

Bethinking of Old Orleans

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Building Through The Years-Part I

On April 1, 1950 ground was broken for the present Arnold Gregory Memorial Hospital in Albion. Shown wielding a shovel to symbolize the start of construction is Mrs. Helen Burrows Hudson (1900-1964). At the time, she was first Vice Pres. of the Board of Directors, acting as President in the absence of Edward Archbald. The shovel was presented for the ceremony on behalf of the Albion Rotary Club by Past President William A. Monacelli. On-lookers in the background from left to right include in part Peter Snell, Walter Balcom, "Doc" Hawks, Dr. Dorothy Cooper, Muriel Northrup, Francis Weale and Dorothy Haines.

At this occasion Roy T. Merrill, a board member, acted as master of ceremonies, with the Rev. William Nixon of the Baptist Church delivering the invocation and the Rev. Vincent Browne of the Episcopal Church giving the benediction. Other speakers were: Sidney Eddy, second Vice-President; Miss Helen Yerger, Hospital Administrator (1964-1965); and Dr. Paul Lemcke and Charles Royle both of Rochester.

The ground-breaking took place about 75 yards east of the old hospital on land donated by Bert Hughson in 1949. This distance to the ceremonial site was reached by a temporary walk two planks wide.

On October 29, 1950 the cornerstone of the hospital was laid and on January 28, 1952 patients were transferred from the old hospital to the present one. Although he did not live to see this all take place it would have been a dream-come-true for Lynn M. Burrows, President of the Board from 1929 until his death in 1944. For it was he who first recognized the need and made real efforts to achieve a new building. In March of 1941 through his direction a building fund was set aside starting at \$5,000. With the able leadership of his successor, Edward B. Archbald and the backing of the entire community, the first part of the present hospital became a reality with 51 beds at a total cost of \$650,000.

However, by 1965 it became apparent that additional space and equipment was necessary to continue the ultimate in hospital services. A matching campaign goal of \$360,000 was more than reached against a two million dollar addition which was dedicated November 15, 1969 as the Dr. David Cooper Memorial Wing. With that addition the number of beds was practically doubled and thus Arnold Gregory Memorial Hospital became the first "all electric" hospital in the state.