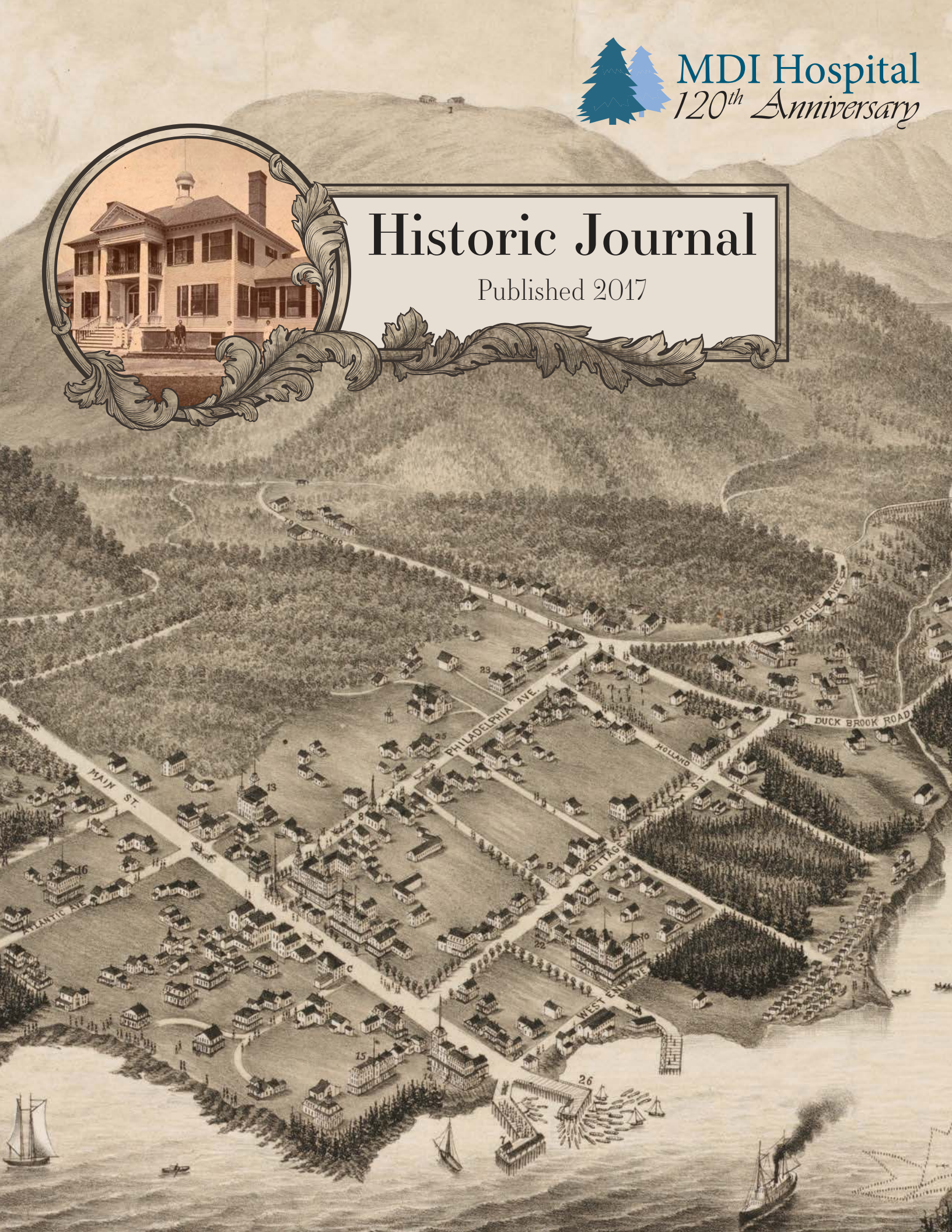
MDI Hospital
120th Anniversary

Historic Journal

Published 2017



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Historic Journal

Mount Desert Island Hospital Summer 2017

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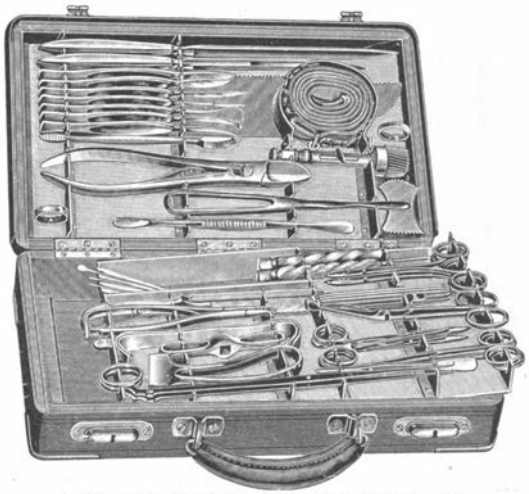

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Historic Journal Written by Nessa Reifsnyder, Edited by Oka Hutchins, Designed by Bethany Roberge

Images

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- Bar Harbor Historical Society
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Mount Desert Island:
from Dawnland to Today

Mount Desert Island has been celebrated by writers, artists, and visitors for more than a century. But residents and visitors alike tread in the well-worn footsteps of the Wabanaki, a collection of Native American tribes who inhabited the Island for millennia before the arrival of European settlers. More than 13,000 years ago, the Wabanaki set up seasonal encampments on the shores of MDI, where natives hunted, fished, gathered plants and berries, and traded. By these residents, our Island was called "Pemetic," a term referring to the distinctive range of mountains visible from many vantage points. Centuries later, the first French visitors led by Samuel de Champlain called this place "L'île des Monts Déserts"—another name invoking the mountainous landscape, later anglicized to Mount Desert Island.

❧

Colonial immigrants began settling on MDI in 1760, at the invitation of Governor Francis Bernard of Massachusetts—in an era when Maine was part of that commonwealth's holdings. After the Revolutionary War, homesteaders came in increasing numbers to farm, fish, lumber, and quarry granite. Wabanaki people still maintained their connection to the Island, too: setting up in-town markets for handmade wares such as ash fancy baskets, sweetgrass glove boxes, and birchbark log carriers; working as guides in the woods and waters; and presenting music and dance performances in venues around Bar Harbor. As the Maine Memory Network explains, "For them, the island was a familiar place long frequented by their ancestors…[and] the rusticators who vacationed there provided a new opportunity to earn a living while remaining true to their heritage."

Mt. Desert Island from "The Bluffs"

The word Wabanaki roughly translates to "The People of the Dawnland," so named for the early sunrises in the northeast.

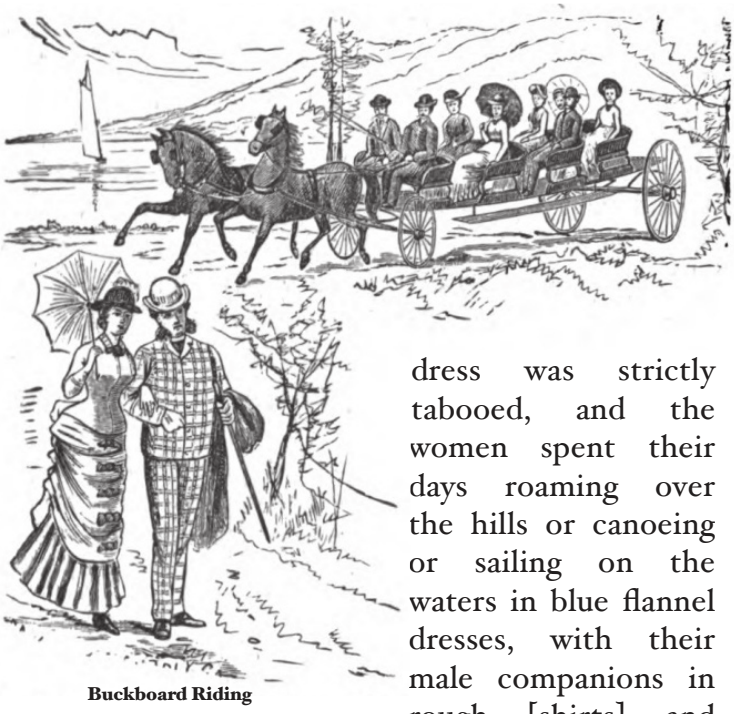
❧

"Rusticators" were the first wave of summer visitors to MDI. They came north by steamship and railroad and horse-drawn carriage, in search of respite from the hot summer weather to our south. Sherman's *Bar Harbor Guide* of 1890 described the paradise that awaited them:

"…[T]he summer days at Bar Harbor will be one uninterrupted round of health-giving pleasure and exercise, with nights of cool repose for which the enforced dweller in the city would almost barter his soul's salvation."

❧

Some rusticators depicted MDI's wilderness and water views in evocative artistic works that increased the fame and appeal of this retreat. Newspapers and magazines picked up the story, not only describing the fresh air "like champagne," the "majestic cliffs" and "bold, rugged beauty," but also the emerging social landscape, especially popular for young people. Immense wooden hotels with sweeping verandas provided lodging and meals in downtown Bar Harbor, and as the *Illustrated American* magazine observed, "By an unwritten law evening



Buckboard Riding

dress was strictly tabooed, and the women spent their days roaming over the hills or canoeing or sailing on the waters in blue flannel dresses, with their male companions in rough [shirts] and knickerbockers...a happy, careless, go-as-you-please out-of-door summer life."

❧

Moneyed families from an array of American (and European) cities turned their attentions to this idyllic resort in the latter days of the nineteenth century. In 1896, the *Chicago Tribune* marked this shift: "The canoe and buckboard life which distinguished early Bar Harbor, when college boys and girls climbed the mountains, paddled on the bay, and sat on the steps at Rodick's [hotel] together, has almost disappeared before cottage life and its more luxurious ways." Cottage life centered on grand, shingled homes with stunning views, and a fleet of yachts that plied Frenchman's Bay. The cottages had storied names: Clovercroft, Edenbrae, Devilstone, As-you-like-it, Reverie Cove, Bide-a-While, Thirlstane, Kenarden—just to name a few. At the peak of Bar Harbor's summer colony, there were scores of these edifices, and a bustling downtown shopping district to fill their household needs.

❧

Political figures, musicians, industrialists, CEOs, scientists, university professors, physicians, artists, attorneys—Bar Harbor was home to a heady mix of summer people and their families and friends. Simultaneously, many of MDI's year-round families were finding success as hoteliers, bankers, lawyers, doctors, and retail shop owners. All of these Islanders played a key role in the establishment of the Bar Harbor Medical and Surgical Hospital in 1897. They contributed ideas, expertise, labor, and funds... served on boards and committees...hosted festive balls and chamber concerts to benefit the Hospital... and made meaningful bequests that still yield support every year. The energy and drive of our founders was boundless—and their original concept of a small, in-patient hospital grew quickly, adapting to the acute need for medical care in our coastal community.

❧

Bar Harbor's fabled "Golden Age" gave way to a more egalitarian seasonal economy during the twentieth century. Today, vacationers come to MDI from all over the world, ranging over the hills and paddling the waters, enjoying the vistas and attractions of Acadia National Park. When the Bar Harbor Medical and Surgical Hospital was renamed Mount Desert Island Hospital in 1931, it symbolized this change: no longer just an in-patient surgical facility with limited bed space, we were serving patients at every stage of life and health. Our Island remains a favorite place for those who love the outdoors, and our Hospital continues to care for those who live, work, and play here.

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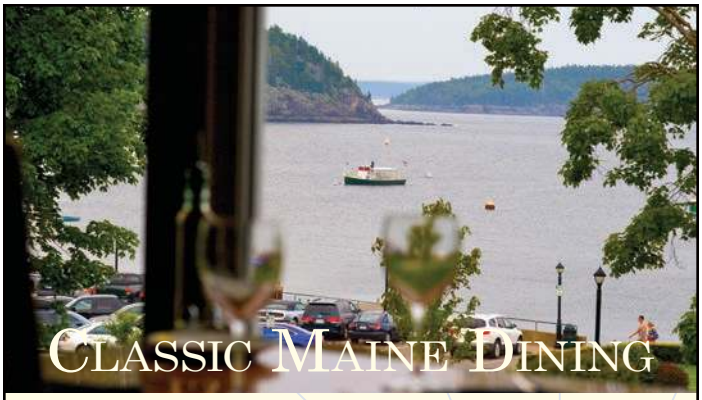

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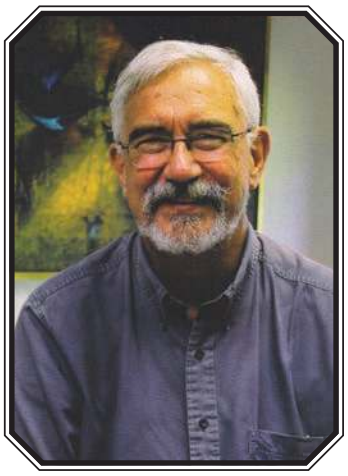
—Robert D. Wilson, MD, 1977



"I have had the privilege of taking care of the same patients for decades and taking care of families of patients, and extended families—and really getting into the community in that way. The real joy of it is taking care of folks long-term."

—O. Lee Haynes, MD, 2012

"Nursing is a part of you before you even start. It's not so much a profession as it is a lifestyle. A nurse is a person who is interested in people, in how to help people. You take care of the body, the soul and the spirit."

—Rose (Suzon) Liscomb, RN, 1995

Sand Beach West

By Christiane Cullens

Media: 14" X 11" acrylic, deep edge canvas

Christiane has taught at Mount Desert Island High School for eighteen years and finds that engaging art, nature, and community are integral to the healing process and excellent health.

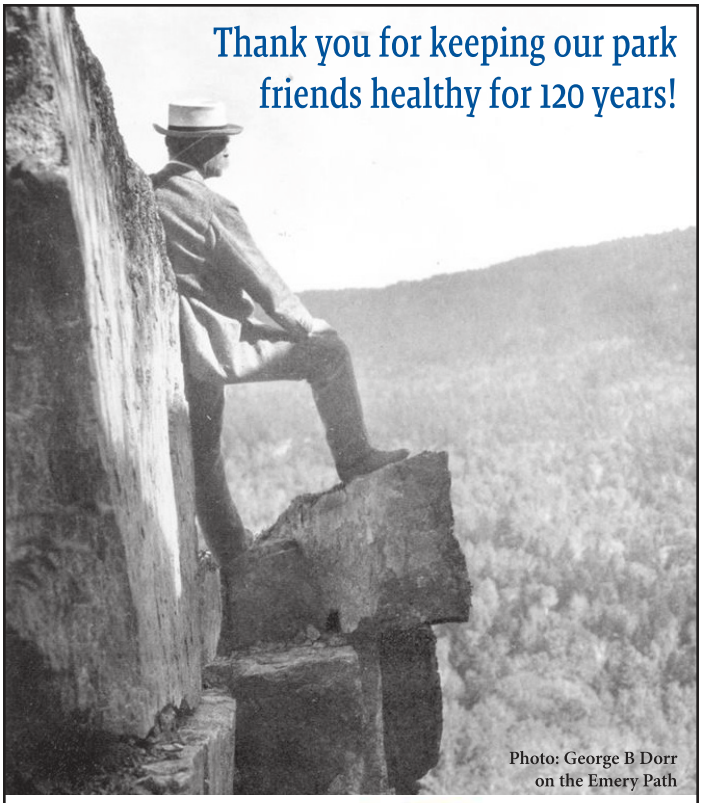


Photo: George B Dorr on the Emery Path

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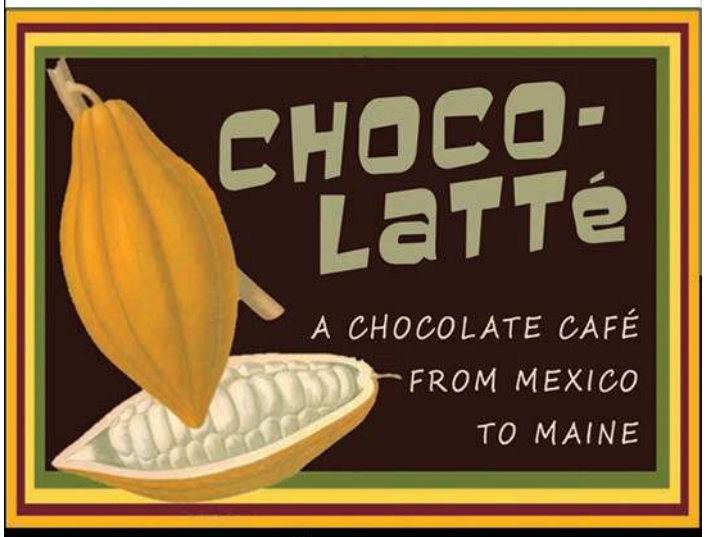

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Mount Desert Island Hospital's Founding Years:
A Vision for a Village Hospital

In the 1890s, a determined coalition of locals and summer residents held several meetings to air their concerns about access to medical services on Mount Desert Island. At that time the nearest hospital was a bare-bones naval facility located on an island in Penobscot Bay: 60 miles away traveling over land and by boat, and about half that distance by boat alone. Bangor had opened a general hospital in 1892, but that too was an arduous trip for Islanders. It may seem surprising that the Island's clear need for a hospital could have required years of discussion, but in those times, an institution serving patients who might be carrying infectious diseases caused a great deal of concern, if not panic. In fact, interested parties suggested a possible hospital site on Ledgelawn Avenue in 1895, only to be turned away by the neighbors, who did not want that risk on their street.

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By 1897, the plan to establish a hospital in Bar Harbor was finally gaining traction. On August 31st, the Village Improvement Association voted to convene a committee of physicians and surgeons of both year-round and summer residents, to seek their input. Just four days later, that committee of eight doctors "met and approved the idea of a village hospital," as the *Bar Harbor Record* reported. Thereafter, on September 25th, the Bar Harbor Medical and Surgical Hospital was officially incorporated. Seven trustees were elected to solicit funds, select an appropriate building site, and construct a hospital to meet the Island's needs:

- Robert Amory (Boston physician)
- Edward C. Coles (Philadelphia lawyer)
- George B. Dorr (owner of Mount Desert Nurseries)
- William Fennelly (innkeeper and Bar Harbor postmaster)
- John Stewart Kennedy (retired banker and financier)
- Edward B. Mears (Bar Harbor real estate agent)
- John Andrew Rodick (Bar Harbor innkeeper)

❧

The board agreed that $10,000 must be raised to accomplish their goals, and under the leadership of John Stewart Kennedy [see page 25], the campaign began.

❧

Before the year 1897 came to a close, the campaign was more than halfway to its fundraising target, and the board secured the present site of MDI Hospital's main building: a parcel of land between Hancock Street and Wayman Lane, costing $3,650. Architect Milton W. Stratton was already at work on preliminary designs, and soon after, the Bar Harbor building firm of Goddard & Hunt contracted to construct the facility at a projected cost of $7,496.

Bar Harbor Medical and Surgical Hospital

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During the latter six months of 1898, the new hospital was under construction, with completion in December. A wooden structure with a brick foundation, the two-story facility had a grand entrance facing Wayman Lane, with front steps leading to a columned portico. Entering via double doors, a visitor would see various offices

and meeting rooms, and two public wards on the first floor: women's down the left hallway, and men's down the right. All floors were surfaced in hard pine, undoubtedly polished to a shine.

The Hancock Street side of the building housed an operating room and sterilizer, as well as designated spaces for anesthetizing patients and dispensing medications. According to the *Bar Harbor Record*, "The operating room was planned to get the best light possible on the table," which was enabled by seven windows and a large skylight directly over the center of the room.

Below the first floor was a finished basement with kitchen facilities and mechanical rooms for plumbing and heating. Back in the front hall, a wide flight of stairs led to the second floor, with a walk-out balcony over the front entrance, and a hallway of five private patient rooms. "The prospect from all the rooms is enlivening and exhilarating," the *Record* summarized. Addressing the community's concerns, the article continued, "There is little chance for dust to accumulate or infection to linger."

All that remained was to outfit and appoint the practitioners' spaces. On June 21, 1899, the *Bar Harbor Times* announced: "The equipment of the operating department...arrived Friday from Philadelphia, where it was selected by Dr. John Shober, one of the leading Bar Harbor summer resident physicians. It is expected that this, the finest equipped private hospital in Maine, will be open for patients in July.... The instruments which arrived Friday for the surgical department, such as operating table, sterilizing apparatus and instruments are the finest money could buy.... Dr. Shober says that when the equipment is complete no hospital in the country will excel the Bar Harbor Medical and Surgical institute in that respect."

An early X-ray Machine at MDI Hospital

The first procedures performed in the Hospital were an appendectomy and a surgical procedure for a patient suffering from lockjaw. Five beds were available in the public wards, and five beds upstairs. Cases of infectious or incurable disease were not initially admissible to the Bar Harbor Medical and Surgical Hospital, which was not unusual in this pre-antibiotics era. Instead, during the early part of the 20th century, a rudimentary isolation hospital out on the Eagle Lake Road was available for patients with transmissible illnesses. (This small wooden building was known in common parlance as the "pest house.")

At the one-year milestone, the following notice appeared in the *Bar Harbor Record*: "Since the Bar Harbor Medical and Surgical Hospital was opened, just a year ago, it has received nearly 150 cases, more than 80 of which were surgical, and in four of these cases the prompt relief afforded saved the patients' lives. Those who cannot afford to pay are treated without charge."

Almost immediately, it was evident that the Bar Harbor Medical and Surgical Hospital was too small to serve the Island's needs. The board opted to purchase land to the south of the first lot in 1904, with a major addition to the original building completed the following year. At a cost of $12,721, this unit doubled the size of the Hospital, adding nine new ward beds, seven private rooms, an emergency and isolation ward, an X-ray room, an eye clinic, a pathology lab, and a nurses' dining room.

Nationally renowned philanthropists such as John Stewart Kennedy, Emma Baker Kennedy, Joseph Pulitzer, Fanny Schermerhorn

Bridgham, Peter Augustus Jay, Mary Rawle Cadwalader Jones, Annie Cottenet Schermerhorn Kane, John Innes Kane, Julia Baker Schauffler, and Gardiner Sherman contributed generously in these early years, both as benefactors and advisors. The Hospital and the Island community benefitted mightily from their targeted donations of medical wards and rooms, free beds for patients in need, and upgraded equipment.

❧

Within the Hospital's walls, a blend of physicians from the year-round community as well as summer-resident doctors brought the highest level of care to this isolated coastal setting. They were joined in this task by a dedicated nursing staff, whose growing ranks necessitated the 1914 acquisition of a Nurses' Home on Wayman Lane, donated by philanthropist Julia Baker Schauffler. That same year, Emma Baker Kennedy funded the construction of a maternity ward, the Hospital's first such unit.

❧

At the 20-year mark, the Bar Harbor Medical and Surgical Hospital was on firm footing. While patients had sometimes been turned away in the first few years because of inadequate space, the leaders and board members guiding this institution continually adapted the Hospital's scope and size to suit the Island's needs—establishing a trend of community investment and responsiveness that led the Hospital well into the next century. As the *Bar Harbor Record* observed in 1923: "As one goes through the Hospital one is constantly reminded of the many good friends that the institution has had for the furnishings and equipment as well as the endowment of free beds [which] in so many instances represent the kindly interest of members of the Bar Harbor summer colony and others, who have in substantial ways shown their appreciation of the splendid work that the Hospital is doing.... Bar Harbor has every reason for being proud of its Hospital. Those of our citizens who have firsthand knowledge of the institution are its staunchest friends."

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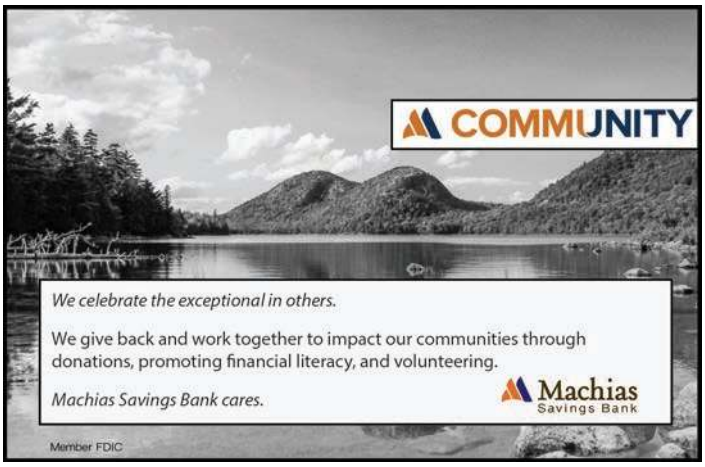

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Mount Desert Island Hospital: A Select Timeline

1897

Members of the Village Improvement Society conclude that "some form of hospital is both expedient and even now necessary."

1905

Bar Harbor Medical and Surgical Hospital is enlarged to twice its former size.

1914

Julia Baker Schauffler donates $12,900 to purchase a house on Wayman Lane for use as a Nurses' Home. Emma Baker Kennedy donates a maternity ward.

1923

Mrs. Gerrish Milliken donates a ward carriage. The Hospital's first electric elevator is installed.

1931

Trustees rename the Hospital "Mount Desert Island Hospital" to recognize Island-wide support for the institution.

1937

A new brick wing provides additional acute care rooms, an obstetrical area, and a Radiology Department.

1948

The Mount Desert Island Hospital Auxiliary is formed by 34 physicians' wives and representatives of other Island organizations.

1962

A new fire-resistant brick structure gives MDI Hospital a fully modernized emergency room, its first pharmacy headed by a registered pharmacist, an upgraded surgical suite, and 57 new patient beds. The building is planned, built, and partially financed by Islanders.

1968

The Medical Arts Building (later to be known as **Cooper-Gilmore Health Center**) offers office space close to the Hospital for doctors.

1969

Completion of the Extended Care Wing makes MDI Hospital one of the best-equipped hospitals in New England. This addition includes patient beds, a large, modern Laboratory, a Physical Therapy department, and office space.

1972

The Intensive and Coronary Care Unit opens.

1982

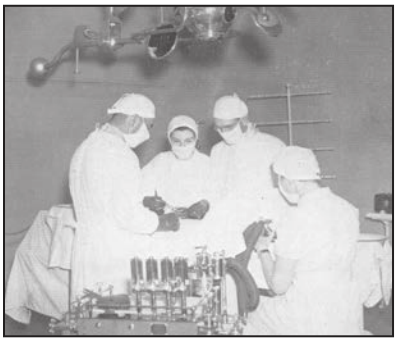
Ultrasound imaging is introduced, revolutionizing diagnostics.

1984

MDI Hospital purchases its own mammography machine for the early detection of breast cancer.

1985

MDI Hospital launches the Island's first treatment program for chemical dependency and opens the Ambulatory Surgery Unit.



1991

An outpatient Oncology Service is established so that MDI Hospital patients will not have to travel to Bangor for treatments.

1992

Northeast Harbor Clinic opens to serve the summer communities of Mt. Desert.

1995

The **Family Health Center** opens in Bar Harbor, and the **Community Health Center** opens in Southwest Harbor.

2001

MDI Hospital's Behavioral Health Center is established. MDI Hospital breaks ground on **Birch Bay Village Retirement Community**.

2003

The Orthopedics clinic opens.

2007

The new Colket Inpatient Care Center provides spacious, modern facilities for patients and visitors.

2014

The **Lisa Stewart Women's Health Center** opens its doors, offering the community a greatly expanded home for women's health. MDI Hospital establishes the **Community Dental Center** in Southwest Harbor.

1993

The **Women's Health Center** opens its doors.

1997

The Breast Center opens, featuring personalized care and a state-of-the-art mammography unit.

2002

The Hospital holds a grand opening celebration for the **Trenton Health Center**, its first off-Island clinic.

2005

MDI Hospital unveils a new Obstetrics Department and the **Cadillac Mountain Medical Building** opens.

2008

The new **Community Health Center** in Southwest Harbor opens, offering primary care, behavioral health, and physical and occupational therapy.

2017

MDI Hospital celebrates its 120th Anniversary!

MDI Hospital
120th Anniversary

Local Artist:
Poem by Mark Kandutsch, MD

The power for healing is that of the
life force itself, and is
another of the faces of love.

Congratulations! We are looking forward to partnering with the MDI Hospital for the next 120 years!

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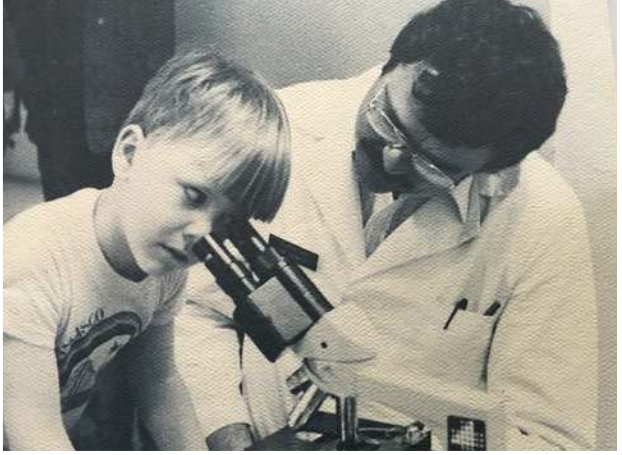

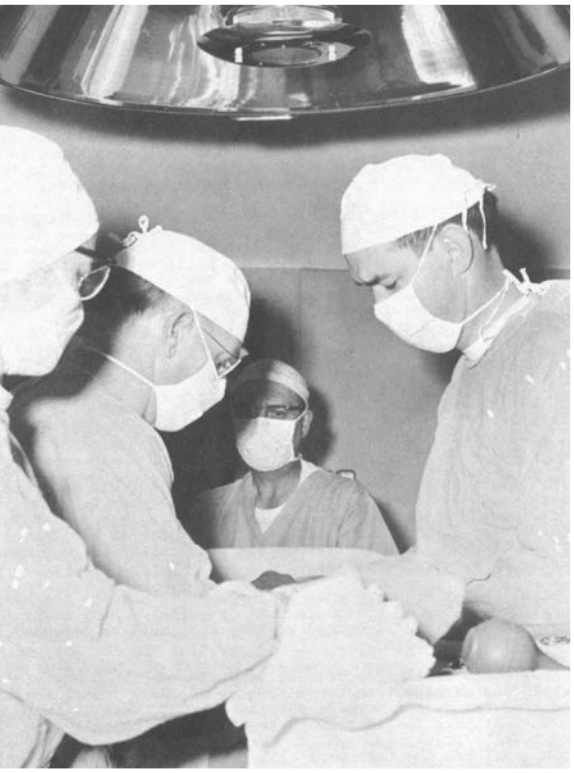

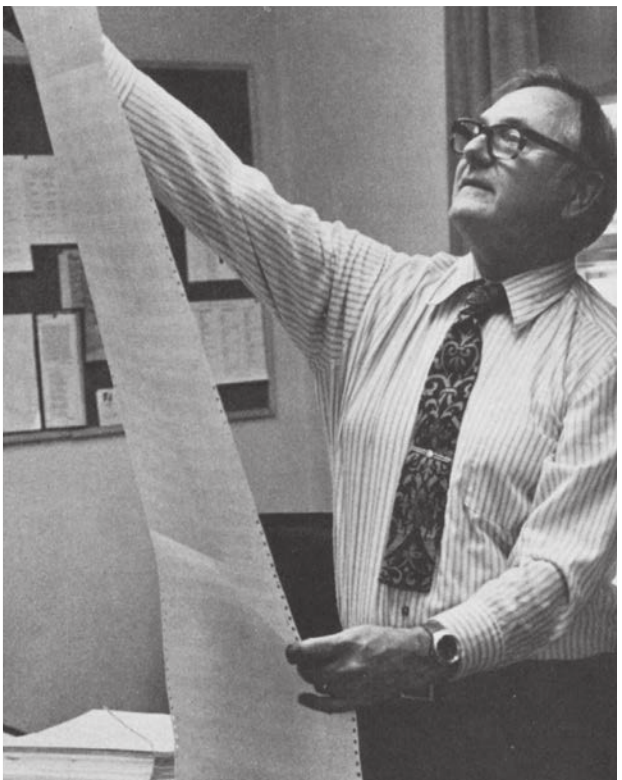

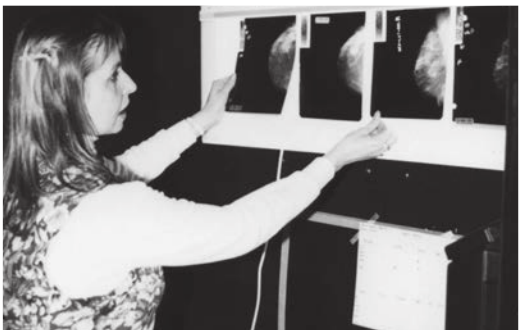

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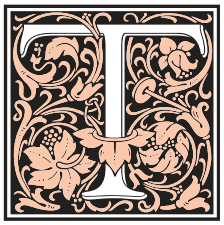
Hope from the Ashes

The 1947 fire that united an island community



The year 2017 marks two significant anniversaries for our Island: MDI Hospital's 120th, and the 70th anniversary of the forest fire that ravaged Bar Harbor.

The spring of 1947 set the stage for the devastating wildfire to come: unusually warm, melting the snowpack much earlier than usual. As summer progressed, Maine logged 108 consecutive days without rain. Even as people basked in summery weather that lingered into October, there was unease about the bone-dry conditions in Maine's forested areas.

On October 17th, a fire was reported in a cranberry bog along the Crooked Road. Bar Harbor's firefighters joined with a crew from Acadia National Park, immediately recognizing the urgency of any blaze when the woods were so arid. Working all afternoon and through the night, the firefighters confined the fire to the bog area and put out the active flames, dealing only with hot spots as morning dawned.

Then the winds came. A new column of flames suddenly whipped up outside the original fire line, tangled in spruce and pine trees, spreading fast. Bar Harbor's fire chief, David Sleeper, called up reinforcements from area fire stations as well as Dow Air Force Base in Bangor. Men and trucks rushed to MDI, but the fire was becoming more fearsome with each passing minute. That afternoon, flames consumed farm buildings out on Norway Drive, and the pathway of the conflagration sheared into Acadia National Park territory on Eagle Lake Road.

Local men and boys joined the firefighting teams, all desperately focused on directing the course of the flames however possible to minimize impact on MDI's towns. It was a days-long battle. As the week wore on, unpredictable gusts of wind as high as 70 mph shifted the danger: first Somesville, then Jordan Pond, then Hulls Cove. One blast of wind would whip the wildfire into an inferno in seconds, forty feet high and surging across the landscape.

News organizations filed urgent reports of the wildfire that threatened Maine's celebrated Island resort. Several summer families returned in hopes of saving possessions from their homes, while year-rounders in Hulls Cove—strongly under threat of the fire's spread—were depositing home furnishings and belongings into open fields well away from the fire's path, as far away as Trenton. Surprisingly, many aspects of MDI life went on, albeit uneasily, while the wildfire raged in the woods and Park.

Medical personnel from MDI Hospital acted swiftly to meet the multitude of medical needs created by the catastrophe. Doctors' home offices were open at all hours for emergencies—minor burns, smoke inhalation—as the Hospital did not yet have an Emergency Department. Casualty stations were established closer to the fire lines, should onsite treatment be necessary for firefighters. Nurses staffed these places, as well as the Hospital itself, where more acutely ill inpatients required round-the-clock

The toll of the 1947 fire:

- More than 17,100 acres burned, including more than 10,000 in Acadia National Park
- $23 million in property damage
- 67 seasonal estates decimated
- 170 year-round homes burned
- 5 large hotels destroyed
- 5 lives lost

Source: National Park Service, nps.gov

October 24, 1947: a residential neighborhood ravaged by Bar Harbor's wildfire.

care. Two babies were born as the fire progressed, surgical patients were in recovery, and frail elders from the Island were brought into the Hospital to be kept safe as their younger family members scrambled to prepare for evacuation. The nursing staff accepted these townspeople into the Hospital population, never formally checking them in, but agreeing to care for them.

❧

Outside the Hospital, National Guardsmen hosed off the roof 24-7 to ensure that burning debris borne on hurricane-force blasts of air would not ignite the 50-year-old facility. Inside, with calmness and determination, nurses moved operating-room equipment from the original wooden building into a newer brick wing. Several personnel—doctors and nurses alike—had only just returned to the Island from World War II service, and their firsthand knowledge of crisis situations helped shaped the activities that were essential to patients' survival. As the fire entered its sixth and most terrible day, nurses and support staff were all required to report to work, and were briefed on evacuation plans: should the blaze reach the Hospital, patients were to be given appropriate pain medications and wheeled down to the sea. Thankfully, this turn of events did not occur.

❧

What did occur was a sudden, immense fueling of flames from the Hulls Cove area all the way down Route 3, barreling toward Bar Harbor. This was October 23rd, the day that "Millionaires' Row"—a string of mansions with ocean views and sculpted gardens—was decimated by the fire's rapid advance. With terrible swiftness, only chimneys stood where houses had been: brick sentries, teetering skyward. Now the alarm went out for all residents of in-town

Bar Harbor to evacuate their homes. Husbands, fathers, and sons were not on hand to help, as they were battling the blaze. Phone lines had burned, cutting off any chance of communication.

❧

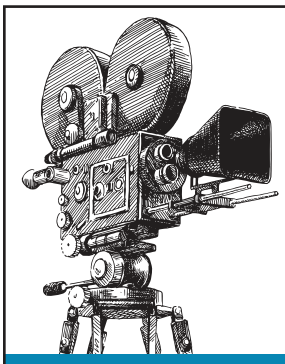
Throughout the town's most chaotic hours, the staff of MDI Hospital waited, watchfully. While 4,000 townspeople were led to the pier by the National Guard to await evacuation by sea, Hospital personnel stayed behind to assist patients, maintaining a calm, even atmosphere. These workers had no idea whether their own homes were spared, or the fate of their loved ones. As night fell, our staff dealt with a new challenge: the last electrical line onto the Island burned with the fire's advance, and the Hospital was plunged into darkness—punctuated only by the sight of glowing embers and debris, swirling in the air and spattering against the windows.

❧

As that night wore on, Route 3 was cleared by bulldozers—discarding the remains of a grand hotel, the Malvern, along with scores of other lost properties—and a slow caravan of vehicles began carrying residents to safety off-Island, driving past roadsides that glowed and flared in the darkness. MDI Hospital staff prepared patients for transfer to the hospital in Ellsworth, which took place the next morning. Afterwards, several medical staffers opted to stay on the Island, caring for injured firefighters—whose work continued for days afterwards—and other residents who stayed put in the aftermath.

❧

It's impossible to overstate the trauma of the Bar Harbor fire for those who witnessed it. And yet, an atmosphere of cooperation and determination prevailed throughout the disaster and was only strengthened in its wake. Jackson Laboratory Director C.C. Little summarized the feeling of Islanders as he spoke with reporters, standing amongst the ashes of his facility, which had been flattened by the ferocious blaze. "Of course we will rebuild!" he asserted. The *Bar Harbor Times* echoed this sentiment: "We have fought for and loved this town for a lifetime." On November 2nd, a *New York*



PETER LOGUE

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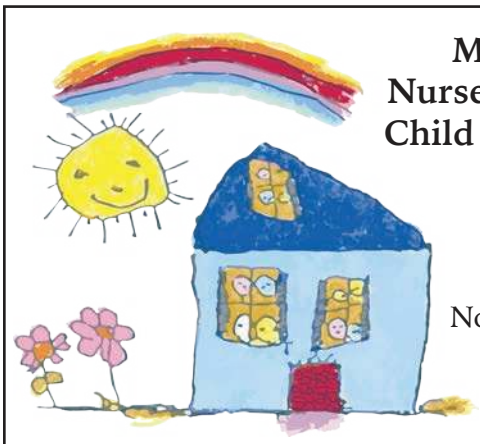
Happy to celebrate MDI Hospital for 120 years of caring for our Island.



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Times headline proclaimed "A New Bar Harbor," and town officials described plans for winterized, modernized homes in the neighborhoods that had been destroyed. An anonymous resident, standing amidst the ruins, told a reporter, "The trees will grow back, and the rabbits and deer will return. There's an awful lot of timber left."

❧

Today, it's still possible to observe the path of the Bar Harbor fire. The best time is in mid-October—the very time of year it occurred. Drive up Eagle Lake Road or take the Park Loop Road through Hulls Cove, and make note of brilliantly colored fall trees that flow all along the route. Thousands of tourists trek to MDI every year to do the same thing. These gorgeous colors directly trace the fire's course; these trees replaced more than 17,000 acres of spruce, pine, fir, and hemlock. What's more, on the Park Loop Road, past Otter Cliffs, you can still experience Acadia as it was before the blaze: the road veers into the woods here, a cool, deep, evergreen forest.

❧

MDI Hospital, too, was forever changed by the fire. Disaster plans were instituted, drawing from the expertise of those who had guided the organization in those terrifying days. The community fundraised for the design and construction of a fully brick building, superseding the original wooden structure that had housed us for 50 years. Many new services were encompassed within the Hospital's rebuilt walls: a pharmacy, a larger surgical suite, more patient beds, and our first-ever Emergency Department.

❧

From the ashes of the blaze, the Mount Desert Island community emerged stronger, more prepared, and more determined than ever to nurture and protect its uniquely beautiful, rugged, and resilient corner of the world.

Angiola Sartorio

A Dance of Nature's Revival

In the summer of 1947, dancer/choreographer Angiola Sartorio opened a dance school in Hulls Cove. Headquartered at the old schoolhouse, the school attracted students from all over the world—and hosted guest performers from leading European dance companies. Sartorio's choice of venue may seem unusual, but MDI's summer community had long attracted classical musicians, conductors, composers, and actors, many of whom performed at festive galas and balls to benefit MDI Hospital. All of these professionals found creative inspiration in the isolated natural environment of the Island...and Sartorio was no exception. According to the Jewish Women's Archive, Sartorio "liked working on energy variations...through which she could shape movements of varying fluidity and hint at the borders between, for instance, human, animal and vegetal life."

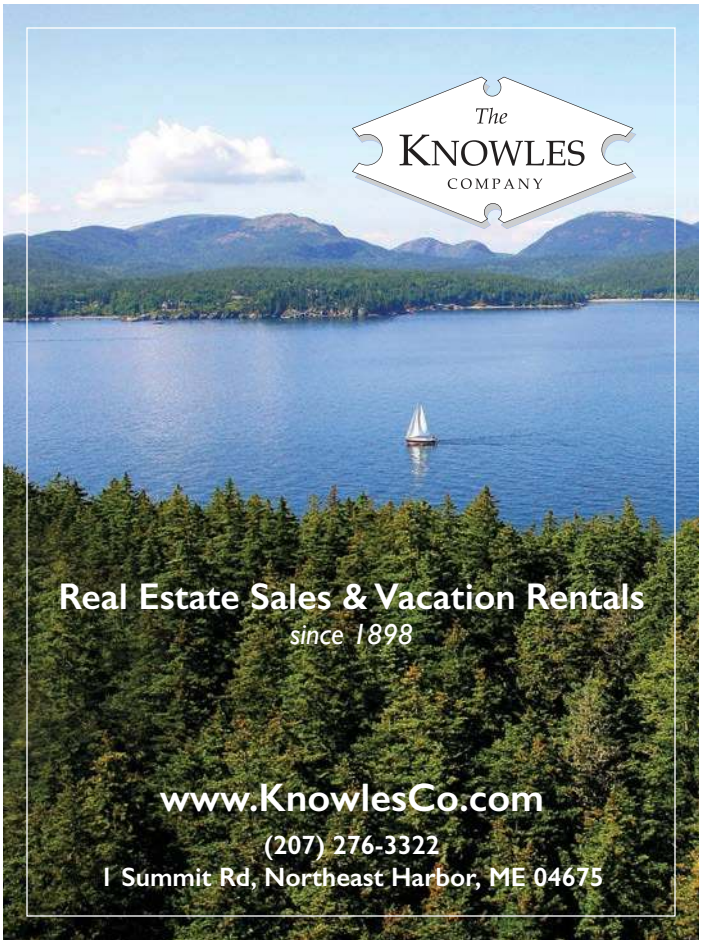
❧

Sartorio was a pioneer of modern dance who trained Paul Taylor and Jerome Robbins, both of whom also became outstanding choreographers. During her dance school's first summer, the troupe presented performances all over the Island. It is not known whether Sartorio was still on MDI when the fire of 1947 ravaged the eastern shore, but she was profoundly moved by the terrible event. In 1948, her school returned to the Hulls Cove Schoolhouse, which had been spared from the wildfire. For that season, Sartorio choreographed a series of dance works and tableaux that were presented in outdoor settings, paying homage to the charred landscape, the buildings in ruins, and nature's revival after the devastation. *Life* magazine captured images of the dancers as a powerful symbol of Bar Harbor's survival and resurrection, including the photograph featured here.

Nurses:
At the Heart of MDI Hospital

"Our nursing staff is always on the 'firing line'. They make an essential effort at MDI Hospital to initiate and maintain our best care for each patient, according to his or her individual needs. In support of our nursing staff, many other loyal employees carry out their crucial tasks in order to create at our small island hospital a comprehensive health care facility."

–Leslie C. Brewer, Chair of the Board, 1982



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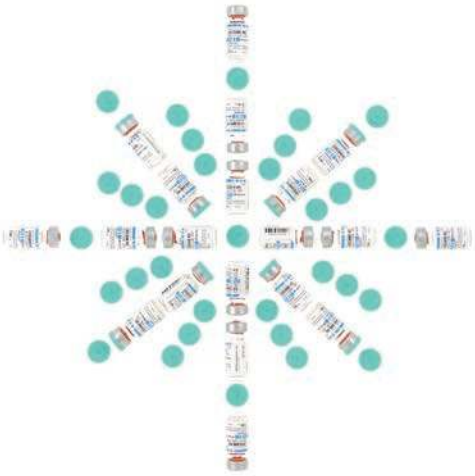
"When I came here [from Washington, DC], I didn't know if my skills would grow or expand. But I've been able to do things here that I would never have had a chance to do at a larger facility. We're a small Hospital so we have to be diverse. I've worked in different areas of the Hospital like the ER and OB units.... You're a part of the plan for patients here. You're making better use of your skills. If you really have a calling to care for people, you want to work someplace that has a heart. That's MDI Hospital."

—Lily Sweeney, RN, 2009

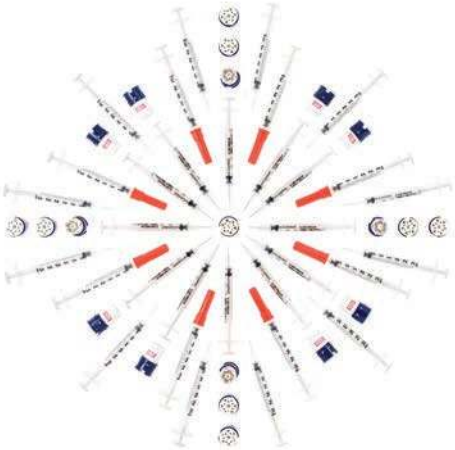
Healthcare Series
By Jennifer Steen Booher

"The Healthcare series is an exploration of long-term illness among my friends and family. It began with one photo that was a celebration of my own healing and an expression of frustration with the physical limitations of a chronic illness and the intricacies of our healthcare system. As I talked with other people living with long-term illnesses and healthcare issues, I became more aware of the expense and physical discomfort of treating many common conditions, like diabetes and hypertension, and also the intensely political conversations happening around healthcare in the US right now. I started to envision a series of photographs that draws 'portraits' of people through their medications. One of the limitations of the series is that illness and healthcare are very personal, and not many people want to publicize their conditions. Another is that very few people can part with their medications for the week or so it takes to build a still life from them! If anyone is interested in participating, you can contact me through my website, www.jenniferbooher.com."



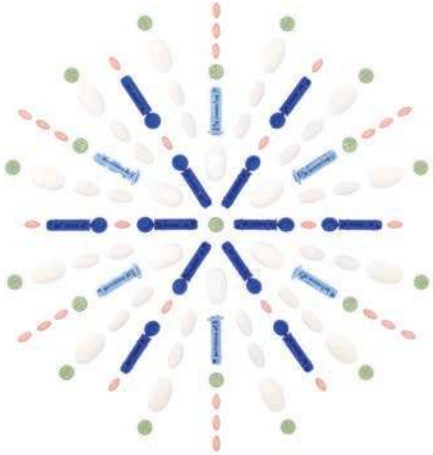
Jennifer: Lidocaine, 40mL
(Healthcare series No.1)

"For five years I suffered from a mysterious, wracking cough that left me bedridden for two months every winter and incapacitated for several more. After years of misdiagnosis, I was aggressively treated for severe acid reflux and allergic rhinitis, and have been cough-free for two winters. During the years when my doctors were treating me for asthma, one of their more desperate attempts to get me some relief from the coughing spasms was nebulized Lidocaine. I saved the bottles."



PD: Insulin, 960 Units
(Healthcare series No.2)

"I was talking with a friend whose daughter has Type 1 diabetes about the possible repeal of the Affordable Care Act. She went into another room and brought back an enormous jar containing only a few days of her daughter's medical waste and said she was often tempted to drive to our senators' offices and dump the lot on their desks. It was my first glimpse into the complex relationship between politics and healthcare. What happens to my friend's daughter if she can no longer afford insurance, and therefore insulin?"



BK: Metformin 18,000mg, Atorvastatin 960mg, Glimepiride 38mg, Lisinopril 150mg, 6 used lancets, 12 sterile lancets
(Healthcare series No.3)

"Adult-onset diabetes, hypertension and high-cholesterol are some of the most common medical problems in the country. They are interrelated, make each other worse, and raise the risk of stroke and heart attacks. This is what it looks like to manage them."

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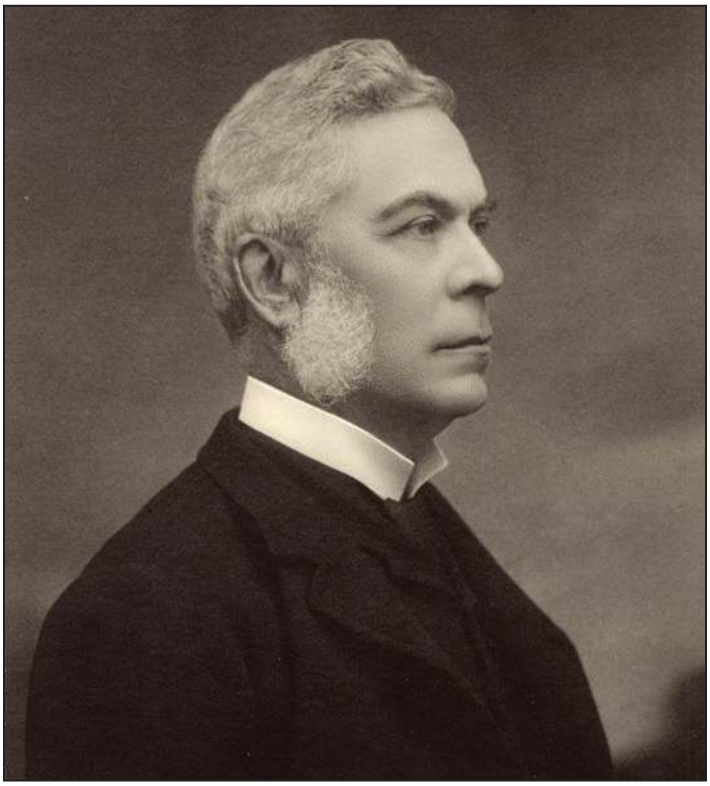
A Legacy of Giving

John Stewart Kennedy & Emma Baker Kennedy

From local businesspeople to world-renowned financiers and industrialists; from families who've received quality care from us, living at every level of the economic spectrum: MDI Hospital is grateful to each and every supporter whose 120 years of generosity has made it possible for us to deliver quality healthcare.

If you have ever supported MDI Hospital—as a donor, as a volunteer, or a blend of both—you are part of a wonderful tradition that began with one of Bar Harbor's earliest "power couples": John Stewart Kennedy and Emma Baker Kennedy. To summarize their Hospital legacy, one reaches for adjectives like extraordinary and legendary. It begins at the very emergence of the Bar Harbor Medical and Surgical Hospital in September of 1897. Here's what the *Bar Harbor Record* said on September 29th:

> *The necessary steps have been taken and a hospital for Bar Harbor is an assured fact. Already nearly $8,000 have been subscribed, officers have been elected and legal steps taken for obtaining a charter under the laws of Maine.... The permanent and summer residents have responded most liberally in money and everyone is united in the work. Bar Harbor has need of a place where the sick can be properly treated and the establishment of the Bar Harbor Medical and Surgical Hospital will be hailed with delight by all....*
>
> *Mr. John S. Kennedy and family leave tomorrow for New York City. Mr. Kennedy has this season taken a lively interest in the hospital...and to his activity and generosity are due in a large measure many improvements in and about Bar Harbor.*



His "lively interest" was tangible: John accepted the daunting responsibility of chairing the Hospital's first board. And as seen in the donor list [pictured at right], he made the largest gift in our founding year, a strong driver in encouraging others to commit funds to the new venture. A writer familiar with John's service on a board in New York City observed:

> *Perhaps no quality is more characteristic in Mr. Kennedy than his ability to form a ready and sound judgment upon matters of moment. No matter how difficult or complicated a question may arise, he can at once grasp the salient points and determine upon the proper solution.*

Mr. Kennedy was the definition of a self-made man, coming from humble origins in Blantyre, Scotland. The sixth of nine children born to cotton millworkers in 1830, he left school at age 13 and parlayed a sales position with the Mossend Iron Works into an international sales and representation job, traveling throughout North America for William Bird &

Company, another iron firm. A return to full-time work in Scotland did not last long; as 1857 dawned, John formed a New York-based partnership with Morris K. Jesup to transact business in railroad iron and materials. John S. Kennedy became intimately familiar with the American railway system as its construction boomed nationwide, and this knowledge led him into a far more lucrative career as a financier, creditor, and supplier of railroad companies.

❧

Just ten years after he began his railway career—which often involved considerable financial risks—John was wealthy enough to retire. He was 37 years old and married to Emma Baker, the daughter of a New Jersey merchant. For a year, the couple took a vacation tour through Europe, but John decided he wasn't ready to leave the business world. Upon his return to New York, he established the banking firm of J. S. Kennedy & Company, deepening his involvement with the growth, finances, and mergers of railway lines in the U.S., Canada, and Scotland. Thereby amassing a fortune of $67 million, John S. Kennedy was popularly known as "the Railway King."

❧

John and Emma never had children, but their nieces and nephews were actively involved in their lives. In the 1880s, John finally wound down his business activities, passing the banking firm on to a nephew, J. Kennedy

Tod. Emma and John began spending several months of the year in Bar Harbor, and another nephew, Cornelius Baker, designed them a summer cottage extraordinaire: Kenarden Lodge. Situated along the Shore Path, an easy stroll from the eventual site of MDI Hospital, Kenarden had 42 rooms; its own electric-generating steam plant; 23 acres of fields, gardens, and woods; and 850 feet of shore frontage. Famed landscape gardener

Original Founding Donors of MDI Hospital: September 29, 1897

John S. Kennedy	$1,000
J.M. Sears	500
Edward Coles	500
Joseph Pulitzer	500
Charles Carroll Jackson	500
Edward A. Smith	500
John DeKoven	500
Johnston Livingston	500
Charles T. How	250
Mary Cadwalader Jones	100
George B. Dorr	100
Joesph T. Bowen	100
Maria D. R. Fry	100
C. Morton Smith	100
Frances Jones	100
A. Howard Hinkle	100
R. Hall McCormick	100
The Misses Morrill	100
Mrs. Anna P. Peabody	100
Bar Harbor Banking and Trust Company	100
Bar Harbor Water Co.	100
J.A. Rodick	100
C. Widenfeld	50
Mrs. Henry Biddle	50
Lewis Bolton Bangs	25
Mrs. L. B. Bangs	25
Mrs. Reuben Hoyt	25
J.E. Clark	25
E.C. Parker	25
L.B. Deasy	25
R.H. Kittredge	25
Miss R.P. Baird	25
B.S. Higgins	25
Fred C. Lynam	25
M. Franklin	15
J. Milton Allen	10
John W. Doe	10
Miss Rebecca Richardson	10
W.H. Davis	10
B.C. Reynolds	10
Miss Helen M. Smith	10
Charles C. Snow	5
Orlando Ash	5
G.E. Soper	5
A.G. Bulger	5
Julius Kurson	5
M. Harnick	5
Lyon, Wandless & Co	5
A.T. Cummings	5
H.A. Lawford	5
A.S. Newman	5
C.R. Clark	5
E.B. Rodick	5
J.F. Hodgkins	5
L.A. Leach	5
Chas. H. Wood	5
D.P. Marcyes	5
Frank Sherman	5

Beatrix Farrand sculpted a breathtaking Italian garden that still blooms every year on the site. The Kennedys did not take their leisure in this spectacular summer home; instead, Kenarden became a staging area for scores of nonprofit involvements and philanthropic activities. Both were profoundly moved to support healthcare, civic life, and education throughout the world, and Emma took special interest in supporting religious organizations, particularly missionary work. Focusing just on MDI, here's a list to demonstrate their lasting impact:

- **Acadia National Park**: In 1908, John purchased Green Mountain outright so that George Dorr could protect it from development. The next year, on his deathbed, John made Emma promise to purchase Huguenot Head, knowing that it was key to the conserved parklands envisioned by Acadia's founders.
- **Bar Harbor Athletic Field**: Given in 1914 by Emma to benefit Bar Harbor's residents and visitors alike, the six-acre field is restricted by its deed to "outdoor games and sports for the development and encouragement of athletics." Walking paths and trails sprouted up from its tree-shaded periphery, which was landscaped by George Dorr.
- **Bar Harbor Water Company**: In the 1890s, John gathered a group of investors to expand this essential civic organization, initially for selfish reasons—namely, the town's water service to Kenarden was too weak to support the extensive plantings on its grounds. Under his guidance, civil engineers were brought in for the first time to fully modernize the town's water supply.
- **Bar Harbor YWCA**: The present YWCA building on Mount Desert Street, a community anchor for people of all ages, was fully funded by Emma in 1911.

Kenarden's Italian Garden

- **Maine Seacoast Mission**: John and Emma supported the *Sunbeam's* outreach ministry for many years.
- **Mount Desert Transit Company**: While this 1907 effort did not succeed, it was a noble idea: to prevent automobiles from overrunning the Island, John and several colleagues sought to build and operate a trolley system from Ellsworth to Bar Harbor, Northeast Harbor, and other places on Mount Desert Island.

Once Bar Harbor Medical and Surgical Hospital opened its doors in 1899, the Kennedys were instrumental as annual funders, advisors, and capital donors. John had enjoyed a deep association with New York Presbyterian Hospital, serving as its board president for 25 years and donating millions of dollars to ensure its growth and progress. Knowledge he gained there undoubtedly helped him to guide Bar Harbor Medical and Surgical Hospital in its early years. Emma was one of many prominent society women who supported MDI Hospital, but her gifts were targeted and meaningful—for example, recognizing that Island women needed a medically staffed birthing place, she donated funds to build the Hospital's first maternity ward in 1914.

Both Emma and John made bequests to the Hospital upon their deaths. This article is too limited to permit a listing of all the other nonprofit organizations worldwide that benefitted from the Kennedys' largesse; suffice it to say, we are honored to know that our Hospital was deemed worthy to stand among them. The giving spirit they demonstrated here endures, moving from generation to generation.

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