



National Nursing Week



MAY 11 - 17

National Nursing Week is an opportunity to promote and show appreciation for the vital role nurses play in the health system and in the life of every Canadian



Left to right: F. Omo-Olagie, T. Marcus, J. Smith, K. Watson, D. Crookes-Barnes and L. Quimby



Hotel Dieu Emergency Room Honour Guard (left to right): Melinda Suich, Carolyn Hill, Diane Crooks, Norma Mamarid. All are RN's.



Back row left to right: K. Weiler, M. Suich, A. Bailey, J. Macri and S. Adam. Front row left to right: A. Vandoorn, N. Mamaril, C. Hill, L. French, J. Fuerth, D. Lacroix.

Honour Guard honours colleagues

Honour guard's formal appearance provides a sense of tradition, professionalism and comraderie

STORIES BY SUSAN LEWIS
Special to The Star

For Hotel Dieu Grace emergency room nurse Melinda Suich, nursing is a profession in which tradition should be revered. In particular, Suich began to develop the concept of an 'honour guard' would stand in respect should someone from the emergency room nursing staff pass away.

bigger. We wanted to set it up to honour those in Hotel Dieu." The death of nurse Lori Dupont prompted the honour guard. "Her death affected everybody – not just recovery room nurses where she worked – but all of us. We began to wonder what would happen if one of us passed away." The emergency room nurses decided to form the honour guard to show respect for its colleagues. For Suich, who began working at Hotel Dieu Grace in 1995, it was also about getting back to tradition which she felt now lacked: "When you graduated back in the day, you wore a cap and gown. Now it isn't like that. We wanted to get back to an old tradition to honour our colleagues." Originally, the idea was to represent emergency room nurses. Suich mentioned the idea to Dr. Paul Bradford who told her that his mother is a retired seamstress. "He volunteered her to make some nursing capes for us. He then brought the idea to the ER doc-

tors monthly meeting and the doctors actually offered to pay for the capes. It is a very tight group." Suich borrowed the cape of a nurse who had graduated in the early 1970s and brought it as a template to Mrs. Bradford who sewed 26 capes, which are navy on the outside and red on the inside. They were embroidered with HDGH on one collar and ER on the other. Suich also found a company in NJ that still makes nurses' caps and ordered 26. The nurses also purchased white uniforms to wear in the honour guard. "No one wears whites anymore," she explains. Suich says the honour guard's very formal appearance provides a sense of professionalism and comraderie and emphasizes the value of what they do. "It is just a simple gesture to honour our colleagues," says Suich. "When you see this group of nurses together wearing that same very traditional uniform... it is very humbling."



Melinda Suich helped develop the Honour Guard concept. Photos: Ed Goodfellow - Special to The Star