

Ann Baugham, RN, PHN, Oral history 2010

Interview with Ann Baugham (17:15-22:30)

AS: My name is Amber Shelton. I'm a nursing student at UNCW. We are at the Public Health Association Conference to do oral interviews in Wilmington, North Carolina. Today is Thursday October 28th, 2010 and here I have with me:

AB: Ann Baugham

AS: When were you born?

AB: I was born in 1948.

AS: What month and day?

AB: February 3rd.

AS: Okay where did you grow up?

AB: I grew up in Pittsboro, North Carolina.

AS: Alright. Why did you decide to become a nurse?

AB: Well I had always wanted to be a nurse because I had two aunts who were nurses. My mother's sister and my father's sister were both nurses so they were role models and I liked that so well I knew that's what I wanted to do.

AS: Where and when did you go to nursing school?

AB: I went to nursing school, it was Cabarrus Memorial Hospital in Concord, North Carolina. I think it's now the Louise Harkey School of Nursing. And then some years later I went to nurse practitioner's school at the university hospital in Jacksonville, Florida.

AS: Please tell me a little bit about your nursing education, especially as it relates to community public health.

AB: when I became a public health nurse we did not have very much education in public health. We had probably several days of going to the health department in our nursing program in Concord. So when I went to work for the health department I spent a year as a public health nurse trying to learn public health and I also took the public health nursing class Principles and Practice. This is required of all RNs who don't have a BSN. Even today it's state law that the nurses without a BSN have to take this class Principles and Practice of Public Health in order to work for a health department.

AS: Why did you decide to become a community health nurse?

AB: At that particular time I thought that it's something that I wanted to do. I liked the hours and I liked the fact that you didn't have to work on weekends, because I had been working in a hospital and most of my work was done on weekends and at nights. After a while that can get a

little bit old, so I wanted it for the hours and I just wanted to do something different in nursing.

AS: Please tell me about your first job in community health.

AB: Okay. I first started in community health it was in the Chatham County Health Department in Pittsboro, North Carolina. At that particular time it was a district health department which was composed of five different health departments. I went to work as a public health nurse and I worked there for about seven years as a public health nurse. I was a trainee then I was a public health nurse, and then the health department sent me back to nurse practitioner's school a couple years later after I had been at the health department. So I became a nurse practitioner and worked in the family planning and women's health division of the health department.

AS: What is your current position?

AB: I am the nursing supervisor for the Carteret County health department in Morehead City.

AS: Can you please tell me your most memorable story about community health nursing?

AB: Well I think this would have been my first job, when I worked in Chatham County. At that particular time we were doing an immunization initiative for the different industries in Chatham County. We had a brick plant, we also had a Pimona pipe plant, and several other industries which employed a number of people. So what we were doing was providing tetanus shots for all of the employees. We had the state working with us on this initiative and were vaccinating the entire plants. One of the plants we went to, it was sort of an embarrassing thing that happened. We discovered after we had vaccinated everyone at the plant that we had given them DPT, which is diphtheria, pertussis, and tetanus, instead of a TD which is tetanus. So what happened was we had to go tell the plant manager what had happened and just apologized for our mistake. But no one was any worse for wear and no one got sick, but it was a rather embarrassing thing. We thought we were doing a great thing for the community.

AS: If you had to do it again would you be a community health nurse, why or why not?

AB: Oh I definitely would be a community health nurse. There's no doubt about it. It's very rewarding work and you get to work with all different types of people. I just have found it very rewarding.

AS: Is there anything else you would like to share with nurses in the future who are interested in community health nursing?

AB: I would definitely encourage them to take this route because it provides you with many opportunities to help people and it's a great way to get into prevention of disease and illness and a great way to do teaching and education for the public.

AS: Okay thank you very much.