

From Vision and Dream to Reality

By Emma G. Jackson

Growing up, especially during the teen years, there was literally a vision and dream that plagued my mind with thoughts and aspiration. It all started with visits to the doctor's office.

My Dad worked for a physician, an ophthalmologist, Dr. Walton Anderson, who was a great contributor to my family's healings and well-being. However, it was his registered nurse, Ms. Hazel, who was the vision that literally fed my dream. I knew nothing about her background, her nursing specialty, or even what nursing school from which she graduated. It was the white starched nurse's uniform ironed so stiff that it could stand alone if not being worn, the white oxford shoes she wore without a scuff on them, the white stockings, and the white starched cap that sat atop her head that finished off her uniform. I literally visualized myself being a nurse and wearing the same kind of nurse uniform. I had dreams of becoming a registered nurse.

Exploration began in sophomore and junior high school grades about what classes were required to get into nursing school. In the 50s there were two well established nursing programs, the three-year diploma program and the 4+ year bachelor degree program.

Another factor played into my career choices: limitation of career fields – teacher or nurse – at that time. Since most of my aunts were teachers, to be the first registered nurse in the family was my choice.

College training was completed, state board passed and I got to wear my white uniform, white oxfords with white stockings and my white starched cap on my head. A vision actualized and a dream come true.

Things and times have changed – other visions and dreams have played a great part in those changes with regard to registered nurses' uniforms – or is the correct description "attire"?