



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.

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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.

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# St. Joseph's Hospital, Gravelbourg, Saskatchewan

The Hospital, The Community,  
The Professional

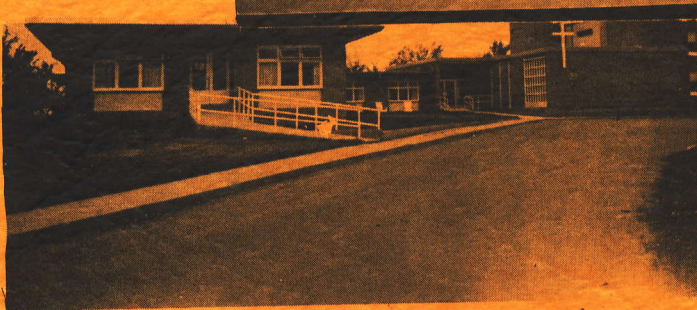
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Digitized: March 2016

# St. Joseph's Hospital

Gravelbourg, Saskatchewan



THE HOSPITAL

THE COMMUNITY

THE PROFESSIONAL

Dear Professional:

We, at St. Joseph's Hospital and Foyer d'Youville are proud of our work place and of the community in which we live. We sincerely feel that our community and our hospital have something to offer which will satisfy your personal as well as professional needs.

The intent of this brochure is to share with you some of these unique benefits in the hope that you will decide to join us and experience for yourself this most fullfilling way of life.

Good health is an important part of what our community has to offer, and as such it is a top priority in the minds of both the providers and users of health care services in Gravelbourg and its surrounding municipalities.

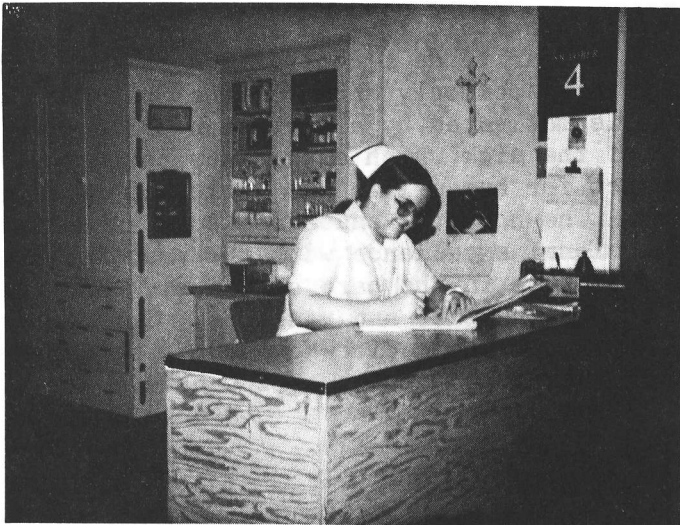
For that reason, we need you to ensure that our sick, our disabled, our disadvantaged, and our elderly will continue to receive the care they so richly deserve.

We are convinced that Gravelbourg has a lot to offer to you and your family. We encourage you to read our brochure and decide for yourself.

If you wish to discuss this matter further, please do not hesitate to call the Adminstrator at St. Joseph's Hospital. We would be pleased to hear from you.

At St. Joseph's - We Care

## THE HOSPITAL

Historical Notes:

St Joseph's Hospital, an imposing four-storey institution, first opened its doors in April 1928, as a result of a joint effort between the Grey Nuns and the people of Gravelbourg and the surrounding districts.

Beginnings for St. Joseph's Hospital were difficult because shortly after its opening, winds, drought and crop failure became the lot of Western Canada. There was, as a result, no money for food, water and fuel, thus placing the future of the hospital in jeopardy. However, the people of the area being highly interested in and proud of their hospital contributed in the way they could to supply vegetables, meat, eggs and flour. It is thanks to their generosity that the hospital managed to pull through hard times.

### Philosophy:

St. Joseph's Hospital, founded and directed by Les Soeurs de la Charité de L'Hôpital Général de Montréal (Soeurs Grises) commonly known as the Grey Nuns of Montréal, is motivated by a Christian philosophy of the care of the sick which emphasizes the dignity of man, respect for human life and nobleness of service to others. The hospital endeavors to fuse scientific and professional excellence with the practice of Christian virtues in the care of the sick and in its relationship with staff and visitors. The hospital is also guided by the Medico-Moral Code as set up by the Catholic Health Conference of Canada.

### The Hospital:

St. Joseph's is rated as a 32 bed hospital with 23 beds set up. Gravelbourg is proud of the fact that its hospital is accredited since 1954, thus assuring its people that optimum care is given to their sick and disabled.



General patient care services are rendered, among these we find: medicine, surgery, pediatrics and obstetrics. Diagnostic facilities include: radiology, laboratory and electrocardiography. Emergency services are available on a 24-hour basis.

The hospital has a staff component of 44 full-time equivalent positions including both professionals and non-professionals. There are three members on the Medical Staff. Consultant services are available for radiology and laboratory on a regular basis, while other consultant services such as in medical records, nursing dietetics, laundry etc. as required.

The Hospital is equipped with a cardiac monitor-defibrillator with a Harco-9 telephone hook-up system to Saskatoon for immediate consultation with cardiologists. Among other modern equipment we find an Ohio Transport incubator and an Electronic fetal-scope. The purchase of such equipment was made possible through the generous dedication of the Hospital Auxilliary and the local community clubs.

#### Community Needs:

The community of Gravelbourg and the surrounding district relies greatly on the efficient and professional services of its hospital. Being located 80 miles from the nearest larger city hospital, it is most important that it be equipped and staffed to deal with all types of conditions. St. Joseph's strives to provide optimum services and is therefore attempting to do this through continuous in-service education to its personnel and the availability of proper equipment and facilities needed for better patient care.

Foyer d'Youville Home:



A 50 bed nursing home, Foyer d'Youville Home, for levels 1, 2, and 3 residents is attached to the hospital, sharing the same administration and a few other services as well. This nursing home was built in 1961 as a response to the needs of the community. As a result of a new program provided by S.H.S.P., two level 1V beds have been added to the hospital, thus Gravelbourg is now in a position to offer levels 1,2, 3, and 4 services as well as acute care to the elderly and handicapped people of Gravelbourg and the surrounding area.

Over the years, St. Joseph's Hospital has proven to be an excellent hospital to be in, either as a patient or as a staff member. Because of the size of this institution, it has been possible to offer personalized care and attention to all.

## THE COMMUNITY:



## The Town of Gravelbourg as a Place to Live and Work:

We invite you to look at a quiet, clean prospering Saskatchewan Prairie town with positive qualities to offer as a place to live and work. Why not consider Gravelbourg? Let us tell you some reasons why you should.

Gravelbourg is an attractive community immersed with a cultural heritage which is reflected by the architecture of its prominent buildings. They are a symbol of the cultural dreams of founding pioneers. Gravelbourg is a meeting of different ethnic groups, mixed to blend as a people who are proud of their home and community. It is located in a rich grain growing district along the Wood River, served by cross-roads of highways. It is fairly close to Regina the Capital City, but closer to the City of Moose Jaw and Swift Current. It is traditionally



known as the Education Centre of the Province, with a fully bilingual teaching program from beginner's grade to secondary level at the College Mathieu. Education and personal developments have been encouraged and supported by the local population.

Gravelbourg has also developed important facilities for leisure activities. The local arena, swimming pool, curling club, bowling alley, theatre as well as a good library and community college, provide many opportunities for physical and cultural development. Summer recreation is available at Thomson Lake



Regional Park where swimming, water skiing, golfing, fishing and camping are just 10 minutes away from Town Centre.

Gravelbourg has professional services with good legal firms and dental practice. It also has good retail outlets and other services and is well known far and wide as a good trading centre.

More important to a physician is our local hospital, which has a long record of accreditation and is recognized as a Regional Health Centre pursuing a high quality level of patient care. This noble ideal is consistent with the ideals of the Sisters of the Grey Nuns who have operated the hospital since 1928. Why not drop in, we would be happy to be your host and guide, and would be anxious to see you and your family comfortable temporarily or permanently.

#### THE PROFESSIONAL:



#### The Joys of Rural Practice:

In these days of urban drift, urban blight and urban sprawl it might be timely to have a last look at rural medical practice before it disappears from the face of the earth.

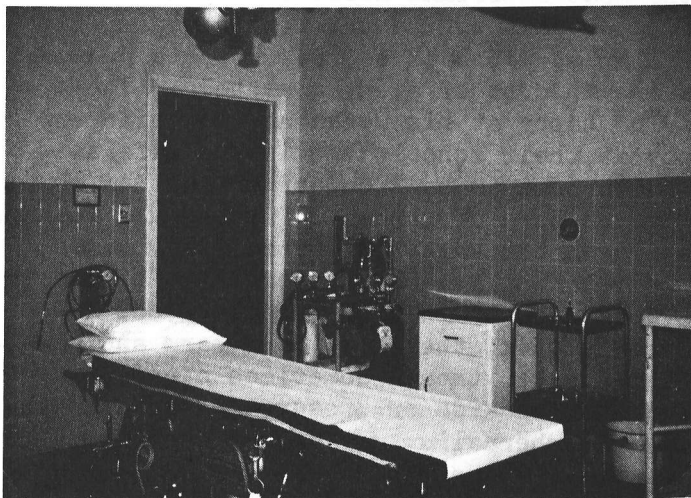
The pundits tell us that solo country practice is doomed - and a good thing too. I often wonder whether this is a self-fulfilling prophecy, for those who seek power gravitate towards each other and congregate around the seats of power, which usually exist in large urban centres, leaving those who are not interested in power at the periphery. Unfortunately, those who wish to govern eventually do so, and their decisions are binding on those who do not wish to be governed, just to be left in peace to enjoy their solitude.

General practice is not a branch of medicine - it is the main trunk from which the branches spring. Rural general practice, especially in Saskatchewan, is the grassroots of medicine. In the controversy over general versus family practice, then, solo practice in a small town is the ultimate of both. It would be impossible to have a more "general" practice. For example, it is very possible for a country doctor to treat four generations of some families, and deliver the children of three sisters who all married into families whose collateral branches, in turn, he cares for.



Does it take a special breed of person to become a country doctor? Maybe it does, maybe it doesn't. Certainly we have to be self-reliant, but whether we learn through exposure to this kind of practice or whether the challenge attracts only self-reliant doctors, is difficult to determine.

For those who wish to plough their own particular furrow in their own particular way, no matter how serpentine it may appear to an outsider, there is nothing to compare with being an intellectual peasant. To walk down to the post office each morning and be greeted as "the" doctor by those you meet gives a real sense of satisfaction. And, once



accustomed to the lack of either street names or numbers, you find that house calls in a small town with no traffic jams or parking problems become pleasant.

It is amusing to read the give-away medical journals with their long-winded articles on buying a place in the country to "get away from it all"

and all the pitfalls to avoid. They seem to be written by urban dwellers for urban dwellers, as if nobody else existed.

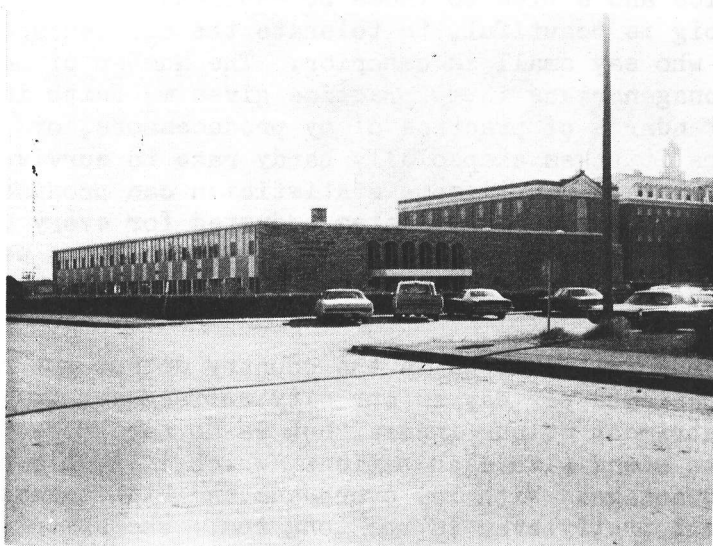
When a country doctor and his wife need to get away from it all, they simply head for the big city for the weekend to stay at a luxury hotel with indoor pool and room service, and damn the expense!

At holiday resorts the signs "city prices" in shop windows appear to be a disadvantage rather than an attraction as city prices are in a lot of instances almost always higher than ours. Real estate prices are still far below city prices.

Probably the most important asset to any doctor is his wife. If she misses the bright lights and big shops, forget it and go back to the concrete jungle, for she is the fulcrum of every household. The husband may be happy at his work and the children may be happy at their school, but if the wife is depressed, then home is hell on earth. But if she is glad, to have an acre of garden to attend and to know that the children can walk home from hockey games safe from molestation and motor accident: if she is content to work with the church women's group and lead the Brownie pack, then home is a warm and comfortable place to be, though sometimes overflowing with the neighbours' kids or preserving jars and the accompanying paraphernalia.

City colleagues are always asking about our schools, apparently not realizing that like hospitals, equipment and staff have to conform to provincial standards. Our school started out as a Convent, but now is called Gravelbourg High School and is a new building of brick with good facilities and an excellent teaching staff. The school principal has been able to trace seventy graduates who have become teachers and forty registered nurses. We

know of two dentists and three doctors. There are six lawyers and a judge and a sprinkling of mathematicians, physicists and engineers.



Because of our largely Roman Catholic population, Religious and Priests figure quite prominently in our list of graduates. The French heritage has enabled a number of students to succeed in the Bilingual services of Radio, Television and the Immigration department.

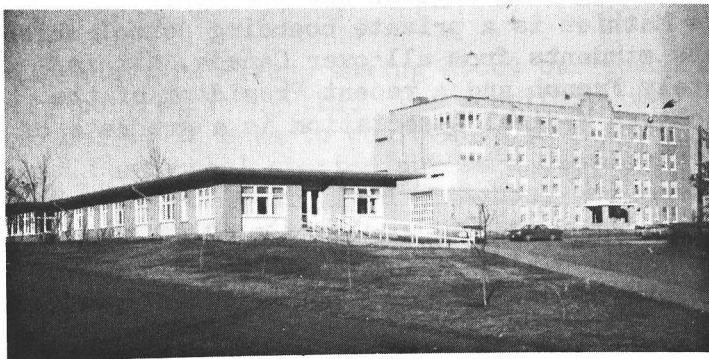
There are two parallel streams in our school system which are taught in English and the other in French. College Mathieu is a private boarding school which attracts students from all over Canada. It is completely French and a recent President of the Saskatchewan Medical Association is a graduate of its halls.

Students of Gravelbourg High School, under the direction of one of the teachers, have made two 16 mm sound movies which have been shown on both French and English networks of the C.B.C.

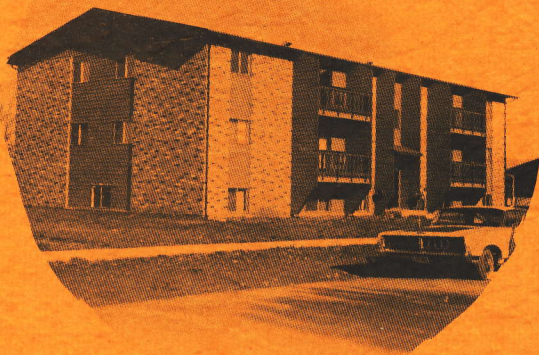
So far I haven't said anything about the quality of medicine practised in the country, but that was not really the point of this exercise. This is simply a statement of the advantages of country practice and a plea to those bureaucrats who believe that big is beautiful, to tolerate the existence of those who say small is superior. The number of octo- and nonagenarians in my practice gives me faith in the standards of practice of my predecessors, or perhaps it takes a specially hardy race to survive the prairies: Until some statistician can produce morbidity and mortality rates adjusted for every conceivable (or inconceivable) variant, how can we ever tell?

It is possible that we in the country do not see as many patients per day as our city colleagues, to the detriment of our income, but we do have more time to spend with each patient, which is to his or her advantage. With low overheads and high taxes we come out pretty even in the long run. The absence of sophisticated equipment may be a disadvantage but, on the other hand, we do not pipe nitrous oxide through tubes marked "oxygen".

"Common things occur commonly" says Neil McLean, and correct treatment depends on an accurate diagnosis: and that, in turn, must rest on a complete history and a thorough examination, whether the patient be seen in a sod shack or a penthouse suite.



**Modern  
Appartments**



**Efficient  
Ambulance  
Service**

Prepared jointly by:

The Board of Directors, Administration,  
Medical Staff and Nursing Staff of  
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Gravelbourg, Saskatchewan.  
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