

Fort St. John Hospital 25th anniversary in 1988

The present Fort St. John General Hospital was officially opened on December 12, 1962 by the Honourable Eric Martin, Minister of Health and Services.

The following excerpts are taken from a report written by Georgina Keddell, covering the official opening:

"December 12, 1962 was a lovely mild day for people on the move. The sun shone. Cars filled the parking lot and the streets around the hospital for blocks. A dais was set up at the entrance, draped in red, white and blue. Fort St. John's own radio station, opened a few months before, broadcast the opening ceremonies. Mr. Jack Baker who had monitored many a hospital trustee panel, and firmly kept in hand many a stormy public meeting during the planning years of the new hospital, presided as master of ceremonies. Mayor Frank E. Spicer spoke for the town. Mr. Ricard Ansley spoke for Commonwealth Construction. Mr.

Peter Thorton represented the architects of the beautiful building. Dr. Gary Westover wittily spoke for the Hospital's Medical Staff. Mrs. George M. "Ma" Murray sent a two foot press wire speech when she found she couldn't attend in person, and her daughter read it for her. Mrs. Murray represented the citizens of the district. Mother Florence Mary, Provincial Superior Midnapore spoke for her Order the Sisters of Charity of Province. Sister Marcellina, who has been the first secular Registered Nurse at the first Providence Hospital twenty years before, and was now the Administrator of Providence spoke for the hospital staff. Mr. George Broadhurst, Chairman of the Board of Directors, whose supervision and devoted interest in the building project doubtless hastened and smoothed the way to early completion of the institution was another speaker, as was Duncan Cran, for thirty years Government

representative on the Board. 8A1 TA worth every moment of the wait".

However, the guest of honour on this occasion, and undoubtedly the most popular in town was the Honourable Eric Martin, Minister of Health and Services who officially opened the hospital.

As the chill settled in on the watching crowd, he slashed his speech in half, and warmed the crowd with laughter. Then he waited while Mr. Cran cut the ribbon, put the key in the beautiful big front door, and declared the new hospital officially opened.

The crowd poured through afternoon and evening for three days. When the exhausted Nursing Association members finally closed the door, sixty persons were still waiting outside to 'go through'.

In every way, the opening of the new Providence Hospital on December 12, 1962, was just the way it should have been. The hospital was a long, long time coming. But when it arrived, it proved to be

While much has changed, particularly in the areas of equipment and methods of treatment, it is heart warming to note that many of Mrs. Keddell's comments are true today.

From her report it is obvious that there was a good deal of community pride, involvement and support. Fortunately those qualities remain strong within this community.

The present Board of Trustees and Hospital Staff remain committed to serving the health care needs of this community and salute all those who proceeded us.

Please join the Fort St. John General Hospital Staff and Board of Trustees as they celebrate Canada Health Days at Totem Mall, May 12, 13 and 14th. There will be lots of free giveaways, as Fort St. John General Hospital is also celebrating their 25th Anniversary. Come and join the party....balloons and cake and lots of memories....see you there.

Submitted article

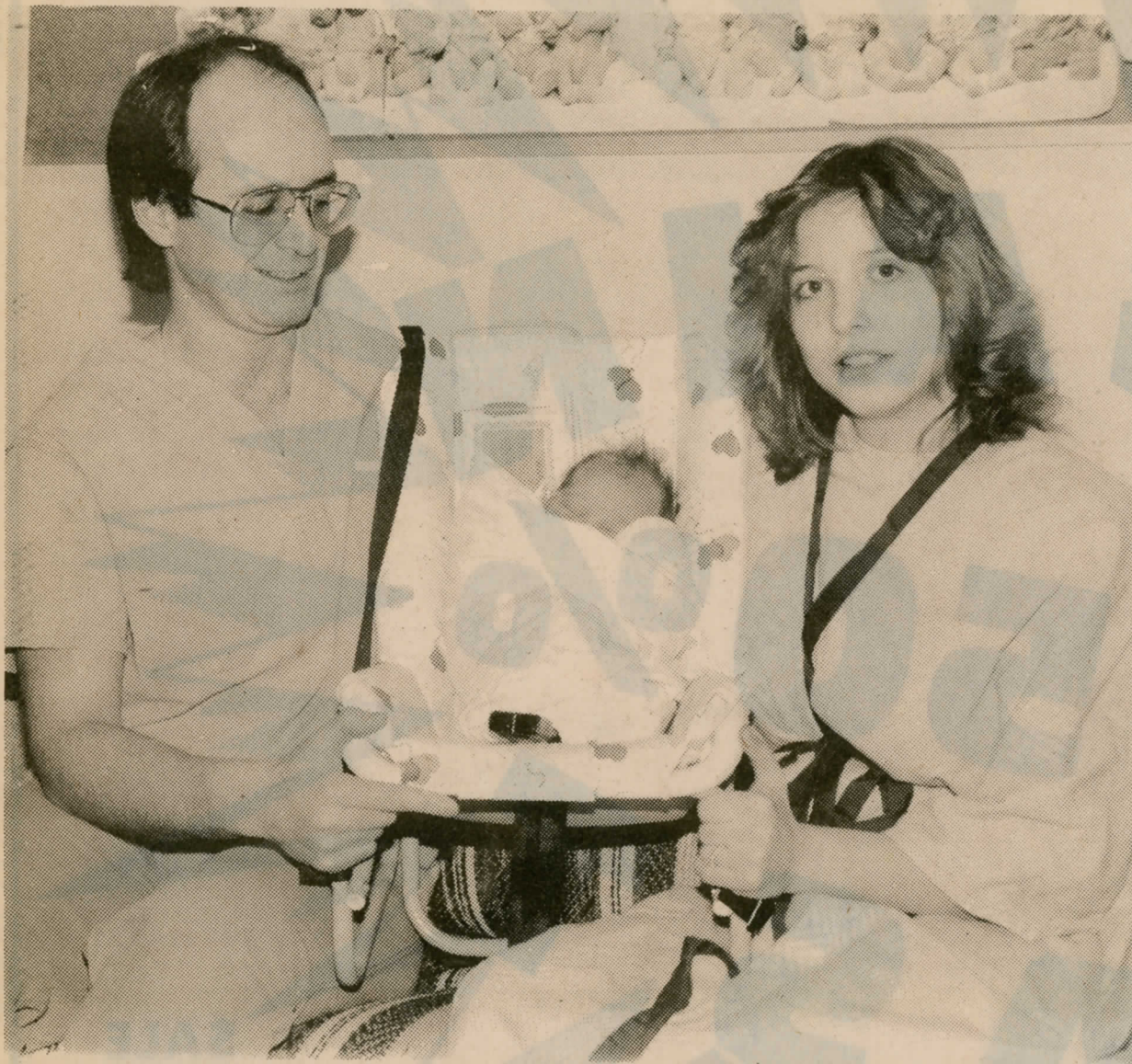




A porta cycle is like a bicycle but allows the patient to sit in a chair. A \$200 donation was presented to Mrs. Asling of the Fort St. John Hospital by Chief Ranger Laurence Richardson of the Independent Order of Foresters. The porta cycle will help to also provide leg exercise for the people who need it. This money was raised at the IOF's annual yardsale.

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A CHILD safety seat was given to New Years' baby Lisa Dawn MacDonald Tuesday courtesy of the BCMA. The seat was presented to new mom Pam MacDonald, right, by Dr. Wm. Watt, left.

The British Columbia Medical Association presents the baby safety seats to the New Year's babies born in B.C. cities every year.