

SAINT JOSEPH'S GENERAL HOSPITAL
PETERBOROUGH



100 YEARS

A COMMEMORATIVE PUBLICATION

MARGARET M. McDONALD, C.S.J.

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Sister Margaret McDonald

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FOREWORD

Each of us has a personal story to recount, a tale of two journeys, really, one the identifiable milestones and accomplishments of a life, and the other a mysterious inner road we walk from childhood to maturity. Institutions, too, show one face to the outside observer and another to those who have inhabited their inner corridors. Sister Margaret McDonald is uniquely placed to chronicle the inner and outer life of St. Joseph's General hospital. An historian herself, and the author of A Heritage of Caring, Sister McDonald served within the hospital for more than thirty years and has watched its development in recent decades from the vantage point of health care volunteer and counsellor in the wider community.

Decade by decade she takes the reader through the hospital's history, with stark statistics and warm, revealing anecdotes. As the 1890 building grows from its pristine splendour on an Ashburnham hill through its many winged and multi-service expansions we are made aware of the faith of all those involved, their struggles to endure and adapt and their courageous and joyful insistence on the mission of compassionate and competent care.

This is Centennial year for the hospital, a time when current health care realities stand in the reflected light of times past. This book is more than a nostalgic remembering, however, it is an ordering of the present and the future upon the building blocks of a hospital's tradition. It serves us well as an historic commemorative and we are greatly indebted to its author.

Veronica O'Reilly, C.S.J.
General Superior



PREFACE

As I undertake the awesome task of preparing some record of health care at St. Joseph's General Hospital for the past one hundred years, I am reminded of the Lord's answer. Habakkuk 2:2 & 3.

... "Write down the vision clearly upon the tablets
so that one can read it readily, for the vision
still has its time, presses on to fulfilment"
... and again, in the words of the prodigious writer,

St. Teresa of Avila (1515-1582),

... "Would that I had many hands with which to write so that
while putting down some of these things, I wouldn't forget
the others" ...

However, the task has been made easier because of the research I had already done for the history of St. Joseph's School of Nursing (1906-1974) in the Heritage of Caring published in 1981. This account included hospital settings and events only as far as Nursing was involved.

In this present treatise, I have endeavoured to fix location and date of beginnings of a number of services which have developed into departments with the passing of time and availability of scientific knowledge and expertise. To establish some sort of sequence, I have attempted to place highlights in ten-year periods.

I have included a few statistics which would be of interest to the then and now. Other information to reflect the growth in the nature and volume of services, has been noted.

Throughout the text, reference to a section of the hospital may be identified by letter or by year of formal opening, e.g.

Key: A - 1922 Wing
B - 1950 Wing
C - 1890 Wing
D - 1964 Wing

The author wishes to express a sincere gratitude to all who have assisted in any way in the production of this commemorative booklet.

M.

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