

MOUNT SINAI QUEENS inside



The original hospital, today's Annex

A New Look at Our History: Part I

In this issue of Inside Queens, we tell the story of our Hospital's very beginnings up through the 1930s. We will continue the story from the postwar years to the present in the December issue.

Up until 2010, the accepted thinking was that our history dated to 1910. Based on that date, we thought we reached our centennial as a hospital. In fact, research shows that Mount Sinai Queens can trace its history back almost 120 years to 1892, when Astoria was hailed as "one of New York's fairest suburbs," a magnet for the wealthy and successful.

It was nearly 20 years earlier than we first thought, in 1892, that the Hospital was founded by a group of Astoria philanthropists, led by Mrs. Frank E. Hagemeyer and included Mrs. Blackwell, Riker and Rapelye—a who's who of the elite in northwestern Queens. The original Astoria Hospital opened in a former private residence leased by William Steinway of the Steinway piano family, and was

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Whether patients walk in or arrive by ambulance, the Emergency Department (ED) sees a wide range of emergency cases—stroke, cardiac, broken bones, infections, asthma and those needing stitches, the list is long. "What we do hasn't changed over the years," says Deborah Dean, MD, Acting Interim Director, shown here to the right, second from the right. Also shown in the photo, from left to right, are Daliah John, PA, Jimmy Lee, PA, and Denise Chuang, DO, Associate Director.

"Our volume certainly has changed in the ED," says Dr. Dean. "We are currently seeing about 50,000 patients a year in our ED, which speaks to our efficiency."

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Some of the Emergency Department staff



Patient Point of View

After falling, my father was seen in your Emergency Department by Dr. Deborah Dean. Had it not been for her quick action, I doubt Dad would have survived the injury. Once Dad was transferred to the ICU, Dr. Sotirios Kassapidis took over. Dr. Kassapidis immediately had a plan of action and he put our worst fears to rest. His work along with that of the respiratory specialist and nurses in the ICU saved my father's life. Today Dad is home and looking forward to spending time with his grandchildren.

— L.M.

A New Look at Our History: Part I (continued from page 1)

located on Astoria Boulevard, then called Flushing Avenue. Mrs. Hagemeyer, a constant in newspaper society pages and a generous benefactor, paid the Hospital's rent for three years.

By 1894, the Hospital, deemed a success, saw the need for a larger building. Mrs. Hagemeyer again led the way, promising \$6,000 toward the construction of a new building if other donors would match her pledge. In 1894, the Hospital purchased a plot of land on Crescent Street near 30th Avenue and, in 1895, it held a successful fair to raise funds for construction. Soon, total donations topped \$20,000. Ground was broken on a picturesque plot, which had a sweeping view and was right across from the historic stone Church of the Redeemer.

The cornerstone was laid on November 1, 1895. When the masons set the stone in place, Mrs. Hagemeyer tapped it with a trowel.

The new Tudor-trim building was completed in April 1896 and opened with a gala reception on May 4, 1896. The Hospital was "a fitting monument to the women who built it," according to *The New York Times*, and a source of pride for the community. Its doors were open to all patients, without regard to sex, creed or

nationality. The new facility boasted two operating rooms, separate wards for men and women, a dining room, a training school and apartments for nurses (young women could attend for free), and even a horse stable and ambulance in the rear. The Hospital could treat 50 patients. Five private "memorial rooms," furnished by benefactors in memory of others, were available for \$10 to \$16 per day. The goal was to run the hospital as "a model of completeness and comfort."

In 1898, however, various independent towns of Queens County merged with Manhattan and Brooklyn, and Queens became one of the five boroughs of New York City. As part of the consolidation, the City took over hospital funding. There were two hospitals in the area, Astoria Hospital and St. John's, the latter in what was then downtown Long Island City. Because the St. John's area was more populated and had greater political clout than suburban Astoria, the City directed its funding towards St. John's. Astoria Hospital wasn't able to earn enough to keep going just from private physicians. Unable to sustain itself financially, the Hospital closed in 1898.

Records show that in 1910 several former doctors from the Hospital attempted to revive Astoria Hospital, but they were unsuccessful.

In 1925, Marie Daly, the wife of Dr. John F. Daly, bought the Hospital and it reopened as Daly's Astoria Sanatorium, a private sanatorium and maternity hospital. Dr. Daly, a 1917 graduate of Fordham Medical School, served as medical director during the sanatorium's early years. By 1930, Dr. Daly had taken up residence in the building on Crescent Street and, in 1932, the sanatorium was legally incorporated as Daly's Astoria Sanatorium, continuing the name.

With 30 beds and 22 bassinets, Daly's Astoria Sanatorium was the site of many births, as well as deaths. Several prominent local citizens drew their last breath there, including the chief otolaryngologist of St. John's Hospital and the pastor of St. Joseph's Church. The sanatorium also seems to have had a reputation as an outstanding maternity hospital, as many Queens County doctors brought their wives there to

give birth. In the 25 years between 1925 and 1949, the Hospital grew steadily. The 1931 *Journal of the American Medical Association (JAMA)* hospital survey reports that the sanatorium admitted 793 patients that year; by 1949 this number had nearly doubled. The sanatorium also contributed to the postwar baby boom, as the number of births increased steadily from 358 in 1931 to more than 800 in the late 1940s.

In December's Inside Queens: Look for the next and final chapter of our history, which recounts how the Hospital grew to a size that at one point served more patients and delivered more babies than any other private hospital in Queens. 📖

Our thanks to the Archives and Records Management Division of Mount Sinai Medical Center and the Greater Astoria Historical Society for their invaluable research assistance.

Recreation Office Employee Discounts!

For discounts on tickets to movies, theater and sports events, as well as discounts for shopping, travel and more, check out the intranet at <http://intranet1.mountsinai.org>. Click on Employee Services (at the top), then Human Resources (on the right), then Recreation (at the top).



Joining the Medical Staff: **Melissa S. Lee, MD**



Melissa S. Lee, MD, joined the staff of Mount Sinai Queens in September 2011 as Medical Director of Ambulatory Care Services. Her administrative role includes the oversight of medical care at Family Health and Physician Associates practices, supervision of physicians, and implementation of quality improvement initiatives. She

also serves as a clinical provider at both practices.

Dr. Lee came to Mount Sinai Queens from the Indian Health Service, as Chief of Primary Care, Chinle Comprehensive Health Care Facility in Chinle, Arizona. "I was there for six years and what I enjoyed about my former job is that I cared for both adults and children and was able to serve leadership roles in practice management. I wanted to continue those elements, but back in my native New York. This job at Mount Sinai Queens was a good fit," she says.

Mother to three children, ages five and younger, Dr. Lee's husband is also a physician and from the East Coast. In fact, Dr. Lee's grandparents lived in Astoria for more than 60 years and her parents lived in Woodside.

"I love being part of the community. My former job allowed

me, with my husband, to work and live on the reservation, which we loved. Similarly, here, my kids play in the same playgrounds that my patients play in, we go to the same grocery store, and my eldest started kindergarten at PS 166 in the Astoria neighborhood."

Dr. Lee received her bachelor's degree in biology and history of science and medicine, cum laude from Yale University.

She also received her medical degree, cum laude from Yale. Her residency was completed in the Harvard Combined Residency in Internal Medicine and Pediatrics program at Brigham and Women's Hospital, Children's Hospital and Mass General Hospital, all in Boston. She is board certified in both internal medicine and pediatrics.

Welcome, Dr. Melissa Lee! 🎉

Focus On: Emergency Department

(continued from page 1)

For the last several years, the ED volume has grown by about 1,000 cases per year. Dr. Dean attributes this increase to new housing in the area, closures of other hospitals in the region and the fact that Mount Sinai Queens is a New York State Designated Stroke Center.

To keep up, the ED team has looked at ways to become more efficient, from rearranging staffing to reconfiguring the existing physical space. To deal with overflow, the ED isolated a space in the lobby and staffed that dedicated space with nursing and ancillary staff, providing the ED with five more beds. Additionally, nursing staff was also added to the main ED.

With most of the Hospital's admissions coming from the

ED, the department is often an influencer on other departments. For instance, in 2007 the ED went paperless and adopted the electronic medical record. "We leapt from paper to computer in one fell swoop," says Dr. Dean. The lessons learned from that experience will inform a transition to a hospital-wide move to the electronic medical record.

The ED is also at the forefront of emergency management planning. "Last summer's Hurricane Irene was a good opportunity to put us through our paces," says Dr. Dean. "The Hospital opened up a command center and I and many of my colleagues stayed the night. Everything worked smoothly and I was very pleased with the staff's responsiveness." 🎉

Take a Bow!

Mera Ali, Cashier Supervisor, received her Master's Degree in Healthcare Management this summer from American InterContinental University online. Previously, after 23 years, she returned to school in 2008 and graduated in 2009 with her associate of science degree in business administration. In 2010, she graduated with her bachelor of science degree in accounting and finance, *summa cum laude*. "It's never too late. Education is something that no one can take away from you," says Ali.

The Mount Sinai Queens Softball Team, for the first time in seven years, got past the first round of the first league playoff and came in second in the league championship game! "While we were disappointed not to take first, this was a huge improvement for us," says team captain **Gary McCollins**, Director of Medical Staff Services. "One year we were so bad, we called ourselves the Flatliners!" Congratulations to McCollins and his teammates: **Charlie Newton**, Radiology; **Roberto Sanchez**, Housekeeping; **Miguel Sepulveda**, Housekeeping; **Jerry Matos**, Housekeeping; **Jason Rivera**, Food and Nutrition; **David Robbins**, Storeroom/Central Supply; **Neem Perez**, Advanced Radiology; **Darwin Pacheco Jr.**, Engineering; and **Lordy Josama**, former director of Medical Records, who remains on the softball team.



"Take a Bow" will be a recurring feature in Inside Queens. Please submit news of your recent accomplishments to Marketing at 718-267-4324 or fax to 718-278-1786.

Events



CLASS: Cardio-Pulmonary Resuscitation (CPR)

This CPR class is designed for the general public and teaches core skills. *Registration suggested; call 718-267-4333.*

Robert Augente,
New York Fire Department

Tuesday, November 15
7 pm

Crescent Tower
Community Room
23-22 30th Road
Astoria, NY 11102

PANEL DISCUSSION: Bullying

Come hear several experts weigh in on this troubling issue. *Registration suggested; call 718-267-4333.*

Christopher Clemens, MD, Family Health Associates Pediatrician
Lily Divino, LCSW, Adolescent Health Center, The Mount Sinai Medical Center
Robert D. Alexander, Assistant District Attorney, Queens County Office
Paul Weiss, PhD, Chief Program Officer, Asphalt Green
Moderator: Dr. Joseph Bertolino, Vice President, Student Affairs, Queens College

Wednesday, November 16

6:30 pm
Public School 234
30-15 29th Street
Astoria, 11102

How Mount Sinai Queens Takes Care of Diabetes

November is American Diabetes Month and an excellent time to review what Mount Sinai Queens provides the community and our patients in diabetes care at both our outpatient practices, Family Health Associates (31-60 21st Street, 718-808-7300) and Physician Associates (27-15 30th Avenue, 718-808-7500).

LECTURE: Reduce Your Risk of Colon Cancer

Learn what you can do to protect yourself. *Registration suggested; call 718-267-4333.*

Nicholas Roditis, MD,
Gastroenterologist

Wednesday, November 16

11 am
Raices Astoria Senior Center
21-21 30th Drive
Astoria, 11102

LECTURE: Maximizing the Doctor-Patient Relationship

Learn how to get the most out of your doctor's visits. *Registration suggested; call 718-267-4333.*

James Melis, MD, Family Medicine

***NOTE: The diabetes class, explained in further detail in the story to the right, immediately follows this lecture.*

Tuesday, November 22

10:30 am
George T. Douris Tower
27-40 Hoyt Avenue South
Astoria, 11102

DIABETES CLASS: Diabetes and Your Nutrition

Get the facts about how you can control diabetes through improved nutrition. *Registration suggested; call 718-267-4333.*

Effie Nerantzis, RD, CDN

Tuesday, November 22

11 am
George T. Douris Tower
27-40 Hoyt Avenue South
Astoria, 11102

Both these sites welcome patients who are newly diagnosed with diabetes, as well as those already diagnosed, who are seeking a comprehensive, convenient approach to care. "We offer internal medicine, endocrinology, podiatry, ophthalmology and nutrition services," says Melissa S. Lee, MD, Medical Director of Ambulatory Care Services. "It's important for patients with diabetes to have a coordinated approach to comprehensive diabetes care."

Patients with diabetes are typically followed by either an internal medicine physician or an endocrinologist, but need frequent specialty check-ups for their feet and eyes. Because diabetes and diabetic complications can be controlled through nutrition, the support of a dietitian is essential, too. "We provide those patients with easy access to many primary and specialty practitioners. Each patient's medical records are also all in one place," adds Deborah Tarulli, Administrative Director of Outpatient Ambulatory Sites.

The Community Relations Department has begun a series of monthly classes offered to the community. Look for this month's class on nutrition and diabetes in the calendar shown on the upper left of this page.



Wellness Tips

November 17 is the Great American Smokeout

Make the most of this day with some preparation and suggestions:

- ▶ Plan activities on November 17 that keep you mostly in non-smoking areas.
- ▶ In advance, ask your doctor about using the patch or other nicotine replacement methods to help you with the cravings.
- ▶ Tell everyone you're going to participate and ask friends and family for help. (If you don't smoke or aren't participating, provide extra support to those around you who are.)
- ▶ Choose a reward that you can buy the day after your successful Smokeout.
- ▶ Be extra good to yourself.
- ▶ Don't light up.
- ▶ On November 18, before you light a cigarette, buy your reward.
- ▶ Try not smoking again. Take it one day at a time.

Halina Szulczewski September Employee of the Month

Human Resources is proud to announce September Employee of the Month, Halina Szulczewski, Care Manager.

"Halina has consistently been diligent and efficient in her job performance. She is caring and compassionate and practices great service standards. She had been recognized numerous times by her own peers and other members of the health care team," says Lourdes S. Geslani, RN, CPHQ, Director of Care Management and Quality Assurance. "Halina is definitely an asset to the department and the organization."

Employee of the Month winners receive a prize, and their names and photos are placed on a poster that is displayed in the lobby. Winners celebrate with colleagues around pizza served on their unit or in their department.

Congratulations, Halina Szulczewski!



Halina Szulczewski



Inside Queens

Department of Marketing and Communications

Submit items to

Marketing
at 718-267-4324, or fax to
718-278-1786.

Submission deadline for:
January—November 30
February—December 30
March—January 31