

A Brief History of
**The Memorial Hospital of
William F. and Gertrude F. Jones**



Est. 1921

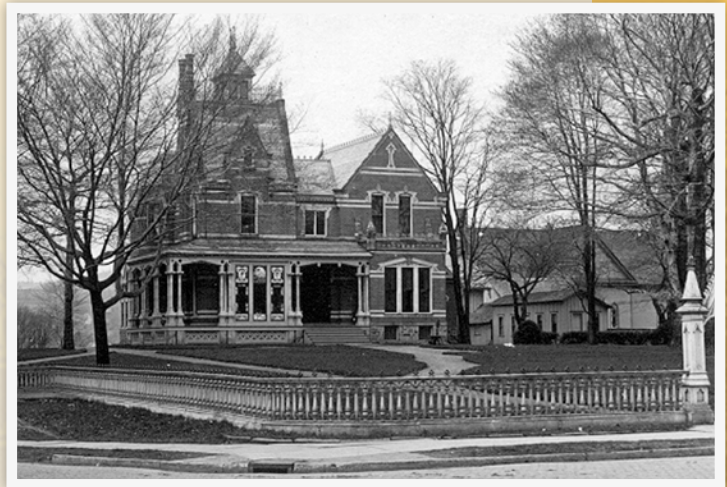
How it all began...



William Folwell Jones was new in town when he stumbled across the plot of land on which he built his first home. An attorney, he was also one of the organizers and founders of the First National Bank of Wellsville. He served as Vice President from 1883 to 1891 and as president for 12 years, retiring from the bank in 1903. During that time, he met, wooed and married Lucy Gertrude Fassett, daughter of two prominent Wellsville citizens, Mr. and Mrs. Isaac Wheeler Fassett.

The couple settled down in the simple frame house William had built along the Genesee River. After a few years, they replaced it with an impressive mansion; built in a style similar to one they had admired during a trip to the southern United States. They called their home The Beeches because of the many beech trees located on the property. In December 1910, William died at the age of 69. It is generally believed that during their life together, they had talked about the need for a hospital in Wellsville and what they could do to help make it a reality.

When Mrs. Jones passed away on June 6, 1920, she had been a widow for 10 years and was well-known for her kindness and charity. She endured a “fatal malady” for the final three years of her life. Perhaps her suffering solidified her decision to leave her home and a \$30,000 endowment to the Village of Wellsville to



establish The Memorial Hospital of William F. and Gertrude F. Jones. As a public, community hospital, she specified that it would “receive the sick, maimed or injured who may need hospital care, without discrimination against those who may be unable to pay therefore, and without discrimination as to race, creed or color.” The village had one year to comply with her wishes or the property and endowment would revert to her heirs. The new hospital was dedicated on July 1, 1921, only 13 months after her death.



Like the medical industry itself, Jones Memorial Hospital has come a long way since the first patients were admitted on June 27, 1921.

In the early years, Jones was a 30-bed facility, serving some 450 patients, delivering 25 babies each year with a staff of about 17 people. Now an affiliate of UR Medicine, JMH is a 49-bed private, not-for-profit acute care facility that serves the healthcare needs of

over 48,000 community residents. The staff is now over 400 people and more than 390 babies are born here each year. The hospital provides inpatient and outpatient services including Medical Imaging, Laboratory, Rehabilitation, Surgical Services, and Orthopaedics. The Jones Memorial Medical Practices is a network of 19 providers ranging from Primary Care, Obstetrics and Gynecology, Podiatry, Pulmonology, General Surgery, and Orthopaedics. In addition, UR Medicine specialists in Cardiology, Oncology, Neurology, Endocrinology, ENT, and Urology consult and treat patients in Wellsville. The Wilmot Cancer Institute Infusion Center at Jones Memorial Hospital has been a major addition to locally available services.



On the day Jones Memorial Hospital was dedicated - July 1, 1921 - crowds passed through the refurbished Jones mansion. What they saw was one of the finest community hospitals in New York State. Soon after the Hospital opened, the village remodeled the adjacent barn, turning it into the hospital laundry and a home for the nursing staff.

The first patient admitted to the new hospital was Mrs. Adelaide Foland. Her physician, Dr. F. E. Comstock, right, is also credited with performing the first surgery at the new hospital. Dr. Comstock was the first of three generations of the Comstock family to serve on the JMH Medical Staff. When Dr. Comstock began his practice in Wellsville in 1896, surgeries took place in the patient's home. In 1910, he was instrumental in establishing Wellsville's first private hospital on Jefferson Street. Anticipating the opening of the new Jones Memorial, that facility closed in May 1921.



Within seven years, it was obvious that the 30-bed hospital was not large enough to meet the needs of the growing Wellsville community.



The first major expansion to the Hospital occurred in 1928, when the Tullar Memorial Maternity Annex was built through a generous gift from Mrs. Angie C. Tullar, left. One of the designers of the new maternity area was Dr. G.W. Roos, a general practitioner with a special interest in obstetrics. He was assisted by Hospital Superintendent Miss Florence Spicer. The wing was furnished through the generosity of Mr. and Mrs. George Rosa, right, who donated \$10,000 for that purpose. The 10-bed Tullar Maternity Annex was attached to the rear of the main building in place of the porch and conservatory. This additional space alleviated the deficiencies of the original hospital.



Mr. & Mrs. George Rosa



Home built for the Nurses



Original hospital buildings under demolition

In 1942, the Harry Bradley family deeded the Old Samuel Carpenter property to the village, connecting the Hospital grounds with West Genesee Street. A new home for the nurses was built there, and the furnishings were provided by members of the Hospital Board.

In 1949, a public survey revealed the need for a larger hospital; the hospital and community had outgrown the existing structure. Within a few months, an intense three-year fundraising campaign began. Major memorial donations came from Dr. Edwin Comstock and Dr. Irwin Felsen, as well as from Lillian Barnes, whose family founded the Wellsville Daily Reporter, and the Thornton family.

Because of the tremendous support from all the local businesses, towns and villages, a modern 75-bed hospital was built around the former Jones mansion. Very soon afterwards, the original hospital buildings were torn down and the front parking lot was placed where the Jones house had stood facing Main Street. People from all over the area donated over \$200,000 to offset the cost of the \$1.3 million building. The hospital was also

granted funds under the federal Hill-Burton Act, which was enacted to encourage hospital construction in rural areas like Allegany County. Jones Memorial was the 50th hospital constructed and financed through this program.

A crowd of 1,600 people turned out to see the new building when it was dedicated on August 3, 1952. However, according to news reports at the time, the new building didn't open for business until two weeks later because a "strike condition" delayed the completion of the finish work. As a result, the old hospital continued to provide health services until the big move to the new building. Four infants were born in the old building on Dedication Day. The first patient at the new Jones Memorial Hospital was Alida Cratsley. The final transfer of patients and equipment to the new building took place on August 13, 1952.

Jones Memorial Hospital – and the community – continued to grow. In 1968, a third floor was built between the existing stairways and a two-and-a-half story west wing was built. A \$600,000 Capital



Addition of the third floor

Campaign kicked off in late 1965. One of the major donations came from the family of George W. Holbrook. The project was helped with a grant from the Hill-Burton Act and an Appalachian Anti-Poverty Grant. The approval notice for the Appalachian grant was personally delivered to Wellsville in October 1965 by Senator Robert Kennedy. After staying a few hours, Sen. Kennedy boarded a plane, left.

All this construction increased the size of the Hospital to 120 beds, including long-term care beds.

Then came Hurricane Agnes. In 1972, the rain-swollen Genesee River overflowed its banks and undermined the three-year-old “new wing”. While this did get the Hospital national newspaper headlines, it also caused the collapse of the west wing. No life was lost and much equipment was saved, but the new wing was gone. A two-year rebuilding project began right away on the north side of the Hospital to replace those areas affected by the flood, including the Intensive Care Unit, patient care rooms, administration offices, and medical staff areas. It was completed in 1974.

The Hospital remained a village entity until January 1988, when it divested from the Village of Wellsville and became a private, not-for-profit hospital. Once JMH successfully separated its operation from the village, the Hospital was eligible for grants and funding that would not have been available were it still a village entity.

In 1991, the Hospital broke ground on a 44,000-foot addition on the east side of the building. With the concept of realigning outpatient services in a centralized core area, this area became home to the emergency services department, the inpatient and outpatient surgical suites, the rehabilitation gym, and the medical imaging department. Also located in this most recent addition are the main entrance and lobby, and the Hospital Gift Shop, which is run by the JMH Auxiliary. The project also included renovation of the hospital’s dietary and cafeteria facilities within the existing building. Again, the community provided the means and the support necessary to make these projects a reality.



Hurricane Agnes caused the collapse of the hospital's west wing in 1972.



1991 Groundbreaking ceremony

As a community hospital, one of the continuing motivations has been expanding and adding services that meet the needs of the residents of this community. This growth can be seen in many hospital departments including Rehabilitation and the Jones Memorial Medical Practices, a primary care network of physicians and healthcare providers with specialties including Obstetrics and Gynecology, Pediatrics, Internal Medicine, Pulmonology, Orthopaedics, and Family Practice. The hospital now operates a Walk-In Clinic which is open seven days a week from 2 pm to 7 pm.

One community partnership which has worked out very well is the Wellsville Lions Club Diabetes Center at Jones Memorial Hospital. Established in 2004 with a \$16,000 donation from the Wellsville Lions followed by a \$54,000 donation from Lions Club International, the Diabetes Center continues to grow thanks to the commitment of other Lions Clubs in the area. The services offered include nutrition counseling, diabetic testing supplies, and on-site testing, including Hemoglobin A1C, lipids profiles, and urine micro albumin. The Diabetes Center is certified by the American Diabetes Association.

After a very successful \$1.2 million Wonderful Beginnings Capital Campaign, the maternity department — which was virtually unchanged since the 1950s — was renovated into a state of the art birthing unit. In 2017, the maternity unit was dedicated as the Dr. F. Clifton Miller Birthing Center in honor of Dr. Miller, who died suddenly in 2015. Dr. Miller spent his entire 43-year career in Allegany County delivering over 8400 babies.



The Scio Lions Club makes a gift to the Wellsville Lions Clubs Diabetes Center, 2018



Dr. Miller's family were on-hand to cut the ribbon in the newly named Dr. F. Clifton Miller Birthing Center.



In 2012, Jones CEO Eva Benedict and UR Medicine President Steven Goldstein signed an affiliation agreement, laying the foundation for a partnership between the two facilities.

After years of collaborating to bring specialists from UR Medicine to Wellsville, Jones Memorial Hospital officially became an affiliate of UR Medicine in 2016. Specialty clinics, cutting edge therapy, and clinical access to those services have all been benefits of our affiliation with UR Medicine. Specialty clinics in Cardiology, Oncology, Neurology, ENT, and Urology bring the experts from UR Medicine to Wellsville to consult and treat patients.

In early 2017, Jones Memorial, Wilmot Cancer Institute, and Noyes Health collaborated to establish The Ann and Carl Myers Cancer Center, a regional cancer treatment center. Located on the Noyes campus in Dansville, the Myers Cancer Center offers radiation therapy. The regional approach to cancer care was augmented when the Wilmot Cancer Institute Infusion Center at Jones Memorial Hospital was opened on the third floor at Jones later that year.



Wilmot Cancer Institute Infusion Center ribbon cutting



The Foundation Board includes, seated from left, Kay Eicher, Foundation Chair Sammy Gilkey, Secretary Jackie Comstock, and Vice Chair Jennifer Joyce. Standing, from left, Foundation Coordinator Jodi Pearson, Bill Smith, Geralyn Gough, Rich Shear, Ann Comstock, and Jim Helms, JMH VP of Finance. Missing from the photo are Foundation Board President and Hospital CEO Eva Benedict, and Foundation Treasurer Gary Balcom.

The support of the community has been an important aspect of Jones Memorial Hospital's history. In 2018, the Jones Memorial Hospital Foundation was founded to provide a philanthropic environment in direct support of the hospital's mission. Through the Foundation, the hospital can accept endowments and other planned giving.

The JMH Volunteers and Auxilians are community members who work tirelessly in support of the hospital. The volunteers can be found in nearly every area, giving our patients and visitors that hometown touch.

The number of activities the Auxiliary organizes to raise money for Jones ranges from the Spring Fling and the Gala and Silent Auction, to jewelry sales, uniform sales, and used and new book sales. Because of the hard work and dedication of its members - and the support of the community - the Auxiliary raises over \$75,000 a year for patient-related equipment. While they don't seek recognition for their efforts, it was gratifying when the Healthcare Association of New York State chose the JMH Auxiliary as Small Hospital Auxiliary of the Year in 2010 and the Wellsville-Area Chamber of Commerce recognized the Auxiliary for the work they do on behalf of Jones Memorial in 2018.



Accepting the Award from WACC Executive Director Brian Perkins were Auxiliary President Kay Eicher, center, and Auxilian Marsha Sick.



Since 1921, Jones Memorial Hospital has been taking care of this community and this community has taken care of Jones Memorial Hospital. Throughout our history, when the hospital needed to expand, add services, or purchase new equipment, the community came through. In every sense of the word, JMH is a community hospital and will be for generations to come.



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MEDICINE of THE HIGHEST ORDER