

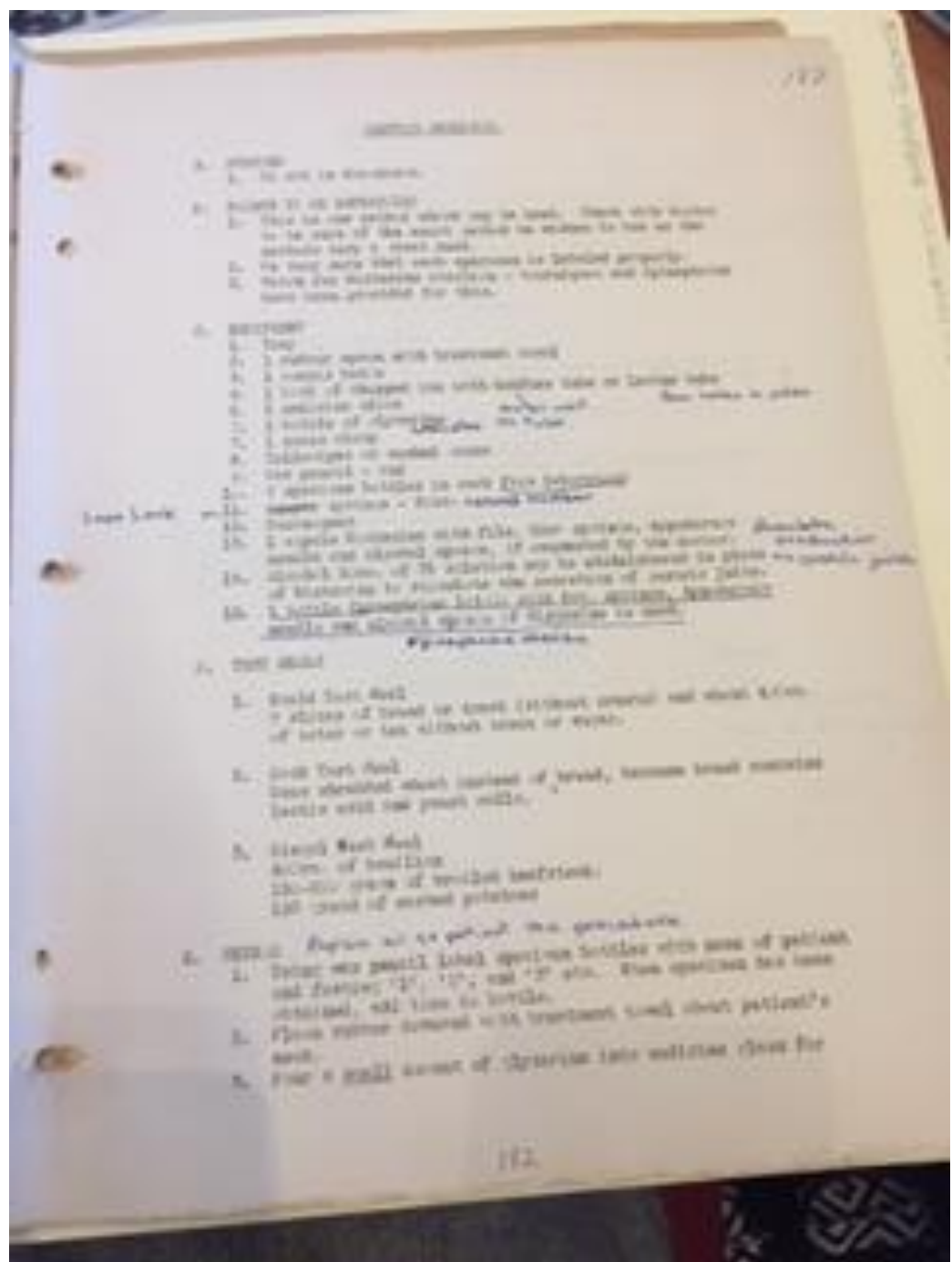
UConn School of Nursing Historical Archive Box

One of the many objects found within the Dolan Collection is an archive box containing several folders of documents and photographs relating to the UConn School of Nursing. The theme of the contents of this box seems to be about the history of the school of nursing at UConn as a whole. It contains photographs, program pamphlets, transaction records, remembrance books and letters from graduates of the first classes enrolled UConn School of Nursing that were collected for an alumni reunion event in 1992.

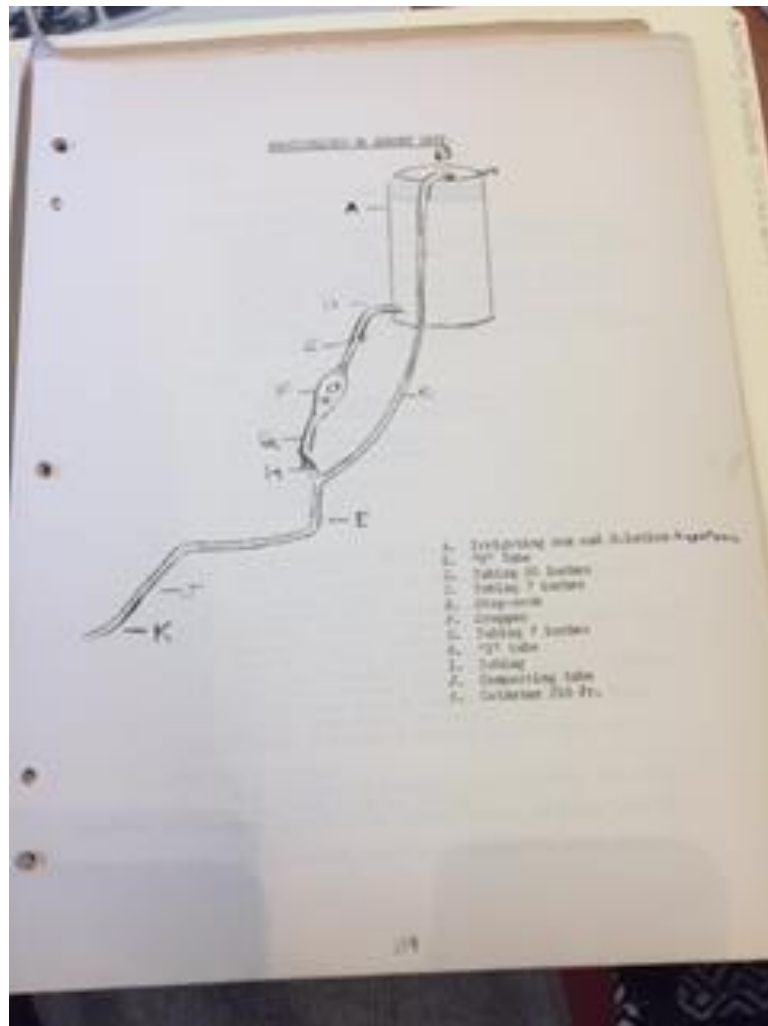


The box also contains a nursing handbook appears to be old and worn. There is no year or date anywhere on the front or within the pages of the handbook, but the pages are yellowed and frayed on the edges. It appears to have been produced with a typewriter with black ink print throughout. It is about 200 pages total and it does not have a cover,

nor is it bound in any way. The pages are all contained within a manila folder inside the archive box. All of the pages are 3-hole punched, as if a 3-ring binder had once bound it. The handbook starts with a table of contents that lists the different practices and procedures that are outlined within. It is very informative and includes explicit directions for how to execute different assessments and procedures. When flipping through the pages of this item, it elicits intrigue as to the age and time period when this was used, and if any of the procedures outlined have drastically changed since then.



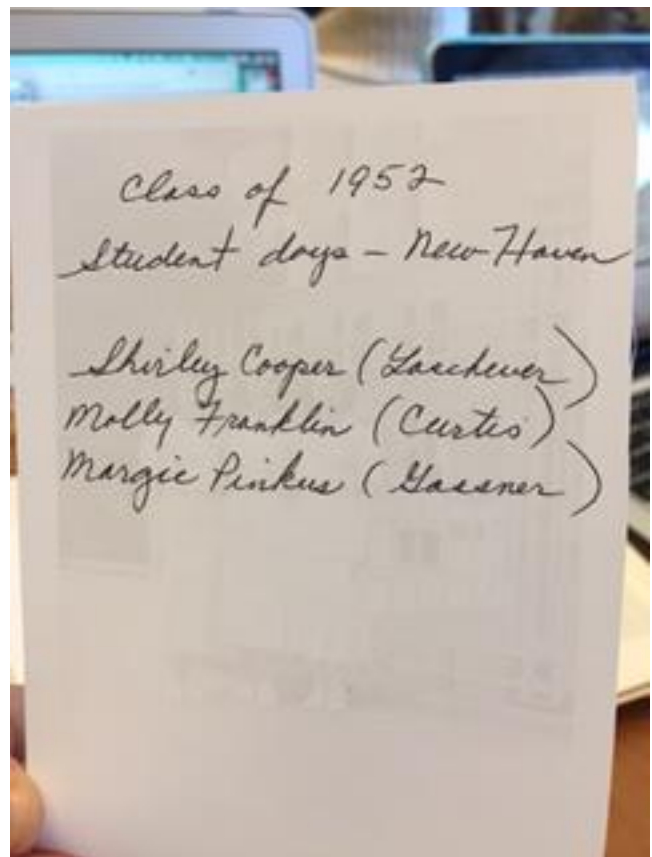
There are handwritten notes in blue and black ink as well as pencil throughout the handbook. The folder that contains the pages for this handbook says “(did this belong to J. Dolan?)”.

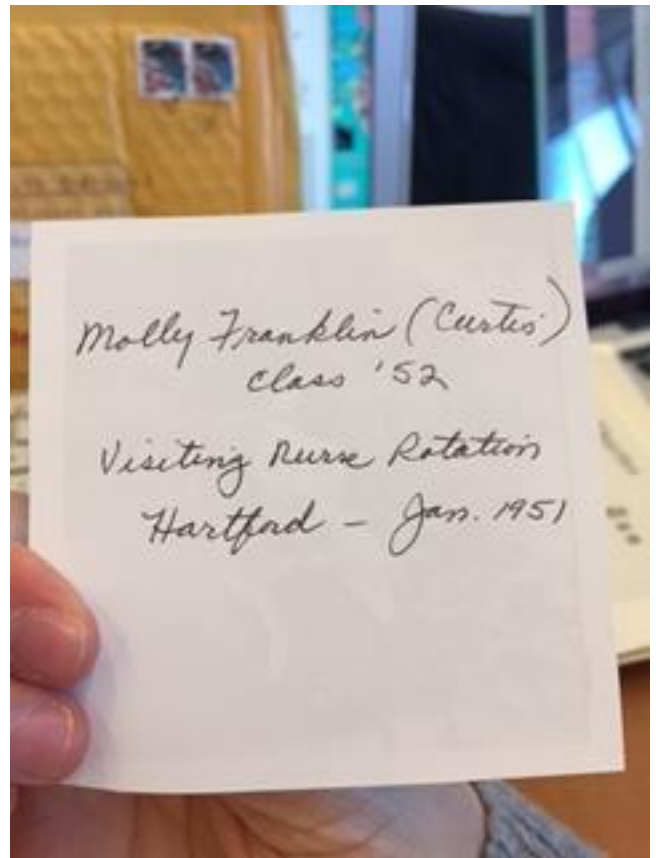


Josephine Dolan was from Westborough, Massachusetts. She joined the University of Connecticut School of Nursing staff in 1944 as the school’s first instructor. She taught for 35 years (Fisher, 2005). She attended nursing school at St. John’s Hospital in Lowell, Massachusetts and earned her diploma in 1935. She graduated with her Bachelor’s degree from Boston University in 1942 and eventually her masters in 1950.

Dolan was nationally recognized as a nurse historian, and was the author of the first history text about nursing in society (Fisher, 2005). The University of Connecticut established a historical collection, The Museum of Nursing History, in her name in 2003, in honor of all she did to advocate for the preservation and teaching of nursing history.

In addition to the handbook, the archive file contains several pictures of nursing students from the late 1940's and early 1950's. They are black and white photographs and most are somewhat yellowed with frayed edges. Most have notes written on the back in either pencil or ink stating what is captured in the photo. Many of these pictures are of UConn nursing students and are taken at the university as well as hospitals across the state. The photos cause one to pause and ponder about the people in them; who they were, and where their nursing careers took them.





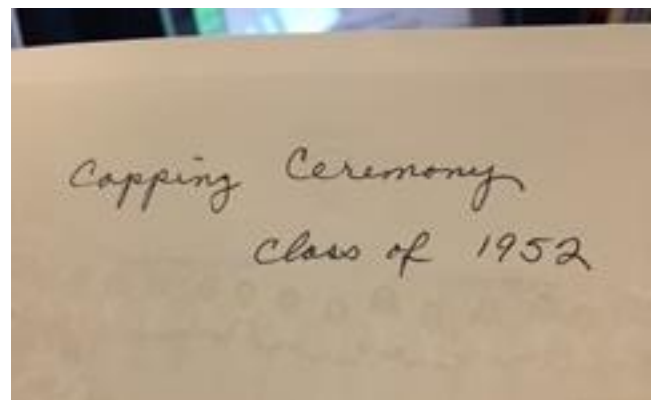
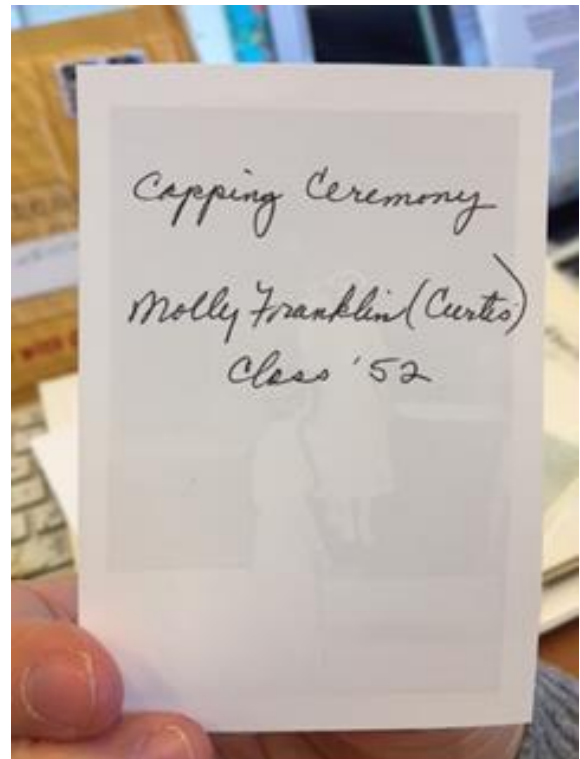
The photos also include one of Carolyn L. Widmer, the first dean of the UConn School of Nursing and Eleanor Gill, who was the dean of the school of nursing from 1967-1979 (UConn School of Nursing, n.d.). The photos appear to have been gifted to the school of nursing by UConn alumni.



The UConn School of Nursing was founded in 1942 as the first public institution in the state of Connecticut to offer a bachelor's degree program in nursing (UConn School of Nursing, n.d.).



During the 1930's and 40's, nursing leaders were promoting education rather than just training for prospective nurses (Judd & Sitzman, 2014). As a result, nursing education became more and more affiliated with universities instead of the strictly hospital-run programs that used to be the norm (Judd & Sitzman, 2014). Schools of nursing (like that at UConn) adopted the belief that combining both clinical and theoretical knowledge would best prepare graduates for their careers, as opposed to just service in a hospital setting (Judd & Sitzman, 2014). Licensing for nurses during this period was not very consistent across the country. Individual states wrote their own nursing examinations in the 1930's, until the National League for Nursing (NLN) proposed a test bank of questions (made up of those from individual states' exams) to develop a national test for nurses in the early 1940's (Judd & Sitzman, 2014).



The first capping ceremony for the UConn School of Nursing was held in 1947 and involved ten graduating students (UConn School of Nursing, 2012). Alumni from this era went on to hold a wide variety of positions both nationally and internationally, including

the armed forces, Peace Corps, academic and religious institutions (UConn School of Nursing, 2012).

The UConn School of Nursing is celebrating its 75th anniversary this year (2017). It is now ranked in the top 10% nationally and top 5 in New England of graduate nursing programs. It is also accredited by the Commission on Collegiate Nursing Education (CCNE) and has been named a National Hartford Center of Gerontological Nursing Excellence (UConn School of Nursing, 2016).

More information regarding the UConn School of Nursing and its history can be found at <http://nursing.uconn.edu/history/>

References

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