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Photos by Jim Wallace

Over \$650,000 worth of stock is issued by the storeroom during the year.

## The Hospital Storeroom Has Order

If variety is the veritable spice that people suppose, then the Hospital Storeroom certainly puts McCormick's to shame.

"We've handled almost everything here from snakes . . . a small python in June . . . to snails," said Mr. Warren Wagner, manager of the Hospital Storeroom. "We've ordered and received a baboon, guinea pigs, turtles, ants, mushrooms, oysters, clams, and rats."

"We even tried to order a marcupia cat once from Australia, but we couldn't get one, because they don't allow them to be shipped out of the country . . . too rare," said Mr. Wagner after an obliging flip through *Webster's* to show a picture of the said cat to the interviewer. (*Webster's* informs that the kangaroo belongs to this family and that all the cats are with pouch.)

This lively department of many orders is also responsible for keeping a well ordered stock of office supplies and patient care items, as well as fulfilling the hospital's annual needs for: sheets (almost 8,000), wash cloths (over 12,000), paper scuffs (11,000), patient gowns (over 1,900), scrub dresses (1,500), lab coats (over 3,000), and safety pins (over 272,000).

Management of the storeroom requires financial skills and very good bookkeeping, for three and three quarters million dollars worth of equipment is ordered and \$650,000 worth of stock issued by the storeroom during the year.

Much of the success of the storeroom is dependent upon the efforts of the three women in the storeroom's outer office. It is these women who pick up, sort and begin to process the volumes of mail. (When Mrs. Wagner, supervisor of the Hospital Post Office, was asked how much mail is posted daily for the storeroom, she replied: "Oh I couldn't begin to estimate . . . but it's a huge amount.") During the year they process 16,000 purchase orders and price 23,000 requisitions for items in stock (pens, pencils, paper clips, etc.). They also keep a running inventory of the stock items, reorder items when necessary, and check the invoices when the items are received. (Most of the stock turns over 3½ times a year.)

In addition to their other duties, these women are responsible for all of the paper work and the subsequent filing. In a year's time they write about 1,000 tracers on orders that are overdue and rewrite many of the original orders. "So many of the handwritten orders are illegible," explained Mr. Wagner—adding with a smile: "We have some *ferocious* handwriting here in the hospital."

The three women are also responsible for answering that seemingly tireless instrument of communication, the telephone. "Answering the phone is almost a full time job in itself down here," said Mr. Wagner drawing reference to the chorus of bells in the front office.

When items are delivered to the Hospital Storeroom, orders are checked immediately by one of the three stock men for damages and/or incorrect delivery. If damaged or incorrect, the order is not sent to the person who ordered it until it has been corrected.

"We check all orders carefully when they are received," said Mr. Wagner, ". . . except for snakes . . . that's one of the things the person doing the ordering checks first. . . ."

Late in the evening and on



The description of all items ordered