

A HISTORY OF THE

Sudbury General Hospital

of the Immaculate Heart of Mary

and its Evolution into St. Joseph's Health Centre



Greg J. Humbert



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A hospital founded and operated by the
Sisters of St. Joseph of Sault Ste. Marie

by
Greg J. Humbert

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Greg J. Humbert
Foundations Editor

Sudbury, Ontario “The Land Above the Ore Below”

In 1970 the International Nickel Company of Canada (INCO) published a small 32-page promotional booklet titled “The Land Above the Ore Below.” It highlighted the historical development of the largest producing nickel company in the world, the company’s influence on the local economy and the life of its citizens. It is common knowledge that much of the history of the City of Sudbury is defined by the ore that was mined far below its surface. One miner who worked at Creighton Mine is reported to have boasted by remarking that he “travelled 15 miles to work—14 miles to the company parking lot and a mile down below the surface.”

But, while the discovery of nickel had brought jobs and prosperity to Sudbury, the primary contributing factor to its foundation was, in fact, the building of the transcontinental Canadian Pacific Railway (CPR). By 1883 the railway crews had reached into northern Ontario and were near Ramsey¹ Lake where they were blasting a path through the Precambrian shield to lay railway track.

Near a temporary muddy construction camp of tents and shanties, laid out for the surveyors and labourers, they noticed a shiny silvery-white fleck in the blast rock. This would turn out to be valuable sought-after nickel ore. Initially “The railway builders had no reason to linger at Sudbury Junction where the terrain, dominated by gigantic rock outcrops interspersed with extensive swamps and endless lakes, was the most difficult imaginable for railway workers.”²

Yet, the discovery of high-grade nickel ore changed everything, and soon Sudbury developed into more than a watering hole for the steam engines of the CPR. The town quickly transformed into a thriving mining town which would draw more surveyors, geologists, land speculators, miners and builders.

The unearthing of nickel ore brought interest from far beyond the Sudbury basin. Even Thomas Edison, the American businessman and inventor of electric power generation, mass communication and sound recording, visited Northern Ontario in 1901.³ Believe it or not electric cars were becoming a novel mode of transport in the United States at the turn of the 20th century, an idea that took another hundred years to gain any traction. However their batteries at the time were heavy and made of a lead-acid combination that corroded quickly. Always ahead of the



The Canadian Pacific Railway:
Sudbury Junction, to Algoma and Gold Mines, F. Jennings, 1888

curve, Edison was here searching for metals that could create a superior battery. After many tests, he discovered that nickel was one of them and ultimately patented the nickel-iron battery that was lighter and rechargeable.

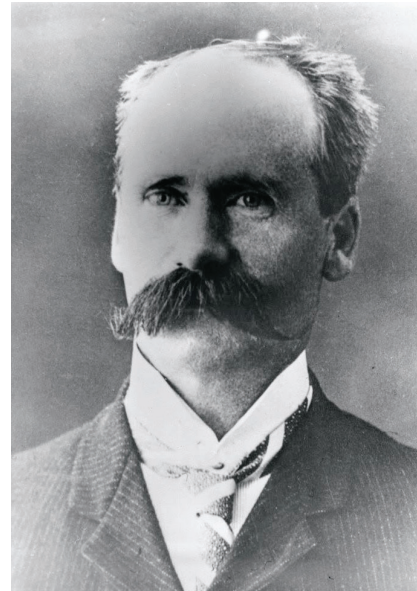
Like all burgeoning industries the mines also brought a need for merchants and stores, the demand for homes to house families, which would then require schools for the children and a hospital for the sick and injured.

The Hospitals Before the Hospital

A hospital going by the name of the “Sudbury General Hospital” existed long before the involvement of the Sisters of St. Joseph.

Yet, even prior to this the first known hospital in this burgeoning mining town was a CPR company hospital that was opened for a very short time, closing in 1887.⁴ It was created in a 40 by 30 foot building with enough room to accommodate fifteen patients. Dr. William Howey managed the hospital for the CPR with his young wife Florence who assisted him as the nurse. Doctor Howey's log hospital was much too small to accommodate the hundreds of lumber-jacks and miners of the vast districts of Nipissing and Algoma.

Because of this, Dr. Jacob W. Hart was the next doctor to set up practice in Sudbury. Born March 12, 1858 he hailed from Durham, Ontario. Initially he began his practice in Huntsville after graduating from medical school. He quickly became involved in local Huntsville politics, serving first as a reeve of the town from 1891-1892 and then its mayor from



Dr. Jacob W. Hart

1901-1903. During this time he established Huntsville's first hospital and was so successful at the venture that by 1891 he decided to launch a satellite branch hospital in Sudbury.

One account relates that Dr. Hart purchased the building that had originally accommodated the CPR hospital. When that hospital had closed the building was converted into a private home. Dr. Hart retrofitted the building once again, returning it to its original

purpose to serve as a hospital that became known simply as the “Sudbury Hospital.”

Another account relates that in 1892, Dr. Hart bought a piece of land from a Mr. H. Boulay situated on Durham Street close to Elm. The small hospital he built on this land was also called the “Sudbury Hospital”. Two years later, Dr. Hart sold this property to Dr. John S. Goodfellow.⁵

In 1894 a second hospital, the Algoma and Nipissing Hospital was established by Dr. R. B. Struthers near the present day Elm Street West. A year later it was renamed the Sudbury General Hospital, and a year after that, in 1896, it was leased to the Grey Nuns of the Cross (now the Sisters of Charity of Ottawa) who renamed it once again in 1897 calling it

St. Joseph's Hospital. When the Sisters arrived they found three patients, two nurses, and two "man-servants". The inventory included medicine, cooking utensils, furniture, and 46 beds with 48 mattresses, 53 pillows and 51 blankets to furnish them.

The Sisters were here to stay and within a year the Sisters decided to construct a new hospital building and open a new St. Joseph's Hospital on property owned by the diocese⁶ where it would remain until it closed in 1975.

Interestingly enough, the Grey Nuns made the decision to construct this new St. Joseph's Hospital because the hospital building they had leased was seized by the town for unpaid taxes. This action and seizure placed them in a difficult and awkward position. As a result they concluded that it would be best to own their own property and building so that their ministry to the sick would not be compromised. Meanwhile, the original Sudbury General Hospital, founded by Dr. Struthers, settled its tax arrears with the town and continued to operate under new management until 1913.

The Sisters of St. Joseph

In the little village of Le Puy, France, the Sisters of St. Joseph began as a small nucleus of six women gathered to alleviate the suffering caused by civil and religious strife. A travelling Jesuit missionary, Father Jean Pierre Médaille, SJ, became associated with them and by 1650, these women were recognized as a congregation of Women Religious—The Sisters of St. Joseph. During the French Revolution several Sisters were guillotined which forced the others to go into

hiding, but finally in 1794 they were free to return to their works of mercy. The congregation was re-established in 1807 as The Sisters of St. Joseph of Lyon.

Thirty years after surviving the French Revolution, the congregation spread to North America when six Sisters landed in St. Louis, Missouri in 1836. From there they established themselves in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. Responding to a call from the bishop in Toronto in 1851 the first Sisters of St Joseph from Carondelet /Philadelphia travelled to Toronto, Ontario which was in the midst of a typhus epidemic. Thus began the Canadian foundations.⁷

Within 40 years, the congregation established other independent branches in the dioceses of Hamilton, London, Peterborough and Pembroke where Sisters founded and operated orphanages, schools and hospitals. In 1881, four Sisters travelled by steamboat from Toronto to Prince Arthur's Landing (the present-day city of Thunder Bay) at the head of Lake Superior and began ministry in Northern Ontario.

By 1936, Bishop R.H. Dignan, second bishop of the Diocese of Sault Ste. Marie (1934-1958) invited the Peterborough Sisters working within his diocese to form a new independent congregation for his vast and fast growing diocese which consisted mainly of immigrants and a large indigenous population. One hundred and twenty one Sisters working in Sault Ste. Marie, Thunder Bay, Sudbury and North Bay responded.

The new Congregation assumed responsibility for St. Joseph's Hospital (1884) in Port Arthur and St. Joseph's Hospital (1931) in North Bay and was soon sending Sisters

off for further studies in nursing instruction and hospital administration. Soon they opened hospitals in Blind River 1940, Little Current 1944, Elliot Lake in 1959, and of course the Sudbury General Hospital in 1950.

Carrying on the tradition of all the Sisters of St. Joseph, this newest Congregation, with its Motherhouse in North Bay, began to reach out to the small communities around Lake Superior and on Manitoulin Island. Sisters opened separate schools in Northern Ontario and established hospitals where no one had gone before. They cared for orphans and the frail elderly, and also brought to each community the gift of music that they taught instrumentally and in choirs.⁸

The “New” Sudbury General Hospital Beginnings

Some hospitals spring up rather quickly moving from the recognition of their need to being founded, built and opened, all in a very short time. Others take more time to be fully realized. The Sudbury General Hospital belonged to that latter group.

Already in July 1941 correspondence between Bishop Ralph Hubert Dignan, bishop of the Diocese of Sault Ste. Marie, and the Ontario Government was interchanged, assessing the hospital situation in Sudbury and investigating, not only if a new hospital was needed, but whether or not a new hospital might be feasible. Three years later on July 12, 1944⁹ the bishop wrote to the Honourable R.P. Vivian, MD, Minister of Health for the Province of Ontario to give him an update of the ongoing investigation into a new hospital.

He addressed a concern in the community that a new hospital operated by the Sisters of St. Joseph might cause ill feelings with the French-Canadian community who would interpret a new English hospital as an affront to the existing French (really bilingual) Hôpital St. Joseph's Hospital. The bishop reassured the Minister that he had consulted with the French-Canadian priests and laity on the matter and that they were “not disposed in any way to make an issue regarding a second hospital.”¹⁰



Bishop Ralph Hubert Dignan,
Diocese of Sault Ste. Marie,

He also informed the Minister that property was available for the purpose of the new hospital from a Mr. Fred Martin Stafford. “This is one of two properties mentioned in the *Sudbury Daily Star* some weeks ago. It has a spacious house and two acres of land overlooking Ramsey Lake in the city of Sudbury. It is in the best section of the city. This property may be purchased for \$23,500 from the owner who lives in Florida.”¹¹

He ends the letter by asking the Ministry to approve the building of a new 100-bed general hospital for Sudbury and that the Sisters “... be allowed to temporarily use the present residence as a Maternity Hospital until the new hospital

shall have been erected, when the residence may be used as a home for the nursing staff.¹² The 20 to 25 bed maternity hospital “would proceed without delay”¹³ accommodating an urgent community need until the hospital was built. The maternity hospital could also be operational with a modicum of renovations to the Stafford home.

A week later, on July 20, 1944, a letter from the General Superior of the Sisters of St. Joseph of Sault Ste. Marie, Mother Cecilia (*nee* Maude Bridget Devine) was also written to the Honourable R.P. Vivian, MD, Minister of Health. In her letter, the Sisters “... request permission to establish a Public General Hospital of approximately 100 beds in the City of Sudbury. We ask permission to establish in due time a school of nursing.”¹⁴ Bishop Dignan encouraged an immediate beginning of the project, which “would be the prudent and feasible manner of ending all opposition.”¹⁵

This choice of words by the bishop is interesting since previously he had assured the Ministry of Health that there was no such resistance or differing opinions about building a second hospital. The perception of “opposition” might have come about because a group of citizens were independently exploring whether or not the city of Sudbury needed a second hospital.

This Citizen's Committee was led by the powerful William (Bill) Edge Mason who was a mover and a shaker in the city of Sudbury. He was owner of the *Sudbury Star*, the *North Bay Nugget*, CKSO radio station and a number of other businesses in northern Ontario. This “fact-finding” Citizen's Committee under the chairmanship of Mason consisted of a number of doctors as well as local businessmen. In the end

all had agreed that it was time to have another hospital in the city. They were equally amenable to the idea that the Sisters of St. Joseph should undertake the project.¹⁶

Bishop Dignan and Monsignor J.C. Humphrey, pastor of Christ the King Parish were finally invited to attend the round-table Citizen's Committee meeting at the Nickel Range Hotel on August 3, 1944 at 8:00 which was also attended by the Inspector of Hospitals for Ontario. Mr. Mason expressed the wish that the work of the committee could be concluded as quickly as possible with all the relevant facts laid before them. The committee ultimately neither recommended nor rejected the proposal of a second hospital.

Any proposed new hospital remained in the hands of the Department of Health. Their conclusion came quickly. Bishop Dignan received a letter dated August 9, 1944 from the Deputy Minister of the Ontario Department of Health providing tacit approval for the establishment of another hospital operated by the Sisters of St. Joseph and encouraging the Sisters to proceed with the purchase of Stafford property.

Despite the establishment of an “independent” Citizen's Committee, Mr. William Mason held no ill feeling about the possibility of another Catholic hospital in Sudbury. He professed being an ally of the project who, in October 1944, supported the Sisters at a special parks commission meeting in their desire to purchase the Stafford property. And again in August 1944 he encouraged the citizens group by expressing “his great wish to see the Sisters of St. Joseph build the hospital they proposed to erect on the site overlooking Lake Ramsey.”¹⁶ And again in April 1947 he brought the

Honourable Russell T. Kelly, provincial Minister of Health at the time to Sudbury where he told him he was 100 per cent behind the Sisters. "These people are dealing with facts, not just talking about building a hospital. They are determined to build one, and I am with them all the way."¹⁸

He offered more than verbal endorsement. When he died in 1948, his fortune was "estimated to be \$1,652,382 – the equivalent of about \$20 million in 2022. After his business dealings were settled and his family provided for, the remainder was left to a charitable foundation created in his name to support Sudbury hospitals, the Canadian Red Cross Society, the Sudbury library, and Sudbury Community Arena."¹⁹

Sudbury General Hospital received a gift of \$100,000 from the Mason Foundation.²⁰ According to the *North Bay Daily Nugget*, Bishop Dignan remarked in a letter in 1949 that "At the turning of the first sod by the Lieutenant-Governor and myself, Mr. Mason was most cordial and cooperative and promised me every assistance and cooperation in bringing the establishment of the new hospital to a successful conclusion."²¹ Another article in the *North Bay*



William (Bill) Edge Mason
Sudbury entrepreneur

Daily Nugget reported, "From funds in the foundation will be taken sufficient to construct a wading pool for children in Memorial Park, after which 40 per cent of the residue will go for construction and maintenance of the proposed Sudbury General Hospital."²² The hospital later named the Mason Residence for nurses after this long-time supporter and benefactor.

The Stafford Property is Purchased and Other Formalities

In anticipation of the project, Bylaw No. 2431 of the City of Sudbury was amended on August 21, 1944 rezoning the land to be used for a hospital and nursing school.

On September 2, 1944 the Stafford Estate at 700 Paris Street which overlooked Ramsey Lake and adjacent to Bell Park was purchased for \$23,500. It consisted of 2.63 acres of land (Lot 5)²³ with a large house that had been owned by Mr. Fred Martin Stafford, a retired Sudbury department store owner and his wife Henriette. The Sisters took possession of the property on October 4, 1944.

A difficulty arose when the Sisters had the property surveyed before purchasing it.²³ An error in the original survey showed a sliver of land on the Stafford property that was really the property of the city. As well, it showed a portion of the land on which Long Lake Road was built as city property. This land was rightfully the Stafford property. In the end the remainder of Lot 5 adjoining the Stafford property closer to the street was exchanged with the city of Sudbury for a piece of the Stafford property facing Ramsey Lake, land that



The Stafford Estate on the shores of Ramsey Lake, Sudbury

would enhance Bell Park and give the park more access to the lake. As Mayor W.S. Beaton remarked at the time, “They (the Sisters) have certainly been fair. They could have built their hospital to the road line on the east and we would never have known the difference. We (the city) thought they already had the land that they are asking for now.”²⁴

The motion before the Sudbury Parks Commission was tabled as such “That this Commission transfer to the Sisters of St. Joseph of the Diocese of Sault Ste. Marie, that portion of land 1.57 acres in area in exchange for the right-of-way and property from the Stafford property to the lake, subject to the approval of City Council.”²⁵ The approval for this exchange was granted at a special meeting of the Sudbury City Council on November 21, 1944, and was processed for the nominal fee of \$1.00.

The formal decree of the diocesan church establishing the

hospital was granted by Bishop Dignan on August 10, 1944. He notes in his Minute Book, “Issue decree of canonical erection of Sudbury General Hospital under the patronage of the Immaculate Heart of Mary, to be operated by the Sisters of St. Joseph of Sault Ste. Marie. Government authorizes Stafford property to be used as a temporary maternity department of the above hospital.”²⁶

The final formal approval (the Order-in-Council) from the Department of Health that provided the Sisters of St. Joseph full authority to establish “The Sudbury General Hospital” was issued on October 17, 1944. Their hope of using the Stafford house as a temporary maternity hospital was, however, not approved by the Ministry. Apart from this, the Ministry of Health did provide approval in June 1947 for use of the Stafford home as an overflow facility for “chronic and incurable patients admitted from St. Joseph’s Hospital in order that additional beds may be available in that institution for the care of active cases.”²⁷

All this was undertaken in the throes of Second World War (1939-1945). There is an interesting footnote in the planning and establishment of the Sudbury General Hospital during this wartime period. In searching out every possible avenue for funding, Bishop Dignan wrote letters to the Honourable C.D. Howe, Minister of Munitions and Supplies²⁸ and his Executive Assistant, Mr. William Bennett in Ottawa. “We would be willing to operate as a military hospital either wholly or partially for a period of years. Perhaps confidentially you could advise me as to the possibility of our entering into an agreement with the Government.”²⁹ However, nothing ever came of it.

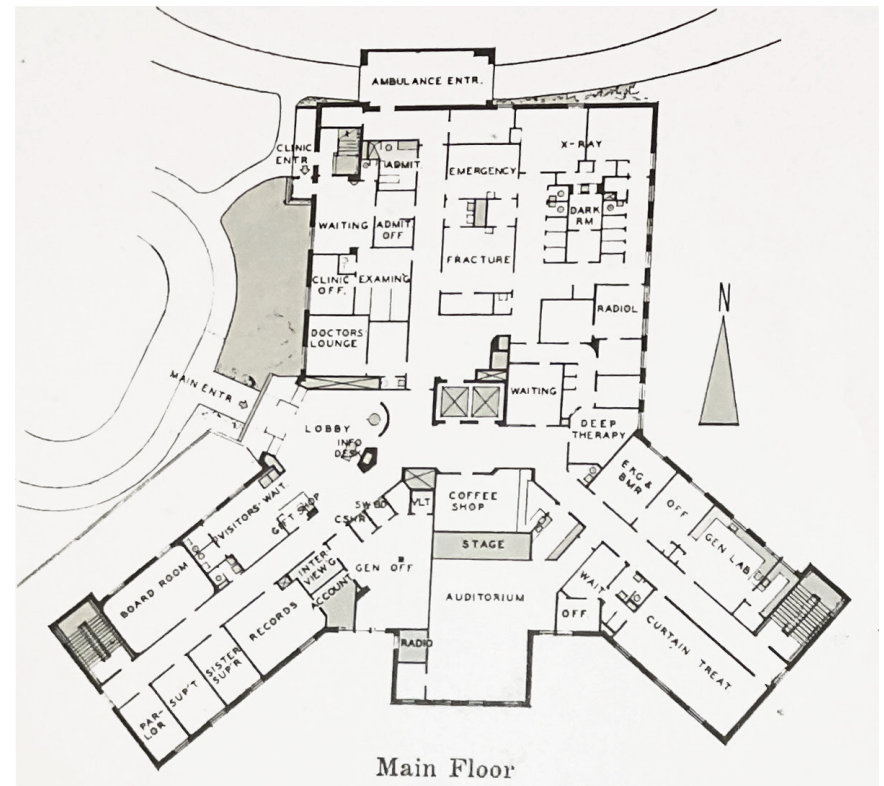


The Stafford Estate Home

The Road to Construction

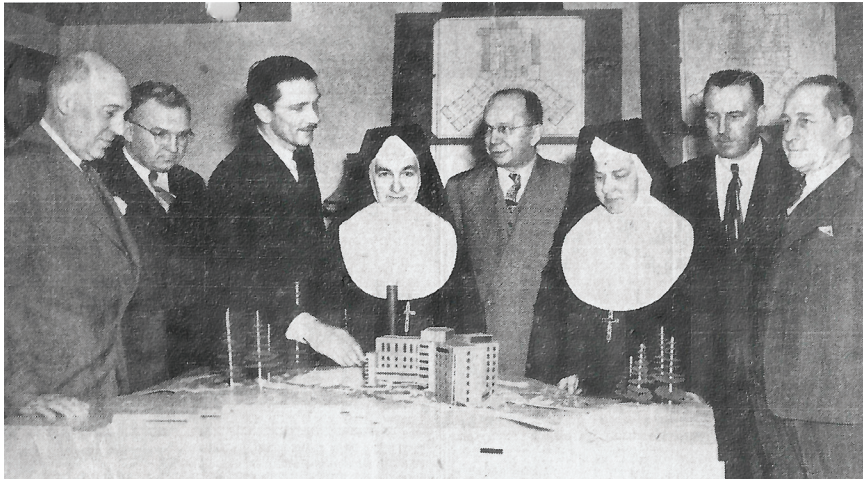
In June 1945 Bishop Dignan, again on behalf of the Sisters, consulted with Mr. Joseph M. Piggot, President of the Pigott Construction Company of Hamilton on the advisability of proceeding with the construction of the hospital as soon as possible. Pigott recommended that the construction be delayed until 1947 when conditions and costs would hopefully be improved. He concluded: "Perhaps the safest thing to say to you is this—if you cannot wait two years, you should go ahead. If it was my own and I could wait two years, I would wait. Whether this opinion is of any value to you, I do not know. It is the best I can do."³⁰

His counsel to delay the project arose from the fallout of the Second World War which had caused many construction projects in Canada to be put on hold because so many permits were being sought for approval. At the same time, labour and building materials were extremely difficult to obtain; shortages in both these essential components still existed all over Canada as a result of the previous war effort. Pigott's opinion was reiterated by Mr. F.J. Brown of Hill-Clark-Francis Limited as well as Anglin-Norcross Ontario Limited, the company ultimately chosen to build the hospital.



Plan of the "main floor" of the Sudbury General Hospital³¹

The Sudbury General Hospital and St. Joseph's Health Centre



Sister Cecilia (centre) Mother General of the Congregation of the Sisters of St. Joseph of Sault Ste. Marie and Sister Joan (3rd from right) discuss new hospital plan.

As a result Bishop Dignan and the Sisters decided to heed their advice and wait. When the time came, Sister M. Joan (*nee* Edith Viola Rochon) was appointed to supervise the planning and oversee the construction of the hospital. She was named the Assistant Administrator after the hospital opened.

On February 16, 1948 Louis N. Fabbro was chosen as the architect to design the eight-storey Sudbury General Hospital, as well as send out the necessary tenders for the project. The preliminary hospital plan projected 100 beds, but was to be raised to 168 by the time construction began. The necessary basic services were originally designed to serve up to 300 beds. The hospital went from an original 116,835 sq. ft. at planning to 131,634 sq. ft. upon completion. The final cost of the project was \$2,575,000.00.³² The original “Y” shape of the building was designed to give maximum sunlight to every room.



The Honourable Ray Lawson, lieutenant-governor of Ontario turns the sod, April 6, 1948



July 1948—Excavation of the construction site of the Sudbury General Hospital for the foundation.



Rev. Mother Cecilia and Pat J. McAndrews fill the copper box as a time capsule to mark the day. The box was placed inside the cornerstone.



Sisters, priests and other dignitaries present for the laying of the cornerstone ceremonies. (Sisters L to R): Sr. Camillus, Mother Cecilia, Sr. M. Joan, and Sr. St. John

Anglin-Norcross Ontario Limited, the second lowest bidder, was awarded the contract on March 1, 1948. The Canadian Bank of Commerce accepted to arrange the financing at an estimated cost of \$2,200,000 with the hope that the work would be completed in five months. Both the Federal and Provincial Governments provided a \$165,000 capital grant towards the construction. Bishop Dignan loaned the Sisters \$798,000 at 3% interest.

Older Sisters in the congregation still recall (as part of their oral history) that Mother Cecilia took the unprecedented step to mortgage all of their convents at the time in order to secure this loan from the Canadian Bank of Commerce. This would have amounted to a considerable risk for the Religious Congregation as a whole—to risk everything they owned to proceed with one venture of compassion and service. That being said, I have found no documents as evidence for the congregation's often recounted story of mortgaging all their properties. I did discover letters to their convents and schools of music (spread throughout northern Ontario from North Bay to Thunder Bay) requesting the Sisters to provide any excess funds from their budgets to help pay down the debt acquired in building the Sudbury General Hospital.

What this story does illustrate is the level of commitment and sacrifice, indeed risk, they were willing to take for their mission of providing health care to the people of Sudbury. It would also explain their fierce reluctance to let go of this mission during the province's restructuring program of the mid 1990s. Whatever the veracity of the oral tradition, the fact remains that this loan was ultimately paid off by using the salaries earned by many Sisters who worked as nurses, teachers and music teachers.



Bishop Ralph Hubert Dignan lays the cornerstone of Sudbury General Hospital with the engraved monel trowel donated by the International Nickel Company of Canada (INCO).

Sister M. Joan



Sister M. Joan (*nee* Edith Viola Rochon) was born in Thunder Bay (Port Arthur) Ontario on August 17, 1899, the daughter of Henry and Adeline Rochon. Viola entered the Sisters of St. Joseph of Peterborough, but when the new Congregation began in the Diocese of Sault Ste. Marie she became one of the founding Sisters and made her final vows in that new community on August 15, 1938.

Graduating with a diploma in business and typing, her first mission was to serve as accountant at St. Joseph's Hospital in North Bay while also Superior of St. Joseph's College. In 1936, she moved to St. Joseph's Hospital in Thunder Bay. But soon she began to supervise the construction of the Sudbury General Hospital even before she moved to Sudbury to continue this work. As soon as the hospital was opened Sr. Mary Alice was appointed Administrator, while Sr. Joan became Assistant Administrator. Her skills were not unnoticed by the Congregation and by 1952, she became its General Treasurer. Throughout her life she had an active part in the planning of Avila Centre (Thunder Bay), Mount St. Joseph College (Sault Ste. Marie), the south wing at the Motherhouse (North Bay), and the Little Current Hospital. Sister Joan was no doubt a leader, innovator and driving force in the Congregation for many years. Her skills in building and her business acumen were outstanding. Sister M. Joan died on May 26, 1996 at the age of 97 and is buried at St. Mary's Cemetery in North Bay.

The sod-turning occurred at the construction site on April 6, 1948 with Bishop Dignan and the Lieutenant-Governor of Ontario, the Honourable Ray Lawson officiating, both of them manning the ceremonial shovel. Bishop Dignan noted in his journal that it was a “beautiful day with a large crowd in attendance.”³³ Excavation of the site began in July 1948, blasting rock for the foundation and going down to eighteen feet. By March 1949 the first floor of the structure was completed. The final frame rose 110 feet above the ground and was built using 515 tons of structural steel.³⁴

The Laying of the Cornerstone³⁵ of the second hospital to be built in Sudbury occurred on Monday May 29, 1949 at 3:00 PM with hundreds of citizens and dignitaries assembled for the occasion, including William S. Beaton, Mayor of Sudbury, the Hon. Welland S. Gemmel, MPP for Sudbury, the Hon. J. Leo Gauthier, MP for Nipissing, and the Hon. Charles P. McTague, retired justice of the court of appeal for Ontario. Also present were Rev. Mother Cecilia, Superior-General of the Congregation, Sister Joan, supervisor of the construction of the hospital, and twenty-five Sisters of St. Joseph.

Bishop Dignan patted the cornerstone with mortar, wielding a handsome engraved monel trowel³⁶ donated by the International Nickel Company. The grey cornerstone, quarried in Queenston (near Niagara-on-the Lake, Ontario) weighed over 400 pounds and was inscribed with the year “1949.” As Bishop Dignan completed his blessing he remarked, “Let this building be a monument to the love of God and our fellowman; let it serve suffering humanity and open its doors to all who need succor and help.” Workmen then swung the cornerstone into place and secured it.³⁷

The Master of Ceremonies for the day was Mr. Pat J. McAndrew, chairman of the Hospital Advisory Board. He introduced the guest speakers who were seated on a raised platform covered with a red rug and decorated with potted flowers.

In his remarks, Bishop Dignan stated. “Today marks the partial completion of the new Sudbury General Hospital. These nuns have surmounted untold obstacles. In the early days of their ministering there were no government grants, they received the charity of the poor, journeyed along the C.P.R. collecting funds for their hospitals to care for the sick and needy.” He went on to clarify that “the nun’s work is inter-denominational. There is no bar to any race, color or creed. If you are ill come to the doors of this hospital and you will receive care.”³⁸

A small copper box was placed inside the cornerstone as a time capsule to mark the day. The copper box contained the following.

- Saturday May 28, 1949 edition of the *Sudbury Daily Star*
- The most recent edition of the *Catholic Register*
- A copy of legal documents
- A penny, nickel, dime, quarter and dollar for 1949
- Religious articles
- Progress schedule for the contractor
- A history of hospitals from the Sisters

Shortly after construction began, an Advisory Board to serve the new Sudbury General was formed. The members of this First Advisory Board were:

The Sudbury General Hospital and St. Joseph's Health Centre

- Monsignor J.C. Humphrey, Chairman
- Dr. G. R. Jones, first vice-president, chairman of medical committee
- H.M. Claridge, second vice-president
- Pat J. McAndrew, chairman of legal committee
- George Collins, legal committee
- Louis Fabbro, architect
- Rev. Sister Joan, Administrator of the new hospital
- Rev. Sister Camillus
- Rev. Sister Eugenie
- Mrs. L. Fabbro, Women's Auxiliary

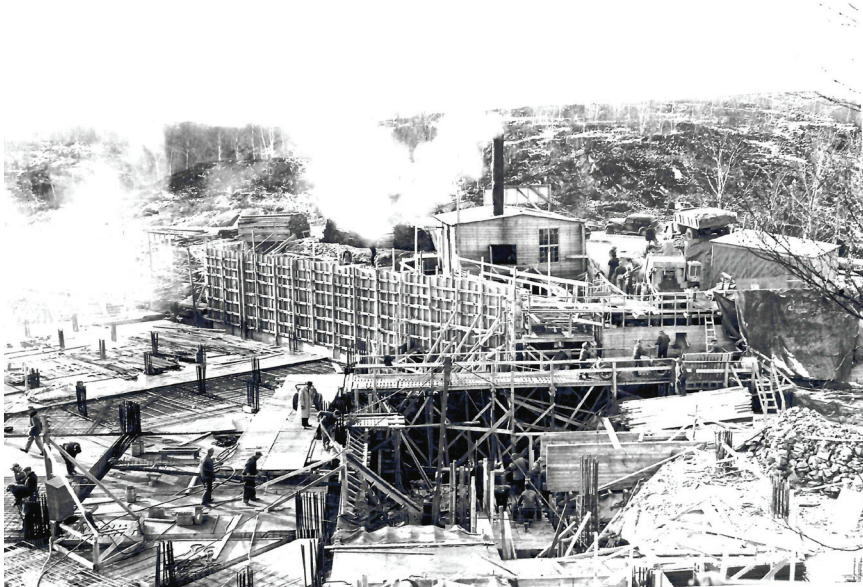


Some of the members of the first Advisory Board of the Sudbury General Hospital
Front Row (L to R): Percy Gardner, unknown, Saul Silverman, Gordon Browning, C.A. Fielding, P.J. McAndrew
Back Row (L to R): Herman Muntz, M.G. Trainor, E.M. Kayser, C.A. Durkee, Dr. G.R. Jones, and Louis Fabbro, architect.

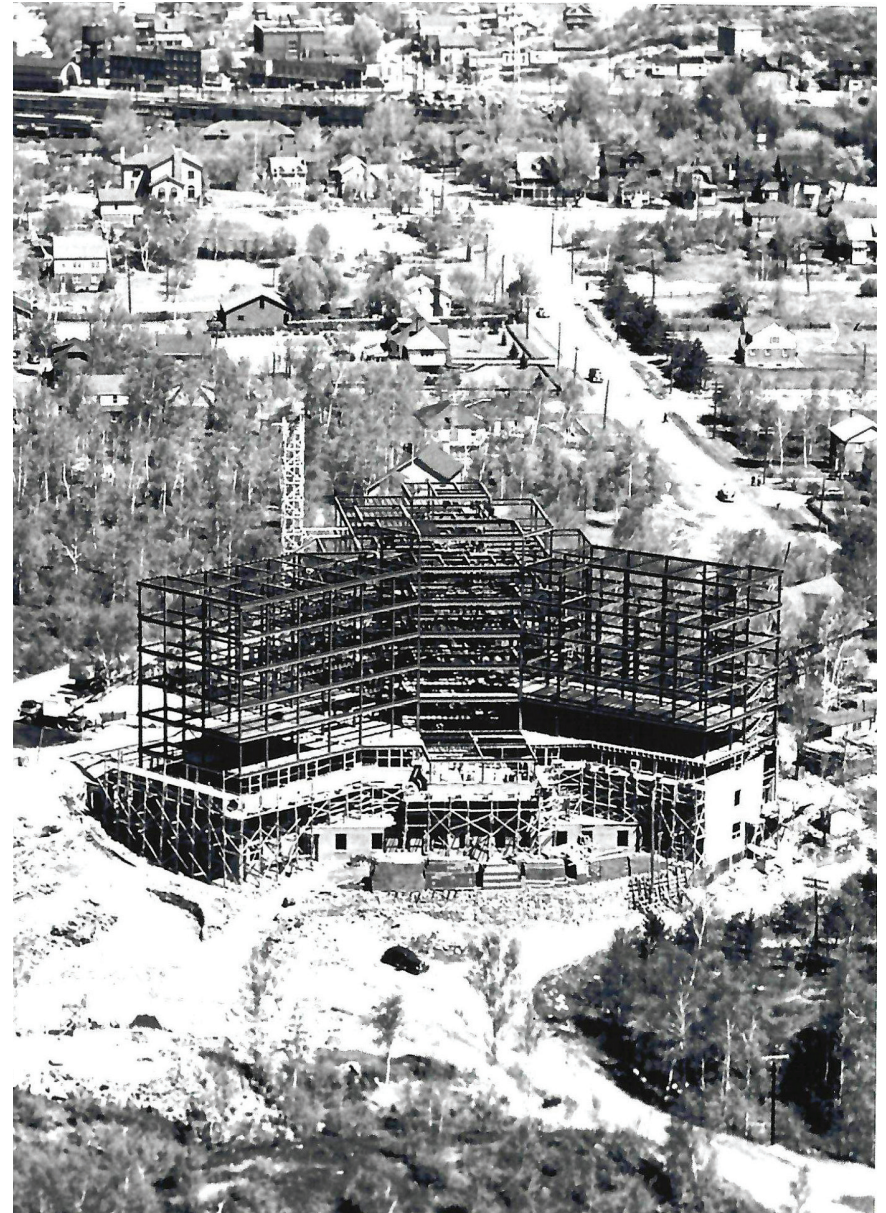
The Sudbury General Hospital and St. Joseph's Health Centre



September 1948—The foundation prepared.



December 1948

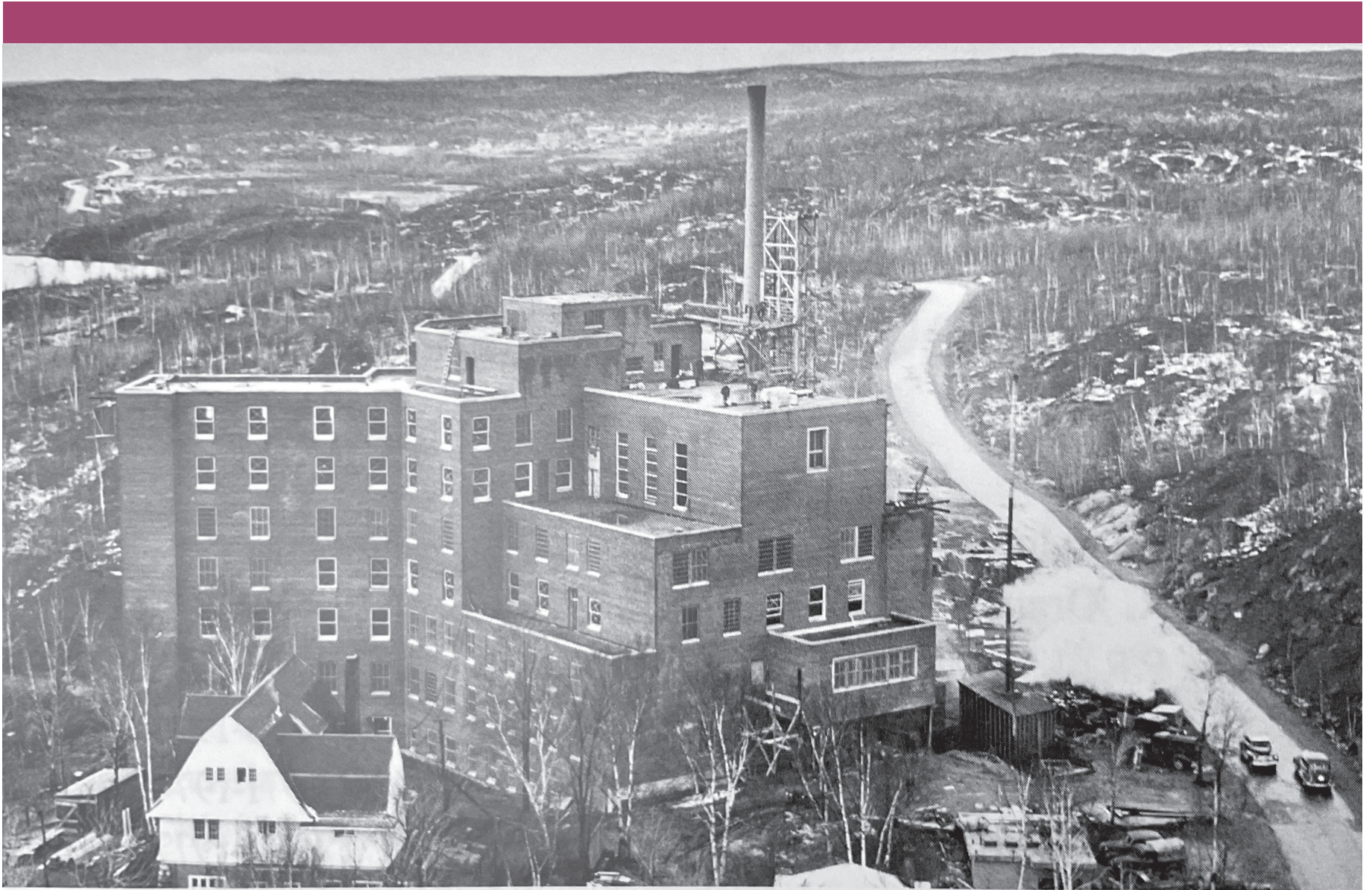


June 1949—The steel superstructure.



The Sudbury General Hospital under construction, 1949.

The Sudbury General Hospital and St. Joseph's Health Centre



November 1949 ~ The Sudbury General Hospital takes shape. Note the Stafford Residence in the left foreground.

Blessing and Official Opening October 15, 1950

When completed the Sudbury General Hospital was the city of Sudbury's highest building.

At the time the hospital opened, thirteen Sisters were assigned to the staff, chief among them the Administrator, Sister Mary Alice (*nee* Alice Quinlan). As well, Sisters held a wide range of positions from medical records, operating room supervisor, ward supervisors, superintendent of nurses, office administrator, to Sisters taking on the positions of librarian and sacristan, as well as managing the laundry.

The first patient was admitted November 1, 1950.³⁹ The first baby born at the hospital on November 13, 1950 was Susan Foerster, the second child of Dr. Fred and Patricia Foerster.⁴⁰

On Friday November 29, 1950 the Vice-President and General Manager of the International Nickel Company (INCO), Mr. R.L. Beattie, presented the Sudbury General Hospital with a cheque for \$125,000 on behalf of the company. Together with a previous donation of \$75,000 it brought the contribution of INCO to \$200,000. Sr. Mary Alice, Administrator and Superior was grateful that this donation helped bring the hospital debt down to \$1,800,000.⁴¹

It was still a considerable debt load for the congregation of Sisters. However, they banded together to address the finances. Mother Cecilia wrote letters pleading with Sisters in all the convents from Thunder Bay to North Bay to send in any "surplus revenue" to the Motherhouse to help pay down the debt. Sisters teaching music in many convents

were an important source of revenue for the congregation.

In this letter Mother Cecilia called the Sudbury General, "Our Lady's Hospital." Normally they would have named the hospital St. Joseph's Hospital, but since there was already a hospital in Sudbury named after St. Joseph, the Sisters finally agreed to call it the Sudbury General Hospital of the Immaculate Heart of Mary. It is interesting to note that after St. Joseph's Hospital was closed in 1975 (and the Sudbury General was moving into convalescent and rehabilitation care) they were then free to name their new entity the St. Joseph's Health Centre in 1997.

In 1950, the first year that the Sudbury General Hospital was in operation, 7,000 patients were admitted, including 1,400 babies.

Building Additions and Expansion of Services

Mason Residence

The Mason Residence was opened on October 25, 1953 as a nursing school and residence. It contained classrooms and living quarters for 33 student nurses. A five-storey addition to the Mason residence was completed in February 1963.

An addition to the Mason Residence building was also completed in April 1971 and the old building was renovated by October of the same year. The following departments moved into the new and renovated sections of the Mason Residence in 1973: Personnel, Health Office, Social Services, Public Relations, Staff Education, Main Administrative

Office, Accounting, and the Sisters' Accommodations.

The Mason Residence was demolished in August 2013 after the hospital was sold and St. Joseph's Health Centre (the former Sudbury General Hospital) moved to its new campus adjacent to Laurentian University.

First Addition (D-Wing), 1954⁴²

The first addition to the right of the hospital main entrance was a new wing added in 1954 consisting of a three-story wing of 100 active treatment beds. As part of this expansion psychiatry opened 36 beds for acute care patients. The social work professionals that first practiced in psychiatry⁴³ were later expanded to serve all other nursing units in the hospital. An occupational therapy service was also opened that offered rehabilitation services to the hospital and was a major support to the psychiatric unit. Physiotherapy was also established to meet rehab needs, particularly the polio epidemic of the early 50's. Earlier in 1952, Sudbury General Hospital has been designated as the polio unit for the region. As well, a gynecological unit with 37 beds opened in this wing in 1957.

Proposed Nursing Residence

A proposal for a new nurses' residence was received from Fabbro and Townend Architects of Sudbury on June 25, 1957. The preliminary cost estimate came in at \$1,095,000, with a construction schedule beginning in the Fall of 1957 and completed in September 1959. However, the Advisory Board was still deliberating about the project in June 1961. "In order to provide for expansion it was obvious that nothing should be constructed between the present building and the Mason Residence, and that eventually the storage garage

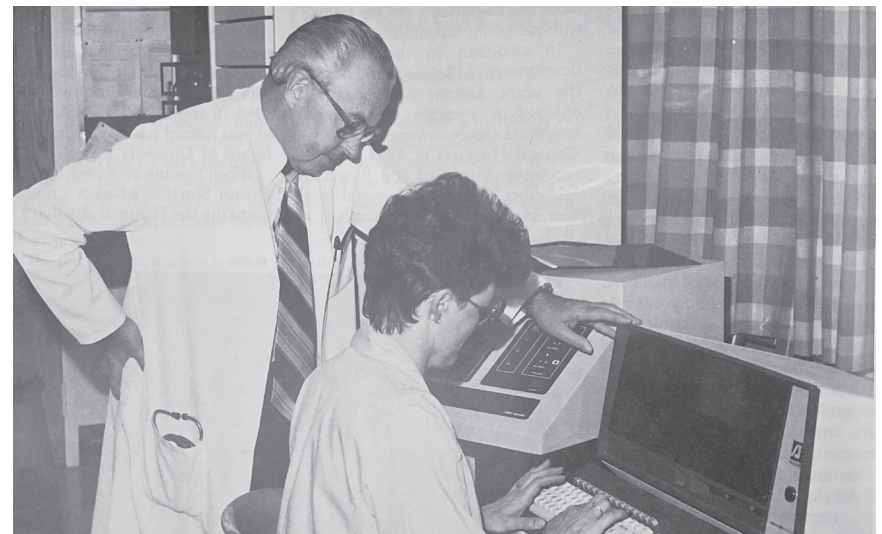
and the Stafford residence would have to be torn down to make way for expansion of the hospital, at least for the expansion of hospital services such as X-Ray, Laboratories, Pharmacy, Administration etc."⁴⁴

Centre for Crippled Children

In 1962 a treatment centre for crippled children was opened in the hospital.

Nuclear Medicine

In October 1964 a nuclear medicine department was opened, providing a diagnostic service for bodily functions and diseases using radio-active pharmaceuticals. This service was spearheaded by Dr. John Walter Sturtridge who was director for many years. In the beginning the unit was set up at the end of the hallway between the cafeteria and boardroom. It was known at the time as the Radio-Isotope Department. One



Dr. Sturtridge and Technical Director Judy Strato examining scans. 1984



Dr. John Walter Sturtridge

of Dr. Sturtridge's assistants at that time, Dorothy Christahn remembers: "We were very cramped. There was a small room for the scanner and a tiny office next door. It was only about four feet wide and the patients had to sit out in the hall waiting for tests. It took hours to perform a scan that can be done in minutes today."⁴⁵ In addition to the diagnostic work, the department also provided a significant amount of treatment for thyroid disease and thyroid cancer.

Dr. John Walter Sturtridge was also instrumental in the creation of the Coronary Care Unit at Sudbury General in 1974. He served as Chief of Staff from 1968 to 1970 and again from 1975 to 1977. In 1977 he was awarded the Queen's Silver Jubilee Medal for exemplary medical service to Sudbury General Hospital and the community. The Sisters of St. Joseph appointed him a lifetime member of the Board of Directors in 1982. Graduating in Internal Medicine from the University of Toronto in 1955 he practised his whole medical career in Copper Cliff and Sudbury until his death in 1991.

Medical Photography

In 1965 a medical photography department was initiated as a regional service offering patient photography of diseases, education, films and tapes, as well as public relations photography to promote the hospital in the community.

Intensive Care Unit

In 1967 a six-bed, specially equipped intensive care unit opened to give intensive medical and nursing care for critically ill patients. This unit was dedicated to Dr. Robin William Poole its founder. In the same year a poison control centre in Emergency was established under the auspices of the Federal Department of National Health and Welfare.

Second Addition (A Wing) ~ The Percy Gardner Wing

On November 30, 1967 a special meeting was called to discuss another renovation and expansion program for the hospital that would include antepartum, labour and delivery rooms, as well as an expanded emergency room. In order to make way for this new wing, the old Stafford Residence (that had also served as a nursing residence for a time) would need to be demolished. The new addition



Plaque dedicated to Percy Gardner is unveiled at the opening ceremonies of the Percy Gardner Wing.

Mr. Percy Gardner



At 87 it was said of Percy Gardner⁴⁶ that *"His handshake is 30, his smile, ageless!"* A long-time Sudbury resident and successful business man, Percy built a life on hope, dreams and finding ways to service the needs of the poor. Gardner was a founding member of the Sudbury Hospital Board of Directors in 1950 and Chairman of the Building and Property Committee at the time of the hospital construction. He was named a lifetime member of the Board in 1974.

Gardner's philosophy of life could be summed up in his own words when he said, "We must watch our Hospital closely. There has to be loyalty, and kindness. When people are sick and dying, they need smiles, they need kindness ... it's being able to help others, to give of yourself. We are all dependent on one another." It was Percy's human touch to the Hospital that mattered most.

The Board of Directors held an honorary dinner for Percy in 1968 after 18 years of service on the board. At that time a scroll of appreciation was given to him that read, in part: You remain a genuine embodiment of the phrase "Virtue is its own reward." Our sincere wish for you, Mr. Gardner is that your life will be continually enriched by the nobility of your service. Born in North London, England in 1887 he founded Gardner Motors in Sudbury in 1921. He died at the age of 94 on August 11, 1981.

was designed by the architect firm of Govin, Kaminker, Langley, Keenleyside, Melick, Devonshire and Wilson and was approved on March 19, 1971. The contract was awarded to Ellis Don Construction Company and excavation work began on May 15, 1971. Costing \$6,400,000 the addition was completed December 28, 1973, expanding the number of beds from 333 to 375 beds. A further \$1,422,000 was spent on renovations, equipment and furnishings for the original hospital, allowing the Sudbury General Hospital to be designated the regional trauma referral centre.

The official opening of the new wing occurred on October 15, 1973 with Bishop Alexander Carter officiating and was dedicated to long term board member Percy Gardner. A commemorative plaque was unveiled by W. Praetorius who represented the architectural firm and Mr. R. Todhunter representing Ellis Don. The official ribbon cutting was performed by Dr. R. Potter, Ontario Minister of Health, Sr. Margaret Smith, Assistant Superior General and Sr. Joan who oversaw the construction of the hospital. As part of the reorganization with the completion of this new wing, the switchboard area was completely renovated. Library, Finance and Personnel offices were moved to the Mason building using space vacated by the student nurses.

A Tragic Accident⁴⁷

After the 1973 addition was opened a tragedy unfolded when a malfunction in the system resulted in a mix-up of gas lines. An inquest presided over by Dr. Ross Bennett, Chief Coroner of Ontario was held into the deaths. He concluded that at least 9 of the 23 deaths investigated were caused by the blending of gas lines. He sought to determine how the gas lines carrying pure oxygen and an anesthetic, nitrous

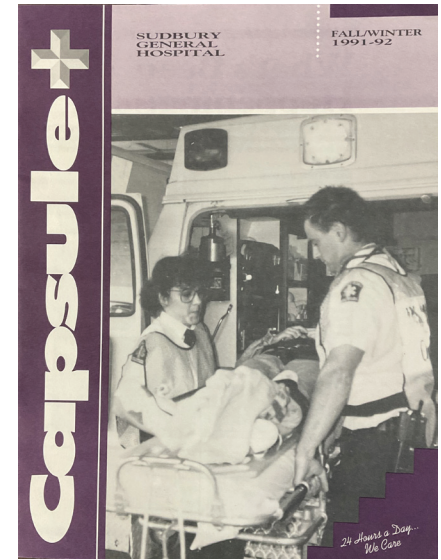
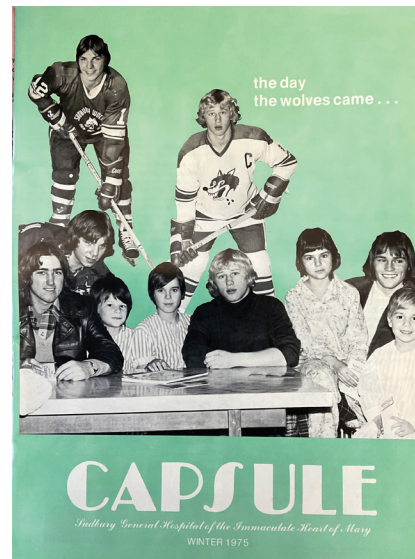
oxide, became mixed up in transmission to parts of the new wing. Eric Heathcote, a Toronto consulting engineer and specialist in hospital gas systems testified that it could be assumed there was a departure from the architect's drawings for the gas lines. The drawings themselves showed a "proper system." His testimony pointed to four rooms of the new wing opened in May 1973, as "gas problem areas" and it was in this section that the 22 victims were treated before their deaths between the months of May to September 1973. All the problem areas, along with other sections of the hospital, were fed from central supplies of oxygen, and nitrogen. Evidence indicated the lines were crossed before the gas reached outlets in the new wing. This mix up had tragic consequences for the patients who died and their families, and was an equally difficult time for staff and administration.

Rationalization and Integration of Services in Sudbury

The rationalization and the integration of services across a number of the Sudbury hospitals became a health-delivery policy of the Ministry of Health in the 1970s. It was a means to eliminate any unnecessary duplication of services and to cut costs. The Sudbury and District Hospital Council decided to move in this direction by creating a *Committee on Integration and Sharing of Hospital Services*. In short their report recommended that:

- The paediatric department for the district (consisting of 120 beds) be centralized in the Laurentian Hospital. The Sudbury General Hospital to retain 40 children's beds as may be required for special services located therein and for the use of the emergency admissions of children when necessary.

- An orthopaedic unit, approximately 33 beds, be centralized at the Laurentian Hospital.
- The only obstetrical unit for this district be allocated to the Sudbury General Hospital.



The Capsule

The Capsule was a magazine produced for employees for many years. A November 13, 1969 noted it was "Edition #249" giving the impression it was originally published monthly for the previous 14 years and suggesting the periodical began publishing sometime around 1955 or thereabouts. In those early years it was printed in house on the ubiquitous Gestetner machines that were an essential part of any office during those days. In later years it was more professionally designed and printed and was published four times a year.

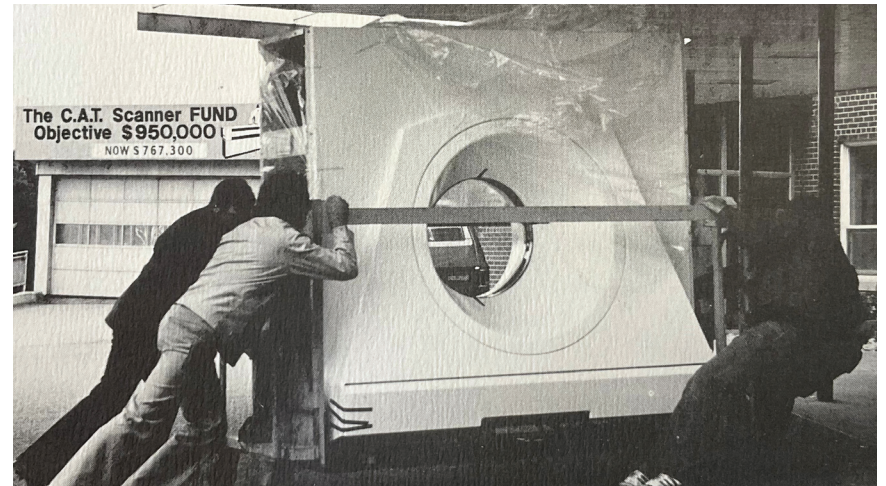
Regional Ambulance Service and Further Integration

On July 5, 1968, at an inter-hospital meeting, Mr. Gordon Browning, Chairman of the Sudbury and District Hospital Council met with the Ontario Hospital Services Commission to determine the location of a city-wide hospital-based ambulance service in Sudbury. Initially, both St. Joseph's Hospital and the Sudbury General Hospital declined any interest in hosting the service. However, by September 1968 the Sudbury General Hospital had reconsidered and accepted the opinion of the Sudbury and District Hospital Council that it was, in fact, best placed to provide this vital service.

The Ambulance Garage was constructed by Primo Titton Construction. It took ten months (between September 1968 and July 1969) of preparation to move the operation of this service over to the Sudbury General. Four new ambulances that had been ordered were picked up in Toronto on July 10, 1969. On July 14, 1969 the operation of the ambulance service was officially transferred to the Sudbury General Hospital. Finally on October 15, 1969 the official opening of the Regional Ambulance Service occurred at its new location.

C.A.T. (Computed Axial Tomography) Scanner & MRI (Magnetic Resonance Imaging)

In May 1977 the Board accepted the principle of exploring the acquisition of a C.A.T. Scanner for the hospital. In February 1978 they requested approval to acquire a whole Body Scanner from the Manitoulin-Sudbury District Health Council. In October, 1978 the Manitoulin-Sudbury District Health Council recommended to the Minister of Health approval of a C.A.T. Head Scanner to be located at the Sudbury General Hospital, (with the understanding that

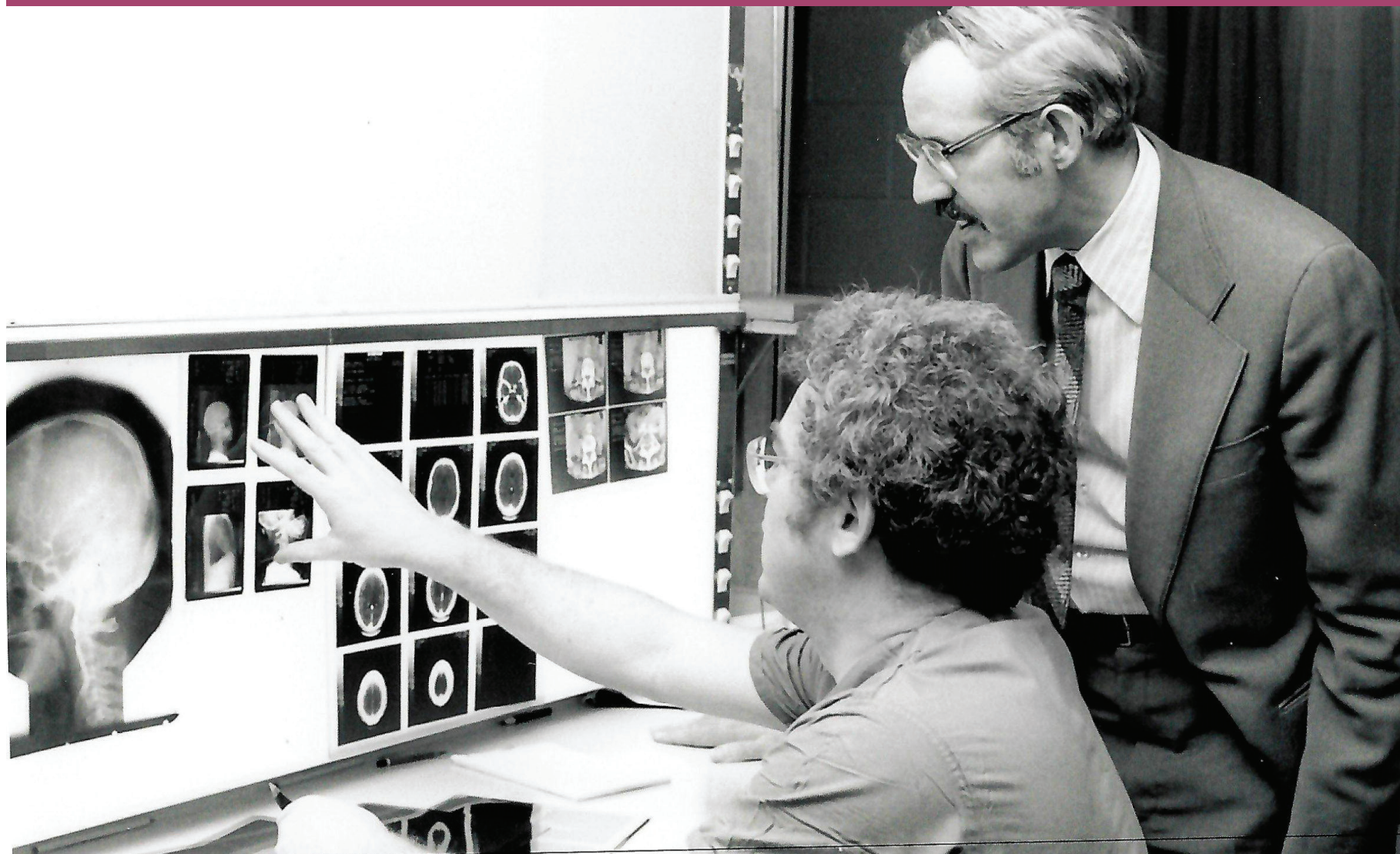


The CAT Scanner is moved into Sudbury General Hospital in September 1980.

this acceptance would not preclude the future acquisition of a whole body scanner in response to real need). In June 1979, the architects, Sawchuk Peach Associates were selected to plan the needed space to house the scanner.

On September 5, 1979 tenders were sent to five companies and on September 27, 1979 the Board approved the acquisition of the General Electric 8800 Scanner. On October 4, 1979 the scanner was ordered from General Electric Medical Systems, Milwaukee, Wisconsin at a cost of \$819,476.

On December 6, 1979 The C.A.T. Scanner Campaign was launched with the announcement of a \$400,000 donation from INCO Metals Company. The campaign objective set at \$950,000, was to include not only the cost of the Scanner but also the hospital's share of the construction costs of the new addition needed to house the unit.



C.A.T. (Computed Axial Tomography) Scanner and the Magnetic Resonance Imaging (MRI) services provide state-of-the-art diagnostic tools to patients at the Sudbury General Hospital.

On March 7, 1980 construction by Gopac Construction (Sudbury) Ltd. started on the 1,700 square foot addition onto the existing Radiology Department in order to house the Scanner and Ultrasound Imaging equipment. This alone would cost approximately \$330,000. The Ministry of Health provided \$200,000 towards these construction costs. On July 3, 1980 Falconbridge Nickel Mines Ltd. announced a donation of \$100,000 for the Physicians' Console of the Scanner.

On November 28, 1980 the construction of the new imaging addition was completed and the official opening ceremonies occurred January 13, 1981.

In November of 1993 the Sudbury General Hospital received approval to begin planning for Magnetic Resonance Imaging (MRI) services for Sudbury. This approval was the result of broad based community support for the acquisition of MRI services for Northeastern Ontario. The endorsement of the Sudbury General Hospital's proposal was the result of a landmark community consensus that was two years in the making. The process involved the local hospitals, the medical community, the Regional Municipality of Sudbury and the MRI Community Action Committee. This approval marked the first time that an MRI had been approved for installation at a community general hospital.

The Helipad

Approval of an application for the construction of a Helipad was given July 30, 1984. The Helipad was completed and operational in June 1986 and formally opened on October 16, 1986. This was a result of the Sudbury General Hospital being named the lead Emergency and Trauma Centre for the region.



Sr. Nora Mullen at the official opening of the helipad.

The value of this new service was clearly demonstrated in May 1987 when many victims of a truck/passenger train collision north of Sudbury were ferried to the Hospital. The helicopter made several return flights to the accident site in less time that it would have taken a land ambulance to make a single trip.

Perinatal Unit

The renovations to the entire third floor and the addition of more than \$500,000 worth of new medical equipment provided the Sudbury General Hospital with the capacity to care for a greater numbers of premature babies and those born with serious medical problems. In addition, the families and friends of mothers and their newborns could remain close to their loved ones and provide valuable support now



Neonatal Unit

that most major problems could be treated in Sudbury rather than having to send mothers and babies to hospitals in southern Ontario. On January 7, 1987 Ontario Health Minister, the Honourable Murray Elston cut the ribbon to officially open the Perinatal Unit.

Clinton Street Clinic

In 1990 the Sudbury General Hospital opened an off-site clinic to provide community-based Mental Health Services.

The clinic offered three community-based programs housed in the Clinton Street Centre,

1. the Psychogeriatrics program;
2. the Interact/Interact Plus program providing those suffering from mental health issues to meet and support one another, and



Clinton Street Clinic in 1990

3. the Eating Disorders Clinic. These programs helped hundreds of patients cope with the struggles of everyday life. Together, over 500 clients were assisted over the first year of operation.

New Hospital Logo

In 1989 a new hospital logo was designed and the theme “Always There to Care” was introduced to capture the spirit of the hospital’s philosophy and the energy of their mandate to provide quality care 24 hours a day.



Emergency Trauma Campaign

In 1992 the Sudbury General Hospital initiated a campaign to upgrade its present intensive care unit into a state-of-the-art trauma centre. Such a centre would help doctors save valuable seconds in those critical first few minutes of treating emergency and trauma patients. The existing intensive care unit had an occupancy rate of 87% and was full 30% of the time. Any emergency patient who had the bad fortune of arriving at a time when the unit was full had to be transferred to southern Ontario.

The goal of the campaign was \$9,400,000. In 1992 The Women's Auxiliary, who pledged \$500,000 towards the campaign, donated their first installment of \$168,000 to the campaign. In 1995 INCO (International Nickel Company) donated a cheque of \$750,000, the latest of many generous donations over the years.⁴⁸



Fundraising Campaign

The Women's Auxiliary of the Sudbury General Hospital

No sooner had the sod been turned for the construction of the hospital when Sister M. Joan presented the idea of forming a Women's Auxiliary to the Advisory Board. It was an idea that was positively received by a local group of women who wanted to help in any way. The inaugural meeting of the Auxiliary was held on September 29, 1948 with Sister Joan presiding.

A slate of officers for the Women's Auxiliary were elected: President, Mrs. J. Shappert; first vice-president, Mrs. L. Fabbro; second vice-president, Mrs. T. P. Doyle, third vice-president, Mrs. M. J. Gaffney; secretary, Mrs. Henry Boucher; treasurer, Mrs. Charles Price; committee secretary, Mrs. M. J. Connor; membership committee, Mrs. J. Shaw; and sewing committee Mrs. M.J. Gaffney. With these people in place the Sudbury General Hospital Women's Auxiliary was born.

In no time they put a plan into action. One group of women created a sewing committee to prepare sheets and bandages for the new hospital that would be opened the following year. The Auxiliary worked diligently on many fronts, often in a practical and hands-on way.

Their goal was to support the Sisters and staff and to provide "better patient care". As well, throughout the first year of its existence, satellite units of the Auxiliary were established in the neighbouring towns of Copper Cliff, Creighton Mines and Coniston.

The women took on the organizing of much of the ceremony for the laying of the cornerstone, and naturally prepared



The newly formed hospital Women's Auxiliary makes plans for the May "Laying of the Cornerstone" ceremony.

and served refreshments for that memorable occasion.⁴⁹

During the month of May 1972 the grand opening of the Gift Shop occurred. It was operated by the Women's Auxiliary, becoming their main source of fundraising for the hospital. Over the years the Gift Shop has progressively expanded in size and income.

The year 1968 saw the advent of the Auxiliary "In-Service" Volunteers program that proved to be a tremendous benefit to the hospital and staff. Some 1500 hours per month were provided by adult and teenage volunteers, hours spent

in easing the workload of the staff and in assisting and comforting patients.

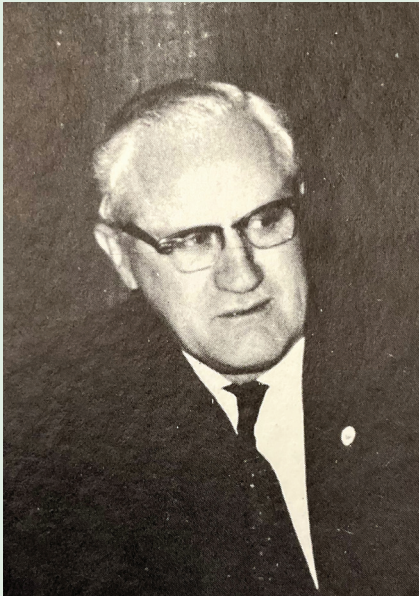
By 1975 the Auxiliary volunteers boasted an active membership of approximately 100—35 members involved in fundraising and 65 members to the "In-Service" volunteer program. Teenage volunteers totaled about forty.⁵⁰

Throughout all of its existence fundraising was a principle activity of the Auxiliary. For example, in 1985 the Women's Auxiliary provided a contribution of over \$500,000 towards the purchase of essential medical equipment for the renovated Perinatal Unit. They undertook this with creativity, boundless energy, and tenacity, organizing such events as bake sales, teas, musical presentations and fashion shows over many years.



(L to R): Sylvia McCoy, Women's Auxiliary President; Margaret Hill, Gift Shop Manager, and Sr. Winnifred McLaughlin, Hospital Executive Director. circa 1990

Faithful Employee ~ Frank A. Gainer, Purchasing



Frank Gainer⁵¹ accepted the position of "Purchasing Agent" at the Sudbury General Hospital on October 1, 1950 a few weeks before the official opening and blessing of the hospital. He would remain at "The General" his whole working life. From the very beginning of his tenure it became abundantly clear that improvement in the quality of patient care was his greatest concern and motivation. Born in Butte, Montana on January 28, 1910, he was raised and educated in Arthur, near Guelph, Ontario. At the age

of 17 he left home (and the family-run farm) to make his mark in the world. On May 9, 1939, he married Miss Rita Roy and together they were blessed with three sons.

During the early years at the hospital, Frank also assumed charge of the Maintenance Department and the Housekeeping Male Staff, using his organizational skills to bring these departments to a high standard. In the early 1960's, due to hospital reorganization, he relinquished this supervision but took on the Laundry and Linen Departments.

Then on September 1, 1967, he was invited to be a member of the newly formed Hospital Administration Team. There is no doubt that during these years he demonstrated the skilled

qualities of a servant leader. These were exemplified by his characteristic consideration of others and his ability to work well with all his colleagues. He possessed an innate sense of justice towards, and a tactful awareness of, the human quality he saw in everyone he met.

The remarkable involvement of Frank Gainer in every facet of the hospital marked him as a man prepared to give his every effort to the work assigned to him and fulfilling it with an unselfish dedication. Frank had a particular genius for keeping his finger on the pulse of the hospital, and more than once came to the aid of his fellow workers with a correct solution to many of their difficult problems, "a solution steeped in the wisdom he had acquired during his 18 years of service" at Sudbury General.

He always thought that the work of every person in the hospital was vitally important and that energy and enthusiasm were as necessary in the person fulfilling the smallest task as it was in the Administrator. In this way Frank's work was aligned to the mission of the hospital. The students of the School of Nursing often sought out his advice and assistance throughout the years. His fellow workers remember his valuable assistance on the Credit Union Committee. There is no doubt that his love for employees in all departments was instrumental in his organizing the Hospital "10 Year Club" and the Annual Christmas Dinner and Dance.

The Sisters of St. Joseph gave tribute to his friendship for his almost 20 years of faithful service to Sudbury General when he died at the age of 59 on February 1, 1969.

Faithful Employee ~ Bob Cecile, Stationary Engineer



Bob Cecile⁵² who was born in Sudbury on March 6, 1935, demonstrated early on in his life, an interest in all things mechanical—machines, motors, equipment and tools. This attraction enticed him to enroll, at the tender age of 14, in what was then called the Sudbury Technical School. He attended this trades-oriented educational institution so that he could absorb sound theoretical knowledge, combined with some practical application in electrical, mechanical and

machine automotive shop work. Coupled with these practical subjects he also received the compulsory academic studies.

In 1952 when he was 17, the Sudbury General Hospital gave Bob the opportunity to learn the skills of a Stationary Engineer. He would remain at "The General" his whole working life. Bob became familiar with the various tasks involved to obtain the different certification tickets. At that time coal-fuelled boilers were used to heat the hospital, and Bob was assigned to work three different shifts on a scheduled, rotating basis. On September 9, 1963, Bob received his first promotion becoming the Assistant Chief Engineer for the hospital. In this position he became part of the team concerned with the physical developments of D Wing and the Mason Residence. Bob was

soon transferred from the Power Plant to become responsible for overall Building Maintenance. When Mr. Gainer passed away, Bob was then given the additional responsibility for Linen and Laundry services. He became heavily involved in the logistics of planning, setting up and developing a workable system.

Then on June 1, 1969, Bob became Manager of Building Services. Housekeeping personnel reported to him as well. When Emil Adams retired, the Power Plant supervision also became part of Bob's responsibility. After a new Director of Housekeeping Services was hired, Bob became Director of Building Services on January 1, 1972. Bob remarked "Part of my role was to act as liaison between the Hospital and the Ellis Don Construction Company. I found the development of A Wing was the most difficult and challenging of all tasks, but likewise, most interesting." Bob Cecile retired in the Fall of 1984 having worked for the Sudbury General Hospital his entire career of 32 years.



Bob and his wife Jacqueline

Doctor Thomas Dixon and the Psychiatric Unit of the Sudbury General Hospital⁵³

Dr. Thomas P. Dixon, C.D., M.D., D. Psych., F.R.C.P.(C) was a native of Sudbury who graduated from Medicine at the University of Toronto in 1943. From 1942-1946 he served in the RCAMC (Royal Canadian Army Medical Corps) during the Second World War. It was during this time that his interest in psychiatry resulted in a desire for further study. No doubt, the mental fatigue and stress he witnessed in battle-weary soldiers returning to Canada prompted his interest in mental health, and a desire to find ways to respond and alleviate the anguish of the mind. In a letter dated March 31, 1949 his commanding officer states:

This is to certify that Captain T. P. Dixon, RCAMC, completed the Army Psychiatric Course given at the Toronto Psychiatric, Toronto General and Christie Street Hospitals from May 1944 to September 1944. He served in MD6 Halifax, as Specialist in Psychiatry from September 1944 to October 1945, under supervision of Majors H. Carscallen and D. O. Lynch, until seconded to Christie Street Hospital, where he served from October 1945 to February 1946, under the supervision of Dr. W. Baillie.

Dr. J. D. M. Griffin, Medical Director
(formerly Colonel, RCAMC, Consultant in Psychiatry
to Director General of Medical Services)⁵⁴

Immediately after Dr. Dixon was discharged from the Army he sought out further studies in psychiatry, receiving his Diploma in Psychiatry and his Certification as Specialist from the Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons in 1949.

In February 1950 he immediately set out to investigate the possibility of establishing a Mental Health Clinic in Sudbury. As part of advocating for such a clinic he emphasized over and over again the following observation. "The practise of placing our mentally ill in district jails in these northern communities is to be decried. Many of these people when treated early can be rehabilitated into their homes and occupations and serve as valuable members of the community..."⁵⁵ The proposed clinic was to be the first permanent clinic in Northern Ontario replacing the Travelling Mental Health Units (mobile units) created by the Ontario Hospitals and sent out to various northern communities.

Dr. Dixon then made contact with Sister Joan at the Sudbury General Hospital on March 8, 1950. He apprised her of his efforts to find funding for a Mental Health Clinic and how he would go about organizing it. Staff would consist of a psychiatrist as Director, who would be responsible to the Provincial Department of Health, a trained psychologist, a social worker and a stenographer—all their salaries would be paid for by the Provincial Department through a Dominion Health Grant.

He goes on to say that "The maintenance cost of such a clinic in your hospital (and its expenses etc.) ... (is) estimated at about \$4,000..."⁵⁶ He further remarks that the rationale and argument for setting up such a clinic would be strengthened

greatly should Sister Joan, along with the Hospital Advisory Board, provide in writing their assurances that the clinic would be accommodated at the hospital.

Dr. Dixon knew that any request for such a clinic to the Department of Health must originate in the community of Sudbury at large. Dr. Dixon was able to persuade Mayor William S. Beaton to make such a request shortly afterwards to W.A. Goodfellow, the Acting Provincial Minister of Health at the time. In April 1950 Dr. Dixon estimated the total annual budget for operating the clinic would be \$20,000. It is interesting to note that his annual salary as psychiatrist would be \$6,000.⁵⁷

Approval for the Sudbury Mental Health Clinic came in August 1950 with Dr. Dixon being appointed as psychiatrist and Director on July 1, 1950 when the clinic was formally founded. The first patients were seen on July 3, 1950. A Psychologist Mr. D.P. Roberts, Social Worker Mrs. N. Browne, and a stenographer Miss J. Corbeil were all hired during September and October of the same year. Temporary office space was offered by the Medical Officer of Health until the rented space at the General was completed and occupied in October 1950.

No sooner had Dr. Dixon successfully launched the Sudbury Mental Health Clinic than he began advocating with the Minister of Health for a residential psychiatric unit at the hospital. The experience of the clinic during its first year of operation revealed that at least two patients a week needed to be referred to a Psychiatric Hospital where they could receive more intensive in-patient treatment. At the time no such facility existed in Northern Ontario and so Dr. Dixon was quick to act.



Dr. Thomas P. Dixon, Psychiatrist

A formal submission for a Psychiatric In-Patient Unit was submitted to the Minister of Health on January 26, 1952. The submission noted that at the time there was no psychiatric hospital in Northern Ontario in an area stretching from Port Arthur in the West, Ottawa in the East, and North of Orillia. For want of such a Psychiatric Unit in Sudbury, patients who were mentally disturbed, suicidal, noisy or unable to care for themselves were customarily brought into the district jails until a bed was available in one of the Ontario Hospitals in Southern Ontario. Dr. Dixon reported that he counted sixty such patients in the Sudbury District Jail. Furthermore, sending patients far away was a considerable disruption to their home life and a financial burden to the patient and the family.⁵⁸

Initially, the Sudbury General Hospital Board and the Sisters were hesitant about the project, not because of the great need to serve people with mental illness, but more out of financial considerations. Dr. Dixon noted in his Report to the Board of Control, City of Sudbury, on the Mental Health Clinic that "I would like to point out that no other hospital in the area at this time was even considering the building of a Psychiatric Unit. It was with much reluctance that the Sisters in charge of the Sudbury General Hospital, already encumbered with debt, would consider adding to that debt."⁵⁹

However once the Sisters agreed to the project they were prepared to immediately undertake the construction of a new Wing at the hospital that would accommodate the 30-bed Psychiatric Unit. The hospital would also place all their present facilities at the service of the Unit. Approval for the project seemed to have occurred sometime in the fall. Already by December 19, 1952 plans were being drawn up

by the architect Louis A. Fabbro. The four-storey, 140 foot extension to the west side of the hospital would include three floors for the Psychiatric Unit and an additional floor for general hospital use that would add an additional 40 beds to the hospital's capacity. Construction began in August 1953. In December, 1954, the financial administration of the Mental Health Clinic passed from the city of Sudbury to the Sudbury General Hospital. While the wing was operating as early as November 1954, the formal opening of the Psychiatric Unit did not take place until Thursday May 12, 1955.

Marymount School of Nursing⁶⁰



Planning for the Marymount School of Nursing began in 1949 anticipating the opening of the new Sudbury General Hospital a year later. The nursing school was temporarily established by the Sisters at the St. Joseph's Hospital School of Nursing in North Bay where student nurses from Sudbury were being trained. Once Marymount School of Nursing was opened in Sudbury, five students nurses (who had finished their intermediate block of courses in North Bay) were transferred to Sudbury on March 5, 1951 where they would complete their nursing course. The students subsequently graduated on June 22, 1952 as the first graduating class of the Marymount School of Nursing.

Another group of such students had transferred from North

Bay on February 14, 1951. These fourteen students were in their preliminary block and consequently did not graduate from Marymount School of Nursing until June, 1953.

In the beginning, the actual location of the School of Nursing was on the second floor of the hospital that consisted of offices, one large classroom, a demonstration room and a science laboratory. "At one time, nursing students resided within the hospital itself. Records indicate that the following sites were also utilized for housing nurses from this school: the Stafford residence built in 1913 by the British American Nickel Corporation; the Mason residence built in 1953 with funds from the Mason Foundation; the Saul Silverman Residence purchased in 1959. If expansion is a measurement of success, then it can be said that the Sudbury General Hospital was taking giant steps in the 50's towards success."⁶¹

Sr. Mary Sheila (*nee* Kathleen O'Loughlin) was the first administrator of the Marymount School of Nursing. She made the nursing school's lofty objectives clear. In a *Sudbury Star* article, dated October 14, 1950, she emphasized that the nursing school sought "To foster that type of education in the nurse that will fit her, not only through religious and moral education, but through the discipline and culture that nursing itself imposes, to take her place in the field of welfare work as a fit individual prepared to aid the physician in his work, to prevent disease and promote health, both physical and mental, in the life of the individual as well as the community at large."

With the opening of the two-storey Mason Residence on October 25, 1953, accommodation for thirty nurses was

provided. Efforts were made to create an atmosphere in this residence as a "home away from home." Regular social functions were organized in the cafeteria and auditorium, along with furnishings that contributed to a safe and comfortable atmosphere. Ten years later this residence was expanded. The School of Nursing was growing yearly in the number of students enrolled. In 1957 St. Joseph's Convent on Louis Street behind Christ the King Church was used to house 37 more students, making the total that year at 115 student nurses in the program. In 1960 the Monsignor Humphrey Residence on Paris Street (which was originally the home of the Silverman family) was used to house an additional 25 student nurses. The 1965 graduating class was the largest class to graduate, consisting of 42 nurses. Shortly after this, in September 1966, the school implemented a two-year program with a third year of internship. The name was changed from the Marymount School of Nursing to St. Joseph's School of Nursing, Sudbury.

Already in the 1960's there was a desire to move nursing programs away from diploma programs being administered by individual hospitals to programs consolidated into a baccalaureate program at the local Community College. In Sudbury such plans for a Regional School of Nursing were initiated on January 25, 1966. A new Board of Governors for Marymount School of Nursing replaced the Advisory Board. Forty-eight students were enrolled in September 1966 in this new program. They would be the last class to graduate from the school on May 28, 1969.

In the 16 years that the nursing school existed the total number of nurses that graduated from Marymount School of Nursing was 513 diploma nurses.



The first graduating class in 1952 of the Marymount School of Nursing at Sudbury General Hospital

Spiritual and Religious Care

Since the opening of the hospital in 1950, the nursing Sisters on the floors were often the ones called on to attend to the spiritual needs of the patients, as well as providing moral support to their families. Sisters who were also engaged in other occupations would visit the hospital in their “free” time. Retired Sisters made visitation of the sick as part of their volunteer apostolate. Of course, local clergy from all faiths were called upon to provide spiritual and religious care, conduct prayer services, and in the case of Catholic priests, celebrate mass and administer the Sacrament of the Sick which was called Extreme Unction (the Last Rites) at an earlier time.

In June of 1962 Bishop Alexander Carter appointed the hospital's first resident chaplain, Father Francis Murphy.⁶² His duties consisted of saying Mass, preaching, baptizing, and hearing confessions to all who would approach him. He also acted as confessor and spiritual director for the Sisters, providing lectures to nurses, guidance when necessary, and regularly visited the sick and their families.

Over time the need for a more formal “Pastoral Care” was recognized. This was happening in most hospitals throughout the province of Ontario. Chaplains, who were not just pastors or clergy, were required to have the appropriate training and instruction offered by the Canadian Association for Pastoral Practice and Education (CAPPE).

By 1971, a more intentional Pastoral Care was established and organized in the hospital. This consisted of four Sisters of St. Joseph who voluntarily visited, counseled and supported



Caring for the spiritual needs of patients and staff was always a central part of healing the whole person—body, mind and spirit. Fr. Jim Sharpe gives communion to a patient accompanied by Sr. Miriam Downey.

patients, their families, and staff when needed. The philosophy of treating the whole person—their physical, spiritual, emotional and social needs—became more explicit in the hospital's approach. Those who provided this care expanded to include qualified and supervised lay people. Of course, priests and ministers continued to regularly visit the hospital and often accepted referrals from the new Pastoral Care team.

The first Pastoral Care Department (later known as the Spiritual and Religious Care Department) at the Sudbury General was formally established with paid professional

staff in April 1976. From the outset the aim of the Pastoral Care Department was to be "responsible for the planned, organized and co-ordinated delivery of Spiritual Care, to meet the needs of patients, families and personnel of the Sudbury General Hospital."

The Department was supervised by its Director who answered to the Executive Director of the hospital. The Director oversaw the activities of five full-time employees, including a resident chaplain and a number of pastoral associates, who provided 24-hour coverage. The Director also coordinated the volunteer Sisters, lay visitors, a sacristan and visiting clergy from all faiths. Roman Catholic chaplains and pastors were available on a rotating 24-hour schedule to be on-call as needed. Spiritual and Religious Care staff were assigned hospital Units for which they were responsible. They visited their Unit daily, checked with the Nurse Manager for any urgent referrals and did follow-up visits with patients and families when necessary.

Patients admitted to Hospital were provided with a high degree of Spiritual Care to assist them in expediting their recovery, or in assisting them in their final moments. Each incoming patient was visited at least once, and on successive occasions, if this was deemed necessary. During times of crises, (i.e. death, accident, etc.) the pastoral care personnel gave assistance to families in a manner appropriate to the situation. Assistance was also given to the visiting clergy of all faiths in utilizing the Hospital's facilities for counselling and ministering to the needs of patients and their families.

Lay Chaplain, Betty Szilva



Mother St. Edward (*nee* Norean McColgan) and Betty Szilva (right)

C. Elizabeth (Betty) Szilva, a mother of five children, was previously an elementary music supervisor in the Sudbury Separate Schools. She became one of the first lay pastoral caregivers at the Sudbury General Hospital. She had approached Sister Mildred Muldoon, the Director of Pastoral Care at the time, and was encouraged

to "come and see." As she looks back Betty remembers "It was in prayer and reflection on the healing ministry of Jesus that I first felt the call to begin my journey into spiritual and religious care studies and training." First she enrolled in the courses offered at the Pastoral Institute of Northern Ontario at Laurentian University. Then she took the required Clinical Pastoral Education (CPE) course through the Canadian Association of Pastoral Practice and Education (CAPPE). At the same time she gained experience by accepting volunteer shifts as a pastoral caregiver at the Sudbury General. Betty continued to study at Laurentian University, St. Paul's University in Ottawa, and finally completed her Bachelor of Arts in Religious Studies at St. Jerome's University, affiliated with the University of Waterloo.

Hired as a part-time chaplain in the 1980's (and later full-time in 1990) she remained a chaplain until her retirement in 2003. She was proud of the fact that as part of the pastoral care team (made up of Sisters, Clergy and lay chaplains) they were mandated to "provide spiritual/religious/supportive care for all patients who requested or were in need of such support, regardless of faith or religious affiliation, or no faith at all."

Betty Szilva Remembers:

The Emergency Department (ER) requested our services daily – often in the dead of night. I remember quietly supporting one grief-stricken family whose beautiful baby girl had died of sudden infant death syndrome (SIDS). I sought to provide a measure of compassion to the shock and horror that the parents were experiencing. Sitting with them, being a caring presence, attentive to their needs, I liaised with ER Staff on their behalf. My deepest connection to their pain came in my offer to carry the little swaddled body to the Morgue while Security Staff lead the way. When the Family left the Hospital, I contacted the funeral home for them, and I left "Emerg" with a heart full of sadness...praying for them.

Another unforgettable experiences in "Emerg" was with the wife and young son of a man brought to the hospital after having sustained a cardiac arrest. I knew this family. As we stood together by the stretcher in the treatment room the son (about 10 years old) was very concerned that his dad's body was cold. Between us it was decided that putting the boy's cardigan around Dad's shoulders would be a caring gesture. I promised to accompany Dad's body to the morgue, and to ensure that the sweater remained with him. I made another call to the funeral director who was touched to hear about the sweater, a last caring connection between son and dad. The funeral director assured me he would honour that request.

Not all experiences with families were stressful of course. Supporting patients scheduled for operations often helped them calm their pre-op anxiety. In cases where the diagnosis and gravity of the situation were cause for great concern, supportive listening and the offer of prayer and ongoing support were welcomed. Patients often expressed gratitude when they knew I would be praying for them while they were in surgery, and I promised I would see them after their operation.

Many hours were spent caring for patients who were dying or critically ill along with time supporting their loved ones. Many cups of coffee were delivered to family waiting rooms as chaplains cared for loved ones – listening to their latest reports, hopes or fears. Praying together often brought them strength.

Sacramental ministry was offered and readily available thanks to the hospital priest chaplain and local clergy.

For families and friends of patients who died in our hospital during the previous six months, a Service of Remembrance was held in the hospital chapel. Twice yearly, these Services were conducted by members of our department's staff with a visiting clergy from one of the Sudbury Churches serving as Homilist. Music ministry was provided by our team and friends. After the service, all were invited to join our pastoral team for a time of sharing, refreshments, reconnecting and fellowship in the Hospital Cafeteria.

For me religious and spiritual care is not a meaningless activity. Each day, my ministry to those in need was, for me, a "Walk with God". I felt privileged and blessed to be an instrument of God's love and care for all who came through the hospital doors.

Sister Cecilia Mulcahey My Unforeseen Guardian Angel

Excerpted from "My Unforeseen Guardian Angel" by Janice Leuschen⁶³

Around 1978, I met a nun for the first time. I was working my first shift as a newly registered nurse at the Sudbury General Hospital of the Immaculate Heart of Mary. I had just moved to Sudbury. I was raised in southern Ontario and didn't know many Catholics and definitely not any nuns. My knowledge of nuns came from television and movies, in particular, *The Flying Nun*, *The Sound of Music*, and *The Trouble with Angels*.

I was working on 4A, a medical floor, where there were lots of older people with heart problems, cancer, or diabetes. Some of the patients were treated and discharged, but others were waiting for placement and still others were waiting to die. As I learned how to do the job I was trained for, I also learned things I hadn't been taught in school. For example, the blue name tags over the bed were for Catholics. If they were nearing death, the priest was to be called for the Sacrament of the Sick. The what? And, they could receive communion every afternoon. More "what." But I listened and learned.

A few months later I arrived for my afternoon shift to learn that the woman at the end of the hall was dying. She was one of my patients. During report I was told Sister Cecelia (Mulcahey) was in the conference room with the family. Sister Cecelia was a member of the Sisters of St. Joseph. She wasn't a nurse, but a nun who lived in the residence behind the hospital. She could be called at any time to sit with a family or patient.

Around 18:00, the RNA came to me and said it was time to turn the dying woman. People who cannot move need to be

repositioned in the bed every two to three hours to prevent bed sores. We used a small flannel sheet across the middle of the bed, called a draw sheet, to turn her. On the count of three, we lifted and rolled her to her right side. But it was soon obvious she was dead. I had seen people who were dying, and I'd seen people who were dead. But I'd never seen anyone die.

We turned her onto her back. Changed the pillowcase. Washed her face. Combed her hair. Pulled the covers up and positioned her hands neatly on top of her abdomen then raised the head of the bed. She needed to look peaceful for her family. Now I had to tell the family. When I was told Sister Cecilia was in the conference room I opened the door to the room to see a slim petite woman in a white dress, white stockings and shoes, wearing a small white head piece.

She stood and asked, "Is she gone?" This was more of a statement than a question. I nodded. She turned to the family and made the announcement in a calm voice. Several family members began to weep, and others hugged each other. Sister took the new widower by the arm and led him out of the room. She looked at me as if to say, "I've got this". What a relief!

I had lots of paperwork to do. Luckily, my supervisor had arrived and helped me with all the details. I needed to call emerg to see if the doctor had time to come up and pronounce her. When the family was gone, I had to call the orderly to bring up the morgue stretcher and accompany him and the woman to the morgue.

Thankfully, the RNA made sure the other patients were taken care of and Sister Cecilia consoled the family.

When most of the patients were settled for the night, half of the hallway lights were dimmed. I'd lost track of time, but around 21:30, Sister Cecilia came down the hallway, her arm looping through the arm of the widower, followed by the family. We stopped and stood silently as they passed the nursing station. She ushered the family into two elevators, and they were gone. There was a moment of silence.

Around 22:00 as I sat at the desk signing charts, the elevator doors opened, and Sister Cecilia walked out. She looked tired, but her attire was still pristine. She'd come to see how I was doing. I couldn't believe she was there, worrying about me. This was my job. Of course, I was fine. She spoke softly and said it must be hard for me ... first death ... lots of work. I don't remember all of what she said. I only remember that she was there.

Over the ten months I worked on 4A, Sister Cecilia seemed to be there when families needed her. She was there when we didn't know we needed her. She just seemed to know when to show up, always poised and soft spoken. It wasn't until I'd left the profession four years later and was driving past the General one day that I wondered how nurses and patients and families managed in hospitals that didn't have nuns. How did they cope in times of grief and stress? For me, Sister Cecilia was a gift. A gift I didn't know I needed until she was suddenly there.

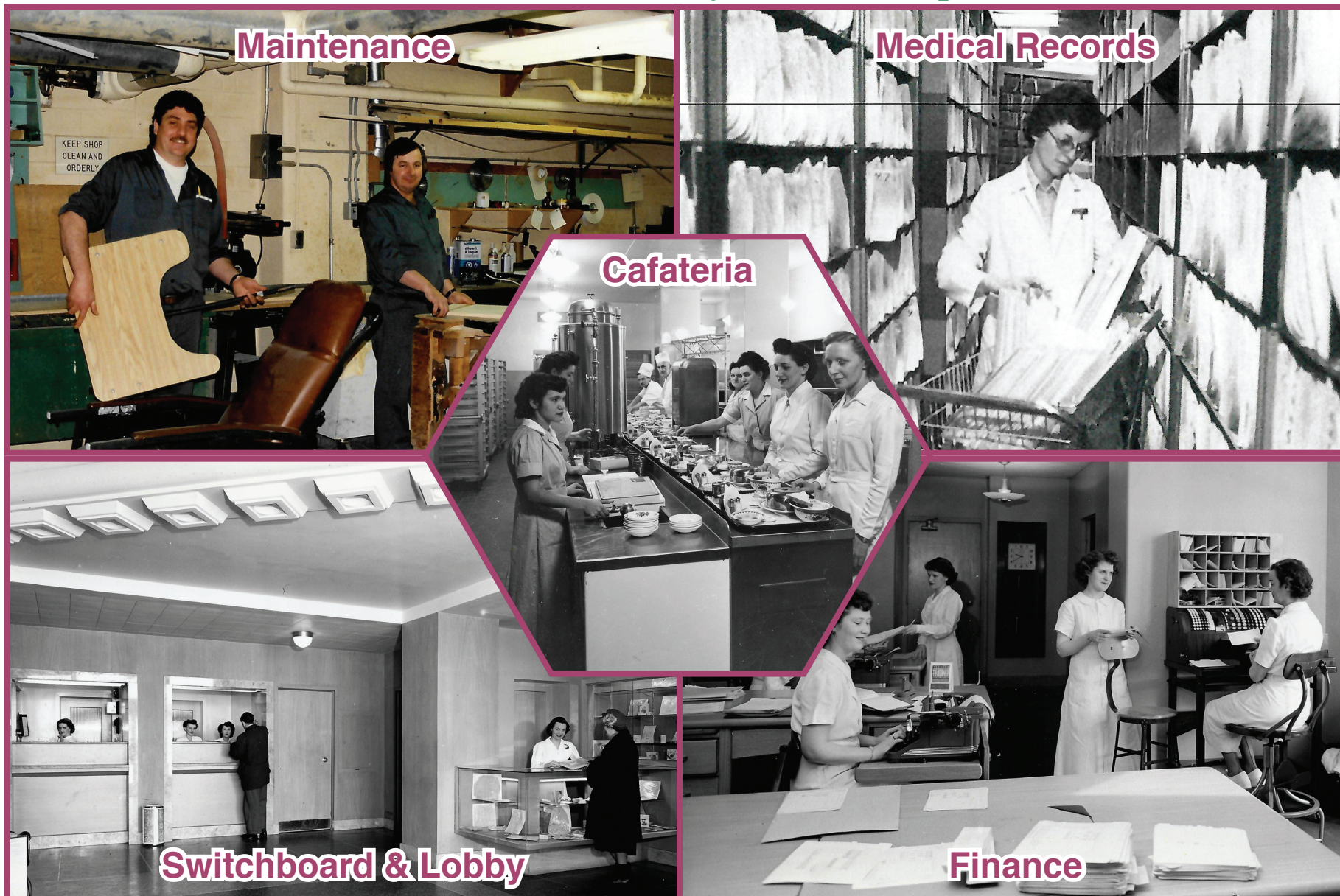


Sister Cecelia Mulcahey, CSJ

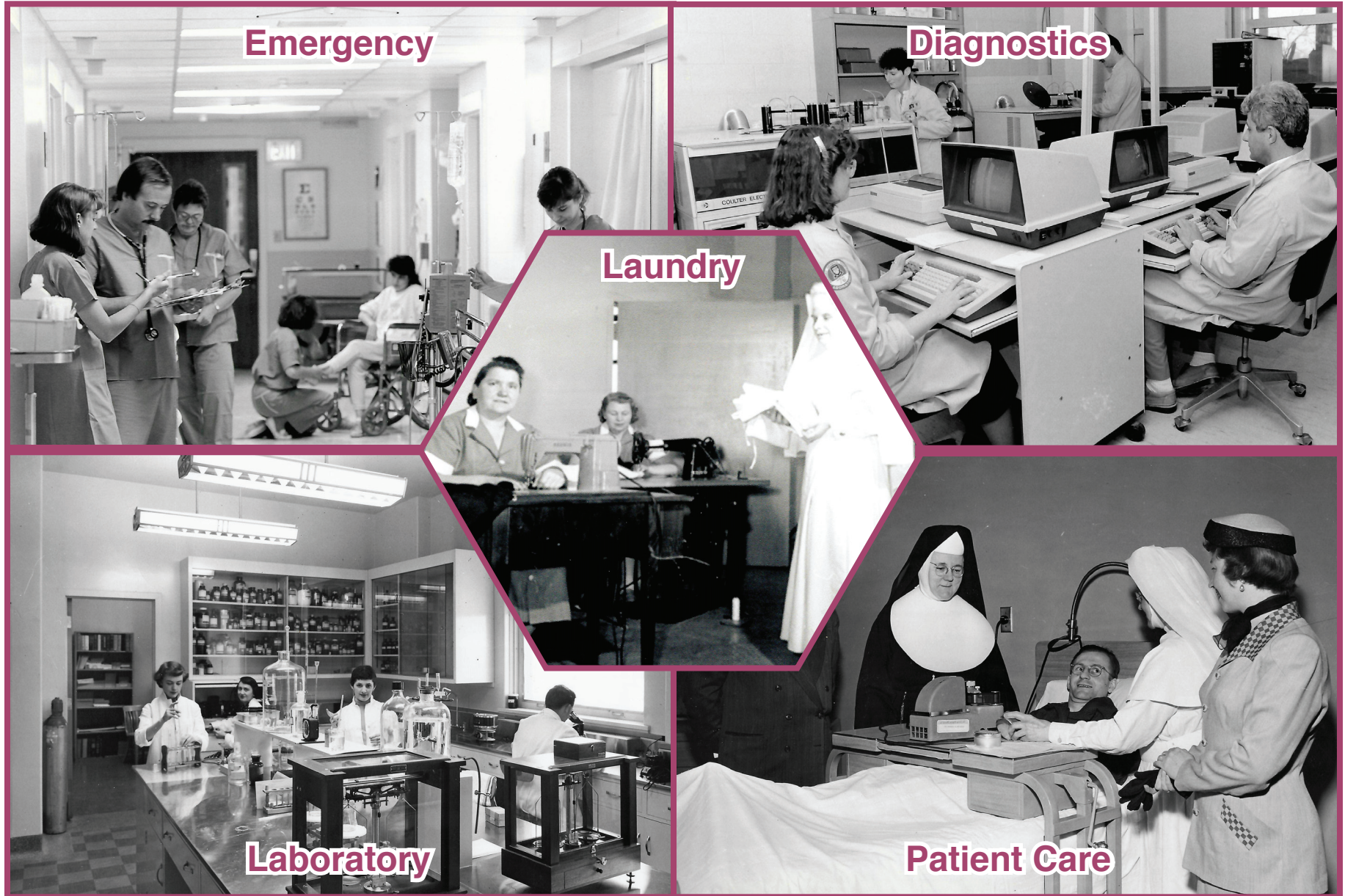


Chapel on the 5th floor of the Sudbury General Hospital.
It was located on the same floor as Pastoral Services, the neurological surgery and the board room.

Life & Work at Sudbury General Hospital



Life & Work at Sudbury General Hospital



Developments Leading to the Closure of Sudbury General Hospital

In 1995, the Ontario Government, led by Premier Mike Harris, set out to restructure health care delivery throughout Ontario, including the Sudbury region. They announced the closure of the Memorial Hospital, and also the future reorganization of services within both the Sudbury General Hospital and Laurentian Hospital. The government plan proposed that the two hospitals would operate as a single organization with one governing board, administration and medical staff. This decision was a blow to the Sudbury General Hospital and the Sisters of St. Joseph who owned and operated it.

The plan was seen as an affront to the identity of Catholic Health Care in Ontario. It prompted the bishop of the Diocese of Sault Ste. Marie, Bishop Jean-Louis Plouffe, to issue a communique⁶⁴ that reiterated the Church's long standing role and heritage in the healing ministry. In the letter he wrote: "Today I must share with you my concern that this important work of the Church may be in jeopardy due to a lack of understanding and support for the continuation of the Sudbury General as an equal partner within the redesigned hospital system in Sudbury." He questioned the move to "one board", a move that "may seriously threaten the Church's mission in health care." His concerns, along with those of the Sisters, were well founded. Already Sudbury had lost St. Joseph's Hospital in 1975 when the corporate structure of Laurentian Hospital was changed in order to reduce and eventually eliminate an ongoing role for the Sisters of Charity who had been in Sudbury for 79 years.

Setting aside the Catholic identity and governance issue, local doctors also waded in on the "one hospital" concept of health care delivery. Dr. Chris McKibbin, president of the Sudbury and District Medical Society called the restructuring plan "a disastrous downsizing of existing facilities. One site would not be that bad a thing but it has to be big enough.... The system is already lean enough"⁶⁵

Sister Winnifred McLaughlin, President and CEO of Sudbury General Hospital remarked that the government's restructuring proposal "is one of marginalization and it's completely unacceptable to us." The Board reaffirmed its opposition to a sole governance model of health care delivery in the Sudbury region.⁶⁶ The hospital and board took their concerns to the public, giving interviews with the local press. The Board and the Sisters wrote letters to the Minister of Health and the Premier of Ontario at the time.

Nonetheless, in 1996 the *Health Services Restructuring Commission* (HSRC) activated a plan to merge the city's three hospitals under one administration and one site, the former Laurentian Hospital on Ramsey Lake Road, taking effect on April 30, 1999. Hospitals in other communities throughout Ontario were undergoing a similar restructuring. As a result of this decree it precipitated a radically different role in the community for the Sudbury General and the Sisters. The board of the Sudbury General consequently decided to search out unmet needs in the Sudbury area that lead to a focus on the elderly and those in need of chronic care.

The Sisters were not advocating that the hospital building be saved. On the contrary, if the *Health Services Restructuring Commission's* recommendation for one "superhospital"



Sister Winnifred McLaughlin, CSJ

was to move forward, the Sisters and Board requested that it be governed with two boards. It was a suggestion not without precedence—one is Sault Ste. Marie and another in Sarnia. The Sisters were quite willing to bring their concerns to court against the *Health Services Restructuring Commission* for the principal of the matter.⁶⁷ However they eventually dropped their lawsuit⁶⁸ when the Sisters were given a unique role to operate chronic, rehabilitation and palliative care within the regional hospital.⁶⁹

In the agreement the new single-governance hospital corporation would contract the Sisters of St. Joseph to manage key areas such as chronic, palliative and transitional/sub-acute services, while allowing the Sisters to maintain a Catholic mission in health care on that site.⁷⁰

On May 2, 1997 the *Health Services Restructuring Commission* indicated (should the Sisters of St. Joseph so choose) they could maintain a short-term and long-term role in the provision of health services in the Sudbury region. Both the short term and long term roles would be achieved through a contractual relationship between the new Sudbury Regional Hospital Corporation and a new corporate entity established by the Sisters. The Sisters signed an agreement with the Ministry of Health and Long Term Care (MoHLTC) to that effect on Thursday November 27, 1997.⁷¹

The Sisters had hoped to re-purpose the Sudbury General Hospital building for Long Term Care, however, the cost of renovations to meet ministry standards made the proposal too expensive to undertake. In 2005 the Sisters called for proposal from interested parties concerning the redevelopment of the Sudbury General site. The City of

Sudbury was one of the presenters proposing a plan that would convert the land to green space and necessitate the demolition of the building. Discussions with the Ministry of Health and Long Term Care continued in an effort to have the Ministry live up to its commitment to include demolition as part of the decommissioning of the hospital. However, as late as May 20, 2010 the Ministry of Health and Long Term Care withdrew its commitment to pay for the demolition of the building.

Shortly afterwards, the Sisters received an offer from an outside developer to buy the property and building “as is” and on May 31, 2010 at 4:00 PM the Sisters accepted the offer. On July 28, 2010 the ownership of the property and building of the former Sudbury General Hospital formally passed to Panoramic Properties of Niagara Falls.

As an addendum to this, in 2019 ten years after the sale of the old hospital the building was used as an art installation. As part of the *UP Here Festival* (“a volunteer-run, non-for-profit organization funded in 2012 around the simple idea that art can playfully reshape our community”) this festival commissioned a mural artist who went by the name *RISK* to spray paint a mural on the exterior walls of the old hospital building. The mural inspired the Sudbury Writers Guild to publish a chapbook in 2021 entitled *Painted Voices*, a collection of poems and stories by local artists about the mural and the Sudbury General Hospital.

On Monday November 25, 2024 the planning committee of the Sudbury Municipal Council unanimously decided to accept the Panoramic Properties’ 530-unit residential Paris Street project, which would replace the old Sudbury

General Hospital building. The project is slated to consist of three buildings totalling 530 units. Hope was to break ground within the next five years.⁷²

Many of the artifacts from the Sudbury General Hospital and the Marymount School of Nursing can be viewed on the second floor walls of St. Joseph's Continuing Care in a corridor connecting to St. Joseph's Villa on South Bay Road.



Decommissioned hospital used as an art installation for the “Up Here Festival.”.

Catholic Health Sponsors of Ontario

Around 1996, in the face of diminishing resources and personnel, a movement began among some Religious Congregations to look for an alternate way to continue to sponsor the Catholic health care institutions they had founded. The Sisters of St. Joseph of Sault Ste. Marie was one of these congregations. They were founders and sponsors of six Catholic hospitals in Northern Ontario from Thunder Bay to North Bay. Along with the Sisters of St. Joseph of Toronto, the Grey Sisters of the Immaculate Conception from Pembroke, with the help of the Catholic Health Association of Ontario they came together to develop a new model of Catholic Sponsorship in order to continue the legacy of their Founding Sisters and to strengthen existing Catholic health care. As a result of this collaboration, The Catholic Health Corporation of Ontario (now the Catholic Health Sponsors of Ontario, CHSO) came into being in 1998.

In the law of the Catholic Church (Canon Law) this new sponsorship form is called a Public Juridic Person, a term used to designate those officially entrusted with a mission of the church. This ensures that a health care organization participates in the name of the church with the full authority of the church.

Since the inauguration of the Catholic Health Sponsors of Ontario, five other Religious Communities have transferred the sponsorship of their respective institutions to CHSO sponsorship. Today 22 health care organizations comprising of 34 separate institutions share a common bond of excellence, quality and compassion, continuing the legacy of their pioneering Sister founders. As an incorporated body

the CHSO has defined responsibilities under Canon Law, Civil Law and the Federal Corporations Act.

In 1998 sponsorship of the the new entity St. Joseph's Health Centre (SJHC) was transferred from the Sisters of St. Joseph of Sault Ste. Marie to the Catholic Health Corporation of Ontario.

A New Era St. Joseph's Health Centre



St. Joseph's Health Centre Of Sudbury
Centre de santé St-Joseph de Sudbury

The recommendations of the Health Services Restructuring Commission (HSRC) precipitated Sudbury General Hospital of the Immaculate Heart of Mary to officially change its name to St. Joseph's Health Centre (SJHC) on August 14, 1997, and to undertake a new role in collaboration with the Hôpital régional de Sudbury Regional Hospital .

For a time, this new role of the Sisters of St. Joseph, a transition from acute care to complex continuing care and palliative care would take place in the old Sudbury General

site. The contract with the Hôpital régional de Sudbury Regional Hospital to lease the building at \$1.00 per year was initially for a two-year period; however, it was extended for a thirteen-year period between 1998 and 2010.

The newly formed SJHC had two objectives:

1. To operate a hospital, other health care, educational and related facilities in accordance with the philosophy and mission of the members of the corporation.
2. For the aforesaid purposes, to acquire and take over the property and assets of the Sudbury General Hospital of the Immaculate Heart of Mary situated at 700 Paris Street, in the City of Sudbury, in the Province of Ontario and assume all liabilities associated therewith including any indebtedness to The Sisters of St. Joseph of Sault Ste. Marie and to indemnify The Sisters of St. Joseph of Sault Ste. Marie for any and all claims arising from the operation of the Sudbury General Hospital of the Immaculate Heart of Mary.

It is clear by these stated objectives that the Sisters of St. Joseph, were not only keeping their options open (with the goal to operate a hospital or other health care facility), but were also claiming their historical legacy, contribution, and ownership of the Sudbury General Hospital property and building. They had invested, not only a great deal of financial resources, but also a solid mission of compassion and service to the people of Sudbury, and they had a fervent desire to find new ways to continue a health care role in the region.

SJHC took on a new health care role in the Sudbury region, one to provide chronic, transitional and rehabilitation hospital care. This new entity oversees the operation of a “village of care campus” located on South Bay Road on property leased from Laurentian University. SJHC serves as the corporate offices for three individually incorporated health care delivery facilities in the City of Greater Sudbury: St. Joseph's Villa, St. Joseph's Continuing Care Centre (SJCCC) and Villa St. Gabriel Villa.

On December 1, 2003, St. Joseph's Villa on South Bay Road in Sudbury was opened with 128 long-term care beds. Then again in 2009, SJCCC was opened with a capacity of 64 beds. In 2011, SJHC expanded to include Villa St. Gabriel Villa in Chelmsford, with 128 long-term care beds as another Centre of Excellence for Wellness and Aging for the community.

The opening and operation of the 60-bed Clarion site from April 6, 2020 to March 2025 was a further development of services, as was the opening of a second location of SJCCC on Lasalle Boulevard on October 28, 2024, which ultimately enabled SJHC to permanently close the temporary site at the Clarion Hotel.

St. Joseph's Villa

SJHC was initially awarded 96 long-term care beds through the Ministry of Health/Long-term Care (MoHLTC) in May of 2000. Planning for the new 96-bed long-term care facility proceeded on this basis. However, in November 2000, the Ministry released a subsequent application process in which 32 additional beds became available to the Region of Sudbury. SJHC applied for these additional 32 beds and was

notified on May 15, 2001 of its success. Both applications combined provided the ability to construct a 128-bed long-term care home.

St. Joseph's Villa was provincially incorporated and received its letters patent as a non-profit corporation on September 13, 2002. The objective of St. Joseph's Villa was to establish, equip, staff, maintain and operate a long-term care home. St. Joseph's Villa was built on 28.4 acres of a beautifully wooded property leased from Laurentian University near the site of the new Northern Ontario School of Medicine.

Designed by Perry & Perry Architects in such a way as to fit into the natural topography of the Sudbury landscape, St. Joseph's Villa has spacious living areas and beautiful dining areas with spectacular views of Lake Ramsey. Its indoor and outdoor sacred spaces include a chapel and beautiful healing gardens. The "Town Square" at the heart of St. Joseph's Villa features a hair salon, a café and access to the Villa's Jim Ashcroft Family Healing Garden, the Desjardins



St. Joseph's Villa, Sudbury, Ontario

Community Room, as well as terraces, wandering paths, and a children's play area.

St. Joseph's Villa was constructed by Tribury Construction Company and opened its doors on December 1, 2003 to 128 residents. St. Joseph's Villa provides an expanded definition of services for the Sudbury area and nurtures the body, mind and spirit of all residents, families, staff and visitors at various stages of their life journeys.

St. Joseph's Continuing Care Centre

St. Joseph's Continuing Care Centre of Sudbury (SJCCC) is the only stand-alone rehabilitative care hospital in Northeastern Ontario. Construction on the first 64-bed site on South Bay Road in Sudbury began on August 20, 2007. Architects for the project were the Sudbury firm of Perry & Perry, and the building was undertaken by Bondfield Construction Company of Sudbury.

SJCCC was provincially incorporated and received its letters patent as a non-profit corporation on January 18, 2008. The Grand Opening of the South Bay Road Site took place on June 1, 2009. SJCCC contributes to an expanded continuum of care for the region and seeks to nurture the body, mind, and spirit of all patients at various stages of their care journey. These are often patients who may otherwise be deemed Alternate Level of Care (ALC) and admitted to hospital or other care facilities.

The focus is on providing rehabilitative and restorative care to patients, with the goal of encouraging independence in activities of daily living and transitioning them to back to

Life & Work at St. Joseph's Health Centre Facilities





St. Joseph's Continuing Care Centre,
South Bay Road Site, Sudbury, Ontario

their home or to a lower, more appropriate level of care. The philosophy of care respects the individual needs of the patients, while working towards increased independence.

It strives to accomplish this by providing programs and consultation in continuing care, reflecting the Catholic tradition and values, while addressing the needs of clients and their caregivers. SJCCC offers four distinct streams of care: Rehabilitation, Complex Medical Management, Activation and Restoration. Patients' length of stay is determined based on their needs, in alignment with provincial standards.

SJCCC Alternate Health Facility – The Clarion Hotel

In 2020 the Clarion Hotel (once known as the President Hotel) at 117 Elm Street in downtown Sudbury was temporarily converted into a 60-bed alternate health facility. Two floors of the hotel were converted into hospital inpatient units for the provision of rehabilitative care. It was intended to be

only open for three months to help as a pre-emptive measure to combat the COVID-19 pandemic and a possible surge in patients at Health Sciences North.

Local health care partners came together to prepare the facility for opening in just seven days.

Once opened and operating however, SJCCC was unable to withdraw services from the Clarion Hotel because of the growing demand for care. The hotel consistently remained at 97% capacity since it opened. Over 1,700 patients received care at the Clarion Hotel. It was phased out in March 2025 as patients transitioned to the new permanent, purpose-built hospital on Lasalle Boulevard, offering enhanced rehabilitative care in a modern, fully equipped environment.

“Operating a hospital in a hotel presented unique challenges,” explained Vicki Lejambe, Chief of Nursing and Allied Health. “We had to deal with small bathrooms, narrow doorways, tight accommodations, and a minimal space for rehab, socialization, communal dining, and safe outdoor activities which are essential elements for the rehabilitation process.” Yet despite these challenges, both patient and staff satisfaction at the Clarion Hotel remained high. 97% of patients report improvement during their stay and 91% of employees recommend the facility for compassionate health care.

SJCCC Capital Expansion

To meet the growing need for rehabilitative care, SJCCC expanded through a two-phase capital project, a new 72-bed site at 319 Lasalle Boulevard. Designed by Louis Bélanger of Bélanger Salach Architecture, construction of the project

took place in two phases and was undertaken by the Prosperi Co. Ltd.

On October 28, 2024 Ontario Health Minister Sylvia Jones was present for the Grand Opening of the \$20 million Phase 1 portion of the Lasalle Site. At that time a total of 36 beds were moved from the Clarion Hotel to the new facility.



St. Joseph's Continuing Care Centre, Lasalle Site, Sudbury, Ontario

Approval for a \$30 million Phase 2 portion, an additional 36 beds, came in December, 2023. The first 24 beds opened in February 2025, when the remaining beds from the Clarion Hotel site were relocated temporarily into double occupancy rooms. When Phase 2 is completed in the Winter of 2026, those 24 beds will move into private rooms, and an additional 12 beds will be opened, thus finalizing the 72-bed hospital project.

The Lasalle Site is about more than just expanding rehabilitation beds in the region—it is about creating a sanctuary where patients can regain strength, confidence, and mobility to live independently again. An essential part of the new hospital site will be a fenced-in outdoor space or “healing garden” intended as a good place for families to meet during the nice weather.

Villa St. Gabriel Villa, Chelmsford

Villa St. Gabriel Villa is a 128-bed long-term care home located on Regional Road 15 in the community of Chelmsford, in the City of Greater Sudbury. The property was donated to SJHC by the Bélanger Family. The building was designed by Louis Bélanger of Bélanger Salach Architecture, and constructed by the Tribury Construction Company at a total cost of \$20.8 million dollars. Construction began in the fall of 2009.



Villa St. Gabriel Villa, Chelmsford, Ontario

Villa St. Gabriel Villa was provincially incorporated and received its letters patent as a non-profit corporation on January 22, 2010. On March 31, 2011, Villa St. Gabriel Villa was formally opened. Then on December 11, 2013, Villa St. Gabriel Villa was designated under the *French Language Services Act* as a bilingual facility.

St. Joseph's Lodge in Gore Bay

In November 2023, SJHC announced plans that would see a new 48,000 square foot 64-bed long-term care home, St. Joseph's Lodge, in Gore Bay on Manitoulin Island. The new home, designed by Louis Bélanger of Bélanger Salach Architecture, is to be built on the West Bluff, off Armstrong Road. It will replace the existing, privately owned Manitoulin Lodge at 3 Main Street.

Pending approval from the Ministry of Long-Term Care, construction of St. Joseph's Lodge is projected to be completed in 2027. The new facility will be a single-storey structure, with most bedrooms offering views of the bluffs and the North Channel of Lake Huron.

With access from Armstrong Street, the home will feature two 32-bed Resident Home Areas and adopt a "small house" model, dividing each wing into 16-bed "neighborhoods," each with its own shared dining area to foster a more intimate, home-like environment.

The site will also include a fully accessible healing garden and a walking path around the building, providing outdoor space for residents and visitors to enjoy.

On July 1, 2025, SJHC will assume operations of Manitoulin Lodge, a long-term care home located at 3 Main Street in Gore Bay. The home will be renamed St. Joseph's Lodge, and long-term care services will continue at this location until the new St. Joseph's Lodge on Armstrong Road is completed and ready to welcome residents.



L to R: Gore Bay Mayor Ron Lane, Louis Bélanger of Bélanger Salach Architecture, Kari Gervais of St. Joseph's Health Centre and Jaime Lynn-Kalmikov of Manitoulin Lodge.

APPENDIX 1

Administrators, Presidents and CEOs of the Sudbury General Hospital

1948-1950	Sister Mary Joan (Viola Rochon) Supervisor of building construction and Assistant Administrator (1950-1953)
1950-1953	Sister Mary Alice (Alice Quinlan) First Administrator
1953-1955	Sister Mary Jovita (Mary Gertrude Kennedy)
1955-1958	Sister Patricia (Margaret Smith)
1958-1962	Sister Jane Francis (Marion Stanton)
1962-1967	Sister Paula (Dorothy Brown)
1967-1974	Sister St. Louis (Alice Johnson)
1974-1982	Sister Miriam Downey
1982-1997	Sister Winnifred McLoughlin

Presidents and CEOs of St. Joseph's Health Centre (SJHC) ~ Old Sudbury General Site

1997-1999	Mr. Carl Roy, President and CEO
1999-2000	Sister Bonnie MacLellan

Presidents and CEOs of St. Joseph's Health Centre (SJHC)

2000-2021	Ms. Jo-Anne Palkovits
2022 to present	Ms. Kari Gervais

Board Chairs of the Sudbury General Hospital

1948-1950	Judge P.J. McAndrew
1950-1952	Dr. J.F. McCullough
1952-1955	Mr. Saul Silverman
1955-1960	Mr. J.W. Tate
1960-1965	Mr. Gordon E. Browning
1965-1969	Mr. William (Bill) J. Shea
1969-1971	Mr. F. Baxter Ricard
1971-1975	Mr. Gordon O. Machum
1975-1976	Mr. Mervin J. McNamara
1976-1978	Mr. George A. Bouchard
1978-1980	Mr. Hugh S. Judges
1980-1982	Mr. C.V.J. Nurmi Jr.
1982-1984	R.B. Michael Keenan
1984-1986	James (Jim) H. Coghlan
1987	Leonard J. McNamara
1987-1989	Wayne Wilson
1989-1991	J. Stephen O'Neill
1991-1993	R.B. Michael Keenan
1993-1994	David Bronicheski

Chiefs of Staff of the Sudbury General Hospital

1951-1957	Dr. J.F. McCullough
1958-1963	Dr. R. Orange
1964-1967	Dr. P.R. Kyle

1968-1970	Dr. John Walter Sturtridge
1971-1974	Dr. Philip A.J. Andrews
1974-1977	Dr. John Walter Sturtridge
1978-1983	Dr. G.M. Irvine
1984-1990	Dr. R. Grosso
1990-1993	Dr. Ricardo Parraga
1993-1994	Dr. Van Boxel

Board Chairs of St. Joseph's Health Centre (SJHC)

1995-1998	Allister Cruthers
1999-2000	Gaetan Doucet
1999-2001	Sr. Shirley Anderson
2001-2003	Margaret Ashcroft
2003-2005	Don Garrioch
2005-2007	Monique Landry Sabourin
2007-2009	Sr. Mildred Connelly
2009-2011	Thomas Orendorff
2011-2013	Joseph Pintur
2013-2015	Ehren Baldauf
2015-2017	Linda Wilson
2017-2019	Paul Marleau
2019-2021	Andre Durette
2021-2023	Daniel Sirois
2023-	Catherine Huneault

APPENDIX 2

“What We Believe — And Why” The Sudbury General Hospital Philosophy (March 1978)

- 1) We believe that health care is a vital mission of the Catholic Church and of Christianity, because it is concerned with man in the process of redemption.
- 2) We believe that through this ministry Christ continues to exercise his priestly and healing powers.
- 3) We endeavour, as Sisters, Directors, and Staff of this Hospital, to bring the Father's healing love through the action of the Holy Spirit to each other and to the people we serve.
- 4) We believe that all creation should be held in reverence, and that human life in all its aspects is essentially and absolutely sacred.
- 5) We believe that Life is the dynamic state of being, and man's life is unique, in that each individual is endowed with an immortal spirit and the capacity for free thought, and man has a responsibility to God, his Creator, Redeemer, and Sanctifier, to his fellow man, and to himself.
- 6) We believe that suffering is an integral part of the human condition, and that suffering has redemptive quality when accepted in union with Christ's suffering; however, following Christ's own example of compassion, we strive to alleviate suffering where possible, or to support the sufferer when this is all we can do. We accept death as a crucial moment in man's existence

because, through death, man returns to his Maker. We endeavour to assist the dying to accomplish this passage in dignity and peace.

- 8) We believe that death is not the end for man in God's plan of redemption. This belief directs our endeavours to support the family and friends of the deceased, at this time of separation.

PURPOSE

Since our philosophy embraces the social dimension, our purpose, as a Catholic Health Care Institution as stated in our By-Laws, is as follows:

- 1) To serve in co-operation with other health agencies the people of the Community in which we are situated;
- 2) To give care and treatment to the sick and injured during the acute, chronic and rehabilitative phases of illness;
- 3) To maintain and help improve the quality of life and community health by education, early diagnosis, and treatment;
- 4) To promote research in health and related areas in meeting the health needs of the people we serve;
- 5) To provide an atmosphere of acceptance by stimulating each person in the belief in his own and others' value as a person, and of each one's ability to contribute to the health care ministry, based on this philosophy and these objectives.

APPENDIX 3

Timeline of Significant Dates

1944

June 20, 1944: Bishop Dignan offered to purchase 3.5 acres of land adjoining Bell Park from F.M. Stafford for \$23,000.00 as a site for a hospital.

July 17, 1944: Diocesan campaign was launched to raise funds for the new hospital.

July 28, 1944: The General Council of the Sisters of St. Joseph of Sault Ste. Marie suggested that a request for a hospital come from the people of Sudbury.

September 2, 1944: The Stafford Estate at 700 Paris Street, overlooking Ramsey Lake and adjacent to Bell Park was purchased for \$23,500.

November 21, 1944: Approval was given by the city for an exchange of land adjoining the Stafford property for a lot facing Lake Ramsey.

1948

February 16, 1948: Mr. Louis Fabbro was appointed architect; tenders were called.

March 1, 1948: Anglin-Norcross Ontario Limited, the second lowest bidder was given the contract at estimated cost of \$2,200,000. Work was to be completed in five months.

April 6, 1948: Turning of the sod by the Honorable Ray Lawson, Governor General of Ontario.

July 1948: Excavation of the site began

September 29, 1948: Inaugural meeting of the Hospital Women's Auxiliary was held with Sister M. Joan presiding.

1949

The Women's Hospital Auxiliary of Sudbury General Hospital began being organized.

March 1949: Erection of the superstructure began and the first floor of the structure was completed. Stafford residence on the purchased property was occupied by Sr. Joan and other Sisters to renovate for the Nursing Students' Residence.

May 29, 1949: Laying of the Cornerstone in the presence of Bishop Dignan, Judge P.J. McAndrew, Reverend Mother Cecilia, General Superior.

November 15, 1949: Building of the Hospital well underway. Marymount School of Nursing of Sudbury General established *pro tem* at St. Joseph's Hospital in North Bay. Students were transferred in 1950 to Sudbury General Hospital of the Immaculate Heart of Mary.

1950

July 1, 1950: Sudbury Mental Health Clinic was formally founded in the offices of the Medical Officer of Health. Dr. Thomas Dixon was appointed as psychiatrist and Director.

October 14, 1950: Preview of new hospital by the Board of Directors and Ladies Auxiliary.

October 15, 1950: On a cold day, Mass, blessing and the official opening of the Sudbury General Hospital of the Immaculate Heart of Mary occurred. Having 200 beds, it

was the first English Catholic Hospital in Sudbury. The Hospital Board of Trustees were representative of all faiths and traditions.

November 1, 1950: The first patient was admitted

November 29, 1950: A second cash presentation from INCO of \$125,000 followed a previous contribution of \$75,000 to bring the total to \$200,000.

November, 1950: William Edge Mason Estate endowed the Pediatric Floor with 170 beds and 49 bassinets.

1951

November 13, 1951: Over 7,000 patients including 1,400 babies were admitted during the first year. The hospital took over the debt as well as the operating expenses.

1952

June 22, 1952: First Graduating Class of Marymount School of Nursing.

1953

October 25, 1953: Opening of Mason Residence for nursing students, which was newly constructed adjacent to the Stafford residence. It was named after longtime friend and benefactor, Mr. William (Bill) Mason.

1954

First new wing was added (D-Wing) consisting of an additional 100 active treatment beds, 33 beds for a

psychiatric unit, some surgical and obstetric, nursery, physio and occupational therapy.

1955

Staff health services were established in the hospital.

May 12, 1955: The formal opening of the Psychiatric Unit took place. The four-storey, 140 foot extension to the west side of the hospital was designed by Louis A. Fabbro. It included three floors for the Psychiatric Unit and an additional floor for general hospital use that added an additional 40 beds to the hospital's capacity. Construction began in August 1953.

1957

Gynecology Unit with 37 beds was opened.

St. Joseph's Convent on Louis St. was used for 37 more students for a total of 115 nursing students.

1960

Monsignor Humphrey Residence (former Silverman residence on Paris Street) was used for 25 more nursing students.

1962

Treatment Centre for crippled children opened.

1963

February 1, 1963: Five-story addition to Mason Residence opened.

1964

October 1964: Nuclear Medicine Department was opened providing diagnostic services for body conditions and diseases using radio pharmaceuticals.

1965

Medical Library was established for medical education and research.

Marymount School of Nursing graduated 42 nurses, its largest class.

A medical photography department was initiated as a regional service

1966

With approval from the School of Nurses of Ontario, a two-year nursing program and one year internship was implemented and Marymount School of Nursing was renamed "St. Joseph School of Nursing." Forty-eight students enrolled in September 1966.

1967

A 6-bed specially equipped Intensive Care Unit opened to give intensive medical and nursing care for critically-ill patients. This unit was dedicated to Dr. R.W. Poole its founder.

A Poison Control Centre in Emergency was established under the auspices of Federal Health & Welfare.

November 30, 1967: A special meeting was called to discuss a renovation and expansion program. The cost was estimated at \$7,000,000.

1969

April 21, 1969: The Board of Directors met to study proposed plans for addition.

May 6, 1969: Meeting of Board of Directors and Sudbury District Hospital Council.

May 28, 1969: The last graduation at Marymount School of Nursing. This school and St. Elizabeth School of Nursing were transferred to Sudbury Regional School of Nursing.

July 14, 1969: The operation of the ambulance service was officially transferred from Loughheed's to the Sudbury General Hospital.

October 15, 1969: Official opening of the new regional ambulance facilities. Ambulance garage was constructed for regional ambulance services by Primo Titton Construction.

1970

Neurosurgery (brain surgery) offered as a special department under surgery to treat trauma victims brought to Emergency.

August, 1970: Building Program for the Percy Gardner "A Wing" approved by Sudbury District Hospital and OHSC.

Cost reduced to \$5,000,000. Architectural firm of Govin, Kaminker, Langley, Keenleyside, Melick, Devonshire and Wilson asked to revise schematic drawings.

December 1, 1970: The Ontario Hospital Services Commission (OHSC) officially approved schematic drawings revised by architect and granted approval to proceed with development of sketch plans.

1971

A more formal Pastoral Care was established with four Sisters voluntarily visiting patients and assisting local clergy.

February, 1971: Renovations begin on 1st and 3rd floor of Mason Residence to accommodate personnel, health and education offices previously housed in Stafford residence.

May, 1971: The Stafford residence was demolished

May 15, 1971: Excavation for the new A-Wing. Final approval received from OHSC authorizing the signing of a contract with Ellis Don Construction, Toronto, for \$4,948,472, the lowest submitted of seven bids.

May, 1971: Excavation for A-Wing contract awarded to Rumble Contracting of Mississauga. Architects proceeded with finalization the hospital extension plans.

August, 1971: Official authorization for A-Wing received from OHSC to call for tenders for the \$5 million hospital expansion program.

September 30, 1971: Contract signed for six-story A-Wing addition by Sr. Margaret Smith, Assistant General Superior, RJ Todhunter, Ellis Don Construction, W. Preatorius, Architect, and Gordon O. Machum, Chairman of the Hospital Board.

December, 1971: Completion of all ground floor walls and columns of A Wing. Main floor completed with framing columns for second floor advanced. Elevator shaft completed to second floor.

1972

1972-73: New switchboard area and medical records renovations completed.

1972: Life-size cartoon characters was donated to the Paediatrics Unit by Cambrian College.

September 1, 1972: Meetings of the Board of Directors. Anticipated date for opening of new wing is August 22, 1973.

1973

October 15, 1973: New Percy Gardner "A-Wing" addition is opened at with the final cost being \$6,400,000.00, which included construction, equipment and surgical instruments.

1974

May, 1974: Inquest of a number of deaths thought to be caused by a cross-connection of lines containing nitrous oxide gas and pure oxygen.

1975

A Respiratory Technology Department established to administer to pre and post-operative patients as well as patients needing mechanically assisted ventilation.

1976

A new Audiology (hearing testing) Service opened for out-patients and support to ear surgery in-patients.

April 1976: The first Pastoral Care Department at the Sudbury General (later known as the Spiritual and Religious Care Department) with paid professional staff was formally established.

1977

Obstetrics for the city was centralized at Sudbury General Hospital. The 60 bed, 64 bassinet unit became the largest non-teaching obstetrical unit in Ontario.

1979

September 27, 1979: Hospital Board approved the acquisition of the General Electric 8800 C.A.T. Scanner.

October 4, 1979: C.A.T. Scanner was ordered from General Electric Medical Systems, Milwaukee, Wisconsin at a cost of \$819,476.00.

1980

March 7, 1980: Construction by Gopac Construction (Sudbury) Ltd. started on the 1,700 square foot addition onto the existing Radiology Department in order to house the C.A.T. Scanner and Ultrasound Imaging equipment.

November 28, 1980: Construction of new imaging addition was completed and the officially opened on January 13, 1981.

1984

July 30, 1984: Approval of an application for the construction of a Helipad was granted.

1986

June 1986: The Helipad was completed and operational.

October 16, 1986: The Helipad formally opened.

1987

On recommendation from Hospital Services Restructuring Committee (HSRC), a contract was established between the Sisters' Corporation and the regional hospital to oversee chronic care, sub-acute and palliative care to be constructed at the one hospital site.

January 7, 1987: The Ontario Health Minister, the Honourable Murray Elston cut the ribbon to officially open the Perinatal Unit, a \$500,000 renovation to the entire third floor with new medical equipment.

1989

March 25, 1989: A deliberate fire was lit in a storage room initiating preparations for a general evacuation of the hospital. The fire caused major smoke damage, however no injuries resulted. The arsonist was arrested.

1990

The Sudbury General Hospital opened the Clinton Street Clinic, an off-site clinic to provide community-based Mental Health Services.

1993

November, 1993: Sudbury General Hospital received approval to begin planning for Magnetic Resonance Imaging (MRI) services for Sudbury.

1995

The Ontario Government under newly elected Mike Harris sought to reorganize hospital services in Sudbury with the closure of Memorial Hospital and the reorganization of services within the Sudbury General Hospital and the Laurentian Hospital with the two hospitals operating as a single organization with one governing body, administration and medical staff. The hospital board to have “unfettered” decision-making power over the two-hospital site. Under the new Harris Progressive Conservative government, there were major cuts to health, education and social services throughout Ontario.

1996

June: The Health Services Restructuring Committee (HSRC) began its work to merge the city's three hospitals under one administration. Other hospitals in the province were undergoing the same process. The Government of Ontario's *Savings and Restructuring Act* brought about a change in the role of the Sudbury General Hospital that explored unmet needs in the Sudbury area leading to a focus on the elderly and those in need of chronic care. A commitment was made to focus on elder care and the aging.

December: The HSRC released its directives that all three hospitals would consolidate on Laurentian Site by April 30,

1999. The Sisters of St. Joseph replied that they could only work in such a system if they had their own corporation, Board of Directors and CEO. The Sisters of St. Joseph opposed the commission's directions and appealed to the courts.

1997

May 8, 1997: Consistent with the previous commitment by the Sisters of St. Joseph, the Sudbury General Hospital sent a cheque to the City of Sudbury for \$1,427,444. This amount represented all net profits and accrued interest earned from the hospital parking lot that was on land leased from the City. The money had been held in trust for the building of a low level parking structure on the property. With the issuance of the Final Directions from the Health Services Restructuring Commission this structure was no longer necessary.

August 14, 1997: The name of the Sudbury General Hospital of the Immaculate Heart of Mary was changed to "St. Joseph's Health Centre" (SJHC) receiving its letters patent as a not-for-profit corporation under the Canada Corporations Act.

November 27, 1997: Contract signed between the Sisters of St. Joseph and Sudbury Regional Hospital. Sisters to continue to run SJHC with their own board until one site hospital was completed.

1998

Catholic Health Sponsors of Ontario (CHSO) was founded to build on the legacy of the founding religious congregations: Sisters of St. Joseph, Toronto, Sisters of

St. Joseph, Sault Ste. Marie, and the Grey Sisters of the Immaculate Conception, Pembroke. Sponsorship of St. Joseph's Hospital, Thunder Bay, St. Joseph's Hospital, Elliot Lake, and St. Joseph's Health Centre, Sudbury was transferred to this "public juridic person" under canon law and to Catholic Health Corporation of Ontario (CHCO) under civil law. Membership was later expanded. The CHSO is a partnership of the Catholic Health Association of Ontario, a voluntary association of Catholic health agencies in Ontario and the three religious congregations.

November: Construction began on the one-site Sudbury Hospital; estimated cost was \$132 million and expected to be opened in the spring of 2002. In September 2000, the estimated cost rose to \$168 million.

1998 – 2010: The St. Joseph's Health Centre building on Paris St. was leased to Sudbury Regional Hospital.

2003

December 1, 2003: St. Joseph's Villa long term care, South Bay Road with 128 beds was opened.

2009

June 1, 2009: St. Joseph's Continuing Care Centre (SJCC) a complex continuing care hospital was opened on South Bay Road with 64 beds.

2010

March 26, 2010: Farewell services for the Sudbury General Hospital site/ St. Joseph's Health Center. Patients moved

March 28 to the newly completed Sudbury Regional Hospital.

2011

St. Gabriel's Villa (SJHC) opened in Chelmsford with 128 beds.

2012

October: Sudbury Regional Health Centre was renamed Health Sciences North as it evolved into an academic health research centre.

2020

April 30, 2020: Clarion Hotel site expansion was added to SJHC to meet Covid 19 demand.

2024

October 28, 2024: The Grand Opening of Phase 1 of the new St. Joseph's Continuing Care Centre rehabilitation expansion project at 319 Lasalle Boulevard in New Sudbury.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Sister Mae Kierans, CSJ, Archivist of the Congregation of the Sisters of St. Joseph of Sault Ste. Marie.

Sr. Marlene Roy, CSJ, Assistant General Superior, Sisters of St. Joseph of Sault Ste. Marie and Sr. Constanza Romano, CSJ, General Councillor

St. Joseph's Health Centre, Sudbury, Ontario (Kari Gervais, President and CEO; Tanya Gil-Alfau, Executive Assistant; Kristal Lafantaisie, Director of Development; Keely Grace, Communications and Donor Coordinator); Jo-Anne Palkovits-Williams, former President and CEO.

Betty Szilva, former chaplain, Sudbury General Pastoral care department.

The staff of the reference section at the Sudbury Public Library.

PHOTO CREDITS:

Unless otherwise noted, all photos are from the Archives, Sisters of St. Joseph of Sault Ste. Marie and are used with permission. Some photos of the laying of the cornerstone were originally taken by a *Sudbury Star* staff photographer.

Page

1. Print, The Canadian Pacific Railway: Sudbury Junction, to Algoma and Gold Mines, F. Jennings, 1888, Ink on newsprint - Wood engraving - 39.4 x 29.4. 1888. Source, David Ross McCord.jpg. This image is available from the McCord Museum under the access number M984.306.1288.4
2. Dr. Jacob W. Hart. Town of Huntsville, Ontario website. Past Mayors.
4. Bishop Ralph Hubert Dignan. Archives of the Diocese of Sault Ste. Marie.
6. William Edge Mason, City of Greater Sudbury Heritage Images, Greater Sudbury Public Library Collection, MK0702. Used with permission.
31. Dr. Thomas P. Dixon, Psychiatrist. Photo from the Dr. Thomas Dixon fonds, Archives of the Congregation of the Sisters of St. Joseph of Sault Ste. Marie in North Bay, Ontario.
36. Betty Szilva, Sudbury
45. BayToday.ca website. "Developer releases plans for colourful Sudbury Hospital Property." by Tyler Clarke. August 12, 2023.
- 46-51. Photos courtesy of St. Joseph's Health Centre, Sudbury
52. "St. Joseph's Health Centre lays out plans for new 64-bed nursing home in Gore Bay" by Tom Sasvari. *Manitoulin Expositor* online, November 22, 2023.

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SOURCES:

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40 Years of Caring. A video that commemorated the 40th anniversary of the Sudbury General Hospital. Produced by Michael Snow for the Sudbury General Hospital Educational Services. 1990.

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Marcon, Jason. "Memory Lane: Remembering the old St. Joseph's Hospital," from the website, Sudbury.com (July 19, 2023 12:28 PM).

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Wallace, C.M., and Ashley Thomson, Editors. Sudbury: *Rail Town to Regional Capital.* Toronto: Dundurn Press. 1993.

Numerous *Sudbury Star* articles.

ENDNOTES

1. Ramsey is often spelled "Ramsay" when referring to Ramsey Lake or Ramsey Lake Road. For the purposes of this history I have chosen to use Ramsey which seems to be the more preferred spelling today.
2. *Sudbury: Rail Town to Regional Capital*. Edited by C.M. Wallace and Ashley Thomson. Toronto: Dundurn Press. 1993. p. 13.
3. "The Hidden History of Thomas Edison in Canada" by Mayo Bilboa on the web site *Northern Ontario Travel*. January 13, 2022.
4. Much of this section is taken from Chapter 1 of *Sudbury: Rail Town to Regional Capital*. Edited by C.M. Wallace and Ashley Thomson. Toronto: Dundurn Press. 1993.
5. *Hôpital St-Joseph's Hospital, Sudbury, Ontario: Jubile d'or ~ Golden Jubilee 1896-1946* (76 pages with illustrations) bilingual. 1946. "Memory Lane: Remembering the old St. Joseph's Hospital" by Jason Marcon. July 19, 2023 on Sudbury.com
6. At this time Sudbury was part of the large Diocese of Peterborough that extended from the shores of Lake Ontario, north to Georgian Bay and all the way to the Manitoba border. From 1889 to 1904 it was under the leadership of Bishop Richard Alphonsus O'Connor. The Diocese of Sault Ste. Marie was severed from the Diocese of Peterborough on September 16, 1904.
7. *As the Tree Grows, Celebrating 100 Years of the Sisters of St. Joseph, Peterborough, 1890-1990*. 1993, p. 2, 3.
8. Documents in the Archives of the Sisters of St. Joseph of Sault Ste. Marie.
9. Letter, July 12, 1944. Page 1. Bishop Dignan. Administrative files of the "Sudbury General Hospital." Generalate of the Sisters of St. Joseph of Sault Ste. Marie. North Bay, Ontario.
10. Ibid, p. 1.
11. Ibid. p. 1.
12. Ibid. p. 2.
13. "Bishop Dignan Tells of Plans for Building" in the *Sudbury Star*, August 4, 1944.
14. Letter, July 20, 1944. Administrative files of the "Sudbury General Hospital." Generalate of the Sisters of St. Joseph of Sault Ste. Marie. North Bay, Ontario.
15. Letter, July 12, 1944. Page 1. Bishop Dignan. Administrative files of the "Sudbury General Hospital." Generalate of the Sisters of St. Joseph of Sault Ste. Marie. North Bay, Ontario. p.2.
16. Letter from Bishop Dignan to Mr. J.M. Miller, K.C. of Sudbury, June 17, 1949.
17. "W.E.Mason Backed St. Joseph Sisters: Efforts Helped Obtain Hospital Site from City; Attend Many Meetings" in *The Sudbury Daily Star*. Newspaper clipping in Archives of the Sisters of St. Joseph but no publication date noted.
18. Ibid.
19. "Remembering W.E. Mason, Sudbury's very own Citizen Kane" *Sudbury News, Then & Now*, January 6, 2022.
20. "Wading Pool Among City's Benefits from Mason Will" in the *Sudbury Daily Star*, Saturday, July 18, 1951.
21. Letter from Bishop Dignan to Mr. J.M. Miller, K.C. of Sudbury, June 17, 1949.
22. "W.E. Mason Will Benefits Hospital, other Charities" in the *North Bay Daily Nugget*, June 24, 1948.
23. The *Sudbury Star*, Monday May 30, 1949 stated that the Stafford estate was "a large 3½-acre holding adjoining Bell Park."
24. "Settle Tangle on Boundary of New Hospital" in the *Sudbury Star*, May 11, 1944.

25. Letter to Mother Superior Sister Cecilia from Mr. H.P. McKeown, Clerk of the City of Sudbury, November 23, 1944.
26. *Dignan, Ralph Hubert. Sources.* Humbert, Greg J. editor. Archives, Diocese of Sault Ste. Marie, 1995. page 239.
27. Letter from Hon. Russell T. Kelley, Minister of Health, Province of Ontario to Bishop Dignan. June 6, 1947.
28. The Department of Munitions and Supply was the Canadian federal government ministry set up specifically to co-ordinate domestic industry during the Second World War. It was created by the *Department of Munitions and Supply Act* with C.D. Howe as its Minister. The Department produced armaments for the war effort and regulated the use of gasoline, silk and other strategic commodities such as health and safety in Canada in order to prioritize their use for the war production.
29. Letter from Bishop Dignan to Mr. William Bennett at the Department of Munitions and Supplies in Ottawa. October 4, 1944, and Letter to The Honourable C.D. How, Minister of Munitions and Supplies, Ottawa. October 5, 1944.
30. Letter to Bishop Dignan from Joseph M. Pigott, President, Pigott Construction Company Limited, Hamilton. December 12, 1945.
31. Taken from the booklet "Newly-Erected Eight-Storey Hospital To Serve Sudbury and Surrounding Vicinity." Published on the opening of the Sudbury General Hospital 1950. Archives of the Sisters of St. Joseph of Sault Ste. Marie. (5 pages) 1950.
32. The number of beds at the time of construction has been noted differently throughout the years, from the original 100-bed plan, sometimes 151, and other times 165 or 168 beds. An assessment by the architect was provided in 1959. Letter to Mother St. Bride from Louis N. Fabbro, Architect, September 11, 1959.
33. *Dignan, Ralph Hubert. Sources.* Humbert, Greg J. editor. Archives, Diocese of Sault Ste. Marie, 1995. p. 267.
34. 40 Years of Caring. A video that commemorated the 40th anniversary of the Sudbury General Hospital. Produced by Michael Snow for the Sudbury General Hospital Educational Services. 1990.
35. Much of this is taken from the newspaper article, "Bishop of Diocese Lays Stone: Hundreds Watch Impressive Ceremony Marking Milestone in Erection of 165-bed Hospital for District" in the *Sudbury Daily Star*, May 30, 1949. Sudbury General Hospital was the second hospital to be constructed in Sudbury after St. Joseph's Hospital that was owned and operated by the Sisters of Charity of Ottawa.
36. Monel is a nickel-copper alloy. The trowel was made of monel which may well have been a product of INCO (International Nickel Company).
37. "Bishop of Diocese Lays Stone" in the *Sudbury Star*, May 30, 1949, p. 3.
38. Ibid, p 3.
39. In Bishop Dignan's Journal and Minute Book *Sources* it states: "First patients enter the hospital on Monday November 13th." p. 267.
40. "Memory Lane: "From its first baby to its last patient. Here are your memories of Sudbury General" by Vicki Gilhula. October 13, 2020. Sudbury.com
41. "125,000 Gift to Hospital Made by INCO" in the *Sudbury Star*, Wednesday November 29, 1950. page 2.
42. "Health minister emphasizes scope as second addition is opened at Sudbury General." in the *Sudbury Star*, December 28, 1973.
43. For a more detailed description of the Sudbury General Mental Health Clinic and Psychiatric Unit refer to the the section of this history titled "Psychiatric Unit of the Sudbury General Hospital." pages 30-32.
44. Letter to Sr. Jane Francis from the chair of the Advisory Board, Mr. G.E. Browning, June 15, 1961.
45. "20 years of Nuclear Medicine" by Peter McPherson, in *The Capsule* (Fall, 1984) Sudbury General Hospital Magazine staff magazine.

46. "Mr. Percy Gardner" in *The Capsule* (Winter 1975). Sudbury General Hospital Magazine staff magazine.
47. The Coroners Act - Province of Ontario. Verdict of Coroner's Jury for the Catherine Dominic: *et al.* Inquest January 14, 1974 held at the Palladium Room North, Holiday Inn, Sudbury, Ontario. Also, 'Our hearts were broken, just shattered': recalling deadly mix-up at former Sudbury hospital", by Erik White, CBC News. Posted: Oct 13, 2016.
48. "\$750,000 gift to Sudbury General" in the *INCO Triangle*. (Vol. 54, No. 6) June 1995, p.1-2.
49. "Auxiliary Is Two Years Old" in the *Sudbury Star*. October 14, 1950.
50. *Sudbury General Hospital: Transitions in Treatment 30th Anniversary 1950-1980*. Annual Report 1979-80. p. 17.
51. "Frank A. Gainer: Jan. 28, 1910~Feb. 1, 1969. Earth Has No Sorrow That Heaven Cannot Heal" Sudbury General Hospital program in honour of Frank Gainer. 1969.
52. "A New Chapter in the Life of Bob Cecile" by Siegfried Born in *The Capsule*. Sudbury General Hospital magazine, Fall, 1984. pages 6-7.
53. Much of the material about the founding of the Psychiatric Unit at the Sudbury General Hospital comes from the "Dr. Thomas Dixon fonds" deposited at the Congregational Archives of the Sisters of St. Joseph of Sault Ste. Marie in North Bay, Ontario. Hereafter referred to as the "Dr. Thomas Dixon fonds".
54. Letter from the medical director of "The National Committee for Mental Hygiene (Canada) Toronto dated March 31, 1949. Dr. Thomas Dixon fonds. These are housed in the Archives of the Congregation of the Sisters of St. Joseph of Sault Ste. Marie in North Bay, Ontario.
55. Letter to a Dr. Walker, February 26, 1950. Dr. Thomas Dixon fonds.
56. Letter to Reverend Sister Mary Joan, March 8, 1950. Dr. Thomas Dixon fonds.
57. Letter to Dr. J.B. Cook, Medical officer of Health in Sudbury, dated April 11, 1950 from the Neurological Clinic at Sunny Brook Hospital (Department of Veterans Affairs. Dr. Thomas Dixon fonds.
58. Brief to Dr. MacKinnon Phillips, Minister of Health, Province of Ontario on the Psychiatric Unit, Sudbury General Hospital. January 26, 1952. Dr. Thomas Dixon fonds.
59. "Report to the Board of Control, City of Sudbury, on the Mental Health Clinic" by Dr. Tom Dixon. Not dated, but the report ends with a reference to December 1954. Dr. Thomas Dixon fonds.
60. A significant portion of this section is taken from, Bouchard, Jeannette L. *Seven Decades of Caring / Sept Decennies de Soins*. , Sudbury, Ontario: Laurentian University Press. 1984.
61. Ibid, p. 33.
62. "Name chaplain for General Hospital" in the Catholic Register. June 16, 1962.
63. Leuschen, Janice. "My Unforeseen Guardian Angel" in *Painted Voices*. Sudbury Writers Guild, 2021. Used with permission of the author.
64. "To the Priests and People of the Parish in the Sudbury/Manitoulin Region" Letter from Bishop Jean-Louis Plouffe, Biocese of Sault Ste. Marie. September 27, 1995.
65. "Doctors disagree on one-hospital system" in the *Sudbury Star*, Tuesday October 1, 1996. p. A6.
66. "Sisters of St. Joseph stand their ground: Health council turns up heat on General. Officials at Sudbury General told to accept sole governance or hospital will be dropped from recommended restructuring proposal." in the *Sudbury Star*, Friday October 6, 1995, p. A3.
67. "Sisters suggest two boards for superhospital" in the *Sudbury Star*, December 22, 1996.
68. "Sisters drop lawsuit: A role has been found for the Sisters of St. Joseph in the Sudbury Regional Hospital Corporation" by staff writer Lisa Gervais in the *Sudbury Star*, Saturday May 3, 1997.

69. "A new era for Sudbury's hospitals" by staff writer Denis St. Pierre, in the *Sudbury Star*, December 30, 1997.
70. "Sisters drop lawsuit: A role has been found for the Sisters of St. Joseph in the Sudbury Regional Hospital Corporation" by staff writer Lisa Gervais in the *Sudbury Star*, Saturday May 3, 1997.
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72. "Panoramic Properties' 530-unit project greenlit for old Sudbury Hospital" by Tyler Clarke in *Northern Ontario Business*. Wednesday November 27, 2024.
73. "Province greenlights new, 72-bed rehab facility for Sudbury," by Darren MacDonald. CTV News online, December 4, 2023; "New St. Joseph's Continuing Care Centre on Lasalle progressing," by Hugh Krutzel for the *Sudbury Star* online. August 14, 2024; "From Hotel to Hospital: St. Joseph's Continuing Care Centre set to open this fall" by Katie Wright, Community Care Team. May 10, 2024. Sudbury.com; "Health Minister attends opening of Sudbury's new 72-bed rehab facility," by Len Gillis. October 28, 2024. Sudbury.com.
74. "St. Joseph's Health Centre lays out plans for new 64-bed nursing home in Gore Bay" by Tom Sasvari. *Manitoulin Expositor* online, November 22, 2023. "Town of Gore Bay will soon sign lease for Manitoulin Lodge," by Tom Sasvari. *Manitoulin Expositor* online, November 6, 2024.



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