HAPPY 70th BIRTHDAY WDMH!

CELEBRATING 70 YEARS OF CARING FOR OUR LOCAL COMMUNITIES! THANKS FOR YOUR SUPPORT!

Compassionate Excellence
How It All Began

• Dr. J.J. McKendry is credited with starting the ball rolling when he sent a letter to the Editor of the Winchester Press in 1944.
• He stated the need for a hospital in Winchester and envisioned a 25-bed facility.
1948

• WDMH was officially opened on December 8th by the Hon. Charles Challies, MPP for Grenville-Dundas and the Hon. Russell Kelly, Ontario Minister of Health

• Over 3,000 people attended the event
A Memorial Hospital

• At the ceremony, a scroll bearing the names of boys in the district killed in WWII was erected.
• Perley S. Boyd, clerk of the United Counties, noted there was no better tribute to war heroes than a hospital.
WDMH Firsts!

• The first patient was 10-year old Glendon Loucks, who underwent minor surgery.

• Four days later, the hospital registered its first birth, that of a little girl born to Mrs. Glenn Fetterly of Mountain.

• Dr. Howard Justus was the first Chief of Staff.

• In the first year, staff and physicians treated 1300 patients and delivered 245 babies.
Compassionate Excellence
WINCHESTER — It took nearly four years to organize, finance and erect the Winchester District Memorial Hospital, but it was an effort well worthwhile and a project that the citizens of Dundas County, Osgoode Township and Russell could justly feel proud of. The official opening of the hospital took place on Wed., Dec. 8, 1948.

In the afternoon, a crowd of over 3,000 people inspected the building. At one point, the long corridors and every room on both floors were packed with citizens who came from all districts in the hospital’s area. On every hand, there was nothing but words of commendation for the hospital, which was one of the finest small hospitals in Ontario, and had everything in the line of equipment that the larger institutions had.

At the opening ceremonies, the Hon. George Challies, MPP for Grenville-Dundas, commended the people of the district and the board of directors on the success they had achieved in the erection of such a fine hospital.

Following Challies’ remarks, the hospital was declared officially opened by the Hon. Russell Kelly, Ontario Minister of Health. The minister expressed his delight with the hospital and said it would stand out as a model for every other community in Ontario. He said he had always been in favor of decentralization of hospital accommodation and for this reason had taken a keen interest in the local hospital project.

During his address, Kelly announced that he would donate a Mansfield woolen blanket to the first baby born in the hospital. In the case of twins, Challies said he would donate the second blanket. The speaker paid tribute to the nursing profession and referred to nurses as “angels on Earth.”

Kelly pointed out that the hospital had been erected by a united effort on the part of all citizens of the district. He urged the people to continue this unity to keep the hospital in operation without a deficit each year.

Dr. J.J. McKendry of Ottawa, the man who was first to propose that a hospital be erected here, said it was just like a dream coming true. He was delighted with the building and said he was proud of Winchester and district. “Great trees grow from small acorns,” said the physician.

The scroll bearing the names of all boys throughout the district who had paid the supreme sacrifice during the Second World War, in whose memory the hospital was erected, was unveiled by Perley S. Boyd, clerk of the United Counties. Boyd paid tribute to the war heroes and pointed out that there was no memorial as fitting to remember them, as a hospital. Two minutes’ silence was observed in their memory, after which the benediction was pronounced by Rev. N. Holmes of Hallville.

Our hospital
When it first opened, WDMH was a two-storey building with 32 beds. There were 16 wards with two beds in each, and a six-bed sunroom.

Below: Located just inside the hospital’s lobby entrance, a plaque lists the local men who died in the Second World War. WDMH is a “memorial” hospital because in 1948 it was dedicated to the memory of these soldiers.
1955

- A new administrative wing was added at a cost of $36,000.
- A blood bank was established.
1955 Expansion

The year 1955 saw the first Expansion Program at the Winchester District Memorial Hospital. A northern extension to the centre section of the original building was added at a cost of approximately $36,000. It increased office space, waiting room accommodation and dining space. It provided office space for the hospital Manager and the Superintendent of Nurses. In the basement a small auditorium and a blood bank area completed the expansion.

New waiting room — Mrs. Letta Acres giving information to visitor at W.D.M.H.
1960

• The first major expansion expanded beds from 35 to 89 at a cost of $700,000.

• The new south wing included medical, surgical and maternity beds, more and larger operating rooms, x-ray and lab facilities, a new delivery suite, a cafeteria, a modern kitchen, new laundry and board rooms, a new nurses lounge and a pharmacy.
Number of beds more than doubles

WINCHESTER — More than 1,500 Winchester and district residents attended the open house of the new south wing of Winchester District Memorial Hospital on Sat., June 26, 1960. Judging by the comments of visitors, all returned home more than impressed with what they saw.

Although a number of small additions had been made to WDMH throughout the 1950s, it quickly became evident that the hospital’s 35 beds weren’t enough to serve the area’s population, especially during the post-war Baby Boom. In 1957, when there were 622 births at the hospital, it was clear WDMH needed to grow. Also, the waiting list for treatment was more than 260.

WDMH’s first major campaign raised $700,000 and in 1960 construction on the expansion was complete. The addition of the south wing drastically changed the hospital’s appearance and added a great deal more space.

The expansion raised the bed capacity from 35 to 89, including medical, surgical and maternity beds. It provided for more and larger operating rooms. X-ray and laboratory facilities were enlarged. There was a new delivery suite, a cafeteria, a modern kitchen, new laundry and board rooms, a new nurses lounge, female and male staff rooms and a new pharmacy.

OFFICIAL OPENING

The south wing of the hospital wasn’t completely ready for use until a year later, on June 8, 1961. The new wing was declared officially open by Hon. Matthew B. Dymond, Ontario Minister of Health.

“Don’t let anyone talk you into letting the government take control of hospitals,” said Dymond. He said Ontario then had the best hospital care in the Western world, with six hospital beds available for every 1,000 population. In Britain, the average was only 2.5.

In the previous year, 3,000 hospital beds had been added in Ontario, bringing the provincial total to 36,000, including more space for the mentally ill and TB sanatoriums. The Minister explained that, at the time, it cost $15,000 to establish a single hospital bed, and another $7,000 annually to maintain it.

The Women’s Auxiliary was singled out for special praise. In the previous year, Dymond said that hospital auxiliaries had turned over more than $1 million to hospital boards in Ontario. “And it never ceases to amaze me,” he said.

Following the ceremonies, Dymond and the other dignitaries present were given a first-hand example of how auxiliaries raise money when they attended the popular Hospital Auxiliary Fair at the community centre.
1964

- Funds from the Harvey S. Dillabough estate made possible the construction of a $140,000 nurses’ residence.
Nurses’ Residence

Funds from the Harvey S. Dillabough estate made possible the construction of a $140,000 nurses’ residence. It was officially opened Wednesday, October 21, 1964 by the Provincial Member for Grenville-Dundas, Mr. F. M. Cass.
Compassionate Excellence
Demand for beds continues to grow

WINCHESTER — The second growth spurt at Winchester District Memorial Hospital was being planned only three years after the first expansion was completed. And on June 1, 1968, the Harvey S. Dillabough wing opened, bringing bed capacity from 89 to 128, including a 35-bed unit for the chronically ill and a new 16-bed pediatric unit.

“This community should take real pride in this accomplishment today,” said Ontario Health Minister Matthew Dymond. Under warm June sunshine, some 500 gathered on the hospital grounds for the unveiling ceremony. Government and local dignitaries sat on a platform in front of the entrance to the newly expanded emergency facilities.

As had been the case in the late 1950s, the problem a decade later was not enough beds. The $1.3 million addition at the east end of WDMH was designed to solve the problem.

Space was a common problem in Ontario hospitals at the time. While Winchester’s new wing was being constructed, some 15 other hospital expansion projects, averaging 100 beds each, were in various stages of completion. Many more hospitals were contemplating additions to provide much-needed beds and facilities for their communities.

It was an era when more people were going to hospital, and generally were staying there longer. The primary reason for the financial barrier to necessary hospital care, due to the provincial hospital insurance program, and because modern medical science had led to treatments which required the patient to be in the hospital for periods of time.

Providing the beds and facilities to accommodate the pressure was only part of the challenge confronting the WDMH hospital board. Finding the highly qualified people to staff them was another serious problem.

With the new wing, the WDMH staff would have a new physiotherapy department, a larger medical records department, a new admitting department, and increase facilities in X-ray, laboratory and emergency. The new wing also provided for a new boiler room, new dietary department and greatly increased storage facilities.

The lower level of the new wing housed the new 16-bed pediatric unit, complete with a playroom.

The $8,000 of new equipment in the physiotherapy department was generously provided by the Women’s Hospital Auxiliary.

On the first floor of the new Harvey Dillabough wing, the 35-bed unit for the chronically ill was complete with a patient dining room, day area with TV, and a conference room. In this area, many items were specifically designed for use by and in the rehabilitation of chronically ill patients.

The new wing had been constructed with future expansion in mind, and had been designed to carry at least another
1977

• $225,000 was spent to create a new x-ray room, family lounge, pharmacy and nursing office.
• The bed count increased to 120 beds.
• Three years later, the Intensive Care Unit expanded to four beds at a cost of $105,000.
Ribbon Cutting

X-ray department head John Gray, left, Ed Hanson and X-ray technician Stan Marriner performed the ribbon cutting ceremony January 28, 1978.
Mrs. Eric Casselman of Chesterville was first to try out the new $170,000 X-ray unit at official opening ceremonies. John Gray demonstrates equipment while Stan Marriner looks on.
Trend Towards Ambulatory Care

WINCHESTER—Like all other hospitals throughout the province, Winchester District Memorial Hospital is moving quickly towards a changing medical role.

Administrator Bert Stel said in an interview with The Press that a current trend toward more ambulatory care — where patients are cared for more on a day basis — is affecting the role of this hospital.

Administrator Bert Stel

"The trend has already started where certain surgical procedures involving the patients coming in during the morning and going home to recuperate on the same day is occurring," said the administrator.

These day care surgical procedures include teeth extractions, laparoscopic and gastroscopic procedures and rectal surgery, he noted, and will probably increase further in the future.

Out-patient and emergency care is also on the increase, he said, and because of the general reductions of the length of patient stays the overall occupancy rate of the hospital is beginning to decline slightly.

"It will ultimately result in a decrease of the active treatment beds," noted Stel.

In 1968 the hospital "opened its doors" to service and health care organizations, he said, which helped greatly to reduce the "closed in" nature of the health care community.

Since then allied health organizations like the Red Cross blood donor clinics, the home care program, the homemakers program, the Victorian Order of Nurses and the Dundas County Association for the Mentally Retarded use the hospital facilities for meetings and special projects.

"The hospital truly opened its doors to become a community health care facility for the whole area," he said. "We've now reached the point where the facilities are barely adequate to cope with the whole spectrum of activities."

Stel said one organization that has become "dear to my heart" is the women's hospital auxiliary.

"If you want to have an auxiliary to support your hospital you must first give them support."

Compassionate Excellence
1985

- A $600,000 project created a new state-of-the-art lab, a renovated x-ray department and emergency and out-patient departments.
Lab upgraded to state of the art

WINCHESTER — Two years of planning and fundraising reached their culmination on June 21, 1985 when Winchester District Memorial Hospital officially opened its newly renovated laboratory.

Hospital staff and administration gratefully acknowledged the support of a generous public as MPP Noble Villeneuve cut the ribbon marking the official opening of the hospital’s new laboratory and outpatient facilities.

The $596,500 project increased the size of the hospital’s lab from 1,800 square feet to 3,200 square feet. The project also provided new office space for the hospital’s radiology and emergency outpatient departments.

“The initiative must be a local one,” Villeneuve told the crowd at the ceremony outside the addition. “You have provided the initiative. The government has just provided a little encouragement.”

According to Ron Workman, president of the hospital board of governors at the time, the project had no deficit on completion. “We are fortunate to have a community in which the private individual helps out so greatly,” he said, reviewing the highlights of the hospital’s development since its founding in 1948.

Chief of staff Dr. D.W. Justus echoed Workman’s praise for the community’s support, and added a word of thanks of his own to the boards: “I cannot recall one occasion when a request of the medical staff was refused by the board of governors.” Justus said, “In 1985 it would be difficult, I think, to overestimate the importance of up-to-date laboratory facilities.”

In addition to providing the hospital’s lab staff with less cramped quarters, the project included the replacement of equipment and the purchase of a new chemistry analyzer for use in fluid analysis. The lab’s prior location was converted to provide office space for the radiology department, an office for the emergency outpatient department and three new outpatient treatment rooms.

A grant from the Ministry of Health covered $261,000 of the total cost. Counties council provided $100,000. Prescott-Russell contributed $8,000 and other municipalities gave a further $38,000.

Donations from area service clubs totalled $60,000. Legion branches gave $30,000. Eastern Star chapters donated $8,500. The hospital auxiliary donated $40,000 and other organizations contributed a total of $7,500. The total was rounded out by $21,500 in individual donations and $10,000 from estates and bequests.

Hospital administrator Bert Stel said the funds were raised using a low-key approach based on appeals to municipalities and service organizations. Since no direct appeal was made to the public, all private donations received were unsolicited.
1992

• The HELP campaign raised funds for infrastructure changes such as ventilation systems, code upgrades and plumbing.
HELP campaign begins major renovations

WINCHESTER — Over the years, the aging process had taken its toll on the physical hospital and its systems to the point where a significant renewal program was required. The basic issue had become one of safety, and of bringing WDMH up to fire, safety and Ontario Hydro codes.

In 1990, the hospital’s board of governors decided to initiate the HELP campaign to fund emergency work to correct deficiencies which could not be ignored. A low-key three-year campaign was started to raise $3 million locally. The other half of the funding for the $6 million project came from the provincial and federal governments.

All of these critical problems were mundane infrastructure issues that were hard to get excited about and were incredibly expensive to fix.

There were basic problems with the hospital’s ventilation system. The condition of the unit that provided ventilation to most of the building was in extremely poor condition with evidence of corrosion throughout. Heating coils were not in operating condition, so ventilation was only provided in the summer; during the winter there was no mechanical ventilation at all. Also, air filtration in patient areas did not meet standards.

Plumbing was a big problem. The supply, storm and sanitary piping systems were a conglomeration of every known material available. There was a distinct lack of shut-off valves in the system, and those that did exist were not reliable. The waste system used a mixture of cast iron and plastic pipe which appeared to breach some fire regulations. Because most of the piping was concealed, any minor leak soon created the need for major repairs.

The emergency diesel generator was in a general state of disrepair with manual and automatic controls that did not function. It was more than 30 years old and was very slow to get on line. Although it still ran, it was in non-compliance with safety standards.

Fire detection throughout the building did not meet Ontario requirements. Areas existed with inadequate or no detection equipment, including patient rooms, all corridors and stairwells. Manual pull station coverage was inadequate.

Each of the hospital’s two elevators required a new motor, a new controller and new door operators. The centre core roof suffered from severe ponding because the drains were at the high points of the roof. There was widespread deterioration of the entire system. It appeared that the insulation was saturated with water. Patched areas of the roof were saturated and depressed when walked on. The southeast corner of the roof was totally rotted away and the structure underneath was open to the weather.

In 1992 the hospital announced that the $3 million target had been reached. Renovations had been ongoing and were wrapped up that summer.

The HELP campaign has a lot in common with the current WDMH campaign. Essentially, anything that wasn’t replaced 10 years ago needs to be replaced now.
1993

• The WDMH Foundation was incorporated on December 23.
• Local communities including individuals, businesses, farms, services clubs and other groups/organizations have been supporting the WDMH Foundation ever since.
• Because of our donors, we have been able to disburse over $25,000,000 to WDMH since its incorporation. WDMH would not be what it is today without donor support.
Renewing the Vision

• The Renewing the Vision campaign raised $15.1 million for WDMH’s redevelopment.
• Generous community members, municipalities and businesses contributed.
Renewing the Vision launched with fanfare

by Matt Wood

WINCHESTER — When the Renewing the Vision campaign was officially launched on Sat., May 11, over $6 million had already been raised or pledged to the campaign by various levels of government, industry and individuals, taking the campaign more than halfway past its ultimate goal.

MP for Stormont, Dundas and Char- lottenburgh Bob Kilger was one of the many dignitaries present who had no idea what amount had been raised during the quiet phase of the campaign.

“I’m stunned they’ve got half of it,” he said shortly after the announcement. “They should take a great deal of pride in what they’ve already done.”

During the presentation he said there could not be a more important cause.

“Among the most important facilities in our community are our care-giving hospital facilities,” he said.

The hospital had undertaken a $40 million cost of redeveloping WDMH, had been in the quiet phase of seeking donations for the previous six months. The strong support and leadership from the community meant the campaign was ready to go public and announce its plans to the community in search of further funds.

Bill Smirle, co-chair of the Renewing the Vision campaign, introduced the various speakers throughout the presentation, and delivered wishes from the two honorary co-chairs, Dr. Howard Justus and Larry Robinson.

Before the first committee meeting had taken place, the hospital auxiliary had come through with its pledged amount of $250,000 over five years. And Smirle added that a month and a half ago the auxiliary gave another $50,000 cheque to the cause.

John Cleary, MPP for Stormont, Dundas and Charletonburgh, was one of the campaign co-chairs Mike McInnis and Bill Smirle, Brian Mann, chair of the WDB board and WDMH administrator André Rodier, ready to serve cake to the guess the campaign launch.
2009

• The *new* WDMH officially opened, resulting in the most technologically-advanced facility in rural Ontario.

• Generous community members, municipalities and businesses gave $15.1 million for the project, through the Renewing the Vision campaign.
Compassionate Excellence
The small-town hospital with the $54-million dream

Community generosity and forward-thinking government have an Eastern Ontario hospital at the forefront of a rural medical revolution, reports GORDON from Winchester.

Maybe for effect, or maybe it’s the wintery chill. The people of 6th Dandall have dogs and snowshoes. They may be stuck in the snow, but they’re determined to keep their hospital. The people of 6th Dandall have dogs and snowshoes. They may be stuck in the snow, but they’re determined to keep their hospital.

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2013

- A Community Care Building was built on the WDMH campus, providing access to other key health and community services close by for patients and families.
- It doubled in size in March 2016, welcoming more partners.
Throughout the Years

• Our Auxiliary has been a founding member of WDMH since 1947.
• Their initial efforts were led by Mrs. Chester Robinson. Mrs. George Elliott was the first secretary and Miss Nora Elliott handled the meagre finances at the time.
• Our Auxiliary continues to be an essential part of the care team.
Auxiliary responsible for much unseen work

by Chris Chase

WINCHESTER — Most people know about the Winchester District Memorial Hospital auxiliary. They’re the ones who run the gift shop, right?

Yes, that’s true, but there’s a lot more to it than that. What some may not know is how much the day-to-day operation of the hospital depends on the dedicated volunteers who run the WDMH auxiliary.

Through sheer numbers, the volunteers each give one morning a week to help the regular nurses provide the necessary comforts to the patients resting up after operations or other procedures.

Rose Campbell and Margaret Casselman, two veteran members of the WDMH auxiliary, took time to chat with the Press about the history and accomplishments of the long-standing organization.


draws are also profitable for the organization.

“We used to have a cheque-off each year in which we received and other high-profile guests participated,” said Casselman.

But while money is also needed, both women agreed on some occasions terms there. They raise WDMH


tain, that which the abuse doesn’t cause. Can that an auxiliary? It has a thing with

WDMH Auxiliary president Joan Farlinger (left) and immediate past president Marion Carron have both logged many hours in the hospital gift shop. They are also noted for being among the few people who have been president for more than one term along with Rose Campbell, Hilda Bray and Gail Van Noy.

Press Photo — Zabel

Giving endless hours of service

WINCHESTER — With the work of the Winchester District Memorial Hospital auxiliary, the hospital literally wouldn’t have the equipment to offer all of the services it does. The fundraising efforts of this 150-member group are crucial to ensuring WDMH staff are always working with the best equipment available.

An auxiliary member can always be found in the hospital gift shop, one of the group’s major fundraising sources. The gift shop is especially profitable because so much of its stock is donated by auxiliary members. Baby knitters provide afghans, slippers, sweaters and baby items.

The auxiliary, which is divided into five divisions: Winchester, Churchill, Marysville, Marysville, and Todd, is proud of its history.

Hilda Vandekemp is in charge of the volunteers who work in the hospital. The new requirement for all students to submit their studies with volunteer work has been a benefit for the auxiliary. “Two started working their 40 hours in the gift shop and liked it so much they decided to keep on with it,” said Farlinger.
Hospital Auxiliary visionaries

The WDMH Auxiliary presented the campaign with a cheque that pledges $250,000 over the next five years. From left, Marguerite Fawcett, Elinor Jordan, Mike McInnis, Joan Fartinger, Bill Smirle, Dorothy Houze, and Marion Carkner. Photo — Wood
Compassionate Excellence
Celebrating 70 years of caring for our local communities! Thanks for your support!

Compassionate Excellence
Our Commitment

We are here to care for our patients with compassion – close to home and with our partners.

We pursue excellence in all we do.

We are one team. We value respect, accountability, innovation and learning.

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