-the-crna-who-helped-save-dr-martin-luther-king-jr/>  
<https://nurse.org/articles/nurse-anesthetist-crna-goldie-brangman-saved-MLK/>

Editors: Kim Curry, Joy Pieper, Liz Rogan.

Please let Kim know if you have items to contribute: [akimbelcurry@outlook.com](mailto:akimbelcurry@outlook.com)

Contact Liz if you would like to be featured in a member interview: [lizrogan.edd.rn.cne@gmail.com](mailto:lizrogan.edd.rn.cne@gmail.com)