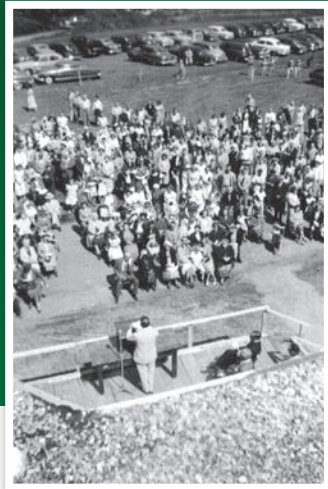


The Beginning...

When Dr. Robert V. Persson first moved to Newton Falls in 1935 to serve as the company doctor for the Newton Falls Paper Mill, he was the only physician for the entire region. The nearest hospital was 35 miles away at a time when cars on the road were fewer and slower. It soon became clear to Dr. Persson that a community hospital was needed.

Support for Dr. Persson's plan continued to build over the years. In 1943, the first meeting of interested parties in the Clifton and Fine Townships was held and, as a result, J. Otto Hamele of Wanakena was designated Chairman of the sponsoring committee



August 5, 1951

Clifton-Fine Hospital is dedicated at 3pm and opens for use. Total cost of the project upon completion is \$315,000. The hospital's first patient is seen on August 28th. An expectant mother, Nila Ward Boyd delivers the first baby born at the hospital. Within the first five years 550 babies are delivered at Clifton-Fine Hospital.



1951

Lawrence L. Jacobson serves as the hospital's first General Superintendent and Business Manager from 1951-1964. The medical staff at the time of the hospital's opening includes Dr. Robert V. Persson, Dr. Leon E. Sutton, Dr. William R. Carson and Dr. Clifford H. Marsh. The original nursing staff consists of Violet Cornell, Florence De Witt, Doris Hall, Evelyn Hooven and Helen Stinehelper.



1961

General practitioner Dr. Milton Lowell (L) joins the medical staff at Clifton-Fine Hospital. He remains part of the hospital staff until his retirement in 1977. With him is Dr. Robert Persson (R) who retires in 1973 after 38 years of providing care to area residents ... including delivering more than 5,600 babies!

of a new Clifton-Fine Hospital. Two years later a regular township election carried two proposals by a sizeable majority. The first was to create, build, operate, and maintain a public hospital. The second was to allow the two townships, Clifton and Fine, to bond a total of \$75,000 toward the hospital project.

Four acres of land north of the village of Star Lake were purchased from Ethel and Herbert Snider for the facility building site in 1946. By 1949 the general contract for building the hospital was awarded to Deline, Charlebois, & Wagner of Watertown and a groundbreaking ceremony was held on August 4th.



1971

Dr. John (Jack) Carthy is hired as a surgeon and general practitioner. He leaves the community in 1986, but returns as a family practitioner in 2009 and is still seeing patients today.



1976

The Clifton-Fine Medical Clinic opens. This new \$85,000 facility, financed by the Towns of Clifton and Fine, is constructed approximately 50 yards from the Hospital.



1985

As a community service project, the Clifton-Fine Lions Club purchases thirteen televisions for patient rooms. Television service is free of charge for all patients.



1993

The Wilderness Health Care Foundation is established by Stan Lawrence, a resident of Cranberry Lake and, at the time, Chairperson of the Clifton-Fine Hospital Board of Directors. The Foundation's mission is to support Clifton-Fine Hospital through fund-raising endeavors.

1998

The Clifton-Hospital Ambulance Service is established to transport inpatients. The service was discontinued in 2012 due to lack of funding.



July 15, 1995

A devastating micro-burst strikes the Clifton-Fine area at 5 a.m. with 80 mile per hour winds. While the hospital itself is structurally undamaged, many other buildings are not so lucky. The hospital does lose its "memory tree," a large blue spruce, donated by the SUNY-ESF Ranger School in Wanakena in the 1950s.



2002

The early 2000s see the opening of both the Physical Therapy addition and the hospital's Skilled Nursing Unit. The new Physical Therapy building is a 1,200 square foot addition to the existing garage that is still in use today to provide outpatient therapy for community members. After receiving approval from the NYS Department of Health, Clifton-Fine Hospital converts 11 of its 20 acute care beds to nursing home beds. When the new Skilled Nursing Unit opens, after \$75,000 in physical plant renovations, eighteen people are on a waiting list for placement.



A new 6,700 square foot Clifton-Fine Hospital Primary Care Clinic opens on January 11th after the original Clinic is destroyed by an early morning fire on October 12, 2008. Chaired by Walter Todd and Chris Westbrook, the Wilderness Health Care Foundation's "Close to Home" campaign raises over \$750,000 to contribute to this project.

2011



2003

The Hospital Auxiliary funds the construction of a gazebo on hospital grounds for patients, visitors and staff to enjoy. Four years later, in 2007, Clifton-Fine Hospital is recognized as the sole provider in a medically underserved area and receives designation as a federal Critical Access Hospital.



2013

Robert L. Seamon is hired as the hospital's tenth CEO. He continues in that position today. Mr. Seamon works closely with the Board of Trustees to explore options to affiliate with a larger hospital, a process which ends on March 31, 2014 when Clifton-Fine Hospital becomes affiliated with Samaritan Medical Center.



The Future...

Generations of families have placed their trust in Clifton-Fine Hospital, and with sound guidance from hospital trustees; a strong partnership with Samaritan Medical Center in Watertown; a supportive and committed community; and the dedication of our talented physicians, staff and volunteers; we look toward our next 65 years stronger than ever.

Thank you for your support!