

Congregation of the Sisters of St. Joseph in Canada

Finding Aid - Education, Yellowknife, NT series (F01-S120)

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Education, Yellowknife, NT series

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Summary information

Repository: Congregation of the Sisters of St. Joseph in Canada
Title: Education, Yellowknife, NT series
Reference code: F01-S120
Date: 1961-1964 (creation)
Physical description: 3.5 cm of textual records

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 records concerning the involvement of the Sisters of St. Joseph of the London diocese in education in Yellowknife, Northwest Territories. There are three yearbooks from St. Patrick's School where the Sisters worked as principals, teachers, and librarians. The yearbooks contain photographs and information on the students, staff, school activities, St. Patrick's Church, St. Joseph's Convent, Norman Byrne's (chairman of the Separate School Board) reception of the Bene Merenti Medal, and advertisements from local businesses. The school began a mining course for high school seniors in the 1961-1962 school year and it is highlighted in two of the yearbooks. Since mining was so important to the community, with two gold mines located in Yellowknife at the time, one of the yearbooks is titled *Au-197* as "Au" is the Latin abbreviation of gold and 197 is gold's atomic composition by weight.

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 Congregation of the Sisters of St. Joseph of London.

Arrangement

Order was imposed by the archivist.

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]

C. Bondy (ed.), *The Sisters of St. Joseph of the Diocese of London: Their Contribution to the Health Field in Canada and in Peru. Their Contribution to the Education Field in Canada and Other Parts Of The World*, unpublished manuscript. (Researchers: E. Bardawill, C. Bondy, M . L. Kirwin, C. Kuefler.) NWT Archives, 'Byrne, Norman W,' <https://gnwt.accesstomemory.org/byrne-norman-w>, accessed 2023/09/12.

Note [General]

Prior to the formation of Yellowknife School District # 1 and 2, educational facilities in the territories were: a) residential schools staffed and administered by the Grey Nuns of Montreal or federal schools administered and financed by Ottawa, but there were none in Yellowknife. When the public schools were established, they were grades 1-12 and followed the Alberta curriculum. A request was made to have the Sisters of St. Joseph from the London diocese who had a convent in Edmonton, come to Yellowknife to establish a separate school. The Sisters opened St. Joseph's convent in Yellowknife on August 11, 1953. St. Patrick's school which had grades 1-9 opened in 1953. On March 13, 1954, the Sisters were able to move from the tar paper shack in which they had been living into a new convent. The convent chapel was used for baptisms and weddings. By 1955, school enrollment had increased, and two new rooms were added, with federal aid given provided the rooms were not used for high school classes. The Joint-Hostel program began in 1958, which was a system of regional schools in designated places into which teachers and students were moved from surrounding areas, the first move being pupils from Fort Resolution to Fort Smith. In 1958, a federal high school, Sir John Franklin was opened. Until this point, the separate and public schools had received the same federal grants, but the grant to the separate schools was cut off with the opening of this new high school. In 1960, the territorial government decided that public and separate schools should receive the same grants, and that a separate school could be established in places even where there was no pre-existing public school. Mr. Norman Byrne, Chairman of the Separate School Board, was presented with the Bene Merenti medal by Bishop Paul Piche in recognition of his work to further Catholic education. In 1961, the new St. Patrick's high school opened, and introduced an introduction to mining course. On April 4, 1964, there was a fire which destroyed the school. The principal of Sir John Franklin high school provided space at Akaitcho Hall, a residence for student boarders, in order for St. Patrick's students to continue classes, along with much needed supplies, and on November 1, 1964 the high school reopened. In 1966, an elementary school was built and connected to St. Patrick's high school. The city grew at a fast pace, and in 1968 a second floor was added to St. Patrick's high school, and in 1971, an addition to the elementary school as enrollment continued to rise. An interesting program was started by the Sister principal at the elementary school in which inmates at the correctional centre visited the school weekly and provided instruction in Inuktitut, soapstone carving, and art fundamentals. Special education classes and remedial education classes were also initiated at the school. Teaching religion and other parish work was carried out by Sisters as well as providing teaching and school administration services. One Sister spent time living in Dettah from 1975-1982, and another Sister lived in Behchok## (formerly Fort Rae) from 1988-2018. Both of these are Tlicho communities near Yellowknife. A new school, named in honor of the Sisters, St. Joseph's school, was opened in 1978. The Sisters closed their convent in Yellowknife in 2000. The Sisters also served in other NWT communities including Fort Liard (1990-1995), Igloolik, which is now in Nunavut but at the time was in the Eastern N.W.T. (1991-1995), in the Inuvik Delta region

(Tsiigehthchic, Tuktoyaktuk, Paulatuk, Inuvik (1999-2004), Hay River (1999 onward), Fort Good Hope (1989 -1992), and #utselk'e (Snowdrift) (1983-1986).

Other notes

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

Access points

- Congregation of the Sisters of St. Joseph in Canada (London, Ont.)
- Textual record (documentary form)
- Textual records (documentary form)
- Congregation of the Sisters of St. Joseph in Canada (London, Ont.) (subject)
- Northwest Territories (place)

Series descriptions

Subseries F01-S120-01: St. Patrick's School

Date: 1961-1964 (creation)

Physical description: 3.5 cm of textual records

Publication status:

Published

File / item list

Reference code	Title	Dates	Physical description
F01-S120-01-01	File - 1960-1961 – The Shamrock Our Yearbook Vol. 1 [yearbook]	1961	
F01-S120-01-02	File - 1961-1962 – Shamrock Our Yearbook Vol. 2 [yearbook]	1962	
F01-S120-01-03	File - 1963-1964 – Au-197 [yearbook]	1964	