

1971



NEW YEAR BABY OF 1971 was 6 lb 8½ oz Douglas James, son of Mr and Mrs Ken Moffat of 2 - 10320-99 Ave. Douglas, who made his appearance with the assistance of Dr Gary Westover at 4:36 am January 1 is pictured here with his mother, Mrs Caron Moffat.

Parents of the last baby of 1970 were Mr and Mrs Clay McDonald, whose baby daughter was born 10:55 pm, December 30. Mr and Mrs Moffat will receive a wide array of presents from Fort St John merchants as advertised in the Alaska Highway News First Baby Contest.

THURS., JAN. 14 - NP Chapter RNABC assembly hall Providence Hospital at 8 p. m. 1971

MON., FEB. 22 - Hospital WA annual new members and installation of officers dinner at 6:30 p. m. in hospital committee room. 1971

SAT., MAY 15 - Hospital W. A. Spring Ball at Immaculata Hall. Apr 28, 1971

WED., FEB. 3 - Candy Strippers' Bake Sale at Providence Hospital from 9:30 a. m. 1971

MON., FEB. 15 - Candy Strippers Capping Ceremony at Hospital committee room 7:30 p. m. 1971

THURS., FEB. 4 - North Peace Chapter RNABC meeting in assembly hall Providence Hospital at 8 p. m.

FRI., FEB. 12 - Annual Nurses' Ball "Cupid's Capers" in Immaculata Auditorium. Music by Rhythm Knights. Tickets \$10 couple 5-3184

SAT., FEB. 13 - Kinette Bake Sale at the Bay 1-5 p. m. Free coffee.

MON., FEB. 15 - Candy Strippers Capping Ceremony at Hospital committee room 7:30 p. m.

MON., FEB. 22 - Hospital WA annual banquet in Hospital committee room at 6:30 p. m.

MARCH 17, 1971



"THE TIMES THEY ARE A CHANGING." The nurses at the Providence hospital have gone mod with the pantsuit look. Miss Cheryl McGuffie, seated, Mrs Betty Marriott, background and Miss Bonnie Bryant all agreed they are in favor

of the new look. The wearing of pantsuits at the hospital came into effect Wednesday, March 17. Hospital administrator, Reg Wand, said pantsuits are being worn in all major hospitals and it is a progressive move for the local hospital.

# Hospital WA

JAN 27, 1971

The annual election of officers was held January 18 in the Providence Hospital. Nineteen members were present. The minutes of the last meeting were read by Mrs Molly Stark who sat in for Mrs Georgina Lee who recently moved to Cranbrook and will be greatly missed for all the work she accomplished for the WA. Following the regular monthly business discussions the floor was thrown open for the election of 1971 officers. Mrs Gay Spicer returned to the president's chair; Mrs Simone Westover first vice; Mrs Di Brooks second vice; Mrs Belle Bremner treasurer and Mrs Ruth Bruce secretary. Conveners for various programs were assigned by president Mrs Gay Spicer.

Mrs Lillian Dennison a patient in the hospital, joined the group for coffee in honor of her 78th birthday. Mrs Dennison was presented with an Honorary Life Membership in thanks for all the long hours and effort she has given our group.

Plans were made for the annual membership banquet to be held February 22 in the hospital committee room. Members will be phoned concerning this event.

All members were asked to remember the Candy Strippers Bake Sale to be held February 3 starting at 9:30 am in the hospital. On February 15 the Candy Strippers Capping Ceremonies will be held in the committee room at 7:30 pm. All members were invited by Mrs Carol Clark to attend.

HOSP MAR 3, 1971

It was up three flights of narrow stairs in the old hospital and everyone pushed over to give the WA a meeting room. Way back in the dim beginning, giving spark and direction to the organization were two members who have continued to be involved to, these past 25 years. Rosie De Tonnancourt and Tulley Hamilton were so honored at the annual dinner meeting with corsages and pins. Following closely with 20 years of membership were Yvonne Cushway and Lucy Scheck. A special commendation going to Mrs Anne Donis for her work down through the years. The attending 101 members and guests gave them a well deserved round of applause.

MAY 12, 1971

1971.

# Nuclear medicine in Fort St John

Fort St John's Providence Hospital has moved a further step along the road of medicine in its latest laboratory acquisition.

This machine — known as a spectro-scaler — is activated by a tiny radio-active element and is at present being used by the hospital in the calibration of thyroid hormones. Other applications are resting for pernicious anaemia, checking blood volume, checking hormone levels and for the presence of insulin and drugs. It is particularly useful in examining problems connected with the under or over functioning of thyroid gland.

Dr M M O'Brien, in an interview with the Alaska Highway News, said that hopefully the new equipment represents the beginning of a new hospital department which will offer increased diagnostic service. The next step was to build a special laboratory for the handling of radio-active material which would make possible scans on organs such as the brain, liver, kidneys, lungs and bones. As Dr O'Brien explained it, the procedure is X-ray technique in reverse in that the radio-activity in the organ itself produces the picture.

Nuclear diagnosis is new to the Peace country but has been in use in major hospitals in the country for 10 years or more and the technique is well accepted by the medical profession. The risk to the patient and technician is in many cases, less than with normal X-ray, to which the nuclear machine is a complement, providing as it does in many cases faster diagnosis with minimum risk and effort on the part of the patient.

The doctor pointed out that certain conditions, such as bone diseases, can be detected at a much earlier stage by the nuclear diagnostic technique. For instance, a diseased vertebra cannot normally be detected by X-ray in the earlier stages, whereas abnormal radio-active emanation detected by the nuclear machine would give clear warning that disease was present.

Similarly, in the case of head injuries, the presence of bleeding around the brain can be detected much more easily. It is now standard procedure in hospital equipped with a nuclear laboratory for concussion and cases of suspected



CHECKING OUT A NEW NUCLEAR POWERED piece of hospital equipment are Doctor Michael O'Brien and Mrs Erika Davies. It is the start of nuclear medicine for the Providence Hospital.

provide all the equipment that the hospital would be likely to use in the foreseeable future to provide good nuclear diagnostic services at reasonable cost.

There could, in fact, be a substantial bonus by way of cost reduction in that there would be a considerable cut down in the number of patients whom it was necessary to send out for diagnosis.

Whether or not Fort St John will in the near future be able to enjoy the full benefits of nuclear medicine will, of course, depend upon the attitude of the provincial government and the taxpayers on the question of providing the necessary funds.

brain tumor to be examined in this way. It is easy on the patient and gives quick results. In pregnancy also the nuclear machines can be used for localizing the placenta with less radiation risk to the mother and child than might be by the case of using X-rays.

There was good reason to believe that, just as the modern physician would find it almost impossible to practice medicine without the aid of the X-ray, the next few years would see nuclear diagnosis becoming more and more important and covering every organ of the body and as readily accepted as an adjunct to medicine as the X-ray. It was likely that nuclear equipment facilities would be then available in most communities. Nuclear treatment, too, could be extremely helpful in the case of certain selected patients suffering from hyper active thyroid glands.

On the subject of cost, Dr O'Brien felt that a fully equipped nuclear laboratory could be provided for a figure of approximately \$50,000 which made it relatively inexpensive compared to other standard methods now in use. The Royal Commission on Health costs had a proposal submitted to it that such facilities should be installed in every hospital with 100 beds or over. It was not really desirable to centralize nuclear laboratories to serve a group of hospitals since they provided additional facilities for normal routine tests. Dr O'Brien was of the opinion that the \$50,000 mentioned would

May 7, 1971

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hopefully the new equipment represents the beginning of a new hospital department, which will offer increased diagnostic service.

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SAT., OCT. 30 - Hospital WA Black Cat Bazaar and Tea in Immaculata Hall from 1 to 5 p.m. 1971

## "COMING EVENTS"

THURS., JUNE 10 — North Peace Chapter Registered Nurses regular meeting with social hour. 1971



MAY 26, 1971  
 GEORGE GARDINER, GOALIE for the Vancouver Canucks, toured the children's ward of the Providence Hospital when in town for the Millionaires dinner Friday night. He distributed several hockey sweaters and autographed a number of Vancouver Canuck yearbooks. Here he visits with Dan Nickols, 10, of Fort St John, background, and a lad from Hudson's Hope.

TUES., MAY 4 - Providence Hospital Candy Stripers Capping Ceremonies in Assembly Hall of Hospital at 7:30 p.m. 1971



DARRELL McLEAN ON BEHALF OF the Central Elementary Junior Red Cross presents Mrs H Pain of the Providence Hospital with a cheque for \$80.75. The money will provide two play pens and two walkers for the children's ward of the hospital. JUN 9, 1971

## Hospital manager leaving

JUL 14, 1971  
 George Broadhurst, chairman of the Providence Hospital board of management, has advised the Alaska Highway News that Reginald Wand, administrator, will be leaving in the fall to take up a position in the lower mainland.

Mr Wand says the he is very proud of his association with Providence Hospital and all who work there and that he will miss the work and the friends he has made here.

He has, however, received an unexpected but fine opportunity for advancement in the health care field and feels his new position as assistant administrator of the Richmond General Hospital will allow him to build and expand on his past experience and training.

# Union gift to maternity ward

SEPT 15, 1971

Through the generosity of the members of Local 180 of the Hospital Employees' Union, the maternity ward of Providence Hospital has acquired an ultra-modern piece of equipment which should be of value in possibly saving the lives of newly born babies and as an aid to the nursing staff.

The device, as explained by maternity nursing supervisor, Miss Claire Harwood, and hospital administrator, Reg Wand, consists of a small mattress with a control panel. The mattress is electronically sensitized so that it becomes a breathing monitor and records each breath taken by an infant by means of an audible click. In the event of the infant ceasing to breathe (an occurrence not uncommon in the case of weak premature children) an alarm bell rings. By means of the control panel the alarm can be adjusted so as to prevent it being set off during ordinary normal breathing pauses which occur naturally.

The value of this additional piece of equipment, the cost of which is over \$300, is obvious. In cases where there is anxiety over the survival of a weak premature baby it is no longer necessary for a nurse to concentrate practically all her attention on that particular child. The clicks of the breathing monitor can be set so that they are clearly audible throughout the ward, thus enabling the nursing staff to attend to other babies while still keeping an ear tuned to the monitoring note with the assurance that there will be an alarm should breathing cease for longer than a few acceptable seconds in time for corrective action to be taken.



MISS CLAIRE HARWOOD, left, maternity nursing supervisor at Providence Hospital, accepts from Mrs Sylvia Cranston, chairman of local 180 of the Hospital Employees' Union, the

breathing monitor donated by the union to the hospital maternity ward. The control panel to the left of Mrs Cranston operates the monitoring and alarm devices.

SEPT 15, 1971

## \$150,000 Rotary project

Fort St John Rotary is considering taking a leading role with the construction of a regional health centre in Fort St John. It will provide psychiatric and public health facilities. Capital cost of the structure is estimated at \$150,000.

The project was first conceived in 1962 and it is hoped to make it a reality in 1972.

# Hospital facts for all

NOV 1971

A desirable level of occupancy for a 100 bed hospital such as ours is 80 in-patients. This allows for fluctuations upwards caused by epidemics, accidents, and so on and should not overload the supporting services such as X-rays, lab, kitchen, cleaning and laundry, to name a few. Since October 1 the in-patient level at Fort St John's Providence Hospital has constantly been above this figure and has reached as high as 99 in-patients. It must be remembered, that in addition to the in-patients, there are considerable number of out-patients and emergency patients each day, all requiring the use of the support services.

On one occasion last month there were 22 patients in the 20 bed maternity ward. No — there was no standing. The labour room beds temporarily became ward beds.

When occupancy levels reach this high, it brings a number of factors to light which indicate that our hospital usage is outgrowing our facilities. Have you tried to find a place to park in the parking lot during the peak period of visiting hours, lately? Well, the same kind of problem could become a reality inside the doors. Indeed, recently, adults have had to be placed in the childrens ward; and extra adult beds in a patients' day room.

Hospital patients are still receiving the same high level of care expected of an accredited hospital, but should the present rate of high occupancy continue or increase, as it should, with Fort St John's continuous growth, Providence Hospital will need to grow also, to keep pace with the demand.

## New hospital administrator

NOV 10, 1971

New administrator of Fort St John's Providence Hospital is John (Jack) Howard.

Howard, who comes to Fort St John from administrative posts in hospitals at Taber, Alta and Rosthern, Sask, is the holder of a certificate in hospital administration from the University of Saskatchewan and has over 24 years experience of the hospital world. A native of Duncan he was an X-ray technician at the King's Daughters hospital in that city before serving for 10 years in a medical administration capacity in the RCAF.

He and his wife, Josephine Anne, have eight children, four of whom have accompanied them to Fort St John. The other four are all university students.

We welcome Jack and his wife and family to our town and hope that they will soon settle down happily in their new surroundings.



ONE OF THE LAST pictures taken of Fort St John's beloved Dr Garnet Kearney. Dr Kearney passed away in November.

X DEC 29, 1971

## Doctors thank

Editor, Alaska Highway News  
We, the undersigned doctors

DEC 29, 1971

of Fort St John, would like to publicly thank Mr Ernie Carriere for his long and faithful ambulance service to this area.

### READERS PLEASE NOTE

Letters to the editor must be signed by and bear the address of the writer. The shorter the better. A pen name may be used on request. The Alaska Highway News may edit letters for brevity, clarity, legality or taste.

We have personally found his service to be quite adequate and in our personal experience all of our patients who used his services were well handled from a medical point of view.

GG WESTOVER, MD  
K W DIXON, MD  
JJ TEMPLE, MD  
LM ERICKSON, MD  
J KINDRACHUK, MD  
MM O'BRIEN, MD  
R E CLARKE, MD  
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