

## EDITORS' NOTES

While researching for the history of the Littleton Hospital Auxiliary, we came across a history of the first fifty years written by Dorothy H. Cummings and we offer it verbatim. Records are lacking until the 1940's but we do know that the Auxiliary was begun in December of 1906 and formed in 1907. There were to be two women from each church with dues of one dollar per year. Mrs. Hannah Hildreth became a life member by paying twenty-five dollars. Currently, annual dues are \$2.00 with life memberships still at \$25.00.

During research we were struck by the fact that once a woman became truly active she remained active for decades. We feel honored to be presently working side by side on the Auxiliary with women who have been active members since the 1930's. To these women, our efforts are dedicated.

The organization was first known as the Women's Board, then as the Women's Auxiliary of the Littleton Hospital and is now known as the Littleton Hospital Auxiliary. 1981 has found us with our first male member - at least the first who paid his dues voluntarily, and he should be noted -- David Hartson, Ph.D.

Researching has been a humbling experience for us. An enormous amount of money has been raised and donated during the last seventy-five years as well as the creation of many on-going programs of service to the hospital and its patients. The amount of energy and talent expended by those who have gone before us is boggling!

Finally, we have attempted to summarize the Country Fairs and the years 1947 to September of 1981. Those of you who have been close to situations mentioned who find blatant errors are requested to apprise us of those errors so that when we do the history of the first one hundred years in 2006 we will not repeat those errors.

Now, on with the history of 1906 to 1956 by Mrs. Cummings.

Mrs. A. Powell (Jewel) Fogg  
Mrs. Robert C. (Carroll) Campbell

1981

The Woman's Auxiliary Board of the Littleton  
Hospital Association 1906-1956

"Traditionally we are taught, and instinctively we long to give where it is needed ....."

Anne Morrow Lindberg

Fifty years of giving of time, energy, money and thoughtfulness, has surely been the purpose of the Woman's Auxiliary Board of the Littleton Hospital Association. Since the formation of this board, many of the older members have passed away, but it is because of the fine tradition passed down to our present board that we are able to try and carry on the fine work which they so ably started.

Shortly after the Littleton Hospital was built, Mr. J. G. M. Glessner made the suggestion that there be a women's board. Due to a lack of early records, complete lists of officers cannot be given, but we do know that Mrs. William Beattie was the first President. Mrs. Beattie held the office for quite a number of years, followed by Mrs. A. T. Downing and Mrs. Raymond Giles. Mrs. Charles Lane, mother of Mr. Edward Lane, was the first Treasurer, and held the office for twenty-five years.

Mrs. Harold Edson and Mrs. John Mathes were the next two Presidents, and from here, in 1933, we have the secretary's reports to give us details of the work done by the board. At this time, the yearly Donation Day was held the Saturday before Thanksgiving, it later being changed to the last Monday in October. 1939 was the first year in which school children brought in food for this yearly event.

It is to be supposed that the ladies had been making and saving money up to this time, as the Trustees asked for a loan of \$3,000.00 for a large coal bill. The Woman's Board loaned them half of the requested sum.

In 1934 the depression was being felt, and it was voted to cut needless

expenditures at the hospital.

Nurse's training was offered at the hospital for a number of years, and ended in 1935, when it was voted to send the remaining students to other hospitals to complete their courses. It was estimated that the expense of operating the hospital would be halved by this move.

Mrs. Robert Peckett, Jr., was elected President in 1935, and during her term of office a thousand dollars was voted to equip a laboratory. At the Annual meeting Mrs. Beattie reported for the Children's Fund, and announced that Mrs. Downing and Dr. Barbara Beattie would be new members to fill the expired terms of herself and Mrs. Burch. Mrs. Downing and Dr. Beattie served on this committee for twenty years and were replaced in 1955. During 1936 it was noted that the hospital was in better financial condition than in some years, and the following year it was voted to install an electrically controlled elevator at an estimated cost of \$1361.00. The new X-Ray machine was proving its worth, there being none better north of Boston!

During 1938, through the efforts of the Woman's Board, ten high school graduates were assigned for ward attendant courses for one year. This was a N.Y.A. (National Youth Administration project.) The financial situation was now not as good, and the painting of the hospital was postponed. A special Town Meeting was held at which time it was voted to stabilize the hospital finances.

At the regular Town Meeting held in March 1939, an appropriation of \$3,000.00 was asked for and granted. In May of this year, Dr. Ezra Jones of Manchester held the first Cripple clinic in the North Country at Littleton hospital, and twenty-six children were in attendance. Because of an increase in the number of patients, the second floor of the old wing was opened for use, and a hospital book truck was purchased during this year. Monthly card parties were held in various hotels and homes to add money to the treasury. Perhaps because of the unlucky date, but more likely because of the condition of the Nurse's home, plaster fell in four rooms there on November thirteenth. Much repair work was

done by the board at this time.

It was decided in 1940 that the oil stove in the hospital kitchen had proved to be a failure, and a gas stove was purchased. A need for new books was felt, and the old ones were sent to the C.C.C. boys.

April 5, 1941 was the cause of hospital as well as town celebration, it being Bette Davis birthday, and the world premiere of her picture, "The Great Lie". One-half the proceeds of this movie went to the Board of Trustees of the Littleton Hospital and one-half to the Golden Rule School for boys at Franklin. In July of this year the N.Y.A. project closed with the training of ten girls as ward attendants.

In 1942 Mrs. Charles Copenhaver was elected President, and shortly afterward Mrs. Emma Bass became Superintendent of the hospital. 1943 brought the death of Mrs. J. G. M. Glessner, a member of the board since its formation. The Annual meetings were held at her home for more than thirty years, and her interest in and love for the work of the board and the hospital will never be forgotten.

Mrs. John Guider became the next President in 1944, holding the annual meeting at her home then, and up until the present time.

During the next two years, while Mrs. Paul Holly was President, the nurse's home was painted and insulated by the board.

In 1948 Mrs. Robert Edge became President, and the board was active in setting up the new nursery, purchasing a fracture table, installing a blood bank in the hospital and furnishing an oxygen tank.

Mrs. Raymond Whicher was elected President in 1950, and during her term of office the board purchased a centrifuge, stretcher, oxygen tent, and redecorated the Superintendent's apartment in the nurse's home.

From 1952 to 1954 Mrs. Frances Mathey served as President. The board at this time refurnished the nurse's home, purchased new laundry equipment, modernized the operating room and held the first parking meter day, replacing the tag day which was held for many years.

Mrs. James Heald was elected President in 1954, thus having the honor of being in office during our fiftieth anniversary this year. The board has in the past two years purchased a movie projector and furnished and decorated a waiting room on the lower floor near the emergency room. President Heald has emphasized public relations, and as a result two groups held their regular club meetings in the hospital, and were served tea there.

Space would not permit listing the dozens of linens and utensils purchased by the board, as well as the larger items for which so many public affairs have been held to make money. Through the years the board has provided Christmas gifts to the hospital staff and small gifts to patients, also lighting the tree on the lawn. In latter years the Littleton Garden club has made favors at Christmas time for patient's trays.

Thus we come to our fiftieth milestone, with many a card party, tag day, dance and puppet show held that the endless work might go on; hoping to provide the best and most modern equipment for our hospital. It has been truly said that nowhere but in America are people so generous in giving money for worthwhile causes, and the people of Littleton and surrounding towns may well be proud of the support they have given to their hospital.

Dorothy H. Cummings  
1956