



The *Great* Canadian
Catholic Hospital History Project

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



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

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

St. Martha's Regional Hospital Antigonish, Nova Scotia

100th Anniversary
1906-2006

Source: Archives of the Congregation of the
Sisters of St. Martha, Antigonish

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Saint  Martha's
R E G I O N A L H O S P I T A L

"Serving as we would be served"



TIMELINE 1906 - 1910

The citizens of Antigonish believe the establishment of a properly conducted hospital in the town will be a means of alleviating a great deal of suffering. Five doctors of the community share the belief and desire of the people.

The doctors petition the recently established group of Sisters of St. Martha at the College, and pledge "to cheerfully give our professional services gratis to the poor patients." The rector of the College, five citizens and five doctors give the Sisters a "free hand" to take charge in the establishment of a cottage hospital.

On June 10, 1906, the first hospital, in the Campbell house on St. Ninian Street, officially opens. The house provides space for 6 patients, an operating room and a kitchen.

Three months after the hospital opens, a typhoid fever epidemic hit the town. The need for a larger institution becomes obvious. A Grand Bazaar is held and raises funds towards the purchase of the Harris House.



Left to Right: Patsy MacIsaac (Geriatric Clinic), Wilma Mills (GARU), and Josée Morrell

January 2007

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
	1 New Year's Day	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30	31			

TIMELINE 1910 - 1920

In 1911, Harris House, the large home of a retired bank manager, is purchased with the help of interested citizens, the Sisters at the College and the Ladies of the Town. The house is located on a beautiful site overlooking the Town, Sugar Loaf Mountain towers in the background. With the purchase, the hospital expands to twenty beds. Harris House is now established as the first St. Martha's Hospital. Interestingly enough, this is the property on which the hospital stands to this very day.

Also in 1911, St. Martha's Hospital School of Nursing opens when the Hospital secures the larger location. By 1914, the first class of four nurses graduates. The training period lasts three years at this time.

Over the years, Harris House is renovated and expanded to accommodate more patients and provide staff quarters.



Left to Right: Carmel Benoit (Health Records) and Dr. Phillip Cooper (Surgeon)

February 2007

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14 Valentine's Day	15	16	17
18	19	20	21 Ash Wednesday	22	23	24
25	26	27	28			

TIMELINE 1920 - 1930

By the 1920's the need for a new building has become a necessity. A 90-bed facility is envisioned at this time. The estimated cost: \$100,000.

In January 1925 a campaign begins to fund a 100 bed hospital under the leadership of Rev. Dr. M.M. Coady and Dr. T.O.R. Boyle. The people of the community are encouraged by their clergy to become partners with the Sisters in the service of health care. On May 11, 1926 the new 125 bed hospital is opened, the final cost is more than \$300,000. Harris House is converted into a residence for the Sisters and nursing students.

In 1926 the Sisters of St. Martha negotiate an affiliation between the hospital's School of Nursing and St. Francis Xavier University (St.FX). It is announced, "Beginning in September 1926, a Department of Nursing and Health will be opened which will give courses leading to the degree of B. Sc. In Nursing."



Left to Right: Lynn Sampson (Physio) and Cathy MacKinnon (Finance)

March 2007

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17 <small>St. Patrick's Day</small>
18	19	20	21 <small>Spring Begins</small>	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	31

TIMELINE 1930 - 1940

The 1930's see a rise in the incidence of tuberculosis (T.B.). It causes much anxiety for the doctors and staff of the hospital. The prevalence of T.B. prompts the Nova Scotia Department of Health to build a 50-bed unit in 1932 as an annex to St. Martha's to combat the disease. This annex operates until 1957 when there is a decrease in the incidence of tuberculosis.

By 1935, the School of Nursing is in need of a space for the teaching of the student nurses. Sister Mary Peter McVeigh envisions a plan to convert a cluttered basement storage room, known in the hospital as "Campbell's Workshop" into a teaching area. By clearing the debris, adding a new floor, a fresh coat of paint, demonstration beds and teaching equipment, Campbell's Workshop becomes a modern teaching center of nursing arts."

Time Capsule Quick Facts...

1932 - Ladies' Aid sell T.B. seals

1933 - Board says no to sweepstakes as a fund-raiser

1938 - Mutual Hospital insurance Group organized with about 80 members



Left to Right: Donna Connors (HITH) and Dr. Mary Gorman

April 2007

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
1 Palm Sunday / DST Begins	2	3 Passover	4	5	6 Good Friday	7
8 Easter	9 Easter Monday	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30					

TIMELINE 1940 - 1950

The death of Dr. John L. MacIsaac brings sorrow and a great sense of loss to the St. Martha's Hospital personnel. Dr. MacIsaac has been associated with the hospital for almost 35 years, having joined the medical staff within a year of the opening of the cottage hospital in 1906.

The forties and early fifties witness many changes and developments with the introduction of new programs and much needed services. In 1944, the first electrocardiograph machine is donated by the Ladies Aid Group. In 1944, the laboratory under the direction of Dr. O.C. MacIntosh is approved to teach laboratory technology and students are accepted for X-Ray training.

Time Capsule Quick Facts..

- 1945 - Pathologist/radiologist appointed
- 1946 - Board recognizes need for a pediatric extension to hospital. Search for an eye, ear, nose and throat specialist initiated and a Chief Surgeon is appointed.
- 1948 - Block system of nursing introduced; 120 students and nurses on staff. Hospital expansion recommended.



Left to Right: Imelda Farrell (Health Records), Brian Spin (Laundry), and Joanne Gillis-Morrell (Social Work)

May 2007

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13 Mother's Day	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21 Victoria Day	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30	31		

TIMELINE 1950 - 1960

In response to the growing need for nursing staff and in cooperation with the Dept. of Health, St. Martha's, in 1957, offers a ten month program for nursing assistants. By the mid 1950's a nurse's residence became the new and urgent need. The T.B Annex, having closed in 1957, is renovated and serves as a student nurses residence for freshman and junior nursing students. The Ladies Auxiliary campaigns to raise the \$500,000 needed for a new nurse's residence. The goal would not be realized until 1963.

Time Capsule Quick Facts...

- 1951 - New hospital wing opens, cost \$760,000; community contributes \$100,000, government contributes \$100,000, Sisters mortgage Motherhouse for remainder. Internal Medicine specialist appointed.
- 1957 - Board approves participation in Mental Health Association.
- 1958 - Plans for unionization of general workers. A 4-story nurses' residence approved for construction.
- 1959 - Federal government legislates funding for Hospital Insurance Plan



Left to Right: Gerry Gurney (Housekeeping), Mary MacIntosh (Business Office), and Maggie MacIntosh

June 2007



Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17 Father's Day	18	19	20	21 Summer Begins	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30

TIMELINE 1960 - 1970

In 1961 a volunteer service plan begins. Grade 10 girls give some of their vacation time to serve hospital patients. In the beginning of the program the girls are called 'Marthaettes;' later this is changed to Candy Stripers.

In 1962 a new policy sees housekeeping take on the cleaning of patients' rooms. Until this time this has been one of the many duties of nursing staff.

The Dept. of Inhalation Therapy is opened in 1968 with an inhalation therapist in charge. In that same year, a Diabetic Clinic is established to provide better service on an out-patient basis.

Time Capsule Quick Facts...

- 1962 - Obstetrics/Gynecology specialist joins staff
- 1963 - Pediatrician appointed
- 1964 - New nurse's residence opens
- 1965 - Physiotherapist joins staff
- 1966 - 4 year integrated nursing program initiated leading to a B.Sc. in Nursing from St.F.X. Social Service Dept. opens.
- 1968 - mobile X-ray unit purchased for \$5263
- 1969 - Board campaigns for equipment/patient care funds



Left to Right: Melissa Hodder (HR) and Neal Coady (Engineering Student)

July 2007

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
1 Canada Day	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30	31				

TIMELINE 1970 - 1980

In 1974, a Pastoral Care Department is officially opened under the direction of Sr. Mary of Nazareth MacDonald.

Time Capsule Quick Facts...

- 1971 - Obstetrics/Gynecology Intern Training Program in place. Fire escapes built and fire detection system installed. St. Martha's Hospital separately incorporates.
- 1973 - Intensive Care Unit opens and operating room is air-conditioned. Patients can now rent TVs.
- 1974 - Diabetic Day Clinic opens in Strait area.
- 1976 - Day Surgery facility opens. "No Smoking" policy initiated.
- 1977 - Planning initiated for new hospital; cost estimated at \$10M, increases to \$22M, community responsible for funding \$4M.
- 1978 - St. Martha's Hospital administers outreach program, Isaac's Harbour Medical Centre.
- 1979 - New hospital construction delayed, so renovations made to old building.



Left to Right: Nancy MacEachern (Nursing Services Manager) and Rochelle Heighton (Physio)

August 2007

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
			1	2	3	4
5	6 Civic Holiday	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30	31	



TIMELINE 1980 - 1990

Despite the grim outlook for a new facility, the “Building for Health” campaign begins in 1984. All know that unless a new hospital is built soon, the present St. Martha’s will “self-destruct within a short period of time.” In times of need, the local community has historically been known to give and give and this time is no different. The campaign “Building for Health” becomes a miraculous demonstration of the power of the community.

In 1989 the present structure officially opens. Nova Scotia Premier John Buchanan declares the new facility a “great credit to Nova Scotia and to Canada as an institution dedicated to caring, to healing, to compassion, to life itself.”

Time Capsule Quick Facts...

- 1983 - Emergency Hospital paging system promotes faster response for cardiac arrests, fire and disasters
- 1985 - 80th anniversary of hospital
- 1988 - New hospital officially named a regional hospital
- 1989 - New Hospital opens with 175 bed capacity. Old hospital demolished. School of Nursing celebrates 75 years
- 1990 - St. Martha’s Regional Hospital Foundation established



Left to Right: Samantha MacFarlane, Marlene MacKenzie (HITH), and Rachael MacKenzie

September 2007

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
						1
2	3 Labor Day	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23 Autumn Begins	24	25	26	27	28	29
30						



TIMELINE 1990 - 2000

With cutbacks to healthcare in the early 1990's and changes in the delivery of hospital services many of the 175 beds at St. Martha's are closed. The hospital now operates 75 acute care beds including a thirteen-bed Geriatric Assessment and Rehabilitation Unit and an eight-bed Mental Health in-patient unit. In addition, there is a five-bed Department of Veterans Affairs Unit.

The End of an Era...

On September 30, 1996, with the passing of the Regional Health Boards Act, St. Martha's becomes a designated health care institution within the newly established Eastern Region. Prior to the designation, there are lengthy dialogue and negotiations among the Eastern Regional Health Board, St. Martha's Hospital Corporation, the Sisters of St. Martha and the Province of Nova Scotia. In the course of this dialogue it becomes clear that it is in the best interest of the people to have the hospital become part of the new provincial structure. This ended 90 years of ownership and governance by the Sisters of St. Martha, however, the hospital remains a Christian hospital in the Catholic tradition.



Left to Right: David MacKenzie (VP of Operations) and June Brosha (OR Booking Clerk)

October 2007

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8 Thanksgiving	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28 Daylight Savings Time Ends	29	30	31 Halloween			



TIMELINE 2000 - 2006

In January 2001 the Guysborough Antigonish Strait Health Authority (GASHA) is established as a district board to replace the Eastern Regional Health Board. With GASHA, St. Martha's Regional Hospital enjoys the same collaborative relationship it had experienced with its predecessor. St. Martha's is a partner in the delivery of holistic health within GASHA as one of its five institutions.

In February 2006 GASHA, Kevin MacDonald, CEO, announces that GASHA had been awarded a three-year accreditation by the Canadian Council on Health Services Accreditation. The Council report praises the District Health Authority for a number of accomplishments and recognizes them for 'making a significant shift towards the provision of the continuum of care between acute and community services as well as creating many successful partnerships within the district.'

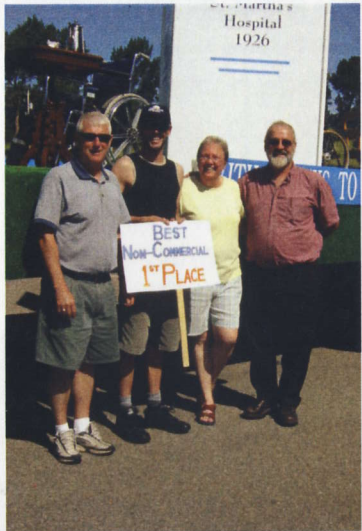
At the same time, the Trauma Association of Canada (TAC) accredits GASHA's St. Martha's Regional Hospital as a District Trauma Center. St. Martha's is the only Regional Hospital in the Province to achieve recognition of this standard. These accreditations attest to the high quality of service provided at St. Martha's and represent a wonderful conclusion to this 100 year chapter!



Left to Right: Faye Steeves (X-ray) and Simone Cooper (Surgical Office)

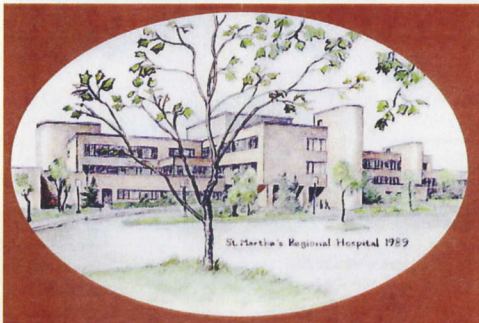
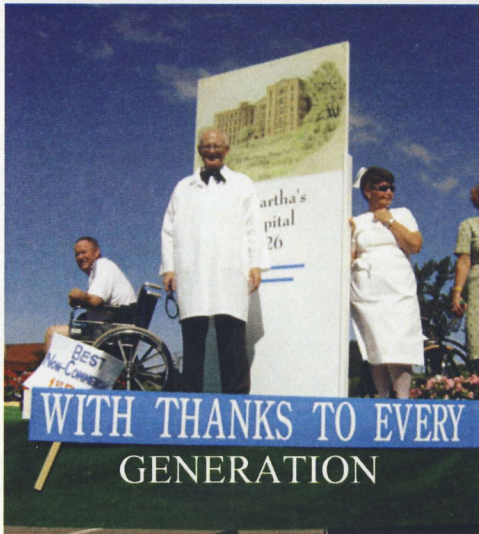
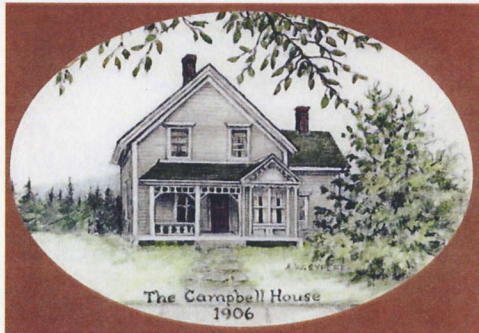
November 2007

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11 Remembrance Day	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	



December 2007

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22 Winter Begins
23	24	25 Christmas	26 Boxing Day	27	28	29
30	31					



HIGHLAND GAMES PARADE 2006

THANK YOU!!

to

Sisters of St. Martha
Festival Antigoniash
Alva Construction
St. Martha's Hospital
Personnel

Gordie Gillis

Sue O'Brien

Dr. Mary Gorman

Patsy MacIsaac

Terry Penny

Melissa Hodder

Rosalie MacMillan
(photographer)

Andrew Murray

Wendell Schurman

Joanne Smith





GASHA

St. Martha's Regional
Hospital
Antigonish, NS

The Guysborough Antigonish Strait Health Authority (GASHA) is one of nine district health authorities established by the Nova Scotia Department of Health on January 1st 2001, following the proclamation of Bill 34, the Health Authorities Act. Replacing the Regional Health Board system, the District Health Authorities were created to bring health care decision-making closer to the community level and improve accountability for health care decisions.

St. Martha's Regional Hospital was originally founded in 1906 by the congregation of the Sisters of St. Martha. Located in the historic town of Antigonish, St. Martha's Regional Hospital is an acute care facility providing a range of primary and secondary services through in-patient, outpatient and satellites:

- 80 in-patient beds in total
- Geriatric Assessment and Rehabilitation Unit (GARU) (13 beds)
- Medical/Surgical Services (9 beds)
- Children's and Women's Health Unit (15 beds)
- Psychiatry (8 beds + 2 observation beds)
- Progressive Care Unit (Medical/Surgical) (24 beds)
- Intensive Care Unit (6 beds)
- Department of Veterans Affairs (5 long term care beds)
- Hospital-in-the-Home Program (Acute home care)
- Multiple Services and Clinic Areas

GASHA Web Site: www.gasha.nshealth.ca



S T . M A R T H A ' S
Regional Hospital
F O U N D A T I O N

St. Martha's Regional Hospital Foundation grew out of the Building for Health campaign back in the 1980's that saw the people of the community raise more than \$8 million to build the new St. Martha's Hospital. The Foundation was incorporated under the Societies Act on December 10, 1990. St. Martha's Regional Hospital Foundation was established to supplement the levels of funding provided to the hospital by traditional sources. The mandate of the Foundation is to provide funding for much needed medical equipment in addition to research and education.

Since 1991 the Foundation has made numerous contributions to the St. Martha's Regional Hospital purchasing a variety of equipment such as (but not limited to): blood gas analyzers, heart monitor and defibrillator, I.V. pumps, oxygen saturation monitor, stress testing equipment, respiratory gas monitor, patient monitoring system, ocular ultrasound, a CT Scanner, and presently a MRI machine. The money comes from the communities of Antigonish, Guysborough, Richmond and Inverness counties (a catchment population of more than 60,000).

The Foundation continues to grow and is now looking into unique ways of fundraising such as a Doctors Tribute Gala Event, sporting events, and getting the word out on the Hospital Help Day and Cupful of Care. The Foundation has set up an eCommerce web site (www.smrhf.com) where people can make donations online and read about the Foundation.



January: 1906—1910



February: 1910—1920



March: 1920—1930



April: 1930—1940



May: 1940—1950



June: 1950—1960



July: 1960—1970



August: 1970—1980



September: 1980—1990



October: 1990—2000

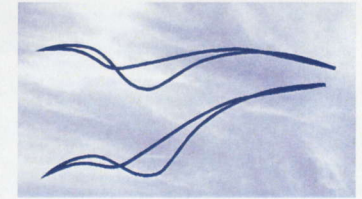


November: 2000—2006



December: Various Pictures

CALENDAR PROCEEDS BENEFIT



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