

## Marjorie...

By Jake Strother

"All her life has been devoted to helping others! In the way a neighbor describes Miss Marjorie Elmore of Moss Hill, a registered nurse whose career as an operating room nurse spans almost four decades.

She is a quiet and retiring person, reluctant to discuss her career or any achievements attributed to her. She admits she loves people and adds quickly that "people have been good to me." But she denies any claim to being a celebrity or someone above the ordinary, every day routine of neighborly living in her community and in Lenoir County.

However, her dedication to others has been so consistent and so pronounced in the eyes of her neighbors and a host of friends that these friends have decided to tell everybody how much she has meant to the Moss Hill community and its citizens during the past 36 years.

### July 11 Picnic

They have planned a Marjorie Elmore Appreciation Day and Picnic at the Moss Hill School gymnasium for 6 p.m. Saturday, July 11. The Moss Hill Ruritan Club is spearheading the effort and half a dozen committees have been active the past month making detailed plans to make it a memorable event for all of Miss Elmore's family and friends. So if you are a friend of this faithful nurse and humanitarian, or have benefitted from her healing and helpful service during the past 36 years, you are invited to participate on July 11.

In a recent interview Miss Elmore said a lot more about the fine helpful service of her neighbors than she did about her own career. She is the daughter of the late Mr. and Mrs. Edgar Elmore of Kinston Route 4, which embraces the Moss Hill community. Her immediate family includes two sisters, Mrs. Mary Alice Sutton of LaGrange, Mrs. Helen Howell of Kinston Route 4; two brothers, Tom Elmore of Seven Springs Route 1, and Robert Elmore of Pink Hill, two sisters-in-law, Mrs. Harold Elmore and Mrs. L.C. Elmore, both of the Moss Hill community. There are scores of nieces, nephews and cousins by blood and marriage that comprise the closely-knit Elmore clan.

### Went to Work

Miss Elmore, even in her high school days at Moss Hill School, dreamed of being a nurse and helping the sick. She enrolled in the James Walker Memorial School of Nursing in Wilmington and completed the requirements for a Registered Nurse in 1944. She applied and was employed by Parrott Memorial Hospital in Kinston but worked only a few months before she was called into military service.

Her duty as an Army Nurse was in the Southern Division of the United States and lasted one year and one day. In referring to her military nursing duty she noted it lasted the same length of time normally issued bootleggers who had to serve for making illegal whiskey during prohibition — a year and a day. She welcomed her chance to get back into the duty for which she was trained and was

assigned by Parrott Hospital to be the operating room nurse. In this capacity she worked long days and many nights, as the work required. She was ready to go when the doctors had emergencies and when they had elective surgery to do. Her faithful service earned her the plaudits of the entire staff of the hospital, including Dr. R.G. Tyndall, Dr. Clifton F. West, Dr. Dexter Witherington, Dr. Rachel D. Davis and others over the years.

### Took New Post

When the hospital was merged with Lenoir Memorial and the new plant erected and opened in 1973, Miss Elmore was employed as the day operating room supervisor, a position she has held faithfully ever since. She has no current plans to retire, but when that day comes she says "I will not be bored." She has a garden, she has her family, and she has a feeling of being needed by those in her community "who have been so good to me," as she puts it. She envisions a long and active period of retirement which she hopes will continue to be blessed by her current good health.

Her late mother suffered a stroke some years before her death and this called for all of Miss Elmore's unique talents and developed skills to cope with the years of her mother's confinement. She was faithful to the end but she does not mention that in her interview. She recalls how "Cousin Emma Jones," a neighbor who died about two years ago, came regularly every Tuesday night for a decade to visit her mother and cheer her up. She recalls how much her mother appreciated those breaks in her routine and what they also meant to her as a daughter whose responsibility for her mother was constant, but never too heavy to bear with good humor and a bright outlook of hope for the future.

### Revolution of Progress

Miss Elmore has seen a revolution of progress in the practice of medicine and in the growing role of the trained nurse in that progress. In the beginning even an appendectomy or hernia operation could confine a patient two to three weeks. But today they are up the next day and often discharged before the week is out. It has been an exciting and rewarding period of growth for Miss Elmore and she doesn't want to go back to the "good old" days. She notes too that the pay, from her starting salary of \$120 per month in 1945, has advanced now to a more respectable living wage for the R.N.s on private and hospital duty, as well as for practical nurses who elect to serve in the ranks of Florence Nightengale's successors in modern health care. She recommends her profession to all who love and want to serve people. To her it has meant "a good life full of rewards and many loyal friends," but she hastens to add, "What's so remarkable about that?" She worships at Union Baptist Church with her neighbors and friends, but she mentioned it only as an after-thought. Those neighbors and friends know Miss Elmore serves her Master and Lord daily in her instant response to everyone who is in need. No wonder they have set July 11 as the day to honor one who always helps others.

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