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Lehigh Valley Health Network

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Lehigh Valley Hospital - 17th Street landmark in LVHN 120th anniversary

The year was 1899 when The Allentown Hospital opened its doors at what is now Lehigh Valley Hospital (LVH) - 17th Street in Allentown.

One-hundred-twenty years later, the Lehigh Valley Health Network has grown to provide care at eight hospital campuses throughout eastern Pennsylvania, numerous physician practices, health centers and ExpressCARE locations.

Allentown was a city of about 35,000 when the first patient, Clinton Troxell, an Easton bricklayer who fell from scaffolding, came through the new hospital's doors in 1899. The latest United States census shows an Allentown population of more than 121,000, ranking it the third largest city in the state.

A move to build the hospital began in 1892 when a group of community leaders incorporated and obtained a charter naming The Allentown Hospital. A fund was created by The Allentown Morning Call newspaper to collect donations to purchase the land and build the hospital.

Over the next several years, enthusiasm for the hospital waned and the project stalled. But Morning Call publisher David Miller, who established the hospital fund, continued to publicize the concept and raise money and eventually turned over \$1,900. The project began to move full-speed ahead. By February 1896, the Board was organized, the hospital chartered, and an active Ladies Auxiliary with 13 initial members was founded.

Next on the agenda

was to find a suitable piece of land on which to build. Organizers settled on a very valuable piece of property that was available, the Solomon Griesemer (a farmer and hotel operator) tract at 17th and Chew streets. Unfortunately, the land was put up for sale with the stipulation it not be used to build a hospital.

Acting as individuals, community leaders that included Col. Harry C. Trexler, Henry Leh, Frank M. Trexler, J.H. Pascoe and Dr. C. S. Martin purchased the property and in March 1897, transferred the deed to The Allentown Hospital Association. The land was purchased for \$5,297.51 and was paid for by the Ladies Auxiliary. Money was raised in various ways, including the sale of a cookbook, "The Up-to-Date Cookbook," which is digitally preserved by Library Services of Lehigh Valley Health Network.

Construction began in 1898 as fundraising continued. Once the hospital opened with 30-beds, the staff cared for 18 patients a day the first year. That number grew to a peak of 102 patients a day during the first 10 years to almost 8,000 patients, which lead to several additional expansions.

LVH - 17th Street is the health network's inner-city outpatient hub with services that include: outpatient surgery, emergency care, Sleep Center, Transitional-Skilled Unit, Geriatric Medicine through the Fleming Memory Center, Comprehensive Health Services including HIV and AIDS counseling and treatment, and adult and



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

To mark LVHN's 120th anniversary of its beginnings in Allentown, PPL Corp.'s landmark tower, Ninth and Hamilton streets, as well as Three City Center, 515 W. Hamilton St., were lit in LVHN's blue and green colors.

children's clinics and treatment programs such as tobacco cessation.

Lehigh Valley Health Network includes eight hospital campuses, three in Allentown including the region's only facility dedicated to orthopedic surgery; one in Bethlehem; one in East Stroudsburg; one in Hazleton, and two in Pottsville.

Also, there are 26 health centers caring for communities in seven counties; numerous primary and specialty care physician practices and 19 ExpressCARE locations throughout the region, including the area's only Children's ExpressCARE at the Health Center at Palmer Township; pharmacy, imaging, home health

services and lab services; inpatient and outpatient rehabilitation services, and preferred provider services through Valley Preferred.

Specialty care includes: trauma care at the region's busiest trauma center treating adults and children, burn care at the regional Burn Center, kidney and pancreas transplants; perinatal-neonatal, cardiac, cancer care, orthopedics, and neurology and complex neurosurgery capabilities including national certification as a Comprehensive Stroke Center.

The Lehigh Valley Cancer Institute, the Lehigh Valley Heart Institute and the Lehigh Valley Institute for Sur-

gical Excellence give clinicians of the highest caliber the necessary infrastructure, programs and partnerships to help community members stay healthy and provide the most advanced treatment when needed.

The Lehigh Valley Cancer Institute is a formal member of the Memorial Sloan Kettering (MSK) Cancer Alliance, a transformative initiative to improve the quality of care and outcomes for people with cancer in community health care settings, including access to key MSK clinical trials.

Robotic surgery is offered in 10 specialties in the health network with more than 14,000 procedures performed since

2008.

Lehigh Valley Reilly Children's Hospital, the only children's hospital and Level 4 NICU in the region, provides care in more than 30 specialties and general pediatrics.

Lehigh Valley Hospital - Cedar Crest has been recognized among the Top 5 hospitals in Pennsylvania by U.S. News & World Report for five consecutive years.

Lehigh Valley Hospital - Cedar Crest, Lehigh Valley Hospital - 17th Street and Lehigh Valley Hospital - Muhlenberg are national Magnet hospitals for excellence in nursing.

Information: LVHN.org