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Doctors John Ayers, Gifford Grimm and Joseph Laszlo have asked me as the oldest surviving member of the original Obs & Gyn Department to write a brief history of the residency training program at Fitkin Hospital as it was then called.

I am pleased to be asked and will make every effort to be as factual as possible. This account will date back to 1944 which is sixty years ago and while I will try to be as accurate as my memory permits, I will undoubtedly "misremember" occasionally. Dolly Russo was the secretary to the medical staff for much of this time and might be able to correct some of my mistakes. Joseph Ackerman, MD has a fantastic memory and might also be willing to check this report for accuracy.

In 1944-45, Doctors James Fisher Jr., Frank Guito, Raymond Jacobus and Jose Pietri were Rotating Interns. I am not aware of there being a resident then but it is possible. All four doctors have since passed away. Tony Eckert who was the administrator had joined the army and Mr. LaStrange took his place. Lorraine Metzger was the head of the Nursing School Office. Her husband, Karl Metzger MD, who was on the medical staff was away in service as was much of the hospital staff during World War Two. James Fisher Sr. MD once complained to me that the staff had "run off to play soldier and left him to do all the work." He was Chief of Staff for many years and a good one who tolerated very little nonsense. He had attended Peddie Prep School prior to World War One with my father. This seemed to strengthen our relationship.

In 1945-46 there were again four rotating Interns; Thomas Flanagan, and Hugo Black were both from Syracuse Medical School. They were classmates of Jim Fisher Jr. and agreed to intern at Fitkin provided that they be allowed to do some surgery. Black became an anesthesiologist later and Flanagan went into Urology in Norwich, NY. Black died of prostate cancer a decade or more ago. None of the house staff was married. They were paid only fifty dollars a month and were on call every other night and every other weekend. Interns were noted then for their devotion to having fun whenever the opportunity presented itself. So much so that when Tony Eckert returned to being administrator after the war, he told me that had he been in charge, he would have dealt severely with Drs. Black and Flanagan. They were never dull and made our job a lot more fun.

Daniel Collinson and I were the other two rotating Interns. We also worked hard and played hard. It was rumored that one of the internes crawled into the nurse's residence, DeCoppet Hall, through an open window at night to visit his girl friend. This was later firmly denied. The miscreant admitted that he had simply walked through the door.

Dan and I both later married graduates of the Ann May School of Nursing. Dan married Helen Cremeans and I married Catherine Briggs. They were of the class of 1946. Both wives have since passed away after more than fifty years of marriage. I later married another Ann May Alumna, Judith Vincenz Throckmorton class of 1962.

Dan went into Urology in the Red Bank area and I went into the practice of Obs&Gyn in Neptune with John W. Hardy and Benjamin Daversa as the Monmouth County Associates in Obs&Gyn in 1952.

James Fisher, Jr. was the General resident from 1945-46. He later went into ophthalmology. His father had practiced EENT for many years. Jim Jr. later died of a melanoma.

Ironically, James Fisher, Sr. was blind when he died having suffered a stroke. I visited him in the Convacenter Nursing Home just before he died. It was terribly sad to see this man who had saved the sight of so many, now unable to see anything at all. I had to even help him with the urinal! He was a fine man and greatly respected as a leader in the medical community. I admired him greatly.

From 1946-48 I served in the Air Force as a medical officer doing Obs&Gyn and caring for dependents in the medical clinic. From 1948-50 I worked with Ben

Daversa doing Obs&Gyn and also general practice in Point Pleasant. Then from 1950-52 I took residency training in Obs&Gyn in City Hospital of Akron and in Charity Hospital in Shreveport, La.

In 1952 I returned to Fitkin. The name was later changed to Jersey Shore Medical Center. Monmouth County Associates in Obs&Gyn became a reality and it was about then that Ben Daversa began a campaign to have a residency training program in our field. The only resident up to that time had been a resident who served only one year. I am not aware that he was assigned to any specific duty but was called a "General Resident." There was no formal training program at all. Interns started a lot of IV's, drew a lot of blood samples, assisted in the operating room, delivered ward cases, worked in the clinics and took a lot of histories and physicals.

Albert Schmidt, MD. who was on the Pediatrics Staff after he returned from the war insisted that Interns were a source of cheap labor who subsidized the hospital. He had a point but that was normal operating procedure in those days. With only two Interns to run the entire hospital, summer weekends were a nightmare. One service consisted of both the emergency room and the delivery room at the same time. I had that duty and lost twenty pounds before it was finished.

Robert Abbe MacKenzie, MD and Kenneth G. Brown, MD who was Chief of the Department did not want a residency training program. John Hardy agreed with Daversa. It must have been in the mid 1950's that we had an informal meeting in the small TV room off the delivery suite of the Obs Staff consisting of MacKenzie, Brown, Hardy and Daversa and I. I do not remember who suggested that we vote on the question of whether or not we should have a training program but an oral vote was taken. MacKenzie and Brown quickly voted against it, Daversa and Hardy voted for it. This left me with the deciding vote. I felt that this was unfair since I was a neophyte and should not be put in such an awkward position. MacKenzie immediately agreed with me and the meeting adjourned with the matter unsettled.

Daversa would not be denied and he subsequently managed to persuade MacKenzie and Brown to agree with him and Hardy. He ignored me since I had disappointed him and he no longer needed my acquiescence anyway.

There was still a lot of paper work to be done before a residency program could be approved. All of this was accomplished by John Hardy. After months of "spade work" by him, approval was obtained. In order to be fair, Mackenzie wanted John Hardy to have the honor of being the first Director. Hardy modestly refused and insisted that MacKenzie be the "Chief." Mackenzie enjoyed a fine reputation. Since it was Daversa's idea originally, I thought that he should have precedence over MacKenzie. My guess is that Hardy knew that Daversa would not like to have him as his "boss" but that MacKenzie would be acceptable to all. And so, MacKenzie became the first Director.

John Hardy was the next director and he did a fantastic job. Ray Jacobus was next and he also did a superb job. Both of these were "hard acts to follow." I tried hard but the best that I can say is that I did manage to hold the department together from 1972-75 when I developed cancer of the colon and had to resign.

My one claim to fame might be as a result of my hiring our first coordinator. David Carter had become the administrator and he ordered me, as the director, to find a coordinator. MacKenzie thought that this was my idea and chastised me for wasting the hospital's money. He was mystified to discover that it was not to my liking at all but that I was doing what I had been ordered to do. We advertised, I offered the position to all the men on our staff, I went to a number of Obs&Gyn Conventions and finally found an Associate Professor of Obs&Gyn at Temple Medical School. His name was Nubar Tschilinguarian, MD. After a great deal of bargaining, Carter finally lost his patience and said, "Take it or leave it." He took it. I suspect that the hospital profited financially from hiring a coordinator. Up to this time, all of our residents had passed their boards! We were quite proud of them and their record but not many years later, this string was sadly broken.

If my memory serves me correctly, John Ayers then took the helm and did an excellent job for a number of years. Interestingly, Ben Daversa never did become Director although he loved being in charge. Since he could not be the first, he might have refused the job. He was a brilliant man with many

innovative ideas but he had a quirk in his personality that made him difficult to deal with at times.

Our first resident was Richard Battaglia, MD. He came to us from a busy general practice in Elizabeth, NJ. He stayed only one year and then went back to Elizabeth to practice. He developed malignant hypertension and went into the allergy field but died a few years later.

As a point of information, I should add that MacKenzie was the first MD in Monmouth County to pass his Boards in Obs&Gyn. In fact, he may have been one of the first in NJ. He might well be called a pioneer in the specialty in N.J. Daversa was the second one on our staff to pass his boards. I may have been the third getting mine in 1955. Hardy and Payne also got their boards about that same time but I am not certain of the chronology.

One other interesting addendum is that Daversa claimed that he delivered the first surviving newborn to a diabetic mother at Fitkin. This would have been around 1945. He delivered her by Caesarean Section because of her diabetes. Up to then, diabetics were usually delivered vaginally.

I have included some personal reminiscences to spice this up a bit, that you may want to delete. I expect that you might want to use some of this material and add it to other accounts. Please do not hesitate to edit it freely. If you wish any clarification on any of it or would like to discuss it, please call or write at any time.

In brief summary then, Ben Daversa first proposed a residency training program. John Hardy did the paper work to gain approval. MacKenzie was the first Director, Battaglia was the first resident.

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Cordially,

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