

History of St. Francis Hospital School of Nursing

The following is copied exactly as printed in the Antidote 1929 St Francis Hospital School Nursing Yearbook....

"In 1908, eight sisters left Joliet, Illinois, for Santa Barbara, purchasing on their arrival with borrowed money, the Quiesesana hospital and sanitarium, which is now the building occupied by this hospital as a nurse's home. They soon had a growing hospital but lacked financial backing, and were it not for the aid of the Franciscan Fathers, and assistance from the St. Joseph's Hospital, of San Francisco, they would have been destitute.

The sisters had the will to persevere. They determined to place the institution in the first rank. "Service" was the watchword. It was a bitter and sometimes apparently a losing fight. Bit by bit the community saw the work of charity and care for the sick and rallied to the help of the Sisters.

With the aid, in part, of the public, in September, 1923, a new Saint Francis Hospital was finished. On that morning, never to be forgotten by those who were in Santa Barbara, June 29, 1925, the new building, less than two years old was twisted and shattered. Not a patient was injured. The building was damaged beyond a point of safety, and it was necessary to erect anew. At that time the Sisters had an indebtedness, on the cost of the building, of over \$100,000.00. The general Relief Committee, from the funds raised throughout the state and in Santa Barbara, recognizing the work of charity and mercy of the Sisters, allocated of the funds raised, the sum of \$220,000.00 toward the erecting of a new hospital. During the construction of the hospital, in order that the patients might have care and attention in the old nurse's home, the Sisters expended \$30,000.00 in reconstructing the old hospital into a temporary hospital, all of which was devoted to hospital work. The Sisters slept in rows in the garage and under the porches of the hospital, and it was necessary actually, in times of rain, for them to maintain umbrellas over their beds. Such is the spirit of Saint Francis Hospital.

The cost of the present hospital exceeded the funds available. Unsolicited gifts from the public, gifts from other hospitals of the same Order, all recognized the need of a hospital in Santa Barbara, with the Sisters, pledging their credit and resources, together with the money from the Relief Committee, have made possible the building of this hospital. A heavier debt than before the earthquake exists on the hospital, but with confidence in the patronage of the community, and its god will, the Sisters bravely approach the future."

The list of Saint Francis School of Nursing graduates on the website is incomplete. The names are from yearbooks, The Antidote, for 1929, 1930, and 1931, and an alumni list in the 1929 yearbook. These yearbooks have been scanned, if you would like a copy of an image please contact our Research Team