

Tenacre History Summary

(Compiled by Wendy Lanning)

The original Main House on the Tenacre Farm was built in the 1800s. It was a poultry farm with an orchard and lots of woods surrounding it. George and Kathryn Barmore became Christian Science practitioners after they bought the farm in early 1913 and they owned the farm at least by the mid- to late-teens. They opened their home from time to time to patients who needed a retreat. The properties around the famous Tenacre Farm were primarily 2- and 3-acre wood lots owned by families with big houses in town. The many fire places in each home needed a constant wood supply. Once central heating was popular, the titles of these lots were forgotten and taxes weren't paid. Apparently the tax assessor sold the lots for the Township to himself (!) until he had acquired about 175 acres for practically nothing. By the time Burwell Harrison got involved, he negotiated with the tax collector's daughter, Mary Pardoe, for 21 acres for \$21,000. But when all was said and done, the parcel had only 17 acres, and she wouldn't correct it. Early in Mr. Harrison's tenure, he said they purchased some road frontage because the Tenacre Farm did not have a driveway on land they owned. Mr. Duffield sold them the land and kept 1.5 acres for his own gardening. Mr. Harrison recalls seeing him out raking the leaves while listening to Princeton football games on the radio. The 1.5 acres was later purchased in the early 60s.

1921 About this time someone brought a private duty nurse for a mental case. [New Jersey teenager, Alberta Fielder, was healed of severe case of polio by her medical nurse reading Science and Health to her and being carried into a lecture held near a shore town. The healing received a lot of newspaper publicity throughout the state. After her healing, she trained as a medical nurse since there was no program for training Christian Science nurses. She first nursed a private patient in a Maryland Christian Science facility (every patient had a private nurse). She came to Tenacre about 1921. The law required that an RN be on the property at all times. She was head nurse until 1933 when she opened her own CS nursing facility in northern NJ. After a few years she moved to Massachusetts and eventually to Concord, NH, and was listed as a Christian Science practitioner. In 1967 she returned to Princeton and lived in an apartment in Palmer Square for more than twenty years. She passed on after a short stay at Tenacre in 1990.]

1926 Mr. Harrison said Tenacre was first incorporated for profit.

1927 Special department added to care for those challenged by mental and emotional challenges; straight jackets were used

State of NJ begins to license facilities under Department of Institutions and Agencies. Existing operations are grandfathered. Thus Tenacre obtains a license as a Mental Hospital (even though it has no medical staff nor medical supervision). Perhaps then or maybe later, part of the facility is also licensed as a Nursing Home and part as a Boarding House.

- 1928** Tenacre is a full-fledged nursing facility, primarily serving Christian Scientists working out mental problems

Tenacre legally organizes as "Tenacre, Incorporated"

Tenacre offers over fifty \$1000 ten-year mortgage bonds to finance building a 14-bed secure facility (wooden frame North Hall?)

- ©**1930** Tenacre sued by former mental patient claiming that the nursing care he'd received hadn't been consistent with the teachings of Christian Science; Tenacre eventually won the suit, but legal expenses left Tenacre insolvent

- 1935 (March 18)** Tenacre reincorporated as "Tenacre Foundation" as a not-for-profit corporation, owned and operated by a board of trustees. The land and buildings were formally donated by the Barmores. The Board was composed of people from Philadelphia. The show of this grand gift was later overshadowed by the Barmores leaving Tenacre during the night in 1938, taking the only cash assets, about \$15,000, and leaving this new board with the debts. The Barmores said this was the money owned them for what they had loaned the organization.

- 1938** Tenacre unable to repay mortgage loans of 10 years earlier and to keep up with current obligations, declares bankruptcy; the Barmores move to Maine. But Tenacre never closes its doors. [At least 9 guests remain, keeping the facility operating and preserving the license.]

The Reorganization

- 1938** Tenacre owed \$62,500 to creditors (the fifty 10-year mortgage bonds and the rest owed to vendors in town). Receiver appointed by court to operate Tenacre and to conserve assets for creditors until disposition could be determined. (Note: Receiver was a pupil of one of the members of The Christian Science Board of Directors. CS Board of Directors took an interest in Tenacre, although they had no jurisdiction over Tenacre; they sent an informal message to the field that steps be taken permitting Tenacre to continue providing its unique services and to repay all debts in full without soliciting funds from the field.)

Several prominent Christian Science teachers and businessmen offer substantial practical assistance, one of whom is Howard Bleakly, C.S.B. and a former attorney. J. Burwell Harrison, one of his pupils, operates a hotel in East Orange, N.J. and assists Mr. Bleakly in various ways.

- 1939 (January)** Mr. Harrison offers to help at Tenacre, and begins commuting on a volunteer basis to help with day-to-day management. Mr. Harrison's parents met in Florida in 1891. She was managing the housekeeping for the 12 hotels owned by Mr. Flagler who owned the Florida East Coast Railway, from Jackson to Key West. His father worked for Mr. Flagler.

(Washington, DC. 1929) He saw Martha as a new girl in the office and Mr. Harrison had his sister who also worked there, to arrange a trip on Saturday and he would drive. It was love at first sight for him. He told his mother the first night he saw her, I am never going to get married, but if I ever do I have found the girl I want to marry. They dated for 5 years and were married in 1934. She was not a Christian Scientist and they agreed not to interfere with each other's religion. But Christian Science is irresistible and she was a perfect candidate.)

(May 19) New Board of Trustees appointed, because Receiver dismissed by court after Mr. Harrison works out plan to pay back all creditors in full. Mr. Harrison begins his work at Tenacre and continues for 50 years. There were 19 guest rooms and 11 employee accommodations.

Over the next few years, Tenacre Trustee Mr. Sykes bought up 36 of the original 50 bonds, often for 10 cents on the dollar. He then gave them all to Tenacre; Tenacre eventually purchased all of the remaining bonds.

1941 The Harrisons move to Tenacre to live in a converted milking barn (Terrace Cottage). The Administration Office is in a converted milk house (building #2). Early on, Mr. Harrison would drive the help to Tenacre from Trenton. He got started by bringing the Italian gardener. He met Jeff Presslaff's grandfather years ago when he would begin the day at 4:00 a.m. at Grigg's restaurant on the corner of Witherspoon and Hulfish. This restaurant served oatmeal which had been simmering all night on an old wood stove. The grandfather was an enterprising young man who had exclusive rights to the print distribution in Princeton. He would meet the early train and get the newspapers to town. He too stopped at this restaurant in the predawn hours.

(July) Began nurses training for those who were not eligible for the Christian Science Benevolent Associations programs -- under 24 and over 42 years of age. Mrs. Emily Moulton Valentine, BA graduate, organized the program of instruction.

1940s Some of the chicken houses were remodeled to serve as nursing guest rooms. A building known as South Hall was renovated to serve those with "physical care" needs. It burned in 1956. South Wing and East Wing of North Hall were then built. Nursing staff were housed in Princeton in rooms rented by Tenacre. Tenacre would also transport the nurses back and forth.

1943 Maurine Mallard (later Gehert) arrives as a new BA graduate. She had worked with Emily Moulton Valentine at the BA and followed her here. The head of the BA was reluctant to make Tenacre's need for nurses known, thinking that this wasn't the place they should be nursing. Miss Mallard later married. She led the instructional program after Mrs. Valentine moved to San Mateo, CA., to start her own retirement home. Mr. Harrison said that at one time Tenacre had the whole 10 students from Mrs. Valentines' nursing class at the BA. He related several instances of how they discouraged nurses from coming here.

1944-45 Mr. Harrison decided to not exercise the military waiver granted those who were in key positions. The draft was beginning to call up married men with children and he and Martha thought it best that he go and save at least one father from going. He was supposed to go in March, but got a delay until August. He left the country on Thanksgiving Day; saw his first combat Christmas eve. They had 121 days of action with no break, considered very long, and this was part of the 'Battle of the Bulge' in Belgium. Mr. Harrison was too old to be trained to be an officer so he was made a sergeant and served in the infantry. Mrs. Harrison managed Tenacre during his absence. Martha Harrison had to carry the heavy bags of chicken feed up to the second floor of Halfway House. After the war, the chickens were all sold.

1945 Purchase of 5 additional acres of land for \$14,500 [Benson Property which included a show horse stable (later known as the Barn)]

Brochure of this period (after West Hall was built, about 1954) stated 'Tenacre School for Christian Science Nurses.' Another similar brochure published before (about 1952), 'Tenacre School for Attendant Nursing' for "qualified Christian Scientists who cannot take nurse's training course at the sanatoriums of the Christian Science Benevolent Association. It is available to physically qualified, experienced CS who will, upon completion of their training, work for a modest fee 'caring for the sick in the home, or the home in sickness.' "

At this time Tenacre consists of more than 12 buildings on an 18 acre estate.

1954 Tenacre contributes \$6,000 towards the cost of a new standpipe to be installed by the Princeton Water Company. NH apartment units added (probably other half of West Wing and Dayroom); Old South Hall demolished to make way for South Wing and East Wing of NH

1956 (May) 17 acres of land purchased from Mrs. Pardoe [now nature trail, Great Road East easement (3 acres), and land on other side of road (10 acres) which was later sold]. Tenacre wants to continue to build and make improvements. Laws require that no more than 10% of property can be built upon or covered with asphalt. The additional land was acquired to keep within that percentage as a whole.

The new kitchen and cafeteria was built with the terrazzo flooring. The whole project was \$100,000.

(June 22) Fire at 7:30 a.m. in frame structures which were part of old North Hall started by a young guest with matches igniting the curtains. Three people perish, one more a day later. The young guest was found walking in the woods. An unrelated suicide in Main House occurred the same morning just before the fire. Five guests lost altogether.

(October) Mr. Barbey's will establishes Tenacre Trust

1957 (July) Social Security coverage begins for staff; (not allowed before this)

1959 Trustee House built for the Harrisons

(March) Betty Jo Hunt arrived (served for 25 years)

(Sept) 1 acre of land purchased from Ethel Meloney (between Red House and Hill House.

Tenacre School recognized by the federal government as a school to which foreign students might be admitted.

1960 **(May)** Eposito property, 3 lots, (1.57 acres with Hill House, 3.54 acres with no buildings, and another piece of land only) for \$42,500. Lots had previously belonged to Walter A. H. Edgar et ux.

(June) Calkins property of 3 acres and Red House is purchased for \$30,000. Tenacre will not take possession of the house until 6/1/76.

1961 **(August)** Duffield property of 1.5 acres and gardening shed (Trustee Office) purchased for \$15,500 (renovated after 1969). Mr. Duffield was a prominent Princetonian. He was head of the Firestone Library.

(Dec) Corner of Stuart and Great Road East of 1.9 acres purchased from Stuart Country Day School for \$18,000 (property cut off from school by new road --Stuart Road)

1960s Garden Apartments (for resident volunteers on life care basis). [Zoning was an issue according to Stuart Robson, tax assessor at this period. He recalls that permission to build was given because we reasoned with the planning board that taxes could be collected from these new properties.] One of the volunteer residents was Mrs. McKnight from Cleveland. When she passed away she left all her funds to Tenacre -- over a million dollars.

New South Hall ('63-'64), Chapel (1966?), and Dining Room (by 1969) built; also Laidlaw (by 1969) and Administrator's house (Gray House & Annex-a prefab unit, by 1969)

When the Chapel was being conceived, Mr. Harrison wanted to build a quanset hut gym like Westminster Choir College had built. At this same time a patient, a young man was at Tenacre. After 6 months, Mr. Harrison asked him to leave, because no progress was seen and the room was needed for others. He had mostly watched TV while here, even though he also had a private nurse. The young man's mother felt that if Tenacre had had recreational facilities her son could have benefitted and been able to stay. Wherefore, she donated \$25,000 towards such facilities. Mr. Harrison and another man drove her son to Michigan where she found a place for him. Mr. Harrison at first withheld the donation saying that he would have to think about what sort of faciities would fit into Tenacre. Then the gym was conceived. The building code also required a bomb shelter be built under this building. When the drawings returned, someone said, you could fit a bowling

alley in there it's so big. Thus the bowling alley became a part of the concept. Mrs. Harrison conceived the benches along the sides. A huge underground tank for emergency water storage was installed. The PA system was incorporated as well.

1964 3.5 acres on other side of road sold to Sheehan for \$6,500.

1965 Realignment of The Great Road (known also as Cedar Grove Road) to form Great Road East

1966 The Mother Church requests Tenacre to join its accreditation program to increase the number of beds as The Mother Church joined the Medicare program; Tenacre is allowed to maintain its unique services to the field

(July) Tenacre is the first Christian Science facility in Medicare program because it is licensed by the state as a hospital and hospitals entered six months before nursing homes

1967 Amended Articles of Incorporation

(April) Tenacre suspends participation in Medicare program pending further study

Christine Cheney and John Irby begin their association with Tenacre

1968 Formal withdrawal by Tenacre's Board of Trustees from Medicare on April 18th

1969 Mr. Harrison appeals for government approval for Conscientious Objector program

(July) Traded 2 acres of property on other side of road for 2 acres of Elmer Timby property on this side of road.

State discontinues licensing Tenacre as a hospital because change from Department of Institutions and Agencies to Department of Health; Dept. of Health says it can't supervise a "house of prayer," so an exemption is written for facilities practicing a system of care by members of a recognized church relying on prayer for healing (See 1972)

1969/70 Tax Reform Act of 1969 and NJ Supreme Court in The Presbyterian Homes of the Snod of NJ v. the Division of Tax Appeals. This was called the Meadowlakes Decision and resulted in our garden apartments (four garden apartment buildings and Laidlaw House on ten acres of land) being taxed, because they were viewed as not necessary to the main purpose of Tenacre, still licensed as a hospital and nursing home.

(Dec) Sold 6.8 acres on other side of road to Woodward for \$65,000.

1970 **(June)** Agreement with Township that 10 acres of land along this side of Great Road East remain as "green space" in exchange for reduced tax levied to pay for installation of sewer along new Great Road East which Tenacre was not intending to use anyway. Easement along The Great Road because of road improvements, around curves by New

Tenacre building.

1970-73 Building projects: South Hall Extension (1972), North Wing (1971), and Edgewood (finished 1972) which represents Mr. Harrison's vision of Christian Science nurses devoting their lives to ministering and having a sense of home. Until this time, most Christian Science nurses are single and live at the facility in dormitory-style accommodations. Original wooden structures of North Hall called Front Corridor are removed and addition to West Wing of North Hall (sewing room, laundry room, and nursing director's offices) is built (1974?).

Early 1970s Residential program and life-care agreement (in Garden Apartments) no longer advertised. Apartments are devoted to rest and study as they become available. Some longer term arrangements are still made into the mid 1980s, but with no life-care obligations. The last guest to leave with a life-care agreement was Berdilla Smith who arrived in January 1976 and passed away January, 1994.

1971 New nurses training program (the "tuition program") instituted by The Mother Church; Tenacre becomes an arm of this program--having both a School of Christian Science Nursing and an OJT (on-the-job training) site. Tenacre School of Institutional Administration (under John Wagenseil) began with Daniel Finlay as first student.

Brochure states 95 guest accommodations and 263 rooms overall in 33 buildings

Guest rooms

24 – North Hall	14 - SH (including lower floor)
11 – North Wing	10 - Garden apartments
14 – South Hall Extension	3 - Laidlaw
16 – West Hall	=====
	92 (3 more?)
Staff buildings:	
Main House - 8	PO - 10
Building #3a - 2	Building #5 – 2 (Terrace Cottage)
Barn - 20	Dorm - 5 (Archway upstairs, downstairs)
New Tenacre - 8	Hill House - 7
Gray House – 1	Gray House Annex - 3
Trustee House - 2	Edgewood - 20
Brook House - 1	Halfway House - 5 (4 upstairs, 1 downstairs)
	=====
	94 staff units

Stouffer's Food Service is used

Harry Zollars is Director of Operations

1972 (April) State Institutions and Agencies state that Tenacre would no longer be licensed or inspected. The statute containing exemption is entitled, The New Jersey State Health Care Facilities Planning Act, 1971, 26:2H-1 et seq. saying that institutions operated by and for those relying on prayer were excluded from the licensing procedure. Tenacre learned this when dealing with a matter pertaining to State standards in the building program going on.

1972-1980 Development Center produces audio-visual aids to unite all facilities under the "tuition program" of nurses training; Tenacre's Board donates cost of this program to The Mother Church and the field and engages many in the project

1974 Sunroom added to West Hall
Main Laundry in Service Area is built.

Further Unfoldments

1978? ARA replaces Stouffer's

1979 Addition to Administration offices is built

1980 Swimming pool and platform tennis court are built
John Irby appointed President of Tenacre; Burwell Harrison continues as Resident Trustee

1981 Discontinued ARA Food Service and went in-house with own chef

Architecture Department formed. (Jeff Hildner)

Apartments added to each of the three wings of Edgewood

1982/83 Building and expansion of cafeteria; midway a fire damaged renovations leading to rethinking and ultimate expansion of cafeteria. Staff ate outside under a tent for the summer and then in shifts in the "Round Dining Room" until the cafeteria was completed in the spring of 1983.

1983/84 New Tenacre renovated

Post Office staff rooms redecorated

1985 (March) Barn damaged by fire; demolished

Mid-1980s Extensive field nursing program developed (Miss LaRoche; then Lois Herr)

1986 Brook House renovated for architect's use--greenhouse replaced with room

1987 Building of the Center; finished March 1988

- 1989** Mission Statement, ministry statement, guiding ideals of Christian Science nursing at Tenacre, developed by staff and adopted by Board and Staff
- 1989** State revisits licensing requirement. An 18-month study and search for proper license ensues
- 1990-1992** Tenacre purchases four homes across Great Road from the main property to provide houses for management staff, after renovation
- Jan., 1990: 970 The Great Road purchased, house and 9.2 acres, from Mrs. Jay for \$675,000.
- June, 1990: 920 The Great Road purchased, house and 0.41 acres, from Rafael Sharon (previous owner Mr. and Mrs. Cherry) for \$225,000.
- June, 1990: 940 The Great Road purchased, house and 1.37 acres, also from Mr. Sharon (previous owner Mr. and Mrs. Leigh) for \$395,000.
- August, 1992: 1002 The Great Road purchased house and 1.62 acres from Mr. and Mrs. John Harper for \$425,000.
- 1991** The Mother Church withdraws from accrediting nurses training program. Tenacre School of Christian Science Nursing continues to offer courses to students.
- " Tenacre begins to offer Bible-related courses to students of Christian Science who may not be interested in Christian Science nursing
- " Mr. and Mrs. Harrison move to California
- " **(Sept)** Christine Irby appointed President following the unexpected passing of John Irby
- " Remodeling of North Hall completed
- " Decision to license Tenacre under the Department of Community Affairs (DCA) as a Christian Science Facility under Rooming and Boarding House regulations
- 1992** Garden Apartment utilization revisited; concepts re: residential program discussed at Board level
- 1993** Staff-wide focus on ethics for the year
- 1994** Staff-wide focus on Tenacre's mission and ministry for the year
- " West Hall closed, then demolished, due to fire regulations requiring installation of sprinkler system, as well as other necessary renovations. Halfway House also demolished.
- " Efforts begun to engage staff in greater exercise of stewardship, individual responsibility; Stewardship Committee begun; all resources examined from standpoint of more effective

utilization

- " New Views summer program implemented with short seminars and programs on weekends for Christian Scientists (grew out of 1991 decision to offer Bible programs to the field)
- " Video equipment purchased; computer network installed
New telephone system and public address cabling throughout property
- " Decision to reactivate residential program in Garden Apartments on a new basis—
“Christian Scientists-in-Residence”

1995 (July) 884 The Great Road purchased from Mr. and Mrs. Paul Vander Griff

Tenacre Head Nurses

1938 - 1949	Ruth Hulse
1958	Martha Reynolds
1959 - 1969	Olive LaRoche (by 1970 was Director of Services)
	Kathryn Helm
1970 - 11/76	Lynn Whitney
11/76 - 2/77	Betty Hunt (Director, Nursing Services & Education)
2/77 - 9/78	Sheila Geier (")
9/78 - 4/84	Betty Hunt (Director of Nursing)
4/84 - 9/ 88	Wendy Lanning
6/87 - 5/95	Faye Uhlig
5/95 -	Jeanne Ross (Nursing Services Manager)
	Laura Middleton (Director, Christian Science Nursing Department)
	Caroleen Bunting
	Andrew Love

Directors of Tenacre's School of Christian Science Nursing

1941	Emily Moulton (Valentine)
1945	Maurine Mallard (Gehret)
1970	Mr. J. B. Barton
	John Wagenseil
1975 - 2/77	Betty Jo Hunt
2/77 - 9/78	Sheila Geier
9/81	Wendy Lanning
	Beatrice Hastings
	Christine Irby (Williams)

9/91-1995?

Cynthia Love
Laura Middleton
Griff Henninger
Caroleen Scholet (aka Caroleen Bunting)
Tina Bilhorn