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St. Peter's Hospital

1 2 5 Y E A R S

History of St. Peter's Hospital 1883 to 2008

St. Peter's history of service to Helena and the surrounding area dates back over 125 years.

The earliest plans for St. Peter's Hospital were made in 1883, but it was not until the next year that the hospital became a reality. The first building was frame and known as "The Grange." A miner, named Robinson, was the first patient.

The history of St. Peter's Community Hospital begins with a woman who arrived in Helena, Montana Territory, in 1880. Mrs. Henrietta Brewer, wife of Episcopal Missionary Rt. Reverend Leigh R. Brewer observed a need for another hospital to care for those in distress. St. John's Hospital, founded by the Roman Catholic Sisters of Charity of Leavenworth, already existed in Helena, but was not large enough to meet the needs of the growing city.

As early as 1882, historical records reveal hospital work performed by Mrs. Brewer. Her untiring efforts were largely responsible for Helena's modern St. Peter's Hospital. In 1883, Rev. Fredrick T. Webb, rector of St. Peter's, began his tour of the parish and discovered a great need for hospitalization of members in his care. On March 9, 1883, the vestry of St. Peter's church met for the first time, to discuss plans for maintaining a hospital for the medical care of people brought into Helena. The next year, on June 11, a board of trustees was elected to act as incorporators under the territorial laws.

The trustees, together with six Helena women, worked diligently to establish a hospital. One of the women's husband, Mr. Samuel J. Jones, purchased what was then known as the Grange Building and moved it from the Helena Valley to the Northern Pacific Railroad tracks. The former A.M. Holter residence, located on Jackson Street, was then secured and the Hospital moved to the more accessible location. Early records are vague as to when these buildings were occupied.

Through Mrs. Brewer's determination and effort, St. Peter's Hospital was established in 1883 and the Hospital began incorporation proceedings in 1884. Bishop Brewer and Reverend F.T. Webb, rector of the parish, served as president and vice-president of the board. The other trustees were Samuel J. Jones, William A. Chessman, Governor John S. Crosby, Judge William Chumasero, W.E. Cullen, Dr. J.J. Leiser, and E.D. Edgerton.

In the early days, the Hospital existed largely on faith and the good deeds of others. Little capital was available and no one involved with the project had any practical experience with Hospital management.

Mrs. Brewer recognized the need to have a person trained in Hospital work to manage and oversee the Hospital's activities. She traveled first to Connecticut, and then to New York to secure the services of Miss Georgia C. Young, a graduate of the nurse's training school at Connecticut State Hospital. Although informed



HENRIETTA BREWER,
FOUNDER OF ST. PETER'S HOSPITAL

that the hospital was without resources and supplies, Miss Young accepted the call and served as a nurse beginning in 1883 and then as superintendent of St. Peter's from 1886 to 1906 when she retired. The Auxiliary of the Diocese of Connecticut appropriated \$400 a year for the salary of Miss Young.

With the Hospital under sound management, Mrs. Brewer's next project was to build a permanent facility. On June 11, 1886, St. Peter's Hospital was incorporated. The same year, land was purchased at the corner of 11th Avenue and Logan Street and on December 15, 1887, St. Peter's Hospital occupied a new building constructed specifically for that purpose.



"We want this hospital to be open to every class and every condition. We will raise no questions about schools of medicine or of race or of class or of color. We say to all the community, this is the Lord's house . . . and all shall receive equal treatment and equal welcome to the service that can be rendered. No question of race, or religion, or faith, or belief, shall come in here. It is suffering humanity we are trying to serve and in serving it we are also serving humanity's author and the Lord." -- BISHOP L. R. BREWER AT THE LAYING OF THE CORNERSTONE OF THE HENRIETTA BREWER MEMORIAL

Bishop Brewer laid the cornerstone of the splendid new building, located at the corner of Eleventh Avenue and what was then called Pear Street (but now is Logan Street) in April 1886. Bishop Brewer ruefully noted in his diary that

“we shall also have a debt of \$15,500; that will be a trouble and a worry to me, but the work is begun and must go on.” The official opening day, during which many visitors toured the building, came on April 17, 1888. “St. Peter’s Hospital is now fairly started on its work of love and mercy,” the Bishop wrote.

The originally constructed hospital contained seven private rooms, a chapel, a 10-patient ward, a large room for contagious patients and a reading room, towards which \$1,000 was given by Mrs. Freudenberg, in memory of her husband, Col. Carl Gottfried Freudenberg. Most of the hospital furnishings, as well as the furniture in the chapel, the organ, the stained glass windows, and all household linen and supplies were provided through the efforts of Mrs. Brewer.

An operating room, which B.H. Tatem built and equipped in memory of his father, a Philadelphia physician, was ready for use in 1898. Later, when additional space was needed for general patients, Mrs. Brewer had a small cottage built behind the Hospital for contagious cases.

Mrs. Brewer and Mrs. A. M. Holter organized a group of women from St. Peter’s Church to assist with the day-to-day work of the Hospital. Members of this group who became known as the “lady visitors” included Mrs. Brewer, Mrs. Holter, and Mrs. S. J. Jones, Mrs. Major Eckles, Mrs. F.T. Webb, and Mrs. W. M. Biggs. The lady visitors inspected the Hospital weekly, made suggestions for improvements, and performed much of the actual cooking and cleaning required. Their selfless dedication and devotion to their humanitarian task carried the Hospital through difficult times.

On a Saturday in March, 1889, the Bishop wrote in his diary about a visit he made to the fine new hospital building. “I found everything in good condition,” he said, “the wards were full, the private rooms occupied. There was a man with his hands gone; they were blown off in a mine by a charge of dynamite. He told me he had been at work for some time in the Jay Gould Mine. He gave up the place to go back to his cabin where he had been prospecting. In crossing the gulch on fallen timber, he fell into the water. He managed to get out of the water and crawl up the bank, and remained unconscious there for four days. When he came to his senses, his feet were frozen. Somehow he managed by great exertion to get to a ranch from where he was taken to our Hospital. There, both feet had to be amputated. He is now in a fair way to recovery and cheerful. He has no means, but we shall take care of him and raise money to buy him artificial feet. I found him with a catalog relating to artificial limbs by the side of his cot and he was planning how he could yet make his own living. I believe that such work is true of him who came to heal human infirmities!”

Within a few short years, the Hospital was turning away patients due to a lack of room. Mrs. Brewer began to plan for an addition to the Hospital. When a fire on March 16, 1901, partially destroyed the building with losses amounting to \$7,994, the need became pressing. Later Bishop Brewer received a



HOLTER HOME, CIRCA 1885
1883-85 ACCOUNT BOOKS SHOW PAYMENTS FROM 65 PATIENTS AND DUES FROM TWO MINES FOR TREATMENT OF EMPLOYEES

The July 1961 MONTANA The Magazine of Western History, reported: A small group of “visiting ladies” organized in Helena in the 1880s by Mrs. Brewer began ministering to the sick. The first patient was admitted July 27, 1884, to “The Grange,” a large house which had been moved from the Helena Valley to a location near the Northern Pacific tracks on Helena Avenue. The former A.M. Holter residence on Jackson Street was later used by the infant hospital, which Bishop Brewer described in his diary in 1884: “St. Peter’s Hospital, started last June, is struggling on with its difficulties, working its way slowly toward permanence and success. What shall be done with it? That is a question that troubles me now. I dislike to make appeals. Must I fold my hands and wait for what will come? God help me to be wise and prudent! God help the Church to be wise and generous!”



ST. PETER’S HOSPITAL, CIRCA 1890, WAS LOCATED IN TODAY’S DOWNTOWN HELENA ON 11TH AVENUE BETWEEN LOGAN AND JACKSON AND CRUISE.

In 1894, St. Peter’s recorded 238 inpatients and by 1901, the annual patient load had risen to 427. The building included a sick ward, contagious ward, convalescent ward, chapel, nurses’ room, and basement kitchen and laundry. The building was destroyed by fire in 1901; stones in the foreground were left by gold-mining operations. The Hospital was rebuilt in the same location and an addition was constructed in 1927. St. Peter’s remained at the site until 1968, when the facility moved to its current location on Broadway in southeast Helena.

donation of \$15,000 which not only replaced the section destroyed by fire but added much needed equipment and assured the financial success of the venture.

Mrs. Brewer worked tirelessly fund-raising toward her vision of a complete, modern Hospital, however, she did not live to see her

dream fulfilled as she died in 1903. Fund raising for a new hospital to commemorate Mrs. Brewer's memory was begun immediately following her death on March 17, 1903, and increased on the commemoration of Bishop Brewer's 70th birthday.

Bishop Brewer made sad reference to his wife's illness and death in 1902. "There is little to be said, but the words of the old patriarch of the East remained to give hope and comfort: 'The Lord gave and the Lord hath taken away.' My wife has been called to eternal rest, and I must go on with my work." In April, two years later, he wrote: "At Philipsburg, a class of boys handed me an envelope which contained \$12 and it was marked, 'For the Henrietta Brewer Memorial building of St. Peter's Hospital.' They had earned this money themselves, and thought up

the whole idea, and gave it to me. I am indeed grateful, not only for the gift of money, but for the gift of love in their attitude and industry."

The contract for the Henrietta Brewer building was let to general contractor E.W. Fiske of Helena on October 20, 1908. The structure was dedicated in March 1910 as a memorial to Henrietta Brewer whose unshakable faith and determination in the face of overwhelming obstacles established St. Peter's Hospital. Whereas the original building, with furnishings, cost about \$20,000, the Bishop noted in his diary that at least \$30,000 was still needed to pay for the building erected in his wife's memory. "My idea is that we put up the building and then wait for money to complete and furnish it," he wrote in 1908. The generous Easter offering at St. Peter's Parish in 1909 helped the project by \$2,200.



ST. PETER'S PROVIDED A TRAINING SCHOOL FOR NURSES FROM 1909 TO 1933.

St. Peter's provided a training school for nurses from 1909 to 1933.

In February of 1931, St. Peter's Hospital Board of Trustees amended the articles of incorporation and transferred ownership of the Hospital to the Helena community and it became known as St. Peter's Community Hospital. A 15-member board of directors elected from corporate membership governed the Hospital. Although the Episcopal ownership of the Hospital ended, the Diocese has maintained close ties to the Hospital. The bishop or his designee has a seat on the board of directors.

Also in 1931, a surgical wing was added to the Memorial Building between the Brewer wing and the 1887-hospital building. This brought a vital new obstetrical room, a modern operating room, the finest and most modern equipment, and a number of beautifully furnished private rooms. The project was made possible through the generosity of Mrs. Conrad Kohrs, in memory of her husband, a wealthy Deer Lodge rancher and philanthropist. In making the contribution, Mrs. Kohrs continued the practice of her husband who most generously assisted public charities and community enterprises.

After completion of the Conrad Kohrs addition, the original hospital was used as

a nurse's home until 1937 when Perkins House was built at the back of the lot. The old hospital was torn down in the late 1930s. Perkins House, the nurses' home, was constructed in 1937 from a legacy provided by Mr. and Mrs. Jamison L. Perkins, Montana pioneers.

In 1938, a carefully designed modern home was built for persons employed at St. Peter's. Funds for its erection were donated by the late Mrs. Harry W. Child in memory of her husband and her sister, Dr. Maria M. Dean, who for many years was closely connected with the hospital.

Florence Reid, superintendent of the hospital, received her training at Guy's Hospital in London, England, and prior to taking the position at St. Peter's had seven years hospital experience in Rhodesia, South Africa. She had been at St. Peter's for 15 years. Other supervisors were Medelieine Collishaw, fourth floor; Hazel Nordstrom, third floor; Mrs. Ed Donovan, second floor; and Mary Wilson and Mrs. Emery Schopfer, in charge at night.

The final addition to the Hospital was constructed in 1957. The spacious new George Cormack Memorial Wing, adjacent to the Kohrs Wing, replaced the original 1887 building and made St. Peter's a full-fledged community institution.



GROUNDBREAKING 1956

In 1972, St. John’s Hospital closed, leaving St. Peter’s as the only adult acute care facility in Helena. A veteran’s hospital at Fort Harrison and Shodair Children’s Hospital also served the healthcare needs of the Helena area.



WHEN ST. PETER’S OPENED AT ITS 2475 BROADWAY LOCATION, ABOUT 6,000 PATIENTS WERE BEING TREATED AT THE COMMUNITY HOSPITAL. THE PROJECT COST \$3.2 MILLION, OF WHICH \$750,000 WAS RAISED LOCALLY

The Hospital constructed a new building located at 2475 Broadway in 1968. The State of Montana licensed the current facility for 99 inpatient beds. All of the buildings that comprised the old St. Peter’s Hospital were eventually razed and an apartment complex occupies that site.

A St. Peter’s fund-raising brochure for the project stated: “The new St. Peter’s Community Hospital is geared for all levels of medicine, from intensive care of hospital patients through care for those needing care in their own homes.

Interwoven with this concept of patient orientation is a complete pattern of education of all personnel at all levels—professional people to service employees. The modernity of the hospital’s overall operations is typified by the closed circuit television being used in education of doctors, nurses, and all hospital associates, and reflected in the quality of the latest types of equipment available for patients’ rooms, in the operating theatre and building accessories.

Not content with creating a hospital for today’s demands, the planners of the new St. Peter’s Community Hospital directed the architect, a hospital specialist, to look to the future and make provisions for expansion as the needs develop.

Thus, St. Peter’s Community Hospital, having served Helena since the 1880s, is geared to offer Helena a haven of hope for her sick and injured for years to come.

Each department—pediatrics, surgery,

maternity and medical care—is a unit within itself. Nurses work only in their units. Supplies are distributed from a central area by pneumatic tube to any unit within 30 seconds. A communications system between patient and nurse provides that a request may be received and evaluated before the errand begins, thus serving every patient most efficiently.

The new hospital is a basic one-floor design, on a 27-acre site overlooking the scenic Helena Valley from the city’s eastside. Thus it is more economically expandable than the high rise older hospital downtown.

Engineering provides for withstanding impact of an earthquake up to a scale of eight. The concrete and steel structure, with attractive russet colored brick exterior, is designed for years of use with minimal maintenance and expense. The new construction and furnishings cost approximately \$4 million.”

The current facility has undergone significant changes and expansion. A major construction project in 1982 added needed space to the laboratory and emergency services. The Hospital also added services based on community need. In 1984 inpatient psychiatry opened. That same year, the Hospital acquired ambulance services from a private community provider. In 1986, Shodair Children’s Hospital made a decision to not provide pediatric care and the Hospital assumed acute care for children as well as adults.

A major construction project in 1992 added a new medical wing and made way for expanding outpatient services. St. Peter’s acquired homecare services in 1994. In 1996, the Cancer Treatment Center of St. Peter’s opened, enabling Helena residents to have both chemotherapy and radiation therapy locally. Prior to that time, cancer patients rode daily in vans to Butte for radiation treatment. The facility was expanded in 2001.

In 1999 St. Peter’s partnered with local physicians to open the Helena Surgi-Center located adjacent to the Hospital campus. In September of the same year, the Hospital constructed a medical office building connected to the west side of the building. The building is named for the first female physician in Helena, Dr. Maria Dean.



The Hospital in December 2003 announced that it would move forward with a cost-effective expansion project to meet the current and future needs of Helena and the surrounding area due to the increasing population, aging demographics, and changing technology demands. The \$43 million project included construction of an efficient, four-story patient wing which will consolidate inpatient services, as well as a new and expanded emergency department and intensive care unit, new radiology department, expanded Same Day Services and Cardiology areas, a public corridor offering convenient admitting and registration and easy access to amenities, and representatives from the Helena churches, undertook the responsibility that had been shouldered by Mrs. Brewer in the Hospital's early days. The fundraising assistance given to the Hospital by this dedicated group has ranged from providing charity care to furnishing hospital departments with needed equipment. Today, the Association continues its long-standing tradition of support for St. Peter's Hospital.

125 Years of Health

In 2008, St. Peter's Hospital turns 125 and will begin occupying a new, four-story new patient wing. A lot has changed over the past one and a quarter centuries, but one thing that has stayed the same is St. Peter's presence and dedication to improving the health of people in the Helena region.

"For 125 years, the community and St. Peter's have had a vital relationship," says John Solheim, President & CEO. "St. Peter's has played a key role in helping our area become what it is now. But if it weren't for the community's support through all those years, St. Peter's wouldn't be what it is today."

St. Peter's continues to answer the needs of Helena and the surrounding communities and strives to offer the best medical care available.



BOB MORGAN RENDITION OF AN ORIGINAL ST. PETER'S HOSPITAL CIRCA 1890



ARCHITECTURAL RENDERING OF NEW PATIENT WING MAIN ENTRANCE 2008

Events that Made it Possible

1882 - 2008



1887

New brick hospital built on the corner of 11th Avenue and Logan Street; the hospital contained seven private rooms, a chapel, a reading room, a ten-patient ward and a room for contagious cases

1887

“Lady Visitors” beginning of the Hospital Association; the lady visitors inspected the hospital weekly, made suggestions for improvements and corrections, and performed much of the actual cooking and cleaning

1883

First nurse; Miss Georgia C. Young, a graduate of the nurses training school at Connecticut State Hospital was recruited by Henrietta Brewer; Miss Young’s salary was \$400 per year; she served as superintendent of St. Peter’s from 1886 to 1906



1884

First building, Grange Hall, was relocated from the Helena Valley to an area near the Northern Pacific Railroad; the building was small, unattractive and inconvenient, but a beginning

1882

Hospital work performed by Henrietta Brewer, wife of the Rt. Rev. Leigh Richmond Brewer, Missionary Bishop of Montana

1884

First patient; a miner named Robinson was cared for in the Grange building in the sixth ward

1889

First operating room, furnished by B.H. Tatem

1886

Incorporated

1882

1890



1901
Fire partially destroyed the hospital

1900



1909
Began training school for nurses

1910

1920



1932
Surgical wing added –
Konrad Kohrs
Memorial Unit

1931
Hospital board of
trustees amended
article of incorporation
and transferred ownership
of the Hospital to the
Helena community for
the sum of \$1

1930



1942
Formation of
blood bank

1949
Hospital kitchen
purchased an elec-
tric dishwasher

1947
First
Incubator

1948
Hospital ad-
mitted 2,257
patients and
welcomed
317 babies

1940



1954
Volunteers branched out into all hospital departments

1957
Final addition to hospital constructed

1950

1960



1975
Occupational Therapy Department and Diagnostic Ultrasound established as new services; first fiber optic colonoscope purchased

1969
St. John's Hospital closes OB unit consolidating Helena's OB services at St. Peter's

1973
New ICU; St. Peter's transfers all pediatric care to Shodair

1971
Helena nurses opt for pant suits and hospital offers on-site beauty salon

1974
Heliport built at the Hospital

1968
Cancer scanner implemented

1972
St. John's Hospital closes and donates all equipment to St. Peter's

1974
ICU established for critical babies along with a fetal heart monitor

1968
New hospital built at 2475 Broadway

1970
Variable hours for employees a success at St. Peter's

1970



1986
St. Peter's combines effort with Blackfoot Valley Medical in Lincoln to operate and provide medical staff to medical center

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St. Peter's combines effort with Blackfoot Valley Medical in Lincoln to operate and provide medical staff to medical center

1977
Medical Library established

1976
Private room daily charge increases to \$77

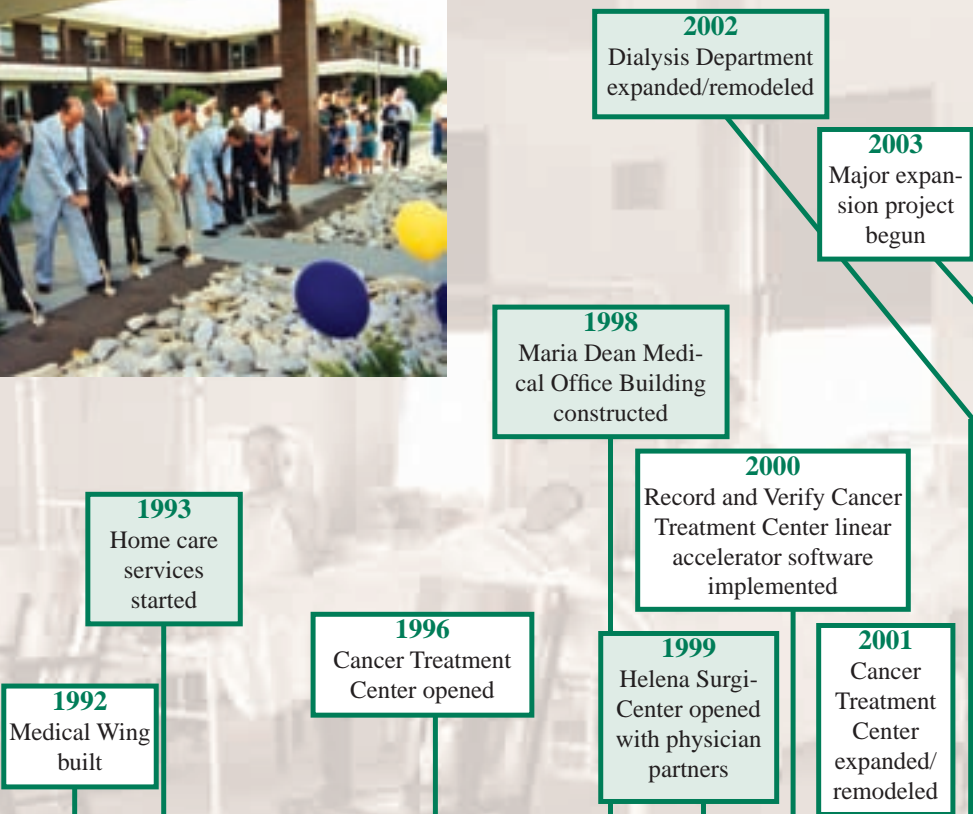
1983
First CT Scanner

1985
Pete's Place Daycare begins

1982
Laboratory and Emergency Services expanded

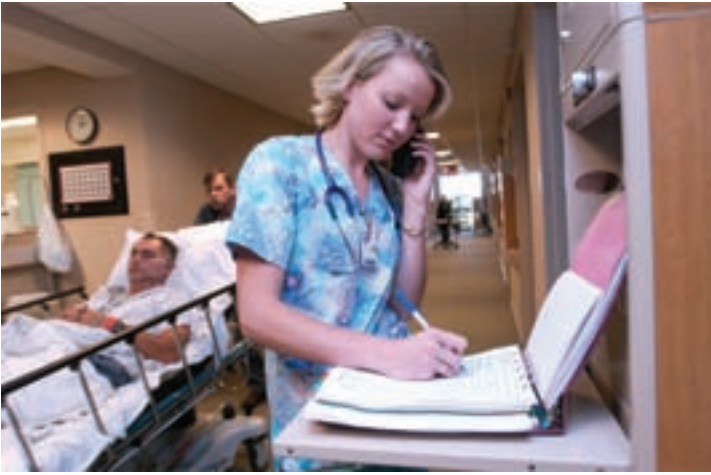
1984
Purchased Ambulance Service, began Inpatient Psychiatry services

1980



1990

2000



2006
Expanded Emergency Department opened
2006
New Intensive Care Unit opened
2006
Physical Medicine & Rehabilitation remodeled and expanded

2006
New Linear Accelerator, 64-slice CT scanner, and MRI installed
2006
Hospital admitted 5,992 patients, 875 babies born



2005
New Public Concourse built for improved way-finding
New Continental Café, Coffeeshop, and Kitchen constructed
Remodeled Materials Management and new loading dock
Ambulance Garage built
2005
Maria Dean Lab Draw area opened

2007
Radiology Picture Archive Communication System technology installed
Omnicell automated medication dispensing system begun
Cardiology Picture Archive Communication System technology installed
Pharmacy expanded, outpatient pharmacy opened

2008
St. Peter's Medical Group Clinic opened on Montana Avenue
2008
New four-story Patient Care Wing opened; main entrance re-located to southeast

2008

Medicine in Montana

Excerpted from *Montana Hospitals—A Heritage in Transition* published by the Montana Hospital Association (1989)

Early medicine in Montana was practiced without benefit of hospitals. The Native Americans of the Northern Plains and Rocky Mountains had men and women trained in the use of medicines from their native pharmacopoeias and in therapeutic procedures such as sweat baths, applications of heat, prescription of diuretics, emetics, fever reducers, pain killers, cathartics, antiseptics, tonics, and other remedies. The patient's or the practitioners home was generally the site of treatment.

In 1805, when the Lewis and Clark Expedition set out on their exploration of Louisiana Territory, they brought their own medical kit and practitioner along. Thomas Jefferson had arranged for Meriwether Lewis to train with Dr. Benjamin Rush, the leading physician in the United States, before embarking on the long journey. Rush instructed Lewis on health care for his men, gave him lists of medicines to take and health rules to abide by, and made up a list of questions to guide him in seeking information regarding Indian health practices. The explorers learned and adopted Indian remedies while enroute and shared their medical knowledge when it was needed.

Fur trappers followed closely upon the heels of Lewis and Clark and were the first non-Indians to reside in Montana for extended periods of time. They adopted some Indian medicines, but relied most heavily on whiskey for the routine cure of sickness, pain, and boredom.

The first medically trained newcomer to Montana was Father Anthony Ravalli, who arrived at St. Mary's Mission in 1845. He

had been recruited by Father Pierre Jean De Smet, the Jesuit missionary that the Flatheads had brought to Montana in 1840 to teach them the white man's religion. Father Ravalli had studied medicine and surgery in Italy. He treated his Indian patients with medicines he either brought with him or procured with other mission supplies. He studied the medical properties of their native plant remedies, standardizing and preserving them in alcohol and measuring and recording suitable doses. Eventually, he also treated them with their own medicines.

Other missionaries also had some medical skills and treated the simple ailments of Indians and whites. They were also among the first to recognize the need for hospitals. The Sisters of Charity of Providence started the first Indian hospital in 1864 at St. Ignatius for the Flatheads.

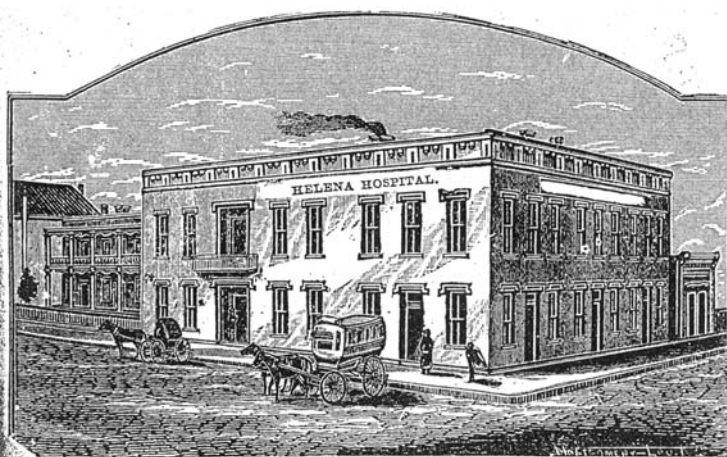
The military began establishing hospitals in Montana in the 1860s, but they offered

little succor to civilians due to their locations away from population centers.

The first large influx of whites into Montana came with the discovery of gold in 1862. Members of the medical profession, being as susceptible to the gold bug as anyone, were among the miners who flocked to diggings. By 1865, there were 15,000 miners and 22 medical practitioners in Helena.

It was a gold stampede that initiated the establishment of Montana's first civilian hospital. In the winter of 1866, several hundred

men dashed off to the Sun River Valley in pursuit of their fortunes, following successful Helena miner John McClellan. McClellan never made it clear why he went there, but the



The Rooms are spacious, well ventilated and have all modern conveniences.

The Hospital is provided with all modern appliances for surgery, electro-medical apparatus, steam baths, etc.

THE LADIES' DEPARTMENT

is under the supervision of Mrs. Dr. Clark, who has for twenty years made the diseases of her sex a specialty.

PHYSICIANS

R.F. CLARK, M.D.,
Formerly Surgeon U.S. Army.

Mrs. R.F. CLARK, M.D.,
Gynaecologist and Accoucheur.

For further information, address

R.F. CLARK, M.D.
Box 1883.

others thought he had made a new discovery and they wanted in on it. The stampede left their claims in the Helena and Virginia City areas during a January thaw, without sufficient provisions or clothing. Blizzards swept down from the north, sending temperatures down to 40 degrees below zero and stranding many of the miners far from the nearest settlements. Many of the prospectors were aided by Indians and the fathers at St. Peter's Mission, but many of the snowbound died or were severely frost bitten.

When word reached Helena that the frozen miners were making their way home, citizens and doctors immediately responded. A meeting was held January 27, 1866, "for the purpose of establishing a Hospital or Institutions where the disabled miner may be taken care of." The Miner's Hospital Association of Edgerton County, organized two days later, found an empty cabin to rent for a hospital. A couple of weeks later, a Helena newspaper reported that the Miner's Hospital, endowed by the businessmen and miners of Helena, promised to become a permanent institution. However, public support waned during the ensuing 18 months, and by June 1867, the county was operating the hospital. In 1971, the county commissioners purchased 160 acres of land

in the Prickly Pear Valley, 1 ½ miles north of Helena, for the hospital grounds. The institution was later known as Lewis and Clark County Hospital.

Other hospitals in Montana were also born of necessity. Many of Montana's early settlers were single men who had left their families behind, so there was no one in their homes to care for them. Often the first hospitals in a community were started by doctors, nurses, or others in order to care for the sick and injured who had no one else to look after them. Sometimes epidemics of smallpox or typhoid provided the stimulus to start hospitals in which to quarantine the victims. Hospitals also saved time for the doctors since they no longer had to see each patient in a different location.

The religious community established many of Montana's first hospitals. The Catholics and the Methodists were the most active. They usually called upon womens' religious orders to send members to raise funds, administer the hospital, and provide nurses. The Catholics primarily relied on the Sisters of Charity of Leavenworth, Kansas, and the Methodist called upon the Deaconess Organization of Chicago, Illinois. Their efforts are reflected in the names of Montana hospitals.



Montana Historical Society

MINERS' HOSPITAL IN LAST CHANCE GULCH, HELENA. OPENED 1866
PHOTO BY GRACE V. ERICKSON, 1928

Montana's Oldest Hospitals

1862	Powell County Memorial Hospital, Deer Lodge
1874	St. Patrick's Hospital, Missoula
1881	St. James Hospital, Butte
1882	Choteau County District Hospital, Fort Benton Glendive Community Hospital
1883	St. Peter's Hospital, Helena Broadwater County Health Center, Townsend Livingston Memorial Hospital

St. Peter's Hospital

125

Years



www.stpetes.org