



*S. Stoykewich presenting cheque to Harry Kristalovich on behalf of the breweries. Tom Paraschuk, Ira DeWitt and Peter Bobbie looking on.*

pastel shades with matching drapes - these color schemes worked out by the T. Eaton Co., Brandon, Man.

There was also a large operating room, nursery, medicine room and staff living quarters, separate from the nursing unit proper.

Mr. DeWitt also reported that three applications from interested medicos had already been received.

The organization meeting to establish the Sandy Lake Nursing Unit had been held at the residence of Ira DeWitt on February 28, 1949. Also present at this gathering were Mike Kowalchuk, H.B. Kristalowich, Bill Melcosky, Tony Keller, Steve Verbiwski, Onufrey Didyk and Steve Rystephanuk.

The members proceeded to canvass for donations and at a meeting on April 26, 1949 the following members were appointed and registered with the office of the Minister Ivan Schultz, Department of Health and Public Welfare to serve on the Organization Committee of the Sandy Lake Nursing Unit District. Ira S. DeWitt (Interim Chairman), H.B. Kristalowich, D.O. Didyk, Peter Bobbie, Tom Paraschuk, Steve Verbiwski and Mike Kowalchuk.

In this interview Mr. DeWitt also paid tribute to the residents of the district whose generous donations had eased the task of financing. The late Dr. R.H. Kippen of Newdale bought the complete debenture issue; the Manitoba Pool Elevators donated \$3000.00; and under the terms of the will of the late Mrs. E.J. Farmer, the hospital was left \$2400.00. The Ladies Auxiliary to the Sandy Lake Branch of the Canadian Legion, the Chamber of Commerce, the Ukrainian Catholic and the Ukrainian Greek Orthodox church parishes donated enough to cover the cost of furnishing a room at an approximate cost of \$700.00 each.

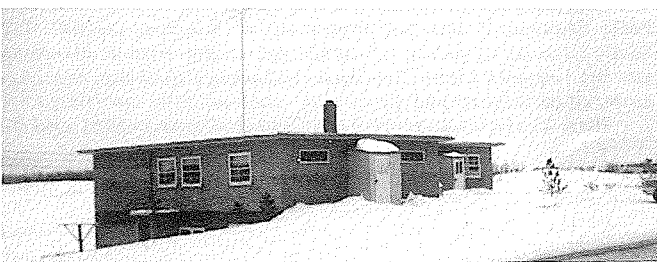
It was decided to build the unit with local help - common laborer 75 cents per hour, rough carpenter \$1.00 per hour, supervisor \$1.25 per hour. Mr. Tony Gregorash was the supervisor, then later taken over by Mr. DeWitt.

And in June 1952 the hospital opened its doors in time to admit Mrs. Mary (Tony) Kowalchuk who gave birth to the first baby (a baby daughter).

Mrs. Rose Craig was the first matron of the Unit. She served for a short period before Alied Vander Kooy (Nechweduiik) took over and worked with nurse Leona Kowalchuk (Davis) until the Unit closed. The first doctor was Mark Scherz of Brussels, Belgium, who worked in his office within the new hospital. Dr. Scherz came to Sandy Lake with his wife and 15 month old daughter.

In August 1956, Steve Verbiwski, representative of the Unit Board of Directors travelled to Winnipeg to meet with the Minister of Health, and to make application to the Department of Health to gain per-

*Old Hospital which was later converted to the Nursing Home.*



*Staff and residents enjoying an afternoon at the lake, 1964.*

mission to operate the Unit as a Home for senior citizens. Permission was granted and the doors opened to seniors in September 1956.

Mrs. Harris was the first manager of the Senior Citizens Home. The Home operated for fourteen years providing care and comfort for a large number of seniors who became unable to care for themselves. The residents enjoyed visits from local organizations who brought cheer regularly, they especially enjoyed the Ladies of Court Royal Purple, Canadian Forresters who came from Strathclair every December with an entertaining Christmas visit.

In 1970, a letter was received from the Dept. of Health that the existing facility was not up to standards and the Board was given five years to update the old building or build a new one.

In June 1973 Municipal Affairs Minister Howard Pawley arrived in Sandy Lake on a Friday afternoon and turned the sod to begin construction of the new Sandy Lake Nursing Home. The \$450,000 wood frame structure is situated on the former playground of the old elementary school, is an L-shaped building and a 36 bed unit - each resident having their own room and bathroom.

Exactly one year later, on June 13, 1974, the move from the old building to the new was finally completed. With the help of the Minnedosa Medical Unit, the 23 residents were moved in time to have dinner in the new building. The administrator Mr. George Prout credited the early date to the persistence, cooperation and hard work of the staff. All their time and effort greatly appreciated by the residents, Mr. Prout and nurse Mrs. Patricia Krupa. Also assisting with this move was Activity director Mrs. Janet Nylan.

The following day the residents were entertained by the Selkirk Junior High School Band, who happened to be touring in the area. Many visitors were also in attendance and lunch was served to everyone. And somehow on this beautiful sunny day in June, the young people, their music and all the guests proved to be an excellent way to open the doors to this new residence that would become "home" to many future seniors. And it was on that opening day that the news column "Golden Reflections" was born, this "news from the Home" which is being enjoyed to the present day.

*Present Medical Nursing Unit with low rental Senior Citizens homes visible on far right.*

