In 1813, Friends Hospital was founded by the Religious Society of Friends for the sole purpose of providing care for individuals with a mental illness. The 200th anniversary of this important event is upon us and Friends Hospital is looking forward to celebrating with a series of events throughout 2013.

Originally called “The Asylum for Persons Deprived of the Use of Their Reason,” Friends Hospital would become an innovator in behavioral healthcare treatment techniques to offer humane care for their “Friends”. Thomas Scattergood, the founder of Friends, was a Quaker minister who protested the harsh treatment of the mentally ill that was pervasive at the time. Scattergood, who suffered from depression, advocated for moral treatment, a model based on dignity, respect, kindness, and love. Quakers believed that all humans have “that of God” within them and they wanted a hospital where respectful treatment and recovery could take place.

For 200 years, Friends Hospital has been a leader in behavioral health treatment. We are excited to celebrate the achievements of the last 200 years and are looking forward to our ongoing leadership role in the field of mental health treatment.

In conjunction with the Scattergood Foundation, Friends Hospital has planned several events to commemorate the 200th Anniversary.
Spotlight on: Expressive Arts Therapy (EAT) at Friends

A well rounded person doesn’t focus on any one aspect of life. In addition to the activities we routinely enjoy, it is also important to explore new opportunities that help us stretch and grow. With this in mind, Friends Hospital recognizes that an important component of treatment is to offer a variety of treatment modalities to meet the different and evolving needs of the individuals we serve.

Every one of our patients has unique needs and responses to treatment. Many can benefit not only from traditional “talk” therapy but also from exploring all aspects of life. Our Expressive Arts Therapy Department (EAT) uses the arts – music, movement, recreation and art – to help patients approach and address their own unique challenges.

Offering a board based experiential therapy in a variety of modalities, the EAT department is an integral part of the overall treatment plan. But sometimes patients, and even staff who may be new to the concept, don’t understand what is being offered.

“I typically tell (patients) what it is not.” says Jill Comins, Dance/Movement Therapist and EAT supervisor. “It’s not a dance class; it’s not an exercise class. We’re constantly communicating through our movements, whether we realize it or not. We do it all the time, it’s an expression of who we are and our personality.” Once patients experience the freedom in letting go and expressing themselves through movement, they often leave the group feeling less burdened, and better able to take on the rest of the day.

Offering patients the opportunity to explore themselves through their art work is the focus for Natalie Hoffman and Charlene Morris, both art therapists. As with movement, their work can be initially misunderstood. “I’m not the art teacher.” Charlene says with a good natured smile. “It’s not just drawing, though drawing is therapeutic, we have a focus, a theme just as any other group does.” Natalie notes. “We work with the patients to look for indicators in their artwork, which may aid them on their journey of self discovery.”

When Maureen Ciolko, Recreation Therapist arrives on unit, it’s not uncommon for folks to assume a rousing game of Bingo will ensue. “What most people think we do is participatory activities, like Bingo or an exercise group, but the activity really depends on the individuals I’m working with.” Maureen notes. Because Friends serves patients a wide spectrum of illnesses and behavioral challenges, all treatment modalities, including recreation therapy, must be ready to provide a variety of approaches. Maureen is often called upon to do leisure counseling, especially with patients with co-occurring disorders or severe depression. “The focus of this group is to look at leisure awareness, what our values are and how they work, or don’t work, in the recovery process.”

Music therapist Corey Niefert notes that music is not always a positive thing for people, especially those living with depression. "Sometimes people join the music group hoping for a sing-along which I sometimes do, but with a very specific purpose. Music therapy can help people connect with a wide variety of feelings and help them begin the process of dealing constructively with those feelings."

Whatever life experience or illness brought individuals to Friends Hospital, the fundamental principle of all recovery is hope. “I think that expressive arts have this innate ability to allow people to have that experience of hope, whether it be though making music, or being involved in the art process or moving. I think that’s something as a department that we all do well.” Jill observes.

Patients seem to agree. It’s not uncommon to hear laughter emanating from a room filled with people exploring movement, or others proudly displaying their collage made during art therapy. In offering people the opportunity to feel good about themselves, while providing greater insight to their mental and emotional challenges, the Expressive Arts department embodies the spirit of hope for recovery at Friends Hospital.
The Scattergood Cupboard

Friends Hospital and First Home Care (FHC) are excited to announce the opening of the Scattergood Cupboard, a clothing donation program located in the historic Scattergood building.

“We are very excited to receive donations to help those we serve stay warm and dry!” said Dr. Gina Fusco, COO at Friends and CEO of FHC. Many of our clients, including children and babies, are in urgent need of gently used clothing and other items such as suitcases and outerwear.

Donations to the Cupboard are tax deductible. For more information on the Cupboard’s “wish list” or to make a donation, please call (215) 831-6957.

Friends Celebrating Friends

Friends Hospital has a lot to celebrate! The Employee Holiday Party kicked off our 200th anniversary year with a bang! Over 200 employees and their guests enjoyed an evening filled with food, music, dancing and friendship.

“The Holiday Party was a great way to say ‘thank you’ to our employees. Friends staff really enjoy spending time together outside of the normal routine” said Geoff Botak, CEO. “It was also very important that we acknowledged the dedicated staff who worked the evening and night shifts. Several managers served a catered dinner in the dining room and staff had an opportunity to leave the units and enjoy dinner with their co-workers.

Service Excellence played a big role in the evening. The 116 Service Excellence nominations received during the year were entered in a drawing and Kathleen Moore from the CRC was the Grand Prize winner.

In addition to Holiday festivities, the Service Excellence Committee, headed by HR Director Paul Cavanaugh, has organized several events at Friends. The Philabundance food drive raised $628 and 578 pounds of food donations, far surpassing the original goal of $500 and 500 pounds of food. Corey Leaper, MHT continued his outstanding commitment to this event by packing the donations and delivering them to Philabundance.

“Barbara Osinski suggested hosting a pretzel sale for Philabundance and Barb and Justine Kilkenny spearheaded the effort. It was so successful, we are going to continue holding them monthly to raise money for other charities” said Paul.

Pretzels took center stage for Valentine’s Day when each employee received a heart shaped treat, complete with a service excellence reminder card.

The Service Excellence Committee is also working to highlight one aspect of providing superior service around Friends Hospital each month.

“It is so important to foster a sense of hospitality when guests visit our ‘home’. We want to focus on the things each of us can do to make a positive impact on everyone we come in contact with during a visit to Friends” stated Paul.

If you have observed a Friends Hospital staff member providing exceptional service please complete a nomination form and drop it in one of the Service Excellence Feedback boxes. You may also email Paul Cavanaugh directly at paul.cavanaugh@uhsinc.com.
A Look Back in Time

This edition’s “Look Back in Time” revisits a series from old issues of Among Friends called “Know Your Hospital”. As Friends celebrates its 200th anniversary year, a snapshot of early historical tidbits seems appropriate. This piece is a reprint from a 1950 newsletter.

Know Your Hospital

From time to time, as space permits, we plan to run excerpts from the history of Friends Hospital. These will be presented in diary form. We sincerely hope you will find much pleasure and interest in this series.

1813—A piece of land near Frankford containing 52 acres was purchased for $6764.06, and plans and estimates for the proposed building were started.

1817—The Asylum opened for the reception of patients on May 15th. Rate of board, $3.50 per week. Cost of erecting and preparing building and enclosing courts and yards, $42,400.

1820—Ice house built at the end of the northwest wing. Rate of board placed at $3.50 per week was reduced to $2.50.

1825—Isaac and Ann Bonsall, Superintendent and Matron since the opening of the Institution, asked to be relieved from their positions. Their resignations were accepted by the Managers with regret. The use of coal as fuel was introduced in a portion of the Main Building to replace the wood burning stoves now in use.

1836—The Managers under the conviction of the benefits which result from constant exercise in the open air endeavor to promote useful occupation among the guests. Many of the men assist the farmer and the gardener in their various tasks while the women employ themselves in sewing, knitting, quilting and other branches of housewifery. For the interest of those not inclined toward such occupations, animated objects such as lambs, poultry, English rabbits, pigeons, etc., were placed in the adjacent yards. Morning and afternoon of each day when the weather is suitable a carriage is provided to take guests on rides through the pleasant country roads of the vicinity.

1839—Several deer presented to the Hospital and part of the woods enclosed as a deer park.

1862-1863—The past two years have been eventful ones in the history of our Hospital. The strife of arms, which has been going on between the hostile sections into which our once happy country is at present divided, has effectually cut us off from communication with the friends of some of our patients, while the financial embarrassments arising from the general stagnation of trade have limited the means of defraying the expenses of others.