

My name is Betty Smith and I turned 90 years old yesterday. I was born and raised in Washington, D.C. but moved here to Cardiff thirty years ago with my family. I have dedicated my life to helping others. For 35 years I was a professional nurse at the county hospital. I began my career as a nurse in the Second World War, and also assisted soldiers injured in Korea, Vietnam, and here at home. For the last decade, I have been a school nurse, and now I live with my son, his wife and their two children. It has been a beautiful life.

I settled on nursing because taking care of the soldiers seemed so natural to me. I met my husband on the battlefield. My children were born the year we ended the war and declared peace. What else could I have done? This life of service found me.

One of the most interesting things has been meeting people in all the countries I've visited. In times of distress, you really see how tight each community becomes. If someone is in the water, they're plucked out. If someone is injured, they're bandaged. There are no questions, just action. I'd love to see that kind of community support all over the world. Not just during times of war and disaster, but in everyday life. The villages that support each other are the villages that succeed. In this giant village of Britain, it's vital that we remember that our responsibilities lie not just with ourselves, but also with our neighbors. Our liberation is bound to the liberation of others.

I'd like to think I've done my part, been as useful as possible, and given to the best of my abilities. For now, I'd like to continue mentoring young nurses and enjoying my time with family and friends.