



The *Great* Canadian
Catholic Hospital History Project

Documenting the legacy and contribution of the
Congregations of Religious Women in Canada,
their mission in health care, and the founding and operation of Catholic hospitals.



Projet de la *Grande* Histoire
des hôpitaux catholiques au Canada

Retracer l'héritage et la contribution des
congrégations de religieuses au Canada,
leur mission en matière de soins de santé ainsi que la fondation et l'exploitation des hôpitaux catholiques.

St. Clare Mercy Hospital Historical Highlights: 1922-1998

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ST. CLARE'S

MERCY

HOSPITAL

HISTORICAL

HIGHLIGHTS

1922-1998



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Mission

The mission, values and philosophy of St. Clare's Mercy Hospital are carried out in the spirit and tradition of the Sisters of Mercy. St. Clare's motto, Mercy Above All, calls volunteers, staff, including physicians, the Advisory Council, and the Sisters of Mercy, through their collaborative efforts, to care for the sick and dying with competence and compassion, and without discrimination. This mission affirms the dignity and uniqueness of each person, fosters holistic healing, and promotes the pastoral care of all patients.



St. Clare's commits itself to all who serve within the hospital community and seeks to provide an environment of recognition, care and support. Inherent in the mission of St. Clare's Mercy Hospital is a commitment to health promotion and disease prevention, and the promotion of a healthy social and physical environment. St. Clare's recognizes a strong ethical dimension in carrying out its mission.

The White House

St. Clare's Mercy Hospital has a history that is almost legendary. The hospital had its beginning in the "White House", LeMarchant Road, the former residence of the Honourable E.M. Jackman.

In 1912 the White House was purchased by Archbishop M.F. Howley from funds collected by Sr. M. Clare English, PBVM. The largest donation was obtained from the sale of a Rosary of gold nuggets brought by a family friend from the gold fields of the Klondyke.

(The Rosary had been purchased by the Knights of Columbus, (U.S.) for \$1000.00 and presented to Cardinal James Gibbons of Baltimore, MD on the occasion of the Golden Anniversary of his ordination to the priesthood.)

On September 29, 1913, after renovations, the White House was reopened as St. Clare's Home, a residence for working girls, under the direction of the Sisters of Mercy.





Founding of St. Clare's Mercy Hospital

The need for another hospital in the city was a priority and in 1922 St. Clare's Home was renovated for that purpose. Meanwhile, Sr. M. Bernard Gladney was sent to Mercy Hospital, Pittsburgh, to train as a registered nurse in preparation for the opening of the hospital.

St. Clare's Mercy Hospital opened on May 21, 1922, with Mass celebrated by Archbishop E.P. Roche.

The first staff, Sr. M. Bernard Gladney, superintendent, Sr. M. Gabriel Fleming, Sr. M. Catherine Green, one registered nurse - Alice Casey, one assistant - Gladys Healey, cared for 23 patients in the hospital. The medical staff consisted of 12 visiting doctors with Dr. John Murphy as chief surgeon.

The first patient admitted to the hospital was Sr. M. Benedict McKenzie, PBVM; the first baby born at the hospital was Arthur Morris in 1924; he later became a physician practising at the hospital.

Due to the illness of Sr. M. Bernard Gladney, in 1923 the hospital was closed for approximately six months and reopened in October with Sr. M. Aloysius Rawlins as superintendent and Sr. M. Teresita MacNamee from Mercy Hospital, Baltimore as Director of Nursing Services. After two years, Sr. M. Teresita MacNamee returned to Baltimore and her position was filled by Miss Marcella O'Connor, R.N.

It is interesting to note that Baltimore is a name with a special meaning for St. Clare's Mercy Hospital. Between 1922 and 1939 six Sisters of Mercy from Newfoundland graduated as registered nurses from Mercy Hospital, Baltimore: Sr. M. Stanislaus Parsons, Sr. M. Joseph Byrne, Sr. M. Loretto McIsaac, Sr. M. St. Joan Mc Donnell, Sr. M. Aloysius Rawlins and Sr. M. Magdalen Baker. The latter was the first registered X-Ray technologist in Newfoundland and a founding member of the Society of Radiological Technologists.

Opening of the 1939 Building

When facilities at the hospital became no longer adequate, plans were made for the construction of a new and larger hospital. In 1937 Archbishop E. P. Roche made a public announcement that a new hospital would be built and the following year a fund-raising drive was started in the Archdiocese.

The first block of concrete was placed, containing the Seal of the Archdiocese, photographs, and an autographed statement by Archbishop E.P. Roche - 1938.

The new facility was opened and blessed October 29, 1939 with Mass celebrated by Archbishop E.P. Roche.

With the opening of the new building, provision was made for a pediatric ward, an obstetrical department, a surgical floor, a small laboratory, patient wards, semi-private and private rooms.

The first patients admitted to the new hospital were nine patients who were transferred from the original building on November 15; the first baby born in the new hospital was the daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Bruce Connolly, St. John's.

The Governor of Newfoundland, Sir Humphery Walwyn, and Lady Walwyn paid an official visit to the hospital in November 1939. Lady Walwyn presented to the hospital a picture of Our Lady which had been in her family for over seventy years.



The School of Nursing

With the opening of the new hospital, plans were made to open a School of Nursing. Fourteen new nursing students and five potential nursing students who had spent one year in the original hospital, moved into the new School of Nursing at St. Clare Avenue with Sr. M. Stanislaus Parsons as the first Director of the School. She was replaced in 1944 by Sr. M. Xaverius Kenny who held the position for thirty years.

In 1941 the first School of Nursing Graduation was held, the five graduates being Ethel Goff, Ann Hogan, Lillian Coleman, Eileen O'Brien, and Margaret O'Reilly.

Soon, affiliations began with other city hospitals - the Hospital for Mental and Nervous Diseases, St. John's Sanitorium, and the Fever Hospital and later with the Janeway Child Health Centre, the General Hospital, St. Patrick's Mercy Home and a number of cottage hospitals.

In 1958, a new School of Nursing, Our Lady of Lourdes Hall, was opened on LeMarchant Road.

Highlights over the following decades include:

- St. Clare's School of Nursing Alumnae Association was formed with Lillian Coleman as its first president - 1944.
- A School of Nursing Advisory Council was formed to serve as a liaison between the school and the Board of Governors - 1962.
- Katherine Daley became director of the School of Nursing - 1974.
- Affiliation began with Memorial University, with university approved credit courses to be offered in the school - 1982.
- The School of Nursing celebrated its 50th Anniversary - 1989
- The School of Nursing was relocated to the former St. Bride's College, Litledale in August 1990, and became part of the Centre for Nursing Studies in 1996.

On June 26, 1998, a ceremony was held to close the School of Nursing. It celebrated its tradition of Mercy, its commitment to gospel values, its accomplishments in nursing education and its contribution to St. Clare's Mercy Hospital and health care in our province and beyond.

Memorial Chapel and Hospital Extension - 1950

In 1947 Archbishop E.P. Roche celebrated the Golden Anniversary of his Ordination to the Priesthood and a special memorial of this event was the building of the chapel at St. Clare's Mercy Hospital, made possible from donations of friends of the Archbishop throughout Newfoundland. Archbishop E. P. Roche donated his Anniversary Fund (\$73,000.00) to St. Clare's Mercy Hospital for the provision of a chapel and hospital extension.

The Chapel Wing opened on March 20, 1950, with the first Mass being celebrated on the Feast of St. Joseph by Archbishop E.P. Roche, a short time before his death. The extension also included space for new dining facilities as well as additional beds for obstetrical and pediatric patients on the lower levels.

In 1954 a window on the chapel corridor was dedicated to Our Lady of Lourdes in memory of Sr. M. Aloysius Rawlins who had spent over twenty years as administrator of the hospital.

Board of Governors & Medical Advisory Committee

In the 1950's the need for formal organization of a Board of Governors was recognized and the necessary preparations were made.

Discussions were held with Archbishop P.J. Skinner and Sr. M. Imelda Smith regarding the formation of a Board of Governors in 1955. The following year a Board of Governors was formed and its first formal meeting was held on March 15, 1956. Members of the Board were: Archbishop P.J. Skinner, Chairman; Sr. M Imelda Smith, Superior General; Monsignor Harold A. Summers, Hon. R.S.Furlong, Sr. M. Loretto McIsaac, Dr. E.L. Sharpe, Sr. M. Fabian Hennebury, Sr. M. Xaverius Kenny, Secretary.



Dr. J. B. Murphy was appointed Chief of Staff, although he had been recognized as such from 1939. Following his official appointment, the medical staff became organized and later departmentalized. In 1956 five members of the Medical staff were appointed to form the first Medical Advisory Committee. Dr. J.B. Murphy became the first President, with Dr. G. M. Brownrigg, Vice President, and Dr. R.J. Simms, Secretary. Other members of the Committee were Dr. T.G. Anderson, Dr. F.L.O'Dea.

Medical Staff By-Laws, Rules and Regulations were approved by the Medical Advisory Committee and a Medical Records Department was established under the direction of Sr. M. Brenda Lacey in 1957. The following year St. Clare's became the first hospital in Newfoundland to microfilm medical records.

Following the sudden death of Dr. J.B. Murphy in 1958, Dr. G.M. Brownrigg was appointed Chief of Surgery and Chief of Staff, a position he held until his retirement in 1978. During his years at St. Clare's, he played a major role in establishing St. Clare's as a teaching hospital in affiliation with Memorial University.

Hospital Accreditation

Following the reorganization of the Board, and the formal organization of the Medical Staff in 1956, discussions began regarding accreditation for the hospital. The Board, anxious to maintain a high standard of patient care, realized the importance of being involved in this program.

An application was made to the Joint Commission on Hospital Accreditation for a preliminary survey which was completed by Dr. J.LaPlante and resulted in a one year accreditation with a number of recommendations.

In 1959 a second survey of the hospital was carried out by Dr. J.J. Laurier from the Canadian Council on Hospital Accreditation, with a three year accreditation.

Since then, the hospital has been accredited eleven times with a three year award granted each time.





Opening of 1962 Wing & Further Growth

In 1960 the Board of Governors completed plans for the construction of a new wing. The cost, totalling \$2,662,000.00 was financed by a federal grant of \$285,000.00, a provincial grant of \$750,000.00 and the arrangement of a bank loan to cover the balance.

In 1962 the extension was opened by His Grace, Most Rev. P.J. Skinner, C.J.M., D.D. with representatives present from the Congregation of the Sisters of Mercy and the Department of Health.

The new wing provided accommodations for 40 pediatric patients, 60 obstetrical patients, a new dietary department and new emergency facilities.

Over the following decade other significant highlights included:

- An automatic x-ray processor was installed, the first in the province - 1962.
- A cardiac unit, with two monitors, was established -1966.
- Physiotherapy services were introduced - 1967.
- Respiratory Therapy was initiated - 1968.
- The Pediatric Unit was phased out and a Neonatology Unit was established - 1970.
- Rheumatology Unit and a Department of Orthopaedics were established - 1971.
- A Social Services worker was hired, laying the foundation of a Social Work Department in the hospital - 1971.
- Ultrasound services under the direction of Dr. W.J. Higgins, were introduced into the hospital - 1971.
- A Medical Morals Committee was formed within the hospital - 1971.

Through the efforts of Sr. M. Aidan Howell, St. Clare's Mercy Hospital Auxiliary was formed with Mrs. Joan Crosbie (Parker) as Patroness (President). 1967. Since that time the members of Auxiliary have been actively involved in the life of the hospital, giving generous monetary contributions to support the programs and services of the hospital.

In 1968 an agreement was signed between St. Clare's Mercy Hospital and the Medical School of Memorial University whereby the hospital was recognized as a teaching hospital.

50th Anniversary & Opening of 1972 Extension

Almost immediately after the opening of the 1960 wing, the need for further expansion was recognized. In 1966 Agnew Peckham & Associate of Toronto surveyed St. Clare's Mercy Hospital and recommended the erection of a new structure that would replace and enlarge the service areas. The following year an agreement was reached between St. Clare's and the Provincial Government to expand the hospital to 300 beds.

The first phase of the project, the building of a heating plant, was completed in 1969. With the completion of the extension in 1972, the transfer of departments and services to the new area of the hospital began in April.



MR. BOLTON—ARCHITECT, PASSING OVER THE KEYS FOR THE 1972 EXTENSION TO SISTER MARY FABIAN, ADMINISTRATOR.



ST. CLARE'S MERCY HOSPITAL—THE NEW EXTENSION, 1972.

The Golden Anniversary of the hospital was celebrated with the formal dedication and official opening of St. Clare's Mercy Hospital Extension on September 8, 1972, with representatives from the Congregation of the Sisters of Mercy and the Department of Health in attendance. It was a fitting culmination of 50 years of service to the sick and suffering. With the opening of the extension, the hospital virtually expanded all its departments, modernized its equipment and greatly increased its range of services.



OPENING OF PALLIATIVE CARE UNIT, 1979.

Decades of Growth

After the new extension, St. Clare's experienced significant growth during the next two decades.

Immediately, there was a centralization of the supply, processing and distribution of materials within the hospital. At the same time, psychology services were offered with a department being established within five years. A chest unit was opened in the South Wing and an EEG department was organized with a full time director. Steps were taken to initiate infection control services. During this time, a collective agreement was signed with NAPE, the first such agreement for the hospital.

A significant step was taken in 1975 when the Pastoral Visitors Program expanded to become the Pastoral Care Department directed by Sister Mary Carmelita Power.

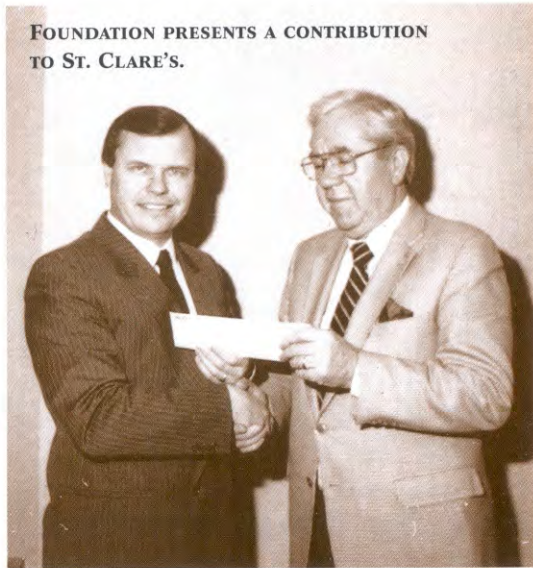
In 1978 Talbot House, a residential detoxification centre, was opened and the following year a Palliative Care Unit was established to provide palliative and supportive care to terminally ill cancer patients and their families.

In 1974, Dr. Ian Tough became the first Medical Director of the hospital. In 1978 Dr. G.M. Brownrigg retired, having been chief of staff at St. Clare's for 20 years and was replaced by Dr. E. A. MacLaughlin; in 1981 Sr. M. Fabian Hennebury retired after 26 years as administrator and was replaced by Sr. M. Lucy Power. In 1986, Sister Elizabeth Davis became the new executive director.

Other significant events:

- The School of Nursing became affiliated with Memorial University and for the first time university-approved credit courses were offered at the school - 1982.
- An Endoscopy Unit was established - 1982.
- A Quality Assurance Program was initiated in the hospital - 1983.
- St. Clare's was chosen to be one of the ten national test sites for Management Information System Project in 1984. The following year, computers were introduced into the admitting and medical records departments with a view to the phasing in of hospital-wide computerization.
- In 1985 the Dr. Walter Templeman Hospital on Bell Island was placed under the Board of Governors of St. Clare's Mercy Hospital.

In 1985 the St. Clare's Mercy Hospital Foundation was established to support the mandate and objectives of the hospital. It has contributed greatly over the years through generous contributions to the hospital so that it can continue its services and programs. It is now an important partner with The Health Care Corporation of St. John's, in ensuring that St. Clare's will be able to carry out its expanded role in health care delivery.



FOUNDATION PRESENTS A CONTRIBUTION TO ST. CLARE'S.



AUXILIARY PRESENTS A CONTRIBUTION TO ST. CLARE'S.

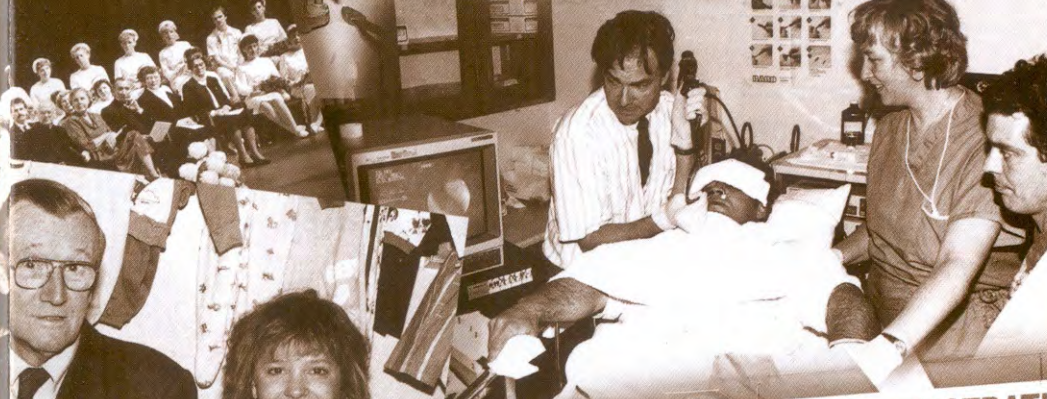
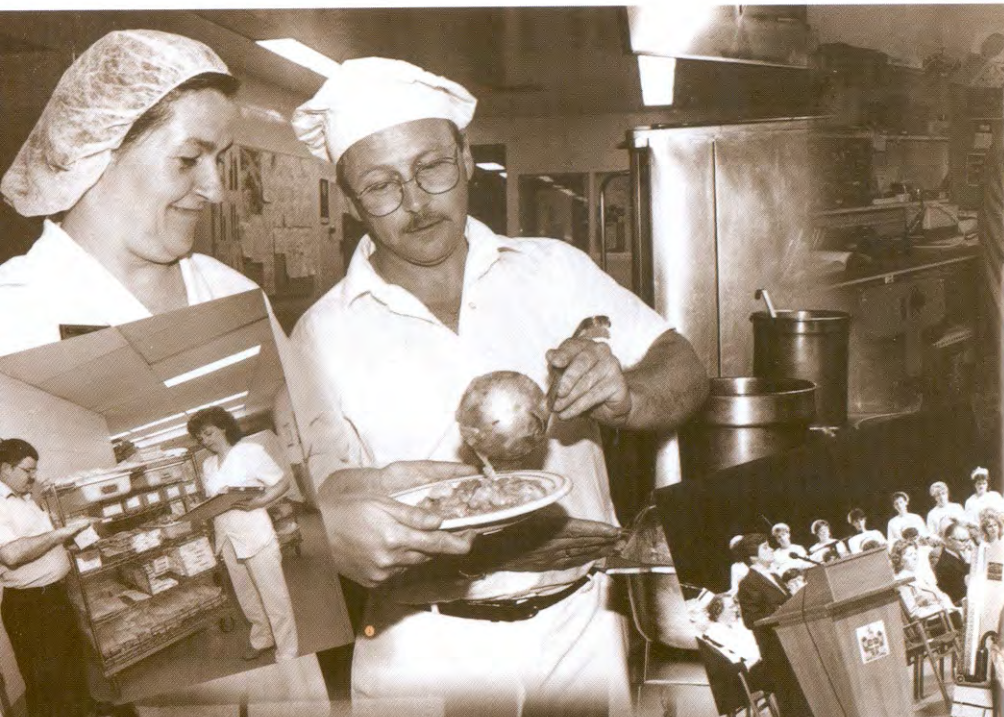


OFFICIAL OPENING OF THE CAT SCAN ON JUNE 6, 1991.

Beginning in the early 1990s, St. Clare's saw a period of expansion and renovation of which the following are highlights:

- The School of Nursing relocated to St. Bride's College, Littledale - 1990
- A Mammography unit was opened in 1990 and the following year a CT scanner began operation at the hospital
- In 1992 obstetrics and neonatology services were transferred to the Grace General Hospital. At St. Clare's thoracic surgery was centralized, psychiatry services doubled in size, general and orthopaedic surgery were significantly enhanced.
- The official opening of LeMarchant House, a mental health centre of St. Clare's - 1994
- Official opening of newly renovated ambulatory services - orthopaedic and surgical clinics - 1994
- Opening of Intermediate Care Unit - 1994
- Official opening of renovated emergency department and medical/surgical day care unit - 1994
- Official opening and dedication of the Endoscopy Suite in memory of Dr. Garrett Brownrigg - 1995

In 1994 St. Clare's bid farewell to Sister Elizabeth Davis following her appointment as chief executive officer of the Health Care Corporation of St. John's. Dr. Sean Conroy continued as medical director and became the acting executive director of St. Clare's, a position he held for one year. He was replaced by Sister Phyllis Corbett who was administrator for one year.



St. Clare's Joins Health Care Corporation of St. John's

On December 8, 1994, an Agreement was signed by the Congregation of the Sisters of Mercy and the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador regarding the future of the hospital. This agreement was negotiated by the Congregation, the Board of Governors of St. Clare's and the Government.

Under the Agreement, the Government purchased St. Clare's Mercy Hospital and provided that the mission, philosophy and values of St. Clare's be maintained. In a Ministerial Statement, Honourable Lloyd Matthews, Minister of Health, paid tribute to the Congregation for the tremendous contribution it has made to health services in the province during the past 72 years.



On March 23, 1995, the Board of Governors held its last meeting at St. Clare's and a ceremony was held to mark the transfer of governance to the new Corporation. The ceremony celebrated the mission and service of St. Clare's for seventy three years and on April 1, 1995, St. Clare's became part of the newly formed Health Care Corporation of St. John's. In 1995, in accord with the December 1994 agreement, the St. Clare's Mercy Hospital Advisory Council was established. Its purpose is to advise the Board of Trustees of the Health Care Corporation of St. John's on matters relating to the mission and values of St. Clare's Mercy Hospital.

In 1997 St. Clare's celebrated the diamond anniversary of its founding. It provided an opportunity for staff, physicians and volunteers to celebrate 75 years of competent and compassionate care to the people who entrust themselves to their care.

We give thanks for God's continuous blessings toward St. Clare's. Rooted in a proud tradition, may it continue to live out "Mercy Above All" in new times and in new ways.

St. Clare's Mercy Hospital

1922 - 1996

Chairpersons, Board of Governors

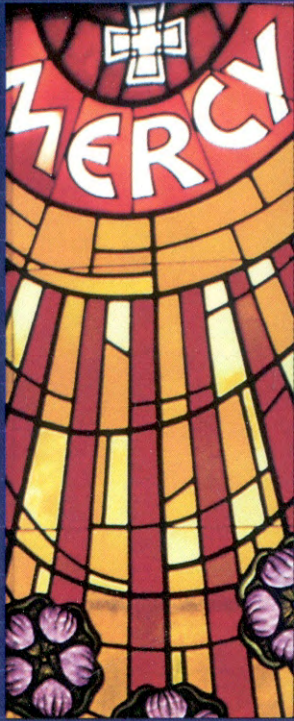
Archbishop E.P. Roche	1939 - 1950
Archbishop P.J. Skinner	1950 - 1972
Most Rev. D.P. Morrissey	1972 - 1989
Mr. Aidan Maloney	1989 - 1995

Administrators/Executive Directors

Sr. Mary Bernard Gladney	1922 - 1923
Sr. Mary Aloysius Rawlins	1923 - 1931; 1937 - 1952
Sr. Mary Stanislaus Parsons	1931 - 1937
Sr. Mary Loretta Mc Isaac	1954 - 1955
Sr. Mary Fabian Hennebury	1955 - 1981
Lucy (Power) Dobbin	1982 - 1986
Sr. Elizabeth M. Davis	1986 - 1994
Dr. Sean Conroy	1994 - 1995
Sr. Phyllis Corbett	1995 - 1996

Chiefs of Staff

Dr. Joseph B. Murphy	1939 - 1958
Dr. Garrett M. Brownrigg	1958 - 1977
Dr. E. Aidan MacLaughlin	1977 - 1984
Dr. George W. Battcock	1984 - 1991
Dr. David B. Peddle	1991 - 1995



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