

100hearst



**CROIS. ARKINSTALL CRES.**



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## **Arkininstall Street**

*The Arkininstall Doctors Published in Clayton's Kids (2009)*

Born in 1899, Bill Arkininstall came from a family of dairy farmers in the rural Eastern Ontario community of Athol in Glengarry County. The young man was to take over the family farm, but instead chose a career in medicine. In 1930, he graduated from Queen's University with a major in surgery. A friend's cousin told him of an opening for a surgeon at the United Church Women's Missionary Society Hospital in Hearst. Bill Arkininstall accepted the challenge and arrived on April 21, 1931.

His wife, physician Margaret Smith, was born in Scotland in 1906. She was the daughter of Reverend G. Watt Smith. The family emigrated to Canada where the father was a minister in

St. Elmo, Glengarry. It was at Reverend Smith's services that Bill Arkininstall began to show interest in Margaret. The two young people certainly had an affinity for each other as Margaret also headed to medical school. A graduate of the University of Toronto, she is considered a pioneer in bringing Canadian women into the practice of medicine. It is also known that she was not afraid of northern regions as she did her internship in Moose Jaw, Saskatchewan. In 1931, she agreed to marry Bill Arkininstall and joined him in Hearst.

The Arkininstalls, although extremely busy with their medical practice, were leaders in the community, successfully fundraising for many projects. These include the expansion of the hospital, the construction of nurses' residences and the construction of a new public school. It is also thanks to their efforts that the Hearst United Church owes its presbytery. The couple was very involved with their church. They organized summer camps at their cottage (Athol Camp) on Lake Pivabiska. This log building, still standing strong today, was built by Ed Larson.

The couple practised family medicine in Hearst until 1945 when Bill Arkininstall accepted the position of Director at the Kapuskasing Hospital. At the same time, he became Chief

Medical Officer for the Spruce Falls Power and Paper Company. In 1947, they moved to Newmarket, Ontario.

When it came time to retire, Bill Arkinstall returned, if you will, to his first love: farming. The doctor traded in his stethoscope to raise Angus Aberdeen cattle. And what was meant to be a hobby, ended up being a successful 1400-acre farm in the Hearst area.

In recognition of their commitment to the community, St. Paul's Church in Hearst dedicated one of its stained-glass windows to them in 1997. Dr. Margaret Arkinstall was awarded by the Order of Canada in 2000, just before her death in 2001. The country has recognized the extraordinary contribution of this remarkable pioneer. A book she wrote details her and her husband's experience in Hearst (Arkinstall, 1983, 1997).

Other streets in the municipality are named after physicians who have contributed to health care services. Among them we find Samson, Aubin, Chalykoff and Polnicky Streets.

- *Ernie Bies*

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