

# McClelland likes Audiological room

Provincial Health Minister Bob McClelland promised a three pronged attack on health problems in the province and singled out a Fort St John community project for special praise in an exclusive Alaska Highway News interview Saturday.

He had just opened the new Diagnostic Extension Services at the hospital on Saturday. The local program was the Audiological Room at the hospital. He stated that it was a good example of expansion from a pilot project, the first that had occurred in fact from five set up in the province. He praised the people behind it for their forward looking approach to problems of health care in the community.

Earlier, during his speech to open the new facilities, he promised a substantial program across the province to improve health care on an intermediate to long term basis. He criticized current ideas as being too compartmentalized, "Health care is health care, no matter whether it be short term, intermediate or long term. If somebody is ill, you have to look after them and these

distinctions don't mean much."

Later he added, "This might not necessitate a lot of new rebuilding, though it could mean some. Basically, we have enough beds, but they're not all in the right places." The government is currently conducting a survey of hospital utilization to determine the amount of space needed. It is also trying to persuade Ottawa to pick up some of the expenses involved. "This will be one of the main concerns at the meeting of provincial health ministers in Fredericton later this week, explained the minister.

The other two planks of the government health platform are a campaign to reduce alcohol and drug abuse in the province and an active campaign of preventive health care.

"The emphasis on this idea will be a lifestyle change. This must be emphasized over the next few years. Our main thrust here will be at the schools, though we shall be trying to reach adults too with meaningful advertising," said McClelland.

# Hospital extension officially opened

Provincial Health Minister made it to town to open the new hospital Diagnostic Extension Services, though he had to leave earlier than planned for Victoria and missed out on the local party annual general meeting.

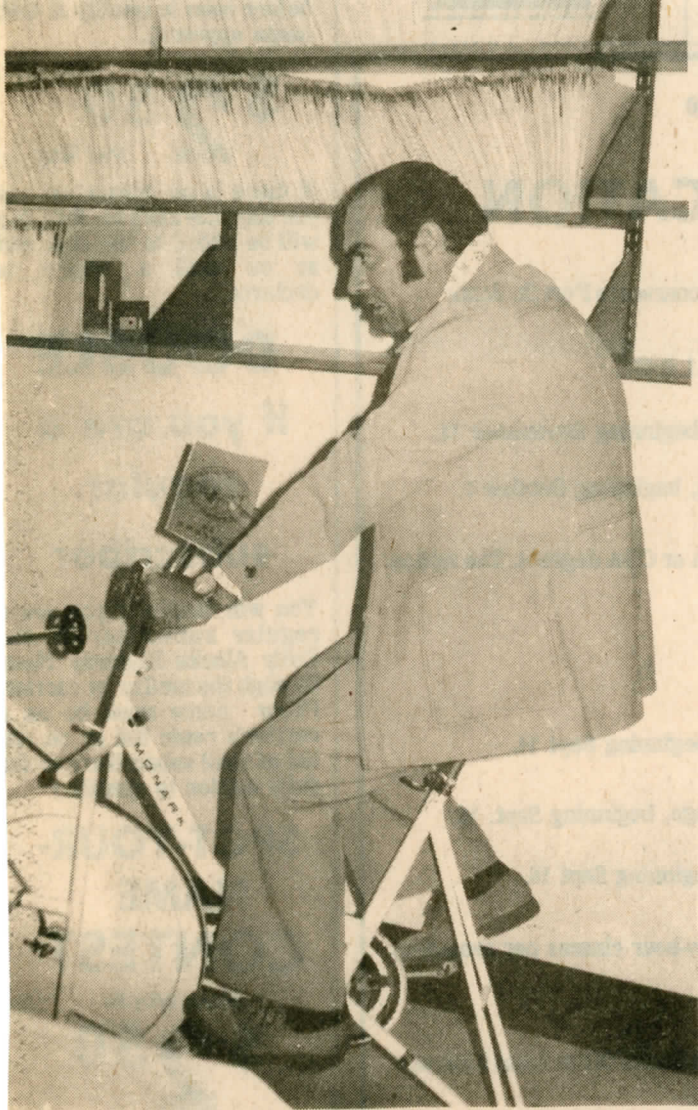
During the 45 minute ceremony, he made a brief speech in which he promised that the local Intermediate Care Home project, now going to tender, would encounter no more snags or delays.

McClelland then performed the actual opening act, which was the unveiling of a commemorative plaque.

About one hundred people watched the ceremonies in broad sunlight. Among the crowd were many veteran members of the original hospital association as well as representatives of the Sister of Providence, the nursing order that had staffed the original Providence Hospital.

Later, the crowd was invited to tour the new facilities. They were escorted in groups of a dozen by members of the Hospital Board to inspect the

modifications and new equipment which had been installed over the last two years. All tours ended up in the cafe where visitors were served with light refreshments.



**WITH AN EXPRESSION THAT** suggests either pain or determination, Health Minister McClelland tries out a pedal cycle used in cardiac diagnosis. He was in the middle of a tour of the new hospital facilities.



# Hospital Opening

DUPMATE

# Tours and speeches will c

On Saturday, September 11, at 3:15 on the lawn in front of the main entrance, the ultra modern Diagnostic Expansion Services wing of Fort St John General Hospital officially swings into operation. The prestigious event will draw two VIP's up from the south of our big province to look on as the symbolic key is presented.

The Golden key will pass from the hand of Hugh de Kraker of Pooygon Construction to the chairman of the hospital board, George Broadhurst.

A special treat for local people in conjunction with the grand opening has been arranged. Guided tours, led by members of the hospital board, will wind around the

entire hospital, visiting all departments and allowing interesting insights into the complexity of a hospital and the features of the new wing.

Tours end in the cafeteria, where free coffee and donuts will be served by the WA.

Candystrippers stationed in the cafeteria can lead you back to any department you

wish, to allow you to ask questions of the department heads. One other attraction of the afternoon is the public display of the ambulance in the hospital parking lot. In case an emergency arises, no cars will be allowed on the lot during Sturday.

The ceremony starts near the front doors, unless inclement



THE NEW EXTENSION to the Fort St John General Hospital was completed substantially on June 15. Since then it has been landscaped and the interior

finishing has been done. It is to be opened tomorrow. Honorable Robert Howard McClelland.



# Open hospital extension

a meeting of the Social Credit Party that night.

weather strikes, in which case the proceedings will move indoors to the Assembly Hall. The afternoon kicks off with speeches from the Master of Ceremonies, Doug Allen, the Chairman of the Board, George Broadhurst, the provincial Minister of Health, the Honourable Robert J McClelland and Mrs

McClelland, MLA Ed Smith, Eli Framst, the cahirman of the Regional Distirct, and Mayor Peter Frankiw. Following the oratory, greetings from Phyllis Whitcome of the BC Hospital Association will be read. Next, the key is to be presented to Broadhurst. Reverend Harold E Rowledge is to perform the dedication of the building and finanlly architect Karl Schmidt will unveil the brass plaque, officially opening the new services to the hospital.

The tours follow. The 40 minute excursions start in the foyer - lobby area, (which was furnished through a donation by the Lions Club.) During the first tour to leave, involving the VIP's Board Chairman Broadhurst will make a key presentation in front of the spanking new WA Shoppe to president Vi Wooward. Health Minister McClelland will accept a gift of a picture of the hospital from the WA and in turn gracefully draw the winning ticket on their afghan raffle, held in conjunction with this historic event.

A reception by invitation follows at the Mackenzie Inn between 5:30 and 7:00 pm in the evening. McClelland will speak as the guest of honor at



*The Mayor*  
and

*The Members of Council*

join with the

*Citizens of Fort St. John*

in congratulating the

*Board of Trustees*

of the

*Fort St. John and District*

*Hospital Board*

on the occasion of

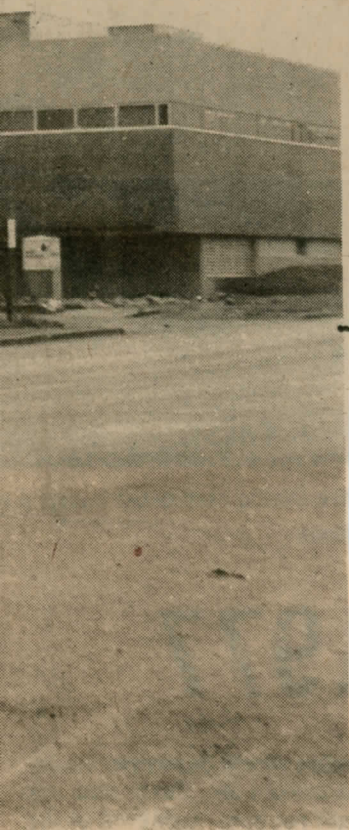
*Official Opening*

of the

*Diagnostic Expansion Services*

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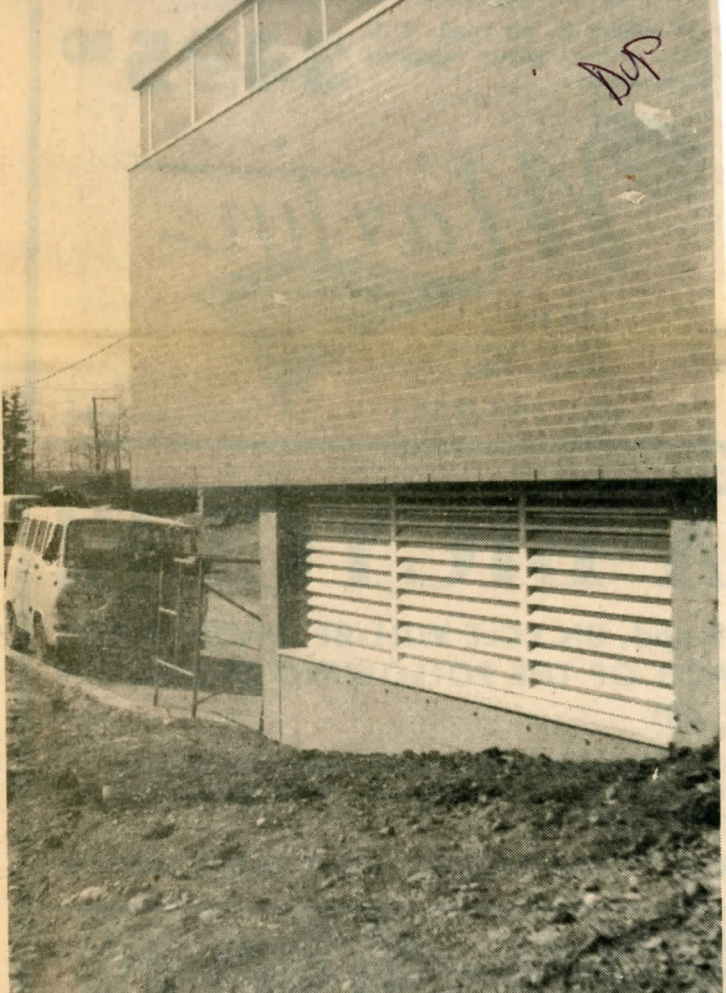
*Fort St. John Hospital*



row by Minister of Health the



DUP



IS IT TOO near the ground? Hospital Board President George Broadhurst thinks that the grill for the hospital's air intake sits too close to the street and that there is an increased risk of drawing in dust and snow.

APR 28, 1976

# Suck stuck dust from air ducts

Could the breakdown of the fans cause an infectious back-draft through the exhaust of the hospital air system? This was a matter of some debate at the Hospital Board meeting of Wednesday April 21. In the end it was resolved to have a thorough inspection of the ducting in the hospital to ensure its cleanliness or its need for suction cleaning.

Administrator Wilson stated that the hospital had in fact been remarkably bug free during the construction period. There was no contamination problem at the present, but he felt they should cover all possibilities. "It is virtually impossible to grow a germ culture here at the moment however," he added.

The discussion started after President of the Board George Broadhurst expressed his doubts over the situation of the air intakes for the fans. They are mounted on the south side of the building and in his opinion are too near the ground.

"Not only will they suck up a lot of dust, I am also concerned about the back suck of snow during the winter. When the

north wind comes over the top of that building, the air turbulence drops a lot of snow right near those intakes," said Broadhurst.

He added that the fans were of a powerful type that would tend to suck up garbage in any case.

Board member Doug Allan asked if the air intakes had electronic filters.

Broadhurst replied they had, but Board Member Welsh pointed out to Allan that Broadhurst's prime concern would be to get the arrangement altered while construction was still underway and money was available. "We should get it fixed while we can still get a change order issued," he said.

Broadhurst brought up the matter of cleaning the air ducts, both the new ones in the new hospital extension and the old ones that had not been cleaned out for some 13 years. He commented that the new ducts had a layer of plaster dust in them, whereas the old ones had, in places, as much as an inch of dust laying. He wanted to know the view of the rest of the board

(Continued on page two)



# Hospital well in the black

The hospital finished 1975 in a surplus position when all its accounts had been scrutinized by the auditors. The auditors also referred to the higher standard of accounting than in previous years.

These figures were announced at a meeting of the hospital board on Wednesday April 21. At the same meeting, it was also announced that the new extension was likely to be finished comfortably within budget, and on schedule.

Said Hospital Administrator Ric Wilson, "We didn't do bad with our budget. We were certainly luckier than some who were hit with massive deficits." The final figure for operating surplus, which does not include depreciation, was \$7,186.

The hospital's budget for 1975 had been \$2,205,463. This is operating expenses only and does not include capital projects like the new wing.

Of the \$2.2 million over 80 per cent was spent as wages for hospital employees. This figure, \$1,745,025 is up by more than \$311,000 over the 1974 figure.

The auditors drew attention to this fact and complimented the administration in containing the other expenses. The hospital's problem had been compounded by the lower than usual occupancy rate during 1975 which meant that less money was forthcoming from the government. Hospitals are paid by the government according to the work they do in a number of different categories. A certain rate is paid daily for occupied beds and rather less for unoccupied ones according to a government determined schedule. The latter rate for unoccupied beds is determined at the end of a year and is a major factor in whether hospitals show a surplus or a deficit. Clearly, the lower the number of occupied beds, the less the government pays.

The meaning of the government's recent declaration of hospital policy becomes clearer in this context. The government stated about six weeks ago that hospitals should show financial responsibility. They warned that deficits would not automatically be picked up.

Said Administrator Wilson, "To them, financial responsibility is making an honest effort to contain expenses. In our case, faced with rising staff costs and declining occupancy we had to reduce our staff by natural wastage and we also managed to cut our other costs by over \$40,000. I think this is

why we were allowed to remain in a surplus position.

"Many of the civil service people in the Health Department in Victoria have been in hospital administration before and they know the score. If you try to pull the wool over their eyes they can tell and they can dump a deficit on you. But if you're straight with them, they level with you."

Hospitals are in a curious position financially. In a community such as Fort St John a hospital running at a steady deficit would not be shut down for obvious reasons. On the other hand it cannot raise taxes through the mill rate as could a municipal authority or a school board. In the end it has to be the government that bales them out, though as the auditor suggested, at Wednesday's meeting, "there remains the option of a door to door collection in the city." Hospital Administrator Wilson also pointed out that the hospital could be baled out by the Regional District or by adopting 'hard nosed' attitudes in the collection of debts.

Speaking of the accounting the auditor present stated "We had less problems than a year ago."

George Broadhurst President of the Hospital Board asked, "Are we on the upgrade as far as accounting is concerned then? We all know it wasn't the best at the time we went regional."

The auditor replied, "It's cleared up a lot, though there are still a few grey areas."

He suggested that a bi-annual visit rather than an annual one would be helpful to both parties but a suggestion from board member Doug Allan that he should come in once a quarter was rejected.

The Hospital Board's Annual General Meeting will be held at the Mackenzie Inn on Wednesday, April 28 at 7:30 pm prompt.

# Hospital . . .

(Continued from Page one)

as to which should have priority as there was a limited sum (\$6,000) available for the purpose.

Hospital Administrator Wilson stated that he was more concerned about the system's exhaust than its intake. "If the fans were to quit," he said, "you could get a backdraught down the pipes and contaminated air that had been expelled from wards and laboratories could re-enter the hospital."

Board member Joanne Mucci stated that she would like to see the whole system cleaned out and her view was echoed by Board Member Bob Bruce. Retiring board member Lorne Walsh stated that he too would like to see the job done "but not just for the sake of it." The filters installed were in his opinion doing their job.

However Board members Allan and Schaerer resolved that an inspection should be made and Administrator Wilson be empowered to authorize a clean up job if the experts so advised.



JULY 7, 1976 DJP



THE COMPLETION DATE of June 15 is long past, however much of the new hospital facility is now in service. Visitors to the hospital can enjoy the spacious comfort of the new reception-waiting room area. Though not quite finished the carpeting and plush chairs are in place and one readily imagines how it will be when complete.





HEALTH MINISTER BOB McLelland was the recipient of a locally painted picture at the

Women's Auxiliary gift shop before he opened the hospital extension on Saturday.

SEPT 14 1976



# The Third Page

DJP

## New x-ray room opens in hospital

Curious passers-by have noticed that the new hospital extension is rapidly nearing completion and may be curious to know when it will be open for business. After all, it's been a long drawn out affair and the confusion without and within has created an inconvenience for medical staff and patients alike.

The end is in sight, though. Part of the new wing is already in operation, as the X-Ray Department was commissioned on Friday afternoon. The other new additions are also on the way, and the builders will be out by June 15, according to Hospital Administrator Ric Wilson.

The new X-Ray room is an impressive improvement to the existing facilities and has as its centrepiece a new machine that stands to the existing equip-

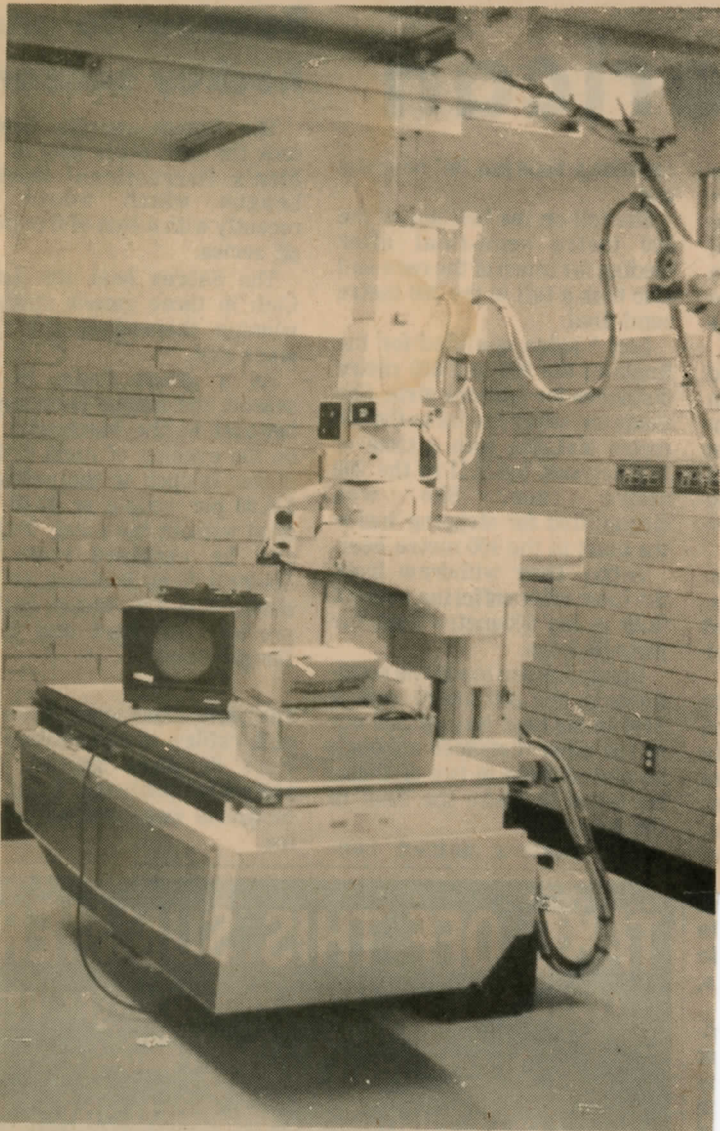
ment, as would an acrobat to a cripple.

Where the present equipment takes only still photographs, the new equipment, valued at \$98,000, takes movies. It is equipped with an image intensifier and a television camera. The patient lies on the slab and the movements of his internal organs can be studied and watched on a tv set as they work, or perhaps don't work.

It is clearly a powerful diagnostic tool, and as up to date as any equipment to be found outside a teaching hospital in the country.

Bob Bruce, a member of the Hospital Board, stated. "This hospital is one of the most modern hospitals in western Canada. You would find no better equipment if you were in New Westminster."

The new X-Ray machine works from a 1000ma transformer, itself costing an additional \$20,000, which is twice as powerful as the present unit.



THE HOSPITAL'S NEW X-RAY machine differs from the old model in that it can take movie pictures and allows the physician to inspect a patients' internal organs on the TV screen, as the patient lies on the slab.

EXIT

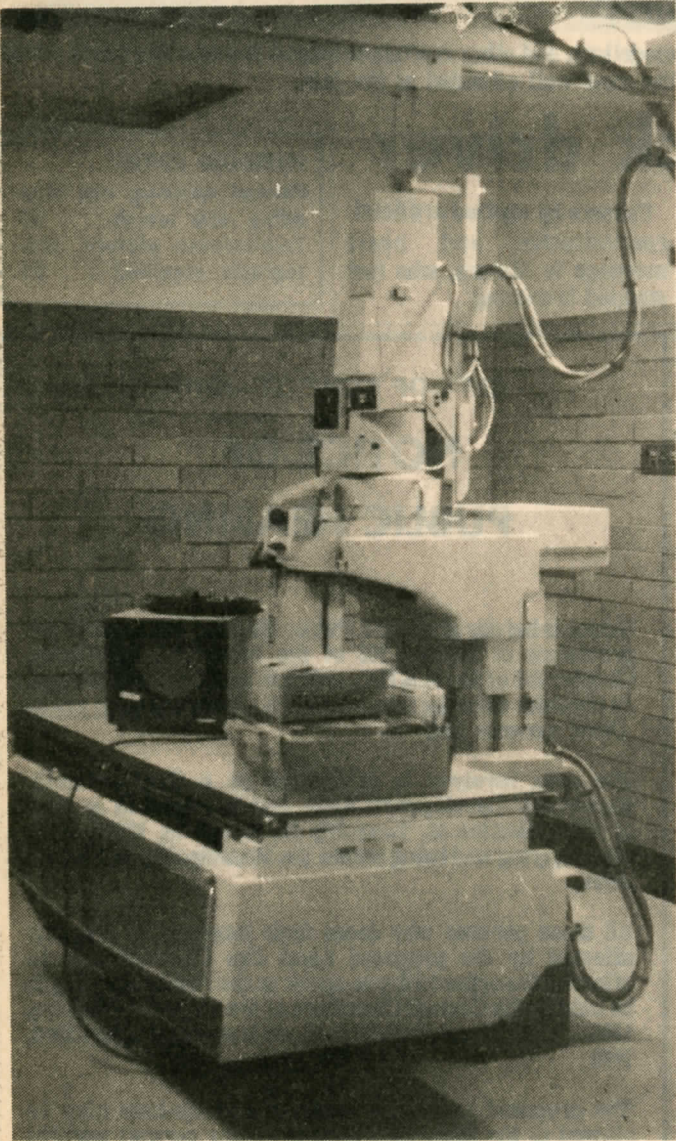
APR 14, 1976

DWP



**IT WAS BUSY BUSY** on Friday morning as the hospital cleaning staff brushed up the place where the new X-Ray department was to open in the afternoon. The new department is one of the major projects in the hospital construction.





**IF YOU ARE** one of those who got the wind up about a report of faulty X-ray facilities in the north, relax. The report, (in Monday's paper) was dealing with the Northwest Territories, not round here. Above is the new X-ray machine installed at the Fort St John General Hospital recently at a cost of \$100,000.

AUG 12, 1976 DUF

# The hospital is OK folks

Thank heavens we only live in the "South" says Ric Wilson, Administrator of the Fort St John General Hospital (referring to the Health Report in the August 9th, Alaska Highway News. He has heard comments from residents that they are now scared to have x-rays taken at the hospital if the people and equipment are in such bad shape.

The facts are that the article referred to a Federal study relating to the Northwest Territories. Conditions in BC are certainly not in that kind of shape and the BC Government and Regional Hospital District has reacted favorably to the hospital's request for new equipment.

Behind the new brick walls sits a 1000 MA Picker X-ray Unit, worth \$100,000, capable of performing any test which can be done in the major cities. One of the main reasons for its purchase is its

capability to perform both simple and complex procedures with minimal radiation exposure to the patient. The very latest in radiation protection, construction to limit scatter radiation, and all safety measures and practices have been built in to this construction program and the Federal Radiation Protection Branch has inspected and approved the installation.

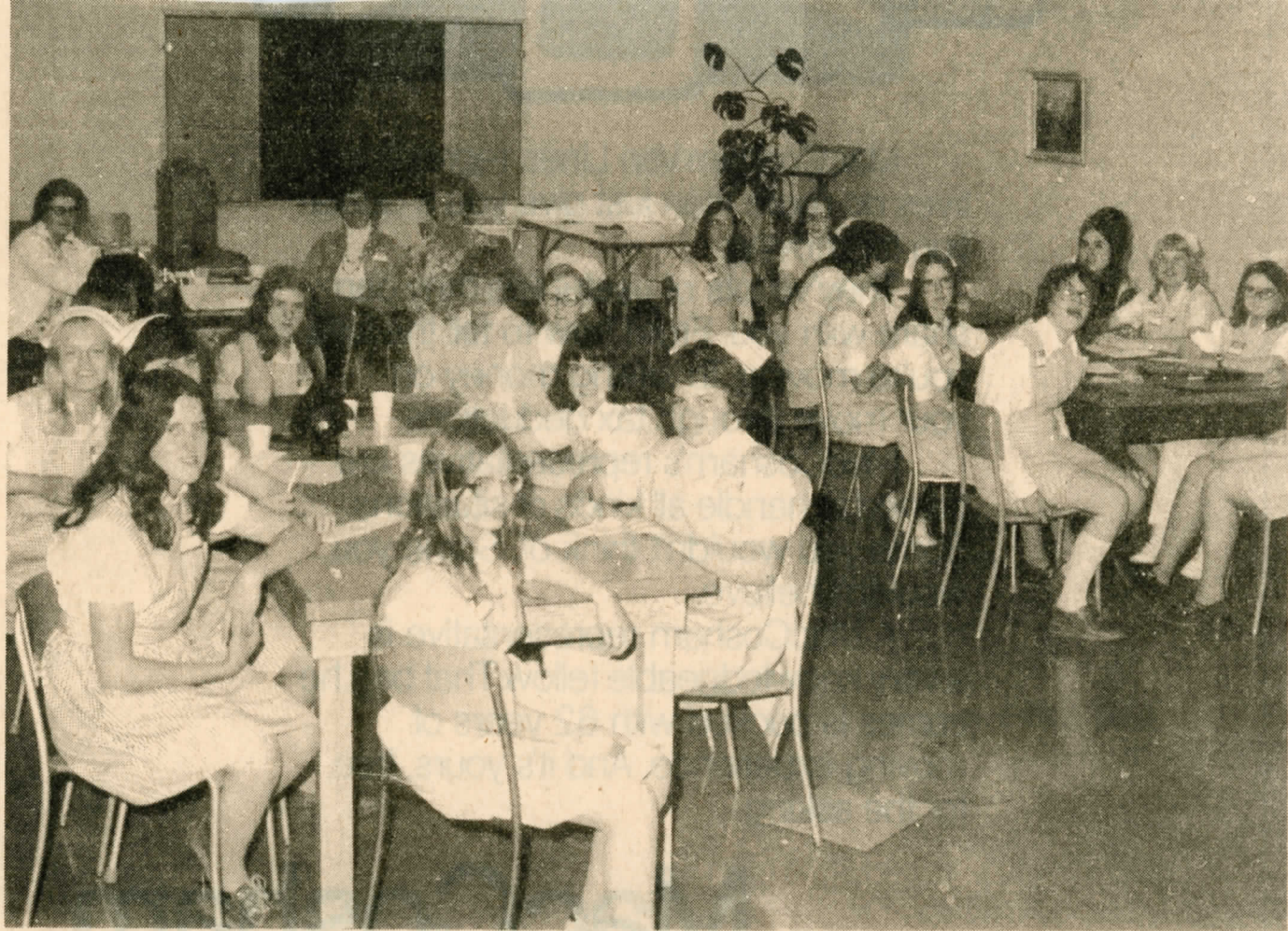
Fort St John hospital technicians are well trained and qualified, said Wilson "We're proud of the quality of work they do, and we don't need to have janitors doubling as x-ray technicians as the report says they do in the "North". I have no doubt many readers, since we are all well indoctrinated that we live beyond the southern boundaries, have misread the article as Northern and not Northwest Territories and it would be a sad thing if

patients lost confidence in the excellent staff and facilities provided for the diagnosis and treatment."

Wilson added, "If you want to see it for yourself and talk to these people why not come

AUG 12, 1976  
DUP  
to the Official Opening on September 11 and tour the hospital. We are proud of our hospital and we want you to see and be proud too, Fort St John and its hospital are not second class outfits."





CANDY STRIPERS FROM up and down the Alaska Highway gathered in Fort St John over the weekend for a conference. About 30 girls from Fort Nelson, Dawson Creek and Fort St John

spent Saturday discussing problems of mutual concern and exchanging ideas, at the hospital assembly room.

JUN 7, 1976

DUP