

Nurse Halladay and Boissevain's First Hospital



There is a stately brick home on a quiet street in Boissevain that is known locally as the Nurse Halladay House. It has a well tended lawn, elaborate entrances, ornate windows, and a dated stone reading "Jubilee 1897" commemorating Queen Victoria's Diamond Jubilee. It was built by Joseph Graves and later sold to pioneer Benjamin Halladay.

The "Nurse Halladay" House

Benjamin's daughter, Lily Gertrude Halladay was born in 1890, in a log house on the family homestead a few kilometres north of Boissevain.

After she received her early education at local rural schools Royal and Dunallen, she took Registered Nurses' training at St. Boniface Hospital in Winnipeg. Immediately after graduating she served overseas in World War I. Then she nursed in several hospitals before deciding to return to Boissevain to "work from home": she established a "nursing home where she hosted expectant mothers and brought their babies into the world.

The Memorial Hospital

Nursing homes filled a pressing medical need that was eventually

filled by the establishment of a Municipal Hospital.

The Boissevain, Morton, Minto Memorial Hospital opened in 1948. The building itself was built as the Airport Hospital for the No. 17 Service Flying Training School based at RCAF Station in Souris. After being declared surplus after the war it was dismantled and moved to Boissevain, where it was dedicated to those who had fallen in the two World Wars. When the hospital opened, it was equipped with thirteen beds, two cribs, and all the latest in medical equipment.

When the time came to open the doors on this new and much appreciated service, Nurse Halladay was appointed Matron, a position she held until her retirement in 1960. She spent her retirement years in Boissevain and passed away in 1969.

In 1977 when the new hospital replaced it, the old building was moved to a spot near the Home Hotel on Main Street where, with some renovations, it has served as a Community Centre and Seniors' Activity Club.

Source:
Boissevain History Book Committee. *Beckoning Hills Revisited. "Ours is a Goodly Heritage"* Morton - Boissevain 1881 - 1981. Altona. Friesen Printing, 1981.

▼ *The Memorial Hospital was Boissevain's first Hospital. Nurse Halladay served as Matron from its opening until her retirement.*



Memories of Nurse Halladay

Flipping through the pages of the history book "Ours is a Goodly Heritage" from the Boissevain-Morton area, evidence of Nurse Halladay's value to the community is obvious.

"Muriel Edith Wright was born in March 1928 at Nurse Halladay's Nursing Home." - Margaret Cliffe

"Dr. McDiarmid came from Brandon to perform the operation in a room at the Hotel and was assisted by Nurse Halladay."

- Hazel Howard (remembering having her tonsils removed)

"...(on) July 18, 1944, their second daughter Ina Marlene was born at Nurse Halliday's nursing home in Boissevain." - Albert Edward and Verna Gladstone

"Mildred Catherine, was born September 22, 1936, at Nurse Halladay's in Boissevain."

- Bertha Irene Blanchard

"We named her (our daughter) Elva Louise and she lived for only four days. The day she was buried I came down with polio. Fortunately I had not left Nurse Halliday's nursing home and the doctors caught it in time and gave me serum."

- Dorothy Sage Plunkett