

From the history and archives collection

EDGEWOOD SANATORIUM



HOPE FARM

YESTERDAY AND TODAY

On a small plot of land surrounded by age-old woods, the first sanatorium in the United States to be used exclusively for tuberculosis Negroes was built.

Known as Edgewood Sanatorium, it was erected in 1914 from funds made available by the Delaware State Legislature and the Delaware Anti-Tuberculosis Society. Previous to this time Negro patients had been cared for in a unit attached to Hope Farm, now known as Brandywine Sanatorium.

The new Edgewood contained everything that an ill or convalescent tuberculous patient could desire. The rooms were large, but cheerful and very comfortable. Numerous windows admitted sunshine and fresh air to benefit those patients unable to enjoy the cool shade of the lawn and porches during the long summer months. Built along a highway, it gave them a feeling of closeness to the outside world, yet there was a minimum of noise and confusion for the road was seldom used.

in this state and always will. During 1946, the patient population was greater than any previous year. It will no doubt be greatly increased during 1947 as a result of the extensive X-ray program now being conducted by the Delaware Anti-Tuberculosis Society and the Delaware State Board of Health. The first sanatorium of its kind in this country, may it continue to serve the people to whose lives it has been dedicated.



EDGEWOOD SANATORIUM - 1911

A nurses' home was built close to the main hospital. In those days there were 10 nurses and the superintendent. Dr. Conwell Banton was the Medical Director and still retains that post.

Years passed and their passing brought enlightenment to the people of this state. Tuberculosis could be cured if cases were found and treatment instituted in the early stages of the disease. Edgewood, with facilities for less than forty patients was no longer able to take care of the increasing demand for hospitalization.

In 1939, the State Legislature was approached with another request; this time an appropriation sufficient to build and maintain a larger, more modern Edgewood. The money was made available as evidenced by the present building now located on a tract of land formerly known as Hope Farm. Old residents returning to the state after many years' absence may well gasp in amazement as they look upon the small village which has replaced the shack of forty years ago. The vast acreage is now shared by Brandywine and Edgewood Sanatoria.

The new sanatorium is ideally situated. Like Brandywine, its location commands a view of the entire country side, with Wilmington, Delaware's largest city but a few miles away.

ANNIVERSARY EDGEWOOD SANATORIUM

1915 - 1947



Open House Edgewood Sanatorium

January 12, 1947
Two-Five

Transportation is made available to both staff and convalescing patients by means of a station wagon which takes scheduled trips to the city every day.

Its accessibility to the city lends itself to further enjoyment for the patients. Not only is it possible for relatives and friends to visit at regular intervals, but several local organizations from nearby towns plan various types of entertainment which would be prohibitive were the sanatoria too far away. Movies are probably the most popular of all the activities and the patients look forward to this weekly event.

With facilities for sixty-eight patients, Edgewood would be in a splendid position to meet the needs of the Negro people of this state, but sufficient personnel to staff an institution of this type has not been available since the sanatorium was opened. But this is a situation which prevails everywhere, and we hope will be remedied soon.

The general death rate from tuberculosis in Delaware was 200 per 100,000 population in 1907. In 1945 the rate was 35.6 per 100,000. During that same period hospital facilities have increased from eleven to more than 200 beds. Every effort is being made to stamp out the disease which still claims thousands of lives. Edgewood plays a major role