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Collection 149

Mercer Hospital / Mercer Medical Center / Capital Health Collection (1895-2020)

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January 2020

History

The Mercer Hospital was founded on March 20, 1895. Its establishment can be traced and credited to a group of benefactory individuals with visions for public advancement in regards to the medical field. Several of these individuals include Miss Julia Scudder, Dr. Lowrie, Dr. John Hall, and Dr. W. W. L. Phillips. They raised funds through various connections to open the hospital in 1895, after almost ten years of planning. It was named in honor of General Mercer, an accomplished physician and soldier.

A group of women in Trenton, comprised of several wives of board members as well as other Trenton women, grew active in the establishment and creation of the hospital. Their contributions were so fundamental that a Women's Auxiliary was formed in the hospital with its own board of directors. This was the beginning of the hospital's expansion.

In September 1895, the hospital began a two-year course for student nurses, which was the basis for the Mercer Hospital School of Nursing. Over the course of the hospital's development, more and more departments were added to the hospital, including the Departments of Pathology, Gynecology, Ophthalmology, Electrotherapy, Physical-therapy, and Obstetrics, to name a few.

Throughout its history, the hospital has relied on the support (both financial and voluntary) of various organizations within the Trenton community. Various volunteer groups were

instrumental in the hospital's growth through their charity work. The Women's Aid was responsible for much of the funding that brought medical advancements into the hospital. The American Red Cross provided a great deal of training and courses for nurses. The USAAC Emergency Corps provided volunteer ambulance drivers, most of who are trained in first aid.

Soon after, Mercer Hospital became Mercer Medical Center, and shortly thereafter was renamed Capital Health at Mercer. At present, it is known as the Capital Health Satellite Emergency Center.

Scope and Content Notes

This collection consists of reports, papers, and records relevant to the history of the Mercer Hospital, and its subsequent renaming to the Mercer Medical Center. This collection is contained in nine folders in one manuscript box, and is divided into two series: I. Mercer Hospital; and II. Mercer Medical Center.

Series Description

Series I. Mercer Hospital

The first series is comprised of a collection of annual reports spanning many of the hospital's working years, commemorations of its years of service at various anniversaries of the hospital, health and infancy records of patients, and a manual for the USAAC Emergency Corps, a national organization whose local chapters work with various hospitals across the country. Included in its duties are ambulance driving, night shifts of hospital duty, first aid training, and meeting war-time needs, if necessary. If looking for a general overview of the hospital's history, see the commemorations, as they describe the progression of the hospital from its establishment to the anniversary it commemorates.

Of note is Vol. 1, No. 1 of "Mercer's Fair," a newsletter created to be a souvenir for a fundraising event spanning four days in May 1903 and held at the Samuel K. Wilson Homestead. It includes descriptions of how each room was decorated, as well as advertisements from many of the prominent businesses of the day.

There is a journal that includes written descriptions of daily tasks performed by its unidentified owner. Its only obvious connection to the Mercer Hospital is its branding on the front cover. It

could be the journal of someone affiliated with the hospital, or simply a journal someone bought at a fundraising event for the Mercer Hospital School of Nursing, which is inscribed on the inside of the front cover.

Also of note is the 1968 yearbook for the School of Nursing, which belonged to Anita Black Clayton and contains a short biography of her nursing career on the inside front cover.

Series II. Mercer Medical Center

The second series is comprised of a collection of annual reports. These reports span the duration of time in which the hospital was renamed as the Mercer Medical Center. Included in these reports are lists of the executives and board members that governed the hospital during that year, as well as extensive updates from each department of the hospital. They also include statistics and finances for each year.

Container List

Box / Folder / Folder Title

Series I. Mercer Hospital

- 1 / 1 / Annual Reports (1921-1926)
- 1 / 2 / Annual Reports (1927-1970)
- 1 / 3 / "Mercer's Fair" (1903)
- 1 / 4 / Commemorations of Years of Service (1945, 1970)
- 1 / 5 / USAAC Emergency Corps (1944)
- 1 / 6 / Health and Infancy Records
- 1 / 7 / School of Nursing (1954)
- 1 / 7a / School of Nursing yearbook (1968)

Series II. Mercer Medical Center

- 1 / 8 / Annual Reports (1975-1979)
- 1 / 9 / Annual Reports (1980-1986)

Bibliography

Mercer Hospital, *Fifty Years of Service 1895-1945*, Trenton, New Jersey; 1945.

Mercer Hospital, *75 Years of Service: A Community Commitment 1895-1970*, Trenton New Jersey; 1970