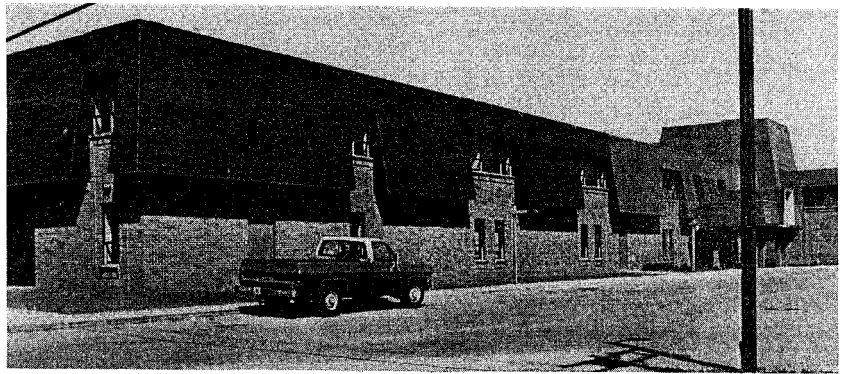


The original Otsego Memorial Hospital, located at site of present Gaylord Post Office on East Main Street.



Wing addition to present Otsego Memorial Hospital on North Center Avenue, witnessing steady growth in 30-year hospital history.

Major growth at Otsego Memorial

BY BRAD FLORY
Herald Times Staff Writer

GAYLORD — With completion of a new 11-bed wing last spring, 1981 has been a year of growth and expansion for Otsego Memorial Hospital.

Such growth has been typical in the 30-year history of the facility.

Established in 1951 in a refurbished home located where the Gaylord Post Office now stands, Otsego Memorial Hospital has grown to keep up with health care needs of the area.

Faced with the rapidly expanding medical needs of a growing community, a modern new facility was opened in 1973 at the present hospital site on Old 27 North.

By 1978, growing hospital use led to further need for expansion.

In February of 1979, a 6,850 square foot addition was completed at a cost of \$528,000. The addition featured three new emergency

rooms, including a trauma room.

Also included in that addition was a nurses station, a surgical suite with scrub area, a four-bed recovery room, a second x-ray room, and additional laboratory space.

ALTHOUGH the 1979 addition was not meant to serve more patients — rather to give patients faster and more complete medical services — the addition completed this year was intended to increase the number of patients served at Otsego Memorial.

The new wing, adding about 10,000 square feet of space to the facility, increases the total number of beds at the hospital to 88.

Also, the two-floor addition expands space for medical records, computers, billing records, and administrative offices, meaning more efficient health care services can

be offered.

The cost of all hospital improvements made in the past fiscal year totalled \$862,208.

Those funds were secured through a \$2.6 million tax-exempt bond sale, which consolidates all long-term debts. The bonds will be repaid, at 11.1 percent interest, over a 30-year period.

Of the amount spent on improvements over the past fiscal year, \$247,000 went towards replacement of equipment, such as hospital beds.

Hospital officials have long-range plans for other additions, increasing space by another 22 beds over the next 10 years. Those additions will be considered as need develops, officials say.

OTSEGO Memorial Hospital now employs a 210-person staff, including 20 physicians, with an annual payroll exceeding \$2 million.

The hospital recorded 2,310 admissions over the past fiscal year, with 312 births at Otsego Memorial.

Among hospital programs is a shared services agreement with William Beaumont Hospital in Royal Oak, enabling the hospital to purchase supplies and services at reduced cost.

A contract with Kirtland Community College provides for the education of licensed practical nurses. Nurses' aides are trained through the Gaylord Community Schools cooperative education program.

Besides the hospital, other medical facilities include the Medical Arts Building and the Hazel V. Shipp Building, designed to house physicians' offices.

The Otsego Memorial Hospital Association was established in 1946. Newly-elected president of the association's Board of Trustees is Willis Wegmeyer.

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