The laying of the cornerstone of St. Mary’s General Hospital: Sunday October 21, 1923. The hospital accepted its first patients exactly one year later.
2014 marks 90 years since our founders, the Sisters of St. Joseph of Hamilton and a small group of local physicians, opened the doors to St. Mary’s General Hospital in 1924. We are inspired by the legacy of the Sisters of St. Joseph and grateful that their compassion and strength continues to guide us today.

We have come a long way in the past 90 years. We are pleased with all that has been accomplished, and appreciative of the generosity of our donors, support from our community, and dedication from staff, physicians and volunteers.

In 2013, we celebrated the 10th anniversary of the Regional Cardiac Care Centre with staff and the community at the Annual Community Update, and 2014 marks the 10th anniversary of our Thoracic Centre of Excellence which we also look forward to celebrating with you. 2013 also saw the initiation of the Integrated Comprehensive Care pilot project, which we hope will result in patients transitioning to home faster and receiving more comprehensive care at home after discharge.

Over the past year, St. Mary’s has been recognized nationally and internationally for our quality patient care, patient experience, and commitment to continuous improvements. In October, St. Mary’s was named in an article in The Journal of the American Medical Association as a leading North American healthcare organization in using Lean tools and methodologies to drive continuous improvement. We are pleased with the ongoing application of Lean by front line staff as we continue to look for better ways to provide safer and more cost effective care.

We’re honoured to share that for the second year in a row, St. Mary’s was rated by our patients among the top 10 per cent of hospitals in Ontario for patient satisfaction. Ensuring an optimal patient experience is something we take special pride in.

These successes would not be possible without the support and commitment from our donors, community and staff, who help us provide the best patient care possible, with innovation, compassion and respect.

Looking ahead to 2014, we are eager to begin renovations to support our new cardiac arrhythmia program. This will allow us to provide the full spectrum of cardiac care to those living with heart disease in Waterloo-Wellington. In order to achieve this and continue to support the needs of our patients, we will once again ask for your support and we hope that you will continue to see the benefits of investing in St. Mary’s.

In this report, we share with you touching stories demonstrating how the generosity of our donors has a direct impact on our ability to meet the needs of our patients and their loved ones, and focus on their spiritual and physical health and well-being. We have done this by looking at where we’ve come from over the past 90 years and where we are going next.

On behalf of everyone at St. Mary’s, thank you for your continued support.

Don Shilton
President,
St. Mary’s General Hospital

Peter Sweeney
President,
St. Mary’s General Hospital Foundation
At St. Mary’s General Hospital, we consider ourselves blessed to have benefitted from the incredible support of this great community for 90 years. In that time we have had the opportunity to meet numerous donors who have often thought of great fundraising ideas to help us out.

From the initial $150,000 raised to build our hospital in 1924 to the numerous bake sales, golf tournaments and even bingo nights, we’ve have had the privilege to see it all.

Most recently though, it was a young donor who reminded us of what it means to be a philanthropist.

Brent Thornton, a manager at a local high-tech company, wanted to give back to the community that has been good to him and his family. With February approaching, he and his friends decided to throw a party for Valentine’s Day and raise money for the Cardiac Care Centre at St. Mary’s.

Brent explains why he and his friends—co-event planners Mike Civak and Shawn Fuller—decided to hold an event for St. Mary’s. “We wanted to find a way to have a good time while giving back to a local charity. Holding a Valentine’s Day event for our local cardiac centre made perfect sense,” says Brent. He added that for people of his age and stage in life, the ability to make a large personal donation is not easy. “Most people our age are still busy raising their families, securing jobs and paying their mortgage so the ability to make a large personal donation to charity is difficult. By bringing people together at an event like this with a reasonable ticket price and some great silent auction items, we had a much larger impact than any of us could have had on our own.”

While the event required a lot of hard work and planning, they were ecstatic about the results. The turnout was great and they raised over $2,000, which was more than double what they had hoped. The support and generosity from their friends, family and community Brent describes as “incredible.”

Brent, Mike and Shawn look forward to potentially making their “party for a purpose” an annual tradition. Brent hopes to inspire other young people to start their own fundraising initiatives and will happily lend a helping hand to get them on track.

By being creative, innovative and goal-oriented, Brent proves that everyone has the ability to do their part and give back to the community. “Just keep the feel-good goal in mind and you will succeed,” he says.

At St. Mary’s, we’ve been fortunate to have people like Brent helping us out for 90 years and it is because of them that we have been able to serve our community for generations.
Left:
Col. Hugh J. Heasley accepts a cheque from generous community partners during the community campaign of 1960.
A twelve-bed ward during visiting hours at St. Mary’s in 1955.
Born in 1924, John Petsch is a man as longstanding as St. Mary’s General Hospital itself and thanks to an innovative program we launched last year, he continues to live at home with his wife Katherine.

The program is called Integrated Comprehensive Care (ICC) and is designed to help our patients translate through the healthcare system and stay in their homes and out of the hospital as long as possible. Having fought two heart attacks, lymphoma, arrhythmia, shortness of breath and multiple surgeries—all within a matter of 18 months—John has been through it all and he credits our ICC program for making his difficult journey much easier.

For decades, St. Mary’s has worked hard to provide safe and effective patient care. The implementation of the ICC program is just one example of how we have improved the patient experience in our hospital and in the community. Designed to create a smooth transition from the hospital to home by integrating hospital and community care services, the ICC program allows patients to continue to receive the care they need after being discharged from the hospital. By doing so, we not only reduce the number of repeat emergency room visits and reduce the length of hospital stays, we provide our patients with the assurance that they are in good hands, even after discharge.

Thanks to the ICC program and the remarkable people from St. Mary’s who make it happen, John continues to live at home with his wife where he enjoys reminiscing about their past together while even enhancing his already admirable computer skills.

Not only was John provided guidance upon discharge from the hospital, he also receives in-house nursing support every two weeks and is able to contact his personal ICC Nurse, Janis, whenever necessary by phone.

“The staff are caring and compassionate, and overall just very helpful,” says John’s daughter Mary Meaney. “Janis has been a great coordinator. I can think of at least four occasions where she provided us the help we needed where otherwise, my dad would have ended up back in the emergency department.”

“I really don’t know where we’d be without this wonderful program at St. Mary’s,” she adds. “My parents are comfortable and managing in their home and I worry less about them. While they may need to consider alternative living arrangements in the future, ICC remains helpful in allowing them to stay in their home longer than may have otherwise been possible. This program has provided us all with peace of mind and really is a true gift.”
When we use your donations to invest in new technology, we always ask “how will this improve patient care?” We do this because healthcare technology is expensive and it changes quickly.

**TECHNOLOGY IN 1977**

A new nuclear medicine department opens with community support

**MOVEMENT IN 1989**

Obstetrics and pediatric services transferred to what is now Grand River Hospital

**FOUNDATIONS IN 1986**

The St. Mary’s General Hospital Foundation is incorporated

With limited resources, we are constantly evaluating what equipment needs to be replaced for safety reasons and what needs to be replaced to enhance patient outcomes.

Last year, with the support of our loyal donors, we invested $160,000 in a new cardiac diagnostic system called PACS, which stands for Picture Archiving & Communication System. Upgrading this diagnostic technology is akin to replacing your film-based camera with a digital version. The pictures are not only better, they are viewable instantly.

Our new PACS system allows our technicians to diagnose heart conditions through the use of echo-cardiography much quicker and our cardiologists to view those images almost instantly. Prior to making this investment, it would take 2–3 weeks for a patient to get their results. Today, we’re turning those results around in 24–48 hours.

Dr. Heather Warren, one of our newest cardiologists, points out two crucial benefits of the new PACS. “First of all, we provide our patients and their care team with the information they need very quickly and secondly, we improve the quality of our diagnosis and reduce the risk of errors because the entire system is automated.”

Reducing our turnaround time not only makes us more efficient but it allows us to see more patients, get their disease diagnosed and treated quicker, all while reducing the anxiety that comes with waiting for a medical test.

At St. Mary’s we have been diagnosing and curing disease since 1924. While the technology has come a long way in those 90 years, our commitment to providing our community with the best care possible has never wavered. Throughout it all, donors like you have made that possible.
Left:
Dr. Ferrell proudly displays a new Picker x-ray unit during an open house in 1962.
The "Save our Hospital" campaign begins in the wake of hospital closures across Ontario.

Full cardiac services begin at St. Mary's including surgery and angioplasty.

New 100,000 square foot addition opens with $10 million in community support.

Cardiac Arrhythmia program comes to the community.

Our Cardiac Centre celebrates its 10th anniversary.

St. Mary’s is chosen as the site of Ontario’s first community based regional cardiac centre.

Our Journey to Heal Generations / Looking Forward
Throughout this annual report to the community, you have read about our past and our present. In each case, our community of donors, like you, have made it all possible.

The future of St. Mary’s is bright and we hope you will continue to support our mission of caring, compassion and innovation.

Over the next five years, we will be enhancing a number of our clinical services, starting with the development of a new cardiac arrhythmia program. This program is the last major piece of the puzzle for our cardiac centre as it completes our goal of eliminating the need for residents of Waterloo region to travel for advance cardiac care. Today, those with heart rhythm issues, like irregular heartbeats or atrial fibrillation, must travel to London for diagnosis, care and treatment. By 2015, with your help, that will change.

Over the next few years, our Foundation has committed to raise the $15 million necessary to build and equip the new arrhythmia program and we hope today you will consider helping in that monumental effort. We have raised $4 million already and have used those funds to purchase a new CT-scanner and replace an existing catheterization camera; both prerequisites to providing an arrhythmia service.

We hope you have found this report inspiring and informative. Thank you for your continued support and We wish you and your loved ones good health.