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Royal Inland Hospital Celebrates 100 Years on Columbia Street

Royal Inland Hospital has a long standing history of providing great medical care in Kamloops. This year September 14th will mark 100 years at the Columbia Street location for Royal Inland.

“Royal Inland continues to play an integral role in this community,” says Kamloops-North Thompson MLA Terry Lake. “For 100 years, people from the Kamloops area have been coming to the Columbia Street building to access expert medical care.”

Built in 1885, Royal Inland was the first hospital in the B.C. interior. It was originally built on Lorne Street. Back then, people were afraid of hospitals and doctors sometimes had housecalls that took them a hundred miles away, traveling by freight train, horse and buggy, and on foot.

“Things have changed a lot in 100 years, but Royal Inland remains the heart of the community in many ways,” says Kamloops-South Thompson MLA Kevin Krueger. “Looking forward, we are excited to see the RIH redevelopment beginning to take shape, promising great things for the future of health care in our region.”

In 1912 a new hospital was completed at the current location. On September 14th a ceremony coinciding with the City’s centennial opened the hospital. The Duke of Connaught, then Governor General of Canada, was present along with other dignitaries.

“It is really amazing to look back at the developments in health care over the last 100 years. Royal Inland now serves about 220,000 people from throughout the region,” says Interior Health Board Chair Norman Embree. “As a tertiary referral centre, it offers high-level, specialty medical care, with services including psychiatry, neonatal intensive care, trauma, lung health, and more. Most importantly we are very proud of the calibre of staff and physicians at Royal Inland.”

The hospital will mark its 100th anniversary on Columbia Street with a variety of events:

- To learn more about the hospital’s history, throughout September patients and visitors at RIH are invited to peruse archived photos on display in the main hospital lobby. The photos reflect historical highlights and the many changes that have taken place at Royal Inland since its construction on the current site 100 years ago.
- Kindergarten students have sent in colourful “birthday cards” and this artwork will be displayed in the 1st floor lobby.
- On September 14th, volunteers will serve cake to staff, visitors and patients.

- During the evening on September 14th a unique photography event is being staged at the hospital. Dubbed “the Big Picture”, anyone interested in participating is invited to pre-register to take part in a choreographed time exposure shot of the hospital’s exterior. For more information about the Big Picture photo event, contact Education Services at Royal Inland: 250-314-2100 ext. 2230.
- Watch this November as Royal Inland participates in the much-loved Kamloops Santa Claus parade.

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Archive photos of RIH available upon request.