

Building our Future

The transformation of St. Joseph's Hospital

Milestone 2, Phase 3

“On the corner of Richmond and Grosvenor streets opposite Mount Hope stood a fine old residence belonging to Judge Street, with extensive lawns on all sides. This was an ideal site for a hospital and just at that time offered for sale,” wrote Sister Genevieve Hennessy, who compiled history of the Sisters of St. Joseph from the period of 1868 to 1932.

Leading up to the year 1888, when the Sisters of St. Joseph purchased the home on Grosvenor and Richmond, they had created a sanctuary out of Mount Hope for the orphaned and aged. Dr. O'Reilly, Inspector of Hospitals and Charitable Institutions, was impressed by the Sisters' compassionate care and efficiency at running the orphanage and encouraged Reverend Mother Ignatia to pursue hospital work.

Mother Ignatia procured the home on Grosvenor for \$7,500 with assistance from the community. With little money and plenty of faith, her and three chosen Sisters began building a hospital out of a residential home. Their first task was to erect a temporary chapel, which was situated in a little nook in the closed space over the side porch. They fashioned an altar out of a packing box covered with white paper and wrote the initials IHS (Jesus Savior of Mankind).

On October 15, the hospital began to accept patients.

Sister Genevieve wrote: *“No sooner had the public been informed that the Sisters were prepared for the reception of patients, then many persons sought admission.”*



Mrs. Wells had been working around her little shanty when she slipped on an onion, fell and fractured her hip. Since there were no ambulances, or phones, a neighbouring milkman lifted her into his cart and brought her to the new St. Joseph's Hospital. Doctor Wishart was sent for, and without the aid of an X-ray, set her limb into place.

The first operating room was installed in a small space



off of the entranceway. The operating table was made from a soft maple wood, two feet wide and five feet long. The only light provided to the surgeon was from the window, and when necessary candles were brought in from the Chapel.

As London's population grew, so too did the needs for new buildings and expansions to the existing hospital. By 1914 designs had been laid by Watt and Blackwell (who would eventually become architects Tillmann Ruth Mocellin (aRTM) — who have designed every addition and renovation at St. Joseph's — which was to be a three-story wing with a basement on the west side of the hospital extending south along Richmond to Grosvenor. These plans included a new Chapel and the Sister's quarters, which would allow for an extra 80 beds to open up for patient use.

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Just like its past, St. Joseph's is being renovated to suit the needs of the population. One quadrant will be rebuilt to comply with: building code standards; accessibility needs for patients, visitors, staff and volunteers; and to keep pace with the need for green facilities. The other quadrant will be renovated to consolidate outpatient clinics and replace deteriorating brick and windows that no longer insulate the building. The Chapel constructed in 1915 will be safeguarded by the same architects that built it, preserving the heritage Chapel.

While the façade of the hospital has changed over the century, the care and compassion the Sisters brought to London still lives on at St. Joseph's Hospital.

Behind the scenes on B3...



Crews are working to renovate Zone B, level 3 the former neonatal/perinatal care area to create a state-of-the-art facility for outpatient clinics, such as the Pulmonary Function Lab, Cardiac Rehabilitation, Pain Management Program and Infectious Diseases Care. For the safety of patients below the renovation zone: Ivey Eye and the cataract suites, heavy construction work is taking place after hours.

Preserving a legacy...

In every nook of the hospital there is a reminder of St. Joseph's past. These artifacts have become a natural part of our work landscape. Whether we have an attachment to a monument, or we can smile knowing the story behind it, these artifacts are reminiscent of the past and remind us of why we are here today: to carry on the traditions instilled by the Sisters to provide excellence in care.

Many of these treasures will be carried into the new design, such as the terrazzo tile original to the hospital in 1892.



The design of the tile mimics the Coat of Arms, created for the Federation of the Sisters of St. Joseph of Canada. The four shields can be representative of the four Sisters who embarked on the mission to build a hospital: Reverend Mother Ignatia who appointed Mother Aloysia Nigh and Sisters Martha Toohey and Herman Murphy.

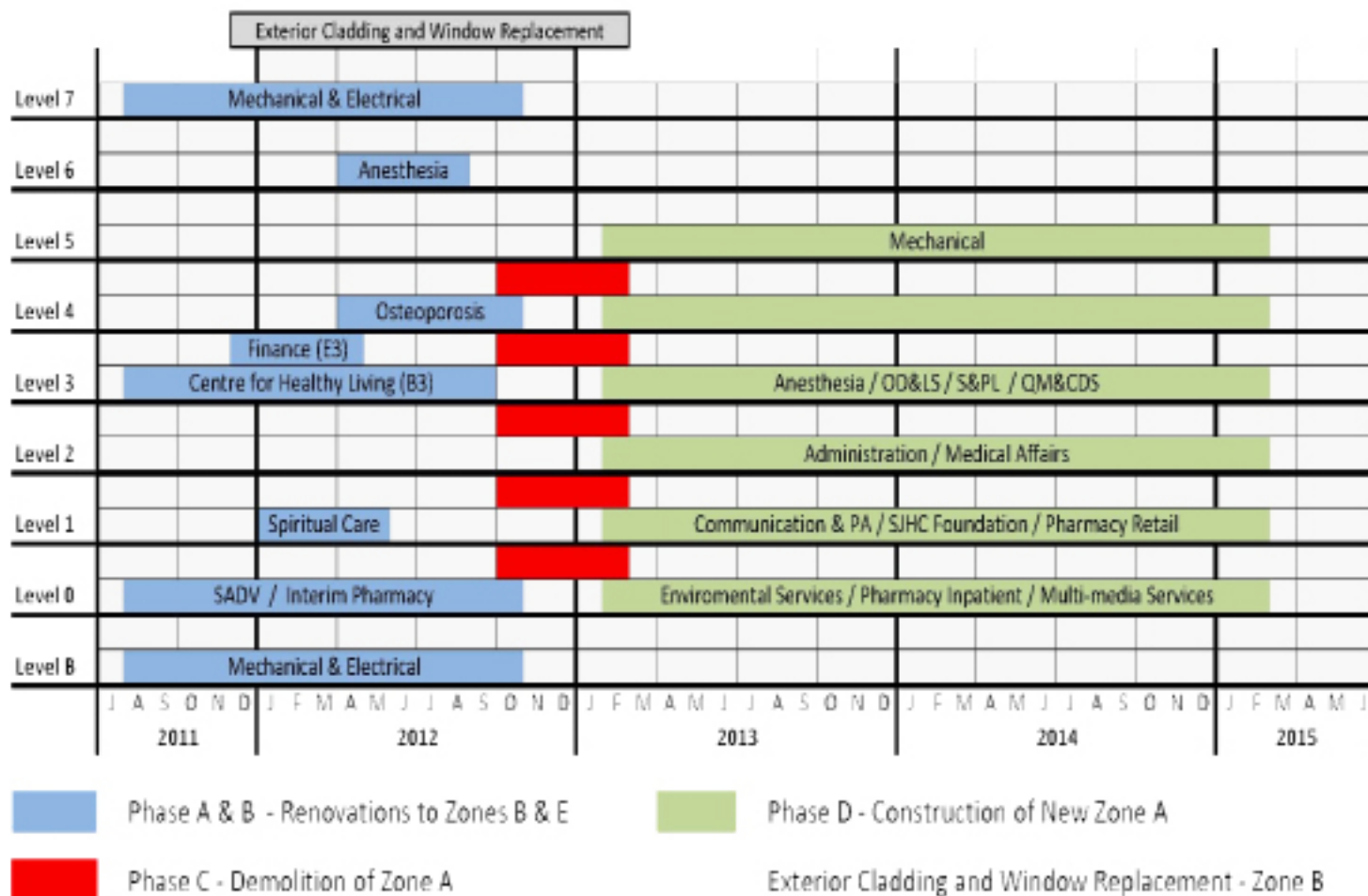
The tile is situated in the hall of A100 towards the West entrances off of Richmond. If you look close enough the original diamond shaped terrazzo tile can be seen underneath the linoleum that was laid over the floor (and fitted around the original terrazzo tile of the Sisters Coat).

Building a future of excellence...

Current projects underway at St. Joseph's are:

- The former Emergency Department is being turned into the new home for Regional Sexual Assault and Domestic Violence Treatment Centre on B0.
- Neonatal/perinatal (on B3) is undergoing renovations to become a state-of-the-art centre consolidating outpatient clinics such as Pulmonary Function Lab, Cardiac Rehabilitation, Cardio Vascular Investigative Unit (CVIU) Pain Management Program and Infectious Diseases Care.
- Formerly the kitchen on B0 is transforming into the Interim Pharmacy.
- Communication wires between St. Mary's annex of Mount Hope and St. Joseph's have been rerouted to accommodate St. Mary's demolition and St. Joseph's, both with the closing of the tunnel and the demolition of Zone A on Grosvenor and Richmond
- The former Ivey Eye, B2 100, is now being renovated
- Cladding and window replacement to Zone B exterior

M2P3 Schedule



Notes: The Chapel will be closed for the duration of phase C & D

Tunnel access from the parking garage to St. Joseph's Hospital will be closed for the duration of phase C & D

WE WANT TO HEAR FROM YOU!

Have a question about M2P3?

*Want to share a favourite
memory of St. Joseph's?*

Send an email to

sjhcreno@sjhc.london.on.ca

NEED MORE INFO?

*To find out more information on
St. Joseph's renovations visit our
internal site under Hospital Renovation
or online at
<http://www.sjhc.london.on.ca/stjosephshospitalrestructuring>*