


# *Alumnae Association*
# of the Hartford Hospital School of Nursing

1892–2026

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**Alumnae Association of the Hartford Hospital School of Nursing**
Commemorative Magazine
September 2026

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# Dedication & Acknowledgements



***Board and Officers of Alumnae Association of HHSN. Front row left to right: Theresa Gwozdz, Christine Johnson, Alicia Plikaitis Junghans, Betty Ann Vose Fusco. Back row left to right: Mary Jane Malone, Mary Jane Pappalardo Densmore, Jerrilynn Saltus Sicaras, Lesley Prentice McGrath, Gail Pendleton Rapoza, Phyllis Weiner DeMaine, Sheila Rowell, Patricia Andreana Ciarcia. Missing from photo: Jane Wallace Lasher, Karen Stinson Mazzarella, Diane Leggio Lebedski.***

***Alicia Junghans, board secretary for many years, sadly passed away on May 7, 2026 after an 18-year battle with myeloma.***

We dedicate this commemorative magazine to the thousands of Hartford Hospital School of Nursing graduates who became the lifeblood of our beloved Alumnae Association. Over the course of 100 years, each of us entered the school and began a journey that would carry us from a society of homemakers to a world of daring opportunities and groundbreaking challenges.

For a century we would become the embodiment of professionalism and excellence at Hartford Hospital, a true reflection of the outstanding education we received at the Hartford Hospital School of Nursing and the Hartford Hospital Training School before that.

We hope, through these pages, we have captured the essence of our esteemed school and the perpetual heartbeat that was sustained by the Alumnae Association for more than 125 years.



Photos courtesy of the Hamilton Archives, Hartford Hospital, with special thanks to Katarzyna “Kathy” Woznica MLS, Medical Librarian at the Hartford Hospital/Institute of Living Health Sciences Library, for her extensive help in gathering the images for this issue.

Sources include: The Healing Triangle: Hartford Hospital’s First 150 Years, by Bruce Clouette and Brian Lever; A Long Way: Hartford Hospital School of Nursing, Volumes I – IV by Ethel Brooks; Hartford Hospital Nursing Magazine; RxTra newsletter.

# FOREWORD

## *A School is Born*

In 1876, the Executive Committee of Hartford Hospital decided to create a training school for nurses in order to "select and educate an efficient class of women, that the Hospital may have a high order of nursing." When it opened on March 22, 1877, the Hartford Hospital Training School for Nurses was only the fourth training school for nurses in the United States, based on the Nightingale Plan developed by Florence Nightingale during and after her experiences in the Crimean War.

Frances A. Tuttle was the first Lady Superintendent of the school. She oversaw the students' education, which involved textbooks, lectures from visiting physicians and experience on the hospital's wards. The school began with a two-year program, but later extended it to three years. Ms. Tuttle served as the head of the training school for 13 years, resigning in 1890.

Among those who held the position of Lady Superintendent after Ms. Tuttle's departure were two of the country's leading nurses. Flora Macrae, who served from 1890 to 1892, had helped establish the Johns Hopkins School of Nursing in Baltimore. Linda A. J. Richards served from 1895 to 1897. She was one of America's first trained nurses, enrolling in the first class of the first American training school for nurses, at the New England Hospital for Women and Children.

In her memoir, Ms. Richards describes HHTS as "one of the pioneer schools in the country."



Frances A. Tuttle
First Superintendent Training School, Hartford Hospital
March 1, 1877 – April 1, 1890

Seeking to incorporate the newest methods (what today might be called "best practices") into the school's program, Ms. Richards brought in graduates of some of the best schools in New England. "Today," she wrote in 1911, "I know of few schools superior to that of the Hartford Hospital."

For several years, nurses were housed and educated at various locations in the hospital,

wherever a space could be found. As the hospital and the school continued to grow, however, the need for a building to house student nurses became evident. Funds were raised for it and, in June of 1900, the Nurses' Residence opened at 37 Jefferson Street. Its 65 rooms allowed each student to have her own room and provided a library, sitting room, a dining room and a classroom.

Commenting on innovations in the program in her report of that year, Lady Superintendent Elizabeth Friend wrote, "The course of training for the pupil nurses has been changed from two to three years, and the standard of education raised. By these changes we expect to give the nurses a more thorough training, and so supply the public with more efficient nurses."



***Lady Superintendent Elizabeth Friend***



***Linda Richards, left, in the classroom of HHTS (colorized)***

# 1877–1879

# *In the Beginning*

**1877:** Hartford Hospital opens the Training School for Nurses on March 22. It is the fourth in the country of its kind, after schools at Massachusetts General Hospital in Boston, Bellevue Hospital in New York City and New Haven Hospital in Connecticut.

Frances A. Tuttle is named lady superintendent and director of the school. It is likely that Mrs. Tuttle, a widow, had no formal training but did have nursing experience. She oversaw the development of the nurses, both personal and professional, as well as introducing food preparation and nutrition to the curriculum. In its initial two-year term, coursework included the application of leeches, bandaging wounds, and preparing medications, as well as other procedures in the care of patients.



***The earliest known photo of Hartford Hospital circa 1875***

**1878:** The school received 47 applications for the training school; 25 were accepted. Twelve nursing students departed in the first year.

**1879:** The first class of five nursing students graduates: Hannah M. Calahan, Amelia Cooke, Caroline A. House, Annie Morrell and Lydia S. Woodward.



such positions as they may be found capable of holding, with a proportionate increase of salary.

When the full term of two years is completed, the nurses thus trained, after passing a final examination, will receive diplomas, certifying to their knowledge of nursing, their ability, and good character.

---

N. B.—This paper is to be filled in (in the candidate's own handwriting), and sent to the Superintendent of the Hartford Hospital.

QUESTIONS TO BE ANSWERED BY CANDIDATE.

1. Name in full, and present address of candidate?
2. Are you married, single, or widow?
3. Your present occupation or employment?
4. What has been your occupation?
5. Age last birthday, and date and place of birth?
6. Height? Weight?
7. Where educated?
8. Are you strong and healthy, and have you always been so?
9. If a widow, have you children? How many? Their ages? How are they provided for?
10. The names in full and addresses of two persons to be referred to? State how long each has known you. If previously employed, one of these must be the last employer.
11. Have you read and do you clearly understand the regulations, and do you promise to conform to the requirements?

I declare the above statement to be correct.

(Signed)

*Candidate.*

Dated

***Page from prospective nurse applicant materials, including questionnaire to be completed by candidate.***



***Miss Caroline A. House, first graduate of HHTS, class of 1879 (colorized)***

# 1880–1889

# A Growing Campus

**1883:** Hartford Hospital opens its first maternity ward in an effort to separate healthy, expectant mothers from sick patients. While most babies in this time were born at home, the ward provided a safe accommodation within the hospital.

**1884:** The "Old People's Home," adjacent to the hospital property, opens, employing nurses from Hartford Hospital and the training school. Nurses who worked there were sometimes housed there, as well. By the end of the decade, the home was occupied to capacity. Nurses often had grandmothers in the Old People's Home.



***HHTS Nurse with babies***



***Lizzie T. Oliver, Class of 1880***

*The Old People's Home*



*Second and third graduating classes of HHTS, 1881*



*Nurses circa 1888-1889*

# 1890–1899

# The Alumnae Association is Born

**1891–92:** Hospital uniforms were introduced: a long blue and white striped cotton dress with long sleeves, a white apron, bib, collar cuffs and a cap.

**1892:** Nursing students trained in a new diet kitchen, learning how to prepare food for the sick.

**1892:** After a tea party attended by area graduates, the Hartford Hospital Training School Alumnae Association was formed. Mrs. Frances A. Tuttle was elected president.



***New hospital uniform (colorized)***





***Hospital uniforms, seen here in 1891, on the hospital's children's ward***

**1894:** Miss Fannie Nichols, class of 1894, died of typhoid fever, just weeks after leaving the hospital. She had been sent from Hartford Hospital to Windsor, VT to assist with the epidemic and died there.

**October, 1895:** First commencement exercises took place at the school. Ten nurses received their diplomas and pins.




**1896:** 70 cases of typhoid fever were treated at Hartford Hospital, two of them fatal. With no known medication to treat the illness, nurses administered cold-water baths to patients. The average stay at the hospital was four weeks.

**1895–1897:** Nurse Linda Richards, who studied with Florence Nightingale, brought her talents to Hartford Hospital as Lady Superintendent. She introduced the role of head nurse, a position solely dedicated to the education and training of the student nurse. She also developed the role of ward maids, relieving the nursing student of cleaning duties, allowing them more time to focus on patient care. While she only served as Superintendent for less than two years, her contributions were impactful and positively changed the nursing school.

**Late 1890's:** Growth of the school is a burden on the hospital, with overcrowding in wards and nurses' quarters affecting the overall health of the students.

**1899:** Hartford Hospital was wired for electricity.



***HHTS nurses administer ice water baths during the typhoid fever epidemic***



***Nurses socialize in a student bedroom, 1895***

# 1900–1909

# A New Home at 37 Jefferson Street



*37 Jefferson Street, circa 1900*

**June 4, 1900:** The hospital's Nurses' Residence was completed at 37 Jefferson Street. Of 140 applications to the nursing program, 40 were accepted. The building was financed in large part by Mary Sweeney, of South Manchester, a nurse who left the hospital a sum of more than $27,000 in her estate.

HHTS Principal Miss Lauder Sutherland described the new Nurses' Residence in great detail, noting, "Built and equipped with reference to the requirements and comfort of the nurses, it contains 65 rooms. On the first floor an attractive entrance Hall extends across the building. On the left are the Principal's sitting, bed and bath rooms, and six nurses' rooms and bath. Also, a sitting-room attractively furnished in a color scheme green and yellow for the use of the head nurses."

The residence boasted a stocked reference library, as well as fiction, travel and leisure materials "for the amusement of the nurses." The sitting room featured a Tiffany fireplace and a piano, providing a comfortable space to gather and relax.

Miss Sutherland highlighted the nurses' rooms that came equipped with adjoining linen closets. Each hallway had one bathroom with

two tubs and allowed for one toilet for every six nurses. Sutherland noted an added feature provided respite for nurses via a balcony. "Opening from each corridor is a long narrow balcony over-looking a courtyard," she wrote. "On the balconies the year round is a row of cot beds for those who prefer to sleep out of doors and it is only in very rainy weather that these cots are not occupied."



*The Jefferson House reception room in 1905*



*Miss Lauder Sutherland, HHTS Principal (colorized)*

**July 1900:** the Training School program moved from a two-year program to three years, transitioning from nurses earning $12 per month the first year and $14 the second year to $8, $10 and $12, respectively over the course of 3 years.

**September 1908:** Total nursing staff at this time is 88, including 71 student nurses, 13 graduate nurses, one dietician and three attendants.



*Nurses, babies and doctor, circa 1904*

# 1910–1919

# *Wartime Challenges*

**February, 1912:** New student nurse uniforms were introduced, changing out the blue and white gingham that dated back to 1891 for a lavender and white striped uniform, with enamel cuff pins, belt buttons and collar buttons.



***Nurse Gertrude Boutelle dons the HHTS uniform (colorized)***

**Fall 1912:** Diphtheria struck the city of Hartford. Hartford Hospital utilized its Contagious Disease Pavilion, as well as the Infectious Cottage on the grounds between the Nurses' Residence and the Old People's Home. With as many as 106 nurses falling ill, Hartford Hospital was forced to turn away patients from October 15 to November 4. A total of 16 patients succumbed to diphtheria that season.

The hospital's annual report of fiscal year 1914–1915 reflected on the impact of the war in Europe on hospital costs. "All surgical instruments have been advanced at least 20% in price, and many, if not all, drugs and medications have increased in cost, some 300 or 400%, and others to a prohibitive figure. So many of our drugs and chemicals are manufactured in Germany, that now these are unobtainable at any price."

Also that year, it was reported that outbreaks of diphtheria and scarlet fever had led to the closure of the hospital's children's ward on more than one occasion.




***Contagious cottage nurses in personal protective equipment***

**1915–1916 report:** Miss Lauder Sutherland reported on the challenges of the nurses and students, writing: "As compared with a few years ago, four times the number of patients are now treated in the Hospital and a proportionate number of nurses are required. The capacity of the Nurses' Residence has not increased accordingly."

**April 6, 1917:** The United States officially entered World War I. In anticipation of increased needs, probationary classes were admitted four times a year, instead of the customary six months. Hospital staff reduced to one half of its normal quota, with 27 individuals in service.

**1917:** Dozens of nurse graduates volunteered for war service.

**February 19, 1918:** Nurses Patriotic Meeting featured a farewell to Miss Ida F. Butler and all nurses who were entering the service. All graduate nurses were invited. After various addresses and the singing of hymns, all present joined hands and sang "Auld Lang Syne."

**November 11, 1918:** World War I ended

**1918–1919:** According to the Department of Public Health, the influenza outbreak of 1918 proved to be the worst epidemic in the history of the city, infecting nearly a quarter of Hartford's population. With many nurses and doctors dispatched to places like Boston, Hartford Hospital treated a total of 1,733 people, 309 of whom died. October and November of 1918 saw the suspension of all operations, except for emergency surgeries. Hartford Golf Club was opened as an emergency hospital.

***"The year 1918–1919 is probably the most strenuous one ever completed by the Training School owing to the prevalence of the epidemic of Influenza. The hospital was filled to over-flowing and to meet the demands on the nursing service, the newly admitted probation class, thirty-six in number, was placed on duty on the surgical wards in order to leave the older and more experienced nurses free to care for the influenza cases.***

***All of the members of the school gave untiring service and several were unfortunate enough to contract influenza and pneumonia. It is with deep regret that we record the death of two student nurses, Evelyn C. Carton and Olive Roys. Both nurses in their short term of service proved themselves earnest and efficient pupils."***

—1918-1919 Annual Report



***Hartford Hospital's Men's Ward, 1905***

# 1920–1929

# A Building Boom

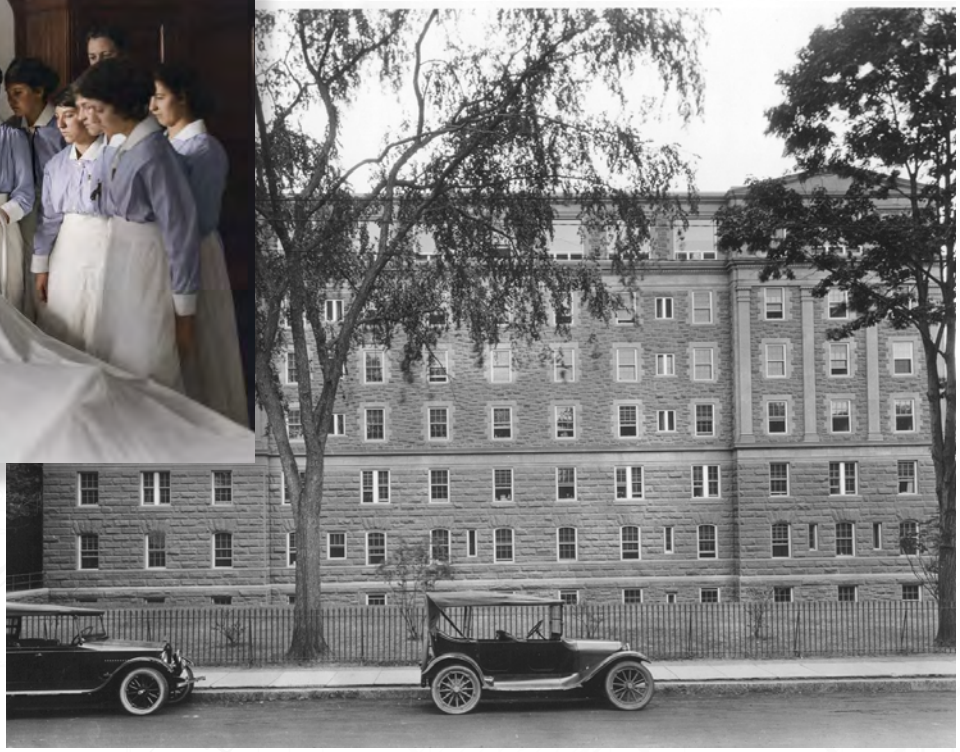
**1920:** Hartford Hospital experienced the second year in which applications had declined, resulting in an immediate nursing shortage. Miss Robina Stewart, principal of the Training School, reported on recruitment efforts, "A canvas of 26 high schools in the state was made in the closing days of the school term, a thousand students were told the story of nursing, and urged to try it; a thousand illustrated bulletins of this school were distributed by mail and 330 personal letters sent to graduates living outside of Hartford and its vicinity, in whom we hoped to arouse interest in the school's welfare."

**January–September, 1920:** nurses treated 63 cases of syphilis. Mrs. Madeline Martin, head of the Social Services Department wrote, "It is our desire that when we acquire our new worker to do our part in fighting venereal disease and its complications, and to arouse the patient's sense of responsibility not only towards himself, but the community at large."

**1922–1923:** The Women's Building (Brownstone) opened, employing three graduate students. It contained a demonstration room with a large platform and was equipped with "every facility for teaching practical nursing."



***Nurse educator Eva Crowdis trains students on model "Mrs. Chase", 1921 (colorized)***



***Brownstone Building***

*Nurses in Heublein Hall, late 1920's*



***"Many tears and many heartaches over great discouragements,***
***Yet we tried by faithful working to win praise and compliments.***
***May our training school remember us as a class that's tried and true,***
***Still achieving, still pursuing, That's the class of '22."***

—Last stanza of HHTS school song, written by Cora McClench '22

**1925:** The Heublein Building and campus dormitory were completed on Jefferson Street, containing 72 single rooms and bath tubs, showers, toilets and linen closets on all four floors. Heublein Hall was regal, beautifully appointed with white and stained red oak, arched ceiling and a herringbone floor of polished white oak. Between the hall and the dormitory was a courtyard, adorned with a fountain featuring a stork-like bird, affectionately named "Hepatitis" by the nursing students, reflecting its green "complexion" due to algae growth.

**1927:** The first school newspaper, called "The Scalpel", is published.



***"Hepatitis" fountain, 1924***

# 1930–1939

# Making Way for Recreation

**1930:** Ingalls House, named for Dr. Phineas Ingalls, Chairman of the Training School Committee, was added to the campus. It accommodated 24 graduates and 84 students, moving all students out of the Old People's Home.

**1932:** The D. Newton Barney Education Building contained a pool, gym and classrooms. The campus further expanded with a new dining room as well as 15 dormitory rooms above so-called Laundry Alley.



***Barney Chem Lab (colorized)***



***Ingalls House***

**1936:** The annual report noted, "Monthly conferences for students were held for the purpose of keeping them in touch with problems; re: their duties and development and to enable them to have an hour's relaxation and enjoyment."

**1937:** Soon after joining the Hartford Hospital Board of Directors, George Jackson Mead presented his vision of a new hospital building that would rival the skyscrapers of Hartford with an 18-story building.



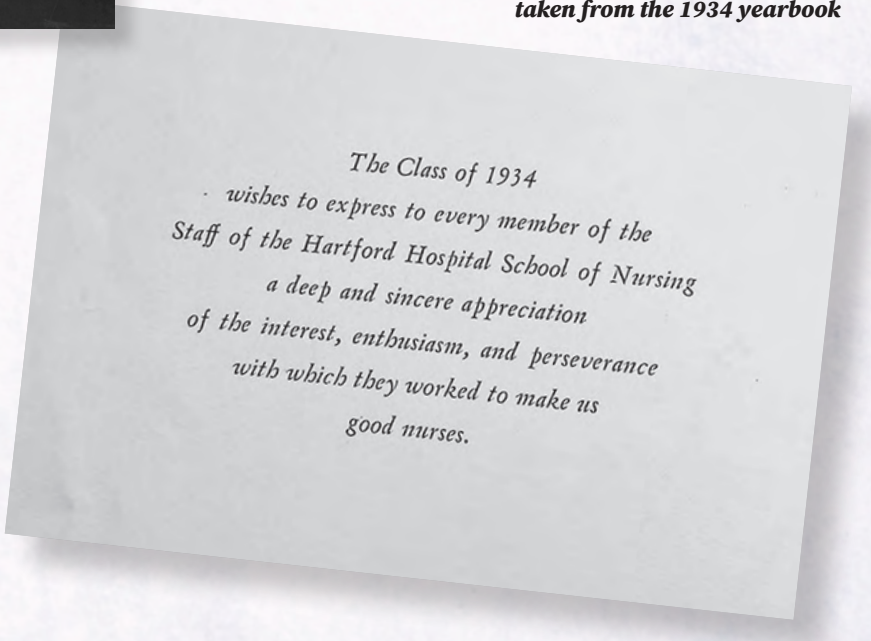
***Barney Library***

**1938:** A rumpus room was opened for nurses' enjoyment, with one particular rule: no uniforms. Smoking was permitted only in this room and uniforms were prohibited so as not to absorb the odor and take back to the bedside.




***Barney Pool, circa 1939***

***A note of thanks taken from the 1934 yearbook***



The Class of 1934
wishes to express to every member of the
Staff of the Hartford Hospital School of Nursing
a deep and sincere appreciation
of the interest, enthusiasm, and perseverance
with which they worked to make us
good nurses.



# 1940–1949

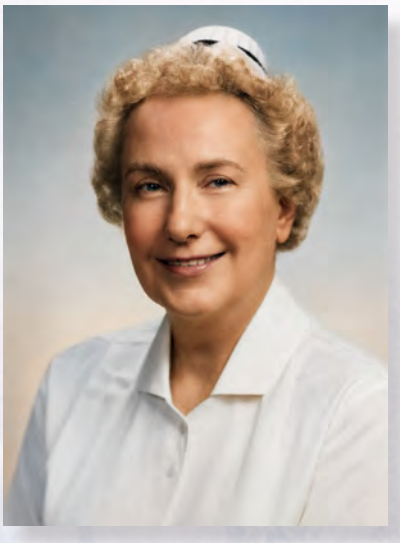
## Trying Times

**1940:** The Hartford Hospital Training School was officially renamed the Hartford Hospital School of Nursing. With an enrollment of 325 students, there were 120 staff nurses at Hartford Hospital.

**April 8, 1941:** Ground broken for the five-story South Building of the new hospital. This was to be one of the busiest years on record for the Nursing Department, bolstered by increased admissions, increased births, larger class size and supervisory and teaching staff changes.

**1941:** The new HHSN Procedure Book was completed and distributed to the units.

**1941:** Miss Ethel Brooks was welcomed as Associate Director of Nursing Service. Soon after, she was named Director of the School of Nursing and Nursing Service. She would remain in this position until her retirement in 1969. Long after her retirement, she maintained a very close relationship with the nursing school and hospital, writing "A Long Way: The Hartford Hospital School of Nursing." Her contribution to the school and hospital cannot be overstated.



***Ethel Brooks (colorized)***

**1943:** The annual report notes "admissions have increased 50% and have established us as the largest non-government hospital in the country." It is also noted that 45 doctors and 119 nurses are in the Armed Services.

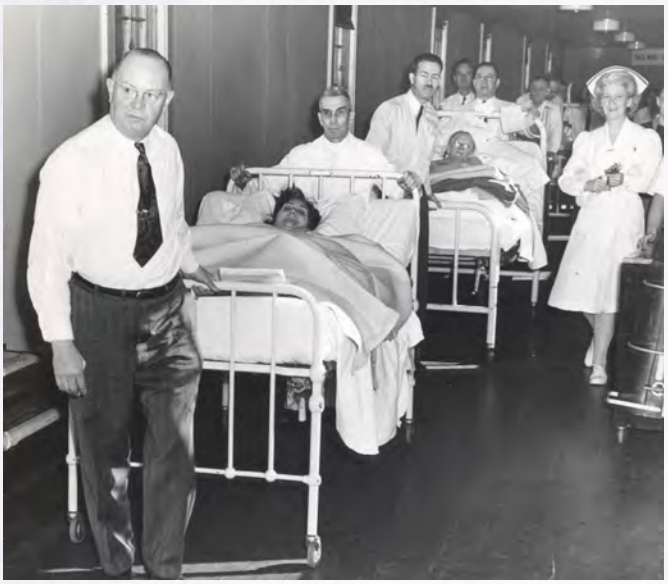
**1943:** Nursing students could now marry and stay in training.

**1943:** The so-called "Baby Boom" was realized, with 4,778 births this year, compared to 2,250 in 1938.

**1944:** The Hartford Circus Fire on July 6 claimed 167 lives and injured hundreds. Hartford Hospital treated 87 victims, three of whom succumbed to their injuries. One surviving patient was a nursing student at HHSN who sustained burns in the fire.



***Circus Fire patients, 1944***



*Moving patients during the "Easter Parade"*

**1945:** Wartime demand for nurses led to students being enrolled during February and August. Nurses worked at Hartford Hospital on 11-hour shifts from 3pm to 7am. Private duty nursing was discontinued while staffing shortages abounded, and the Women's Auxiliary formed the Hartford Hospital Volunteers, or "Bluebirds," who numbered in the hundreds and filled the gaps in staffing.

**1948:** In January, in coordination with the State Department of Education, a new program for trained attendants began, marking the beginning of LPN programs.

**March 27, 1948:** The last operation in the old building was at 12pm and the first operation in the High Building was at 1:15pm. More than 700 volunteers moved patients and equipment into the new complex in an event later called "the Easter Parade."

**1948:** The last class of Nurse Cadet Corps members graduated.

## Two's a Crowd

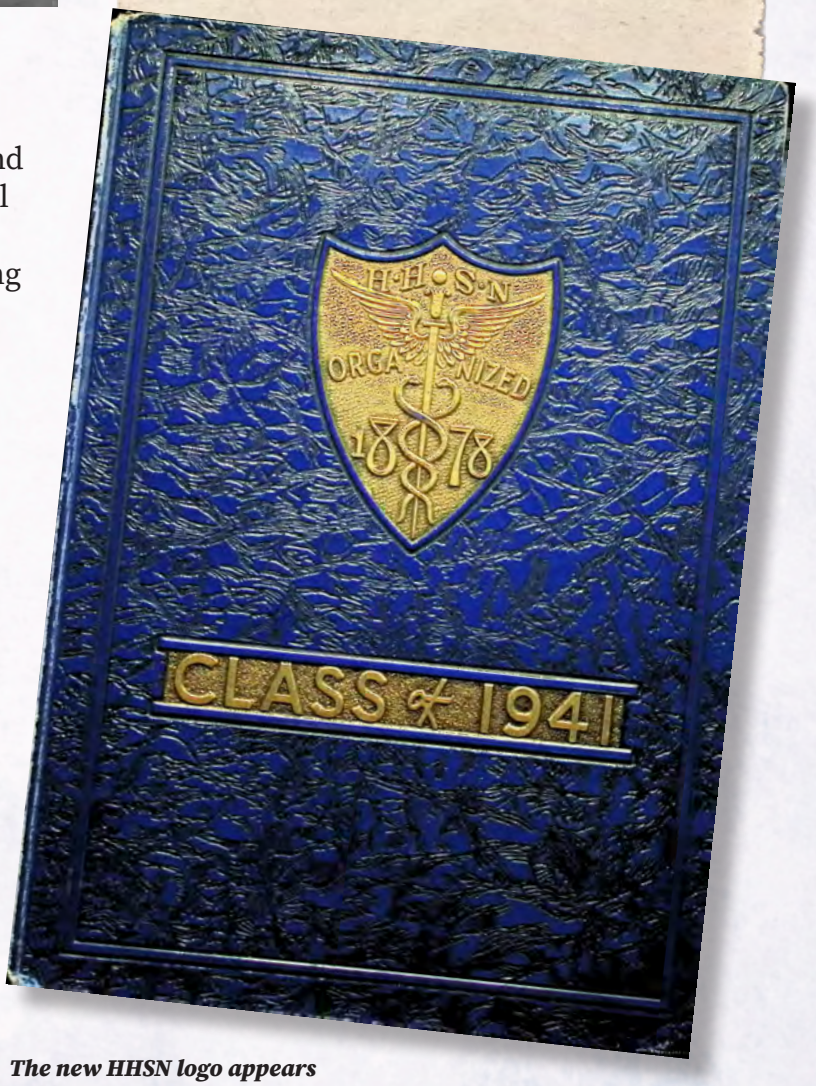
***Before I heard the doctor tell the dangers of a kiss,***

***I had considered kissing you, the nearest thing to bliss.***

***But now I know biology, and sit and sigh and moan,***

***Six million mad bacteria—and I thought we were alone.***

—1941 yearbook




***The new HHSN logo appears on the 1941 yearbook***

# 1950–1959

# Tribulations & Celebrations



*Nurses hold dolls depicting uniforms across the years at the Diamond Jubilee (colorized)*

**May, 1952:** The diamond jubilee of the founding of the School of Nursing was celebrated during weeklong festivities. The Alumnae Homecoming and Tea was a highlight, during which the Alumnae Association presented the School of Nursing with a Steinway grand piano.

**1954:** As polio spread across the country, Hartford Hospital treated 32 polio cases in the summer. Mary Roth Burns '50 was a student nurse at the time. She recalled, "We used the Sister Kenny method on our patients. Beds next to washing machines had flannel cloths in hot water, squeezed out by hand-cranked rollers, then wrapped around spasms, over and over, as we sweltered in gowns over uniforms. There were no empty beds or cribs. A heavily-padded bathtub held a toddler covered with pustules from a scratched smallpox vaccination. Children with bulbar polio were in iron lungs."



*Charting in the 1950's*

**1954:** Hartford Hospital marked its 100th birthday. A blurb in RxTra dated December 6 stated, "If an institution could talk, it would note that the diseases that people dread are no longer yellow fever, cholera, typhoid, and diphtheria… instead there are polio, cancer and cardio-pulmonary diseases…people no longer fear dying too young, but are afraid of living too long."

**1957:** Nurses were surveyed, evaluating satisfaction and dissatisfaction. A report noted, "Most nurses expressed satisfaction with most aspects of employment but being human, hoped for relief from frequent evening and night duty and that present three and four weekends on duty could be reduced. One cannot study such problems with these women without developing a firm conviction of their devotion to and pride in their calling."



*Nurse tends to a baby in the 1950's*

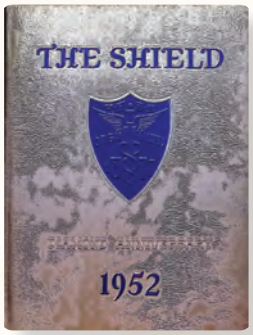
**This is a freshman. She is confused. Do you remember when you were a freshman?**

**You were confused too. Residence was such a maze of corridors and blur of strange faces. And the uniforms! Which snaps goes where was the big question. Then there was the new language. No one talked words—just letters. "S.S.E."—q.d, p.r.n." (it's amazing how quickly you learned what it meant.) One day your head felt heavier. This was because you pasted or sewed, never pinned a stripe on your cap. How happy it made you! Then came the small pin that means so much to you. The symbol of your job well done and your goal finally reached, CONGRATULATIONS, '55!**

—Excerpt from Primer, Class of '55

## *Did you know?*

The school emblem — The Shield — is pictured with the year 1878 in all the yearbooks until 1952, when the date becomes 1877!



# 1960–1969

# A Growing New Campus

**1960:** Hartford Hospital admitted its 1 millionth patient.

**1965:** HHSN graduates scored the highest on state boards of any large nursing school in the country.

**January 13, 1965:** Groundbreaking for the new School of Nursing was held, with Miss Sue Smolski lifting the first shovel of dirt along with Dr. J. Wendall Burger, Chairman of the SON Committee.



***1965 groundbreaking for the new School of Nursing***

**May 24, 1966:** HHSN celebrated the beginning of construction of a new campus on Hudson Street. Margaret Doyle '98 added her HHTS nursing pin to the contents of a cornerstone box.

**1967:** The nurses' new campus opened at 560 Hudson Street. The facility was state of the art, with air-conditioned passageways on all levels. A bridge connected the school building and Ingalls. Its eight-story dormitory held 384 single rooms with closets and shared bathrooms. It was also home to the Robinson Library. The new campus had all the bells and whistles, including a kitchen, game room, television room, faculty lounges and offices as well as an amphitheater.

**1968:** Recruitment efforts were reflected in the largest class ever — 138 — entering in September.

**1968:** HHSN mean state board scores were the highest in the United States.

**1969:** Ethel Brooks retires as Director of School of Nursing and Nursing Services. She was a pioneer and champion of team nursing, providing insights and observations on the topic that were published in the *American Journal of Nursing* in 1949. In her 30 years at Hartford Hospital, she trained and mentored more than 2,000 nurses, half the entire population of graduates in the school's history. It was said of her, "a person characterized by optimism and serenity, she maintained a firm dedication to quality and to service. Her contribution to Hartford Hospital will be long remembered." In her final days, when illness necessitated a hospital stay, she requested to be transferred from Massachusetts General Hospital to Hartford Hospital so she could "be home with my girls." Brooks died on April 24, 1980.




***Ethel Brooks places items in cornerstone***



*Nurses moving into new dormitory, 1967 (colorized)*

## The Story of a Student Nurse

**Now this is the story of a student nurse, who thinks no profession could ever be-----**

**Better than taking care of people sick in bed,**

**But sometimes she thinks they're just sick in the ----**

**Hospital because they've got nothing better to do,**

**Than ask student nurses to wipe up their ----**

**Flower vases which have spilled on the floor in the night,**

**Yes, if you're a student nurse you think nursing's all ----**

**The Class of '60!**

**Wear your caps with pride.**

**Be conscientious, devoted and kind,**

**And bring health to the halt, lame and blind.**

— 1960 yearbook, written by Stephanie Yale

# Hartford Hospital Fire of 1961





**December 8, 1961:** On this day, a place of life saving became an inferno. A discarded cigarette tossed into a garbage chute ignited a fire that spread across the ninth floor of the High Building, killing 16 people and destroying much of the floor. While the High Building was constructed with concrete slab floors and fire doors to prevent such events, the chutes connecting the floors of the building provided no effective barrier from flames.

The fire burned initially in the basement, but when one trash chute was opened, fresh air ignited more flames, which traveled upward. Fire burst from the chute door on the ninth floor, quickly spreading to flammable materials in the hallway. Ceiling tiles ignited and collapsed, fire doors blew open, smoke spread rapidly, while nurses and staff rushed to evacuate patients. A total of 782 patients were evacuated from the hospital.

Numerous HHSN nurses were on duty when the fire broke out and remember it vividly, recalling the heavy smoke that permeated the unit. Some donned washcloths over their patients' and their own faces and evacuated down the stairwells. Many thought they were going to die that day.

Fire laws did not prohibit the use of elevators in the case of fire and several people were trapped and rescued that day. All victims died of smoke inhalation. Seven patients, five visitors and four staff members lost their lives in the fire, among them, private duty nurse Marion Winget.

In the days after the fire, hospital president Dr. T. Stewart Hamilton required that every hospital employee toured the fire site, to help them better understand the gravity of the event. The fire led to changes in hospital fire safety that rippled across the country. Areas that received new quality standards were finish materials, ceiling tiles and patient rooms. Automatic sprinklers faced tighter requirements. Longer hallways were required to have more exits. New safety codes were enacted that prohibited garbage chutes in hospitals nationwide.











***Nurses rush to duty after fire breaks out***

# 1970–1976

# *We Finish to Begin*

**1970:** Program curriculum reduced from 11 months to 9 months.

**1970:** HHSN graduates its first male nursing student.

**1970:** A pivotal reflection in the annual report reveals a sign of the times. Dr. John Freyman, the hospital's first Director of Education wrote:

*"In spite of outstanding success of the school in recruiting this year, we are aware of the controversial position of diploma schools of nursing on the national scene. We believe that the century-old heritage of educating nurses in the hospital continues to have much to offer. On the other hand, such benefits need not be mutually exclusive of the advantages of baccalaureate nursing education. Following discussion of this philosophy with the presidents of several colleges and universities in this region, exploratory conversations with University of Hartford faculty have been opened by members of nursing faculties of Hartford Hospital and St. Francis Hospital's Schools of Nursing. These are preliminary and no commitments have been made. They are proceeding with an objective not of discarding hospital nursing education but rather of melding the benefits of both types of Nursing Education into a form that could perhaps become a national model."*



*The class of 1976*



*We've come a long way, baby! (colorized)*



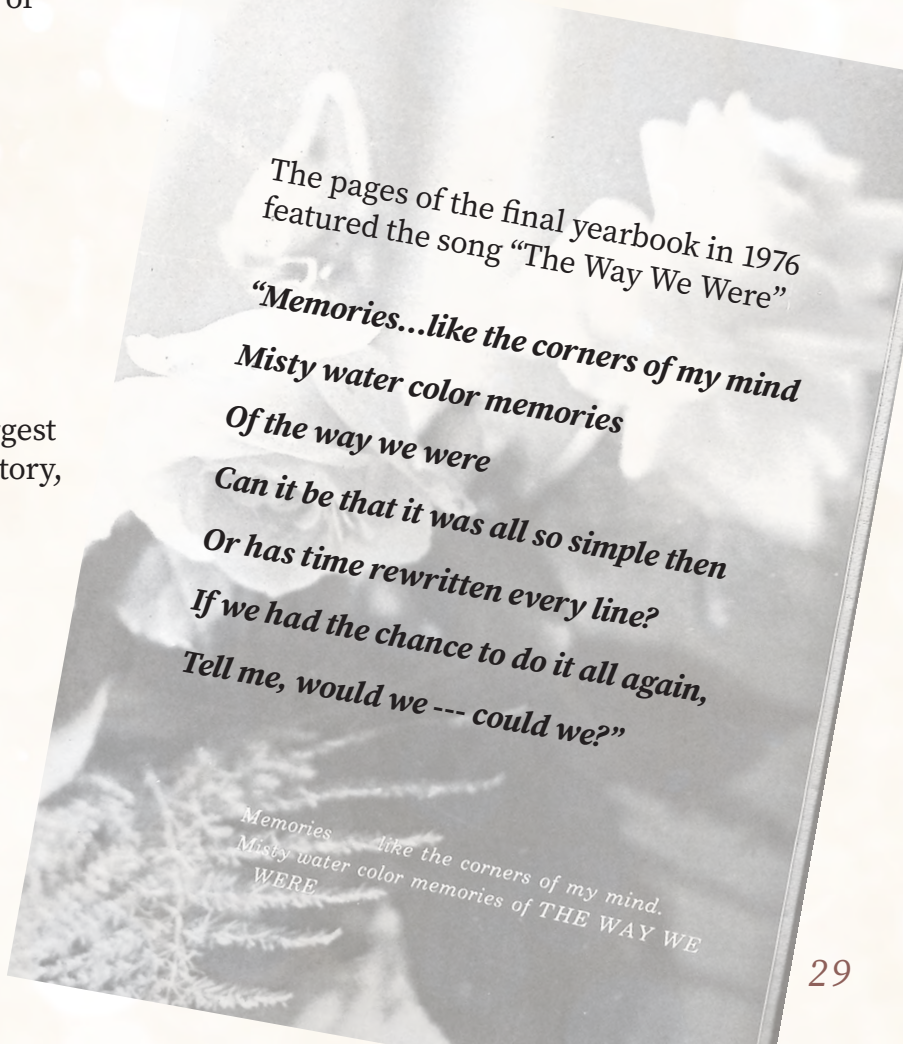
*Razing begins at 37 Jefferson Street in 1975*

**1973:** Nurses are given the uniform option of wearing slacks or dresses.

**1973:** Hartford Hospital School of Nursing entered a joint program with Manchester Community College and the University of Hartford, with MCC providing associates degrees (ADN) in nursing, and University of Hartford offering bachelors of science in nursing (BSN) degrees, beginning in September 1974.

**1975:** The Class of 1975 represented the largest graduating class in the school's 98-year history, with 112 nurses receiving diplomas.

**1976:** The last of the School of Nursing students celebrated their commencement, with a record high 124 graduates. Director of Education Dr. Donald Brown reflected, "Expressions of nostalgia and regret surround the closing of such a distinguished diploma school of nursing, which ended with a century old reputation of excellence and service."



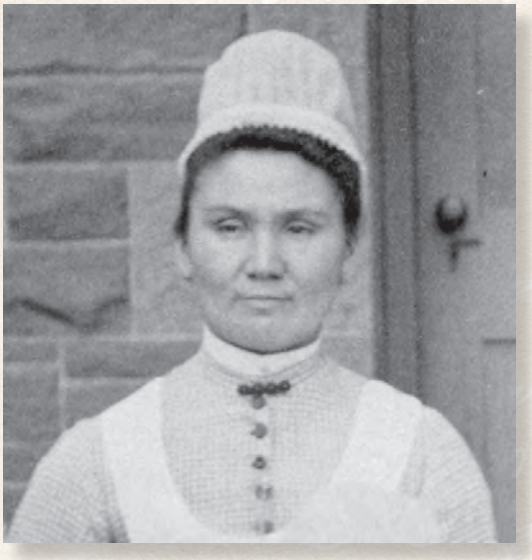
# Graduates of Note

## *Contributions to Society*

Every single nurse graduate of the Hartford Hospital Training School and School of Nursing contributed to society in so many ways. This is merely a fraction of the immense talent represented by our alumnae.



**Gertrude O. Lewis** '01 was selected as matron of the Litchfield County Hospital and remained there throughout her career. In 1881, during her senior year at Hartford High School, she founded the Connecticut Humane Society (CHS), an organization dedicated to the well-being of children, women and animals. CHS remained as the only statewide organization offering protective services for 84 years, until the introduction of the State of Connecticut Department of Children and Families in 1965.



**Nancy Cornelius**, class of 1890, was the first known Native American to attend HHTS. She was a member of the Oneida tribe.



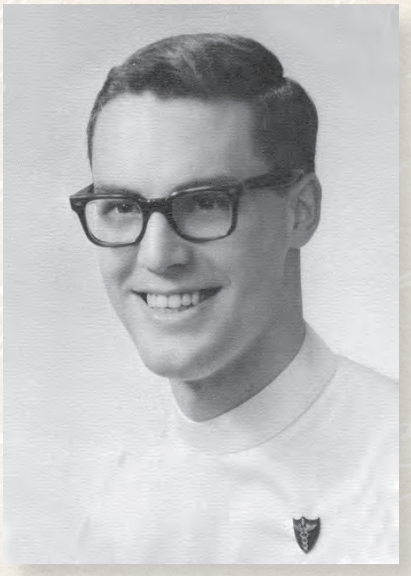




**Martha Wilkinson**, class of 1899, became the sole nurse for the Hartford Visiting Nurses Association, traveling through Hartford on a bicycle, toting nursing supplies and nourishing foods for her poorest patients.



**Anne Crosby Peterson Jennings** '59, first graduate of color



**Randall Jenks** '70, first male graduate of HHSN

**Edna Foley** '04 (front row center), while serving as the superintendent of the Visiting Nurse Association in Chicago, prepared the Visiting Nurse Manual in 1914. She advocated the need for more opportunities for African-American nurses. She served as a chief nurse of the American Red Cross Tuberculosis Commission for Italy in 1919 and was actively involved in the American Red Cross Nursing Service.



# Nurses in Service to Our Country

## *Answering the Call*

Since the inception of the Hartford Hospital Training School and subsequently Hartford Hospital School of Nursing, hundreds of nurses proudly served our country, both here and abroad. While we cannot mention all of them by name, we are eternally grateful for their service.



**Lillian Bozenhard** ’33 was one of the first trained nurse anesthetists, serving as captain in WWII with the 39th General Hospital Yale Unit based in New Zealand. Upon her return, she was awarded the Asiatic Pacific Campaign Medal.



**Marilyn “Lynn” Roberge Malerba** ‘74 served as the nation’s first Native American treasurer from 2022 to 2024. Malerba, Many Hearts, is the chief of the Mohegan Tribe in Uncasville, CT.



**Ida Butler** ’01, right, spent 14 years with Hartford Hospital. She was one of the first Red Cross Nurses in 1906 and was called into active service in March 1918 during WWI. She was stationed in France and organized two hospitals for refugee children. She served as president of the National Red Cross Nursing Service from 1936 to 1938.



**Martha Haynes Page** ’42, served in the US Army during WWII in the 135th Evacuation Hospital, a semi mobile unit. She was assigned to the US 15th Army in Germany, which was the last to see service in northwest Europe as the final command of General George S. Patton. Martha rose to the rank of Second Lieutenant. She received a European African Middle Eastern Campaign Medal, as well as a World War II Victory Medal.

**1899:** Graduates Alice M. Smith ’90 and Mary C. Johnson ’97 died caring for patients during the Spanish American War.

**1944:** 80% of new nursing students joined the US Cadet Nurses Corps, a program providing federal funds for student nurses who agreed to serve the government’s military or civilian needs upon completion of nursing school.

**1946:** Hartford Hospital created an Honor Roll of those serving our country in WWII. The School of Nursing Alumnae list included Lillian Bozenhard, Jo Cianci, Grace DeGruttola, Annabell Duff, Grace Holland, Ruth Banfield Lowderback, Dorothy Newton, Edith Lamb Schmidt, Celia Steele, Ruth Thompson and 226 others.

## HHSN Nurses Who Served in the Military

Georgianna Bakshys Hull ’73
*US Army Reserve, Captain*

Kathleen Mandl Baker ’74
*Navy, Commander*

Joyce Batcheller ’75
*US Air Force, 2nd Lieutenant*

Theresa Gwozdz ‘76
*Army Reserve, Captain*

### WWI

Millicent Lester ‘17
*Killed in Action*

Ethel (Sara) Bernhardt Cornwall, ‘16
*US Army*

### WWII

Phyllis Wood Best ‘38
*US Army*

Louise Seeley Beecher ‘40
*US Army*

Frances Hoar Greisel ‘40
*US Army*

Ola Ferla Krasnoselsky ‘40
*US Army*

Frances Lucas Sutherland ’40
*US Army*

Eleanor Vick Nestor ‘40
*US Air Force*

Miriam (Mim) Sihvonen ‘40
*US Army*

Wanda Snecinski ’40
*US Army*

Elsie Forte ‘42
*US Army*

Jan Bristol ‘44
*US Navy*

### VIETNAM WAR

Rosemary DeAngelis ‘62
*US Air Force, CT Air National Guard, US Army Reserve; Retired as Lieutenant Colonel*

Nancy Doerrer Daugavietis ‘62
*US Air Force*

Gerrie Fowler Zelinsky ‘65
*US Army, Field Lieutenant*

Beverly Dean Johnston Gregory ‘68
*US Navy Nurse Corp*

Marilyn Godlewski Bassford McKeown ‘69
*Mobile Medical Team Coordinator, Salvation Army Mobile Medical team*

Linda Sorensen Clougherty ‘69
*US Army Nurse Corp, 1st Lieutenant*

Leslie Taylor ‘69
*US Army Nurse Corp*

Kathleen Boyd Didier ‘69
*US Army*

Della Pappalardo Usher ‘69
*US Army*



# Highlights in Alumnae Association History

**Alumnae Association Highlights in History**

**1892:** The Hartford Hospital Training School Alumnae Association (AA) is born.

**1903:** A $15,000 Free Bed Fund is established for care and treatment of graduate nurses.

**1921:** The Lauder Sutherland Memorial Fund is created after the sudden death of the beloved educator and alumnae executive.

**1927:** A school newspaper was published entitled the "Scalpel".

**1936:** Associate members working at the hospital are required to be members of the AA.

**1939:** "Free Bed Fund" name is changed to Alumnae Bed Fund. Cost increases from $25 to $50 with a 14-day limit/no obstetrics.

**1940:** HHTS changes its name to Hartford Hospital School of Nursing.

**1942:** From HH Annual report: "Greatest achievement of the year was the awarding of a $500 scholarship to a member chosen by the association scholarship committee."

**1948:** HH holds open house for the new hospital.

**1949:** Free AA membership granted for 30-year members.

**1952:** Miss Ethel Brooks discusses the nursing shortage, requests Alumnae Association to staff one unit (N-12) around the clock.

**1956:** Discussions begin about changing the school uniform.

**1957:** A presentation made to Miss Brooks and Dr. Hamilton by the AA that nurses with disabilities be hired by HH.

**1958:** Membership dues increase to $50.

**1962:** Miss Brooks presents the hospital's Disaster Plan, developed after the 1961 fire.

**1965:** New "Perma starch" caps are introduced.

**1968:** The newsletter, "The Pillbox," debuts. Miss Helen Roser retires.

**1969:** Miss Ethel Brooks announces her retirement. It is celebrated with a gala river cruise on the Dolly Madison.

**1976-77:** The final class of HHSN graduates in June.

**1976:** A grand centennial celebration takes place in September 1977 at the Hilton Grand Ballroom with 510 graduates along with the alumnae board and hospital dignitaries.

**1995:** Marilyn McKeown makes a presentation to HH suggesting we memorialize our school with a permanent structure.

**2000:** The "Caregiver" statue is unveiled and dedicated in April.

**2001:** Copy of our dissolution instructions are presented to the board.

**2002:** Pat Audet publishes the history of the AA.

**2004:** The AA launches its website.

**2009:** Charitable donations begin and continue on an annual basis.

**2009:** A scholarship fund is started for alumnae, family members and HH employees.

**2011:** Bed Fund begins covering most medical expenses for all alumnae in good standing.

**2011:** Alumnae dues decrease from $50 to $10 annually.

**2011:** AA donates $50,000 to HH for nursing education.

**2014:** AA donates $75,000 to the John Springer Memorial Garden.

**2021:** Memorial garden dedication is held.

**2022:** Dissolution plans begin.

**April 15, 2026:** In a unanimous vote, approval is given to dissolve the Alumnae Association effective Dec. 31, 2026.

**September 13, 2026:** Final Banquet Gala celebration at the Aqua Turf in Plantsville, CT.

# The Caregiver
## *Representing Each Student Nurse*

In the north alcove of the Hartford Hospital lobby stands a regal, focused and purposeful nurse. She is bronze, six feet tall and weighs in at 800 pounds. She represents 99 years of the Hartford Hospital School of nursing and its 4,715 graduates.

Her name — The Caregiver — commemorates the talent, humility and dedication of each and every graduate of HHSN. Thousands of nurses didn't shy away from epidemics, contagious diseases, complex injuries and the wounds of war. Rather, they met each challenge and patient with expertise and grace.

The Caregiver's right hand is outstretched in a gesture of compassion and approachability. She wears a uniform reminiscent of the mid-20th century and is in motion, clearly directed to where she is needed the most, wherever that might be. In her left arm's embrace, a book, signifying the world of study and learning that she has devoted herself to.

The statue was the brainchild of Marilyn Godlewski McKeown '69, planned and brought to fruition by the HHSN alumnae on the Memorial Project Committee, who raised $50,000 to finance the project. Sculpted by Lloyd W. Glasson and cast at the Tallix Foundry in Beacon, NY, the statue was dedicated and gifted to Hartford Hospital on April 16, 2000.

She currently stands proudly at Hartford Hospital, bearing witness to the past, present and future lifesaving measures of countless nurses. She is a comfort to many, who have been known to touch and even leave coins and trinkets in her outstretched hand.





Alumnae Association of the
Hartford Hospital School of Nursing
560 Hudson Street
Hartford, CT 06106

*Address Service Requested*

***And even if we must lock the door to yesterday, somewhere we will find the key to tomorrow.***

—1976 yearbook



1954 yearbook