

# *A Vision Born*

A HISTORY OF  
VASSAR BROTHERS MEDICAL CENTER



1887 - 2021







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Vassar Brothers  
Medical Center*



# Table of Contents

Vassar Family History	6
A Visions Born	6
A Vision Realized	7
Opening of the Hospital	10
Early Physicians at Vassar Brothers Hospital	14
Establishment of Nursing at Vassar Brothers Hospital	15
VBH School of Nursing	16
20th Century Expansion and Growth	17
From Endowment to Fundraising	23
Nurses' Residences	26
Hospital Auxiliary and Volunteers	27
Decades of the 1930s-1950s	28
Decade of the 1960s	38
Decade of the 1970s	43
Decades of the 1980s-1990s	45
21st Century Expansion and Growth	50
A New Name	52
New Technologies	53
New Buildings	54
Postscript	61
Appendix 1: Superintendents and Presidents	64
Appendix 2: Presidents of the Medical Staff	65
Appendix 3a: Head Nurses and Nursing Directors	67
Appendix 3b: School of Nursing Education Directors	68
Appendix 4: VBH World War II Honor Roll	68
Appendix 5: Timeline	70





Ambulance outside Vassar Brothers  
Hospital entrance, 1961

## *❧ Vassar Family History ❧*

In 1796, James and Ann Vassar emigrated from England where the Vassars had earned their livelihood in farming, brewing ale, and brickmaking. They came with their two sons, John Guy and Matthew, and settled on a small farm in Dutchess County along Wappinger Creek. James's brother Thomas grew the first acre of barley from which they began to make ale. James sold the farm in 1801, moved with his family to Poughkeepsie, and began to brew ale as a business. Vassar Ale was a thriving endeavor until the brewery caught fire in 1811. Tragically, John Guy died by suffocation from fumes inhaled when he tried to salvage hops out of one of the beer vats. James did not return to the ale-making business after his son's death.

A year later, Matthew started brewing again, and in 1814 he opened M. Vassar and Co. Brewery in a relocated and refurbished building on the riverfront near the Main Street dock. He brought his two nephews, Matthew and John Guy, into the ale business, and together they formed a partnership in 1832. Although Matthew did not officially adopt his nephews, he became known as Matthew Sr. and his nephew as Matthew Jr. By 1836, the brewery had a capacity of over sixty thousand barrels per year, made with malt and hops grown in the area. The company owned a fleet of sloops to transport Vassar Ale to various markets along the Hudson River.

## *❧ A Vision is Born ❧*

In the 1840s and 1850s, Matthew Sr. expanded into railroad stock as railroads transformed transportation along the Hudson River corridor. He also invested in other ventures in and around Poughkeepsie, including purchasing an almost-bankrupt brickyard run by his brother Charles and turning it around. He joined the board of the Poughkeepsie Savings Bank and was active in other civic affairs in the city.

Matthew Sr. and his wife Catherine embarked on a tour of Europe and England to visit family. While in London, he visited Guy's Hospital, founded by his distant relative Sir Thomas Guy. At the time, Guy's Hospital was known for its philanthropic approach to patient care. Impressed by the charity that funded the hospital, Matthew Sr. aspired to leave a similar legacy that would benefit the community in which he had amassed his wealth. However, instead of a hospital, presumably at the insistence of his niece Miss Lydia Booth, he chose to establish Vassar College, which opened in 1861. Both of his nephews, Matthew Jr. and John Guy, served as founding trustees, with Matthew serving as treasurer of the board. In 1868, while giving his farewell speech to the board of trustees, Matthew Sr. slumped over and died, leaving his nephews to take over his estate.

Vassar Female College. Situated near Poughkeepsie, Dutchess County, State of New York.

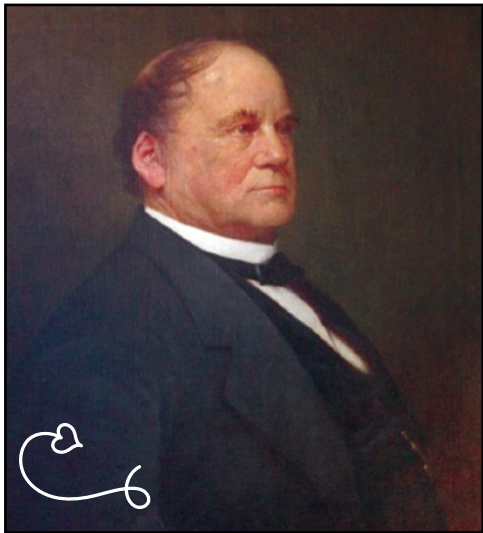


Matthew Vassar  
Copyright by Vassar College

## *A Vision Realized*

Matthew Jr. was actively involved in the day-to-day running of the family businesses. Like his uncle, Matthew Jr. also successfully invested in railroad stock and became a well-known philanthropist dedicated to the city of Poughkeepsie. In addition to serving as a trustee and treasurer of Vassar College, he supported the Vassar Institute and, along with his brother, the Vassar Home for Aged Men. John Guy traveled around the world seeking a warmer climate because of his poor health. He left the management of the brick and ale businesses to his brother, but he sent letters home with detailed investment instructions and ended up the wealthier of the two.

Remembering his uncle's vision of leaving a legacy, Matthew Jr. decided that after he died a portion of his fortune would go to the establishment of a hospital. In his handwritten will, Matthew Jr. instructed his executors, "... As soon as practicable after my decease, cause a hospital to be incorporated, to be called Vassar Hospital and to be located in the City of Poughkeepsie and to be used as a hospital for the sick, maimed and injured persons." (Source: will of Matthew Vassar, Jr.) He willed \$275,000 to establish the hospital. He added a clause that if his younger brother wanted to join in the project, the institution's name should be changed to Vassar Brothers Hospital.



Matthew Vassar, Jr.



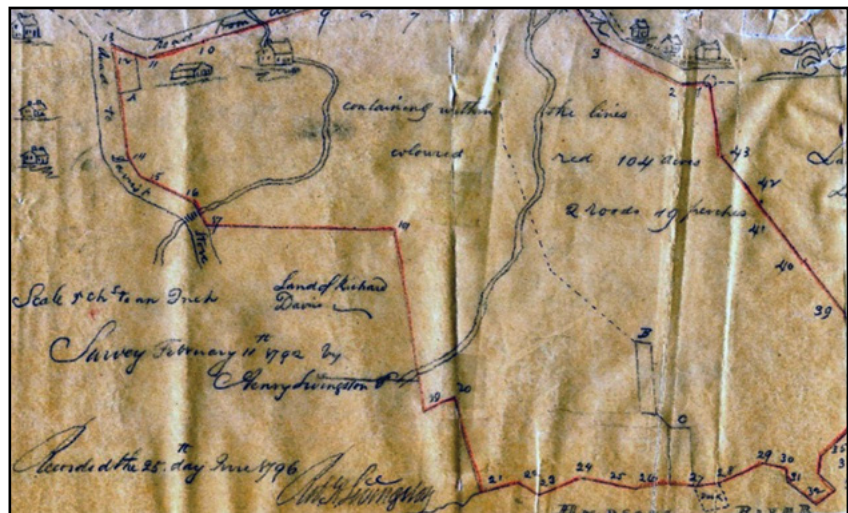
John Guy

Upon his elder brother's death in 1881, John Guy gave \$800,000, a significant amount of money at the time (\$2.4 million in today's currency) to the hospital's endowment. In accordance with Matthew Jr.'s will, the institution's name was incorporated as Vassar Brothers Hospital on June 6, 1882, upon receiving its charter by an Act of the New York State Legislature. In an article published in the New York Times on May 27, 1884, the writer praised John Guy's commitment to the hospital after his brother's death, saying, "Since that time Mr. John Guy Vassar has not only fulfilled the condition named, but has taken an active interest in the matter and it is mainly through his exertions that the enterprise has been brought so near to a realization."

Matthew Jr.'s widow, Irene Beech Vassar, searched for the perfect location for the hospital. She, along with John Guy, Oliver H. Booth, and James H. Weeks, chose a seventeen-acre property in the second ward section of the city of Poughkeepsie, formerly the Henry Livingston Farm, with Livingston Street passing through and a commanding view of the Hudson River. Irene served on the incorporated board of trustees from 1884 to 1901.



Irene Beech Vassar



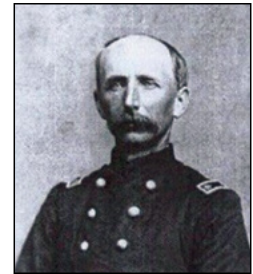
Henry Livingston farmland, 1792, hand-drawn map



At the opening meeting of the board of trustees, appointments were approved as follows: Joseph M. Cleveland, MD, president; James H. Weeks, assistant treasurer; Benjamin M. Fowler, secretary; John Guy Vassar, treasurer; and trustees Irene B. Vassar, Oliver H. Booth, Edward Van Kleeck, and William S. Johnston. Van Kleeck replaced Weeks as assistant treasurer when he died unexpectedly.

The Board of Lady Visitors was formed by four women: Mrs. Booth, Mrs. Van Kleeck, Mrs. Edward Bolton, and Mrs. Charles Wheaton. Headed by Edward H. Parker, MD, the medical board consisted of ten physicians and four surgeons. Also appointed was Dr. Elizabeth Gerow, the first female physician on staff, and Dr. Guy Carlton Bayley, the first superintendent of the hospital. (Source: First Annual Report of the Vassar Brothers Hospital in the City of Poughkeepsie 1887–1888.)

Dr. Cornelius N. Campbell was present at the first board meeting in 1886 and served as a visiting surgeon at the hospital until his death in December 1888. He had served as a surgeon in the Civil War with the 150th Regiment of Dutchess County.



Dr. Cornelius N. Campbell  
Source: <http://www.angelfire.com/ny4/djw/150th.gallery.html>

Trustees approved a total construction cost of just over \$50,000. New York City architect Frederick Clarke Withers designed the hospital building in a gothic pavilion style. He planned innovative interior features such as cross-ventilation and skylights to let in bright light and fresh air. Details of the original plans for Vassar Brothers Hospital appeared in the New York Times on May 27, 1884:



Frederick Clarke Withers

During the last season the Trustees purchased the entire block in the south-west portion of the city bounded by Lincoln-avenue, Prospect-street, Livingston-street, and Read-place. The grounds comprise several acres, slightly rolling, but with a general slope toward the river, ending in a high bluff which overlooks the railroad and the water, and furnishes a commanding and beautiful site for a building...The building is to be of brick, trimmed with terra cotta and molded brick, with stone water-table, sills, and lintels. It consists of three principal parts—an administrative building in the centre and two pavilions on either side. These are each two stories in height, with high slate roofs, and are joined by a one-story corridor, with a spacious veranda in front....

The hospital cornerstone was laid on September 4, 1884 and described as follows:





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*"The building stands near the crest of a bluff, facing the west. Its extreme length is 180 feet, extreme depth of 120 feet. Built of brick, trimmed with terra cotta and molded brick, it consists of an administrative building in the center and a pavilion on each side*

*two stories high, with slate roofs and are joined in the center part by one story corridors each 28 feet long, having verandas ten feet wide running the full length in front. The center part is 46 x 64 feet. The main entrance in the center leads through a vestibule to a short hall that runs back to the main corridor, which communicates with the pavilions. At the right of the main entrance are the rooms of the resident physician, and on the left are the Board rooms and the dispensary. Across the corridor, occupying a high one story wing is the operating room, a large semi-circular apartment, well lighted on all sides and by a sky-light. The second story is made into bedrooms. The pavilions are alike in all respects, and each is composed of two parts. In front are the dining rooms, sitting rooms and nurse rooms; this part is 38 x 24 feet. In the rear are the wards, 28 x 20. The second stories of the pavilion are similar to the first. The kitchen and the laundry are in the basement, the stone water table being seven feet above the surface. The interior woodwork is of white pine, finished in shellac, the floors of yellow pine, the walls plastered with a sand finish on the sides and hard finish overhead. Across the front of the center building is a panel bearing the words in old-style capital letters "Vassar Brothers Hospital Erected A.D. MDCCCLXXXIV! " (Source: "Vassar Brothers Hospital Seventy-Five Years" by Baltus B. Van Kleeck)*

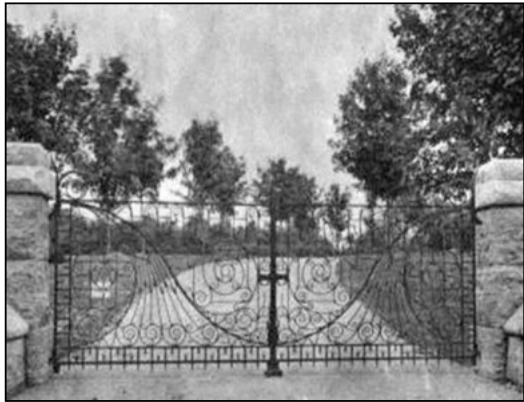
## *Opening of the Hospital*

On April 11, 1887, Vassar Brothers Hospital opened its doors with a capacity of forty beds. The first patient, Minna A. Maxiner, was admitted on April 27 after the hospital passed public inspection. Soon added to the hospital property was a barn with a carriage house, a harness room, and four stalls to house the doctors' horses. Installed at the peak was a tall weathervane made locally of iron and bronze that had been presented to the hospital as a gift on opening day.



The first major construction undertaken was the installation of a stone wall bordering the hospital's seventeen acre property. The wall was made of granite, with each stone numbered to go into its exact place upon arrival from a quarry in Vermont. It took nearly two years (1889–1891) to lay and complete the wall with a hand derrick and muscle power.

*Editorial Note: Part of the wall is still standing as of 2021, but sections have been removed over time.*



Wrought iron gates were hand-fabricated and installed to mark the main entrance to the hospital from Reade Place. In the center of the gates were circles with the initials of the founding brothers—MVJr and JGV.

*Editorial Note: October–December 1994, local resident Paul Wielunski volunteered his time and labor to restore the iron gates and clean the brass initials. The gates now stand behind the main hospital sign and remain in good condition.*

Vassar Brothers Hospital was not the first hospital in Poughkeepsie, but it was the first in the region to accommodate medical and surgical patients on a larger scale. St. Barnabas Hospital, founded by three local Episcopal churches, had opened eight years prior. St. Barnabas was located in a small building and only able to house fourteen patients at a time. When Vassar Brothers Hospital opened, St. Barnabas Hospital closed its doors. Dr. Edward H. Parker, who had established and run St. Barnabas Hospital from 1870–1887, became the president of the Vassar Brothers Hospital Medical Board.

The construction of the original hospital was supervised by P.H.J. Krudler. The cornerstone came from Gatelow Bridge, Scotland and contained a copy of Matthew Vassar Jr.'s will, the names of the executors, photographs of the two Vassar brothers, the act of legislature incorporating the hospital, the names of the trustees, and a complete list of all the men working on the project and their trades.

Also included in the cornerstone was a piece of paper with the following:



*Mason and bricklayers are here for ten hours, \$3.00; Rockman and Laborers, \$2.00; Carpenters, \$2.25 to \$2.50; Bricks delivered on the ground per thousand, \$7.00. Signed P.H.J. Krulder, Supr.*

The hospital was built with four wards of ten beds each, three private rooms in the southwest corner with views of the Hudson River, a labor and delivery ward, a nursery, a children's



room, and two isolation rooms for the care of patients with contagious diseases. It also had a dispensary to care for patients who did not need hospitalization.

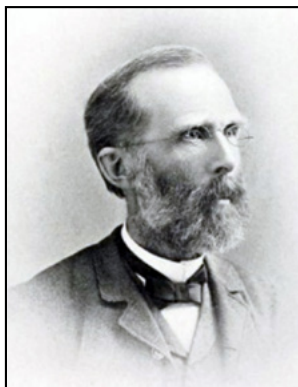
The first ambulance was purchased in 1887 for \$580 and was pulled by a team of two horses housed at the local livery. It had a lantern for nighttime trips and special rollers built into the floor of the wagon to make it easier to push in or pull out a cot. Use of the ambulance

required the permission of the hospital superintendent. The horses were brought from the livery to the stable to be harnessed to the carriage, and a driver would be sent out to pick up the patient at home and bring them to the hospital. Patients were allowed to be transported in it, but the trustees determined that it would not be used for the transportation of patients with infections nor for the removal of dead bodies. *Editorial Note: Today the original ambulance is on display in the Transportation*



In its first year of operation, the hospital admitted a total of eighty patients. Patients were admitted from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. daily, with the exception of emergency cases being admitted at any hour. Visitors were allowed only on Sunday afternoons. According to the 1887–1888 annual report, only one surgical patient died, and that was due to a cancerous tumor. Several of the floors inside the hospital remained unfinished.

At the April 15, 1887 meeting of the board, Dr. Edward Parker was elected president of the medical staff, Dr. Alfred Hasbrouck as vice-president, and Dr. Guy C. Bayley as secretary. The list of members of the medical board included the following: John C. Payne, Alfred Hasbrouck, W. G. Stevenson, Guy C. Bayley, Elizabeth H. Gerow, Edward H. Parker, Robert K. Tuthill, and John Kinkead. Together they compiled rules, set a rotating schedule for patient care and surgery, and signed a statement of agreement. In 1892, their annual salary for their service to the hospital was set at \$300, with surgeons paid \$350.



Dr. Edward Parker



Dr. John Kinkead



Dr. W. G. Stevenson



Dr. Guy Carleton Bayley  
1888 VBH Superintendent,  
April 1888–July 1906

John Guy Vassar served as superintendent of the hospital for the first year. After his passing in 1888, the board of trustees appointed Dr. Guy Carleton Bayley, a surgeon and friend of the Vassar family, to serve as both resident physician and hospital superintendent. A house was erected for his use with an unobstructed view of the Hudson River. Dr. Bayley oversaw a staff of fourteen physicians, and an entry in the hospital's accounting ledger noted his salary at \$2,000 annually. Dr. Bayley also served as president of the Dutchess County Medical Society from 1888 to 1892.

*Editorial Note: Dr. Bayley's grandfather was a physician (they shared the same name), and his great-grandfather, Dr. Richard Bayley, was a surgeon during the Revolutionary War and the first appointed health officer for New York City in 1796.*

*For a complete list of superintendents and presidents/chief executive officers, see Appendix 1.*



The million-dollar endowment left by the Vassar Brothers provided free hospitalization to patients in the early years of operation. The exceptions were those who wanted a private room, which cost three dollars per day. According to an article published in the Poughkeepsie Daily Eagle News in 1889, Vassar Brothers Hospital Board of Visiting Physicians reported that in the previous ten months “there have been ninety-nine patients in the hospital.” Out of that number, ninety had been treated “entirely free.” Patients were treated exclusively by hospital physicians and operated on by hospital surgeons who were paid a salary. The hospital was not open for direct admissions by community physicians.

The 1889 account ledger has the following entries for monthly salaries and expenses:

Dr. Bayley, Superintendent	\$166.00
Sarah Deyo, Head Nurse	\$55.00

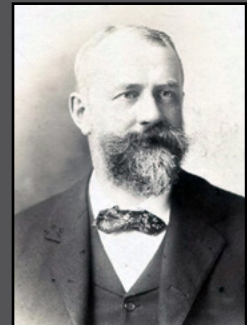
Ann Moore & Ann McCreary, Nurses	\$12.00
George Campbell, Maintenance	\$35.00
Bookkeeper	\$25.00
Secretary	\$10.00
Laundry worker	\$14.00
Cook	\$25.00
Waitress	\$13.00
Maid	\$10.00
,Helper	\$8.00
Hudson River Telephone Company	\$12.00
VBH corporate seal	\$5.00

## *Early Physicians at Vassar Brothers Hospital*

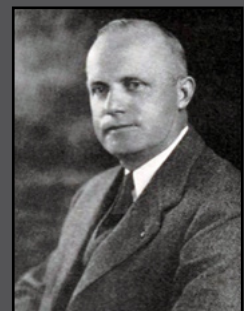
Dr. J. Wilson Poucher began his surgical career at the hospital and distinguished himself as both an abdominal surgeon and a community physician. He performed the first appendectomy surgeries and perfected a new technique for incision and closure of cesarean sections. He retired in the mid-1930s to pursue his love of history, helping to establish the Dutchess County Historical Society, where he served as secretary, and was eventually appointed City Historian.



Dr. David B. Ward was employed as the first physician-in-residence in 1899 with a salary of \$1,200 per year. Dr. Gribbon was appointed assistant to Dr. Bayley but resigned in 1902. The board then hired Dr. Henry G. Bugbee, a urology surgeon from St. Luke's Hospital in New York City, to act as assistant superintendent and to assist with surgeries.



Dr. Bayley resigned in 1906 and Dr. Henry G. Bugbee was appointed superintendent. His efforts resulted in opening the hospital to more physicians, reorganizing services, and modernizing procedures. Dr. James T. Harrington and Dr. Albert R. Moffit, both prominent young surgeons, joined the medical staff. Dr. William G. Dobson was hired and took charge of the ear, nose, and throat clinic. Dr. William A. Krieger was appointed to the position of pathologist in 1908 at \$50 per month; he served in that capacity until his death in 1944.



Dr. Harrington committed thirty years of service to Vassar Brothers Hospital, serving as superintendent for a year when Dr. Bugbee resigned in 1910 to return to his surgical practice in New York City. Dr. Harrington

joined the army as a surgeon and was a medical supervisor for evacuation hospitals during World War I, receiving an honorable discharge as a major in 1919. He returned to Vassar Hospital and remained on the surgical staff until he retired in 1940.

*Editorial Note: Harrington Park was named in his memory – see pg.40*



**Dr. Scott Lord Smith** joined the medical staff as a generalist in 1909 and continued his private practice at his office and home at 113 Academy Street. During his tenure at the hospital, he took a special interest in education of nursing and volunteers, often giving lectures on proper patient care. For over eighteen years he personally cared for a patient with poliomyelitis who was totally dependent on a respirator machine at the hospital. He not only oversaw the patient's physical needs but also his educational and emotional support. Dr. Smith served as president of the medical staff in 1946, and he served on the board of trustees from 1946 until his death in 1957.



Dr. Scott Lord Smith



## *Establishment of Nursing at Vassar Brothers Hospital*

Gertrude Deyo was employed by the Vassar Board of Trustees at \$50 per month to be the head nurse when the hospital first opened. She was a graduate of Orange Memorial Hospital School of Nursing (New Jersey) where she had served as head nurse. Three years after she started her job at the hospital, the trustees granted her a three-month leave "for rest and relaxation." They thanked her for her continuous, dedicated service to patients and for her establishment of a training program for nurses. She continued as head nurse until 1898 when she resigned to be married.





Nurses in Parlor, 1893  
 Gertrude—far left Sarah—second from left

*Editorial Note: Nurses were not allowed to be married, a practice that didn't change until the mid-1960s. For a complete list of head nurses and nursing directors, see Appendix 3a.*

Gertrude's sister, Sarah Deyo, served as head nurse from 1898–1906. They were soon followed by Claribel Wheeler, who was hired in 1908 as Superintendent of Nurses at a salary of \$1,200 per year.

## *Vassar Brothers Hospital School of Nursing*

A year after the hospital opened, Gertrude Deyo started a training school for nurses. In October 1890, hospital medical staff issued nursing certificates to two nurses, Amy McCreary and Anna Moore. This marked the beginning of a long tradition of nurse training that became known as the VBH School of Nursing. Nurses prepared and served all the meals, cut fresh flowers for patients, washed the windows, tended the coal



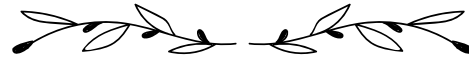
stoves, scrubbed the walls, and gave round-the-clock care in twelve-hour shifts. While on duty, nurses were required to wear a uniform that included starched cuffs and collar and an apron. They received a stipend of \$10 per month in their first year, \$12 per month in their second year, and \$15 per month in their third year. Time off included two weeks of vacation in the summer and Sunday afternoons. Apart from caring for patients, nurses were given time to relax in the parlor, play croquet on the lawn, or play tennis on an open court built on the grounds of the hospital.

Room and board were provided, and the three-year course included classroom instruction and bedside training. Upon completion of the program, they could choose to stay at Vassar

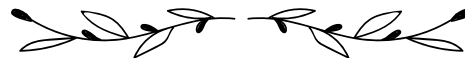


as ward nurses. Most of the graduates chose to fill nursing positions at the hospital or became private-duty nurses in the community.

The VBH School of Nursing received New York State accreditation in 1905 and began issuing official nursing diplomas directly from the School.



Club Parlor was started in 1908 by a group of graduate nurses who met weekly in a furnished room at the YWCA. It was this group that became the VBH School of Nursing Alumni Association, which continues to be active today. Graduates keep in touch via correspondence, publish a yearly newsletter, and join together for an annual luncheon.

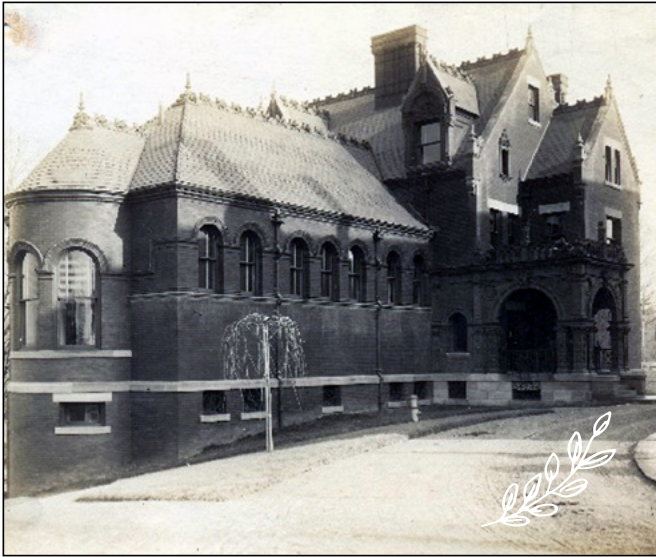


In 1909, an obstetrical affiliation was formed with Manhattan Maternity Hospital in New York City. From 1929 to 1962, nursing students spent three months at Presbyterian Babies Hospital for their pediatric experience. In the 1960s students attended classes at Dutchess Community College, combined with VBH School-based classroom lectures and bedside training. By the time the school closed in 1972, over 1,400 students had graduated.



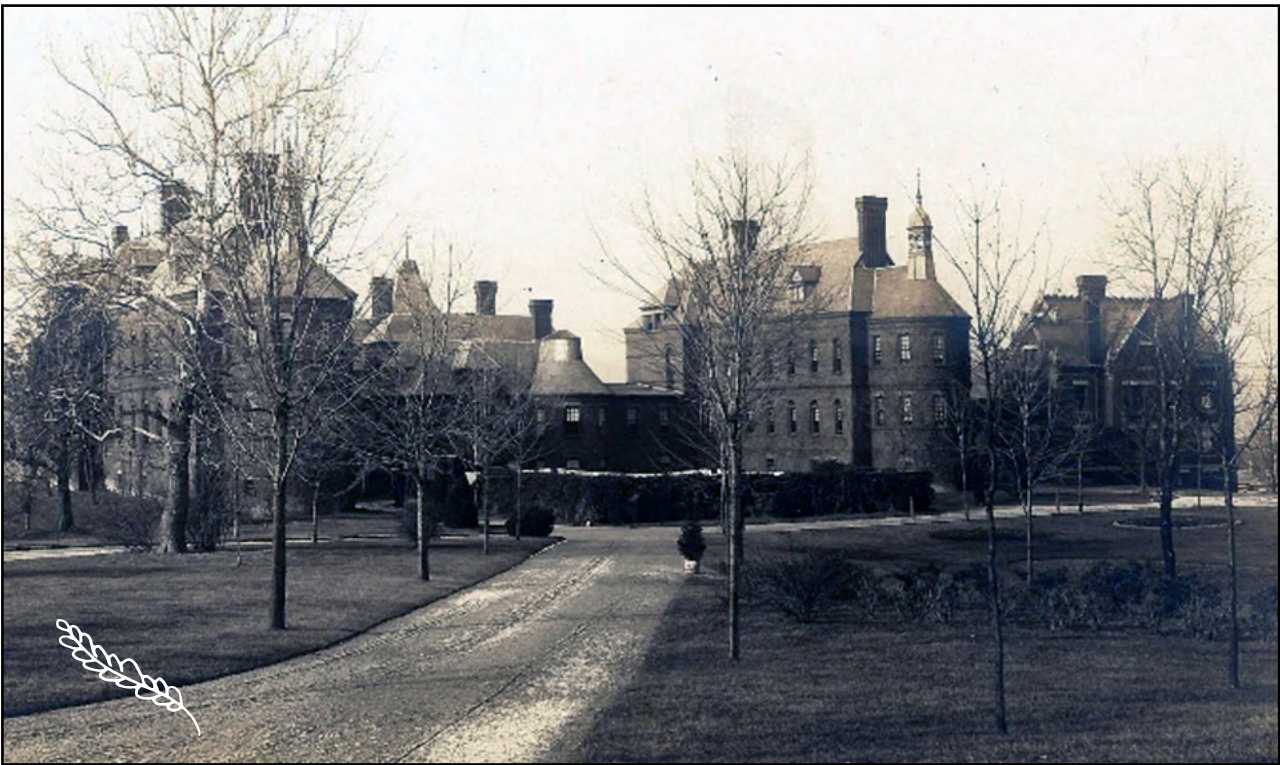
## *20th Century of Expansion and Growth*

In 1889, an architect was hired for \$75 to create a plan for the unfinished space inside the hospital. The interior was completed at a cost of \$1,505 for carpentry, painting and staining, and furnishings. Lighting via acetylene gas was installed initially, followed by electric lighting in the laboratory, library, and hospital operating rooms in April 1900.

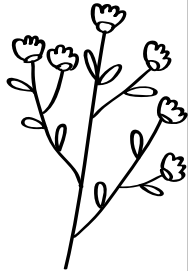


Built in 1897–1898 at a cost of \$20,000, the gothic-style building across Reade Place from the main hospital housed a 4,000-volume book collection in the library/meeting room and space for a laboratory. The laboratory was converted into a living space for \$550. Referred to as Home I, nurses took up residence there in September 1909; prior to that time, nurses had lived in unused rooms in the hospital. Three hospital physicians who had been living in the building moved into their own homes and set up offices in the city.

In the early years of the hospital, other additions included a basement laundry, coal-heated boiler, smokestack, and a grounds-keeping building.



During his travels, John Guy purchased a 131-pound Spanish bell, dated 1760, for thirty-one cents per pound. He had it shipped to Poughkeepsie to be hung in the Vassar Brewery as a fire bell. In 1905, it was moved from the brewery to the hospital, and it hung in an exterior archway until 1952 when it was removed and put on display in the lobby of the Joseph Tower Building.



Just after 1900, a second story was added to the front section of the hospital. Both wings were slightly extended to create more interior space, and vines were removed and landscaping cleared.



1900 Before the renovation



1902 After the renovation



Mr. Benjamin M. Fowler, trustee board secretary since 1887, was appointed superintendent in 1911 and served in that capacity until 1922. Early twentieth century trustees included Charles F. Cossum, Arthur G. Smith, Stephen G. Gurnsey, Frank Van Kleeck, Guilford Dudley, Floyd M. Johnson, Henry Booth, William F. Booth, William T. Reynolds, Morton Atwater, I. Reynolds Adriance, Johnston L. Redmond, and James H. Young.



Mr. Benjamin M. Fowler

By 1912, the annual number of admitted patients rose above 1,200. The State of New York issued a license to the hospital dated April 10, 1912 and signed by the president of the State Board of Charities, William R. Stewart, to open a dispensary to treat patients needing care but not needing to be admitted. The number of dispensary treatments exceeded 5,000 that year.

An interesting story is told that in 1912 a doctor gave the hospital money he had collected from people in the village of Wappingers Falls. The amount of \$64 was acknowledged by the board as the first gift to the hospital outside of the Vassar endowment.



Miss Rachel McCrimmon

Miss Rachel McCrimmon was hired as assistant superintendent of nurses and then promoted to director, a position she held from 1912 until her retirement in 1944. She established many of the protocols for the School of Nursing that were followed by instructors and students alike for many years.

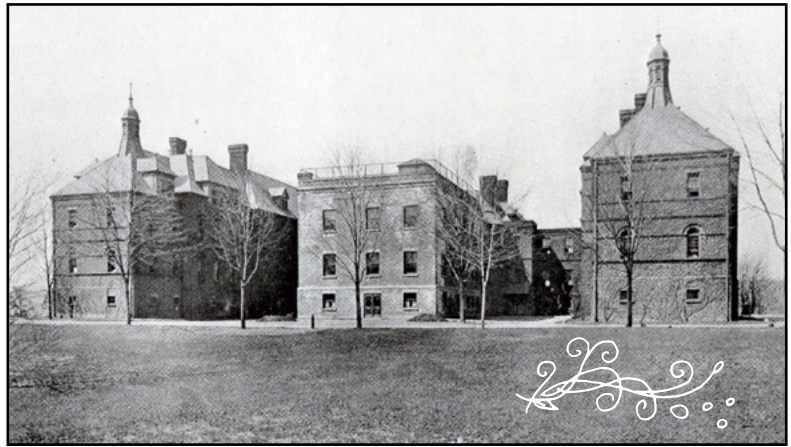
After her retirement she served as hospital hostess until her passing in 1969. Except for two short vacations to visit family in Canada, she gave her entire adult life to the hospital.

It was during her tenure that the 1918 influenza epidemic hit. 182 cases were brought to the hospital and 70 patients died. With only eighty hospital beds available, the City of Poughkeepsie quickly set up places to care for influenza patients so that the hospital would not be overwhelmed. According to the 1919 Annual Report, "many of the influenza patients were not brought to the hospital until their condition was practically hopeless". It was a time of "severe strain on the nurses" when many of them ended up ill as well, requiring the hospital to hire special nurses to take their place.



Surgery 1913

A three-story middle section was built in 1914–1915 between the two wings of the hospital at a cost of just over \$35,000. The new addition provided space for a pathology department, X-ray department, larger kitchen, dining rooms, record storage room, and surgery washrooms. It also included an electric elevator and a solarium on the roof for patients to enjoy fresh air. Other



improvements included expanding the children’s ward from eight to fourteen beds, the installation of water coolers and electric call bells, ventilation, painting, chimney repair, and fire escapes installed on the exterior of the nurses’ home (Home I).

In the spring of 1914, a radiology department opened under the direction of Dr. Eben C. Hill. A prominent story about the installation of new X-ray technology appeared in the pages of the *Poughkeepsie Eagle News*. The hospital’s pharmacy was registered by the New York State Board of Pharmacy in 1915, and a licensed pharmacist was put in charge. The Children’s Ward received new metal-framed beds and mattresses.



## From Endowment to Fundraising

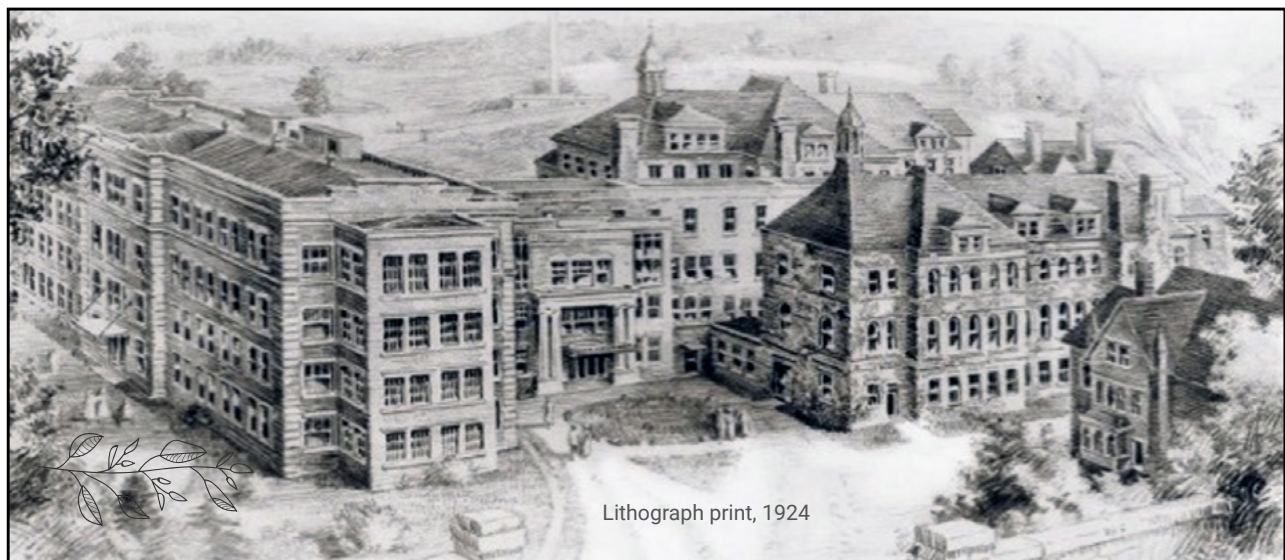
After World War I ended in November 1918, Vassar Brothers Hospital Board of Trustees faced a financial dilemma. According to the 1987 *Life Times* history of Vassar Brothers Hospital, “For the first 33 years of its existence, the Hospital devoted 80% of its service to those who paid only part of the cost of their care or who were treated free.” The original endowment left by Matthew and John Guy was almost depleted. It was during this time the hospital saw the greatest number of patients ever admitted up to that date, a total of 1,949 for 1919.

In March 1920, Dr. Chester O. Davison, coming all the way from Kansas, was hired as the incoming director of radiology, and he significantly advanced the use of X-ray technology for the hospital. He was also instrumental in establishing a tumor clinic, one of the earliest in the country, and one that would receive national recognition that led to an affiliation with Memorial Sloan-Kettering Cancer Center.



Trustees liquidated the last of the Vassar endowment and the board decided to ask the public for contributions for the expansion of the original building. They launched a public education campaign in 1922 that included about 10,000 ballots sent to the public, civic group meetings, special events, silent film clips in movie theaters, and articles in the newspapers. *Newspaper insert left.*

The result was an outpouring of community support, with 95% of the returning ballots in favor of enlargement. A total of \$664,000 was raised to pay for a new pavilion.



A local architect, Mr. William J. Beardsley, was hired to draw up plans for the pavilion. The four-story brick structure was completed in 1924 and connected to the original hospital to form a "T" known as the Corridor Wing. This expansion provided forty-seven additional beds, operating rooms, X-ray department, doctor's conference room, office space, medical records room, maternity ward, and children's ward. Ancillary facilities included office space, modern elevators, a medical records room, and a doctor's conference room. A gated, circular drive led to a new main entrance. Continued fundraising efforts over the next several years brought almost \$1 million back into the endowment fund.



Winter, 1925



First Motorized Ambulance

At the same time, the trustees made a major policy change for the hospital. Community physicians would be allowed to directly admit their own patients for care in the old section of the hospital and would be considered “courtesy staff.” Salaries paid to on-staff physicians were discontinued so they could practice outside of the hospital to earn a living. Patients in the new section would continue to be cared for by physicians and surgeons on staff, as had been the practice since the opening of the hospital.

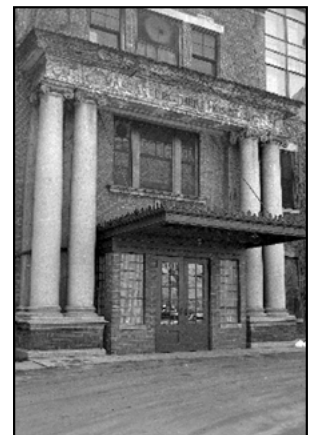
*Editorial Note: Since its inception, the hospital was closed to community physicians. Only physicians and surgeons on staff at the hospital could admit patients. This “closed staff” policy caused a great deal of ill will with community physicians, so much so that in 1914 Dr. Sadlier joined with the Sisters of St. Francis to establish St. Francis Hospital.*

*See Appendix 2 for a list of presidents of the medical staff.*

Following a successful fundraising campaign and expansion, Vassar adopted the hospital standardization procedures set by the new American Hospital Association and the American College of Surgeons to ensure the best care to both paying and non-paying patients. The first prenatal clinic in the Hudson Valley opened in 1927, and in 1931 a social service department began with a social worker hired to assist patients and families. An “Urgent Needs of Vassar Brothers Hospital” campaign was launched in 1937 to solicit help from the community for much-needed supplies. All of this happened under the administration and management direction of Joseph J. Weber, who would serve in that role for sixteen years (1929–1945).



Joseph J. Weber



## *Nurses' Residences*



In the mid-to-late 1920s, the first two floors of the patient pavilion addition were used to house nursing students. With a donation of \$80,000 from Joseph T. Tower, Jr. in memory of his sister, the Mary Tower Memorial Home was built in 1934 as a residence for nursing school instructors, the director of nursing, and senior nursing students. The original ground-level entrance was wood-paneled and housed a grand piano. Many of the interior furnishings were purchased and donated by Joseph Tower's mother, Marie Tower.

There was a grand central staircase, a shared kitchen, a library with richly paneled mahogany walls, a fireplace, bookcases filled with books, completely furnished bedrooms, and a commanding view of the Hudson River. Undergraduate nurses moved out of the hospital and into Home I and Home II, a move which opened rooms in the pavilion for forty-two patient beds.



Home I



Home II

**Home I** – Gothic-style 1898 original laboratory/library/meeting room and physician's quarters; converted to nursing housing in 1909.

**Home II** – 1890s original superintendent's home; converted to housing for nurses and nurse instructors.

*Editorial Note: When the School of Nursing moved into the Joseph Tower Building, both Homes were used as office space. They were heated with steam heat from the hospital's boiler, with heat piped through underground pipes. Both buildings were torn down in the early 1960s—neither Home could be upgraded to meet building fire codes, and the underground heat pipe system connected to the hospital was leaking hundreds of gallons per day.*



# Hospital Auxiliary and Volunteers

Twelve women, the wives of trustees and doctors, founded the Vassar Brothers Hospital Auxiliary in 1915. Their outreach and donation efforts brought much-needed care, gifts, and supplies into the hospital to comfort patients during their stay. Lavina Vail Harrington, wife of Dr. James T. Harrington (surgeon and superintendent) was one of the founders of The Cupboard and the Nearly New Shop. From the 1940s through the 1990s, The Cupboard, an ice cream and sandwich shop at the hospital, the Gift Shop at the hospital, and the Nearly New Shop located in the city of Poughkeepsie, initially on Montgomery Street and then on Raymond Avenue, were collectively managed by many dedicated Auxiliary members. All proceeds were donated to the hospital.



Cupboard, est. March 2, 1939



The Cupboard, 1960s

Over the years, the hospital Auxiliary raised thousands of dollars to support various needs of the hospital, with much of the money going to renovation projects and new equipment purchases. In celebration of the Nearly New Shop's 50th anniversary (1950-2000), the Auxiliary pledged a total of \$500,000 to the Campaign for Vassar Brothers Hospital. Other fundraising activities through the years included plant sales, sponsored community events, and auctions. Auxiliary members held their final meeting in January of 2020. Total giving by the Auxiliary to the hospital exceeded \$2 million.



The Gift Shop, 1950s



The Nearly New Shop on Raymond Ave.

*For further details, please refer to the "VBH Auxiliary History 1915-1995" housed in the VBMC Archives.*

In 1949, the cadre of hospital volunteers was organized into an official department under the direction of Mrs. Louise Clark. The VBH Hospital Volunteers were men and women

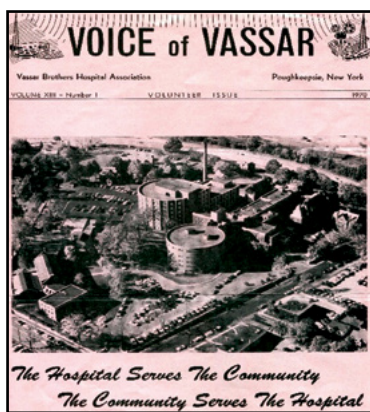
from the community who have, to this day, given innumerable hours to assist in the care of patients and help hospital departments with day-to-day activities. Training classes were held each year for both adult and junior volunteers. Their candy-striped smocks and salmon-colored dresses/jumpers were a welcome sight for patients and staff.

In the Volunteer Services Manual, former administrator Ellison H. Capers made these remarks:

*“We welcome you as an active member of our hospital family. The single purpose of those of us who work here full time or who serve as volunteers is to do our part, whatever it is, to make our patients’ stay as pleasant and beneficial as possible ...We are grateful to you for the time you are giving to our hospital and believe you will find it time well spent.”*



IBM employee volunteer team



1970 flyer

Every year an annual luncheon has been held to celebrate the volunteers. Their willingness to serve and make many contributions to support the hospital are to be commended. The longest-serving volunteer was Barbara Lang-Hutchison who volunteered for fifty-five years and was recognized at the 2014 luncheon for her longevity of service. The oldest volunteers were Fay Dill, who at age ninety-two provided comfort and updates to people waiting to hear about family members in surgery, and Ethie Mund, who at age ninety-five greeted Gift Shop visitors with a smile and friendly service.

*Editorial Note: Ethie Mund served on the board of trustees in the 1980s.*

## Decades of the 1930s - 1950s

The hospital celebrated its 50th anniversary in 1937 with eight hundred visitors attending the Open House. Special events included a healthy baby competition at the Well Baby Clinic, a community program at Poughkeepsie High School, a Hudson Valley doctors’ golf match, and a trustee-doctor dinner. Three booklets were published to commemorate the occasion: *The*



*First Fifty Years—An Historical Sketch*, written by a trustee; *Fifty Years of Progress*, which included photos of Matthew and John Guy, sketches of the hospital, a chart showing admissions over time, and a photo of a young child in recovery; and *Mr. Sloan Pays us a Visit*, a walking tour of the hospital.



**1937 Hospital Facts:**

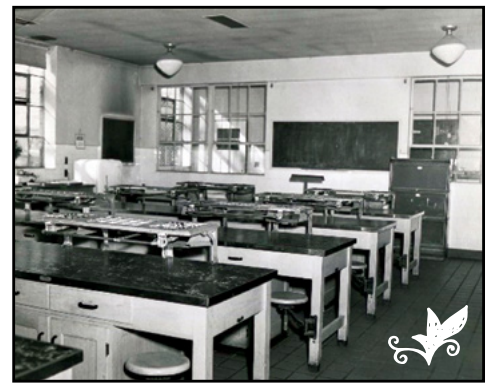
216 physicians, nurses and employees; 34 consulting and 106 courtesy physicians; Daily census of 103 to 141; 2 ambulances; 2,821 babies born; average length of stay about 11 days; hospital water consumption at 19,888,000 gallons of water; 45 train cars filled with coal to produce steam to operate the hospital for one year. Land and buildings valued at \$1.2 million.



Pharmacy

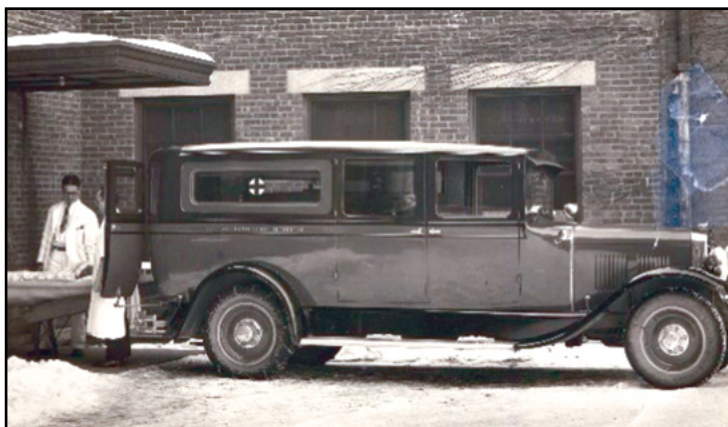


Chemistry Lab



Diet Lab

At the beginning of World War II, forty-two physicians and medical personnel left the hospital to serve in the military. By June of 1942, only a few physicians remained to serve in various specialty areas. Within a year, the hospital had lost all its physician interns to the war effort, prompting the medical staff leadership to create an “officer of the day” rotation. Doctors formed shifts to admit patients, care for needs, and perform the medical interns’ duties. See *Appendix 5 for a complete list of those who served in WWII.*



1938 Ford truck which was repurposed as an ambulance



Short of funds to purchase a new ambulance, the hospital gratefully accepted an anonymous donor’s gift of a 1938 Ford truck which was repurposed as an ambulance. It remained in service for 10 years.



Christmas Party for Children, 1938



Children's Ward, 1940

An interesting event is recorded—the Blackout of 1942—which plunged the hospital into the dark for several days. In an effort to keep up morale, the Women's Auxiliary consolidated their sugar ration coupons to make jelly to give to the patients.

**Daily Rates for 1942:**



\$4.50 to \$7.75 room charges for adults; \$3.00 for children's ward; \$15.00 - \$20.00 for operations; \$40.00 for maternity services; \$2.00 lab test fee; \$2.00 - \$5.00 plaster casts; \$5.00 ambulance fee.



Decorated Christmas trays greeted patients on December 25, 1943



Bulk storage



Coal furnace



Emergency Room



Medical Records Office



Women's Ward



Linen Storage



Men's Ward



Switchboard



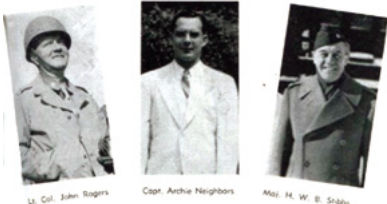
Maj. Linn Stoller      Capt. John Mead      Capt. Victor Bacile

When the new operating rooms opened in 1924, the surgery department was expanded to include Dr. Robert H. Breed and Dr. H.W.B. Stibbs, both of whom would serve in World War II as surgeons, along with Drs L. Stoller, J. Mead, V. Bacile, M. Goss, N. Stone, J. Rogers, and A. Neighbors.



Capt. Maxwell Goss      Maj. Neil Stone

Dr. Breed served on the hospital staff as an attending surgeon for twenty-one years and was “an inspiration to his assistants and instilled hope and confidence in the patients, whose best care was his chief interest.” Source: *1946 Annual Report*



Lt. Col. John Rogers      Capt. Arthur Neighbors      Maj. H. W. B. Stibbs

Dr. Stibbs served in the field hospital of the Third Army Division with General George S. Patton and was discharged as a lieutenant colonel. The School of Nursing Class of 1941 dedicated their yearbook in his honor and “in sincere admiration of his professional abilities”. Dr. Stibbs was on the surgery courtesy staff of the hospital until his retirement in 1953.



He was also remembered as the one who donated his wife’s baby grand piano to the School of Nursing. It was played for many years at events and graduations in the Joseph Tower Building Auditorium.



Postcard 1945



Blood Donation Room at Vassar Brothers Hospital circa 1950

A blood bank was opened on April 20, 1944 to support the blood supply needed for surgery cases and treatments requiring blood transfusions. Within a few years, the blood bank went from supplying blood for a small number of transfusions to supplying enough for three thousand annually. An onsite blood bank was maintained until the mid-1990s when the blood supply service was taken over by the American Red Cross.

Vassar Brothers Hospital was designated by the federal government as the regional depot for penicillin deliveries in 1945. The Department of Anesthesiology opened in July of 1947 and was headed by Dr. T.R. Shannon.

A 1946 campaign to raise \$750,000 for hospital expansion included an architectural rendering for a School of Nursing building. The campaign failed to reach its goal, and the School of Nursing building was put on hold. Funds raised during the campaign went into various improvements in and around the hospital.

In 1946, Ellison Capers took over as hospital administrator and served in that capacity until 1960. He guided the hospital through the post-war years to the mid-1950s and oversaw the construction of the Joseph Tower Building and the Community Circle.



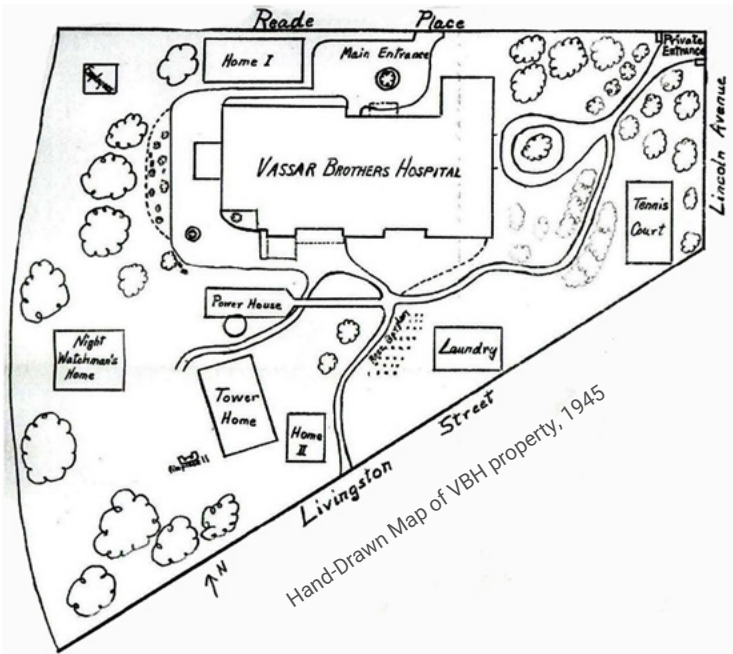
Left: Louis Breglia, Comptroller  
Right: Ellison Capers, President



From the 1948 Annual Report:  
Daily patient census = 186  
Births = 1,066



In 1948, the Tower Family Estate contributed \$90,000 to the hospital in memory of Joseph T. Tower Jr., and the vision for a School of Nursing was revived. A groundbreaking ceremony took place in June 1949. The building took shape over the winter, with completion in May 1950.





The Joseph Tower Nursing School and Residence contained classrooms, a recreation lounge, a tiny galley kitchen, an apartment for the house mother, an auditorium with a stage for hosting events and graduations, and dorm room living spaces for nursing students on the second and third floors.



Dorm room



Classroom





Galley kitchen



Sitting Area Joseph Tower Building 1950



Recreation room



Auditorium



Nurse Instructor I. Fleig teaching Vassar Brothers Hospital student nurses



VBH nurses participate in the Loyalty Day Parade in Poughkeepsie, May 1952

A modernization program was completed in March 1954, resulting in updates throughout the hospital. Laboratories were moved to better locations, various departments were renovated, and operating rooms were upgraded with larger spaces, air-conditioning, and newer equipment. Recovery rooms were enlarged and moved closer to the operating rooms. Cleaning and sterilization of instruments became standardized with the opening of the Central Sterile Supply department. At a cost of \$516,000, a combination of donations from local industries and hospital trustees helped pay



Ambulance Fleet, 1950



Hospital Day, May 1956

During 1957, Vassar lost several prominent physicians who had contributed both professionally and voluntarily to the hospital: Dr. William Garlick, Dr. William H. Meyer, Dr. Leo Murphy, Dr. Scott Lord Smith, and Dr. Archibald Thomson.

A nurse named Audrey Dewitt started an IV insertion service in 1958. She was joined by nurse Louise Marshall and together they did intravenous starts and blood draws on patients with difficult-to-access veins. By 1967, the team grew to five full time nurses and service hours expanded to 11 p.m.

*Editorial Note: Today it is a 24/7 service provided by a team of IV and insertion line experts.*



Arial view 1960

## Decade of the 1960s

With support from the Hill Burton Funds, a grant from the Ford Foundation, and as a result of a successful community capital campaign, Community Circle was built during 1958–1959 for a cost of \$3 million. A cornerstone was laid in June 1959 and contained various hospital pamphlets and newsletters, a list of donors to the building fund, and a copy of the ceremony program.



With its innovative design, the *New York Herald Tribune* called it “the first of its kind in the East.” Hospital officials dubbed it “the hospital of tomorrow built for today.” Community Circle was dedicated on January 29, 1960.



Patient room in Community Circle

The newly built circular structure featured patient care units with a centralized nursing station, piped-in oxygen and suction, efficient heating and air-conditioning, and an interior built for light, air flow, and communication between patients and nurses. Community Circle immediately proved its worth with over 11,000 patients admitted during 1961.



Chef Jesse Harris led a team of cooks and bakers who prepared all the food for patient meals as well as for the hospital cafeteria. He was known for his delicious dishes as well as for his friendly manner.

*Editorial Note: His grandson is the nationally recognized Hollywood Chef Roblé Ali, who attributes his love for cooking to his grandfather's influence.*

*For additional details regarding this time period, see "Vassar Brothers Hospital Seventy-Five Years" by Baltus B. Van Kleeck, President of Poughkeepsie Savings Bank and Trustee/Board President for VBH. © 1962*

After years of having neurosurgeons travel up from New York City to treat patients, Vassar hired neurosurgeon Dr. Robert M. Weiss. He introduced the cerebral arteriogram as a diagnostic tool for patients experiencing a stroke or brain injury. He was assisted by head radiology technician Allen Schafer, who had learned specialized imaging techniques while serving in the U.S. Army.

Vassar Brothers Hospital lost both land and a two-story brick building, along with an extensive section of the granite wall, for construction of the new state highway—Route 9—bordering the western side of the



Treatment Room



Construction of Route 9

On the eastern side, the hospital acquired land along Lincoln Avenue between Reade Place and Livingston Street. The area was used for staff parking and "perhaps in years to come will be a site for building purposes." (Source: Vassar Brothers Hospital Seventy-Five Years by Baltus B. Van Kleeck © 1962)

*Editorial Note: Today it is the location of the Aronzon Center for Ambulatory Surgery (fourth floor) and 21 Reade Medical Office Building (first, second, and third floors).*



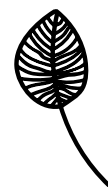
It was a cold December in 1960 when the hospital and its grounds became one of the sites used for filming a movie called *The Young Doctors*, a drama directed by Phil Karlson and based on the 1959 novel *The Final Diagnosis* by Arthur Hailey. It was narrated by Ronald Reagan, and one of the young doctors in the film was portrayed by Dick Clark. Vassar Hospital settings included an opening scene of the emergency entrance, a scene at a bench with the Hudson River in the background, and a scene on the front steps of the nurses' residence, Home II. A cameo appearance was made by a School of Nursing student in a scene with Dick Clark's character. The movie was released the following year and received rave reviews.



A separate building was built as a laundry facility in July 1961. It served that purpose until the late 1980s when laundry service was outsourced.

*Editorial Note: The building then became known as "Big Red" and held the offices of the Engineering Department until it was torn down in 2016 to make way for the new patient pavilion.*

*From the 1961 Annual Report:*  
 Admissions = 11,827  
 Average daily census = 240  
 Births = 1,633  
 Average length of stay = 7.39 days  
 Surgical procedures = 5,798





On the eastern side, the hospital acquired land along Lincoln Avenue between Reade Place and Livingston Street. The area was used for staff parking and “perhaps in years to come will be a site for building purposes.” (Source: *Vassar Brothers Hospital Seventy-Five Years* by Baltus B. Van Kleeck © 1962)

*Editorial Note: Today it is the location of the Aronzon Center for Ambulatory Surgery (fourth floor) and 21 Reade Medical Office Building (first, second, and third floors).*



In 1962 the hospital celebrated seventy-five years of service to the community with an anniversary dinner held on May 16th at the IBM Country Club, attended by 550 guests.

Co-chairmen for the “75th Anniversary Centennial Salute Gala Birthday Ball” were Harold DeG. Spencer and Baltus B. Van Kleeck. The event included displays of hospital memorabilia, ringing of the bell, and a giant cake made in the shape of the newly built Community Circle. In downtown Poughkeepsie, the Michell Furniture Store and The Wallace Company sponsored hospital-themed window displays arranged by the VBH Women’s Auxiliary.



Opening remarks were made by Lelan F. Sillin, Jr, president of the hospital board of trustees, and by William J. Mair, vice president of IBM Poughkeepsie. Speakers for the evening’s event included hospital administrator Louis Breglia (shown at right) and president of the medical staff Dr. George T.C. Way. Special guest speaker was Robert Cunningham, editor of the journal *The Modern Hospital*. Entertainment was provided by the IBM Male Chorus.



Board of Trustees, December 1963

Hospital board of trustees at that time included Lelan F. Sillin Jr., president; George F. Schlobach, first vice president; Robert B. Van DeWater, second vice president; Albert Richard, secretary; and A. Russell Heaton, treasurer.

As the hospital passed its seventy-fifth anniversary milestone, a decision was made by the board of trustees to launch a \$500,000 improvement campaign. When completed, the campaign helped fund more operating rooms and an expanded

laboratory department. Additional upgrades were made to clinical facilities throughout the hospital. In a joint effort, trustees, medical staff, and administration established the region's first intensive care unit which opened in April 1964. A department of Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation was formally opened that same year and dedicated in memory of Dr. William H. Meyer, a much-admired surgeon (1932-1957), president of the medical staff in 1954, and a lecturer in the VBH School of Nursing.



**From the 1967 Annual Report:**

- Admissions = 12,952
- Births = 1,761
- Surgical Procedures = 5,496
- Average daily census = 260
- Average length of stay = 7.8 days



1964 Ambulance



The hospital installed a radioscope magnascanner in 1967, one of the first non-invasive diagnostic tools using nuclear isotopes. According to the 1968 Annual Report, there were 638 full-time employees, and the hospital had established a dedicated coronary care unit for heart patients.

After a report by hospital consultant Dr. Anthony J.J. Rourke indicated the dire need for more hospital space, the Buildings & Equipment Committee, chaired by Dr. George Schlobach, engaged the same architect who had designed the Community Circle, William F. Schorn, to design a second circular tower. For a completed cost of \$4.8 million, South Circle was built debt-free. The seven-level circular tower included nine operating rooms, an intensive



care unit, a cafeteria, and multiple semi-private patient rooms. Dedicated on May 24, 1969, South Circle officially opened on June 17th when a patient was transferred from Corridor 1 to his new room on the fifth floor. New operating rooms opened on August 8th, and just a few days later were put to the test when a fire in the operating suite at St. Francis Hospital necessitated that all emergency operations to be transferred to Vassar for two weeks.



Other changes included completion of a new five-bed coronary care unit, expansion of the radiology department and the emergency room, and moving Labor & Delivery into the old operating suite located in Corridor 3. Medical Records and the Medical Library both moved to spaces in Corridor 2. All of the renovations and moves were completed by the end of 1970.

New beds = 155

Total hospital bed capacity = 342

(Source: Poughkeepsie Journal, Wednesday June 18, 1969, p4. and VBH Annual Report - 1969)

# Decade of the 1970s

**A 1970 patient menu lists the following for dinner:**

- Soup – chicken consommé, regular or salt-free
- Entrees – hot roast beef sandwich or beef liver and onions
- Vegetables – O’Brien potato, green peas, cauliflower
- Salad – tossed salad with Italian dressing
- Desserts – apricot halves or strawberry ice cream

**A supper menu included the following:**

- Entrees – chicken à la King on a biscuit, baked haddock, American cheese sandwich
- Vegetables – paprika potato, sliced carrots, lima beans
- Salad – vegetable cottage cheese
- Desserts – Angel food cake or custard.
- Evening snack was a choice of either a tuna fish salad sandwich with lettuce or assorted cookies.



Main Lobby

**From the 1970 Annual Report:**

- Administrator: Louis E. Breglia
- Admissions = 13,977
- Births = 1,954
- Average patient stay = 7.7 days
- President of the medical staff: J. Stuart Fishler, MD
- President of the board of trustees: James E. Neighbors





When the School of Nursing closed in 1972 due to the transfer of the entire nursing program to Dutchess Community College, the Joseph Tower Building was converted into office space, and the auditorium, with the stage removed, became a large meeting room. Housed within the building was the blood bank, nursing education training rooms, computer labs, various offices, human resources department on the first floor, finance and accounting departments on the second floor, and purchasing department on the third floor.



The Center for Radiation Oncology opened on February 3, 1974 as the first of its kind in the five-county region to offer a full range of cancer treatments. Twenty years later, November 1994, the center was rededicated and renamed the Murphy Center for Radiation Oncology at a special ceremony in recognition of a \$1 million donation from the Thomas W. and Florence T. Murphy Trust. It was the largest single monetary gift received by the hospital's foundation up to that time.

With the closure of maternity services at St. Francis Hospital in 1975, Vassar Brothers expanded its maternity and delivery room services, added a special-care nursery for high-risk infants, and hired a full-time neonatologist. The Children's Ward, operational since the 1890s, was relocated to the corridor off South Circle 4 and opened as the new Pediatrics Unit with fifteen patient rooms and a playroom. The Mother's Club, founded in 1947, gave support to new moms caring for their newborns. The monthly club meetings were well-attended through the years, and the club disbanded in 2017.

*Editorial Note: Sisters at St. Francis Hospital declined to participate in the expanded services required by the New York State Department of Health that included abortions. Consolidation of the service at Vassar made the most economical sense, and a petition from the community*

*failed to change the decision. (Source: Series of published articles in the Poughkeepsie Journal in 1974.)*

In 1977, the New York State Department of Health selected Vassar Brothers Hospital as the regional facility for computerized axial tomography. A full-body CAT scanner was installed, expanding the radiologic imaging capacity for the hospital.



What remained of the original hospital, referred to as "Old Vassar," was demolished in 1979.



After the closing of the School of Nursing, the Mary Tower Home had various uses and occupants throughout the 1970s and 1980s, including housing the local chapter of the American Cancer Society for many years.

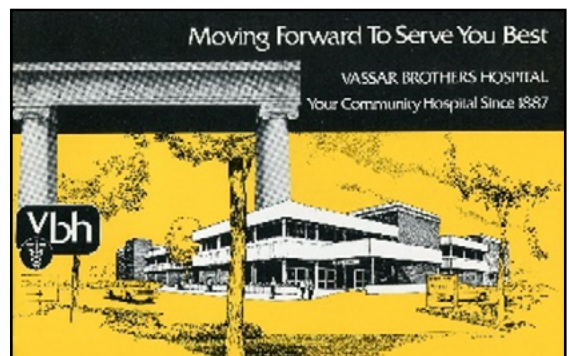
It was leased to a private entity and converted into medical office space in the mid-1980s, with an elevator and stairway additions to accommodate patient and staff accessing all five levels.

## *Decade of the 1980s*

Final plan approvals were received from New York State authorities in 1980 to begin constructing new sections for ambulatory services, outpatient clinical care, critical care, and an expanded emergency department. A capital campaign commenced with an initial goal to raise \$1.5 million. Following a successful fund drive led by a team of over one hundred community members and chaired by Dr. W.J. Coppoc, pledges and contributions exceeded \$2 million.

### **From the 1981 Annual Report:**

Number of patients = 15,372  
Number of births = 2,085  
Emergency Room visits = 39,128  
Full-time employees = 961  
Volunteers = 524





Edwin B. Boltz, Administrator

In February 1982, a ribbon-cutting and open house was held for the newly built critical care unit. The unit specialized in coronary and intensive care, with a highly-trained staff and advanced monitoring technology. The first patients were admitted to the new unit in June.

On June 6, 1982, the hospital celebrated Charter Day on the one hundredth anniversary of receiving its original charter.

The main entrance to the hospital, created in 1924 with columns and a portico, was taken down to make way for a newly expanded emergency department. IBM made a contribution of \$500,000 to the project.



Left photo: Arthur P. Stache, trustee (L) and Edwin B. Boltz, administrator (R)



Right photo: James Fahey, IBM (L) with A. Stache (M) and E. Boltz (R)

An official dedication was held on June 19, 1983, with the opening of the outpatient clinics, pulmonary function lab, and expanded radiology services. The ceremony ended with the ringing of the bronze bell originally purchased by John Guy Vassar. The entire project cost \$11.8 million.

The Ambulatory Care Center for same-day surgery had its own dedication on June 20, 1983. In November 1986, the Respiratory Care Specialty Unit opened, dedicated to giving specialized care to people experiencing respiratory illnesses, one of the top health concerns which brought patients to the hospital at that time.

A beautiful spot of land between the expanded emergency department and the hill overlooking the Hudson River became the site of Harrington Memorial Park, named for Dr. James T. Harrington who served the hospital for over forty years as a surgeon and briefly as the hospital's superintendent. His wife, Lavina Vail Harrington, was a member of the hospital's auxiliary board for many years. The park was dedicated on May 11, 1984, with remarks made by Edwin B. Boltz, administrator and Kingsley G. Morse, president



of the board of trustees. The park included picnic tables, a brick walking path, benches with views of the Hudson River, and several shade trees.

A group of enthusiastic and dedicated executives joined Vassar in 1984 through 1986. They revitalized the internal culture and processes in a way that set the tone for years to come. Under their leadership, the hospital updated many services including modern cancer care, open-heart surgery, advanced imaging, expanded surgical services, a prenatal care clinic, and a new approach to fundraising and marketing. The executive team pictured at right included Richard Henley, VP for Finance; Ann K. Armater, Executive Director, VBH Foundation; John H. Moyer, VP for Marketing; Ronald T. Mullahey, President and CEO; Thomas A. Dee, VP for Professional and Support Services; Susan Davis, Vice President for Nursing; and J. Stuart Fishler, MD, VP of Medical Affairs.



(Source: VBH Today, Winter 1986/1987 newsletter)

*Editorial Note: Of the group above, Mr. Mullahey went on to consulting work. Susan Davis became CEO of Vassar, then went on to serve as CEO of hospitals in Connecticut and Florida. Richard Henley moved on to serve as a financial consultant for several large hospital systems. Dr. Fishler retired to enjoy tennis and community involvement. Ann Armater served in her role as Executive Director of the VBMC Foundation for thirty-five years and retired in December 2020. She was instrumental in orchestrating several highly successful campaigns which raised more than \$100 million to support new programs and new technologies, including the multi-million-dollar campaign for the new patient pavilion.*

In October 1985, VBH Corporation was incorporated to encompass the hospital and all of its affiliated entities including various hospital-based physician groups and a home-care agency, with the goal of creating a more balanced and financially stable structure. Also in 1985, the Vassar Brothers Hospital Foundation was created, with Dr. William J. Coppac as chairman, for a systematic and professional approach to fund-raising and revenue support. In 1986, the specialty care nursery became a full-service neonatal intensive care unit to care for the medical needs of the tiniest patients. Neonatology physician and nurse practitioner groups were formed to provide around-the-clock care.

*Editorial Note: In January 1992, the completely renovated Neonatal Intensive Care Unit opened with an additional twelve isolette stations and new state-of-the-art equipment. A specialized neonatal transport team was established to bring infants from*



other hospitals to Vassar for their care. Dr. Stephen Kovacs was appointed Director in 1995.

A recruitment brochure entitled *Nursing At Vassar Brothers Hospital* was published, which included information about the philosophy of nursing at Vassar, continuing education for nurses, and photos of inpatient adult health care, critical care, maternal and child care, perioperative care, and emergency care.

In April 1987, a centennial celebration with speeches and a huge outdoor picnic under a massive tent marked the occasion of one hundred years of service to the community. The Centennial Committee was chaired by Stephen P. Lumb and supported by John P. O'Shea, board chairman; Ronald T. Mullahey, hospital president; and William J. Coppoc, VBH Foundation chairman, as well as by an active group of physicians, physician's wives, community members, and the hospital's administration team.



A large banner was placed above the hospital's main entrance (see photo above) to announce the milestone date. Proclamations and letters of commendation came from The White House, The Governor's Office, U.S. and New York State Senators, the Commissioner of Health, and the Mayor of Poughkeepsie.

The Centennial Salute Gala Birthday Ball was held in the Joseph Tower Auditorium on November 14, 1987. Displays of memorabilia in the auditorium included the original horse-drawn ambulance carriage, framed photographs of the hospital through the years, nursing uniforms from the School of Nursing Alumni Association, stained glass windows saved from Home I, the bell purchased by John Guy Vassar, and the original weathervane. The celebration concluded with a formal dinner party sponsored by the hospital's board of trustees and the Vassar Hospital Foundation. Proceeds from the gala and the sale of the *Vassar Brothers Hospital Centennial Journal* supported the purchase of a radiation simulator for the Radiation Oncology Center.



Plate



Weathervane



Float

# Decade of the 1990s

The Cardiac Catheterization Laboratory opened on October 6, 1993 and performed 1,018 catheterizations in its first year of operation. In addition to heart catheterizations, the center offered a range of services including nuclear imaging, EKG, arrhythmia monitoring, echocardiography, and stress testing.

Dr. Daniel O’Dea served as chief cardiologist, pictured here in the foreground. Also pictured are three nurses who specialized in cardiac patient care—Pat Soriano, Linda Benton, and Rosemary Decker.



The John and Nancy O’Shea Pediatric Specialty Center opened in 1996, bringing pediatric specialists from Westchester Medical Center into the hospital to treat patients needing complex pediatric care. A play area and hand-painted murals of nature scenes created a welcoming atmosphere.

In April 1996, Mid-Hudson Health was formed between Vassar Brothers Hospital and St. Francis Hospital, an alliance which lasted four years. The goal was to reduce outmigration of patients due to a lack of specialized services in the immediate area. The two hospitals agreed to split responsibilities with Vassar taking on heart surgery, radiation therapy, and women’s and children’s services, and St. Francis taking on trauma, cancer surgery, orthopedics, neurology, plastic surgery, and mental health. Both hospitals immediately began to expand their facilities to support those services.



Campaign pin

Vassar kicked off a multi-million-dollar Facility Modernization Plan in 1997 with the campaign theme Changing Lives – Saving Lives. Phase I consisted of the building of the West Wing (Chest Pain ER, Cardiothoracic Surgery suite and Maternity suite), a new main lobby, a medical office building, and a parking garage. Phase II was the building of the Dyson Center for Cancer Care.

A groundbreaking ceremony was held on October 9, 1997 under a large tent in the parking lot and officiated by Paul J. Ganci, chairman of the board of trustees. Also in attendance were Stephen Saland, New York State senator; William Steinhaus, Dutchess County executive; Ronald T. Mullahey, president of VBH; Ronald J. Tatelbaum, MD,



Ron Mullahey, CEO

president of the medical/dental staff; and Robert R. Dyson, chairman of the campaign for Vassar Brothers Hospital.

*Editor's Note: Raw footage mp4 files available in the VBMC Archives collection.*

## *21st Century of Expansion and Growth*

Across the street from the hospital's main entrance, the DeLaval industrial building was torn down in 1998 to make way for part of Phase I – a parking garage with an attached office complex to house various specialties including cardiology, cardiothoracic surgery, urology, and imaging, and a covered walkway over Reade Place. Structural and civil engineering was provided by Sydney I. McGrath, PE, construction by Barr & Barr, Inc., and Ace Drilling & Blasting, Sun-Up and Westage also contributed to the project.



Main Lobby construction – April to December 1999 ©Berstein Associates, Photographers

## HEALTHQUEST

In September 1999, VBH Corp. changed its name to Health Quest Systems, Inc. The resulting hospital system expanded in 2001 and brought together Vassar Brothers Hospital, Northern Dutchess Hospital, Thompson House, Hudson Valley Home Care, and the Care Center at VBH, followed by Putnam Hospital Center in January 2002 and Sharon Hospital in August 2017. Onsite departments such as budget and finance, purchasing, materials management, printing and mailroom, inpatient and outpatient billing, and accounting were merged and moved offsite to locations at Taconic Crossings in LaGrangeville and the Westage Business Center in Fishkill. A fully integrated information technology department and electronic network made a seamless exchange of information possible across multiple platforms and campuses.



On February 15, 2000, Vassar Brothers broke ground on the Medical Mall at Westage in Fishkill to expand services to the southern part of the county. Located next to the Westage Business Center, the renovated space housed ambulatory surgery, radiation therapy, wound care, sleep lab and several medical specialty office suites. The Medical Mall at Westage opened in December 2000.



Vassar's main lobby was redesigned as a three-story enclosure with elevator, staircase, and a walkway leading to the parking garage. An opening ceremony in January 2000 was hosted by administration and physician leadership with hospital staff and guests in attendance to watch the official ribbon cutting.

On April 10, 2000, the first open-heart surgery at Vassar was performed by a cardiothoracic surgery team led by Dr. Daniel Chiaburri, ushering in a new era of advanced patient care. Everyone on staff wore "We've Got Heart" burgundy t-shirts to commemorate the day. Four days later the first primary angioplasty procedure was performed.

As part of Phase I, the West Wing was completed in 2001, designed by Taylor Clark, architects, and constructed by Barr & Barr, Inc., builders. It contained a new food service kitchen and central sterile processing department on the ground floor, a state-of-the-art cardiac and general surgery operating suite on the second floor, and luxurious maternity rooms on the third floor overlooking Harrington Memorial Park and the picturesque Hudson River. At the opposite end of the hospital, the third floor in the Community Circle was completely renovated as a post-coronary care inpatient unit.



The Dyson Center for Cancer Care opened its doors in December 2001, offering advanced services for cancer patients and direct access to specialists. The center included oncology physician office suites, a dedicated infusion center, a state-of-the-art MRI machine, spacious lobby areas, private offices, and a patient information library.

Architects: Perkins Eastman Architects, PC and Larsen Shein Ginsberg Magnusson Architects, LLC. Barr & Barr, Inc, Builders. Structure Engineering: Severud Associates. Civil Engineering: The Chazen Companies and Edwards & Zuck Engineers, PC.

## *A New Name*

New services and expansions were not the only changes that came with the turn of the millennium. The idea of a name change had been first proposed and then extensively discussed at a medical executive committee meeting held in the fall of 2001. In early 2002, the board of trustees accepted a proposal from the medical staff to consider the change. After a series of focus groups involving hospital staff, physicians, and the public, an agreement was reached and endorsed by both the medical executive committee and the board of trustees to officially change the name to Vassar Brothers Medical Center. This change reflected a melding of the tradition of its founders with the expanded regional outreach of Vassar's healthcare services.

On June 6, 2002, a ceremony to celebrate the name change was held in the main lobby to a standing crowd which filled the lobby and stairway. Commemorative bookmarks were passed out to attendees.



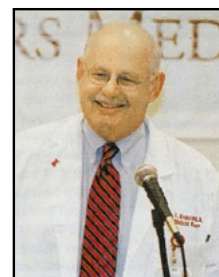
At the helm of the hospital since 1984, Ron Mullahey's tenure spanned over sixteen years (1985–2001). He was followed by the first nurse in the history of the hospital to serve as president,



Ron Mullahey – Susan Davis –  
Richard Henley



Daniel Aronzon, MD



Susan Davis, RN, PhD (2001–2004). During that same time period, Richard Henley served as chief financial officer. Susan was followed in her tenure by the first physician to serve in that position since the early 1900s, Daniel Z. Aronzon, MD, pediatrician with Children's Medical Group and former Vice President for Medical Affairs (2004–2011).

*See Appendix 1 for a complete list of superintendents and presidents of the hospital.*

Vassar Brothers Medical Center applied for licensing for fifty more beds with the Department of Health, and in 2004 a New York State grant approval was received for an \$11.8 million bed expansion. To accomplish



this endeavor, South Circle 6 and South Circle 7 were gutted and converted into nursing units.

*Editor's Note: An original hospital wheelchair dating back to the 1890s was found in a storage closet on the sixth floor. It was restored and put on display in the main lobby of the hospital.*

The departments of nursing staff development, engineering, and environmental services, which had all formerly occupied the South Circle space, were moved to the lower level of the Joseph Tower Building. They joined the departments of human resources, marketing, accounting, purchasing, budgets, and a Health Quest executive suite already located on the first, second, and third floors of the building. At a special ribbon-cutting ceremony in 2006, South Circle 5 was dedicated as an oncology nursing unit, followed by the completion of the bed expansion project on South Circle 6 and South Circle 7. At the same time, the emergency department expanded into the former Corridor 1 on the first floor, adding 3,500 square feet to the department.

Vassar Brothers Medical Center was the first hospital in the region to implement medication bar coding which combined with the creation of a comprehensive electronic medical records system.



Senator Hillary Clinton visited the Medical Center in June 2006, with a tour led by Dr. Aronzon and followed by a presentation to the staff from the senator on the state of health care in the United States.

## *New Technologies*

In July 2007, modern digital mammography units replaced the aging mammography units in the radiology department. (Note: Mammography was moved in 2013 to a new second-floor space in the 21 Reade Medical Office Building.)



A da Vinci Robotic Surgical System was installed in December 2007. It was a \$1.4 million investment resulting in typical surgical outcomes with less pain and a shorter post-surgical hospital stay. The first knee surgeries using the new technology were performed in April 2008.

The Heart Station opened in 2008, providing state-of-the-art diagnostic services for patients with heart conditions. At the end of the year, the high-risk pregnancy center opened to provide specialized care during pregnancy and coordination for high-risk deliveries. Combining expertise in cardiac surgery and specialized neonatal care, heart surgery was successfully performed on a premature infant in April 2011 to close a hole in the baby's heart.

Community Circle 5 was rededicated on September 23, 2009 as the Nephrology Care Unit to care for patients with renal diseases and renal failure. In February 2010, South Circle 5 was renamed the Oncology Care Unit. Other specialized care units were named as follows: Cardiothoracic Step-Down (Community Circle 2), Post-Coronary Care Unit (Community Circle 3), Respiratory Care Unit (Community Circle 4), Orthopedic Specialty Unit (South Circle 3), Surgical Step-Down and Surgical Care Units (South Circle 4), Neurosciences Care Unit (South Circle 6), and general medical care on South Circle 7.



Aerial view, 2010

## *New Buildings*



A need for more operating room space, particularly for day-case surgery, resulted in the design and construction of a building in the block just east of the hospital at 21 Reade Place (formerly a parking lot for staff) to house both an ambulatory surgery unit and space for medical offices. The Daniel Z. Aronzon Ambulatory Surgery suite opened on May 23, 2012 with a ribbon-cutting ceremony that was

attended by a huge crowd of executives, trustees, physicians, hospital staff, and invited guests from the community.

To accommodate staff parking, a four-level parking garage was constructed along Livingston Street (formerly residential lots). Staff moved from various parking locations, including a large city lot on Pine Street (now an apartment complex), to the new parking garage in January 2012.





At the September 2012 Diamond Gala, the 125th anniversary of VBMC was celebrated with a special video of past and present highlights, a gift-boxed anniversary cupcake for each attendee, and a commemorative pin.

A new group of administrators began arriving in January of 2014 and started the work of getting Vassar into position to build a modern patient-care facility. The existing patient rooms, cramped spaces, and outdated technology of the 1950s and 1960s made it difficult to accommodate the needs of a modern hospital. Cost-containment measures, realignment of services, and reallocation of funds set the hospital on the path toward a new facility. Additionally, a food hospitality and culinary company, Aramark, was brought in to provide meal services for patients and cafeteria services for staff and visitor.

In August 2015, the main hospital entrance was renovated with modern decor, a glass awning over the drive entrance, and a redesigned connection to the parking deck, which included a curving interior staircase.



Over the summer, the cafeteria received a much-needed facelift with modern fixtures, seating, and reconfigured spaces for better food display and customer service flow. A temporary cafeteria was set up and meals served to staff and visitors in the Joseph Tower Building's auditorium.

A big change to the campus was the tear-down of the Joseph Tower Building in the Fall of 2015 and the Mary Tower Home in the Spring of 2016. The Joseph Tower Building had served its purposes well, but multiple structural issues made continued modernization impossible. A time capsule was found embedded behind the 1949 cornerstone. The sealed copper box contained a November 14, 1950 copy of the *Poughkeepsie New Yorker*, the 1950 annual report of the hospital, a letter from the Tower Estate, a miniature nurse's cap, and a nursing pin belonging to Miss Rachel McCrimmon (former nursing school director and hospital hostess).

*Editor's Note: Time capsule contents are housed in the VBMC Archives*



< time capsule found in cornerstone and raising of the Joseph Tower Building ^

In 2016, the Mary Tower Home lease was cancelled (building had been leased to a private entity in 1989 and converted into medical offices) and then torn down literally brick by brick, a testament to its sturdy architecture. No cornerstone was found.

Vassar applied for and received Level II Trauma designation in March 2016 and immediately hired experienced staff to establish the trauma program and provide patient care. The existing clinical trials program was expanded to include not only oncology but also cardiology, with the goal of enrolling patients into nationally recognized trials in both disciplines.



In the former Joseph Tower location, trailers formed a “city” to house the construction company as well as the various unions involved in the construction of the new patient pavilion.



Under a huge white tent pitched at the lower end of Livingston Street, a groundbreaking ceremony for the new patient pavilion was attended by over four hundred people on a sunny day on September 13, 2016. In attendance were politicians,

administrators, physicians, construction managers, School of Nursing alumni, and medical and hospital staff.

Eleven VIPs, including the state senator, county executive, and city mayor, lined up to do the honors of turning over a shovel of dirt to mark the occasion. A catered reception followed.



Where the Mary Tower Home once stood, a steel structure was erected that is now the entrance to the patient pavilion.

Construction architect for the project was CallisonRTKL (New York, NY) and construction management was provided by Walsh & Consigli.



**From the 2016 report on giving:**

Inpatients: 23,236  
Emergency Department visits: 70,439  
Surgical procedures: 17,347  
Babies born: 2,362  
Average length of stay: 4.2 days



Main Entrance, 2017

In May 2018, everyone was invited to put their signature on the final steel beam to be placed at the upper-right corner of the building.



Initial design for the patient pavilion had 264 private patient rooms, 30 private intensive care rooms, a 66-room emergency department, 15 surgical suites, and a conference center, lobby and café with indoor and outdoor seating. In January 2018, the project was revised to include an additional eighth floor for future expansion and a rooftop helipad.



2018



2019

Construction continued for the next three years.



2020

On April 1, 2019, Vassar Brothers Medical Center, along with the other three hospitals of Health Quest, merged with Western Connecticut Health Network to form a new corporate entity called Nuvance Health. This brought together seven hospitals across both states to maximize purchasing power, recruit new talent into the region, expand existing patient care services, and create better efficiencies of scale.



As the SARS-CoV2 (COVID-19) global pandemic spread into the United States (January–March 2020), construction came to an almost complete stop and then continued very slowly under new protocols for construction site management. Vassar admitted its first COVID-19 positive patient on March 15, 2020. By mid-April, there were over 80 patients hospitalized with the virus, 101 patients discharged (recovered), and 34 deaths. The situation had a major impact on hospital capacity, patient care, staffing and disruption to many services. In May of 2020, the staff received a morale boost when Dr. Aronzon, former CEO, gave an encouraging speech to the staff and expressed support on behalf of the community. The volume and intensity of the situation continued until the first week of July when the COVID-19 inpatient count dropped to zero. A second wave began in mid-November, with



over one hundred patients per day from December 28 through January 29, 2021. Cases dropped to the single digits by mid-May but went back up to double digits in the beginning of August.

*Editor's Note: As of August 18, 2021, Vassar had cared for a total of 2,032 inpatients diagnosed with and treated for COVID-19, with 85.2% safely discharged and 275 deaths.*

A temporary certificate of occupancy was issued by the NYS Department of Health at the end of November 2020, as space was desperately needed to care for COVID-19 patients when pandemic cases exceeded legacy hospital capacity.

*Editor's Note: Because pediatric rooms had glass-enclosed entrances, it was the most logical unit to convert to a COVID-19 critical care unit. Other areas converted to care for COVID-19 patients included, at times and depending on volume, the Gastrointestinal Lab, Vassar Ambulatory Surgery Center, the Nephrology Care Unit on Circle 5, South 7 Med-Surg Unit, the Surgical Step-Down Unit on South 4, and the Postoperative Care (PACU) bays in the new patient pavilion. After the move to the patient pavilion, the former PACU in the legacy hospital was used as a COVID-19 ICU.*

After a successful review, the permanent certificate of occupancy was obtained on December 10, 2020. A virtual ribbon-cutting ceremony was broadcast on Friday, January 7, 2021. The patient pavilion officially opened on January 7th and patients were moved from the legacy hospital to the new care units on January 8th. The emergency department admitted the first patient to the newly opened space at 3 a.m. on January 9th. The entire patient pavilion officially opened for all hospitalized patients on January 11, 2021.



The labor & delivery and postpartum (maternity) units as well as the Neonatal Intensive Care Unit (NICU) remain in the legacy hospital building, along with the departments of Pharmacy, Laboratory, Food & Nutrition, Registration, Cashier, and the hospital call center. Radiology and Interventional Radiology, Heart Valve and Vascular Services, Heart Station, GI Lab Suite, Cath Lab Suite, Central Sterile Supply, Case Management Administration, Hospitalist Service, Quality Systems, Knowledge Resources Library/VBMC Archives, and various departmental administration offices also reside in the legacy hospital building.

Conversion of the legacy hospital space is already in the works, including consolidation of the residency program on the South Circle floors and a resident doctors' lounge space in the former cafeteria. An inpatient pediatric service is planned for a return, reoccupying the former pediatric unit which has been refurbished into nine private care rooms. Further changes will occur to the rest of the space in the years to come.

Built on Livingston land with Vassar endowments, a hospital became a reality that is a lasting tribute to Matthew and John Guy's vision. The tradition established in the nineteenth century has continued into the twenty-first century with an emphasis on physician-coordinated care, clinical and nursing education, advanced technology applications, innovative surgery, and top-quality patient care. Vassar Brothers Medical Center stands today as a tribute to the many physicians, nurses, trustees, administrators, and myriad support staff, past and present, who have cared for patients, served in every capacity, and contributed to its success as a preeminent healthcare facility in the heart of the Hudson Valley.



## *Postscript:*

There are many more stories that could be told and many, many more photos that could be shared. This is not meant to be a comprehensive and detailed history, but it is hoped that what is contained on these pages will tell enough of a story to be enjoyed by all who read it.

Additions, comments, and/or corrections to any of the content may be submitted in writing to: VBMC Archives, Vassar Brothers Medical Center, 45 Reade Place, Poughkeepsie, NY 12601.

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Photography credits: Frank B. Howard, Photographer (1930s); John P. Christin, Photographer (1994 series); Bernstein Associates, Photographers (1999); VBH Public Relations Dept. (1970s-2000s).

Donations of historical items of interest to the hospital archives are gladly accepted. In-person visits to the archives are available by appointment.

Respectfully submitted by: Mary Jo Russell, Knowledge Resources Librarian and Archivist  
Date: January 1, 2022

## **Appendix 1: Superintendents and Presidents of Vassar Brothers Hospital**

### **Superintendents of Vassar Brothers Hospital**

Dr. Guy Carlton Bayley	April 1888 – 1 July 1906 (19 yrs.)
Dr. Henry G. Bugbee	1 July 1906 – 15 May 1910 (4 yrs.)
Dr. James Taylor Harrington	15 May 1910 – 1 June 1911 (1 yr.)
Benjamin M. Fowler	1 June 1911 – 15 February 1922 (11 yrs.)
Alexander H. Candlish	15 February 1922 – 1 May 1925 (3 yrs.)
Henry C. Wright, Acting	May 1925 – October 1925 (6 months)
Sidney J. Barnes	October 1925 – May 1929 (4 yrs.)
Joseph J. Weber	12 June 1929 – 1 December 1945 (16 yrs.)

### **Administrators of Vassar Brothers Hospital**

Ellison H. Capers	1 December 1945 – 1 October 1960 (15 yrs.)
Louis E. Breglia	October 1960 – June 1972 (12 yrs.)
Edwin J. Boltz	1 August 1972 – November 1984 (12 yrs.)

### **Presidents & CEOs of Vassar Brothers Hospital**

Ronald T. Mullahey	December 1984 – May 2001 (17 yrs.)
Susan A. Davis, RN, PhD	June 2001 – January 2004 (3yrs.)

### **Presidents & CEOs of Vassar Brothers Medical Center**

Daniel Z. Aronzon, MD	February 2004 – 31 December 2011 (7 yrs.)
Janet L. Ready, RN	1 January 2011 – 31 December 2013 (3 yrs.)
Robert Friedberg	1 January 2014 – 4 November 2015 (3 yrs.)
Ann McMackin	5 November 2015 – 7 November 2018 (3 yrs.)
Kerry Eaton, interim	12 November 2018 – 5 January 2020 (1.2 yrs.)
Joseph J. Mullaney	6 January 2020 – 28 July 2020 (6 months)
Peter Kelly	29 July 2020 –

## Appendix 2: Presidents of the Medical Staff

### 20th Century Presidents of the Medical Staff

Scott Lord Smith, MD General Practice	1946
William Garlick, MD	1947 – 1948
Emil A. Stoller, MD	1949
Neil Stone, MD	1950 – 1951
Donald Malven, MD	1952
Albert A. Rosenberg, MD Pediatrics	1953 – 1954
John F. Rogers, MD	1954
William H. Meyer, MD Ob/Gyn/Surgery	1955
Maxwell Goss, MD	1956
Sidney N. Miller, MD	1957
Lloyd H. Kest, MD	1958
Philip V. Buckley, MD	1959
Archie L. Neighbors, MD	1960
Reuben T. Lapidus, MD	1961
George T.C. Way, MD Ob/Gyn	1962
James R. Breed, MD	1963
Martin Dreyfuss, MD Pathology	1964 – 1965
James K. Keeley, MD	1966
William Liesenbein, MD Radiology	1967
Ellison V. Capers, MD	1968
Justin Sheer, MD	1969
J. Stuart Fishler, MD Pediatrics	1970
Bert A. Kanwit, MD	1971 – 1972
Francis H. Darragh, MD	1973 – 1974
Carl K. Needy, MD Internal Medicine	1975 – 1976
Eugene Shekita, MD	1977 – 1978
Robert L. McKee, MD Internal Medicine	1979 – 1980
Martin G. Koloski, MD Surgery	1981 – 1982
Marvin Goldstein, MD	1983 – 1984
James J. Manion, MD	1985 – 1987
Herbert J. Leary, MD	1987 – 1988
Jack J. Hentel, MD Radiology	1989 – 1990
Alan Apfel, MD	1990 – 1991
Ronald D. Scheinzeit, MD	1992 – 1993
Stephen A. Katz, MD Internal Medicine	1993 – 1994
Ronald Tatelbaum, MD Cardiology	1995 – 1997
Daniel Z. Aronzon, MD Pediatrics	1998 – 2000

## 21st Century Presidents of the Medical Staff

Lawrence Schek, MD Cardiology	2000 – 2002
Sunil Khurana, MD Internal Medicine	2002 – 2004
David Stamer, MD Orthopedics	2004 – 2006
Amelia Martinko, MD Internal Medicine	2007 – 2008
David Weinreich, MD Cardiology	2009 – 2010
Richard Friedland, MD Radiology	2011 – 2013
Edward Farhangi, MD Radiation-Oncology	2014 – 2015
Richard Dean, MD Gastroenterology	2016 – 2017
Thomas Robinson, MD Family Practice	2018 – 2019
Salvatore Buffa, MD Gastroenterology	2020 – 2021

## Vice Presidents of Medical Affairs (VPMA)

J. Stuart Fishler, MD Pediatrics	1986 – 1991
Paul Kardon, MD Ob/Gyn	1991 – 1999 (full time); 2000 (part time)
Daniel Z. Aronzon, MD Pediatrics	2000 – 2001 (part time); 2001–2004 (full time)
Sunil Khurana, MD / Lawrence Schek, MD / Stephen Katz, MD / Ronald Tatelbaum, MD	February 2004 – September 2005 (shared position)
Stephen Katz, MD Internal Medicine	September 2005 – February 2013
Ronald Tatelbaum, MD Cardiology	March – June, 2013
Health Quest VPMA / Acting VPMA for Vassar Kathleen Mantaro, MD Internal Medicine	July 2013 – August 2014
Ronald Tatelbaum, MD Cardiology	September 2014 – August 2015
Health Quest VPMA / Acting VPMA for Vassar Michael Doyle, MD Psychiatry	September 2015 – July 2019
William Begg, MD Emergency Medicine	October 2019 –

## Appendix 3a: Head Nurses / Directors of Nursing / CNOs

### Head Nurse

Gertrude Deyo	1887 – 1898
Sara E. Deyo	1989 – 1906
Blanche E. Eldon	1906 – 1907
Alice C. Ellison	1907 – 1908

### Director of Nursing

Claribel Wheeler	1908 – 1912
Mildred Deyo	1912 – 1920
Rachel F. McCrimmon	1920 – 1945
Nan H. Ewing	1945
Mary L. Fernald	945 – 1949
Isabel E. Christiana	1949 – 1960
Marguerite Regan	1961 – 1962
Thomas F. Furlong	1962 – 1963
Joanna McCarthy	1963 – 1983
Eileen Cecconi	1984 – 1985
Susan L. Zuzek	1985 – 1987

### Vice President of Nursing / VP of Patient Care / Chief Nursing Officer

Susan L. Davis	1987 – 1992 (VP Nursing) / 1992–2001 (VP Patient Care)
Margaret Cusumano	2001– 2014 (VP Patient Care Services)
Lore Bogolin	2015 – 2020 (CNO)
Inna Makievsky	2020 (CNO)
Margaret (Peg) Wright	2020 – 2021 (Interim CNO)
Eilish Hourihan	2021 –(CNO)

## Appendix 3b: School of Nursing—Directors of Education

Sarah L. Sweet	1925 – 1953
Jane Secor	1954 – 1960
Agnes Tobin	1960 – 1961
C. Marie Andrew	1961 – 1968
Evaline P. Mayhan	1969 – 1972

## Appendix 4: Vassar Brothers Hospital WWII Honor Roll

### Ninety-one medical personnel who served in World War II

W. H. Everts, M.D.  
J. H. Farrow, M.D. (Oncology)  
Victor A. Bacile, M.D. (Ob/Gyn)  
Maxwell Gosse, M.D. (Surgery)  
F. K. Heath, M.D.  
Archibald L. Neighbors, M.D. (ENT)  
John F. Rogers, M.D. (Ob/Gyn)  
H. Weston B. Stibbs, M.D. (GP)  
Louis W. Stoller, M.D. (Surgery)  
Neil C. Stone, M.D. (Pediatrics)  
Lynn H. Thatcher, M.D. (GP)  
Samuel Stein, D.D.S.  
C. W. H. Arnold, D.D.S.  
Charles Kovacs, D.D.S.  
Frank Arico, JR. (OR Technician)  
Robert Sommer, M.D. (GP)  
M. Cornwell, R.N.  
S. J. Solomon, D.D.S.  
R. V. Berry, M.D.  
Austin J. Ehleider, D.D.S.  
V. Ackert, R.N.  
P. Gordon, R.N.  
B. Beam, R.N.  
Joseph L. Cummings, M.D. (GP/Psychiatry)  
M. Emerson, R.N.  
I. Bruns, R.N.  
J. Heisler, R.N.  
L. Beck, R.N.  
A. Carroll, R.N.  
B. Hicks, R.N.  
Martin Leiser, M.D. (Ob/Gyn)



J. Ralph Lockwood, M.D. (Internal Medicine)  
John Mead, M.D. (Surgery)  
Eleanor K. Peck, M.D. (Pediatrics)  
Benjamin Perrino, M.D. (Ob/Gyn)  
Charles E. Bauer, M.D. (Ophthalmology)  
Virgil B. De Witt, M.D. (GP)  
Benjamin Effron, M.D. (Pediatrics)  
Norman Fabian, M.D. (GP)  
L. Goldberg, M.D.  
Elvine. E. Gottdiener, M.D. (Radiology)  
Harold I. Korn, M.D. (GP)  
Ruben T. Lapidus, M.D. (Internal Medicine)  
E. Alan Larkin, M.D. (GP)  
Alexander A. Leonidoff, M.D. (Cardiology)  
M. William Lynn, M.D. (GP)  
Peter Mombello, M.D. (GP)  
Irving Ostrow, M.D. (ENT)  
Harold C. Rosenthal, M.D. (Surgery)  
J. B. Scott, M.D.  
Samuel Simon, M.D. (Urology/Surgery)  
J. R. Turiga, M.D.  
H. S. Weichsel, M.D.  
Thomas S. White, M.D.  
Charles Lamont, M.D. (Dermatology)  
Albert I. White, M.D. (Surgery)  
M. M. Greenbaum, M.D.  
H. A. Richardson, M.D.  
Charles F. MacDonald, D.D.S.  
Abraham Krakower, D.D.S.  
S. P. DuBois, D.D.S.  
P. Fullam, R.N.  
B. Shepard, R.N.  
M. Lasher, R.N.  
R. Arico (Jack-of-all-trades; VBH staff)  
R. Broas  
S. Chapman  
J. Walsh  
A. Janendo  
J. Broas  
E. Fischer  
Luis Breglia  
A. Sambells  
B. Nickse, R.N.  
Raymond DuPilka  
James Veach (orderly)  
S. Steele, R.N.  
Abraham H. Tinkelman, D.D.S.  
M. Schwartz, M.D.

J. Sandleben, R.N.  
 H. Curran  
 I. Syretchen, R.N.  
 E. Putnam, R.N.  
 H. Pierson, R.N. (Private Duty)  
 F. Hritz, R.N.  
 L. Thomson, R.N.  
 R. Clum, R.N.  
 B. Knapp, R.N.  
 J. Frey, R.N.  
 Janet VanScoy, R.N.  
 H. Rogers, R.N.

## Appendix 5: Timeline of Buildings, Additions, and Expansions

1887	Original Hospital opened in April
1890s	Carriage/Horse barn; stone wall; superintendent's cottage
1898	Laboratory/Library (converted to Home I in 1909)
1902	Second floor addition in front; main entrance portico; squared ends on both wings
1903-1908	Pathology Laboratory, Laundry facility, telephone switchboard, coolers installed
1910	Dispensary opened; ambulance charge set at \$5.00
1912	Superintendent's home converted to home for nurses
1914	First financial statement published; children's room converted to ward with eight beds
1915	Three-story center wing; nursery with eight bassinets and one incubator
1924	Second floor added from center wing to main building
1924	Four-story patient pavilion
1934	Mary Tower Memorial Home (converted to office space in 1989)
1941	Kitchen expanded and modernized
1943	Storeroom addition
1944	Laboratory addition
1950	Joseph Tower Memorial Building (converted to hospital department space in 1973)
1960	Community Circle
1961	Laundry building
1969	South Circle
1974	Radiation Therapy Center
1979	Demolition of the last section of "Old Vassar"
1982	Critical Care Unit



