

A BRIEF HISTORY OF
ANDHRA MEDICAL COLLEGE
and
KING GEORGE HOSPITAL

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The story of King George Hospital, from its humble beginning in 1845, exactly 150 years ago till to-day is full of episodes of pathos, hurdles, disappointments, surges of growth, achievements, fame, phases of inactivity and disillusionment.

A civil dispensary existed in 1845 catering to the needs of the people of Visakhapatnam. A Hospital was built in 1857 at a total cost of Rs. 17,200/-. The Government gave Rs.6,975/- as its contribution and the rest was raised by way of contributions from the local gentlemen. The local Zamindar Sri A.V.Jagga Rao took an active part. There was a record, showing purchase of 30 iron cots, probably implying this was a 30 bedded hospital. The probable site was the present Anatomy and Physiology buildings area. An amount of Rs.50/- P.M. was given as a grant by the Govt. for the expenditure. During 1863-64, the Government threatened to withdraw this grant of Rs.50/- P.M. promising only supply of medicines and the hospital faced a definite threat of closure. It was the benevolent Maharajah of Vizianagaram who came forward with a munificent grant of Rs. 1000/- in Government Securities and rescued the hospital by his magnanimity. He was the sole patron of the Hospital till 1875. During this period a hospital management committee was formed with the District Collector as the President and the District Medical & Sanitary Officer as Hon'y. Secretary. The Maharajah visited the Hospital many times during this decade and evinced keen interest. From 1875 onwards the Municipality and the local fund associations gave a contribution of Rs.200/-PM. This along with the interest from the Government securities deposited by the Maharajah of Vizianagaram, which was Rs.23,200/- by then, and the sale proceeds of the medicines took care of the Hospital, maintenance. There was a cryptic remark in 1880 that "doing operations in the verandah is neither good for the patient nor the doctor" and mention was made about the urgent need for the construction of a separate room. Records of 1883 showed there were between 11-17 in-patients and about 100 out patients. The yearly turn over of major operations was between 40-50. By 1898 there were about 48 in-patients

and the out patients were between 150-200. The beginning of the 20th Century saw a flurry of activity in the Expansion. The year 1900 saw building of cottages for "caste" in-patients, wards for the Europeans and also an out-patient department. In the year 1902 permission was accorded for the starting of a Medical School for licentiate course under the leadership of Major Vickers and his staff.

The school buildings were situated far away in the present old post office and Government Queen Mary's School. Surgeon General Browne was so impressed by the teaching in the medical school, he made a special mention about the good work of Dr. Chandrasekhara Mudaliar and the microscopic work of Dr. Keshav Pai in 1904. The kind hearted Maharani Sri Godey Chitti Janakamma Garu of Chemudu Estate provided the needed funds for the Medical School building, to be built close to the hospital for the convenience of the students and the foundation stone was laid on 20.2.1905 by HON'BLE Hon'ble Arthur Oliver Villiers, Baron Ampthill G.C.I.E., Governor of Madras. The period from 1904-1909 saw a growth in the bed strength of the hospital from 54 to 83 and also the annual expenditure from Rs.13,012/- to Rs. 17,097/-. The medical school building was completed and ready for occupation at the present Anatomy building site by 1910. Sensing the importance of the hospital and the growing demand and popularity, surgeon General Smyth observed "the sandy hill above the present hospital would be a good place for a new hospital", indeed prophetic. The popularity can be gauged by the figures which say that 746 operations were done that year under the superb guidance of Major Faulks, and 205 of these were done on patients coming from other districts. Hospital was brought under the administrative control of the District Medical Officer. The dispute regarding the ownership of the site was ratified by the Government in 1913 and the ownership was vested with the Hospital management committee. The details of the hospital are as follows :

a) Main hospital building had six wards, operating room, septic

became an extension of the Obst. & Gyn., Department to house the library, Lecture Hall and P.G. Students of the Department.

The necessity of a blood Bank was recognised by the early forties due to the increasing surgical work and also the 2nd World War and a blood bank was opened under the charge of an Asst. Surgeon in the area which is now occupied by Orthopaedic Theatre.

On 17.05.1948, the foundation stone was laid for a new building by Col.S.L.Bhatia, IMS., Surgeon General of the Govt.of Madras, for the new administrative Block (between the surgical and Medical Wards) in the ground floor, twin operation theatres in the first floor and 18 special rooms in the 2nd floor, which was completed by 1951.

On 12.12.1949 the foundation stone was laid for Bhavanagar Block by Sri Sir. Krishna Kumarsinhji of Bhavanagar, Governor of Madras with a bed strength of 100 for General Medical patients, sick nurses and psychiatry cases. On 20.8.1955 the Rajendra Prasad ward was declared open by H.E.Hon'ble Sri Babu Rajendra Prasad, the first President of our country, for General Medical patients with a bed strength of 120. On 18.1.1956 the Paediatric ward with a total bed strength of 120 (80 for paediatric Medical and 40 for paediatric Surgical patients) was declared open by Rajakumari Amrut Kaur, Union Minister of Public Health. On 26.9.56 the Institute of Gynaecology & Obstetrics was declared open by Smt. Chandrasekhar, Union Deputy Minister for Health. A major re-organisation of patients took place about this time with the addition of these new blocks to King George Hospital. Two super specialities were also added, namely Cardio-Thoracic Surgery with a bed strength of 44 and, Neurology & Neuro Surgery with a bed strength of 28 in 1956. A separate Operation Theatre was got ready for these specialities and was called Ebden theatre. Extensions were made to the OP Block to house the Gynaec & Obstetrics OPs, Ophthalmic OP and ENT on one side; Paediatric, Dermatology and Venereology on the other side. The Urology Department was started in 1969.

From 1956 onwards the growth in the Hospital was mainly reorganisation and establishment of the super specialities. The surgical specialities took the marching lead with Orthopaedics, Cardio-Thoracic Surgery and Neuro

Surgery followed by Urology. It was in 1971, one medical unit was converted into the Cardiology Department with a bed strength of 24 followed by the establishment of Neurology on 31st December, 1976. The Eighties saw the establishment of various other specialities like Nuclear Medicine, Radio-therapy, Gastroenterology, Nephrology, Endocrinology, Traumatology and Plastic Surgery which has recently been expanded to house a separate burns ward under its wings.

The Growth in the bed strength of King George Hospital in the century is as follows:

83 beds	—	1913
192 beds	—	1923
342 beds	—	1933
348 beds	—	1936
432 beds	—	1941
531 beds	—	1943
700 beds	—	1946
793 beds	—	1953
947 beds	—	1955
983 beds	—	1956
1033 beds	—	1958
1037 beds	—	1995.

The only two new buildings that are added in the last four decades are those of the Cardiology and Nuclear Medicine, while all others are only modifications or extensions. The role played by the Coastal Andhra Heart Foundation and BARC is laudable. The growth of the specialities in the last two decades, though a boon to the patients has been the bane of the Major Specialities of General Medicine & General Surgery whose units and beds are nibbled away. It is highly desirable to have a superspeciality block separately to house all these specialities which then would permit proper organisation of the facilities and future expansion. Plans are with the Govt. and a favourable outcome is fondly awaited.

The turn of century heralded the beginning of numerous changes in the Hospital set up and it is fondly hoped, similar events would take place from now onwards to resuscitate this doddering old giant with a hoary past and a glorious tradition.

We had a talented batch of students in our class. There used to be songsters like Sivadayal, Sivaraman, Feroze Begum, Venkataramana and others. We had plenty of dramatic talent in B. Krishna Murthi, N.S. Subrahmanyam, Sivaraman, T.S. Chakravarti and others. The last named i.e. T.S. Chakravarti was also a good artist. An oil portrait of Potti Sriramulu still adorns the dining hall in men's hostel.

In the year 1955 we had our 1st MBBS exams and for a number of reasons which now appear to be not good enough I was unsuccessful in Anatomy. It was a setback to me personally and to my family. For 3 days I confined myself to my room sobbing, only coming out to take my lunch.

All my classmates left for their homes and one kind senior cajoled me. He advised me to go home for a week and come back and study regularly for a fixed time every day. This advice was particularly helpful to me.

The first clinical year is the most enjoyable and care free period in a medical students career. In those days there was a lot of sports activity. I secured a good racket and joined the tennis club. Many teachers used to come to the playground for a game of tennis in the evenings. It was one place where teachers and students used to come together. We had many outstanding sportsman at that time. Special mention has to be made about my classmate S.V. Ramana Rao (Popularly known as 'TAMATI'). He was a brilliant footballer. His special merit was to train others and he built up a strong team for Andhra Medical College. In those days there was severe competition from Andhra University colleges foot ball team which was captained by B. Bapiraju who was also a friend of mine. One afternoon our college played with them and our team was leading by 2-1 and was expecting to win. The referee unexpectedly awarded two penalties against us and our college was defeated by 2-3. There was fierce argument and we hurled choicest curses against the opponents

before returning back to the hostel. In those days the newspaper Hindu used to publish a weekly "Sport and pastime" the reading of which was a must for all students. In one issue "Tamati's" photo was published on the cover page which was considered as a rare honour. Immediately we purchased all available copies in the town. We could get about 10 copies and asked "Tamati" to give his autograph on every copy as a memento. He was very much pleased.

We had several eminent teachers. While it is not possible to name every one of them several outstanding figures come to mind. There was Dr. Sitaramarao Prof. Of Anatomy who could speak fluently for hours, we used to call him "Walking Gray". In Physiology we had the teacher of teachers Dr. P. Brahmayya Sastry, Dr. M.V. Ramana Murthy who retired as director of medical services joined as Hony. Professor of Surgery used to be very methodical. He used to carry a pocket book with all our names and used to call us individually. Then there was Dr. H.M. Lazarus who was considered as an angel among human beings. Dr. D. Govinda Reddy who was principal, could put any student at ease with his ready wit and easy grace. We had eminent professors of Surgery like Dr. M. Krishna Murthy. He was a great scholar and had a passion for correct English 'Can I have another pair of scissors', he used to say when he wanted one scissors. Dr. Shanmukeshwararao was master craftsman. We final year students were given opportunity to wash up and assist him. His operations were just as mentioned in Treves "Operative Surgery". Dr. L. Suryanarayana was the other professor. He was also warden Men's Hostel. I was a mess secretary for one term and he always gave us a free hand. We had a ward party one evening in the Lawsons Bay which was a picnic spot in those days. Dr. Gowranga Rao Chief Anaesthetist carried the day with his very funny experiences. In the department of Gynaecology we were under the spell of that brilliant orator Dr. N.
