

1956-1965

Galt Rehabilitation Centre

Long-term patient in Galt Hospital, Gramps Griffiths, blowing out the candles on his birthday cake, 1952. Galt Museum Archives, 19752910382

Patients who were aging or infirm and were no longer able to care for themselves increased in number following the Second World War. Many spent years in active treatment hospitals such as the Galt until Rehabilitation Centres or Auxiliary Hospitals were developed to assume their care. Dr. Hugh A. Arnold introduced the idea of 'rehabilitation' to local doctors and politicians, like Mayor A. W. Shackelford and County of Lethbridge Reeve H. G. Houlton, in the early 1950s.



An organization comprised of the City of Lethbridge, the Municipal District of Lethbridge, and the communities of Coaldale, Barons, Nobleford and Stirling purchased the Galt Hospital building and \$22,000 of its furnishings and ran the Centre for the benefit of people from all the communities.

On July 6, 1956, the Galt Rehabilitation Centre opened in the recently vacated Galt Hospital building. As well as providing a place to recuperate, the Galt Rehabilitation Centre offered physical and occupational therapy to restore patient mobility and capabilities.

The older generation benefited from better health care and therefore lived longer. This increased the need for housing and assistance for them to live comfortably at a reasonable cost. Senior Citizens' Homes were developed in Lethbridge in the early 1950s, some utilizing the former Galt Hospital Nurses' and Maids' residences. Towards the end of its time in the Galt building, the Galt Rehabilitation Centre also became a Senior Citizens' Home.

Did you know?

The Galt Rehabilitation Centre required financial assistance so a **Women's Auxiliary** was created to help raise the necessary funds. "The greatest volunteer help is given to the rehabilitation centre by its women's auxiliary organization. They have donated a deepfreeze, electric clocks and radios to the hospital, and each year sponsor a tea and sale of handicrafts from the occupational therapy department. Mrs. M. M. Lehodey is president of the organization." *Lethbridge Herald*, September 26, 1959