

Grand Opening of New Coalville Library & Health Department

January 25, 2012

The Summit County Hospital



In 1935, when Dr. E. W. Oldham came to Coalville to practice, he had a dream of being able to work with the special equipment and facilities that a hospital could provide in a rural area. Dr. O. W. French, and doctors that had preceded Dr.

Oldham to Summit County

were handicapped because of the lack of a hospital. Dr. French and perhaps others, carried a portable operating table that was used at times when the kitchen table was not useable. Dr. French had a small hospital with one room for operating in and one room for a few hours recovery located two flights up over The Summit Merc.in Coalville, he was limited in the services he could provide.

With Dr. French's help, Dr. Oldham persuaded the Summit County Commissioners to find a way to build a hospital in Summit County.

In December 1938, a building was started and was completed in December 1939. It was a WPA Project, No

1216-F, and cost \$51,830. It was a brick structure, 123 feet 9 inches by 41 feet 9 inches, and included a concrete half-basement. Ashton & Evans, Salt Lake City, were the architects, and the construction work was done by Ryberg Bros., also of Salt Lake City.

The hospital contained 14 beds, surgery, delivery room, x-ray department, nursery, kitchen, etc., and had the very latest modern equipment throughout. Dr. Oldham brought in some of his own equipment to be used in the hospital, along with some of the other doctors.

An Open House was held January 7, 1940, for everyone to come and see this beautiful new building with all its modern conveniences and facilities.

Miss Paloma Matthews was the first superintendent and the nursing staff was Kathy Cafarelli(Wheaton) and Jenny Colzani(Wright), Josphine Garavaglia(Smith) and Mrs. Affra Rees. Another superintendent was Mrs. Superla C. Staley. Mrs. Wm. Robinson was in charge of the kitchen and Mr. Wilford Clark was the janitor. The Summit County Commissioners were David L. Johnson, Coalville, chairman and Ed McPolin of Park City and John W. Guild of Kamas.

The first baby delivered in the new hospital was Earline Durrant, a daughter of Lela and Owen Durrant of Coalville. The first patient to have surgery was Austin Bowen. The first death at the hospital was James Ernest Robinson I, who died in February 1940.



Gary Smith



Kathy Wheaton, Paloma Matthews, sister of Matthews, Jenny Wright

SUMMIT COUNTY
PUBLIC HEALTH DEPT.

The first nurses were RN's, but others were hired to help as people from out of the county were admitted to the hospital.

Nurses and aids that have worked at the hospital are Affra Rees, Louise Jones, Dorothy V. Blonquist, Shelia Cottom, Superla Staley, Alice Lowham, Rose Bigelow, Shirley Jorgenson, Betty Jones, Blanche Young, Ruth Oldham, Torza Mason, Helen Boyer, Amy Shaw, Della Sunberg, Nadine O'Brien, Joan Burton, Beulah Willoughby, May V. Olsen, Ruth Richins, June Wilde, Wilma Foster, Almeda Mecham, Kathy Wilde, Lily Argyle, Sheryl Porter, Ella Mae Judd, Mrs. Kresgar, Jane Harper, Jean Paskett, Helen Bezzant, Lola O'Driscoll, Zola Mae Lott, Gary Smith, Vivian Willoughby, Mrs. White, Beverly Anarude, Bonnie Dawd, Mary Jane Moore, Kathy Garfield, Jeanette Vernon, Nancy Hutchinson, Sherie Farrell, Eleria Warburton, and Karen Ekker,(director).

Doctors that have practiced in Summit County Hospital are Dr. O. W. French, Dr. E. W. Oldham, Dr. Harlan T. High, Dr. Reed J. Parker, Dr. E. G. Wright, Dr. John Kumagai, Dr. Wayne Bosworth, Dr's Smoot, Brown, Bingham, Robinson, Nuttle and Dr. Oneiki, Dr. Bjarnason, and Doctor Frank Rees worked with the doctors administrating anesthetic.

All of these names were given by memory and there are probably some missing, but it certainly is not intentional.

The last baby Dr. Parker delivered at the hospital was the baby of Eldon and LuAnn Pace of Hoytsville. The last baby delivered before the Summit County Hospital was closed, was the baby of Roy and Dixie Dixon of Hoytsville by Dr. Kumagai.

The small hospital did some very miraculous work and many a life was actually saved because of it.

There are plaques that honor four of the doctors who have practiced there. One is dedicated to Dr. O. W. French. It says, "This token of loving respect is erected to Dr. O. W. French by his life long friends in appreciation for the concentration of his life's labor in service to our country. His masterful performance of the merciful duties to which he is devoted, joined with sympathetic friendship

for all, has encouraged and instilled hope and faith.

For these virtues and the privilege of enjoying his human fellowship, we offer our undying gratitude."

Another plaque is dedicated to Dr. Oldham for his service from 1934 to 1950 and one to Dr. Parker for service from 1948 to 1975. Another plaque is dedicated to Dr. John Kumagai for his dedication and service and concern for the welfare of the entire population of Summit County. Other plaques include Eldred G. Wright and Dr. Wayne Bosworth for their services.

April 4, 1980 the Summit County Hospital was remodeled at the cost of \$250,000.

Travel to the cities to specialists was made faster and easier by the freeways. As time went on, there was a decrease in the use of the hospital. Evanston and Heber opened hospitals for their areas and it began to be a struggle to find the money to keep the hospital going.

After a great deal of study and discussion, the County Commissioners could find no way that the County could continue to financially keep the hospital open. Many days the hospital had only one or two patients and sometimes no one at all.

Advanced health systems took over the hospital management. They tried to stay open, but were faced with the same problems and on June 30, 1982, the Summit County Hospital, as it had been was closed forever.

The Summit County Hospital effectively closed as of July 1, 1982. Effective July 19, 1982, the Holy Cross Hospital operated a health care center with emergency room capabilities.

Doctor Wain Allen, was the last associate at the clinic. In July, 2008 the clinic moved to the Sandra Toole Memorial Building in Coalville. The clinic is now called the Summit Wellness Clinic.

The restored building is now the Summit County Library and the Summit County Health Department, at the cost of \$1,090,319.

**Summit County Bee 1982
Summit County History
NaVee Vernon**

