



Hospital Auxiliary marks 90 years of service

December 10, 2014



LHSC Auxiliary President Donna Baran (white jacket - centre), along with some past-presidents and current members, celebrates the 90th anniversary of the 100-Strong volunteer group.

London, Ont. - A display commemorating London Health Sciences Centre Auxiliary's 90 years of service to LHSC was unveiled on December 10 in the atrium of Victoria Hospital's North Tower. An identical display is installed at University Hospital, on level three, outside Auditorium A.

"It's the best Christmas present," says LHSC Auxiliary President Donna Baran, speaking on behalf the Auxiliary volunteers - many of whom were in attendance and visibly touched by the thanks they received as an organization.

The thanks are well deserved. The displays highlight significant contributions from this 100 member-strong, volunteer organization - including their involvement in building the hospital: from helping fund the renovation of a nursing residence in 1948, to contributing funds towards the construction of Victoria Hospital's North Tower that opened in 2011.

"The consistent and successful fundraising efforts of the LHSC Auxiliary are exemplary," says London Health Sciences Foundation President John MacFarlane. "In fact, its \$5 million donation to hospital redevelopment in 1999 remains the largest pledge in the history of hospital auxiliaries in Canada."

Recently the LHSC Auxiliary pledged another \$1 million, this time supporting the hospital's innovative Transition Age Program in Mental Health.

"Volunteers like those who serve in the LHSC Auxiliary are the lifeblood of our hospital," says LHSC Vice President of Communications and Stakeholder Relations Tony LaRocca. "Many things that enhance and enrich the outstanding health care that we are able to provide at LHSC would not be possible without the dedication and effort of those members of the hospital family who volunteer their services here every day."

From its inception the LHSC Auxiliary contributed proceeds from its tea rooms, gift shops, flower shops and break-open lottery tickets. It has financially supported the acquisition of hospital equipment like an iron lung to help combat the polio outbreak of 1937, as well as helping equip various operating rooms, the nursery at Victoria Hospital, and clinics like the Outpatient Clinic and the Women's Clinic. It has also contributed to the hospitals teaching mandate, from awarding the first scholarship granted by an auxiliary in North America to a graduating nurse in 1924 and continuing with other scholarships and bursaries throughout its history.

Auxiliary-run shops continue to provide important funding for hospital initiatives as well as a convenient and quality retail service for patients, visitors and hospital staff.