

Morningside Hospital Aids Community's Mental Health

Therapeutic Community Puts Emphasis On Informal Living

By **WILLIAM SANDERSON**
Staff Writer, The Oregonian

and
LEONARD BACON
Staff Photographer, The Oregonian

May is Mental Health Month. The Oregonian has chosen Portland's Morningside Hospital, largest private psychiatric hospital on the West Coast, to help illustrate the changing patterns of treatment for the mentally ill and the significant relationship of the psychiatric hospital to the community.

Not long ago a group of nuns from Marylhurst College drove east on SE Stark Street toward an appointment at Morningside Hospital.

They were certain of the address (10008 SE Stark St.) but when they neared Gresham they concluded they had somehow missed the hospital.

Later, having backtracked successfully, one of the nuns sheepishly admitted to Administrator Henry W. Coe they had driven by because they "didn't think these pretty buildings and grounds could have been a psychiatric hospital."

Coe reassured her the mistake was a common one. Morningside Hospital cares for mentally retarded and emo-

tionally disturbed patients in a setting not unlike a colorful, well-groomed village.

It is called a "therapeutic community" by those professional persons who live and work there.

To some the terms "mental hospital" or "psychiatric ward" conjure up grim visions of bleakly dark brick buildings, murky corridors and dismal rooms, dull, muscular orderlies and unsympathetic doctors.

A visit to Morningside dispels such misconceptions. Hundreds of persons take advantage of the hospital's willingness to schedule tours.

No Bars Used

There are no stone walls or steel bars and few locks at Morningside. Except for a small nameplate on a brick pillar at the entrance there is nothing about Morningside to alienate it from its pastoral residential surroundings.

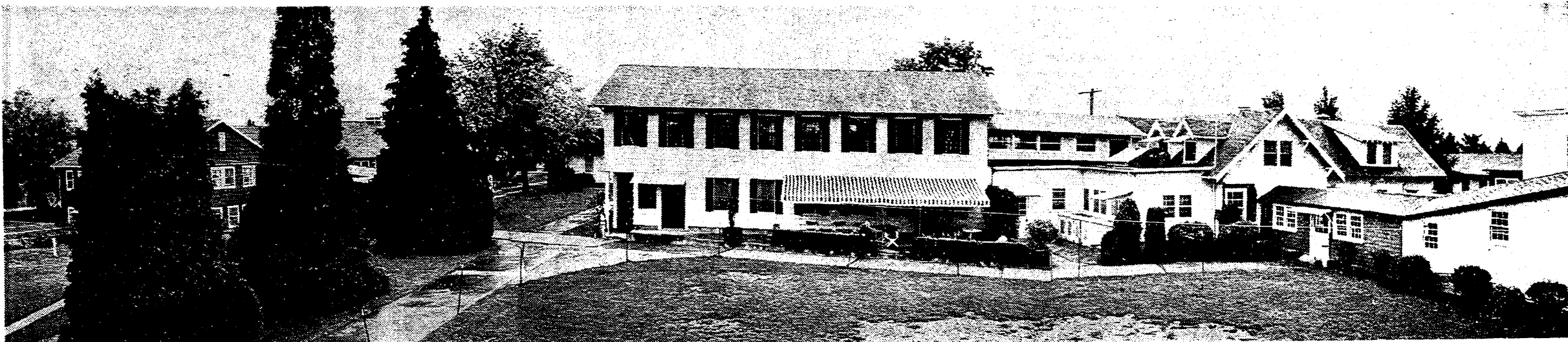
The cluster of attractive buildings — infirmary, library, school, cafeteria, professional offices and patients' units — is situated among flowering trees and gardens. A spacious, landscaped mall, used extensively as a recreation area for patients, buffers the hospital from busy Stark Street.

These surroundings offer a congenial, peaceful atmosphere, yet in no way do they minimize the professional awareness of the serious task at hand.

Morningside was founded in 1893 by Dr. Henry Waldo Coe, grandfather and namesake of the current adminis-



HENRY W. COE, administrator at Morningside Hospital and a grandson of the founder, stands before handsome administration building, center of hospital complex. "Campus" abounds with blooming fruit trees and garden.



COLORFUL BUILDINGS of Morningside Hospital are built around this central square. Several underground passageways give pedestrian commuters protection from the elements. Lawn in foreground will be putting green.

trator. Coe, donor of some of Portland's finest statuary, started his hospital at Mt. Tabor and moved to the present location in 1910.

It is the largest private psychiatric hospital on the West Coast, both in number of patients (over 300) and grounds (60 acres.)

From 1905 until 1962 Morningside was devoted exclusively to the care of psychiatric patients from the Alaska Territory. In 1962, after attaining statehood, Alaska built a psychiatric hospital in Anchorage.

Commendation Won

Since then Morningside has been involved in a transition to private patients. Only about 135 Alaskans, many of whom are Indian or Eskimo, remain at Morningside.

For 25 years Morningside has been the emergency psychiatric facility for the Multnomah County Health Department. The hospital was commended recently by Dr. Robert H. Felix, director of the National Institute of Mental Health, as an example of the "important role of private psychiatric hospitals in the community-based national health program."

Morningside divides its attention in two areas: care of the retarded and psychiatric treatment for the mentally and emotionally disturbed. The program for the retarded covers ambulatory patients of all ages.

Nearly one-third of the hospital's population are children, most of whom are retarded. Some others are undergoing psychiatric treatment.

Since the retarded children cannot be cured, the hospital's task is to help each, according to his capabilities, develop the highest degree of self sufficiency possible.

Children at the hospital attend school, have round-the-clock pediatric and nursing care and continual supervision. In addition to classroom studies, the hospital has a program of arts and crafts, music and recreation for children.

Strength Emphasized

As for the elderly, Morningside emphasizes each patient's strengths rather than becoming preoccupied with his weaknesses. Elderly persons who are physically able and with some degree of mental alertness, can participate as actively as each chooses. Each is encouraged to do so.

Generally, patients at Morningside have a surprising amount of supervised freedom. Only those with acute psychiatric problems requiring secluded care are restricted to the infirmary.

Patients may not slog about in bathrobe and slippers — unless they are in the infirmary. They wear normal street clothes, not unlike the rather casual dress of the staff, aside from kitchen workers and nurses who wear white.

A visitor at Morningside soon notices it is difficult to distinguish patients from employees. "It's intentional," said Administrator Coe. "We think it's a bad policy for a visitor to see a person and be able to say, 'there goes a mental patient.' We dislike labeling our patients."

An average patient's day consists of the basic elements of normal living: work, education, recreation and the development of personal skills. Occupation and vocation therapists supervise a program for both youngsters and adults.

Morningside is a democratic institution and Medical Director Dr. Allan G. Roberts and the entire hospital staff is particularly attuned to the Patient's Committee.

The committee is a self-governing organization which acts in an advisory capacity to the staff on matters concerning all patients.

News Published

Patients publish their own newspaper, operate a canteen and tend to many of their own social affairs. "What's New," a mimeographed newspaper sponsored by the Pa-

tient's Committee, is devoted to news of patients and staff and its writers are not above poking fun at the psychiatrists — and each other.

An ambitious 10-page special edition, commemorating Mental Health Week, was mailed to 700 subscribers. It is significant that both the first and last names of patients appear in the newspaper.

"It's their way of helping to break down their own mental barriers regarding mental health," a hospital spokesman said.

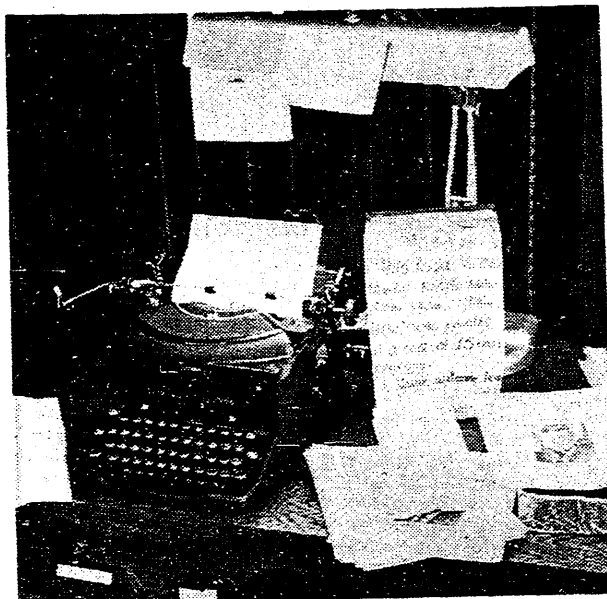
Living quarters for patients are bright, ample and, like the rest of the hospital, designed to promote a speedy recovery. The hospital offers both private, semi-private and ward quarters.

Except for long-term care, the majority of Morningside patients remain less than a year, many for less than three months. Some win an unqualified release from the hospital; others return as outpatients or are returned to the care of their personal physician or psychiatrist.

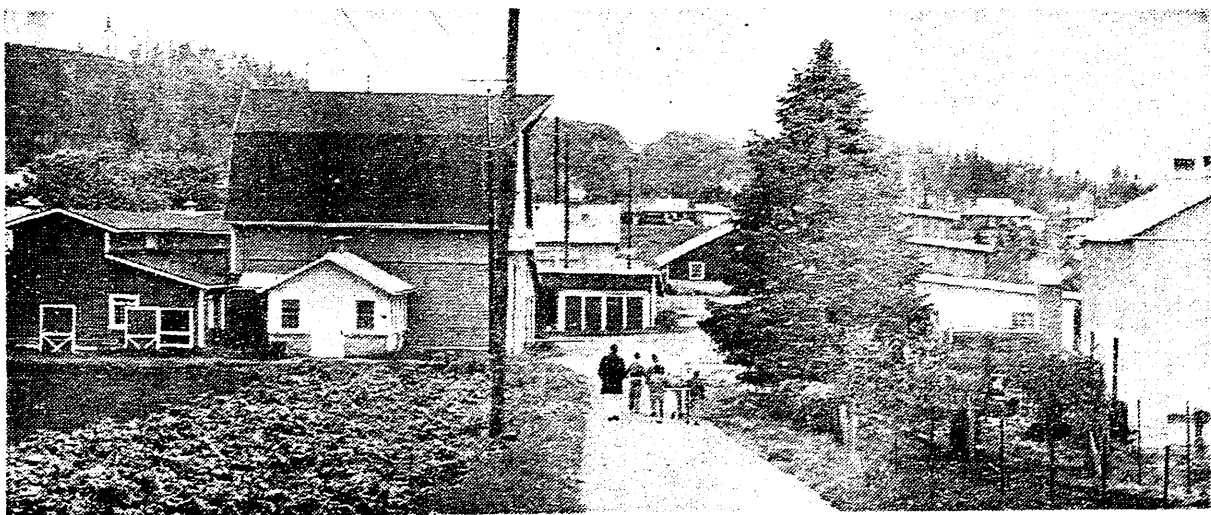
Morningside's "community orientation" — that part of the working policy which is designed to help the public better understand the mentally ill — includes affiliations for psychiatric training for student nurses and interns, and complete accreditation and license.

Too, the hospital's public relations department, headed by Betty Keenan, arranges visitations, open house, tours for visitors to the hospital and "off campus" activities for patients.

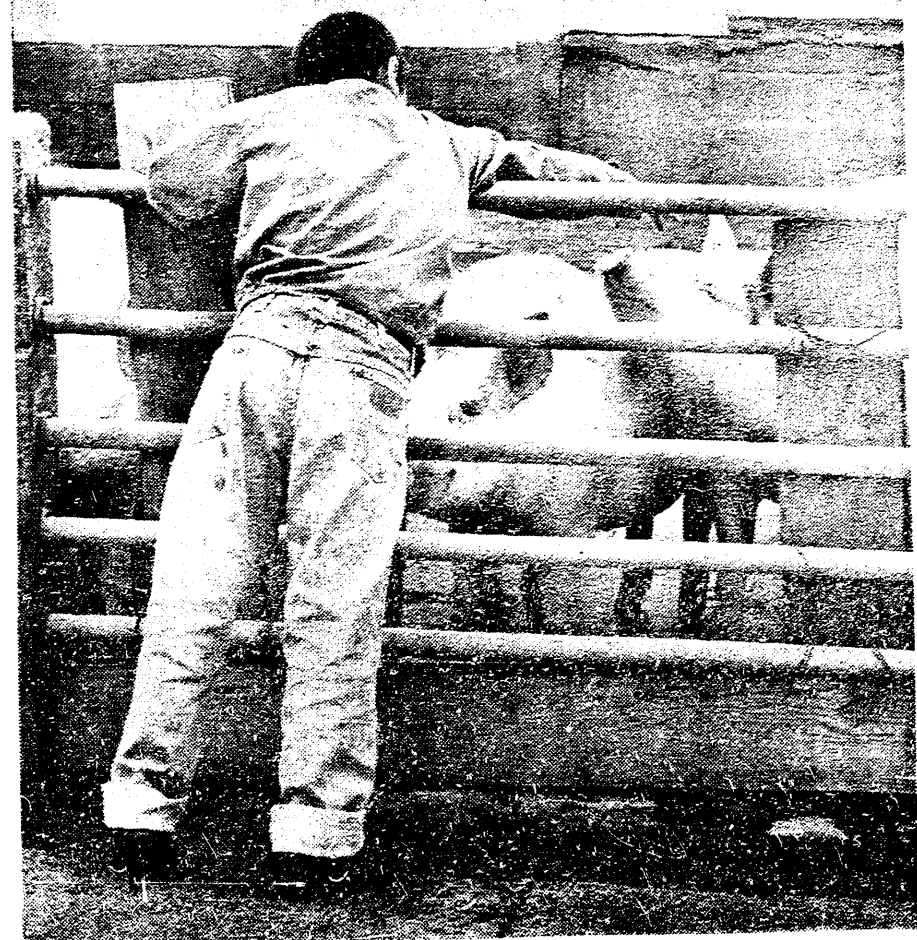
Even the hospital's dairy herd is involved in "public relations." The 16-cow herd has taken many awards, including the 1963 Breeders Registry Award of the Holstein-Friesian Association of America.



"WHAT'S NEW," Morningside's patient-produced newspaper, keeps patients and staff informed of happenings. Much of the copy crosses this, the editor's desk.



A GROUP OF retarded children enjoy a stroll toward hospital's "farm." A prize dairy herd, pigs and large garden are kept at Morningside.



ONE THIRD of Morningside's population are children. Here, a retarded boy inspects pigs. Goal is to help retarded children become as self sufficient as possible.



CHEERFUL, BRIGHT rooms help promote better atmosphere recovery of psychiatric patients. Here, a nurse chats with a patient in sunlit room.