



Before commencement of the commissioning, and over the period 1981 - 1986, the 2 699 nurses were joined by other categories of staff for training in preparation for the work. All were trained in our section: Nursing Personnel Development and Organisation Development (NPD & OD), where they attended the Induction and Orientation (I & O) courses that we had designed, selecting courses relevant to their needs, to fit them for the detailed work of commissioning, and then working in, the new hospital.

Staff in the Division of Nursing made a major contribution to the planning and commissioning of the new hospital. They bore great responsibility during the commissioning – competently, and with outstanding teamwork and dedication.

### June du Preez

Deputy Director Nursing (retired)  
Groote Schuur Hospital  
junedp@mweb.co.za

1. Folb P. At the heart of healing: Groote Schuur Hospital 1938-2008. *S Afr Med J* 2009; 99: 156-157 (book review).

## At the heart of healing: Nursing

**To the Editor:** The book *At the Heart of Healing: Groote Schuur Hospital 1938-2008*<sup>1</sup> is well researched, interesting and informative. However, Chapter 7 on nursing is an exception; it was not adequately researched, and the writers display a lack of knowledge of nursing, resulting in an unacceptably high incidence of errors, in turn casting doubt on the accuracy of the whole work. Most seriously, the commissioning of the 'new' hospital has been omitted from this chapter.

**Professor Anne Digby replies:** I note the criticisms made by June du Preez of the chapter on nursing in *At the Heart of Healing: Groote Schuur Hospital 1938-2008*. I will confine myself to what June du Preez states is the most serious omission in the chapter – the nurses' role in commissioning the hospital. On page 188 of my chapter is a discussion of the important contribution that nurses made to the commissioning process. In addition, in an earlier chapter on the general development of the hospital, I documented Chief Matron du Preez's leadership of the nursing division in the move from the old to the new hospital (page 75).