

# 65 Years in the Southern Tier

# St. Joseph Hospital Has W



The building which first housed St. Joseph's Hospital.

Elmira — Last Monday was the 65th anniversary of the dedication and opening of St. Joseph's Hospital, marking an extraordinary growth from a 35-bed hospital, housed in a remodeled school building, to a 287-bed facility providing not only acute care but a host of other services that contribute to the health and well-being of the Southern Tier.

Despite lavish praise from the press of the time, the hospital was beset by difficulties in its early days; financing was slim, and the public was reticent to use the new facilities. The story is even told that the first administrator, Sister Rose Alice, hung her habit on the line to air on the first evening of her stay in the city, only to find it stolen the next morning.

But the people of Elmira proved generous in those days, providing food, small sums of money and services; and when money became a special problem, Sister Rose Alice's loyalty to St. Joseph became legendary; she would simply pose the problem to her congregation's patron and invariably a donation would arrive in the nick of time to pay the bills.

At about this time Dr. Daniel P. Murphy and colleagues began a nursing education program.

The hospital says of Dr. Murphy, "No one worked longer or harder than he" to make the nursing school a success.

The hospital built a laundry in 1910, its first important addition. Then, in 1914, after a long fund-raising campaign, an annex to the hospital was opened. At the same time the hospital bought its first ambulance.

Soon the needs of the community out-stripped the facilities of the hospital and, again after a long fund-raising campaign, a new surgical building was opened in 1923.

In 1931, St. Joseph's opened a



A 1931 photograph of a group of Sisters serving the hospital at that time.



The first students in the School of Nursing are shown in 1908. From left are Miss Harriett Keavin, Miss Josephine T. Lynch, first superintendent of nurses and supervisor of Catherine Sullivan, and Miss Lena MacIn

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