CONGRATULATIONS FROM
THE MINISTER OF HEALTH AND COMMUNITY SERVICES

As the Minister of Health and Community Services, I am very pleased to congratulate Western Regional School of Nursing on its 40th anniversary.

The Government of Newfoundland and Labrador recognizes the important role that Western Regional School of Nursing plays in educating the nurses who will play such an important role in our province’s health care system.

In recognition of the invaluable contribution that nurses make to the health care system in Newfoundland and Labrador, our government has created more full-time RN and LPN positions to meet the need for increased services for home care, public health and other areas, and we have placed additional nurse practitioners in emergency rooms to enable us to more fully meet the needs of patients.

Our government is proud of Western Regional School of Nursing and its graduates for the impact made on the health and well being of the residents of our province and in particular those living in the western region. Our government has supported health care and nursing in the western region.

On behalf of the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador, I want to thank Western Regional School of Nursing for its contribution to Newfoundland and Labrador and extend best wishes for an exciting celebration.

Honourable Jerome Kennedy, QC
Minister of Health and Community Services
“Celebrating the Past, Embracing the Future!” is an appropriate theme for Western Regional School of Nursing as it celebrates its 40th anniversary. On behalf of Western Health, I convey my sincere appreciation to the dedicated faculty, management and staff of Western Regional School of Nursing for their valuable contributions in improving the health and well being of the people of our province.

The more than 1,825 graduates of Western Regional School of Nursing have made significant contributions not only to Western Health, but also to our communities, our province, our country, and even worldwide, working in many varied positions. They have truly made a difference to the health and well being of individuals, families and communities. For their contribution, we are truly proud.

I look forward to the future as Western Regional School of Nursing continues to respond to the needs of the health and community services system and contributes to the health and well being of the people of our province.

Again, congratulations on achieving such an important milestone.

Susan Gillam, PhD
President and CEO Western Health
CONGRATULATIONS FROM
THE VICE-PRESIDENT OF GRENFELL CAMPUS

On behalf of Grenfell Campus, Memorial University of Newfoundland, I am very pleased to recognize this milestone in the development of Western Regional School of Nursing.

We at Grenfell are proud of our continuing association with the nursing school through the BN (Collaborative) Program. Since the early days of Memorial’s west coast campus we have had connections with the school of nursing; the institutions’ leaders have always sought to establish pathways that would bring them closer together. As the nursing school’s diploma program has transformed into the bachelor of nursing we now offer collaboratively, so too has our relationship flourished.

We look forward to further transforming our affiliation to one that officially recognizes Western Regional School of Nursing as a rightful part of Grenfell Campus. In the future, we will build on the already healthy collaborations that exist with respect to teaching, research and program delivery. One day, our nursing colleagues and students will have a permanent, physical home on Grenfell Campus. This is an exciting time.

And so, congratulations on 40 years of providing excellent nursing instruction in Corner Brook, and on many more to come, within our Grenfell community.

Mary Bluechardt, PhD
Vice-President, Grenfell Campus, Memorial University of Newfoundland
Throughout its 40-year history, the Western Regional School of Nursing (WRSON) has contributed greatly to nursing and the improvement of health in Newfoundland and Labrador. It is a great pleasure to recognize and congratulate the WRSON faculty, staff, students and alumni on this significant anniversary.

Starting with just 39 students in 1969, WRSON has grown exponentially in size and scope. Through its teaching, research, scholarship, administration and practice, WRSON has become a leader in its discipline and now educates over 200 nursing students each year.

Together with the Centre for Nursing Studies and the Memorial University’s School of Nursing, WRSON offers educational programs that are responsive to diverse practice environments and the ever changing health needs of our society. WRSON graduates work in communities across our province, throughout Canada and beyond to improve health and quality life for individuals.

On behalf of the Newfoundland and Labrador Nurses’ Union, I applaud you for your incredible work. I also look forward to the many years of continued success and achievement of WRSON faculty, staff and students.

In solidarity,
Debbie Forward
President, Newfoundland and Labrador Nurses’ Union
CONGRATULATIONS FROM THE PRESIDENT OF ARNNL

On behalf of the Association of Registered Nurses of Newfoundland and Labrador (ARNNL), it is an honour and my pleasure to bring congratulations to Western Regional School of Nursing (WRSON) on its 40th anniversary. As a graduate of this school of nursing, I can attest to the valuable educational opportunity it provides to the residents of the western region wishing to pursue a career in nursing. The school also brings value to communities in the region by educating people who are from the area – people who are more likely to accept employment in the region and make a valuable contribution to the health of people who mean the most to them and to the communities in which they live.

Western Region School of Nursing has been well known over the years for graduating dedicated, high-quality nurses who are well prepared to deliver the care and services required by the population in the areas of promotion, prevention, curative, rehabilitative and supportive care. I am proud of the foundational education that I received at WRSON and felt well-prepared to function in my role as an RN, and to further my education as my career aspirations evolved. ARNNL applauds the past accomplishments of Western Region School of Nursing, and wishes you more success in the future as you continue to educate nurses who will meet the demands of the evolving health care system, and make a valuable contribution to improving the health of the population, particularly in the western region.

Beverly White RN, MScN, CCHN (c)
President, Association of Registered Nurses of Newfoundland & Labrador (ARNNL)
Changing the face of nursing education

Throughout the years Western Regional School of Nursing’s faculty and students have been a strong voice for nursing education, practice and research. Graduates of the school are compassionate and proficient nurses, having made great contributions to the health and well being of the communities where they live and work.

History demonstrates Western Regional School of Nursing has successfully met many challenges over the past 40 years. In 1969 students at Western Memorial Hospital School of Nursing took the first steps, not only for themselves, but for the school and for the community. They began a journey that continues today and will continue into the future, at Grenfell Campus, Memorial University.

The Western Regional School of Nursing Crest was originally designed by Katherine Wells Daley, the first director of the school, and is based on the crest of the City of Corner Brook. The school’s colours, blue and green, symbolize the distinct features of the west coast region: the green forests and the blue waters of the Humber Arm. The golden edge about the crest signifies precious memories that bind us together in friendship and fellowship. The lamp symbolizes nursing and knowledge.

“Celebrating the past... embracing the future” commemorates the 40th anniversary of the school.

From left, Jordan Audeau, Candace Campbell and Rebecca Nippard sport the nursing uniforms of today and days gone by.
The idea to establish a school of nursing at the former Western Memorial Hospital was conceived in the early 1960s by a group of physicians, hospital administrators and community leaders in Corner Brook. At that time the hospital already had a Nursing Assistant Training School; however, there was a serious shortage of registered nurses in the area. The group successfully petitioned the provincial government for funding for a program for registered nurses.

In 1966 government appointed a Nursing Education Advisory Board to oversee the development of the new program. In consultation with Memorial University of Newfoundland and the Association of Registered Nurses of Newfoundland (ARNN) (now the Association of Registered Nurses of Newfoundland and Labrador), the board decided that the program would be 24 months in length, reflecting changes in nursing education being introduced throughout the country. At that time, the decision to implement a two-year program was considered to be fairly innovative as most hospital diploma programs in Canada, including the three other diploma schools in the province, were 36 months in length. In September 1969 the first class of 39 students (37 women and two men) entered the program.
The school of nursing was a distinct and separate entity from the hospital. The school’s director reported to the hospital administrator, rather than to the director of Nursing Service. The school had a separate budget and maintained control over the students’ learning experiences. Nursing service and nursing education were viewed by faculty as complementary but distinct. As the school’s first director, Katherine Wells Daley, noted in her speech to the local Rotary Club early in 1971, “The purpose of a hospital is to care for the sick, and the purpose of education is to form minds” (The Western Star, 1971). This philosophical approach to nursing education was espoused by faculty throughout the years and remains important to the school to this day.

Banding Ceremony: A dark green band replaced the original white band on the nursing students’ caps. This marked their successful transition from Nursing I to Nursing II.
The school originally consisted of three classrooms, a fully equipped biology lab, three discussion rooms and two faculty offices. Nursing education was much less expensive in 1969. Room and board were provided free of charge in the nurses’ residence and students received a monthly stipend of $25.

Accommodations for students were provided in the new residence located in the same building as the school of nursing. The residence was under the watchful eye of a supervisor and had receptionists on duty 24 hours a day. There was also a gymnasium and lounges available for student recreational use.

The only cost to students was for books and uniforms – about $200.

To be accepted applicants were required to:

- be 17 years old and in good health
- have graduated with Grade 11 or with “pass standing”
- undergo an interview process with a selections committee to demonstrate that they had a “personality suited for the profession”
The curriculum was innovative and based on new concepts in nursing and education. Faculty believed in teaching principles of nursing rather than just drills and routine. The enthusiastic young director, Ms. Wells Daley, believed strongly in the program. She explained “in cutting down on ward duty, the nurses didn’t have as much experience – but they knew just as much and were better prepared to improvise and adjust to the varying circumstances they would face as graduate nurses” (The Western Star, 1969).

In addition to nursing, students studied anatomy and physiology, microbiology, psychology, growth and development, sociology, nutrition, pharmacology, first-aid and communications. These courses were taught by guest lecturers from the hospital such as physicians, pharmacists and dietitians, as well as educators from the community.

*The original nursing uniform for women consisted of a pale green dress and distinctive nursing hat modelled after the hat worn by nurses in St. Thomas Hospital School of Nursing in London, England. Men wore plain white uniforms with a green stripe on the side of the pants.*
Coming into their own

In December 1970 the new school of nursing and nurses’ residence were officially named Monaghan Hall. A ceremony was held to mark the many years of service of the well-respected Corner Brook family physician, Dr. T.T. Monaghan.

On Sept. 3, 1971, the first class of 34 students proudly received their pins and graduation diplomas. It was a landmark event for the School and for the hospital. Ms. Wells Daley reflected these sentiments in her address to the graduates.

“As the first graduates of Western Memorial Hospital School of Nursing you have helped make a dream become reality. You have shared with us the responsibility for laying a firm foundation upon which other classes may build in the future. The standards you have met will leave their mark in the years to come.”

-Katherine Wells Daley
Ms. Wells Daley tendered her resignation in 1971. After a series of short-term appointments, an energetic young director, Philomena Hawco Westby, was appointed in 1973. By 1974 there were 10 nursing faculty and three staff members employed at the school. New classrooms were added and enrollment was increased to 70 students per year.

Ms. Hawco Westby brought her own ideas and aspirations for change to the school. One of the first things she did was to “modernize” the school uniform. Commencing in September 1974, women wore white dresses or pant suits with a green arm band and hats with corresponding bands: dark green in Nursing I, light green in Nursing II and white band in Nursing III. Student crests indicating the student’s position in the program were worn on the left sleeve. Men wore a similar white uniform with arm bands and crests.

_School of Nursing Directors:

- Katherine Wells Daley, 1968-1971
- Edith Daniels, 1971-1972
- Julia McIsaac, 1972 (April-June)
- Nicole Pare, 1972-1986
- Philomena Hawco Westby, 1973-1986
- Annette Denny (acting) 1986-1987
- Linda Norman-Robbins 1987-present_
Partnerships with Grenfell

A firm believer in the value of a liberal arts education for nurses, Ms. Hawco Westby approached Dr. Arthur Sullivan, the principal of Memorial University's newly opened junior college in Corner Brook, with a view to offering a prerequisite year to students entering the nursing diploma program. She felt that if students completed courses such as English, biology and psychology before coming into nursing, faculty could then develop a highly structured two-year program with increased emphasis on clinical training. In addition, students would graduate with credits toward a bachelor’s degree. Dr. Sullivan supported the idea and these discussions marked the first steps in establishment of strong linkages between the school of nursing and the former Sir Wilfred Grenfell College (now Grenfell Campus, Memorial University of Newfoundland).

Ms. Hawco Westby was also instrumental in having university courses made available to faculty in Corner Brook. She introduced a policy stipulating that all faculty employed full time at the school must attain a minimum of two credits a year toward a bachelor’s degree. In order to facilitate the policy on continuing education another policy was introduced allowing faculty to be released to attend university classes during working hours, providing student instruction was not compromised.
Changes to curriculum

The ARNN felt that modifications like the suggested prerequisite year should encompass all schools of nursing and needed further study. While her proposal was not approved, Ms. Hawco Westby continued her work by spearheading the introduction of a new integrated curriculum, based on the two-year program at the Victoria General Hospital School of Nursing in Halifax, N.S. The new curriculum, designed to help prepare students for the new Canadian integrated registration exam, was introduced in 1975 and was the first integrated nursing program in the province.

Ms. Hawco Westby subsequently developed a proposal to increase the length of the nursing program to 30 months, so that students received more clinical experience and were able to attain university credit courses. The proposal was approved by government, the ARNN and by the Nursing Education Advisory Board.

In March 1982, 40 students graduated from the new 30-month program; for the first time, the school reported 100% pass on the registration (RN) exam.

The school was visited by an approval team sponsored by the ARNN in February 1987. The assessment team determined that the school had met all provincial standards for nursing education and that it be granted full approval.

In the late 1980s university credit courses in psychology, sociology and philosophy were added to the curriculum. By 1989, graduates of the program were receiving 15 university credit hours for these university courses and 45 credit hours towards a bachelor’s degree in nursing.

A new nurse’s cap was introduced in 1979. The change was initiated by students, who petitioned a more professional looking cap.
In general it was agreed by faculty and their colleagues in nursing service that the new 30-month program was successful, in that graduates were better prepared for the realities of the work situation. However, it was felt that some improvements should be made to help ease the transition from student to graduate nurse. In 1983, Euna Ferguson, a faculty member in Nursing III, travelled to Ontario where several schools had instituted a new model for learning in the clinical setting. In 1984 she and other faculty members in Nursing III were responsible for instituting a formal Preceptorship Program – the first such program in the province. Nursing III faculty member Cathy Stratton developed a Preceptorship Manual to assist graduate nurses in their role as preceptors. The preceptorship clinical model and manual were subsequently adopted by the other schools of nursing in the province and continue to be used today to assist students in the transition to beginning practitioners.

Over the years Western Health has provided strong administrative and clinical support for its school of nursing. In particular, the success of the Preceptorship Program is attributed to the dedicated registered nurses who tirelessly give of their time to assist students. In May 2010, the school introduced an award to recognize a nursing unit whose staff had been exemplary preceptors for students. The nurses on Medicine 3B, under the leadership of Marie Hutchings King (who happens to be a graduate of the class of 1979) were the first to receive this award. Clockwise from top left at the 3B Nursing Station, Western Memorial Regional Hospital, are Heather Mousseau, fast-track BN student, Ruth Lamb, RN, Sarah Devereaux, BN student, and Cathy Pittman, RN.
1982 was a landmark year for nursing education in Canada, as nurses at the Canadian Nurses Association’s biennial meeting held in St. John’s, NL, voted to accept the motion that by the year 2000 all nurses entering the workforce would have a baccalaureate degree in nursing. Under the direction of Ms. Hawco Westby, the school developed a five-year plan to have the required university courses for the bachelor of nursing degree made available for faculty in Corner Brook.

Meanwhile the school continued to grow and develop new initiatives. By 1981 in response to the need for more registered nurses in the province, further renovations occurred at the school, more instructors were hired and enrollment was increased to 90 students in first year.
In September 1973 students at the school first joined with other nursing students across the country to participate in Shinerama, a project that involved shining shoes to raise money for cystic fibrosis research. This event became a tradition at the school every fall and over the years hundreds of thousands of dollars have been raised for this worthy project. Today Shinerama continues at Western Regional School of Nursing and at Grenfell Campus, Memorial University.

*Dennis Boone helped the cause as his daughter Allison Boone, standing, and Kayla Carey gave his shoes a quick polishing.*

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Helen Nugent, who taught paediatrics at WRSON, introduced the Kindergarten Orientation Program in 1982. The goal of the program was to orientate children to the hospital setting in a fun, non-threatening manner, while providing nursing students with appropriate learning experiences with healthy children. This unique program was one of the first health-related community projects initiated and continues today as a valuable contribution to the community.

*Kindergarten orientation has become a regular program of Western School District and Western Regional School of Nursing.*
In August 1986, Ms. Hawco Westby resigned from the school. Annette Denny filled in as acting director until June of 1987 when Linda Norman-Robbins, a graduate of the master of science in nursing program at McGill University, was appointed to the position.

In keeping with recommendations from the 1987 ARNN Approval Report, the school developed a new curriculum framework and adopted Roy’s Adaptation Model to guide students’ nursing practice. Course content was organized around three foci: patients/clients adapting, those at risk, and those not adapting and using ineffective coping. The school also introduced its first quality assurance/program evaluation plan in 1991.

A computerized student database was developed during this period. In addition, test construction and test scoring software was purchased, allowing faculty to store, generate, score and analyze test questions in a much more efficient manner. The school’s first computer lab for students was also established. Faculty received computers for their offices and additional renovations occurred to classrooms and labs, which were equipped with audiovisual equipment.

In the early 1990s work was also underway to develop a preferred future nursing education model for the province to prepare graduates to meet the new entry requirements for the year 2000. Ms. Norman-Robbins and faculty successfully lobbied government to ensure that the new baccalaureate program in nursing would be offered on the west coast. In January 1993 faculty member Anna-Marie Reinhart Alteen went to St John’s for six months to represent the school on the provincial committee chosen to collaboratively develop a new bachelor of nursing (BN) curriculum with faculty from the province’s other three diploma schools and Memorial University School of Nursing.

In June 1991 a special graduation ceremony was held at Grenfell for the seven faculty members who were successful in meeting the requirements for the bachelor of nursing degree.

Soon after Ms. Norman-Robbins began discussions with Memorial University’s School of Nursing regarding the availability of master-level courses for faculty by distance education.
While work continued in the delivery of the 30-month diploma program, faculty members were very busy planning for implementation of the new BN (Collaborative) Program. Joint faculty meetings were held in June and August 1993 and in November 1994 to approve the new curriculum and develop course outlines for the new program. At the administrative level, the director was involved in developing a program budget and the Consortium Agreement which would govern the partnership between the Health Care Corporation of St. John’s for the Centre for Nursing Studies (CNS), Memorial University for MUN School of Nursing, and Western Health Care Corporation for Western Regional School of Nursing. In 1995 and 1996 Dorothy Andrews was seconded from faculty to be the first provincial consortium co-ordinator. During this time she was responsible for ensuring that the BN (Collaborative) Program curriculum package was prepared for approval by the Senate of Memorial University.

Faculty and registered nurses receive bachelor of nursing degrees.
In September 1996, the school accepted 50 students into the new BN (Collaborative) Program. It was a very proud day for faculty at the school of nursing and at Grenfell, and marked the culmination of many years of work and effort to ensure the future of nursing education on the west coast of the province. The program was designed so that students would complete 36 non-nursing credit hours at Grenfell and 94 nursing credit hours at the school of nursing.

Although the move to baccalaureate education was positive for the school, excitement was also mixed with sadness, as in 1998 the last class graduated from the diploma program. Around that time, the school said good bye to several excellent faculty members who had taught in the diploma program for many years.

The transition from a diploma to degree program presented many challenges for faculty members in the new program. Academic issues were now governed by rules and regulations passed by the University Senate. The administration of the program was governed by a consortium and was operationalized through the work of a number of joint provincial committees. It was a steep learning curve; however, throughout the process, faculty and staff at Grenfell and the school’s collaborative partners, MUNSON and the CNS, gave a tremendous amount of assistance and support.

By fall of 1999, 217 students were enrolled in the BN (Collaborative) Program. A Nursing Society was formed under the umbrella of Grenfell’s student union. Students became active members of the Canadian Nursing Students Association and proudly hosted the annual meeting of the Atlantic Students Nurses Association in Corner Brook. Several nursing students won university scholarships for academic excellence and awards for their involvement in university life, as nursing became integrated into the university setting.
New programs:

In 1997, the school began offering a 12-month program for practical nurses, in collaboration with the CNS. This program was subsequently transferred to the College of the North Atlantic in 2002. And in 2001, a BN fast-track option was offered. This option was designed by the BN (Collaborative) Program Consortium to allow students with a degree or with advanced standing to complete a baccalaureate in nursing in two years.

In 1996 the school celebrated its 25th anniversary with students, graduates and colleagues from Western Health and Grenfell. The first director, Katherine Wells Daley, was a special guest at the ceremony. At that time the school changed its name to Western Regional School of Nursing (WRSON). This marked the transition from diploma to baccalaureate education and reflected the school’s regional mandate as a site for the delivery of the provincial BN (Collaborative) Program.
REACHING OUT

Serving Labrador

In 1992 the school partnered with Labrador Community College, Grenfell Health Services, the Labrador Inuit Association, the Labrador Inuit Health Council and the Association of Registered Nurses of Newfoundland and Labrador (ARNNL) to develop and implement the first Nursing Access Program, designed to address the shortage of native and local nurses in coastal Labrador communities. Thirteen of the original 18 entrants graduated from the program and subsequently returned to Labrador to practice. In 2002 this success was built upon with a second program. The school and Memorial University were asked by the Labrador Inuit Association and the Labrador Inuit Health Commission to implement a program designed to prepare applicants from northern Labrador to enter the BN (Collaborative) Program. The program began in January 2005 with 19 students. The program involved three years of study in Labrador and incorporated completion of high school equivalency as well as the first year of the BN (Collaborative) Program. Year two of the BN (Collaborative) Program was also completed in Happy Valley-Goose Bay. Years three and four of the program were completed at Western Regional School of Nursing. Upon completion, seven of the original class members graduated.

Interprofessional education:

In 2005, the school became involved in Collaborating for Education and Practice: An Interprofessional Education Strategy for Newfoundland and Labrador. Lead by Dr. Vernon Curran and Dr. Dennis Sharpe of Memorial University’s St. John’s campus, the project aims to prepare health professionals for collaborative practice, involving Memorial students in nursing, medicine, social work, pharmacy and human kinetics and recreation. Faculty at WRSON helped to develop education modules and subsequent collaborative clinical practice experiences. Students at WRSON participate in the project via the web and videoconferencing.
Developing the research agenda

With the transition to baccalaureate education came the expectation for faculty to participate in research and scholarly activities that would enhance professional competence and advance the discipline of nursing. Opportunities for the school to develop new partnerships and initiatives emerged during this time.

By the end of the 1990s, faculty research and scholarly activities were beginning to evolve at the school. Seven of the 14 full-time faculty members had completed master’s degrees and nine others were involved in studies at the master’s level. Various research projects had been initiated and several faculty members had presented papers on their thesis work at national and local conferences.

Another important event in 2005 was the establishment of a Nursing Research Unit at the School. Carla Foley Wells, who received her PhD from the University of Calgary and was an original graduate from Western’s class of 1975, was hired to develop the unit and promote the school’s research agenda. Faculty members have increasingly become involved in various research projects and have successfully published in many peer reviewed journals. The faculty currently has membership and leadership roles on various research committees including Grenfell and Western Health Ethics’ Committees and the provincial Joint Nursing Research Committee. One of the more important projects being undertaken is a study about Canadian centres for healthy aging, which has received $20,000 in research funding and is led by Dr. Les Cake, who is a retired member of Grenfell’s psychology faculty.

Faculty research interests:
- Breast cancer
- Breastfeeding
- Caregiving, informal
- Caregiving, informal
- Childhood obesity
- Chronic illness management
- Decolonization of nursing
- Food security
- Gerontology
- Healthy aging
- High fidelity stimulation
- Image of nursing
- Immunizations
- Interprofessional education
- Institutionalization
- Mental health
- Mentorship
- Models of nursing care
- Nursing practice
- Nurse practitioner client satisfaction
- Models of nursing care
- Nursing practice
- Nurse practitioner client satisfaction
- Paediatric pain
- Pain
- Pain management
- Palliative care
- Patient care
- Professionalization
- Reflection
- Staff satisfaction
- Staff wellness
- Student health needs and learning preferences
- Student wellness
- Teaching and learning strategies
- Virtual clinical education (VCE)
- Workplace, health and safety
- Wound care
In May 2000 the first graduates of the BN (Collaborative) Program received their degrees during spring convocation at the former Sir Wilfred Grenfell College. It was a proud moment for nursing graduates and faculty as they joined in the academic procession. Then principal Dr. Adrian Fowler noted in his address to convocation that it was also an important milestone for the campus. He acknowledged the efforts of Linda Norman-Robbins and colleagues from Western Regional School of Nursing, “who made collaboration both pleasurable and enriching,” and Memorial University School of Nursing, “whose leadership and support had been crucial to the success of the exciting venture.”

In 2006, the school came one step closer to achieving the goal of becoming fully integrated with Grenfell. Recommendations in the provincial government’s White Paper on Public Post Secondary Education supported moving all nursing education programs to Memorial University. Administration and faculty at the school have developed a model of affiliation in partnership with faculty and administration at Grenfell. The model envisioned is an autonomous School of Nursing under the governance of Grenfell. Discussions are underway to have a new Nursing Building on the Grenfell campus.

As stated in the Earle Report, commissioned by Memorial University in 2007, integration of nursing education into the university is the best model to ensure the nursing resource needs of the western, northern and Labrador regions of the province are met in the future. The model supports additional resources to build on the faculty’s expertise in rural and aboriginal health and education and will allow for the development of new nursing education programs, envisioned to meet the health needs of the region.

Accreditation and Approval:

In 2001 and again in 2008, many of the school’s activities centered on preparation for a joint Accreditation and Approval review conducted by the Canadian Association of University Schools of Nursing and the ARNNL. In 2001, the collaborative program achieved the gold standard and received a seven-year accreditation and a seven-year approval, the highest level attainable. In 2008, the review focused on the program as well as on each school delivering the BN (Collaborative) Program. WRSON received full seven-year awards for both the program and the school.
Looking to the future...

Faculty and students have also made valuable contributions to Western Health. Since 1971, more than 1,825 nurses have graduated from the school and a large number are employed with Western Health today, many in leadership positions. Faculty members have been actively involved in committees focusing on patient safety and quality care and have taken a leadership role in the development of nursing research. Throughout the school’s history the relationship between it and Western Health has been very positive and will continue into the future.

As the school prepares for its move to a new model of affiliation under Grenfell Campus, Memorial University of Newfoundland, exciting opportunities and challenges lie ahead. Nursing students will be fully integrated into the university campus setting and will have easier access to Grenfell’s many resources. Faculty will have increased opportunities to engage in research and other scholarly activities. Nursing education in the university setting enhances WRSON’s ability to shape the nursing workforce, strengthen recruitment and retention of students and faculty, and allow innovation on different levels that would work for the region.

First class of BN graduates
On the occasion of the 40th anniversary of Western Regional School of Nursing, faculty, staff, students and graduates “celebrate the past and embrace the future.”


From left, current staff members (front) Denise Gilbert, Marilyn Borden and Barbara Gallant and (back) Joanne Barber, Glenda Burbury and Margie Loughlin.

Today’s BN students: From left, Mitchell Gleeley, Cassandra Hynes, Elizabeth Enserink, Daniel MacDonald, Lisa Randell, Michelle Skanes and Robin MacIsaac.

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