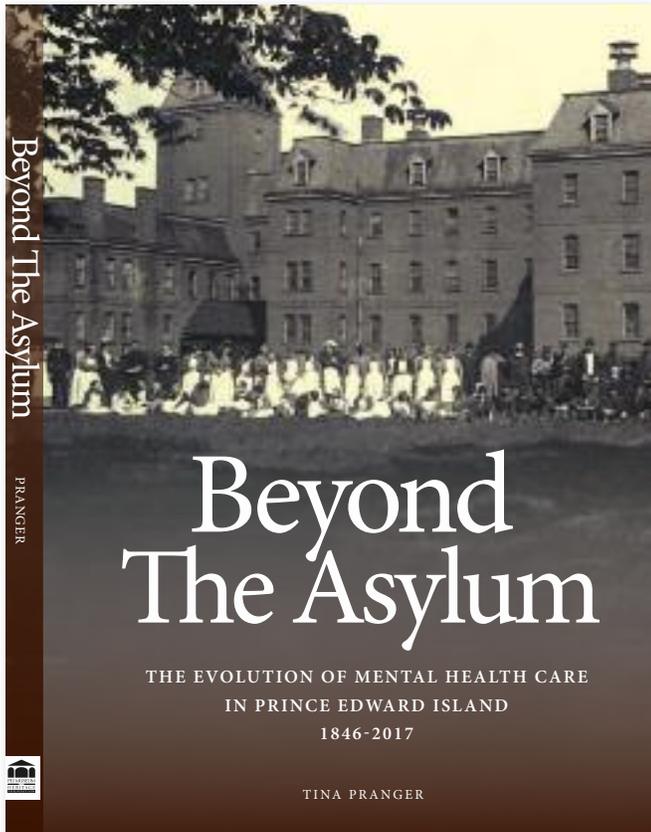


AVAILABLE EARLY NOVEMBER — PEI'S FIRST-EVER HISTORY OF MENTAL HEALTH CARE

Beyond the Asylum

The Evolution of Mental Health Care in Prince Edward Island 1846-2017



7.5 x 10.25, 270 pages with b/w photos
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Mental illness has always been with us. It has been called by different names over the years but almost everyone has someone in their family tree or in their community with “mental troubles”. This book describes the often bumpy evolution of how we in Prince Edward Island cared for these people. It begins in 1846 with the Charlottetown Lunatic Asylum, which was replaced in 1878 by the Prince Edward Island Hospital for the Insane, a massive five-storey building located where Hillsborough Hospital is today. Care in both facilities was primarily custodial — there was little treatment.

It would be almost 30 years later before “madness” began to be understood as caused by disorders of the brain and thus medically treatable. The Hospital for the Insane was renamed Falconwood Hospital, to indicate a new medical approach for the hundreds of “patients” who resided there. Treatments such as shock therapies and medications were introduced. The Falconwood Hospital was replaced by the Riverside buildings, and a new Hillsborough Hospital joined these in 1957. Hundreds of “patients” per year were still “committed” to these facilities and many stayed for a very long time.

The institutional doors started swinging open in the late 1950s with the opening of the first mental health clinics on the Island. The growth of community-based services allowed hundreds of patients to move out of the hospital and back into the community. Today, Islanders can access mental health services that include — but also go far beyond — the asylum/mental hospital.

Through all this, optimism and progress ebbed and flowed — many times. Promising new approaches in treatment were often countered by limited support and restrictive attitudes.

This is an important story for Islanders as it reflects who we were then, who we are now, and who we could be in terms of how we treat people who live with mental illness.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR:

Tina Pranger, PhD (Social Science and Health) has over 35 years of experience in the mental health field as: a mental health occupational therapist at St. Joseph's Health Centre and at the Clarke Institute of Psychiatry, Toronto; a professor of mental health occupational therapy at Queen's University; a researcher and the mental health consultant with the PEI Department of Health; the manager of the Rehabilitation Program, and a mental health officer, at Veterans Affairs Canada. She lives in Stanley Bridge, PEI.

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