

# Your Life. Your Future. Your Hospital.

## *Mercy at 40*

Turn back the clock. In the 1950s, Anoka County was being transformed. Nearly overnight potato fields were converted to neighborhoods, with new houses, families, and babies galore. But where to give birth to all those babies? Or receive health care for a serious injury or illness?

In 1963, the Anoka Community Hospital Association agreed to build a 100-bed hospital located on the border of Coon Rapids and Anoka. Later that year, 2,000 volunteers launched a \$600,000 fund drive, collecting donations door-to-door for the hospital's construction.

Their efforts were successful. Mercy Hospital's first patient, Mrs. Cecil (Judith) Melton, arrived in a raging blizzard on March 17, 1965, five days before the hospital's planned opening; she gave birth to Merci, Mercy's first baby, named in honor of the new hospital.

Today, the hospital is twice its original size, its coffee shop serves lattes, and its technologies would amaze its founders. But Mercy's primary dedication remains the same: serve the health care needs of neighbors and friends living in more than 25 north metro cities and towns, including Maple Grove, Osseo, Anoka, Coon Rapids, Elk River, and Rogers (to name but a few).

Enjoy this scrapbook of Mercy memories. Today, new memories are being made as Mercy, poised for the future, continues to provide the best in health care to the people of its communities.



*Build and they will come -  
housing boom in Coon Rapids, 1957.*

Credit: Norton & Peel,  
Minnesota Historical Society



*Artist's concept,  
Mercy Hospital, 1963.  
The hospital was  
named through a  
community contest.*



*Tornadoes struck Fridley only seven weeks  
after Mercy opened. The hospital and staff  
treated 114 injured in one night.*

**"Some night soon, as you awaken at 2 a.m. ... remember  
that lights are burning in a nearby hospital and people  
there are working and ready to serve you and your neighbors,  
if and when needed, no matter what the hour."**

William Rock, M.D., one of 35 physicians on staff when Mercy opened.  
Today, Mercy & Unity's combined medical staff numbers 875.



**MERCY  
HOSPITAL**

Allina Hospitals & Clinics



The Mercy Hospital Ladies Auxiliary was founded a year prior to Mercy opening. Note the flip charts (no computers).

By 1975, Mercy more than doubled in size as well as capacity. Expansion projects included the addition of 144 beds and a medical office building connected by tunnel to the hospital.



Chemical dependency and mental health services are available at Mercy by 1978. Patients no longer are sent miles from home to receive care.



Mercy's Heart Catherization Lab served its first patients in May 1985. In March 1989, the first open heart surgery was performed at Mercy.



Merci (Melton) Talbot, right, Mercy Hospital's first baby all grown up, returned to the hospital in September 1985 to deliver daughter Angela. Merci's mother, Judith, left, was Mercy's first patient.

Elk Ridge Health opened in Elk River in 2002. It includes physicians' offices and clinics, diagnostic services, MRI and same day surgery.



The Kenny Kids Program, providing pediatric rehabilitation services, opened in 2004.



In 2004, Mercy's heart center underwent a \$40 million expansion and renovation. Today, Mercy's Heart and Vascular Center includes state-of-the-art technologies for diagnosing and treating heart disease, a women's heart health center, and a sleep study center. The project included a new lobby and emergency department.

 **MERCY HOSPITAL**  
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