

# Dialog

Continuing the ministries of The Lutheran Home at Topton,  
Tressler Lutheran Services, and LWS of Northeastern Pennsylvania

SPRING 2002  
Volume 3, Number 1

## Luther Crest resident

Consummate journalist,  
now teacher covered WWII front lines

He calls it a career that “happened quite by accident,” but the profession of print journalism would be a little less notable had Graham Hovey taken any other path.

Whether reporting from the fifty-yard line or a war’s front line, Hovey brought balance and a distinctive viewpoint to his lifetime of writing.

A native of Iowa, and now a resident of Diakon’s Luther Crest Retirement Community in Allentown, Pa., Hovey spent decades keeping tabs on national and international events.

“I’ve been lucky,” says Hovey, “often being in the right place at the right time. I had fine teachers, one of whom became my ‘conscience’ in journalism.”

After graduating from the University of Minnesota in 1938 with a bachelor’s degree in journalism, he cut his news teeth as a sports stringer and, eventually, general reporter for the Daily Courier in Waterloo, Iowa. Hovey then penned copy for an international wire service and a number of other news publications, and went on to serve as a member of the editorial board of The New York Times. Several stints in academia round out a full and distinguished career.

In today’s America, however, one part of his career invokes special interest.

### Breaking in as the country is on the brink of war

In the beginning, Hovey moved where the job took him. And when he signed on with International News Service in 1940, he moved a lot . . . Detroit; Kansas City; Dallas; Tulsa, where he was bureau chief; Chicago, where he was Midwest sports editor; and finally New York, covering the foreign desk.

From this post, he began a two-and-a-half-year tour at the front lines of World War II.

While Hovey had kept  
*Please see Page 7*



*President’s Dialog*  
Page 2



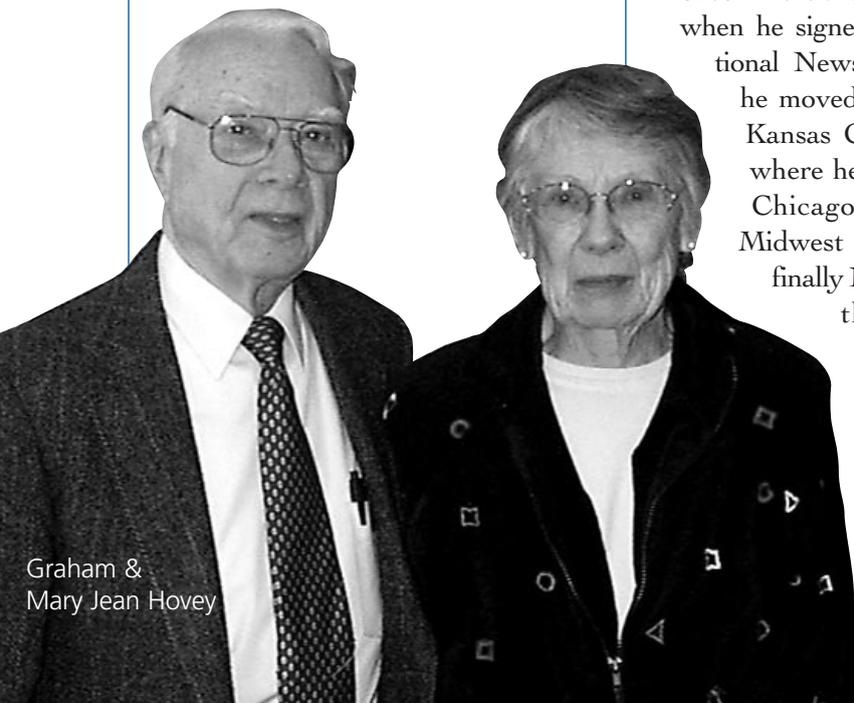
*A wedding dream*  
Page 3



*Regional news*  
Pages 4-5



*9/11 respite care*  
Page 6



Graham &  
Mary Jean Hovey

# A new initiative keeps us on track

We spent the latter half of last year engaged in a plan critical to the continuing success of our ministry.

We developed our “turn-around” plan to meet significant financial challenges caused by such factors as tight reimbursement rates in the health-care industry, increased competition, and a lack of standardized staffing patterns.

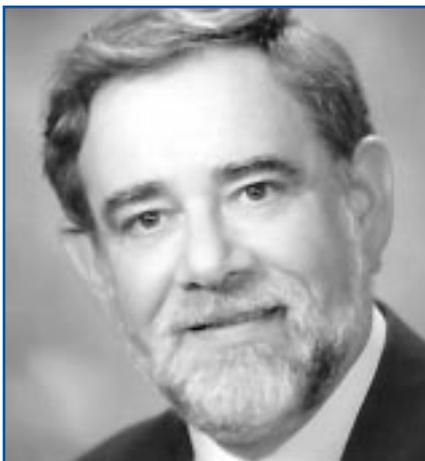
**We set two primary goals:**

- Retirement and Health Care Services must be cash flow positive on a monthly basis by the end of 2001.
- Diakon’s operations in 2002 and beyond must generate revenue sufficient to meet operational requirements and provide the capital to pay debts and keep our facilities top-of-the-line.

**Among the steps we took to meet these challenges were:**

- A hiring freeze within most parts of the agency and the elimination of more than 140 positions as we standardized staffing. In addition to changes in Retirement & Health Care Services, administrative positions were eliminated, including those of three vice presidents. It’s critical to note that we did not reduce direct-care hours. Our commitment to quality care remains uncompromised.
- The closing of several Congregation, Children, and Family Services programs that have generated large deficits for years (and which offered services similar to those provided by others).
- A rate increase for some services and an increased focus on documenting all the services we provide.
- The outsourcing of the house-keeping/laundry and dietary departments at all retirement campuses.

These steps were not easy to take. We understand they affected



The Rev. Daun E. McKee,  
Ph.D., President/CEO

## *the President’s Dialog*

lives, but our plan was designed to impact negatively the fewest number of people possible. The alternative was to jeopardize the organization and the care of all those we serve. It was critical, our board directed, that we focus on preservation of a 130-year-old ministry that changes the lives of more than 40,000 persons annually.

I’m extremely pleased to report that we have begun to reach our goals. Diakon is now on track to meet our financial needs, including the generation of funds to pay loan debts, accumulate financial resources to upgrade facilities, and replace resources we had to use from Diakon’s reserves.

Of course, there remains much to do. We must fine-tune our standardized staffing patterns, expand our rehabilitation department, and stay on target with our efforts to build census in all programs as well

as to generate new revenue from operations and fund development.

Yes, we have made progress—significant progress—and I and our board of directors are pleased with the manner in which everyone in Diakon has worked to meet these challenges.

**There’s an even more positive aspect to 2001.**

*Our uncompensated care and service last year amounted to more than \$19 million, including:*

- The cost to care for residents on Medical Assistance beyond government reimbursement.
- Subsidized care for those in assisted or residential living who no longer have the resources to pay fully for care or service.
- Congregation, Children, and Family Services (CCFS) program expenses beyond revenue as well as Diakon Lutheran Fund grants to those programs.

We are proud of the fact we do not discharge residents whose financial resources are no longer able to pay the full cost of care. And we are equally proud that we offer programs for children and families who might not otherwise be served.

However, we also recognize that \$19 million in uncompensated care is not a figure we can sustain for long without significant financial support from individuals, congregations, and the community. Your generous support in the past has enabled us to offer such care in 2001.

Your future support of this vital ministry is even more critical now. Thank you for your concern, your prayers, and your support.



The Rev. Daun E. McKee, Ph.D.  
President/CEO

# A wedding dream...

Every mother dreams of the day a son or daughter will marry. Melvina Hutchison of Allentown almost missed that opportunity, but thanks to Hospice Saint John, she was able to attend her daughter's wedding.

"We received a lot of help from hospice staff," says that daughter, Earlene Daddona. "They were very good to us and helped to make it all possible."

Diagnosed with cancer earlier in the year, Mrs. Hutchison saw her doctor in September and was given just three weeks to live. "We were planning to have the wedding sometime in 2002, but because of my mother's health, we moved the wedding up so that she could be there," says Daddona.

Mrs. Hutchison's physician suggested they look into Hospice Saint John. "He made all the

arrangements for us," says Daddona. "He contacted them and the very next day we got a call from Hospice Saint John. They set up an appointment and told us about the services they provide."

HSJ Staff Nurse Janet Rich was Mrs. Hutchison's primary nurse, though other Hospice Saint John staff members helped to care for her. "She really wanted to see her daughter get married. I'm so glad she was able to do that because it meant so much to her," says Rich.

"They were all very helpful," notes Daddona. "We never had to go to doctor visits. The nurses would call the doctors and ask them to call the pharmacies to get prescriptions or to get the prescriptions changed. The medicine was then delivered to the apartment. The nursing aides would come to the apartment to bathe my mother."

Hospice Saint John helped to make possible Mrs. Hutchison's wish to attend her daughter's wedding by assisting with care before and during the event, which Daddona and her husband, Tony, had moved to their home.

"The nurse brought her out to the living room in her wheelchair," says Mrs. Daddona. "She was very happy to be there. She kept telling the nurse that before she died she wanted to see us get married."

While she witnessed the wedding on Oct. 2, Mrs. Hutchison unfortunately took a turn for the worse later in the day. A week later, the 72-year-old passed away.

"I am so grateful that I got to spend those last couple months with my mom," says Mrs. Daddona. "I am so thankful for all of Hospice Saint John's help. They were very supportive of us as they took care of my mother. We couldn't have done it without their help." †



With the help of Hospice Saint John, the late Melvina Hutchison was able to fulfill her dream of attending her daughter's wedding.



**Mission:** In response to God's love in Jesus Christ, Diakon Lutheran Social Ministries will demonstrate God's command to love the neighbor through acts of service.

Diakon serves some 40,000 persons annually in Pennsylvania, Maryland, and Delaware through adoption, foster care, refugee services, volunteer home care, retirement villages, housing accommodations, congregational ministries, hospice services, and more.

## Board of Directors

The Rev. Philip S. Bendle III  
Emried D. Cole, Jr., Esq.  
Lynn Cromley  
Jack H. Dreibelbis  
Alan B. Graf  
Dorothea Henry  
Robert Hobaugh, Jr., Esq.  
Peter L. Kern

The Rev. Wayne Muthler  
William Plavcan, M.D.  
Mitchell G. Possinger  
Debra Price  
J. Douglas Price  
Dr. James Raun  
Cecile Reid  
The Rev. Luther H. Routté  
Susan T. Schellenberg  
Susan Ebbert Wambaugh

Dialog is published quarterly by Diakon Lutheran Social Ministries.

William Swanger, APR  
V.P., Corp. Communications  
*Editor*  
(717) 795-0307  
swangerb@diakon.org

Diakon Lutheran  
Social Ministries  
One South Home Avenue  
Topton, PA 19562  
1-888-582-2230

[www.diakon.org](http://www.diakon.org)

# For these youths, it's 'hip' to be square

## *I Won't Be Left Behind*

By Brittany

I run my fastest,  
but still get beat.  
I land on my head,  
when I should be on my feet.  
I try to move forward,  
but I'm stuck in rewind.  
Why do I keep trying?  
I won't be left behind.  
The harder I'm thrown,  
the higher I bounce.  
I give it my all,  
and that's what counts.  
In first place,  
myself I seldom find.  
So I push to the limit,  
I won't be left behind.  
Some people tell me you  
can't,  
some say don't,  
some simply give up,  
I reply I won't.  
The power is here,  
locked away in my mind.  
I will reach excellence,  
I won't be left behind.  
So try to make the best of  
each moment,  
the future is soon the past.  
The more I tell myself this,  
the less I come in last.  
Throughout my competition,  
I've learned what winning's  
about.  
A clear and simple lesson,  
giving up is the easy way out.  
So every night before I go  
to bed,  
I hope in a small way I have  
shined.  
Tomorrow is a brand new day,  
and I won't be left behind.

**B**rittany, a 13-year-old from Harrisburg, Pa., says that learning about self-respect is the reason she's waiting until marriage to have sex.

She is just one of the hundreds of children and adolescents served by Diakon Lutheran Social Ministries' sexual-abstinence programs, operated by Community Ministries in Harrisburg and Reading.

The programs employ unique ideas to encourage young people to wait until marriage. Using summer camps, writing contests, and focused activities, the sexual-abstinence programs seem to be getting through to kids.

"I really feel like young males" put a lot of pressure on girls, says Brittany. "It's disrespectful for boys to talk about sex to girls. You just have to be more assertive and express your beliefs . . . to say no."

Attending abstinence programs since the age of 10, Brittany has learned that writing about her feelings helps to combat peer pressure by building self-esteem. She has won several writing competitions including one offered by Diakon.

"I write a lot now. I guess I didn't write before because I was into the 'friends' thing and didn't do things because other people did or didn't do them. I decided to do what I wanted and entered a contest. I thrive on competition. I love when people try to intimidate me," she proclaims. "It never works!"

The programs' former director, the Rev. Nathaniel J. Gadsden, says teaching self-esteem and leadership skills is the cornerstone to helping kids learn it's okay to say no.

"We instill personal goal-setting, a sense of responsibility, and a purpose in one's life by introducing them to this program," said Gadsden. "We go beyond abstinence to discuss

leadership and refusal skills because a lot of young people feel that they can't say no and if they do, people will think they're square. We tell them that it's better to get on the right track . . . it's 'hip' to be square." That approach has worked for Brittany.

"I've gotten so much from the program. My uncle reminds me that when I think I can't do anything, I have a lot, a lot of potential, a lot of stuff that can just burst out—I have a huge imagination," she says.

The Harrisburg site introduced its first sexual-abstinence summer camp two years ago, featuring community speakers and exercises to demonstrate the importance of waiting. Group discussions tackled topics such as sexual values and attitudes, the value of close parental or guardian relationships and education in making the decision to wait, and media messages.

Brittany knows first-hand that



Brittany shares her book of poetry with another



not saying “no” can lead to desperate situations.

“I know a girl who is 14 and pregnant. I feel bad for her and I wonder how she is going to have that kid. How is she going to take care of it?”

Many youths in the two programs come from single-parent households, Gadsden says. “Many inner-city young people don’t have the support that they should have, especially if they have kids. We give them a way to say no. We know we’re not going to stop everybody, but we also know that the program works and that more young people will hear us and take us seriously and participate and . . . maybe we’ll cut down on teen pregnancies, abusive situations, and abandonment.” †



student in the abstinence program.

## Seniors off to the slopes

Most people may think that skiing is a rigorous sport, but for Dick Mosser and other seniors who frequent the senior centers in Berks County, Pa., it is just one more way to lead a full life.

Mosser was instrumental in forming the “Seasoned Sliders,” a new downhill skiing group for older adults.

“We got the idea from the senior centers’ bicycle-riding group called the Seasoned Spokes,” says Mosser. “When we got to November and it was too cold for biking, we decided to ski.”

The group was unable to meet for a good portion of the early winter because of the warm weather, but had been looking forward to skiing early this year.

The outdoor activity is an excellent one for older persons, says Karen Gottschall, regional manager for the Active Older Adult Program operated through the senior centers, which are sponsored by Diakon’s The Lutheran Home at Topton.

“Not only does it provide an excellent exercise and fitness opportunity, but it also offers a chance for folks to do a fun activity with people their own age,” she says. “Many of our group members participate because of the friendships they’ve made. They come to see their friends and at the same time, are getting fit.”

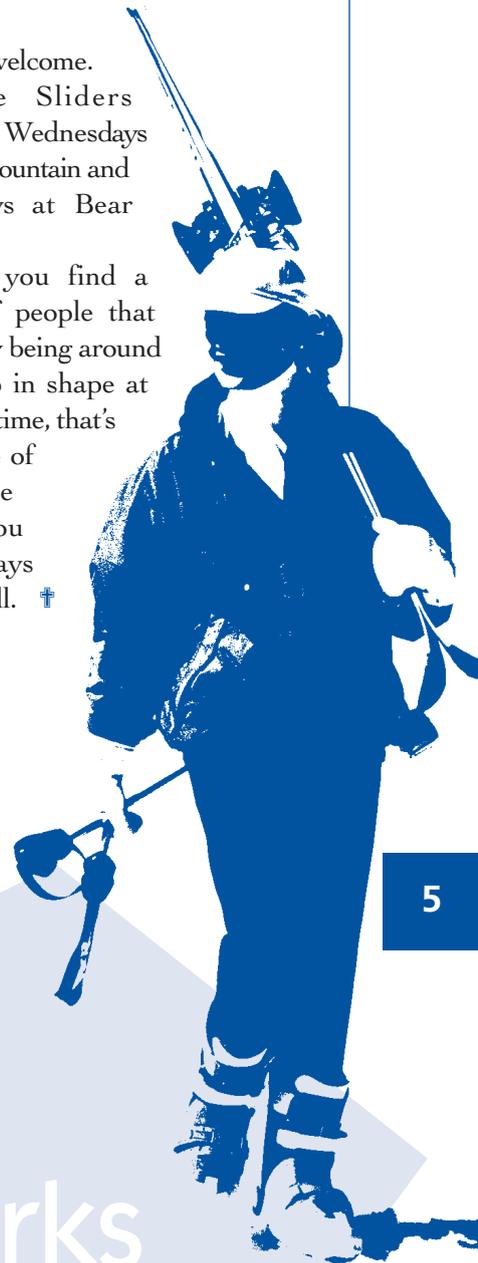
Mosser has been an avid skier for more than 30 years and regularly competes through the American Ski Racing Alliance.

“I’ve been racing for two years now and haven’t gotten anything less than a gold medal,” he notes. But you don’t have to be an expert skier to be a part of this group. Lessons are not offered, but any older person with an interest in

skiing is welcome.

The Sliders meet on Wednesdays at Blue Mountain and Thursdays at Bear Creek.

“If you find a group of people that you enjoy being around and keep in shape at the same time, that’s the name of the game when you retire!” says Gottschall. †



5

## Berks

For more information on the Seasoned Sliders skiing group, readers may contact Mosser at (610) 777-0288. For information on other activities and programs offered by the Berks senior centers sponsored through Diakon, people may call (484) 358-2160.

## Respite, renewal offered in 9/11 wake

**I**n the wake of Sept. 11, Lutheran pastors across the nation have reached out to support their congregations, helping them to cope with grief, fear, and doubt. Nowhere has their task been more challenging than in New York and New Jersey.

Thanks to a unique program headquartered on the campus of The Lutheran Home at Topton, congregations from the Northeastern Pennsylvania Synod are now offering relief to such church professionals.

Funded by a Lutheran Disaster Response grant, Respite and Renewal Ministries is organizing congregations to offer relief for New York and New Jersey church professionals and their families.

Such respite is important in the wake of large-scale disasters.

For example, after the bombing of the Oklahoma City Federal building in 1995, a large number of local pastors and church professionals suffered from a variety of stress-related health problems. Some of them left the ministry. Officials believe they spent so much time helping their congregations that they did not take time to care for themselves.

Thus the goal of Respite and Renewal Ministries is to “take care of our primary caregivers, and make sure that our pastors do not become victims of this tragedy,” says the Rev. Cindy Camp, coordinator.

Camp is originally from New York and was personally affected by the tragedy when she lost a family member, a New York City firefighter, in the collapse of the Twin Towers. She was on leave to spend time with her young family when the call

came to head the new ministry, but she quickly accepted the post, knowing that God had given her an opportunity to make a difference in the face of disaster.

Some 20 congregations have already volunteered respite and renewal opportunities, with many more working to arrange opportunities ranging from donating time at a congregation member’s vacation home to sponsoring pastors on church retreats.

Equally important has been providing volunteer pastors to conduct services for congregations while their pastors are on respite leave. In fact, more than a dozen pastors have provided respite since Christmas.

Camp says pastors are only now beginning to seek respite or renewal, because most believed it was essential for them to be with their congregations during Advent. For similar reasons, she expects a surge in demand for respite and renewal opportunities after Easter.

The Lutheran Disaster Response grant for Respite and Renewal Ministries ends in October, after which the program will be reviewed. Given the long-term effects of such tragedy, Camp expects some level of respite care to still be needed.

“By giving congregations in Pennsylvania a way to help their neighbors in New York and New Jersey, Respite and Renewal Ministries offers a unique opportunity to strengthen bonds within the church and among congregations” to reach out to those in special need. †

*“take care of  
our primary  
caregivers, and  
make sure  
that our  
pastors do  
not become  
victims of  
this tragedy”*

The Rev. Cindy Camp,  
coordinator

*If you would like to support these respite and renewal opportunities, call Diakon’s advancement office at 1-888-582-2250, ext. 1219.*



## Luther Crest resident reflects on storied journalism career

*Continued from cover*

his hand in sports reporting, he had a special interest in world politics and U.S. foreign policy and would later go on to earn a master's degree in political science. During the war years, this understanding served him well, as he covered French and Italian politics. But it was from his vantage point as a front-line correspondent that he was really able to bring the war home.

"The Japanese invasion of Pearl Harbor the previous December had brought an end to my sports writing," Hovey explains, "and after I moved to the foreign desk in the New York bureau, I jumped at the chance to go to Europe. I shipped out of Charleston, South Carolina, on May 25, 1942."

Hovey shares story after story of his wartime experiences. He met generals—Dwight Eisenhower, George Patton, Omar Bradley—and legendary war correspondents such as Ernie Pyle and Boots Norgaard, but was most awed by the everyday greatness of the average GI.

"These were the guys with the stories to tell," he notes.

Hovey reported first-hand on many significant events of World War II, including the battle of Kasserine Pass; the German surrender in Africa on May 9, 1943; the siege of Monte Cassino; the breakout at Anzio; the liberation of Rome; the invasion of the French Riviera; and the campaign in the Rhone Valley.

In Africa, without access to the radio signal he customarily used to transmit his reports, Hovey even attempted delivery by carrier pigeon. He later learned the pigeon never reached its destination.

Hovey recalls dates, places, and peoples' names with textbook clarity, suggesting that he has never stopped being a reporter. His war coverage ended, though, when the INS wanted to send him to Brazil

and he wanted to stay in Europe, "where the real war was." He returned to the U.S. in 1944 as a foreign affairs reporter with the Associated Press wire service, covering the State Department, foreign embassies, and foreign-policy legislation in Congress.

### Sharing his love of the reporting life

From the AP, Hovey went to The New Republic, serving as assistant editor for foreign affairs. Philosophical differences with the magazine prompted his departure, in what he describes as "the only bad job experience" of his career. It seemed the perfect time, he would say later, to "fill in the gaps in his knowledge of foreign affairs" and pursue graduate study at his alma mater, the University of Minnesota.

At this point he also launched the academic side of his career, as a lecturer in journalism. He served on the journalism faculty of University of Wisconsin in the early and mid 1950s. He also was a visiting lecturer at universities across the country, including Columbia, Syracuse, State University of New York, and University of California-Berkeley. He returned to University of Minnesota in 1980 as professor of communication and director of the Journalism Fellows program.

Teaching enabled Hovey to excite others about writing, reporting, and world events. He takes pleasure in seeing the names of some of his students in newspaper bylines, particularly at The New York Times. He says the young people he has encountered in his teaching years have been eager learners.

Hovey still teaches, only now his students are a lot older. He lectures on U.S. foreign policy at Cedar Crest College in Allentown, through the College's Institute for Learning in Retirement.

"My students still want to understand the world," he notes. "After September 11, we couldn't get off the subject of the terrorist attacks. They wanted to talk about how and why it happened."

### Economic and societal challenges bring changes

Print journalism today is very different, Hovey says. The demise of evening papers did away with healthy competition in many cities and towns, including New York. Many operational decisions now are affected by the bottom line, as well as the public's interest and time to invest in the news.

"Some of the changes in print journalism are the result of changes in electronic journalism," he says. "For example, in its prime, CBS was wonderful. Edward R. Murrow was a brilliant reporter. If a story needed 15 minutes to be told, it got 15 minutes. No single story gets that kind of time on a television newscast today."

But Hovey's not a foe of broadcast journalism. He thinks ABC's Peter Jennings is an excellent news anchor, primarily because of his background in foreign affairs. And Hovey's son, Thomas, is a news photographer for WNEP-TV in Scranton/Wilkes-Barre.

Would he still pick journalism as a profession today? Absolutely, Hovey says. And he would still want to be a print journalist. His choice of employers would be The New York Times. He credits Editor John B. Oakes for his Times experience, describing it as "the most wonderful years of my life."

"John was a wonderful and courageous boss . . . He sometimes took a stand that he knew wasn't popular but felt was right nonetheless. People might have hated our guts, but they still read us." †

## TimeLine 1910...

There are many similarities within the histories of The Lutheran Home at Topton and Tressler Lutheran Services, whose heritage of care Diakon Lutheran Social Ministries continues.

Both began in the 1800s. Both originated as orphanages. And both developed services for people of all ages, as use of orphanages ended.

Both also had an identically named building—the Annie L. Lowry Memorial Hospital.

Today, the former hospital on the Topton campus houses some of Diakon's children services. The building at the former Tressler home was razed after the state's 1963 purchase of the campus for use as a youth development center.

The first Annie L. Lowry Memorial Hospital was established on Tressler's Loysville, Pa., campus in 1910. A hospital had already been built in response to the diphtheria



Above: Annie L. Lowry Memorial Hospital at Topton; right: the Lowry hospital at the former Tressler campus.



epidemic of the time. The cost was significant.

Then the home's staff received an inquiry from an attorney who represented the estate of Mrs. Lowry. A Philadelphia resident and member of the Reformed Episcopal Church, she had bequeathed about \$600,000 for charitable work. The attorney's

wife had been a Lutheran as a child and was used to making yearly contributions to the Tressler home.

Thus originated a memorial gift of \$8,500. Other contributions were then used to furnish the hospital.

Within months, the attorney also made a contribution to the Topton home. That campus' Annie L. Lowry Memorial Hospital was finished in 1911. The two-story building cost \$5,500 and served as the home's infirmary

until 1956.

A second hospital building, which maintained the memorial to Annie L. Lowry, was constructed on the Tressler campus in the early 1920s when, in response to health concerns, officials recommended the medical facility be moved farther from dormitories. †