

OHSU Nursing Graduate Carries Education around the Globe

By Lee Lewis-Husk

Living in Baghdad and five-months pregnant with her first child, American-born Jane Bodenweiser McEldowney was given 10 hours to leave Iraq. It was 1967, and the Six-Day Arab-Israeli War had just broken out. "The (American) Embassy told us to pack one suitcase and a gallon of water. We left at midnight on the QT and formed a long convey into Iran," says McEldowney, BS '63. The Americans arrived in Tehran the same year the Shah of Iran staged his own coronation.

Married 38 years to Art McEldowney, a former Foreign Service officer with the U.S. State Department, Jane spent most of 25 years living in six countries. The couple raised two children (a daughter born in Iran and a son born in England), and Jane used her nursing education in a variety of volunteer and paid jobs.

While abroad, McEldowney taught Iraqi nursing students at the University of Baghdad. "Nursing was the second lowest profes-

sion for women because of their personal contact with men," recalls McEldowney. "It really gave me an appreciation for what women pioneers in nursing had to do." While living in Oxfordshire in England, McEldowney renewed her love of school nursing and served as nurse and health teacher.

In 1989, the McEldowneys looked for a place to retire and found Central Oregon to their liking. As Art began phasing out of his career, Jane decided she could still contribute to her profession and became a nurse with the Redmond School District. She loves her job and for the most of the past decade has worked for the district. "Kids keep you on your toes," she says of the many youngsters she serves in the elementary and middle schools. She also is active in the Oregon School Nurses Association.

Although she was often half a world away from OHSU, the school was never far from her mind. She says that she has always been proud to be an alumna of the school. "I was always conscious of



McEldowney enjoying the Bend Wassail

representing the profession and trying to offer a high level of performance."

She recently put together the second annual Wassail for alumni living in Central Oregon and is also helping to plan the 40th reunion of her nursing school class during the annual alumni homecoming in May.

At the end of this school year, McEldowney plans to retire and spend time volunteering in the community. She would like to work with children in some capacity and is particularly concerned about homeless families.

Regardless of where life takes her next, it's hard to imagine anyone being a better ambassador for the nursing profession than Jane McEldowney.