

50th Anniversary
of
Alexander Linn Hospital

1918 - 1968

Fiftieth Anniversary
Of
Alexander Linn Hospital

July 20, 1968

Honorary Chairman
Mrs. George Randolph Hearst, Sr.

Hostesses
The Junior Auxiliary
of
Alexander Linn Hospital

Committees

General Chairman: Mrs. Adrien B. Hommell

Printing: Mrs. Leslie Vermes

Invitations: Mrs. Lester Eddy

Decorations: Mrs. Cyrus Ettlinger

Tea Table: Mrs. Kenneth Meredith

Tours: Mrs. Gilbert Coates

Flowers: Mrs. Clifton Lawrence

Publicity: Mrs. Kenneth Keyes

Donald Bliss

ORIGINAL HOSPITAL BOARD MEMBERS
May 1918

Harvey D. VanGaasbeck	Samuel S. Vandruff
Henry T. Harp	John D. Simmons
Frank Holbert	Charles E. Stickney
John D. Haggerty	John T. Stanton
Ford W. Margarum	

BOARD OF TRUSTEES -- MAY 1968

Emanuel A. Honig-----President
Adele T. Hommel-----Vice President
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Irwin H. Treiser, O.D.--Secretary
Laurens Hardin
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It is believed that many years ago, when our country was a wilderness, the property at 20 Walnut Street, where the Alexander Linn Hospital now stands, was an Indian camping ground, home of the Minsi, or Wolf tribe. This tribe was a part of the Lenni-Lenape Indians, and many of their artifacts have been found during excavations in past years, thus bearing out this theory. Today paved streets have replaced the grasses and trees of the camp ground, and the sound of sirens and automobile horns are heard where once the hills and weeds echoed to the sounds of Indian dances, the beating of tom-toms, and the laughter of happy red-skinned children at play.

When Peter Decker first came to this section, it is believed that he may have settled near a free-flowing spring which is located at the corner of Main and Spring Streets, and a bronze marker at this spot tells this bit of history to all who pause to read. Later he may have built a more permanent home for his family on the property now owned by Mrs. Warren Coon on Hamburg Avenue, for the spring bubbling from the ground at that time was also a source of water for the Indian encampment, since a trail led from their village directly to that spring.

This property of Peter Decker's later became part of the Asa Munson tract of land, and in 1855 Professor Seeley purchased it for his residence and established a private school, this place of education to be known as Professor Seeley's Select School was

*sold by Mr. + Mrs. Edward
Layton, who ran a boarding house.
(nee Mrs. Christie)*

open for many years until other schools were established and the attendance of private pupils lessened, after which it became a boarding house for summer visitors.

In 1918 the Seeley family sold the property to William A. Linn, and he in turn donated it to the town of Sussex to become the Alexander Linn Hospital, a tribute to the memory of his father, Dr. Alexander Linn, and it was at that particular time that the hospital was incorporated in accordance with the terms of the will of the late William A. Linn.

Dr. Harvey VanGaasbeek was the first chief-of staff, while also serving the hospital at that time and in later years were Drs. Jackson Pellett, Henry Harp, B. Ferguson, Edward Uptegrove, Joseph Coleman, Thomas Pellett, Henry Loux, Benjamin Rothman, August Groeschel and Dean Hill, and undoubtedly many others whose names may have escaped the historians. Today's attending staff consists of:

Leslie R. Vermes, M.D. - Chief-of-Staff
Ewald H. Bergmann, M.D. - Chief of Surgery
John J. Piampiano, M.D. - Chief of
Medicine
H. Vinton Coes, M.D. - Chief of
Obstetrics
Frank P. Marchese, M.D. - Secretary

Lester R. Eddy, M.D.
Sylvia A. Ficke, M.D.
Ralph A. Ruffer, M.D.
Edward H. Weiser, M.D.
Donald Sugar, M.D.
*Dr. Johnson, who married Franca
Wilson, of Sussex, died in Beandville
where he practiced for years*

The first baby born in the newly opened hospital was Helen, to Mr. and Mrs. F.J. Lawrence, on April 14, 1920. Helen is now Mrs. Gilbert Mettla, and resides in Amherst, Mass. where her husband is in Public Relations work at the University of Massachusetts.

Infants were kept in baskets on the shelf in the hallway where linens and drugs were stored, and it was not until 1936 that the Junior Auxiliary had a room converted into a nursery and delivery room.

The first patient to be admitted was Albert Post; Mr. Post was a brother of John Post who resides on Sycamore Street in the house facing the present hospital administration building.

An old register shows that admissions for the first year were 119, while today's records list 2,105 admissions for the year 1967.

The original hospital was a wooden frame building three stories high. The main floor or entrance housed the kitchen, dining room, office, and wards. Heat was furnished throughout from a coal furnace, and it was the duty of the nurses at night to attend to the furnace, shake down the coal range in the kitchen for the cook to start breakfast, and get the general mechanics of an institution of that nature under way before the day shift arrived. There was usually time to do all this as a nurse's work day was 12 hours long. Those of staff who "lived in" slept in rooms on the third floor.

The second floor held patients' rooms, some private and some semi-private, and the hallway was the nursery, as mentioned before, while additional supplies were stored on the third floor beside the dormitory rooms.

One of the supervisors who worked in the hospital for many years was Miss Martha Devitt, and today many former patients remember her quiet manner and the efficient service she rendered through long hours of pain or sleepless nights, as well as the joy she shared with a proud mother when another new life came into the world.

As the needs of the community increased, more nurses were added to the staff, and worked 8-hour shifts; office space was increased and an entirely new business regime was set up, along with the hiring of an administrator and superintendent of nurses. The Westfall Wing, made possible by a bequest from the Westfall Estate, was added; it became the Obstetrical Department where a specially trained staff of nurses tend the needs of the mothers and new-born babies. In 1956 work on the new hospital was started and final and complete demolition of the old wooden building that had served so many people for so many years took place in 1957.

Today your hospital offers you complete services in laboratory tests, x-ray and physical therapy; two operating rooms and an emergency room are available, and a recently installed electroencephalograph machine is ready for use. In the Westfall

Wing, a delivery room and nursery with 9 bassinets, 3 incubators and an isolette are ready for the reception of our country's newest citizens. Orthopedic and eye services are also available with consulting doctors, each well qualified in his particular field.

A very important part of volunteer work is carried on by the Sussex Fire Department; a state-wide radio hook-up in the hospital makes the ambulance available at any hour of the day and night, complete with drivers and a trained first-aid squad, some of these being members of the Fire Department Ladies' Auxiliary.

In 1937 a community blood-typing and donor system was started, but today the hospital belongs to the county-wide Red Cross Blood program.

It is hoped that in the not too distant future an expansion plan can be set in motion which will increase the number of beds available.

Senior Auxiliary

From the minutes in the original secretary's book, the following facts were gleaned in regard to the first hospital auxiliary, and these words make clear to all that the administration was acutely aware of the great need for a women's auxiliary: "On March 22, 1920, at the request of the directors of Alexander Linn Hospital, an informal meeting was held to form an auxiliary. The officers elected were:

President-----Mrs. A.G. Tully
Vice President-Mrs. H.D. VanGaasbeek
Secretary-----Mrs. F.W. Margarum
Treasurer-----Mrs. J.D. Haggerty

No mention was made as to the number attending that first meeting, but it has proved to be true that every member from the day of organization was an interested and devoted worker to the cause, and the minutes of June 1920 tell us that "New members numbering 183 joined", and in April 1922, there were 201 paid members. These women were from Sussex and surrounding towns, and it was through the combined efforts of the chairmen appointed to serve in these areas that many needed supplies and furnishings were provided for the hospital.

Various projects were instituted which became annual events for the purpose of raising money, one of which was a Charity Ball. This was held in Hornbeck Hall and was a formal affair, complete with evening gowns for the ladies and tuxedos for the gentlemen. The plain walls of the ballroom were converted into a flower garden by the

skilled hands of Mrs. C.E. Brown and her committees and the dancers circled the floor to music provided by Sherrred's Orchestra of Newton.

Street fairs were held, the favored spot being on the corner of Bank and Spring Streets; these gala occasions lasted all day and helped greatly to swell the funds to be used for the benefit of the hospital. Under the capable supervision of Miss Belle DeWitt, R.N., these were always successful.

For many years, card parties were held each month, often at the homes of members, until the increasingly great numbers attending made it necessary to use the Boro or Grange Halls.

Donation Day was another annual event, and this gave everyone an opportunity to share in the good work by giving food, linens, drugs or small household items. Cars were loaned for the house-to-house campaign collecting, and the results were always gratifying.

We read again in the secretary's book of the variety of purchases made for the hospital, as for example: " 7 dozen gowns, 6 dozen spreads, 50 yards toweling, 2 bathroom cabinets, 1 shower curtain, 6 electric lamps, 2 dozen cups and saucers, porch rocker, inlaid linoleum for bathrooms, and even small but most essential items as needles, pins and thread! This is but a mere part of the many things purchased, and no request was too great or small for the auxiliary to contemplate, then purchase the needed articles.

Times change, however, and many factors enter into the life of any social or service group. Families move away, other interests supercede what was once of primary importance, and hands that once worked long and diligently for the Senior Auxiliary have been forced to retire, but today a faithful group meets each month in the administration building to sew and mend, a service greatly needed. Under the supervision of Mrs. Laurens Hardin, Sr., 8 or 10 women perform this task. Today no formal meeting is held, and the last recorded minutes are dated 1960, but the need for their handiwork is greater than ever, and the work they accomplish can never go unrecorded nor be forgotten. The following have been most faithful in this field:

Mrs. J. Denton Armstrong
Mrs. Everett Ayers
Mrs. Edward Davis
Miss Myrtle Drake
Mrs. William Haldenwang
Mrs. Laurens Hardin, Sr.
Mrs. John Lintner
Mrs. Harry Roome
Mrs. James Williams
Mrs. J. LeRoy White

Volunteers are needed to help with this important service to the hospital.

JUNIOR AUXILIARY

April 1968

President - Mrs. Leslie Vermeer
Vice Pres. - Mrs. John Goble
Secretary - Mrs. Jean Kitterer
Treasurer - Mrs. Thomas Anderson
Trustees - Mrs. Lester Eddy,
Mrs. Vera Musters
Mrs. Adrien B. Hommell

Because a young Sussex matron had the foresight, initiative and ability to unite a small group into an active club, Linn Hospital has benefitted in many ways through the years. In September 1934, Mrs. Adrien Hommell invited to her home several women whom she thought might be interested in being part of an auxiliary for the hospital. The plan met with ready approval and that day an organization was formed to be known as the Junior Auxiliary of Alexander Linn Hospital. The original group was composed of the following thirteen women:

Mrs. William W. Bailey
Mrs. Herbert Bradley
Mrs. Merle Crowell
Mrs. Lester Eddy
Mrs. Theodore Edsall
Mrs. John D. Haggerty
Mrs. Adrien B. Hommell
Mrs. Kenneth Keyes
Mrs. Harry Morrison
Mrs. John Reed
Mrs. Ben Rothman
Mrs. Malcolm Simpson
Mrs. LeRoy White

and several are still active members. It is interesting to note that proceeds earned by a club still in its infancy were around \$200 the first year, and last year's total was over \$6,000; the membership of 13 has grown now to 100.

The Junior Auxiliary is non-sectarian and has no religious or racial prejudices; its members include nurses, school teachers, an

*The Coeddes family donated
the first ambulance*

attorney, farmer's wives and business women, but they all have one thing in common -- to work together as a group for the good of the hospital.

One of the first projects was the purchase of an ambulance and the remodeling of a hospital room into a nursery, supplies for which are still furnished by the auxiliary. Wheel chairs, laboratory renovation, furnishings and equipment, oxygen tent, x-ray machines, furnishings for room in the Westfall Wing, stainless steel delivery room equipment, pathological laboratory, cardiac defibrillator, resuscitator, pediatrics room, morgue refrigerator, anesthesia machine, and many other items greatly needed and still in use are among the purchases made possible through the efforts of the Junior Auxiliary. Not to be omitted is the sum of \$15,000.00 paid in pledges to the Building Fund.

A variety of fund raising activities has been the custom, the first such event being a barn dance in the newly raised barn on the Elston Farm in Lewisburg. Stage shows written by auxiliary members and featuring much unsuspected, unknown, and therefore highly entertaining local talent have been a source of revenue, and are still the most popular among the money raising endeavors. Antique shows, bazaars, smorgasbord suppers, and a birthday calendar (published annually which has been a most successful undertaking) also bring in excellent financial returns.

In 1964 a Gift-Hospitality Shop was opened in the waiting room in the hospital under

the hospital under the direction of Mrs. Leslie Vermes, and she is responsible for obtaining the many donations of salable items that have brought in such fine results.

The Whistle Stop, a thrift shop in a quaint setting -- the old Lehigh and New England R.R. depot on Walling Avenue, was opened in 1967. This is staffed by volunteer workers, and people come from all over to stop, look and buy, having learned of this unique shop while passing through Sussex, or perhaps by way of the "grapevine!"

A system of volunteer workers has proved invaluable in doing clerical work, reading to children confined to bed, arranging flowers, and assisting at the reception desk, thus taking some of the work load away from personnel so that they, in turn, may attend to other affairs at hand. In recognition of their services, volunteers are presented with a pin after completion of a stated number of hours of duty. Many wear a 100-hour-pin, several wear a 500-hour-pin, and but a few have the distinction of wearing the 1,000-hour-pin.

This summer a Candy Striper program is under way in Linn Hospital for the first time, and under the sponsorship of the auxiliary is already proving its worth in many ways.

New members are always invited to become a part of the group that does so much in the way of combined effort for the good of the hospital now celebrating its fiftieth year. Meetings are held each second Tuesday in

each month (except July and August) in the conference room in the Administration Building on Sycamore Street.

The members of the Junior Auxiliary are pleased to present this booklet on the fiftieth anniversary of the incorporation of Alexander Linn Hospital, and wish to thank all who have contributed in any way to make this date a most memorable occasion.



