

ST. LUKE'S - ROOSEVELT

A University Hospital of Columbia University
College of Physicians & Surgeons

George Dermksian, M.D.
Chair, Archives Committee

April, 2011

Dear Alumni and Colleagues,

In the recent past (circa the Holiday Season), hopefully you received a packet from the Medical Board's Committee on the Archives of St Luke's and Roosevelt Hospitals. The packet was sent through St. Luke's-Roosevelt's Development Office and detailed the committee's recent activities. It also included the beautiful Chapel Treasures brochure as well as a request for a donation to support the committee's work.

As an alumnus or active member of the medical staff of these revered and venerable institutions, I had hoped that you would have been able to make a financial contribution in support of the committee's important efforts. To date, though, we have not received such a response. Perhaps you did not receive the packet or perhaps during the busy holiday season you misplaced or forgot it. And so, knowing of your academic and emotional ties to St. Luke's and Roosevelt Hospitals, we are sending this follow-up request in the hope that your financial situation will permit a donation.

The importance of the committee's assigned task is high-lighted in a copy of the enclosed letter from one of our truly illustrious alumni, former chair of the Department of Medicine at St. Luke's Hospital, Emeritus Professor of Medicine at the College of Physicians and Surgeons, and Emeritus Trustee of the Hospital Center, Dr. Theodore VanItallie. The letter is sent with his permission.

Your serious consideration of this second (?) request is appreciated. Of course, a contribution would be greatly appreciated and would also be a testament to your clinical, academic and collegial indebtedness to St. Luke's and Roosevelt Hospitals.

Thank you again.

Sincerely and fraternally,



George Dermksian, MD
Chair, Committee on the Archives

Encl: Theodore B. VanItallie letter
Report of the recent activities of the Committee
Reply form

St. Luke's-Roosevelt Hospital Center
1111 Amsterdam Avenue
New York, New York 10025

Archives Committee 2010 Report

The Archives Committee of St. Luke's and Roosevelt Hospitals is pleased to provide an update on our activities and accomplishments for 2010.

- Providing a home for this important resource, a series of rooms opposite the Bolling Memorial Library on Minturn I at the St. Luke's site was assigned by Administration to permanently house the collection of records and memorabilia related to the histories of St. Luke's Hospital, the Woman's Hospital in the State of New York, and Roosevelt Hospital. The rooms were renovated, decorated, and equipped with the appropriate machinery and furniture (re-cycled from other parts of the hospital) for viewing, studying and researching this important collection. The rooms were also climatized for optimum preservation of the materials. This Herculean task was accomplished through the generous support of donors and devoted efforts of Dr. Nancy Panella, librarian of the Bolling Medical Library. Presently, Dr. Panella is attempting to organize the vast amount of material from the three institutions. The collection, even in its partly organized state, has been called upon by academic institutions, hospitals, and physicians and other medically related personnel for historical information. It also serves as a repository of articles, photographs, tapes, and DVDs frequently needed by departments and staff of the hospital center.
- The magnificent and unique chandelier in the Physician's Cloakroom at St. Luke's was restored to its former elegance through the efforts of Ms. Marta Alexander, Medical Board Coordinator, and with the financial support of administration.
- The Walls of the Muhlenberg corridor now proudly display St. Luke's World War II Service Flags, a framed photograph of the physicians and nurses (properly identified) who formed the 2nd Evacuation Hospital during the war, and a map showing their route through the United Kingdom and Western Europe.
- The art treasures of the chapel at the St. Luke's site are now properly identified in a beautiful color brochure prepared with the help of Public Affairs. The brochure, entitled "The Chapel Treasures of St. Luke's Hospital," is available in both the Bolling Library and the archives.
- The recently restored painting, "The Three Marys at the Sepulchre" is now hanging, properly identified and appropriately lighted in the first panel of the West wall of the chapel. The famed portrait artist, Daniel Huntington, gifted the painting to St. Luke's Hospital in 1858, the year the first patients were admitted.
- Simulated marble plaques, courtesy of the Office of Development, now identify some of the major works of art and their artists displayed at the St. Luke's site.

Theodore B. VanItallie, MD

January 20, 2011

Dear George,

Many thanks for your letter of November 10, 2010 concerning the Archives Fund of St. Luke's/Roosevelt. I think you and Nancy Panella and your group are doing an absolutely splendid job for our institution. If we lose contact with our own past we lose an essential part of our identity and put in jeopardy our sense of place. Both of these features are critically important to the well-being of our hospital and the satisfaction all of us get out of being a part of it.

Your brochure on the Chapel is beautifully done. However, I think it is also important to build up a data base on physicians, scientists, and others who have contributed so much to our hospital's distinction in one way or another. As one example, I was interested to learn that, when J.P. Morgan, Jr. suffered his "final" stroke in the train en route to the Gasparilla Inn in Boca Grande, FL, Dr. Henry Patterson (Eppie Childs' uncle and former chief of Medicine A, who was Morgan's physician) traveled to Boca Grande to care for his distinguished patient. In spite of all efforts to save him, "Jack" Morgan died in one of the Inn's guest cottages on March 13, 1943. (As a founder and former president of the Boca Grande Historical Society, I was especially interested to learn of the Boca Grande connection, and that a prominent St. Luke's physician had as one of his patients America's leading financier of the time.)

There is so much history yet to be recorded about our wonderful institution. For example, it's too bad we don't have funds to collect oral histories and memorabilia from some of our older staff members. Sadly, their memories of our hospital will be erased unless they are persuaded to put them on the record.

Please keep up this important work and tell Nancy how much I appreciate all that she has done to preserve critical information about St. Luke's fascinating history. Our current staff should take pride in the hospital's accomplishments, and those currently in charge of running things need to be educated about our institution's past and be aware of the valiant efforts of generations of our staff members (all too many of them vanished from memory) in its behalf. The many achievements of our predecessors should inspire us to keep our performance standards and our aspirations for St. Luke's as high as possible.

I wish I could contribute more at this time but I enclose, at least, a down-payment.

With great appreciation and best wishes,

