

1915 - 1939

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# Early History of Conn O.T. Assoc.

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Historian

The first records <sup>were</sup> submitted by Mrs. Alice Rogers OTR Supervisor in 1955 concerning Conn State Hospitals' part in the early years of OT.

These records were taken from Dr. Haviland's (supervisor of Conn State Hosp in Middletown, Conn) first report.

"The occupation work started Nov 16, 1915 with a group of 15 women" doing crocheting and some sewing. Few supplies were available.

Later rag rugs, paper flowers, were added and sold.

Mary L. Putman was the 1<sup>st</sup> Occupation teacher ~~teacher~~ with 2 nurses as assistance.

Alga M Evans was instructor of "physical training" held for women such as marching, dancing and games.

Women were initially the main focus of occupation work; then men participated separately making baskets and weaving.

<sup>at plane</sup> The first exhibit and sale was held May 1916 and netted \$ 319.02\*. The aim of occupation work was tested and succeeded financial and therapeutically <sup>per</sup>.

Total number of patients working were 103.

\* aprons cost 10¢, writing paper 10¢

In March 1916 equipment for the cement shop was installed. Garden Benches and large yars were made there

Some of the personal notes on patients were:  
" Sylvia - An interesting case. Made baskets steadily for spring sale, then refused to do a thing for 6 weeks. Was much disturbed and excited. ~~is~~ Is quiet now and working well at baskets again "

" Hannah " Good natured, young girl with lots of energy. Ought to have more muscular work than crocheting "

The 1st formal class for men was Feb 6, 1917.

Previously nearly all the men did was sit around the wards. The improvement was notable encouraging.

June 1917 an exhibit of articles made in Occupation Dept. were sent to the Medico-Psychological Assoc meeting in New York City.

The Red Cross was formed in 1917

The soldiers from WWI returned in 1919

The <sup>daily</sup> average patient taking part in Occupation was 461. And Anita Coe was the Occupational Instructress during 1919

# Pride & Understanding

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New activities were added in the Industrial Shop headed by Mr. Fitzgerald such as brooms, brushes, Elven of the male patients attended the movies in Middletown, <sup>big deal</sup> ~~movies at CVH~~ <sup>Committee of So. Hosp</sup> called ~~Comm. of Hosp.~~

Feb, 1920 lead to a patients government. Ten patients each representing a ward

— 1918 AOTA was born in New York City. They worked closely with AMA.

*My own story*  
Helen ~~Greene~~ Means completed "courses" at the Mansfield War Service in N.Y (1918). She spent her early years in the service with all patients but the psychiatric wards. Helen's particular interest was with the "facial cases" who no visitors would come to see. "The early days in the army were very interesting. There we had all the equipment and cooperation necessary. Because of the demand we had only 3 months course"

*with phrase*  
1920 - The Boston School of Occ. Therapy was already established under Miss Maryony Greene - Dean

<sup>1945</sup>  
1923 Helen Means took over the Occ. Therapy Dept of Bridgeport Hosp. "It was supported by the Junior League for 15 years, then the Hosp took over <sup>the</sup> financial burden. At the beginning the doctors considered it merely amusement, but before many years they were asking for service."

Two trained therapists plus 10 volunteers handled the 500 bed hosp

"There was no Social Service for the first 25 years, so it ~~to~~ become O.T. duties."

"Contacting State Rehabilitation was another part of the job. Many patients could earn money while convalescing at home, and I would take their materials."

No case studies were kept just medical records  
"Grace Clark, Marge Taylor, Ruth Wigglesworth worked with Helen in the early years"

submitted April 27, 1955

and was the 1st president of  
Kathryn H. Root founded the Conn State Society of OT in 1917-1920

Originally from Stanford she was supervisor of home economics in public schools and established the State Home Economic Assoc.

Miss Root was a long active member in the American <sup>therapy</sup> Assoc., having been a member of its board of directors, chairman of its committee on registration

~~Dear~~

1925 - An advisory group of 18 people - mainly physicians, leaders in welfare and a few OT's was formed

# Boards

1926 OT was defined and a pamphlet stated

"An occupation is that to which one's time and attention are given. Therapy is a medical ~~form~~ treatment.

It is something that the patient does for himself, be it crafts, games, gardening or study, guided by a doctor's prescription and trained instructor, to further his cure or rehabilitation".

"The Conn Occupational Therapy Society is a group of physicians, therapists and laymen organized to spread the knowledge of OT and encourages its wider use in Conn."

- 1) it assists in securing trained therapist for positions in Conn.
- 2) it advises on equipment, technique and the training of therapists.
- 3) it circulates designs and craft models among practical workers
- 4) it provides speakers for meetings before an interested audience - with or without lantern slides
- 5) it publishes a quarterly bulletin and distributes other O.T literature " " " "

The general membership fee was \$  $\frac{1.00}{FV}$  and had to

have \$ 500.00 to carry the work of the Assoc.

The Executive Committee was made up of Doctors and its Advisory Board had 8 doctors and 6 OTS and 2 directors of Hosp.

By now Miss Maryjory Greene had outlined the 18 months of courses given at Boston School which included anatomy, some orthopedic and foundation of craft work

1928 the Conn O.T Assoc had 169 members and a paid part-time secretary, and the President was Dr. Wiedman

1929 - Conn OT Assoc annual meeting placed emphasis on craft usefulness, theories of orthopedics with children at Mansfield, Newington and New Haven. The meeting was held at Children's Village 1680 Albany Ave. The speaker was Mrs. Elita D. Wallace director of OT at Children's Village, who demonstrated with 30-40 children how OT is bringing health and happiness to children with protracted illnesses. Dr. L. H. Thompson of the Yale Institute of Human Relations will preside at the business mtg. additional agendas

Physician-in-chief  
Dr. Clarence C. Burlingame, <sup>or</sup> superintendent of the Hartford  
~~Retreat~~ Retreat will speak on "An Ideal O.T. program  
Sera Hosp for the Mentally Sick"

Miss Constance Leigh, superintendent of the Newington  
Home for Crippled Children will speak on "OT for  
the Adolescent Boy & Girl"

Dr. R. D. Richman, surgical adviser of Aetna Life  
Insurance Co. will speak on "If injury  
interrupts Employment, What Then?"

At this meeting Dr. Clarence C. Burlingame was  
elected president of Conn OT Society - 150 attended  
Vice-pres Edward P. Chester - state supervisor of  
vocational guidance

Returning Pres was Dr. Thompson

1931 - A.O.T.A starts a registration plan to safeguard  
and standardize OT

- 5 OT schools in US and Canada

- 1) Boston 1918
- 2) St Louis
- 3) Philadelphia
- 4) Milwaukee
- 5) Toronto

1934 - First directory of Reg OT's was published by AOTTA  
~~318 OT's~~ 475 OTRs with 15 in Conn

1933 - Conn OT Assoc donated \$35.00 to AOTA and publicize an essay contest on OT the winner receiving \$50.00

May 17, 1933 Report of Committee on O.T to Conn Federation of Womens Club by Kathryn Root

Some main points were

- 1) some hosp have closed dept or reduced staff
  - 2) salaries have been lowered
  - 3) no new positions have been created
- but no positions of Conn have been affected  
 There are about 500 register OTs - 15 in Conn  
 1/2 of all OTs are involved in AOTA

1934. Conn OT Assoc pledged \$50.00 to AOTA's Pres Dr. Joseph C. Poane - Philadelphia, Penn

1936 - reorganization committee of the Conn OT Society was held - to make plans for the Society to be governed by Occupational Therapists  
 Their membership was divided into Active - graduate & working ~~the~~ therapists and Associate - those not actively engaged in OT. Dues for the Associate members



15<sup>00</sup> with the privilege to vote for officers while Active fee 15<sup>00</sup>

Active - Membership was 47

The concerns of the Conn O.T. Society was tuberculosis and only 1 part-time therapist working with them

Pres of new Conn O.T. Society was

Miss Vesta Alexander - Hartford Hosp <sup>OTR</sup>

Vice - Pres Miss Maen C. Hurlburt OTR - Silver Hall, New Canaan, Conn

Sec - Tres Miss Mary Junkin OTR - Newington Home for Crippled Children

Miss Kathryn Root - active member at large of the Executive Committee

1936 - New England OT Assoc Formed

There were 20 OTRs in Conn  
6 Secondary registered " "

and 10 graduate therapists

This was the 12<sup>th</sup> year for Conn Assoc.

1939 - WW II