

Local Hospital Observes Silver Anniversary

Torrance Hospital Birthplace of 12,140 Babies in 25 Years

If all the persons born at Torrance Memorial Hospital were to gather around the hospital's 25th birthday cake this week, it would have to be large enough to accommodate a crowd about half the size of the city of Torrance.

As of last week there have been 12,140 babies delivered at the local hospital.

It was 25 years ago on May 17 that the first two patients qualified in a dead heat for the honor of being the first patients to enter the then brand new hospital.

According to the records, Earl A. Hillman of Torrance and Margaret Houts of Long Beach registered as the local institution's first patients.

Since that date more than 45,280 patients have been treated at the local hospital, according to the records of Miss Elsa Hammerstrom, superintendent.

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The hospital was built by Mrs. Jared Sidney Torrance, wife of the founder of the City of Torrance and other heirs as a memorial to Mr. Torrance. Actually the hospital was started from a grant of \$100,000 made by Mr. Torrance, who died before the hospital was completed.

An additional \$25,000 required to furnish the hospital was raised through public sale of membership in the Torrance Memorial Hospital Association.

Today, as always, the institution is a non-profit organization headed by a board of directors, all of whom serve without pay. Heading the present board is R. R. Smith, retired superintendent at National Supply Company. Other members of the present board include Grover C. Whyte, vice president; Dr. J. W. Beeman, treasurer; Donald Findley, secretary and Mrs. Dorothy Jamieson, Mrs. Charles A. Curtiss, Mrs. L. C. Miller, O. A. Kresse, Dr. Roy Flesher, all directors.

The hospital as established under the grant set up in a will by Mr. Torrance, originally contained 28 beds. The addition of two wings, one just completed last year at a cost of \$50,000, has increased the capacity to 65 beds.

It is the only hospital between Santa Monica and Long Beach rated as a Class A hospital by the American College of Surgeons and for that reason enjoys serving people from all over the Southland.

Since the institution is governed by an organization which must remain non-profit, the local hospital can offer rates comparable to any such Class A hospital in the state. Helping support the hospital is a grant averaging \$600 a month established by the hospital's founder in his will. The money is part of the profits from the Brack Shops of Los Angeles owned in part by Mr. Torrance.

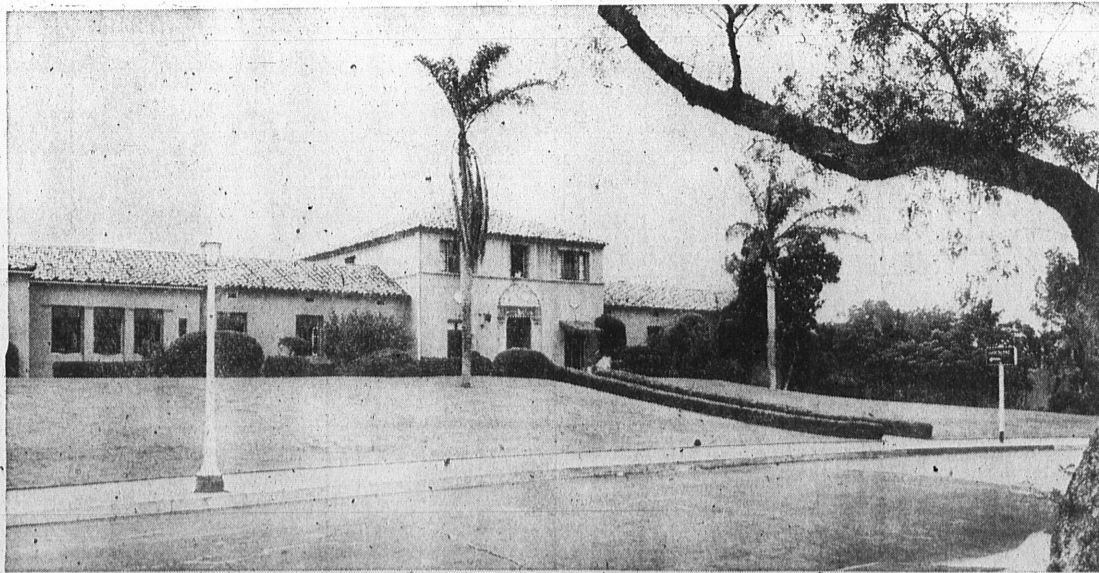
Miss Elsa Hammerstrom, present superintendent of the Torrance Memorial Hospital, took over the reins at the hospital in 1942. She succeeded Miss Esther Z. Maxwell, who together with Miss Hammerstrom have been the only two superintendents in the hospital's 25-year history. It was under her direct supervision that a 28-bed, \$50,000 wing was added to the present facilities last year.



TINIEST ARRIVAL . . . Smallest living tot ever to be delivered at the Torrance Memorial Hospital is Katherine Elizabeth Hineckley, who weighed in at just under two pounds. Since the hospital first opened 25 years ago this week, more than 12,140 new arrivals have listed the local hospital as their birthplace.



HOSPITAL HISTORY . . . This scene, recorded pictorially by Photographer La Plante just 25 years ago, shows Mrs. Helene Childs Torrance, wife of the city's founder, Jared Sidney Torrance, presenting the deed of the Torrance Memorial Hospital to Dr. J. S. Lancaster, president of the Torrance Hospital Association in 1925. Lewis Torrance and Brian K. Welch, two of the heirs of the founder of the hospital, witnessed the ceremony.



ANNIVERSARY . . . This week marks the completion of a quarter of a century of service by the Torrance Memorial Hospital to the city of Torrance and surrounding communities. The local institution is located on a grassy knoll at 1425 Engracia avenue.



First Superintendent Still Offers Support To Local Hospital

Miss Esther Z. Maxwell, the Torrance Memorial Hospital's first superintendent, is still active in the support of the institution though retired since 1942. It was under her supervision that the hospital first earned the rating of a Class A hospital as rated by the American College of Surgeons. She also supervised the purchase and installation of the hospital's first equipment 25 years ago.



Association's First President Served Community 13 Years

Dr. J. S. Lancaster as the first president of the Torrance Hospital Association was largely responsible for the sale of memberships in the association that subscribed \$25,000 to furnish the institution. His 13 years of service to the hospital and community ended with his untimely death in 1938. He was succeeded by R. R. Smith, a retired superintendent at National Supply who still serves as president. Donald Findley has served as secretary during the entire quarter century and is the "hardest working" member of the governing board.



Dark Years of 1932-33 'Lighted' by Efforts Of Dr. George Shidler

Dr. George P. Shidler, associate and co-worker of Dr. Lancaster, did much during the early days of the Torrance Memorial Hospital to help bolster the institution's finances. During the dark depression years of 1932-33, Dr. Shidler sparked a series of hospital balls and other benefits to keep the hospital's finances in balance and enable it to continue serving the community. He died on September 12, 1937, at the age of 55.



Widow of Hospital's Founder Crystallized Her Husband's Vision

Mrs. Helena Childs Torrance, late widow of the Founder of the City of Torrance and the Torrance Memorial Hospital, led the efforts to make certain that her husband's vision of a community hospital would become a reality. She herself left a \$2500 endowment to the hospital following her death on October 18, 1940. Many families still do not realize that Mrs. Torrance was their benefactor in times of financial stress.