

## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

### **Musical Tribute Honours Courageous Life of Joan Donaldson**

*Joan Donaldson Fund will provide lasting inspiration for individuals in long-term care*



**(November 6, 2007 – Victoria, B.C.)** The life and courage of Joan Donaldson were remembered with a musical celebration at Mount St. Mary Hospital in Victoria today. Donaldson was best known as one of the country's leading journalists and head of CBC Newsworld prior to an accident in 1990 that resulted in severe traumatic brain injury.

Performers from the Victoria Conservatory of Music paid tribute to Joan's life and Veronica Osborn, Chair of the Mount St. Mary Foundation, announced the establishment of the *Joan Donaldson Fund*. The \$50,000 gift will provide money for Music Therapy, the Art Group and other resident activities.

"The fund is an appropriate legacy because Joan's life was enriched at all stages by her love of music from the time she played bass in her high school orchestra," said Lynne Hancock, Donaldson's sister. "After the accident that love helped her to recover memories and so find parts of her self. The painting she began in the hospital art group gave her another way of expressing her joys and frustrations. Both activities helped her to be Joan and to share herself with others."

Brain injury is the number one cause of death and disability in people under age 45. Complete recovery from severe brain injury is rare and long-term care is usually required.

The Joan Donaldson Fund will immediately benefit 200 people now and many more in the future. The Fund will provide an opportunity for each individual to get involved, become active and express themselves in as many ways as possible. Functional activities like painting and gardening help residents maintain or improve their functional abilities, enhance their well-being and create a feeling of independence.

"This donation will help us deliver more quality activities to the residents," says, Sheryl Friesen, Activity Aide at Mount St. Mary Hospital. "Age appropriate activities enhance the resident's lives, bringing more laughter and fun."

The overall fundraising goal is to raise \$2 million in permanent endowment for Music Therapy and resident activities. These programs bring variety, social contact and interest to the lives of those who cannot easily 'get out and do' for themselves. To donate contact the Mount St. Mary Foundation at 250-480-3138 or visit [www.msmfoundation.ca](http://www.msmfoundation.ca).

#### **About the Mount St. Mary Foundation**

The Mount St. Mary Foundation is a not-for profit organization, created to support the programs of Mount St. Mary Hospital and enhance the quality of life of our residents. The Foundation's goal is to raise funds to support Spiritual Care, Music Therapy, the Art Group, Pets, Leisure Activities, Bus Outings, staff education and capital equipment including: special skin care mattresses, musical instruments, hearing-assist devices and oxygen concentrators.

- 30 -

#### **FOR INFORMATION CONTACT:**

Mandy Parker, Executive Director, Mount St. Mary Foundation  
Phone: 250-480-3138 or Email: [mparker@msmfoundation.ca](mailto:mparker@msmfoundation.ca)