



## The Honourable Sylvia Fedoruk

One of Canada's foremost medical biophysicists, Dr. Sylvia Fedoruk was the only woman conducting medical-physics research in Canada in the 1950's. Her groundbreaking achievements have earned her worldwide recognition, bringing honour to Saskatchewan, her home province, and to Canada. Working with Dr. Harold Johns, Dr. Fedoruk served on a team of scientists involved in the development of one of the world's first cobalt-60 unit (the "Cobalt Bomb"), and one of the first nuclear medicine scanning machines, which pioneered the curative treatment of cancer using high intensity radioactive cobalt in humans. She became chief medical physicist for the Saskatchewan Cancer Foundation.

The world's first non-commercial cobalt-60 therapy unit went into operation at the University of Saskatchewan in 1951 – the same year Dr. Fedoruk submitted her thesis in physics. Within ten years, cobalt radiation had become the standard of radiation therapists worldwide, and it was estimated that by the end of the century it had helped more than 70 million people.

Later in her career, Dr. Fedoruk contributed to the development of the Dosimeter, allowing doctors to control the amount of radiation that each cancer patient received. She also participated in the development of one of the first whole body scanning machines that used radioactive nuclides to help detect cancers of the thyroid and liver.

With an academic career that spanned 35 years, Dr. Fedoruk was the first woman member of the Atomic Energy Control Board of Canada and served as a consultant on nuclear medicine to the International Atomic Energy Agency, among other advisory boards. She was Chancellor at the University of Saskatchewan (1986-1989), and the first female Lieutenant Governor of the province (1988-1994) – a position she served with wisdom, grace and a strong measure of diplomacy. In addition to her extraordinary scientific strengths, Dr. Fedoruk excelled as an athlete, and in 1986 was inducted into the Canadian Curling Hall of Fame.

Dr. Fedoruk was appointed an Officer of the Order of Canada (1986). She has been awarded the Saskatchewan Order of Merit (1986), the Queen's Silver Jubilee Medal (1977), a Canada 125th Commemorative Medal (1992), five honorary doctorates from Canadian universities, among other honours.

