

The Nomadic Nurse Series

OOH **MATRON!**



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Sarah Jane Butfield

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Sarah Jane has no career aspirations, all she wants is to leave school, work as a cashier at Woolworths and get married. Then everything changes and she finds herself wearing a fluorescent pink uniform and studying to get into Nursing School. What inspired this surprising change of direction? What happens when she leaves home to live in a garrison town with a housemate who is a party animal? The big question being, is she really cut out to be a nurse?

Let's start at the beginning with Sarah Jane as a sixteen-year-old country girl, a bit old fashioned but who has a mischievous sense of humour and who suddenly decides she wants to be a nurse!

Ooh Matron! Details

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From Reader Review Ooh Matron! for online ebook

Rebecca says

I have always enjoyed medical memoirs and was looking forward to reading this one. I wasn't disappointed at all. Sarah Jane writes from the heart and her story is in turns funny, heartbreakingly moving. She describes herself at sixteen as having no career aspirations and yet she undertakes years of training to become a nurse. She highlights the vast amount of medical knowledge a nurse has to learn all under the eagle eye of the ward sisters – it's incredible and probably underestimated by many! She interweaves this with details about her personal life which enhance the story of her journey to full registration. I also enjoyed the links to You Tube etc to explain some of the procedures or to give added information about some of the hospitals where she worked. We learn about her interest in the history of the various hospitals and how they developed and there are some fascinating facts on this subject. You live and learn! I particularly enjoyed all the little anecdotes about some of her escapades and, of course, about some of the more memorable patients. However I think my favourite one involved a hill and a body being transported to the mortuary !! I actually laughed out loud. I'm now looking forward to the next instalment.

Gail says

I did not enjoy this book. It was not what I expected. First there initially too much of the book spent on drinking alcohol rather than nursing. Secondly. There was not nearly as many stories about her patients as I expected from the description of the book. I am an RN and usually enjoy this type of book but not this one.

Christoph Fischer says

I don't often read memoirs because I'm a fiction fan but the title, reminiscent of Carry On Films tempted me into buying this one. I used to work in care homes in my youth and was interested in that aspect of the memoir, too.

The book is written with a wonderfully human spirit: caring, humorous, upbeat and full of life. Where other memoirs drift into documentary style and dry facts, Butfield knows how to spice things up. Great anecdotes, warm-hearted humour and accessible writing make this as an entertaining, interesting and enjoyable read as the title promises.

On a more serious note, the author reflects on many aspects of nursing with great empathy and honesty, particularly the parts about working with mentally ill patients and those with Down Syndrome were moving and informative to me.

There's a lot you can learn from this book. An all round winner.

Sandra McKenna says

Sarah tells of her three years training to become a Registered Nurse in an easy to read and informative style. I have read and enjoyed several of Sarah's books, and this is no exception.

Julie Haigh says

Ooh-it was great! I LOVED it!

I've read all of Sarah Jane Butfield's previous memoirs about moving abroad to Australia and France and really enjoyed them. I must say, I do have a soft spot for medical memoirs-I love them-and I certainly LOVED this! Even in the early section, I was feeling eager to read it, it was catching my interest immediately. I was due to start work and had to keep nipping back for a quick look at 'just a bit more' before I had to go. The book starts where Sarah Jane is just sixteen, it's the early 80s and she begins training to be a nurse. There's quite a bit of introductory matter before it gets going-but I still found this enormously interesting and relevant-eg. the explanation of the title, and the review from an advance reader makes it sound so tempting too-you just have to read on! There's quite a trip down memory lane with the mentions of the Carry On Films. I loved getting to know the young Sarah Jane after having read all her other books set in more recent times. This is a really refreshing change hearing about her earlier life. It's packed with info about the tasks the student nurses did, the things they learned. Later, there was more nostalgia-I had forgotten about this TV series-General Hospital! Next subject covered is student nurse life-and partying! Some very helpful links are included to explanations of things-eg the Australian lift-and a YouTube video link to illustrate this also-what a great idea. I love the rhyming chapter title-and there are a few chuckles here, their antics! Next, she worked on the geriatric ward as part of her training. There's a great insight into the tasks she had to do serving her time district nursing. Here are mentioned the various bowel procedures! Many times in this chapter I was thinking: oh yak, oh no, oh my goodness-the things she had to do! A very interesting chapter. I also enjoyed the bit of history about the area which tied-in. Next placement is at a maternity hospital. There is such an amusing scene, I loved how this was written, a lovely chapter with a chuckle at the end. A really feel-good read at this point. Obviously, with this profession, there are harder times too. Oh, I really enjoyed this! Just my sort of book. It's been really interesting to hear about the different and varied medical fields she's worked in. So varied, more placements include caring for patients who have attempted suicide, on the operating theatre site suite and on the children's ward. Practical jokes are played on the students, Sarah Jane was on the receiving end of a few of these. We get to hear about workplace affairs-I love behind the scenes books like this! An excellent inclusion is a chapter written by Sarah Jane's step-daughter, Claire, who has just completed training as a nurse and she gives a comparison of how it is now to go alongside Sarah Jane's experiences in the 80s. A period of training and working in the A & E brings some aarrrggghhh tales! I like how she explains things as she goes along AND includes a glossary at the end as well of quite a few medical terms/diseases etc. I've read quite a few medical memoirs so I'd heard and knew most of these but I think it's a good idea to have this for people who haven't read many or any of this type of book before. An assortment of amusing, interesting, surprising and emotional stories. A pleasure to read. Her best yet!

Shontae Brewster says

This funny, yet poignant nursing memoir has Sarah Jane's trademark honest writing style which shines through in every story she tells. From starting her student nurse training in Essex to coping with patients in happy, sad and heart-breaking situations. It gives you a young woman's view into the realities of entering the world of nursing in the 1980's. A highly entertaining and informative memoir which was able to take me from laughing out loud to having welled tears of empathy.

Grant Leishman says

I decided to read Ooh Matron mainly because of the positive buzz and vibe I had heard about it in various FB groups and on Twitter. I like memoirs, especially ones full of funny anecdotes and the wisdom that comes with age.

I will say, right from the start, that Ooh Matron is a well written, well researched and generally very interesting book, but as a memoir to set me giggling in mirth, not so much. I guess my main gripe is the cover. The cover, tended to suggest a humorous content and the author did also make reference to the "Carry On" films, in the introduction. This led me to believe it would be chock full of hilarious goings-on in the medical profession. That certainly was not the case. Yes, there were a few anecdotes of student nursing shenanigans, but not what I felt the cover lead me to think

What Ooh Matron is, is a thoughtful and thorough documentation of the training of a student nurse in the 1980's. For what it was, I enjoyed the book. I was impressed by the author's knowledge (still) of what she went through to achieve the coveted status of Qualified Nurse. I also liked her well researched and interesting bonus features about the history of psychiatric nursing. An interesting counterpoint in the book is the description, by the author's stepdaughter, a newly degree graduated Nurse, comparing the training of the 1980's with today.

If you are thinking of buying this book for a hilarious romp through a student nurse's eyes, I would say don't, but if you like honest, well-written and well-researched memoirs, especially if you have a medical background, this is a lovely book to read. Don't get me wrong, I really enjoyed the read and am definitely encouraged to read more from Butfield and find out where her nursing career led her next. A good, solid four stars from me.

B.A. Morton says

Having recently worked within the NHS, I was immediately drawn to this memoir by an accomplished author of the genre. Once started I found it difficult to put down, easily captivated by this collection of amusing, poignant, but overall honest accounts of the author's adventures and misadventures as a young nurse in the 1980's. Beginning as a naive 16yr old we follow this young girl as she steps into the world of student life, bedpans and hypodermics. There were lots to fondly identify with as the author captures the period perfectly. I laughed out loud at the hilarious antics, and was sobered by the genuine emotional moments that all health professionals will recognise. This is a book that will make you laugh and cry and you'll feel better for it - The perfect prescription.

An entertaining, amusing read – just what the doctor ordered!

Lucinda Clarke says

INTERESTING READ

Fun book about training to be a nurse in the 1980's. There was a lot I didn't know about the extensive training the student nurses underwent and there is an interesting comparison to the methods used today.

Julie Watson says

I thoroughly enjoyed reading Sarah Jane's journey as a student nurse through to becoming a qualified nurse. Her story includes stories of her personal life as well as stories of patients she cares for and the experiences she has as a nurse in training. I was amazed at the responsibility that Sarah has as a student in the 1980's and the skills and the knowledge she gained. The training was very in-depth and varied with stories from all areas of nursing including district nursing, maternity, medical and surgical. Stories are recounted of patients, their condition and Sarah's care of them, sometimes sad, other humorous but always interesting and entertaining. There is also background history of places where she worked. The book is well researched, educational and interesting. A story told honestly and from the heart.

Molly says

Excellent memoir, written from the heart with a personal touch and interesting insights about nursing and the UK in the 80s. The writer has a great sense of humour and a warm heart. Loved it.

Peggy says

Was not what I had expected. Wanted more, kept trying to read more and it was just too flat. The story had no direction, no humor, no nothing. Maybe a revision could boast this book!

Received for an honest review