

# ORTHOPEDIC HOSPITAL



Fig. 1. The Children's hospital, from Linden Drive c. 1932. The Kennedy Memorial was added to the top of the wing at the left of the picture in 1963. [series 9/4 Orthopedic Hospital, jf-56]

*The orthopedic hospital was built in 1930 as a dedicated hospital for the children of Wisconsin. In 1962 an addition and major remodelling took place. In the 1970s the hospital was converted for use by the department of nutritional science.*

Part of the agreement reached with the legislature in 1920-21, when Wisconsin General Hospital was funded, was that the university medical school would provide care for crippled Wisconsin children. The university began doing this (in small numbers in the Bradley memorial hospital) even before the squabbles surrounding the main hospital were resolved. But these facilities were never suitable, and advances in orthopedics were being made rapidly. A dedicated children's hospital was needed. The drive for this facility was headed by Dean Charles Bardeen. The state legislature of 1929 approved an appropriation of \$300,000 for such a hospital.

The regents' committee for the new hospital reported in November 1929, recommending that an 'L' shaped building be located at the corner of Linden and Randall Streets, and that Randall should be closed at the north end. Mr. Albert E. Gallistel, university supervisor of grounds and building, drew plans from the sketches of Drs. Bardeen and Buerki. Members of the committee had visited children's hospitals at Minneapolis, St. Louis, Detroit and Ann Arbor. The in-hospital living quarters for staff, common at the other institutions were eliminated from Wisconsin's plan to reduce size and cost. On April 23, 1930 the regents approved the plans presented by the office of state architect

Arthur Peabody.

Bids were opened on May 24, 1930, and the contract was awarded to the lowest bidder, J. H. Kelly of Madison for \$205,700. With subcontracts and miscellaneous cost the total cost of the hospital was \$300,000. By the fall of 1930, several houses and small buildings occupying the site were removed, and the north end of Randall Street was closed. The cornerstone ceremony was held on November 8, 1930, with speeches by governor Kohler and president Frank. The hospital was opened on June 5, 1931.<sup>1</sup>

The finished buff brick building had a three story eighty foot square center section at the corner, with two story wings projecting 92 feet to the west and south and a full basement. The center section has a red tile hipped roof, while the wings have flat roofs. The parts of the basement above ground are sheathed in Missouri marble, while the rest of the trim on the building is Indiana limestone. The court yard between the wings was intended as an outdoor exercise yard. There are reliefs of children's heads on the upper portion of the center section.

The capacity of the hospital was 113 patients, with a two bedroom suite for staff. The kitchen, laundry and swimming pool were in the basement. Operating rooms and an x-ray facility were located in the center section third floor.

For thirty years the hospital served its intended purpose very well, including the terrible polio epidemic in the early 1950s. In May 1961 the regents announced a gift of \$225,000 from the Joseph P. Kennedy, Jr. foundation (named for Joseph Sr. and Rose Kennedy's eldest son) for the support of the research program in mental retardation.

By October of 1961, it had been decided to build an addition to the orthopedic hospital to house the Joseph P. Kennedy Jr., laboratories. State architect Karel Yasko designed the addition which consisted of a third floor added to the south wing of the building.<sup>2</sup> Upon further review it was decided that this was an appropriate time to update and remodel the whole building, so another year went by in the preparation of these additional plans. As estimated in October of 1962 the total cost of the remodelling would be \$500,000 of which \$265,000 came from the Kennedy fund. The mental retardation research program was headed by Dr. Harry A. Waisman of the department of pediatrics.

The addition and remodelling was dedicated November 20, 1963, by Edward Kennedy, R. Sargent Shriver, Harry Waisman and governor Reynolds. Two days later the Kennedy family lost another son.

With the construction of the Waisman center in 1971 and the removal of the hospital functions to the new hospital and clinics building in the late 1970s, the original functions of the orthopedic hospital were gone and the first phase of the building's life came to an end. In 1976 the University assigned the building to the department of Nutritional Sciences. This new use was inaugurated in 1979 when the state approved a remodelling project at a cost of \$1.4 million. This remodelling was nominally completed in 1982, when the department moved in, but difficulties with environmental systems plagued the building for another four years.<sup>3</sup>

1) *Daily Cardinal*, June 5, 1931, p. 1

2) *Regent's Minutes*, October 20, 1961. p. 5, September 14, 1962 exhibit H.

3) Harper to Wendt, March 16, 1976, Harper to Shain, April 25, 1979, request to state building commission, October 1979, Ganther to Fulop, November 12, 1986, series 9/31/9-3 box 6, Nutritional Science folder.