

Congregation of the Sisters of St. Joseph in Canada

Finding Aid - Annals Kinkora, Ont. series (F01-S047)

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Annals Kinkora, Ont. series

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Summary information

Repository:	Congregation of the Sisters of St. Joseph in Canada
Title:	Annals Kinkora, Ont. series
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Administrative history / Biographical sketch

Note

The Sisters of St. Joseph of the Diocese of London, Ontario was first incorporated on February 15, 1891 under chapter 92 of the Statutes of Ontario, 1870-1. London, Ontario is on the traditional territory of the Anishinaabek, Haudenosaunee, L#naapéewak, and Attawandaron Peoples.

On December 11, 1868, at the request of Bishop John Walsh, five Sisters of St. Joseph of Toronto arrived in London, Ontario. Mother Teresa Brennan, Sister Ignatia Campbell, Sister Ursula McGuire, Sister Francis O'Malley and Sister Appolonia Nolan were accompanied by Reverend Mother Antoinette McDonald and were welcomed by Bishop Walsh, Rev. J.M. Bruyere, V.G., and Rev. P. Egan, pastor of St. Peter's Church. Awaiting the Sisters were sleighs that transported them from the train station to a temporary home at 170 Kent Street.

In accordance with their mission in London, three Sisters began teaching at St. Peter's School in January, 1869. After classes, they visited the sick, the poor and the imprisoned. They were also mandated to open an orphanage in the future. In order to accomplish these tasks, more Sisters and larger facilities were necessary.

On October 2, 1869, the Barker House at the corner of Richmond and College Street in North London was purchased and the Sisters moved there from Kent Street. The building was named Mount Hope, and it became the first Motherhouse of the Sisters, eventually housing the elderly, orphans, Sisters and novices.

On December 18, 1870, the Sisters of St. Joseph became an autonomous congregation in the London diocese, independent of the Toronto congregation. Sister Ignatia Campbell was appointed Superior General, an office she held until 1902. On February 15, 1871, the congregation became legally incorporated.

On October 7, 1877, an addition was made to Mount Hope. This building stood until it was demolished on August 3, 1980, surrounded by the growing healthcare institutions founded by the Sisters, beginning with St. Joseph's Hospital which opened at 268 Grosvenor Street on October 15, 1888, and followed by the opening of St. Joseph's Hospital School of Nursing in 1895, and the construction of a new nursing school building in 1927, which saw its last graduation in 1977. On May 1, 1951, St. Mary's Hospital was opened,

followed by Marian Villa on January 12, 1966. In 1985, the hospital complex was renamed St. Joseph's Health Centre, and ownership was transferred in 1993 to St. Joseph's Health Care Society.

But it was not only in London that Sisters saw the need for healthcare and nursing education. On October 15, 1890, they opened St. Joseph's Hospital on Centre Street in Chatham, Ontario, which remained under their control until 1993. In 1895, they opened St. Joseph's Hospital School of Nursing, which saw its last graduation in 1970. On October 18, 1946, they opened St. Joseph's Hospital at 290 North Russell Street in Sarnia which remained under their control until 1993. In Alberta, they administered St. Joseph's Hospital in Stettler (1926), St. Joseph's Hospital in Galahad (1927), the General Hospital in Killam (1930), and St. Paul's Hospital in Rimbey (1932).

On April 10, 1899, the Sisters opened Mount St. Joseph Motherhouse, Novitiate and Orphanage at the former Hellmuth College at 1486 Richmond Street North in London. The orphans were moved to this new location from Mount Hope, which remained a home for the elderly and was renamed House of Providence on June 3, 1899. The orphanage remained at Mount St. Joseph until it was moved to Fontbonne Hall in 1953 (to 1967). The original Hellmuth College building was demolished in 1976.

Later, on September 14, 1914, the Motherhouse and Novitiate moved to Sacred Heart Convent at Colborne and Dundas Streets in London, with the orphans remaining at Mount St. Joseph. The Sisters lived at Sacred Heart Convent until 1953, when they moved back to the newly built Mount St. Joseph, on the original location of the former Hellmuth College. The new Motherhouse and Novitiate was officially opened on June 29, 1954. It was here that they continued a private girls' school which had begun in 1950 at Sacred Heart Convent, and was now known as Mount St. Joseph Academy (to 1985). It was here too that they continued a music school which had also begun at Sacred Heart Convent and was now called St. Joseph's School of Music (to 1982). The Médaille Retreat Centre began here in 1992, and the Sisters also administered a Guest Wing for relatives of hospitalized patients (to 2005). The Sisters departed Mount St. Joseph for their new residence, a green building at 485 Windermere Road in London, in 2007.

On September 4, 1873, St. Joseph's Convent opened at 131 North Street in Goderich, Ontario, followed by other convents in Ontario, including Ingersoll (1879), St. Thomas (1879), Belle River (1889), Windsor (1894), Sarnia (1906), Kingsbridge (1911), Seaforth (1913), St. Mary's (1913), Woodstock (1913), Kinkora (1916), Paincourt (1923), Maidstone (1930), Leamington (1932), Delhi (1938), Tillsonburg (1938), Simcoe (1938), Langton (1939), West Lorne (1957), and Zurich (1963).

The Sisters also opened missions in other parts of Canada, including in Alberta: Edmonton (1922), Wetaskiwin (1929), St. Bride's (1934); and in Yellowknife, Northwest Territories Yellowknife (1953), and in British Columbia in Haney, now Maple Ridge (1956), and Rutland (1970). Branching even further afield, Convento San Jose was opened in Chiclayo, Peru in 1962.

Over the years, as well as their service as teachers in the separate school system, as music teachers, as healthcare workers, as nursing educators, in providing care to orphans, and in providing parish ministry, pastoral care, and administering spiritual retreats, the Sisters were also involved in social service ministry. In Windsor, they opened the Roy J. Bondy Centre on September 13, 1970 which was a receiving home for the Children's Aid Society, withdrawing in 1982 but continuing to provide residential care for disabled children afterward. In London, they opened Internos, a residence for teenage girls attending school and later for troubled teens (to 1979). This was followed by the opening of St. Joseph's Detoxification Centre on September 13, 1973 (to 2005) and St. Stephen's House, an alcoholic recovery centre on February 1, 1982 (to 2000). Loughlin House in London opened as a residence for ex-psychiatric female patients in 1986 (to 1989), followed by the Home for Women in Need at 534 Queens Avenue in 1979 (to 2004).

Later, St. Josephs' House for Refugees was opened in 1987 (to 2005), followed by St. Joseph's Hospitality Centre, a food security program, on February 2, 1983.

On November 22, 2012, the congregation amalgamated with those in Hamilton, Peterborough, and Pembroke into one charitable corporation under the name Congregation of the Sisters of St. Joseph in

Canada by the Congregation of the Sisters of St. Joseph in Canada Act, a Private Act of the Legislative Assembly of Ontario which received Royal Assent on June 13, 2013.

Scope and content

This series contains the chronicles of St. Joseph's Convent in Kinkora, Ontario by the Congregation of the Sisters of St. Joseph of London, Ontario. There are short histories about the activities of the Sisters during their residency at St. Joseph's Convent in Kinkora and their work at St. Patrick's School, including drafts, excerpts, and summaries from 1842 to 1976. The topics include the arrival of Sisters to Kinkora, benefactors, low class attendance due to epidemics (measles, scarlet fever, influenza, and infantile paralysis), student achievements and graduations, Annual Fall Fair and Parade, Rostock Fair, the Milverton Music Festival, public speaking and singing contests, Christmas school concerts and high-school music recitals, school open houses, and Parent Teacher Association meetings. There are other topics such as students from the Stratford Teachers College who completed their teacher practicum at St. Patrick's School, the first broadcast of Pope Pius XI, the introduction of hydroelectricity in Kinkora, the influx of Dutch families in the district, and the purchase of playground equipment, a film projector, and a new car. The Sisters also participated in celebrations; attended professional development days in Kinkora, Seaforth, and Stratford; organized the annual turkey bingo and draw fundraiser; made improvements to the convent after floods in the basement; weathered severe snowstorms and fierce blizzard; and made repairs to the plumbing system due to frost, and this participation is recorded in the annals.

There are several lists including Sisters who taught in Kinkora at St. Patrick's School; Sisters who entered the religious community from Kinkora; and Priests who served in the Parish of Kinkora. There is correspondence regarding the history of St. Patrick's School, the hiring of lay teachers, the dropping of classes from Grades 9 to 12, and the formation of the Perth-Huron Separate School Board. There are also newspaper articles related to the parish history of Kinkora, St. Patrick's School reunion, the 50th anniversary of the Sisters presence in Kinkora, and the "Day of Appreciation" for Sisters who were stationed in Kinkora. There is a news clipping that provides a historical sketch on Kinkora authored by Reverend Thomas Peter Hussey titled, "Kinkora Parish History is One of Fine Progress," published in the **Stratford Herald**, in 1928. There is a lease for St. Joseph's Convent in Kinkora between the Sisters of St. Joseph and the Board of Trustees of St. Patrick's School.

This series contains several small booklets. One booklet was prepared and published by the St. Patrick's School Board of Trustees on the history of Kinkora School and includes lists of teaching Sisters, lay teachers, school enrollment, trustees, and the Board of Trustees. Another booklet was prepared and published by St. Patrick's Church on the history of the parish and includes a letter from the Prime Minister of Canada, Pierre Elliot Trudeau. This booklet also contains printed pictures of Irish families, news clippings, a map of the parish, cartoon drawings, and various lists such as the school staff, teaching Sisters, Parent Teacher Association Executive Committee, and the Catholic Women's League. There are also handmade souvenir hymn booklets for the farewell celebration, pamphlets on the official opening of St. Patrick's Roman Catholic School of Kinkora, and promotional brochures advertising for a Catholic Education in the Huron-Perth Counties. There is also a postcard of the interior of St. Patrick's Church, printed pictures of the exterior of St. Joseph's Convent, photographs of a plaque given to the Sisters who taught at St. Patrick's School, and a class photo of a Sister with her students.

Notes

Title notes

- **Source of title proper:** Title is based on the contents of the series.

Immediate source of acquisition

These records were accumulated by the Sisters of St. Joseph of London, Ontario.

Arrangement

Original order was maintained.

Location of originals

The records are located at The Congregation of the Sisters of St. Joseph in Canada Archives.

Restrictions on access

The Archives reserves the right to restrict access to the collection depending on the condition of the archival material, the amount of material requested, and the purpose of the research. The use of certain materials may also be restricted for reasons of privacy or sensitivity, or under a donor agreement. Access restrictions will be applied equally to all researchers and reviewed periodically. No researcher will be given access to any materials that contain a personal information bank such as donor agreements or personnel records, or to other proprietary information such as appraisals, insurance valuations, or condition reports.

Conditions governing use

Permission to study archival records does not extend to publication or display rights. The researcher must request this permission in writing from the Archives.

Finding aids

Series and file list available.

Accruals

No further accruals are expected.

Note [Sources]

Perth East Public Library, “Land Acknowledgement,” https://pertheastpl.ca/land_acknowledgement, accessed 2024/10/30.

Note [General]

In January 1913, Reverend Father Thomas Peter Hussey was appointed Pastor of Kinkora in southwestern Ontario by Bishop Michael Francis Fallon. Reverend Hussey requested the Sisters of St. Joseph of London, Ontario, to help in the Parish at St. Patrick’s Church and to teach at St. Patrick’s Roman Catholic Separate School. St. Patrick’s Roman Catholic Separate School was also referred to as St. Patrick’s School or Kinkora School. Reverend Mother Celestine McCarthy of the Congregation of the Sisters of St. Joseph of London arrived to look at a hall to potentially be remodelled into a convent, but the building was too far

away from the school. The St. Patrick's School Board and parishioners decided to construct a new convent. A three storey, six-bedroom, red brickhouse with a basement and a chapel was built. The new convent was named St. Joseph's Convent of Kinkora. Kinkora is a village in the Township of Perth East, Perth County, in Ontario, and is situated on the treaty lands of the Anishinaabe, Mississauga and Mississauga of the Credit First Nations.

In December 1915, the first inaugural group of teaching Sisters arrived from Stratford, Ontario, by a horse-drawn open-sleigh, in freezing rain and gale force winds. The appointed Sisters were Mother St. Michael Henry, Superior; Sister Madeleine McDonald, Principal; Sister Sebastian Murphy, Assistant Teacher; Sister St. James McIntyre, Music Teacher; and Sister Dympna McDonald, Music Teacher and Housekeeper. On January 5, 1916, the Sisters took charge of St. Patrick's School, a two-room schoolhouse with 80 junior level pupils. By 1918, they began to teach high school students in Grades 9 and 10. Extra classrooms were added to St. Patrick's School in 1920 and 1923 due to increased enrollment and a government grant allowed for two new subjects to be taught, Agriculture and Art. Landscaping around the schoolgrounds was improved with bushes and annual perennials planted by the students. In 1932, there were 153 students in four classrooms, and in 1933, hydroelectric power illuminated Kinkora, providing electric lights in the school, church and convent.

Manual Training Shop and Home Economics classes were added with great success and interest in October 1939, but by 1941, the school had a low enrollment of 66 students, which steadily declined. One classroom was closed in 1944 and another in 1948. By 1950, there were only 28 students enrolled at St. Patrick's School, and the Sisters considered withdrawing as they were needed in larger places. The parishioners were unhappy with this decision, so Reverend John Christopher Cody, Bishop of London, conferred with the St. Patrick's School Board of Trustees and both parties agreed that if the enrollment was raised to 75, the Sisters would remain teaching in Kinkora. Bishop Cody worked with the Reverend Father VanWezal, who worked in the Department of Immigration, for Dutch families from Holland to emigrate to Canada with sponsorship from the St. Patrick's School Board of Trustees. Enrollment increased to 63 students in 1961, justifying the Sisters remaining as teachers, and by 1965 enrollment rose to 153 students. In June 1966, due to the condition and age of St. Patrick's School, a new six-room school was built across the street. The new St. Patrick's School officially opened on August 15, 1966. There were 176 students enrolled in September 1966, largely due to the addition of a new kindergarten class. 1966 was also the 50th anniversary of the presence of the Sisters of St. Joseph in Kinkora.

St. Patrick's School came under the jurisdiction of a newly formed larger school board, the Huron-Perth Roman Catholic Separate School (RCSS) Board, in January 1968. On June 17, 1969, the Huron-Perth RCSS Board decided to no longer administer the Kinkora Convent, and in November 1970, St. Joseph's Convent was sold to the Parish of St. Patrick. On January 31, 1973, the Sisters decided to withdraw from Kinkora. On June 23, 1973, there was a farewell celebration to honour the Sisters who taught at St. Patrick's School. The staff of St. Patrick's School presented the Sisters with an engraved plaque with the text: "In appreciation to all the Sisters of St. Joseph who have faithfully dedicated their service to St. Patrick's School of Kinkora." All the Sisters who attended the farewell event were presented with an exterior photograph of St. Patrick's Church by Mr. Leonard White, the President of the Parent Teacher Association of St. Patrick's School. On July 16, 1973, St. Joseph's Convent in Kinkora officially closed when Sister Mary Carmel (Margaret Mary) White, Sister Mary Carmel (Margaret Mary) White, Sister Mary Immaculate Krauskoph, Sister Mary Louis McSherry, and Sister Lorraine Coté departed for Mount St. Joseph, in London, Ontario. In September 1975, a library and auditorium were added to St. Patrick's School, and there was an official opening on October 31, 1976.

The teaching Sisters who were stationed at St. Patrick's School from 1916 to 1973 also taught singing, piano, and violin at St. Joseph's Convent in Kinkora, and went out to neighboring parishes of St. Brigid's Catholic Church, in Kennicott, and St. Mary's Catholic School, in Hesson, to teach religion classes.

Other notes

- **Publication status:** Published
- **Level of detail:** Minimal
- **Status description:** Final

Access points

- Multiple media (documentary form)

Collection holdings

File: F01-S047-01 - St. Joseph's Convent, news clippings, and photographs

Title: St. Joseph's Convent, news clippings, and photographs

Reference code: F01-S047-01

Date: 1916-1973 (date of creation)

: 0375

Location of originals: London Annals Box 7 (0375)

Publication status:

Published

File: F01-S047-02 - Chronicles of St. Joseph's Convent

Title: Chronicles of St. Joseph's Convent

Reference code: F01-S047-02

Date: 1916-1973 (date of creation)

: 0375

Location of originals: London Annals Box 7 (0375)

Publication status:

Published

File: F01-S047-03 - St. Joseph's Convent, and Kinkora School

Title: St. Joseph's Convent, and Kinkora School

Reference code: F01-S047-03

Date: 1916-1978 (date of creation)

: 0375

Location of originals: London Annals Box 7 (0375)

Publication status:

Published

File: F01-S047-04 - St. Joseph's Convent

Title: St. Joseph's Convent

Reference code: F01-S047-04

Date: 1966-1971 (date of creation)

: 0375

Location of originals: London Annals Box 7 (0375)

Publication status:

Published
