



# Platinum Jubilee: A Queen's Nurse for every Decade

'A Queen's Nurse for Every Decade' is a series celebrating Her Majesty's Platinum Jubilee featuring Queen's Nurses who started their nurse training during one of the decades of Her Majesty's reign, 1952 - 2022.

# 1960s



Patsy Stewart

## Community Nurse details

Name: Patsy Stewart, Queen's Nurse  
Nurse title: Nurse Practitioner in Primary Care  
Location: London

### 1. When and where did you start nursing in the community?

I started Community Nursing in February 1991 in Lambeth South London.

### 2. What memories do you have of HM The Queen during this time period?

In the 1960's the Queen came to visit the Westminster Hospital and chatted with the Nurses on each of the floors. No photos taken and a respected distance observed. We had learnt to curtsy in case needed! The occasion reminded me of 1952 when the headmistress of my village school announced "The King Is dead. Long live the Queen" and here she was. Move forward to 2000 when the Queen reopened Dulwich Picture Gallery. Her timings were exact. She toured the new extension then planted a tree and afterwards chatted to guests in the marquee before the speeches and her departure. Not a foot put wrong on either occasion. I remembered her coronation in 1953 and I wondered since then how many trees have been planted and visits done either in this country or around the world, all to the timing of a clock? Most years I visit Buckingham Palace to view the rooms, exhibitions and gardens. I particularly love the royal outfits from her wedding and coronation with exquisite embroidery and styles showing her minute waist. The royal women had dresses more elaborate to reflect their station! Afterward I would have coffee and cakes baked in the royal kitchen and thank her for devotion to duty, leadership by example, vision, hard work (today 40 hours a week) commitment, sense of duty, curiosity, respect for others and her embracing of change and of course for being The Patron of The Queen's Nursing Institute. Well done Your Majesty.

### 3. What has been your proudest nursing moment so far?

This was saving the life of a woman who had delivered a stillborn son. I was working in Biafra Nigeria for Save The Children. I was asked to go with a guide to the village to attend this woman who was losing consciousness. I gathered equipment and followed him up the hill in the rain to her mud hut. She was cold to touch and barely conscious and severely dehydrated. I had recently qualified as a midwife so gave her an injection to stop her bleeding and set up a saline drip quietly wondering what the sister tutor would think as I struggled to attach the drip to the wall with tape! I signalled to her husband that I would return. At base I had, with other volunteers blood taken and cross matched with my patient. When I returned she looked somewhat better in response to my intervention. I set up my blood for infusion and returned to our house. As night fell, armed with a torch, my colleague nurses set up the second blood transfusion. By morning she was much improved and was left in the hands of her family and the community midwife. Later she came to see me to thank me. It was lovely to meet her and I have often hoped she was able to have another baby.

### 4. Any tips for aspiring community nurses?

Community care can be given in many settings. Research this by attending a job fair for nurses and signing up for sessions on community nursing to inform your decision or chat to nurses already in the community. Learn more about yourself, personal strengths, job preferences, motivation and priorities in your life and commitment to lifelong learning. Look carefully at each job description. Refresh your CV and have it proof read. Think of an informal visit. Prepare for the interview. Ask for what support is offered for training and clinical supervision. Ask about pay and conditions. Ask for feedback if unsuccessful to make changes for the future.

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