



MONUMENT ON THE HILL

The History of Fauquier Hospital
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Preface

In the past half-century there has been considerable change in American society. We live in a much faster paced culture than did people of the 1950s. Inevitably, much of our sense of community has become diluted. Yet it is comforting to know that some things have remained the same. Fauquier Hospital's commitment to the community is one such anchor. Conversely, so is the community's commitment to its hospital. Here is the story of a community that wanted to be better than it was. It is a story of passion, commitment and generosity. At its core it is about people working together for a common goal — to build a hospital. Like a good novel with engaging characters and many plot twists, the story of Fauquier Hospital is full of suspense and human interest.

In its 45 years, Fauquier Hospital has grown from a small town hospital to one capable of offering the most advanced level of medical care. It owes its existence to thousands of local people who have cared for it over the decades. In almost fifty years of history the symbiotic relationship between the hospital and the community has not changed.

Today a healthy hospital continues to meet the needs of the people of Fauquier County and the surrounding areas. It is a monument to the spirit of cooperation that brought it to pass.

The First Fauquier Hospital

The first hospital in Fauquier County opened its doors February 26, 1925. It was located in a former residence at 32 Waterloo Street, Warrenton. Garner House, as it had been called, had been purchased by the Fauquier County Hospital Association for \$14,000 from Mrs. Frances Garner Grayson on July 30, 1924.

Garner House was a fitting place for such an historic endeavor as establishing the county's first hospital. Its former owner was historic in her own right. Mrs. Grayson was one of the earliest female aviators, and attempted to follow in the footsteps of Charles Lindbergh and become the first woman to fly across the Atlantic Ocean. After turning back on her first try, she attempted the flight a second time and was lost. No trace of Mrs. Grayson or her plane, "Dawn," were ever found.

Even earlier, an outbuilding on the Garner House property had been the law office of one of Warrenton's most famous sons, John Marshall, who later became a justice on the United States Supreme Court.

When the tiny hospital opened in 1925, it had a 20-bed capacity, adequate for such a small community as Fauquier. Its first patient was George Campbell, who was critically injured in an automobile accident and treated at the new hospital. Mr. Campbell died, but his aunt, Miss Arabella Lawrence, was so impressed with the care he received that she made a significant donation to the hospital. Until the hospital closed in 1940, the first room to the left, just beyond the lobby, was known as the George Campbell Lawrence Memorial Room.

By the end of 1925 a total of 344 patients had been admitted to Fauquier County Hospital, as the facility had become known. There were 184 operations that year and 57 emergency treatments. Twenty-two babies were born there that year.

An End and A New Beginning

From 1926 through 1938 Fauquier County Hospital did rather poorly. The tiny non-profit hospital could not compete with other area hospitals. Many Fauquier County residents were skeptical that it could offer the same level of care they could find at hospitals in Northern Virginia, Charlottesville and Richmond. By 1938 all but one physician had left. For lack of support, Fauquier County Hospital closed in 1940 and all of its equipment was sold.

In 1941 a group of local physicians formed a for-profit corporation and purchased the old hospital with the goal of reopening it. Among them was Dr. Martin B. Hiden. Physicians' Hospital, Inc., as it was called, reopened on February 13, 1942, and was successful. During the war years it remained full to capacity, and a 16-bed wing was added to handle growing demand.

Physicians' Hospital remained profitable until 1953, when once again it failed to stack up favorably against other larger hospitals. On January 29, 1954 its ten physician stockholders met and resolved to solicit offers for the

sale of the hospital. A decision also was made to suspend operations because of continued losses.

Quickly a group of local citizens expressed interest in purchasing the hospital, if the right price could be agreed upon. A group of Washington, DC doctors also came forward with similar interest.

Ultimately, the stockholders of the hospital decided that it would be in better hands if sold locally. In May 1954 the citizen group, headed by prominent local businessman and civic leader Tom Frost, signed an option to buy Physicians' Hospital for \$70,000. Frost was well known in the community and across the state. A member of the Virginia General Assembly since 1952, he was at his best when serving the community and state he loved. Frost would go on to become the driving force in the life of Warrenton's hospital for the next fifteen years. It was, to a great extent, his vision that brought about the Fauquier Hospital of modern times.

The plan Frost and his group had was to quickly launch a community fund raising drive to collect \$110,000, adequate funds to purchase, repair and equip the hospital. Everyone involved pledged that no one would be refused admission to the new hospital.

The purchase option was set to expire on August 1, 1954. Frost knew that he had no time to waste in securing funding so that the deal could go through. He formed a finance committee, which included himself, the presidents of Fauquier County's four banks, and the members of the Fauquier County Board of Supervisors.

Early Fund Raising

Word spread quickly throughout the community that the committee was seeking to reopen the old hospital as a non-profit. The "Fauquier Hospital Fund" was established June 15, 1954, and citizens and businesses were encouraged to donate. The community quickly caught Frost's vision and the campaign went forward.

The first contribution toward the fund came from the Warrenton Jaycees, which donated \$500 and promised to offer future contributions totaling \$11,000. This was the shot in the arm the campaign needed to get going.

Contributions were taken at all four branches of the Fauquier National Bank (now known as The Fauquier Bank). A direct mail campaign began and door-to-door canvassers took to the streets. Forty women conducted a telephone solicitation drive, calling every home in the phone directory. The excitement was building.

Donations began to come in increments of \$10 to \$5,000. One \$10 gift came from a woman who admitted she really needed the money for groceries, but was glad to support the cause. The local Soroptimist Club raised \$700 from a benefit picnic. Local businesses began to solicit each other in support of the hospital.

Softball games were organized between different community groups to raise funds. There were bake sales, picnics, carnivals, musical programs and rummage sales.

As the campaign proceeded, the committee refined its numbers. It knew it needed \$70,000 for the purchase, and estimated \$10,000 for repairs, \$10,000 for equipment, and \$20,000 for initial operating capital – \$110,000 in total.

Not everyone in the community was completely enamored with the old Physicians' Hospital property. Some felt that it was in a bad location. Others felt that the price was too high. But most agreed that the correct way to proceed was to get Physicians' Hospital going again and then consider building a better hospital in a better place later.

The Suspense Builds

The story of how the Fauquier community rallied to regain its hospital is full of suspense. Just ten days before the purchase option was to expire the group was \$32,000 short of its goal. Frost and his committee put their heads together to brainstorm ways to increase giving. A week later, with just three days left, the effort was still \$26,000 short. But a wave of contributions came in during those last three days, and by the deadline, August 1, 1954, the committee had raised \$112,000 – \$2,000 over the goal. Donations had come in from people of all walks of life, rich and poor alike. In total, 1,090 donors gave to the campaign. The fund raising committee was ecstatic.

"The Fauquier Hospital Fund finance committee expresses its sincere thanks to every person whose contribution has made possible the success of this drive, and the many volunteer workers without whose tireless efforts the campaign might have faltered," said Tom Frost, speaking for the committee in an open letter to the public."

The fund raising committee decided to keep the campaign going until September 1 to raise another \$10,000 for a badly needed sprinkler system. Tom Frost declared that all donors prior to that date would be considered charter members of the new Fauquier Hospital, and a list would be published in *The Fauquier Democrat*.

The next month was full of busy work. The committee had many details to work out before a settlement could be completed. Circuit Court Judge R. V. Snead, along with Jack McCarthy, chairman of the Fauquier County Board of Supervisors, and H. L. Baxley, Chairman of the Fauquier County School Board, were tasked with naming the new hospital's first Board of Trustees. Fourteen men and women were selected.

W. L. Cowart, of Hamilton, Virginia, an experience hospital administrator, was retained on a temporary basis to oversee the transition from Physicians' Hospital to Fauquier Hospital.

And, of course, plans were set in motion to celebrate the victory. A rally was organized for August 31, 1954 at 8:00 PM at Warrenton High School to celebrate the handing over of the deed. It was a proper celebration for a project that drew the entire community together.

The Deal Goes Through

On September 1, 1954 the deal was ratified, and the new Fauquier Hospital Board of Trustees became stewards of the community's new hospital. Plans went forward to open the facility. Gerald DeHaven was hired as the first official administrator of Fauquier Hospital, and a group of community minded women calling itself the Fauquier Hospital Women's Auxiliary held its first organizational meeting September 14 to discuss how it could support the hospital. Miss Dorothy Neyhart, who spearheaded the creation of the organization, was named its first president.

The Women's Auxiliary wasted no time in getting to work. Neyhart called for local garden clubs to help maintain the grounds of the building, and four clubs came forward to plant shrubs and trees around the hospital. And the Auxiliary quickly established a Thrift Shop on Culpeper Street as its first fund raising project. Still in existence today (now on Main Street), the Fauquier Hospital Thrift Shop is the Auxiliary's longest running fund raising tool. Early funds raised went toward purchasing furniture for the hospital.

The new Fauquier Hospital obtained a temporary license from the Virginia Department of Health and was off and running. The local chapter of the American Red Cross offered its Gray Lady volunteers to help as nurses' aides and office assistants. Members of the Virginia Garden Club raised \$100 and volunteered to clean the entire facility.

As the momentum built, there was much that had to be done to make the facility all that people expected. To comply with state Health Department regulations, the hospital needed major improvements by the end of 1954. Local plumbers, under the director of L. J. Foley, Jr., replaced the hospital's coal furnace with a gas furnace. The labor was donated. The old coal bin was converted for use as a receiving room for accident victims.

The hospital also received a paint job.

In anticipation of once again having a hospital close to home, the Fauquier County Board of Supervisors directed county welfare workers to cancel all contracts with Washington, DC area hospital and to start using the new Fauquier Hospital.

The First Full Year

The year 1955 was a pivotal year in Fauquier Hospital's history. Now in its first full year of operation, it was a time of excitement and anticipation. But by the end of the year, it would prove to be a time for reconnoitering, for reconsidering the new hospital's initial vision.

In early 1955 Dr. Paul Candler became the hospital's first medical staff president. Assisting him were Drs. J. W. Sinclair (vice president), Dr. James L. Dellinger (secretary), and Dr. Cecil Finney (treasurer). These doctors were committed to making the new hospital all that it could be.

Though only months old, it already was time for the hospital's first expansion. To meet state Health Department regulations, it was easier to add a three-story addition to the building than to renovate space elsewhere for an Emergency Room, Operating Room and Delivery Room. The supplies and labor to construct the addition were donated by local businesses.

Many other functional and cosmetic changes were made to the facility during 1955. The installation of a

new sprinkler system was completed, saving the hospital considerable insurance costs. But it was not without complication. In order to provide enough water pressure for the system, the Town of Warrenton had to install a larger diameter water main at the corner of Culpeper and Lee Streets.

The Fauquier Hospital Women's Auxiliary, busy as ever, spent \$2,000 in 1955 to refurbish a room for physicians to maintain their medical records. They also refinished and painted all the beds and metal chairs in the facility.

The hospital also approved the purchase of an x-ray machine and began construction on a one-story addition to the building where it would be housed.

Community Support Continues

Under the leadership of Tom Frost the new hospital thrived. And the community remained faithful in supporting it financially. The Warrenton Horse Show held a fund raising event for the hospital, the prize being "Nellie Kelly," a donated thoroughbred mare. The Warrenton Presbyterian Church donated towels and wash clothes. The Home Demonstration Clubs of Fauquier held fund raising events to purchase needed hospital supplies.

During its first year of service the Women's Auxiliary raised more than \$5,400 for the purchase of furniture and other items. Its members numbered 361. Each paid dues of \$2 a year to be a part of the organization. The Thrift Shop outgrew its space and moved to another location on Culpeper Street.

Meanwhile, the hospital went about the day to day routine of providing medical care to Fauquier residents. Patients came and went, and the hospital quickly found itself stretched to capacity. Despite this frustration, the hospital had much to celebrate. Its new General Electric 300-MA x-ray machine was ordered at a cost of \$11,000, and the hospital was accepted as an active member of the American Hospital Association. Miss Ada Hemsley was named the hospital's first Director of Nursing, and Red Cross Gray Ladies became popular assistants, welcoming and escorting patients, and writing letters for them.

The Compass Swings In A New Direction

In November 1955 the Fauquier Hospital Board of Trustees met to discuss an issue it could never have guessed would have come up so quickly. Demand for medical services was outpacing the growth of the little hospital. Despite the improvements to the building, the board decided that the facility was inadequate to meet the growing need for services. Plans were first discussed to find a new site and build a new hospital.

By early December the wheels were already turning. Tom Frost opened a bank account to save money for a new hospital and donated the first \$1,000 himself. An \$18,700 grant from the Ford Foundation would be used to maintain the existing hospital while fund raising and planning went forward toward building a new facility.

The timing seemed right for thinking big. With a lack of rural hospitals across the country, Congress had passed the Hill-Burton Act, which authorized federal funds to help build new hospitals in rural communities. But could Fauquier Hospital qualify?

With influential businessman James P. Mills of Middleburg as chairman of the fund raising committee, a new hospital was set in the sights. The goal – a 50-bed hospital with a price tag of \$1,000,000.

It was estimated that \$167,000 was initially needed to apply for federal Hill-Burton Act funds. But the deadline set by the government was just a month away. Raising that kind of money by January 16, 1956 seemed like an impossible challenge. But Frost, Mills and the other leaders of the hospital were ready to go at it full steam ahead.

Once again the word went out to the community. This time the need for funds was even greater than before. But the new campaign got a quick boost when four anonymous benefactors came up with donations totaling \$115,000. Still, by Christmas 1955 the hospital was short \$52,000. And time was running out. James P. Mills called a meeting of his committee to discuss ways to stimulate donations.

While the fund raisers worked on the financial obstacles, other board members took on other parts of the project. The present hospital could be sold to generate funds for the new one. And a potential customer quickly was identified. The District Nursing Home of Manassas was interested in the building. Negotiations began. The estimated sale price was about \$100,000.

A hospital site committee was established and began formulating a plan for where to locate the new hospital. By the coming of the new year, the Fauquier community was abuzz with the new challenge. It was an ambitious project, but hospital leaders were undaunted.

Meeting The Challenge

The idea of building a brand new hospital in Warrenton was intriguing, and once again the community rallied together to bring the dream to reality. As the January 16, 1956 deadline approached, donations continued to come in. Most were cash donations, but a few were not. Mr. and Mrs. Kingman Douglass of Middleburg donated 10 shares of Cienega Tanker Corporation stock, which was quite valuable.

By early January 1956, 43 donors had helped the hospital reach its first goal. With \$167,000 secured, the hospital made application for federal Hill-Burton funds. Step two of the project was to continue the fund raising to \$500,000, approximately half of what was needed to build the hospital. The other half, everyone hoped, would come from matching Hill-Burton funds.

Later in January the 20-member Virginia Advisory Hospital Council met in Richmond to consider Fauquier Hospital's application for Hill-Burton funds. The Council was tasked with making recommendation as to which hospitals in Virginia were worthy of receiving federal funds. After considering the strength of Fauquier Hospital's application, and its fund raising efforts to date, the Council approved \$528,000 to build a new Fauquier Hospital.

Planning the Dream

Aside from collecting the necessary funds, the hospital had two more immediate hurdles. It needed a site for the new hospital and plans for its construction. The board began working with the Richmond architectural firm of Ballou and Justice to develop drawings of the proposed facility. Initial drawings were due by October 1, 1956 to fulfill Hill-Burton requirements. Local architect Washington Reed, Jr. was retained as an associate of Ballou and Justice for the sake of the project.

The board quickly spread the word around that it was interested in possible sites for construction of the hospital, and would welcome any land donations. By mid-February it was considering two sites seriously, and was encouraging other land owners to come forward. Eventually at least two other offers materialized. An anonymous supporter of the hospital donated a 30-acre tract of land for sale or use, and Warrenton resident Robert D. van Rojien offered a 17-acre tract just off Shirley Avenue. The site committee began studying the available properties to determine if any would be suitable for the new hospital.

Back On Waterloo Street

While various committees met to steer the construction project forward, the hospital on Waterloo Street was still serving patients. By early spring of 1956 the three-story addition was completed and put into use. About 25 Gray Ladies continued to provide assistance to the limited medical staff there.

The Soroptimist Club of Warrenton donated a \$420 resuscitator machine to the hospital, its first such device. It was designed to remove objects from the throat, restore breathing and provide oxygen. An additional grant of \$9,350 from the Ford Foundation was defraying the costs of building the new x-ray room.

By April 1956 the hospital had celebrated a few milestones. The 1,000th baby had been born at the facility, and the hospital had received an achievement award from the Virginia Hospital Service Association for its service to Blue Cross patients. In 1956 about 50-million Americans were enrolled in 86 different Blue Cross plans. Locally, 23% of Fauquier Hospital's patients were Blue Cross.

Miss Ruby Tate of Roanoke became the hospital's second Director of Nursing, succeeding Ada Hemsley. The hospital had 56 employees and an annual payroll of \$100,000. In 1956 the daily cost of a room at Fauquier Hospital was \$18.23, several dollars below the national average.

By May the new x-ray machine was operational, replacing a ten-year-old unit with a third as much power. Auxiliary members painted the walls of the new x-ray room peach, much nicer than the black walls of the old x-ray room.

Hospital Hill Is Chosen

By the middle of April 1956 the hospital site committee had decided on the 17-acre property donated by Mr. and Mrs. Robert D. van Roijen. With its proximity to town and majestic vistas, it seemed like the perfect place for the new hospital. Tom Frost remarked that the nice breeze on the hill will "add to the comfort of the patients and visitors."

The new hospital site was part of van Roijen's St. Leonard's Farm, hundreds of rolling acres roughly framed by Route 211 to the north, Fauquier Springs Road to the south, and Shirley Avenue to the east. Most of the farm is still intact today.

The van Roijen's were a wealthy and well-known family. Mr. van Roijen's brother, also of Warrenton, was the ambassador to the Netherlands. The van Roijen's had purchased St. Leonard's Farm in 1940 from the estate of John Barton Payne.

With the site chosen, there was another immediate problem to solve – water. Tom Frost made request to the Warrenton Town Council for free water and sewer service at the new building. But the Council was concerned about the amount of water that would be needed. It decided to grant sewer service but said that the hospital was on its own for a source of water. It suggested the hospital either take over one of the Town's existing wells, or drill its own.

In July 1956 Mr. George Offutt, III offered to donate the costs of drilling a new well on Hospital Hill. Two local dowsers used divining rods and a forked peach stick to locate what they thought would be the best place for the well. The drilling began and everyone was hopeful.

The Money Comes In

While the physical aspects of constructing a new hospital continued, so did the massive fund raising campaign. In early April 1956 the hospital was still short of \$134,000 it needed to reach its goal of \$500,000. But the community continued to chip away at the goal.

The Fauquier Lions Club donated \$1,000, the largest single contribution to date from a civic club. Other clubs held fund raisers and businesses donated their receipts. *The Fauquier Democrat* got behind the project with an editorial urging everyone to support the new hospital. Physicians and trustees wrote letters to the editor urging participation.

The Catholic Women's Club donated gowns handmade to the hospital's specifications to save it having to purchase them. There were livestock auctions, bake sales, bingo games. The Vint Hill Farms Station Army Base even donated \$550 from its July Welfare Fund Drive Carnival.

Another source of funds would hopefully come from the sale of the old hospital. Tom Frost reached a gentleman's agreement with the District Home of Manassas on the terms of sale of the property. The prospective owners were interested in converting the old hospital into a 75-bed convalescent home.

As the October 1 deadline drew closer, fund raising got a little more aggressive. Tom Frost approached the Fauquier County Board of Supervisors with a request for \$25,000 toward the hospital. Citing its importance to the community, Frost felt that the support of the supervisors would help stimulate people to give more. The supervisors approved the request in mid-May, bringing the campaign to within \$65,000 of its goal.

Auxiliary Takes The Lead

One of Fauquier Hospital's greatest assets turned out to be the Women's Auxiliary, which worked tirelessly to help in both the operation of the Waterloo Street hospital and the fund raising for the new hospital. The Auxiliary took on the leadership task of coordinating other community groups such as the various area garden clubs and the Home Demonstration Clubs.

By late spring 1956 the Auxiliary itself had raised almost \$10,000 and spent most of it on equipment and improvements to the existing hospital. Most of the money came from sales at the Thrift Shop. Now it felt it was time to start turning its attention more toward the fund raising effort for the new hospital.

Plans were made for the first of several Auxiliary sponsored fall fashion shows. Woodward and Lothrop donated the fashions and area women volunteered as models. The shows were held at Warrenton High School, and the funds donated to the construction campaign.

Fortunately for the hospital, a one-month extension had been granted toward meeting its \$500,000 goal so that architects would have more time for preparing plans. Still short of the goal, everyone breathed a sign of relief and was thankful for the extra 30 days. The new goal was November 1, 1956.

Honing The Vision

Frost and his team were beginning to get pretty specific about what the new Fauquier Hospital would be like. Gerald DeHaven, Washington Reed and two physicians had toured hospitals in Lexington and Waynesboro. They had come back with many ideas, the main one being the need to air condition the new facility. In the mid-50s air conditioning was not as commonplace as it is today. But the team felt that it would be necessary to the new hospital.

In September 1956 Ballou and Justice released the first architectural sketch of the new hospital. It would be a 57-bed hospital constructed all on one level. In the mid-50s this design was deemed the most efficient. It kept construction costs lower and allowed easy access to all areas of the building. The new hospital would be fully air-conditioned, and would feature an 80-space parking lot.

The hospital Board of Trustees quickly approved the drawings, as did various state and federal authorities. But securing construction bids was delayed until the fund raising deadline was met. If bids were requested shortly after November 1, it was felt that construction could begin in the spring of 1957, when weather would be perfect.

To celebrate the progress and stimulate community participation, a large sign was erected at the bottom of Hospital Hill stating, "Future Location Fauquier Hospital. Have you made your contribution?" But the sign was ordered removed by Meade Palmer of the County Zoning Administration because it was too close to a business.

New Challenges

In November 1956 Tom Frost officially announced the sale of the Waterloo Street hospital building to the District Home of Manassas for \$112,500. The hospital recouped its expenses to purchase and improve the property. The District Home would occupy it as soon as Fauquier Hospital relocated.

Meanwhile, the original estimate of one-million dollars to build the new hospital was creeping up. A steel strike had caused the cost of steel to rise. And adding air-conditioning was not in the original estimate. The hospital put the plans out for bid in early January 1957 to 13 firms and hoped for the best.

The hospital had met its financial goals, and Hill-Burton funds were pending. The project was going forward, though more funds were needed. The fund raising campaign continued.

In early January the water committee met to discuss one of the hospital's ongoing dilemmas. A 765 foot well drilled on Hospital Hill had failed to produce enough water. The hospital went back to the Warrenton Town Council and struck a deal. Fauquier Hospital would be given town water at regular rates, and would get the first 15,000 gallons each month for free. In exchange, the hospital would install a 6-inch water main along Shirley Avenue at a cost of \$13,000. The main would be turned over to the Town.

On February 15, 1957 the hospital building committee and architects met in Richmond and opened the construction bids. The low bidder was the English Construction Company of Alta Vista, VA. The winning bid was \$1,248,000. But due to architectural fees, air-conditioning and supply cost increases, it was felt that an additional \$200,000 would be needed. Hill-Burton funds of \$575,850, plus what the hospital had raised (including the anticipated sale of the existing building) brought the total raised to \$1,255,831. Failure to raise the remainder of the funds would disqualify the hospital from the Hill-Burton check.

"We have 15 other communities standing in line with their money, waiting to receive Hill-Burton assistance," said Robert Hamm, administration of Hill-Burton for Virginia. "They will get it if you falter. You would have to stand in line for years before you'd be eligible again for federal aid."

Though Hamm praised the hospital for raising so much money without the aid of a professional fund raising firm, the challenge was clearly set. Once again Tom Frost took the lead. He urged everyone to give generously, and he asked them to write to Fauquier natives living outside the area who were still sentimental about their home. He formed a committee of sixty people to make personal calls to friends. The pressure was on. If the hospital didn't sign a construction contract by March 15 it would lose Hill-Burton funds.

"The hospital is needed, and badly needed, but to get it we have got to work for it and anything that is worth anything is surely worth working for..." said William H. Gaines in a column in *The Fauquier Democrat*. "Are you willing to give of your time and of your money to help out now? If so we know the hospital can be an assured fact, but we have got to get together right away...."

As it had so many times before along the way, the Fauquier community was ready to meet the challenge. Fire fighters conducted a door-to-door canvas, letters went out to school children telling parents what was at stake, businesses dug deep and donated. All donations were welcomed.

"You will own as great a share in the hospital if you give \$5 as those who have already given so much," Tom Frost said. "If no one calls on you, send your money or pledge to Treasure J. E. Cox in Warrenton."

On March 14, with just one day to go, the campaign was still short \$32,000. The Board of Trustees made a decision to authorize Tom Frost to sign the contract with English Construction Company anyway. The papers were signed at 6:00 PM at Peoples National Bank. Frost said he had enough faith in the community to believe the rest of the funds would come in.

Ground Breaking

The construction contract allowed English Construction Company 420 days to build the hospital. Everyone was anxious to get started. Spring had arrived and the weather was favorable.

At a ground breaking ceremony held Tuesday, April 2, 1957, Warrenton Mayor Richard H. Marriott turned the first spadeful of earth on Hospital Hill. A small crowd of board members, physicians and county supervisors watched. Within hours of the ground breaking the English Construction Company went to work. Grading of the site began under the supervision of local civil engineer R. M. Bartenstein. The first task was to create a road from Shirley Avenue to the top of Hospital Hill.

By May the crew was excavating the foundation of the new hospital, and the water main was being laid along Shirley Avenue. Progress was swift during the warm months of summer. By July English's job superintendent, Stewart L. Floyd, announced that the foundation was taking shape, and that the hospital should be under roof by December. His estimate was later changed to January. He estimated completion of the hospital by the summer of 1958.

Anticipation was running high in the community as the new hospital began to take shape. It was a proud time in Fauquier County's history. Construction superintendent Robert B. Carpenter told people that no hospital in the state would be of a better design or construction.

The Cornerstone Is Laid

On October 13, 1957 a crowd gathered once again on Hospital Hill to watch as Mrs. Dudley Clark, one of the hospital's first major contributors, laid the cornerstone. Inside it were various documents, a copy of the first and current issues of *The Fauquier Democrat*, some of Tom Frost's personal effects, and a handful of change. The box also contained photographs of county officials, signatures of Fauquier County citizens collected at the County Clerk's office and various other items.

"The contents of this box have been gathered by numerous citizens of Fauquier County," said a letter placed in the box by the Board of Trustees. "It is hoped that upon opening this box, that you the new hospital trustees or directors will find some of the enclosed information interesting."

It was a bright, sunny day, and about 1,000 people came to watch the historic ceremony. There were many dignitaries in the crowd, including representatives from the State Department of Health and the Medical College of Virginia, supervisors from area jurisdictions, and administrators from other hospitals.

"I've never seen a finer site," said Charles Caldwell, administrator of the Medical College of Virginia Hospital. "This is one of the most beautiful settings for a hospital that I've ever seen. You could not make a better investment. Your children's children will bless you for it."

Architect Washington Reed was equally excited.

"When the job is finished, you'll find it's one of the most wonderful hospitals in this part of the world," he said.

The Warrenton High School Band played at the ceremony, and the Auxiliary served refreshments.

The Winter of 1957 - 1958

By the end of 1957 progress was still moving ahead on schedule, though delivery of roofing materials had been delayed. But because of bad weather, most of the month of January 1958 was lost. Construction resumed in early February, but getting the hospital under roof had to be delayed until mid-February.

Just when the construction seemed back on track, a blizzard hit Fauquier County in late February. With high winds, deep snow and near zero temperatures, construction came to a halt. Many people became ill that winter, and the hospital on Waterloo Street was packed. Army helicopters landed at the A&P supermarket parking lot at Waterloo Street and Shirley Avenue (now the Waterloo Station Shopping Center) to transport serious patients for treatment elsewhere.

High winds blew over an oil stove inside a rooftop room being constructed to house air conditioning equipment. The small fire caused \$500 damage. Bad winter weather also slowed down the delivery of supplies. Because of the construction time lost, Floyd revised his estimate of completion of the hospital to August 1958. Later, with more late deliveries, that estimate was delayed several more months.

The Other Workers

When spring came, the construction crew was not the only group of busy people working on Fauquier Hospital. The Women's Auxiliary had banked \$10,000 toward the project and was gearing up to decorate the lobby and many of the rooms and offices throughout the new hospital. They were choosing curtains for the building and making plans to establish a snack bar. They also were ready to landscape the hospital grounds, and were asking the public to donate shrubs.

In keeping with the observance of National Hospital Week, the mayor of Warrenton proclaimed May 11 - 17, 1958 as Warrenton Hospital Week. The new hospital held an open house so people from the community could view the progress up close. Amid ducts, pipes, wiring and walls that had yet to be plastered, twelve high school aged "Pink Ladies" gave tours to hundreds of people.

Back on Waterloo Street the first Fauquier Hospital was still chugging along. It now had 62 employees and 54 physicians. In 1957 it had admitted 1,800 patients.

Still short of the final dollars necessary to complete the construction, the fund raising campaigners continued their efforts. The Auxiliary turned over its \$10,000, and was planning another fashion show for the fall. And to keep the current hospital solvent, the Board of Trustees urged county residents to pay their hospital bills in full.

The Fall of 1958

By Fall 1958 the hospital was nearing completion. Construction crews were down to the final touches, and the Auxiliary was finishing up the landscape work that had been designed by Meade Palmer. November 16, 1958 was announced as the date the new hospital would be dedicated.

The November 13, 1958 issue of *The Fauquier Democrat* captured the excitement of the community. It published a special section detailing the hospital's history and complete information about the capabilities of the new hospital. In the section Tom Frost offered an open letter of thanks to all who had supported the effort. Virginia Governor J. Lindsay Almond, Jr. wrote a column to praise the people of Fauquier County. And Gerald DeHaven laid a charge upon the public for its continued care:

"The fight is not over now – support your hospital in every way possible. Your hospital is one of the most important buildings in Fauquier County," he told people. "Give to it, learn all you can about its role in the community and speak of it proudly."

After 20 months of construction, the new hospital was finally ready. Though officially licensed as a 57-bed hospital, the facility actually had room for 71 beds. The total cost of the new structure was \$1,456,000. It would serve a population of 30,000 people in Fauquier County as well as people in parts of Culpeper, Rappahannock and Prince William Counties.

"The dream is almost finished," said an editorial in *The Fauquier Democrat*. "The dream of a new Fauquier Hospital, shared by countless persons in the county and elsewhere, will become a step closer to realization with

the dedication of the hospital this Sunday.”

In all, citizens had raised \$800,000 toward the hospital; the balance came from Hill-Burton funds. The project was complete. The staff was ready to serve.

“The new hospital is a symbol to the nurses of what can be accomplished within a community...,” Director of Nursing Lillian Strawn said. “...we pledge to give to the patients of The Fauquier Hospital the best nursing care that is within our power to give.”

The Dedication

On Sunday, November 16, 1958 2,500 people attended the dedication of the new Fauquier Hospital. Architect Louis Ballou and contractor Curtis English presented Tom Frost with a gold key to the building. The ceremony was carried live over WEER radio.

The new facility was grand by all accounts. The 71-bed facility featured air conditioning throughout, a 30-foot square lobby with an aluminum entrance canopy, and three distinct nursing wings. There was a radiology department, laboratory, solarium, doctor’s lounge and meditation room. The new hospital had everything anyone could want. Everyone agreed it was first class, state-of-the-art.

“Sunday, November 16, 1958, is a day that will live long in the annals of Fauquier County,” said an editorial the following week in *The Fauquier Democrat*. “The formal dedication of the new Fauquier Hospital, one of the most modern and best equipped medical facilities in the state, was a prideful occasion, signaling... the triumphant conclusion of a long and arduous community effort.”

Miscellaneous Business

The final construction of the hospital was not completed until December 1, 1958. There was considerable work to do in getting the building ready for patients. The building was thoroughly cleaned, mostly by Auxiliary volunteers, and decorated. Furniture and equipment were put in place and tested.

On the business side, the hospital board decided it needed to require a partial deposit upon admitting anyone to the hospital, as other hospitals were doing. While it remained true to its promise never to turn anyone away because of lack of ability to pay, it did require a small down payment from those who had insurance or were private pay patients.

One of the great challenges faced by the early Fauquier Hospital was a lack of qualified nurses. To make working at Fauquier Hospital more attractive, in 1958 the hospital converted a seven-room home on Winchester Street into a nurses’ home. It was furnished by the Fauquier Chamber of Commerce, which moved furniture from the old soldiers home for use by the nurses. The hospital also provided transportation to and from the hospital.

Moving Day

In the month prior to moving day, as much equipment as possible was moved from the Waterloo Street hospital to the new one. The original plan was to move patients to the new Fauquier Hospital prior to Christmas 1958, but these plans were delayed when physicians needed more time to test the new hospital’s Operating Room for bacteria.

Finally, on Saturday, December 27, 1958 the move was on. Rescue squads from The Plains, Warrenton and Remington transported patients in their ambulances. Three area funeral homes also loaned their vehicles.

Twenty-seven patients and six babies were moved to the new hospital, the first of which were Mrs. Viola M. Kidwell and her new baby. Six ambulances made 33 trips. It took one hour and fifteen minutes. The next day the new Fauquier Hospital’s first baby was born. Terri Vivian Nalls arrived at 9:40 AM.

With all of the equipment and patients moved, the old hospital was turned over to the District Home of Manassas on January 1, 1959. Several of Fauquier Hospital’s nurses stayed behind to work for the District Home. With a large, new hospital to fill, Gerald DeHaven put out an urgent appeal for more nurses to help staff the facility.

Getting Settled

There is not much recorded about the new hospital's first year. By all accounts it was a year of challenges, not the least of which was adjusting to a tragic loss that affected many people in the community. Dr. William R. Pretlow, one of the hospital's earliest physicians, died unexpectedly in March 1959. Pretlow was an early leader in the life of Fauquier Hospital, and was well loved.

"Dr. Pretlow went out of his way to aid his medical colleagues and to help many sick persons who were not his patients," recounted an editorial in *The Fauquier Democrat*. "Last winter, for example, he braved bitter cold and high snow drifts to bring the first medical aid to a trapped family...."

In January 1960 the hospital received its first accreditation survey by the Joint Commission on Accreditation for Healthcare Organizations. A month later the hospital learned the good news that it had been fully accredited.

Mrs. Mildred Peery, the hospital's new Director of Nursing, was overseeing 58 full-time personnel, including 19 registered nurses.

Two events took place in 1960 that set the pace for what Fauquier Hospital was to become in the community. The first was the establishment of an endowment fund for the hospital's future growth. The second was the opening of an innovative but controversial Maternity Clinic.

With long-range insight, hospital leaders realized that the health of the institution depended on a sound financial footing. The Mary Chichester duPont Foundation of Wilmington, Delaware made a generous donation of \$20,000 to establish the endowment fund. Mary Chichester duPont was better known to Fauquier locals as Mrs. Dudley Clark, the same woman who had so generously given a large sum of money at the beginning of the fund raising campaign to build a new hospital.

The Board of Trustees set a goal of raising \$300,000 in the endowment fund's first five years. But within several months the fund was already a third of the way there. And by July 1960 it was nearing the half-way mark. This fund gave the hospital reserve capital during its early years, and laid the groundwork for future hospital growth.

The Maternity Clinic

In January 1960 another of Fauquier Hospital's early supporters, Mrs. James P. Mills, set out to establish a free maternity clinic at Fauquier Hospital for medically indigent women. Local doctors donated their services, and the clinic was established in the hospital's ER. Later it was moved to a room in the basement where it operated until 1975.

The establishment of the Fauquier Hospital Maternity Clinic was significant in several ways. First, it offered the first maternity services to women with no means to pay. Second, it became the focus of a national debate on birth control when it began offering voluntary sterilizations to its patients.

In 1960 birth control measures were controversial, especially among those of the conservative religious faiths. But the 1960s were a time of great world concern about overpopulation. The Maternity Clinic assumed a pioneer role in offering women birth control counseling, contraception and voluntary sterilizations. Because it was the first clinic in the nation to offer such sterilizations, the Maternity Clinic was lambasted by Washington, DC's Catholic Archbishop Patrick O'Boyle, who felt that sterilizing poor women, even with their consent, amounted to discrimination against poor people of color.

"Sterilization of the medically indigent – whether in a county in Virginia, or in far off Japan or Communist China or anywhere else in the world – is morally reprehensible regardless of whether or not it enjoys or seems to enjoy community support," O'Boyle said. The "obvious and crudely selfish and materialistic purpose [of the hospital's sterilization program] is to reduce the tax rate in the County."

O'Boyle's disdain was echoed by evangelist minister Billy Graham, though the clinic's position was supported by more liberal leaders in Methodist, Presbyterian and Unitarian churches.

"We are in serious danger when we take on ourselves to sterilize women even with their permission," Graham said. Mrs. Alice duPont Mills, on the other hand, firmly defended the clinic and its existence as a solution to what she saw as a world problem.

"One of the world's problems today is lack of love," Mills said. "Therefore my aim in life is to work for responsible parenthood. There is too much irresponsible parenthood in the world."

The Fauquier Hospital Maternity Clinic eventually became the impetus for change at the state legislative level. Virginia already had a law allowing sterilization of the "mentally feeble" – mostly the criminally insane. Partly because of the clinic's stand, the law was broadened to allow physicians to provide sterilizations to any adult requesting it. Virginia became one of the first states in the union with such a law.

The controversy grew more intense when Congressman Joelson of New Jersey, an opponent of voluntary sterilizations, called for a Congressional investigation into whether federal funds were being used by Fauquier Hospital to offer sterilization services. However, the clinic was completely self-supporting.

Locally, supporters of the Maternity Clinic insisted that its motives were first and foremost for the welfare of healthy babies. But that for women with too many children, who wanted a means to prevent further pregnancies, such services were not withheld.

"It is unfortunate that the clinic's comprehensive program of care for mother and child has been lost in the onslaught of publicity," concluded *The Fauquier Democrat* in a September 1962 editorial.

The Fauquier Hospital Maternity Clinic operated with no federal, state or hospital funds. It subsisted solely on donations. During its time of operation it provided care to hundreds of local women and delivered many babies. But throughout its years it never shook the stigma of being on the cutting edge of a controversial issue.

The Peery Years

The hospital's first administrator, Gerald DeHaven, stepped down in December 1960, handing over the reins to a 32-year-old administrator from Roanoke Hospital, C. Robert Peery. Peery came to Fauquier Hospital at a time when its bottom line was being threatened by a rising amount of bad debt.

Uncollected debts of \$100,000 prompted Peery and the Board of Trustees to get tough on those with the means to pay who didn't. A policy was established requiring all patients with insurance to pay a pre-treatment deposit of \$50. Those with no insurance were required to pay \$75. Peery quickly hired a credit manager, Mrs. Virginia W. Hartzell, to keep an eye on required patient deposits.

The issue of the hospital's bad debt problem prompted much confusion in the community. To some it smelled like financial weakness caused by the over-extension of resources to build a new hospital. No one wanted to see donations to the endowment fund used to cover bad debts. And the greater concern was for what would become of those donations if the hospital folded.

James P. Mills of the hospital's Board drafted a letter which appeared in *The Fauquier Democrat*. In his letter Mills clarified that all but \$20,000 of the debt had come from the prior hospital; it was not being generated because of the construction of the new hospital. Mills assured people that donations to the endowment fund were fully protected even if the hospital had to close down. He had much to say about what had created the tricky financial situation and what should be done about it.

"This situation has been creeping up slowly for a number of years similar to a locust plague whose breeding grounds in the jungles of Brazil make their slow encroachment upon the pampas of the Argentine," Mills said in colorful words. "...and all of us residing within the County should give our new Administrator our full support, and those owing the Hospital who have any conscience should step up and pay their indebtedness."

The Early 1960s

For the first few years of the 1960s operation of the hospital perked along with predictable success. There were no major growth issues with which to contend. Instead, it was a time of honing the smooth operation of the hospital. During this time:

- * The hospital worked on attracting more nurses by offering free 60-hour refresher courses to inactive nurses in the community.
- * The hospital formed a "Stork Club," offering expectant mothers tea and tours of the Maternity Wing in hopes they would choose Fauquier Hospital for their delivery.
- * The Auxiliary formed the Candy Striper program for young volunteers.
- * The Auxiliary and Fauquier Medical Society co-sponsored the community's oral immunization program to distribute the new Sabin polio vaccine. Clinics were set up around the county and 25,000 residents were immunized.

America in the mid 1960s was in the throes of much social upheaval. The civil rights movement was on a roll, and the country was waking up to the injustices suffered by its African-American citizens.

Prior to 1964, Fauquier Hospital, like many other institutions, was a segregated facility.

"A black person was not allowed to be in the same room with a white person," recalled Mae Benimon, a long-time hospital employee. "There were separate bathrooms in the basement for blacks as well as a separate cafeteria."

But the passage of the Civil Rights Act in 1964 put an end to segregation. And Fauquier Hospital quickly adjusted to the new status black citizens finally enjoyed.

Green Takes Control

In 1965 William H. Green, Jr. became the hospital's new administrator. Green would prove to be worthy leader for the young hospital, and would preside over some of its most significant years of growth and improvement. There was no "honeymoon period" for the new leader. He assumed the post during an intense time of change for the health care industry all across the nation.

About the time Green took over as administrator Congress signed Medicare into effect. Guaranteeing certain health care coverages to America's seniors as an entitlement, health care was never to be the same. The hospital was accredited by the Social Security Administration to provide Medicare services in July 1966. The effect of this was almost immediate. A wave of senior citizens began taking advantage of medical care they previously could not afford. Fauquier Hospital's nursing floors became filled to capacity.

Green hoped the new interest in Medicare services was just a novelty that would slow down after a month. But patients kept coming. With occupancy pushing 100 percent, Green was faced with a situation of overcrowding. About 50% of the hospital's patients were seniors, patients who frequently had conditions that required a high length-of-stay.

With just 63 beds, 21 of which for maternity patients, the hospital could not keep up with the demand. It quickly moved ahead with plans to build a new 28-bed medical-surgical wing. By October 1966 the hospital had been approved for \$326,442 in Hill-Burton funds to build the new wing, about half of what it needed. Once again the hospital would call on the community to help generate the rest of the funds.

"Your hospital is at the crossroads where it can neither afford to turn the clock back nor hold it still if it is truly going to meet the hospitalization needs of the people," a letter addressed to hospital supporters said. "For the first time in ten years we are appealing to each of you for new construction funds for the hospital."

In 1967 the Board chose Ballou and Justice to design the wing. Then it put the project out for bid to find a construction company and get a more accurate estimate of the cost.

1967 posed other challenges for the hospital. The nation was a war in Vietnam. The demand for medical supplies generated by the war drove up the cost of supplies for hospitals nationwide. And a new law establishing a minimum wage standard went into effect in early 1967, requiring the hospital to pay each employee at least \$1 per hour. These pressures created a need for more revenue. A general rate increase of 20 percent was the answer. Semi-private room rates were increased to \$19. Private rooms went for \$26.

In August 1967 the Board of Trustees reviewed construction bids for the new wing. Several days later it held a special meeting to make the decision. With a bid of \$680,000, the firm of Sharpe and Hamaker of Arlington, Virginia was awarded the project. It was expected to take 15 months to complete.

A New Wing Takes Shape

On October 1, 1967 a ceremony was held to break ground on what would eventually be named the Tom Frost Wing. Former Congressman Howard W. Smith turned the first spade of earth. Three days later construction began. With the hospital census consistently in the high 90 percent range, the wing was badly needed.

Tom Frost went back to the community for help. Noting that this was the first appeal for construction donations since the hospital was built in 1958, he asked for \$400,000 in contributions.

The Women's Auxiliary was the first to get on board. It offered the proceeds of its annual Follies variety show, a fund raising tool it had first put into service successfully in 1960. Now in its seventh year, the show raised \$10,000 for the project. The Auxiliary generated thousands more dollars through an auction of furniture

donated by Fauquier National Bank and 500 other donated items.

Local Home Demonstration Clubs held a "Country Store," selling food items from kitchens and gardens around the county.

In January 1968 Frost approached the Warrenton Town Council with a request for \$25,000. But it was not popular with the Council. Mayor Byrnal Haley (who also was a member of the hospital's Board of Trustees) noted that the Town already was giving the hospital inexpensive water and was not getting any tax revenue back.

Later that month hospital Board members J. North Fletcher and Louis Stephenson approached the Fauquier County Board of Supervisors with the same request, reminding them that they had made a donation of the same amount when the hospital was first built.

Hospital employees stepped up to the plate with support for construction of the new wing. A collection of \$1,150 was turned over to the Board by Ray Pennington, the hospital's first radiology technician. Local horse breeders donated stud fees from eight champion stallions, and Virginia Electric and Power Company (now known as Dominion Power) gave more than \$4,300.

Despite the incoming donations, by the fall of 1968 the hospital had raised only \$247,000. It still found itself \$150,000 short of its goal. The total cost for the wing was \$680,000 for construction and another \$100,000 for equipment – \$780,000.

Tom Frost continued his appeals to the community for help. Little by little it came in. But by the end of the year, with construction nearing completion, the campaign was still \$100,000 short.

The hospital's first expansion — the Tom Frost Wing — was officially dedicated January 26, 1969. About 350 people attended the indoor ceremony. Named for the man who had done so much for the hospital, it brought its bed count to 91. On February 4, 1969 Thornton D. Semones of Amisville became the first patient admitted to the new \$780,000 wing. Just ten days later the wing was half occupied.

A Sad Passing

It was fortuitous that the new wing was named in honor of the hospital's prime supporter. On September 18, 1969 Tom Frost died of a heart attack at the age of 64. He had been in Richmond on General Assembly business, and was having dinner with Fauquier County Clerk Harvey Pearson when it happened.

Frost was mourned by the entire community and state. Newspapers carried his obituary as well as letters of appreciation from dignitaries all over Virginia, including Governor Mills Godwin.

"His concern and helpfulness toward others exemplified his generous and unselfish spirit," Godwin said. "In public service he gave unstintingly of himself to the people of his district and the entire state. His death constitutes a grievous personal loss to me, as well as to his colleagues in the General Assembly."

Frost's funeral was held at St. James Episcopal Church in Warrenton. From the church mourners walked the short distance to Warrenton Cemetery for his interment. The line of people stretched for blocks.

"Frost was really the driving force of the hospital," said R. M. Bartenstein, who had been the hospital's civil engineering consultant through much of its construction. "He had the reputation of going [to the hospital] at least once a day. If you happened to be there, you'd see him – he inevitably oversaw everything, but he'd always stop to say hello."

The End of A Decade

By the end of 1969 the Fauquier Hospital Board of Trustees announced that with the pledges and funds it had generated to date, it was just \$3,000 away from fully funding the new Tom Frost Wing. It is likely that the passing of the community icon had a lot to do with an increase in giving after the wing opened.

As the hospital braced itself for the 1970s, and new challenges, it was not content to rest after completion of the Tom Frost Wing. A \$40,000 renovation of existing space was winding down that would provide the hospital with a new newborn nursery and pediatric care unit. Space freed up during construction of these two units was to be outfitted as a new cardiac care unit.

The 1970s

The hospital took a brief breather from construction during the early 1970s but was staying busy with patient care. In 1972 over 3,000 patients were admitted, resulting in almost 26,000 patient days. More than 300 babies were born and almost 900 operations were performed.

But it didn't take long before the need for additional space was felt again. By the fall of 1973 the hospital had announced its intention to build another 35-bed unit at an estimated cost of \$5.2-million. The project was slated to add a second-story wing above the Tom Frost Wing, and a new Emergency Room, laboratory and physical therapy area. It was to be a two-year long project with projected completion in 1976.

Unfortunately for the hospital, getting approval for this project would turn out to be more difficult than anticipated. In March 1973 Virginia passed a law regulating the expansion of health care facilities. It was intended to prevent duplication of services throughout the state. Hospitals required a Certificate of Public Need (COPN) from the state Commissioner of Health in order expand services or add beds.

As the hospital went about making the necessary application for a COPN, it encountered a snag. The Virginia Department of Health presented regional planning district commissioners with statistics showing that Fauquier Hospital's planning district ranked third from the bottom in need for more hospital beds. Commissioners decided to put the burden of proof on the hospital to justify the need for more beds.

In November 1974 the hospital held a public meeting to begin the process of earning its COPN. The meeting took place at the Warren Green Building in Warrenton. The hospital made a successful case for its request and the Rappahannock-Rapidan Regional Planning District Commission recommended approval of both the bed increase and expansion of other services. But a week later the state's Comprehensive Health Planning Council went the other way on the issue, recommending that the state Commissioner of Health turn down Fauquier Hospital's request for 35 more beds. However, the Council said that it would consider approval of the other expansion plans provided the request for beds was removed.

A month later Fauquier Hospital withdrew its request for more beds and decided to pursue its plans to expand other areas of the hospital instead.

"This is a temporary reversal, but we're not dead," said Bill Green.

The Board of Trustees had intended that the additional beds would attract partial funding from Hill-Burton for the entire project. Now it would have to revise its project budget and go it alone on the expansion. By the end of 1974 the hospital had revised its application and resubmitted it, requesting a COPN for expansion without additional beds.

It was to be almost two years before the hospital finalized its plans for financing and construction of the expansion project. But it was by no means a time of limbo for the hospital. The Auxiliary had just celebrated its twentieth year and the \$100,000 of support it had given to the hospital during that time. The hospital was re-accredited by the JCAHO, with Bill Green noting that it had done better on the survey than ever before. The first issue of "Hospi-Topics" was published for hospital employees. Its first editor was Pam Burger, the hospital's first speech therapist, hired just a year before. Mildren Lane, RN, won a \$25 bond in a contest to name the newsletter.

After 15 years of operation, strictly through donated funds, the Fauquier Hospital Maternity Clinic became the hospital's financial responsibility. The clinic continued to operate just as it had, but it was for the first time supported by the hospital.

The Bicentennial Quilt

In mid-1975 the Fauquier Hospital Women's Auxiliary embarked on one of its more interesting and creative fund raising projects. With the country preparing to celebrate its bicentennial, the Auxiliary decided to create a bicentennial quilt for raffle. Mrs. Meade Palmer organized the project and recruited about 30 women to work on the quilt's 30 squares, each of which was to depict something of Fauquier County's history.

After months of research and planning, the quilt volunteers began stitching their squares. Each one took roughly 48 hours of work to complete. Mrs. Palmer sewed the quilt together and it quickly went on tour around Fauquier County. On July 4, 1976, the country's birthday, the quilt was raffled off at a Happy Birthday America celebration at P.B. Smith Elementary School. The winner of the quilt, who happened to be a loyal Auxilian, donated it back to the hospital, where it continued to hang on display in the lobby for many years.

Expansion Begins

As the hospital began to gear up for its next expansion, the need was growing. In May 1976 Dr. James Dellinger, a physician who had practiced at the hospital since its Waterloo Street days, was named Director of the Emergency Room. Under his leadership the ER recruited its own physicians to staff the facility around the clock. Previously the ER was only staffed with Fauquier Hospital doctors during the daytime. Contract physicians took up the slack at night. Now, under Dr. Dellinger, the ER was staffed all the time with its own physicians. The hospital had better control of the ER with its own staff, and was better positioned to meet growing demand for ER services.

In 1976 the hospital was riding a wave of new physicians setting up practice in Fauquier County. Since 1974 many new doctors had made Fauquier their home. Prior to that many physicians practiced at the hospital but kept their offices outside the community. More specialties became available in Fauquier, and the hospital continued to grow to provide the support for these physicians.

Finally, in August 1976 the Board of Trustees signed contracts authorizing the sale of almost \$4.2-million in bonds to finance the upcoming expansion. The bonds were sold through the Industrial Development Authority of Fauquier County. In the plans for this new project was:

- * A new ICU
- * Expanded radiology and physical therapy departments, pharmacy and OR suite
- * New ER, laboratory, central supply area, administration and business office areas.

Ground was broken October 10, 1976. William Doeller, president of the Board of Trustees, invited the entire community to attend. The ceremony was held just outside the Tom Frost Wing, where a new ICU would be built.

The expansion would proceed as no other project had before – a series of phased construction-occupation events. As each space was completed, it was occupied. The construction would then move to another area of the hospital.

The ICU was one of the jewels of the expansion project. It was to be built with a \$650,000 donation from Marie A. Moore of The Plains. Moore had given the money in honor of her mother, Marie Heye Clemens. Today that ICU (now called the Special Care Unit) still bears Mrs. Clemens' name.

The Expansion Proceeds

1977 was a good year for Fauquier Hospital. It was the year Dr. Christopher Leet became the first cardiologist to open a practice in Warrenton. Specialists were coming and hanging their shingles in Fauquier County. Little by little more of the services that once required a trip to Fairfax or Charlottesville were now available at Fauquier Hospital.

On September 19, 1977 the first phase of the expansion project was officially dedicated. The Marie Heye Clemens Special Care Unit featured eight rooms, complete with the most modern telemetry equipment.

In November the Auxiliary made a plea in the local newspaper for new members, citing the need for help in a brand new snack bar that was about to open. By early December the hospital's new entrance was open on the west side of the building. Prior to its opening patients were used to entering the hospital through the side of the building that faces Shirley Avenue. Now they took a new road to what had been the rear of the building. There they found a new 93-space parking lot.

About the same time a new administrative wing opened, adding badly needed office space to the growing hospital. The wing, named in honor of Robert D. van Roijen, contained admitting and business offices, data processing and fiscal services areas, a new medical records office, physician library/lounge, and telephone switchboard room.

In the new lobby was a new snack bar, gift shop and information desk.

When the administration wing and lobby opened, the construction focus moved on to a new laboratory, emergency room and physical therapy area. In the basement of the hospital a new central services area was under construction.

In 1978 the Warrenton Town Council approved a special use permit allowing Peter van Roijen to develop 1.2 acres of land along Hospital Drive as physician offices. The land had been part of his family's St. Leonard's Farm, which was immediately adjacent to the hospital campus. Later in the month van Roijen broke ground on

the construction, which eventually created 18,000 square feet of office space close to the hospital.

A New Emergency Room

One of the key features of the construction and renovation project was the completion of a brand new Emergency Department. Completed and opened in December 1978, it could treat 12 patients at the same time and had three-and-a-half times the space as the previous ER. And for the first time, the ER now had a waiting room.

To enhance the services of the new ER, the local Kiwanis Club built a lighted helipad adjacent to the hospital for air transports.

The Final Touches

In early 1979, with all the phases of the project complete, it was time for a formal dedication of the entire project. On April 26, 1979 about 200 people attended the dedication of the \$4.9-million project. The hospital's new look bore the names of many who had given so much to the facility over the decades. Mrs. Clarence A. Vawter dedicated the new Gift Shop to Dorothy Neyhart. Now in poor health, Miss Neyhart attended the ceremony in a wheel chair. J. North Fletcher dedicated the administrative wing to Robert van Roijen. And a new youth and pediatric center was named for Mrs. Marie A. Moore.

The project was the third major renovation and construction effort since the hospital opened in 1958. Bill Green was confident that the new equipment and facilities would be attractive in getting physicians to establish their primary practices in Fauquier, rather than in Northern Virginia. He was right. Warrenton's cache of physicians was growing quite diverse.

Green believed that increased patient utilization would follow this growth in the medical staff. By the fall of 1979 his prediction was proving correct. The fiscal year that had recently ended showed a 12.5% increase in utilization. Evidence, Green said, that another expansion was on the horizon. Green believed that finally people were becoming comfortable with the physicians and medical services available at the hospital. It was a time of transition in the thinking of the community. Northern Virginia hospitals were no longer seen as having significant advantages over the local hospital.

"Our medical staff is, I think, outstanding," Green noted. "This little hospital doesn't have to take a back seat to anybody for the quantity and quality of our medical staff."

As this project came to completion, the administration of the hospital was becoming too much for Green to handle on his own. Rodger H. Baker, a new assistant administrator, became Green's right-hand-man in the spring of 1979. Eventually he would take over operation of the hospital and lead it through the next several decades of its history.

Two Years of Steady Growth

The first two years of the 1980s were free of the noise and disruption of construction, but there were plenty of other signs of forward progress. A new Educational Services Unit, partially funded by the Auxiliary, was hard at work beefing up effort to inform patients about their conditions and treatments. The hospital installed a new audio visual system that piped patient education programs into all hospital rooms via closed circuit television.

A new radio system was installed that allowed local rescue squads to communicate with ER physicians and transmit vital statistics while en route to the hospital. This allowed the ER physicians to prescribe some forms of treatment before patients arrived, saving many lives.

In the early 80s the hospital had 40 physicians and 330 employees, 40 of which were registered nurses. In 1981 alone there were more than 3,800 admissions, 11,300 ER visits and 500 births at Fauquier Hospital.

Diagnostic capabilities grew to meet patient demands. The Radiology Department added its first nuclear scanner and ultrasound equipment. Dr. Michael M. Orlando, the Laboratory's first pathologist, was elevated to its first director. This was in response to a need to better coordinate all of the rapidly expanding diagnostic services in the Laboratory.

By the end of 1982 the hospital was once again facing the problem of overcrowding. It took the first steps in reviving its unsuccessful plan the add more hospital beds. In early 1983 the hospital presented its case for adding 30 more beds to the Northwestern Virginia Health Systems Project Review Committee. The committee

unanimously granted approval of the project, and it was passed along to the state Health Coordinating Council soon after. In February 1983 the plan received final approval from the Commissioner of Health, and Fauquier Hospital was ready to move forward with another expansion.

“As we look forward, the agenda for the future is indeed a challenge, but with the effort and interest of the community, I believe that we will survive,” Bill Green said in a 1983 brochure produced by the hospital to generate support for the new wing.

Changes In The Health Care System

No one could have known it in 1982, but the passage of the Tax Equity and Fiscal Responsibility Act by Congress was about to have a major impact on hospitals across the nation. The act was an early attempt to stem the quickly rising costs of medical care. It established specific approved fees for various Medicare services. Diagnostic Related Groups (DRGs), as they were called, laid down how much the government would pay for specific services. The approved fees were purposefully tight. Suddenly it became the responsibility of physicians and hospitals to provide those services and still maintain margin.

So while Fauquier Hospital was planning to add more beds, DRGs were about to usher in an age of forced efficiency. This would eventually bring about similar reform in private insurance — managed care — and the growth of outpatient care. DRGs would eventually affect utilization, driving down the need for more hospital beds a decade later. But for now, the hospital needed a solution to its overcrowding, so plans went forward.

“Too often in the past months, we have been forced to ask rescue squads to take patients elsewhere because of all of our beds are full,” Bill Green said.

On October 18, 1983 Fauquier Hospital received its COPN for a 30-bed medical-surgical wing to be created directly over its present administrative wing. The \$2.8-million project would bring the hospital’s bed count to 121, and would free up other parts of the hospital for outpatient services. The Hospital Building and Equipment Company of St. Louis was chosen as the contractor. About 150 people attended the ground breaking ceremony November 18, 1983. Thelma Russell, a nurse at Fauquier Hospital, presented a check for \$2,000 collected from hospital employees to be used toward the new wing.

By the spring of 1984 the ironwork for the new wing was going up. The J. North Fletcher Wing, as it would later be named, would feature 14 semi-private rooms, 8 private rooms, and isolation room and a VIP room. The Tom Frost Wing, formerly for medical-surgical care, would become strictly a medical wing.

Though long-time hospital champion J. North Fletcher had passed away in 1984, his family was in attendance when the new wing was dedicated March 10, 1985. It was an appropriate tribute to a man who had given decades of his time and service to the hospital. About 250 people attended the ceremony, the irony of its opening mostly unnoticed. Fauquier Hospital had just added beds at a time when many other hospitals in the area were closing beds due to low census. Yet it was hard to argue with local statistics. At the time of the wing’s dedication, Fauquier Hospital was operating at peak capacity. A few years down the road it, too, would experience the national trend toward decreased census

Branching Out

On December 13, 1984 Mrs. Charles O’Shaughnessy donated almost 3 acres of land to Fauquier Hospital. Located between the hospital and Shirley Avenue, the O’Shaughnessy property expanded the hospital campus yet further. Though no specific need for it had been identified at the time of the donation, the property would later be developed as a medical office building for the hospital in the late 1990s.

As the hospital’s physical campus was expanding, so was the reach of its services. In July 1985 Fauquier Hospital announced a corporate reorganization that was aimed at allowing it to generate revenue from other non-hospital business ventures. After four years of strategy development, the hospital decided to spin off other entities that would exist to support the hospital. Through these ventures, the hospital could operate a long-term care home, own and manage medical offices, and even operate specific physician practices.

Diversification was nothing original. Hospitals all over the nation were doing the same thing, operating other ventures under the umbrella of a single corporation. It was a means of maintaining margin in an era of decreasing reimbursements. Hospitals were feeling the pressure of decreasing Medicare revenues. Managed care was

hitting hard from the private side.

To attack declining revenues from the cost-cutting side, the hospital established a home health services division in 1985. The move was directly related to DRG pressure. Keeping people out of the hospital was the growing focus. Providing care at home where it was less expensive was a growing trend.

By early 1986 the Virginia Department of Health had granted Fauquier Hospital approval to construct a 60-bed expandable long-term care center on the hospital campus. To be operated by one of the hospital's sister corporations, it was one of the first diversification efforts attempted. The facility, later to be known as Warrenton Overlook Health and Rehabilitation Center, would not be completed until the early 1990s. But it was to become one of the hospital's most successful related ventures, providing an alternative to more expensive hospitalization.

Not The Only News

Adjusting to the changes in health care was not the only thing happening at Fauquier Hospital during the mid to late 1980s. In 1986 the recently renovated first floor medical wing was named for Dorothy Neyhart, who passed away in January of that year. Part of the hospital's original construction, the Neyhart Wing offered many more years of service to the hospital before it was torn down in 2002 to build a new structure.

Also in 1986, the hospital's new Cardiac Care unit was named in honor of Bill Green.

The Fauquier Hospital Auxiliary, which had dropped the word, "Women's" from its name in 1982 to welcome its new male members, was busy making an impact on numerous areas of hospital operations. In 1986 the group funded the construction of a 1,200 square foot solarium addition to the Snack Bar. It was dedicated to Doni Lescalleet, one of its most dedicated members.

That year the Auxiliary mounted its first Follies variety show in twenty years. The show was called "The White Coats Are Coming."

One of the most important moves for the hospital during this time was its decision to join the Voluntary Hospitals of America, Inc., a non-profit organization with 744 member hospitals that encouraged resource sharing. Member hospitals formed a purchasing cooperative which allowed them to get supplies at volume discounts. VHA members also shared strategic information on how to stay viable in the quickly changing health care market place.

A New Era

Though the corporate reorganization was announced in 1985, implementation actually took several years. Before it had completely come to pass, William Green left Fauquier Hospital after a disagreement with hospital medical professionals. After successfully navigating the hospital through more than twenty years of growth, Green left the hospital in the hands of his capable assistant administrator, Rodger Baker.

Baker followed through with the reorganization plans, presiding over the hospital as it established Countryside Family Practice in Marshall and other diversification projects. As assistant administrator for ten years prior to Green's leaving, he had lived through the hospital's highest years of utilization. Now the trends were going the other way and Baker would guide the hospital through the many changes that occurred in health care in the early 1990s.

By the time Baker took over as administrator in 1987 it was clear that the days of 100% occupancy were a thing of the past. Even before the trend was fully noticeable at Fauquier Hospital, it had occurred at other area hospitals. New medical technology geared toward outpatient service, along with Medicare and managed care, was driving occupancies down into the 30-40% range. It was time again to set the hospital's compass in a new direction.

The 1990s

In the early 1990s outpatient care blossomed. Often it was better for the patient, and it certainly was less expensive. With the steady decline of reimbursements from insurance companies and Medicare, hospitals were moving toward more outpatient care as a means of keeping costs under control.

The push for greater outpatient care was not driven solely by the cost issue. New technologies were allowing some forms of medical care to be performed better on an outpatient basis. Thanks to advances in surgical

techniques and equipment, patients could often return home faster after surgeries. It was time to make Fauquier Hospital more user friendly for outpatients.

In early 1990 the hospital Board of Trustees set into play another construction and renovation project geared at modernizing the 32-year-old facility for outpatient use. While the demand for outpatient services was increasing, inpatient care was declining. During this time the hospital also was under considerable pressure caused by corporate consolidation. Large hospital chains were acquiring smaller community hospitals all over the country. Fauquier Hospital was determined to remain independent as long as possible. To do so meant keeping its competitive edge.

The Fauquier Hospital Auxiliary was first in line to support a major hospital renovation. It pledged \$400,000 over a five-year period toward the project. A capital campaign was established in June 1990, and once again Fauquier Hospital found itself going to the community for help. Approximately \$8-million was needed for the first two phases of the \$17-million five-phase renovation. The first \$2-million would hopefully come from donations. The rest would be financed through the sale of industrial bonds.

The project allowed the renovation of 37,500 square feet of space and the addition of almost 28,000 square feet. Once again the Emergency Department was one of the areas targeted. A new 8,800 square foot department known as the Airlie Pavilion for Emergency Medicine was created. The extra space was necessary for the growing number of people seeking emergency care. More than 17,000 patients per year were using the facility.

As part of the ER construction, a new helipad was created just outside the ER door. Helicopters were a regular sight at the hospital in the early 1990s and continue to be critical in transporting multi-system trauma patients to regional trauma centers.

Other changes made to the facility during this project included a new laboratory with increased space, doubling of the Radiology Department, increased diagnostic equipment (such as a mobile MRI and permanent CT scanner), and more Operating Room space.

For patients, one of the most notable changes made was the consolidation of all outpatient services in one area, and the doubling of the size of the Outpatient Department. Also, an expanded two-story main lobby offered more space for patients and visitors.

Fauquier Hospital completed this project in 1993, and held a formal dedication ceremony on June 12, 1993.

Streamlining For The Future

In the mid-1990s the hospital closed the old Dorothy Neyhart Wing for patient care. Patient rooms were converted to office space for the hospital's growing support staff. Though it gave up patient beds to close this wing, the next five years proved that these beds would never be needed again. So in the late 1990s the hospital permanently delicensed these beds, reducing its bed count to 86 beds.

With outpatient services continuing to grow, and inpatient care declining, the move was designed to streamline the facility to better meet medical needs in the coming new century.

In 2002 the Dorothy Neyhart Wing, one of the hospital's original structures, was demolished to make way for new, modern construction.

The Current Project

With outpatient service areas modernized by the project of 1993, the hospital launched another construction project in 1999 geared at replacing inpatient facilities. An new 5-story tower is now under construction on the site of the old Dorothy Neyhart Wing. It will consolidate inpatient treatment areas, allow more space for an expanded food services area, new community resource library, and greater outpatient space. A major feature of this project is the creation of all private patient rooms, something the hospital must do to keep up with changing patient expectations and desires.

A History Of Growth

If he were alive today, Tom Frost would be proud to see how his little hospital has grown over the decades to meet the needs of the community. Today it is positioned as a modern community hospital that can offer almost every service available at larger hospital centers. Best of all, the community spirit that built Fauquier Hospital is

still alive today. It permeates the brick and mortar walls, it fills the hallways.

Fauquier Hospital is a hospital for the community, maintained by the community. Thousands of area residents and businesses still support the non-profit hospital financially. Its growing endowment fund has become more and more important in keeping Fauquier Hospital on the cutting edge. And volunteers are still a major part of the hospital's operation. As it looks to the future, the hospital will, no doubt, continue to depend upon the support of the community. The words of Tom Frost at the dedication of Fauquier Hospital must not be forgotten:

"Let us dedicate ourselves to keep alive and nourish the community spirit and attitudes which made all this possible," he said.

In all of Fauquier County's recent history there may be no project which has brought people of all walks of life together more than the construction and maintenance of its community hospital. It was created by the sweat and love of a caring community. Seated high on Hospital Hill, it is a monument to the triumph of neighbors working together for neighbors.

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