

# The Warren Record

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BIGNALL JONES  
Editor

HOWARD F. JONES  
Business Manager

KAY HORNER  
News Editor

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## Closing Is Regretted

Warren General Hospital, erected at Warrenton in 1949-50, will be closed as a general hospital on January 1.

This was announced in a lead story in The Warren Record this morning (Wednesday). The story was written by Kay Horner, news editor, and explains the reasons for closing the hospital and possible plans to maintain a type of emergency service in the county.

Little hope has been held that the hospital could be maintained in the manner that it has existed since its construction and staffing, and yet notice of its closing comes as a shock.

All over the state and nation not only small rural hospitals are closing, but many hospitals in larger communities, due to increased health care costs, an inability to compensate for reductions in federal Medicare and Medicaid, and steadily declining patient census.

The county commissioners and hospital board members had hoped to be able to delay a decision on the hospital's future pending completion of a state study due in February, but mounting debts prompted action this week.

Recently, we received a clipping from The Wall Street Journal, courtesy of Hugh Holt, headed "Communities Fight Closing of Hospitals." In the clipping a number of small hospitals over the nation were mentioned, including Warren General Hospital. Remarks pertaining to Warren General were as follows:

"Declining admissions are especially evident in the 45% of all acute-care hospitals with fewer than 100 beds, many in rural communities. A recent University of North Carolina

study shows that smaller rural hospitals in the Tarheel State have been losing patients to bigger institutions since the early 1970s. Glenn Wilson, head of social and administrative medicine at the university, who directed the study, says, 'As far as anyone can tell, they were going where the high technology is.'

"With an estimated 25 to 30 of North Carolina's 132 acute-care hospitals in deep financial trouble, pressures on local government to keep them afloat are growing. 'It's not politically popular to be known as the person who closed a hospital,' says Eva Clayton, head of the Warren County commissioners.

### Overcoming Reservations

Warren General Hospital is the only acute-care institution serving the poor and predominantly black county. On some days, only seven out of its 35 beds are occupied. Mrs. Clayton and other commissioners want to convert Warren General to a nursing home and a clinic affiliated with bigger hospitals nearby. But overcoming the reservations of the hospital staff and the public may be difficult, she says.

"Some nursing home operators are also unhappy about such conversions, despite the projected national need for more nursing home beds."

While deeply regretting the closing of the hospital, and hoping that other health care can be provided, we feel that both the county commissioners and the members of the Board of Hospital Trustees are due the thanks of our citizens for the diligent way they have worked in the interest of health care in the county.

## Miss Rodwell Retiring

On Friday afternoon of last week Miss Mary Frances Rodwell of Warrenton retired as Deputy Register of Deeds of Warren County after having held this position for slightly more than 40 years. That she will be greatly missed is perhaps the greatest understatement of the year.

Miss Rodwell, the daughter of the late Mr. and Mrs. Raymond Rodwell, a graduate of Duke University and Henderson Business College was employed as his chief deputy by the late Sam Allen upon his election as Register of Deeds in the early forties. She served in this capacity with Mr. Allen until his retirement in July 1965, when she came Deputy Register of Deeds under Jim Hundley. For nineteen years she was his deputy, continuing to discharge her duties with a skill and patience that won the admiration of those who visited that office.

"She is one of a kind, and they don't make them like her anymore," Jim Hundley commented on Tuesday. Illustrating her patience and ability to get along with people, he said that he and his deputy never exchanged a cross word during the long period they worked together. She always looked on the bright side, liked people and possessed a

great deal of patience.

The qualifications were also pointed out by one who has known her since she was a child, and who used the word marvelous in her description.

The editor was a frequent visitor in the office of the Register of Deeds when he too often unburdened his disappointments to his friend. She never lost her patience, and always looked on the bright side. She will be greatly missed.

## Not Painful

By JEAN McCAMY  
In The Wake Weekly

We do some strange things to ourselves in the name of fashion. Some fashions make people look marvelous and some fashions make people look — well, peculiar.

When you have a chance to sit and watch a rather extensive cross-section of people go by, you see a little bit of everything, from sloppy to funky to chic.

Some people apparently don't give a flip for fashion. They just get dressed in whatever is handy. Others, however, seem to have carefully studied a picture in the latest slick magazine and decked themselves out accordingly, with no regard to how the style looks on them or how appropriate it is for where they are going.

Following fashion trends is cer-

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By BIGNALL JONES

In this column last week I mentioned that Lee Iacocca contracted rheumatic fever and had to spend six months in bed and that it may have been a blessing in disguise. Lee tells about it as follows:

"Suddenly in the middle of my senior year, Japan attacked Pearl Harbor. President Roosevelt's speeches had us all riled up, and the entire country was rallying round the flag. Overnight all of America was galvanized and united. I learned something from that crisis that has stayed with me ever since; it often takes a shot of adversity to get people to pull together.

"Like most young men that December 1941, I couldn't wait to join up. Ironically, the illness that almost killed me may have ended up saving my life. To my enormous disappointment, I was classified 4F—a medical deferment—which meant I couldn't join the Air Force and fight in the war. Although I had pretty well recovered and I felt terrific, the Army had decided not to take anyone with a history of Rheumatic fever. But I didn't feel sick, and a year or two later, when I had my first physical for life insurance, the doctor turned to me and said 'You are a healthy young fellow. Why aren't you overseas?'"

"Most of my classmates were called up, and many of them died. We were the class of '42, and the kids who were seventeen and eighteen went to boot camp and then straight across the Atlantic where the Germans were knocking hell out of us. To this day I sometimes look through my yearbook and shake my head in sorrow and disbelief at all the students from Allentown High who died overseas, defending democracy.

"Being burdened with a medical deferment during the war seemed like a disgrace, and I began to think of myself as a second-class citizen. Most of my friends and relatives had gone over to fight the Germans. I felt like the only young man in America who wasn't in combat. So I did the only thing I could. I buried my head in my books."

Lee said that by this time he had developed an interest in engineering, and the following year he entered Lehigh University in Bethlehem, Pa., where any student who didn't maintain a sufficiently high average by the end of his sophomore year was politely asked to leave. Lee had classes six days a week, including a course in statistics that met Saturday morning at eight. Most of the boys cut it, but he got an A—in statistics, not so much for proficiency but for his perseverance in showing up every week while the other guys were sleeping off their Friday night binges.

Lee added, "I don't mean to imply that I had no fun at all during college, I like to raise a little hell, and I went to my share of beer parties. There were also trips to Philadelphia and New York where I had a couple of girlfriends."

In spite of an excellent

## Mostly Personal

### Shot Of Adversity

record as a high school student, Lee found college more challenging. He said that "in my freshman year I almost failed physics. We had a professor named Bergmann, a Viennese immigrant whose accent was so thick I hardly understood him. He was a great scholar, but he lacked the patience to teach freshmen. Unfortunately, his course was a requirement for anyone who majored in mechanical engineering.

"Somehow, in spite of my difficulties in his class, I got to be a good friend with Professor Bergmann. We would walk around the campus, and he would describe the latest developments in physics. He was especially interested in splitting atoms, which at that point seemed still in the realm of science fiction. It all sounded like Greek to me and I only understood a fraction of what he was saying, although I managed to follow the main argument.

"There was something mysterious about Bergmann. Every Friday he'd end the class abruptly and leave the campus until the following Monday. It wasn't until several years later that I finally learned his secret. Given the nature of his interest, I should probably have guessed. He used to spend every weekend in New York working on the Manhattan Project. In other words, when Bergmann was teaching at Lehigh, he was working on the atomic bomb. "Despite our friendship and despite the private tutorials, I managed no more than a D in fresh-

man physics—my lowest grade at Lehigh. I had been a good math student at high school, but I simply wasn't prepared for the world of advanced calculus and differential equations.

"Eventually I smarted up," Lee said, "and switched my major from mechanical to industrial engineering. Before long my grades started to improve. By my senior year I had moved away from the advanced sciences of hydraulics and switched over to business courses, such as labor problems, statistics and accounting. I did much better in the subjects, finishing my last year with straight A's. My goal was a 3.5 grade average so I could graduate with high honors. I made it by a hair—ending up 3.53. They say that this generation is competitive. You should have seen us at work."

After completing his studies at Lehigh, Lee accepted a scholarship to Princeton University.

Lee said "After one look at the campus I knew that I wanted to be there. I figured that a masters degree after my name wouldn't hurt my career either.

"Suddenly I had two terrific opportunities. (Princeton scholarship and job with Ford) I called McCormick-Goodheart (Ford executive) about my dilemma. 'If they want you at Princeton' he told me, 'bu all means go and get your masters. We'll hold a space for you until you graduate.' That was just what I hoped he would say, and I was on top of the world."

To Be Continued.

## News Of Yesteryear

### Looking Back Into The Warren Record

December 8, 1944

The Warren County Board of Commissioners had a double session on Monday with the old board serving at the morning session and the new board being sworn in for the afternoon session, when W. H. Burroughs was re-elected chairman.

W. Carlton Wilson, formerly with Neal's Service Station, has leased the Sinclair Service Station on Main Street and began operation of the new business on Tuesday.

Margaret Shaw, young pianist of Macon, will be featured as guest soloist with the N. C. State Symphony Orchestra in a concert at the University of North Carolina, Saturday, Dec. 9.

December 4, 1959

Directors of the Roanoke River Basin Association in a recent meeting at John H. Kerr Reservoir put their stamp of approval on construction of a power dam at Gaston on the Roanoke River by the Virginia Electric and Power Company, and expressed the hope that any obstacles in the way of construction may soon be removed.

The Rev. and Mrs. Malcolm M. Hutton of Norlina announce the birth of a daughter in Warren General Hospital on Nov. 25. Mrs. Hutton is the former Miss Ann Davis of Norlina.

Bill Henry Burwell was a holiday guest of the Barker Williams family and Mrs. Mack Sloan at their summer home near Greenville, S. C.

December 5, 1974

Judge Hamilton Hobgood of Louisburg administered the oath of office to Mrs. Anne P. Davis, newly elected clerk of Warren County Superior Court, during ceremonies held here on Monday. Mrs. Davis succeeds R. S. Rodwell as clerk.

Revaluation and a complete mapping of Warren County would cost more than \$200,000, it was revealed at a meeting of the Board of County Commissioners Monday morning.

Miss Catherine Blankenship of St. Mary's College was here for the holidays. She was guest organist in Emmanuel Episcopal Church on Sunday morning.

## Letter To The Editor

### Sad Day For Warren

To The Editor:

December 3, 1984, will be remembered by the County Commissioners, the Hospital Trustee Board and the citizens as a sad day for Warren County. This day, a difficult decision had to be made and supported to change drastically how Warren General Hospital would operate. The Trustee Board and the County Commissioners knew a change had to be made in August and took action to plan an alternative to the Hospital. We all had confidence and pride in what Warren General Hospital had meant to the citizens of the County and wanted to continue to provide health care through that facility but not as a hospital. It was apparent that small hospitals, under 100 patients, were in serious trouble and had to change to survive.

Given the information and knowledge in August, we thought Warren General Hospital could continue to operate for one year, while the new health care program was being designed and established. The State had indicated the time required was twelve to eighteen months. Warren General's situation was far more critical than the Board of Trustees knew. They considered many other options to reduce expenses before they presented the Commissioners with the three final options on Monday. The three options were the result of much discussions and soul searching on their part.

What does this change mean?

1) There will be an interim program for six to nine months with limited services through the emergency room when private doctors offices are closed. The Ambulance Service will be coordinated through the Hospital.

2) There will be a new expanded care program, providing outpatient care with joint specialty clinics with the Health Department and other health providers. Twenty-four hour urgent care will be provided as needed. The quality of health care will be greatly improved; with a wide range of health services serving more citizens at less cost.

3) In both interim and the new expanded health care program, inpatient hospital care will be discontinued.

4) Arrangements will be made with surrounding hospitals to ensure easy access for inpatient care and major medical needs.

The Hospital Trustees and County Commissioners will attempt to clarify and to explain to the citizens and others the details of the change as soon as they are determined.

EVA CLAYTON

Chairperson, Warren County Commissioners

## Closing Authorized

(Continued from page 1)

call system at night" for primary care and minor trauma.

"Other cases would be sent to a more sophisticated medical center," Bernstein said.

His office in late 1983 was called in to assist the Warren General Hospital Task Force, composed of commissioners, hospital officials, and local citizens, in determining what could be done to transform the hospital into a viable health care entity.

After their report last July which indicated that Warren General's days as a full-service hospital were limited, Bernstein's staff was enlisted to conduct a study of alternative modes of health care, such as a geriatric and chronic illness center, outpatient ambulatory service, and joint specialty clinics with county health agencies.

Rural Health's services to the county, which have included providing a hospital administrator during the time of its study, have been free of charge.

Local officials have expressed hope that the General Assembly will assist Warren County in implementing an alternative mode of health care. State Rep. Frank Ballance has told the commissioners that the Legislature might be interested in funding a Warren County project because of its nature as a model for other county hospitals in similar situations.

About 50 concerned citizens were present at Monday's meeting, and seven spoke before the board.

Most expressed concern that the county would be left without emergency room service if the hospital were closed.

Brenda M. Clarke of Warrenton told the board that her family had utilized the services of the emergency room on several occasions "when we could not have gotten to Maria Parham Hospital (in Henderson)."

Ms. Clarke, who sometimes serves as photographer for the Highway Patrol and the Ambulance Service, also expressed concern for accident victims.

"There have been people who wouldn't have made it without Warren General Hospital," she said.

However, a hospital employee, Ms. Candace Miller, expressed support for change.

"Warren General did a great job in its time," she commented. "But if there's any way to make it better, I'm for it all the way."

Dianne Smith, administrator of Warren Nursing Center, lamented the possibility that the hospital might close, but also endorsed the urgent care unit as a "good, viable option."

Dr. R. C. Reinoso, a Charlotte health care finance professional who serves as advisor to the Department of Rural Health, commended the citizenry for their interest in the hospital.

"You're facing exactly the situation other small community hospitals are facing," Dr. Reinoso said. "It will take your continued interest to get into something else. The trap is to continue with what's always been done regardless of the finances."



In the Middle Ages it was believed that wearing a sprig of thyme would increase courage.