

The King's Daughters History: After the Flu Pandemic and the Great Depression: 1920s and 1930s

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While the Flu pandemic had stretched the resources of the nursing staff during the summer and fall of 1918, The King's Daughters continued their efforts to raise funds to meet the ever-growing needs of the community. During 1920, ground was broken for the construction of a new, modern clinic building allowing for the expansion of the prenatal and delivery service as well as space for very sick children to stay during their treatments. This building which opened in 1922 was funded by the local Kiwanis Clubs starting decades of support to The King's Daughters and later CHKD. (The cornerstone of for this building is outside the current CHKD emergency room near the power plant.)

This same year, The King's Daughters Endowment Fund was started with a \$1,000 (\$13,000 in today's dollars) gift from John Roper. The Endowment Campaign focused on raising funds to support the nurses. For example, 75 cents would pay for one visit by a nurse; \$1,400 would cover the services of a nurse for a year. A memorial program was also started encouraging members and the public to donate gifts "what greater memorial than this (The King's Daughters clinic) to some loved one." 1920 was also the year that the "Empty Milk Bottle" Campaign was "officially" launched to raise funds for the Milk program. This year marks the 100th anniversary of our Canister Program.

Miss Blanche F Webb became the 3rd Nursing Director in 1923 and Dr. W. P. McDowell became the 2nd Chief of Staff following Dr. Royster's resignation to take a job at UVA Medical School. In 1924, in response to the increasing need for space, the Kiwanis Clubs funded the addition of a 3rd floor to the clinic building. Additionally, The King's Daughters expanded their services by establishing 2 health centers allowing families to access care much more easily. The first centers were opened in Lambert's Point in the basement of the James Madison school and in

Ocean View in an old fire station. By the end of the decade, 10 health stations were located throughout the city.

In September 1929, a new clinic building was opened providing additional space for operating, labs and clinics. Mrs. Fergus Reid donated 9 Della Robbias from Italy to hang in the new clinic. Today, one of these is located at the entrance to the hospital with others located throughout the hospital. Miss Webb, Nursing Director, called this new building a "Temple of Health, to build strong bodies in which strong minds can grow"

The annual reports from the 1930s were greatly reduced from 51 pages in 1929 to 5 to 7 pages to save expense. Thus, the details we have for other years is not available. An additional health station was started bringing the total to 11. In 1935, medical students from UVA started training in the Maternity Clinic. The most significant work by the nurses and doctors were the efforts to reduce infant mortality. In 1913, the infant death rate was 138 per 1,000 births. By 1939, the rate had dropped to 45 deaths per 1,000 births. That was a 67.4% decrease. (Today's infant mortality rate in Norfolk is 6.7 deaths per 1,000 births).



Staff, Circa 1926



HEADQUARTERS
300 W. York Street.



KIWANIS HOUSE
The Children's Clinic.

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Clinic & Headquarters in 1925



THE DOOR OF OPPORTUNITY FOR THE UNDERPRIVILEGED CHILDREN OF NORFOLK

1929 Clinic with Della Robbia