

# St. Joseph's Hospital Victoria, BC



104 Years of Nursing Care

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Victoria, BC  
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The story of the development and growth of Nursing Care  
by the Sisters of Saint Ann in the city of Victoria,  
is the story of the growth and development of the city itself.



**The log cabin from which Sisters of Saint Ann  
began their work of nursing**

## Log Cabin from which Sisters of Saint Ann Began Their Work of Nursing

In 1858, four years before the city of Victoria was incorporated, and even before British Columbia became a crown colony, a small group of four Sisters of Saint Ann arrived and began their work of nursing from a little log cabin on the outskirts of Beacon Hill Park. That log cabin still stands today, and the work it saw begun has grown with its surroundings.

From this log cabin, the Sisters were called upon to minister to the sick in their homes. The occasion of their first sick call brought the Sisters to the home of a Mrs. Forbes, whose house was located on Collinson Street, on the same location where the nucleus of St. Joseph's Hospital as we know it today was built 17 years later, and where the main Collinson Street entrance of the hospital now stands.

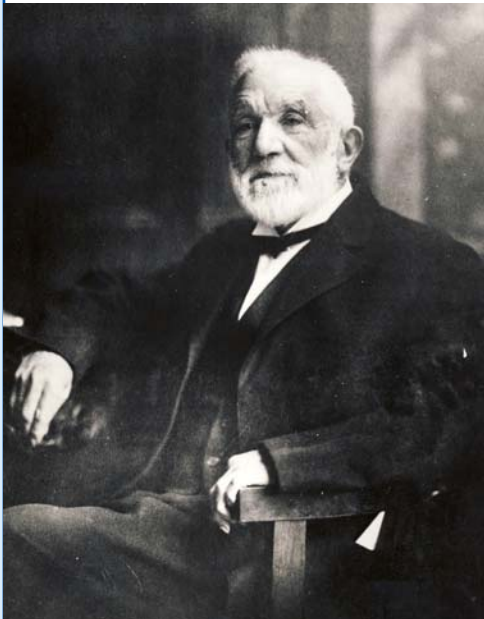
Now, 104 years later, Victorians can look back with pride on the great work that was accomplished by the Sisters, in the building and organization of St. Joseph's Hospital into one of the leading general hospitals in British Columbia.



## SISTER MARY PROVIDENCE Foundress of St. Joseph's Hospital

Sister Mary Providence arrived in Victoria in 1859, just one year after the arrival of the first four Sisters. As Mother Mary Providence, she was head of the community of the Sisters of Saint Ann until 1881. She was appointed Superior at the age of 22, and spent 45 years developing education and nursing care in early Victoria.

It was through her untiring efforts and devotion and her affection for her adopted home here in the West, that St. Joseph's Hospital was founded.



## Hon. Dr. JOHN S. HELMCKEN Co-Founder

The Hon. Dr. John S. Helmcken laid the cornerstone of St. Joseph's Hospital in 1875. A year later, on June 25<sup>th</sup> 1876, he officiated at the opening ceremonies and said:

“It is a great point in favor of this particular institution that it will be under the care of the Sisters of Saint Ann, as that will guarantee good nursing.”

The Hon. Dr. John S. Helmcken was a strong influence in the founding of the hospital, and devoted much of his time and energy into the project.

## Victoria's First General Hospital

It was not the decision of the Sisters of Saint Ann to enter into the hospital field, rather, it was the members of the community who, through the members of the medical profession, approached The Most Rev. Charles John Seghers, Bishop of Victoria, to persuade the Sisters to organize a regular hospital.

This call for help was answered, and the cornerstone of St. Joseph's Hospital was laid in August of 1875. The two-storey brick structure was opened on June 25th, 1876, with a capacity of 35 beds.

The first patient was admitted during the opening festivities while guests were still admiring the new modern facilities. The patient, a Chinese workman, also had the distinction of being the first emergency case to be admitted to St. Joseph's. This first patient set at least two precedents for the hospital:

First—No one has ever been refused admission to St. Joseph's because of race or creed.

Second—That the Emergency Department of St. Joseph's would always be ready to offer help to the citizens of Victoria who would come to its door for aid.

## Victoria's St. Joseph's Hospital ~ Expanding and Improving

### 1876 — 35 Beds

#### **Expansion and Improvement over the next two years**

##### **New Construction**

- 115-bed, 5-storey wing on Humboldt Street.
- 1 Complete new Laundry.
- 1 Research Lab.,
- 1 Medical Records Library

##### **Renovation**

- General Stores,
- Electrical Distribution,
- Boiler Plant,
- Internes' Quarters.

##### **Expansion & Improvement**

- Emergency Dept.,
- Operating Rooms,
- Information, Admitting Dept.,
- X-ray Dept.,
- Food Service Facilities,
- Automatic Switchboard,
- Physiotherapy.

##### **Maternity Department**

- 5 case rooms,
- 6 labour rooms,
- 64 beds, 80 bassinets, 4 nurseries.

### 1962 — 448 Beds, 48 Bassinets

A major part of the \$2,700,000 Expansion and Improvement Program is the 115-bed wing to be built on Humboldt Street, embodying:

#### **Ground Floor**

Employee's Lounge,  
Lockers

#### **First Floor**

Men's Medical

#### **Second Floor**

Mixed Medical

#### **Third Floor**

Men's Surgical

#### **Fourth Floor**

Maternity Beds  
Nurseries

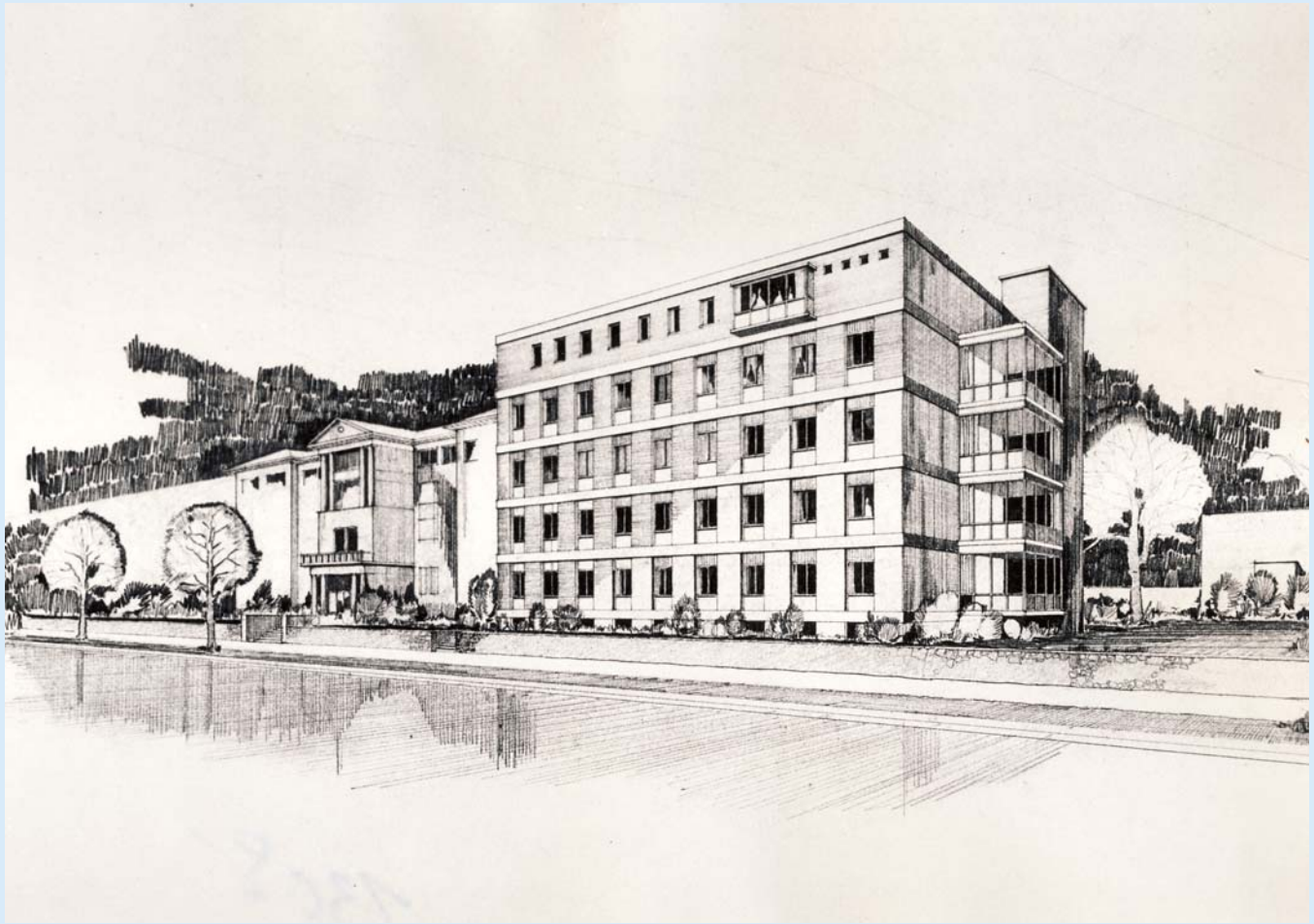
#### **Fifth Floor**

Case & Labor rooms



**St. Joseph's Hospital, Victoria  
1876-1962**





**St. Joseph's Hospital, Victoria  
1962 Expansion and Improvement Plan**

## What We Do at St. Joseph's

### Our 1961 Records

Admissions: adults, children, newborns .....	14,004
Number of babies born .....	1,308
Patient days: adults, children .....	136,006
Patient days: newborns .....	9,943
Operations .....	7,307
Emergency Visits .....	12,824
Laboratory Units .....	167,741
X-ray Examinations .....	18,353
Physiotherapy Patients	
Visits .....	21,204
Treatments .....	24,416

# PROPOSED EXPANSION AND RENOVATION PROGRAMME ST. JOSEPH'S HOSPITAL

## A. Purpose

The purpose of this project is twofold:

1. To provide additional hospital beds and thereby meet the needs of a rapidly expanding population for adequate hospital accommodation.
2. To add to and renovate existing physical facilities and equipment so as to improve service to patients and to make advances in the fields of medical science and hospital operations available to residents of Greater Victoria and Vancouver Island.

## B. Scope of Project

### 1. New Wing

It is proposed that a new five-floor, 115-bed wing, bordered by Humboldt and Rupert Streets, will be constructed. While the new wing will contain 115 new beds, space presently occupied by 84 beds will be used for expansion and addition of essential services such as X-ray, Physiotherapy, or Intensive Care Unit, etc. The net gain in beds will therefore be 31, and the total bed capacity of the hospital will be 478 beds and 80 bassinets.

### 2. Emergency Department

The present emergency department will be expanded to provide 10 observation beds, 2 emergency surgeries, a cast room, and other essential auxiliary services. The expansion of the emergency department is necessary because of the increasing incidence of home, industrial, and traffic accidents.

### 3. Intensive Care Unit

An 8-bed intensive care unit is included in the proposed expansion and renovation programme. This unit which represents one of the most important advances in hospital operations in recent years will allow for the concentration of highly trained personnel and specialized equipment needed for the care of seriously ill patients.

**4. Research Laboratory**

A Research Laboratory, which is essential to the conduct of modern medical research and education, is included in the proposed expansion and renovation programme.

**5. Laundry**

The hospital's long out-dated laundry will be replaced by a new building. This new building will be up-to-date in every detail and will contain the most modern of laundry machinery.

**6. General Stores**

The present laundry building will be converted to a warehouse, wherein many and diversified products will be stored and made readily available to the hospital.

**7. Food Service Facilities**

Present kitchen and cafeteria facilities will be completely revamped and dietary procedures will be completely reorganized with the result that St. Joseph's will provide patients with the most up-to-date approach to hospital food service.

**8. Boiler Plant**

Two old boilers will be replaced by two new package boilers. These new units will meet the demands of expanded hospital areas for a continuous supply of steam and hot water.

**9. Electrical Transformers and Electrical Distribution Area**

The hospital's electrical system will be completely remodelled by the addition of a new transformer and the construction of a centralized distribution area.

**10. Admitting Department**

A new admitting department designed to facilitate and expedite the admission of patients will be constructed.

**11. Automatic Switchboard**

A new automatic switchboard designed to expedite telephone communications within and outside of the hospital, will be installed.

**12. Operating Rooms**

The hospital's operating rooms will be remodelled, with the installation of a piped oxygen system, the enlargement of some service areas, and the addition of new lighting and other equipment.

### **13. X-Ray and Physiotherapy Departments**

These two departments will be increased in size to keep pace with the trend toward greater use of specialized hospital diagnostic and therapeutic services.

### **14. Medical Records and Medical Library**

The Medical Records Department, which is the focal point of the Hospital's patient care, medical research and medical education activities, will be enlarged.

### **15. Administration and Business Offices**

The administration and business offices presently located in various sections of the hospital will be combined in one central area.

### **16. Interns Quarters**

The interest of the medical staff in expanding the teaching services of the hospital will be met through the re-location of, and addition to present interns' quarters.

### **17. Information Office**

A new information office designed to facilitate and expedite the provision of condition reports, directional information, etc., will be constructed in the main entrance to the hospital.

## **C. Cost of Project and Method of Financing**

It is anticipated that the cost of the expansion and renovation programme will be approximately \$2,700,000.

It is proposed that the project will be financed in approximately the following manner:

- Municipal Government Grants \$300,000
- Sisters of St. Ann \$400,000
- Community Subscriptions \$350,000

The remainder of the total amount will be made up from Federal and Provincial Government Grants. As to the time of the actual commencement of construction, it is expected that a start can be made on the second phase soon after the end of the campaign in April, 1962. The first phase, which is the installation of two new boilers, has already commenced, and is expected to be completed by the beginning of April, 1962. This has been done to meet the increased demands for heating and steam pressure which will be created by the new 115-bed wing and the new laundry.

