

## ELMHURST HISTORY HIGHLIGHT: Elmhurst Hospital

As early as 1920, a petition with over 100 names was presented to the Elmhurst City Council requesting the establishment of a city hospital. Until the hospital opened in 1926, Elmhurst residents in need of hospital care went to West Suburban Hospital in Oak Park or to one of the hospitals in Chicago.

Dr. Edward Marquardt, an Elmhurst resident and physician, was a leader in the campaign to build a hospital in Elmhurst. Following a presentation by Dr. Marquardt in 1921, the Elmhurst Boosters Club endorsed the hospital plan. Supporters of the hospital sold shares of stock in the Elmhurst Hospital Association. Interest and support in the hospital reached throughout all of DuPage County and the surrounding counties since it would be the first hospital in the county.



*One of the two operating rooms in Elmhurst Hospital, circa 1929. M66.8.1.15*

After consideration of several locations, the hospital's site committee purchased property at Avon and Schiller in March 1925, and there was a ground-breaking ceremony on November 3, 1925.



*Memorial Hospital of DuPage County, 1966. M2013.1.46*

The new hospital was dedicated on October 10, 1926 with a large gathering of spectators. Following the ceremonies Dr. Marquardt spoke to the crowd before opening the door to the hospital ...*The safeguarding of life is the supreme and foremost duty of a community toward its members, and this is what this institution stands for...*

The community supported the new hospital in many different ways. The Elmhurst Woman's Club equipped the birth rooms, and the True Kindred Conclave of Elmhurst equipped the nursery. Dr.

Marquardt furnished one of the operating rooms. Members of the [Elmhurst Golf Club](#) donated \$200 to the hospital's charity fund to be used to cover the expense of those unable to pay for services.

When the four-story facility opened it included a lobby, accommodations for eighty-five patients, administrative offices, two operating rooms, a nursery that could accommodate twenty babies, a pediatrics department, a mothers' department, an obstetrical department, a laundry, a drug room, laboratories, an X-ray department, and an emergency room.

In 1934 the hospital was reorganized from a stock corporation to a community-owned, not-for-profit organization and the name was changed to Elmhurst Community Hospital. The name was changed in 1946 to Memorial Hospital of DuPage County to commemorate those who had served in World War II, and it was renamed Elmhurst Memorial Hospital in 1983.

In 2001, as the hospital observed its 75th anniversary, it had 427 licensed beds, 2,500 employees and nearly 600 physicians. A new hospital facility was built at 155 E. Brush Hill Road and opened in 2011, while the old facility at Avon and Schiller was demolished in 2014. In 2013, Edward Hospital & Health Services merged with Elmhurst Memorial Healthcare to create Edward-Elmhurst Health.

*By Nancy Wilson, Elmhurst History Museum staff, updated October 2021*