

GATHERING IN THE GOOD

FERN LODGE FOCUS — SEPTEMBER 2017

Early in the 1950s, a loving couple in the Hayward Christian Science church, Willard and Mindell Fern Cox, opened their home to help Christian Scientists. The tender care and support for Christian Science healing they provided led to ongoing and increasing requests for their services, and soon they purchased the house in Castro Valley that would become Fern Lodge. As the need increased, an additional building was added. In 1967 they formed a nonprofit corporation, Fern Lodge, Inc. This step enabled the Coxes to provide opportunities for tax-deductible donations and welfare payments to support patients who needed financial assistance.

During 2017 Fern Lodge is celebrating the 50th year since incorporation, and we are sharing with you and all our many supporters some of what has been accomplished during those 50 years and where we see ourselves going in the future. In May we held an open house and invited everyone we could contact to share with us their healing experiences and memories of their experiences with Fern Lodge. Contributions flooded in, and we have many of them, in words and pictures, on display in our hallways. You can see a few photos in this newsletter.

“Bring ye all the tithes into the storehouse, that there may be meat in mine house, and prove me now herewith, saith the Lord of hosts, if I will not open you the windows of heaven, and pour you out a blessing, that there shall not be room enough to receive it.”

This passage, Malachi 3:10, is a theme of our 50th anniversary celebration. Our tithes are our gifts of gratitude and our commitment to continue in the holy work, providing the healing ministry of Christian Science nursing, without regard for how long an individual may need care or their financial ability to afford the cost.

In this *FOCUS* we'll review briefly some activities and steps of progress that have emerged in these 50 years. We are most deeply grateful for our opportunity to have served so many Christian Scientists who have needed assistance as they prayed for the spiritual healing of Christian Science. Our on-going commitment is to continue to improve our Christian Science nursing services through understanding more fully that God cares for each of Her precious children and keeps them whole and safe in divine Love, and that man reflects that health-giving care. And there is more. In the years since incorporation, Fern Lodge has made significant contributions to broaden and deepen the demonstration of Christian Science nursing within our world-wide Church. And as we acknowledge and give gratitude for these footsteps, let's remember that from its earliest years through our most recent days, Fern Lodge has maintained the home-like, family character on which it was founded.

With gratitude and affection,

George Strong
Administrator



Joel Carico thanks Ellen Skou for her many years of service as a Christian Science Nurse.

BRINGING THE TITHES INTO THE STOREHOUSE —

In celebration of our first 50 years we are decorating the halls at Fern Lodge with photos and reminiscences from many friends who have served with us through the years. These two pages give glimpses of the facility and of our celebration day. We hope you will come for a visit after our Annual Meeting on Saturday, October 21, or any time during the year.



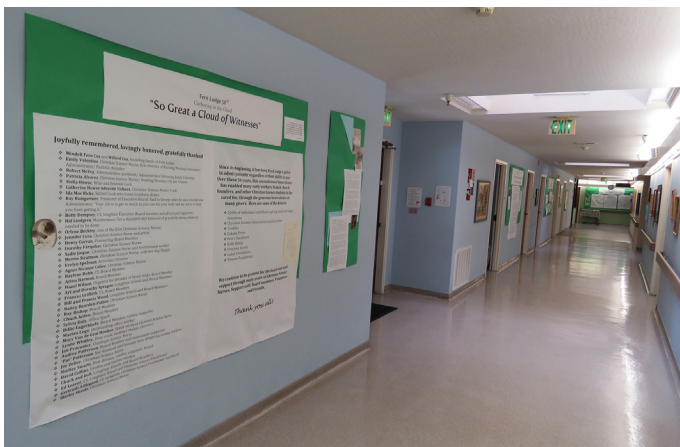
Ellen Skou, Camille Lindsay, and George Strong, dear friends and devoted, steadfast Christian Science nurses whose combined years of service to Christian Science nursing comes to about 100, many of those years at Fern Lodge.



Joe Smith and Ben Cahill take wonderful care of the Fern Lodge facility and grounds.



Above: Rosa Leal, our Head of Housekeeping, has been with Fern Lodge for more than 20 years. We all are grateful for her kindness, grace and joy. Rosa is standing beside a list of the contributions Fern Lodge has made to our larger community through the years.



Left: Looking down the Treeside wing hallway, you can see the anniversary displays. The one on the wall nearest us is a list of "so great a cloud of witnesses," who have played valuable roles in the history, and who are no longer with us.

IN CELEBRATION OF MORE THAN 50 YEARS OF CHRISTIAN SCIENCE NURSING



Left: Trinka Wasik, Fern Lodge Board member gives a hug of gratitude to Sharon Strong. A Christian Science nurse since the 1970s, Sharon has served at Fern Lodge for about 20 years, as a staff nurse, Director of Christian Science Nursing, and for the last five years as Director of Christian Science Nurses Training.

Right: Karen Stroud, Christian Science nurse, was honored for her years of service.



FERN LODGE IS FAMILY

It should be no surprise that Fern Lodge always has been focused on and supportive of families. Our dear facility was conceived, founded, and lovingly operated by a couple, Willard and Mindell Cox. These devoted and caring Christian Scientists established the spiritual foundation on which Fern Lodge still stands.

Pictured below are Hilda Palomares, center, with her two daughters, Iriana, smiling beside her mother and Christina, with a mop. Hilda first came to Fern Lodge when she was eleven years old, accompanying her mother, Julia, who was the Fern Lodge Head of Housekeeping for several years. When Hilda was old enough to work, she was hired to help in Housekeeping and in the Kitchen. She now serves faithfully and lovingly as our Breakfast Cook. Two of Hilda's children, José and Iriana, have begun working at Fern Lodge, following in the footsteps of their mother and grandmother.

Throughout its long history families have been integral to our healing work, with Parents and children, sisters and brothers, wives and husbands working side by side in the healing demonstration of divine Love, Christian Science nursing.



“When I came here, I told them I did not come here to die—I came here to heal! When I arrived I was barely aware of my surroundings and needed to be lifted from the bed to a chair. My first major step of progress was to be able to move myself around the facility on my own in a wheelchair. Now I am able to stand and walk with the assistance of a walker. I am grateful for this progress, and for some hard lessons along the way.”

The foregoing testimony was given at one of the first Patient Prayer Committee meetings in Spring. These meetings provide a mutually supportive forum for patients to share and encourage each other in their mental work and to companion with each other in their unique role in the Christian Science

how to share the gospel with the world, the spiritual reality of home, and how all are praying for Fern Lodge in general.

Each meeting is geared to support each individual's demonstration, to find each other where we are, to behold the perfect man and to love God by trusting and seeking to behold His reign of harmony. A lesson I began to learn early on in Christian Science nursing was the value of perceiving the current proportion of one's believed ability and to “meet in the middle”—wherever that point happens to be at the moment. One does not water a budding tomato plant with a showering blast from a hose as would be appropriate for a mature plant, nor does one sprinkle or mist a mature plant or tree where a good soaking

is due. I continue to find (though not always easily!) that a patient and humble attitude reveals just what is needed at the moment, which is always and ultimately watching God do His own work and is an effortless joy.

HAPPINESS IS SPIRITUAL. OUR WELL BEING IS ANCHORED IN OUR RELATIONSHIP WITH OUR EVER-PRESENT AND ETERNALLY GOOD GOD.

movement, recognizing their stay in a care facility as an opportunity to support healing through prayer alone—for themselves, for each other, for Fern Lodge, for Church, for mankind.

I have heard it said in regard to organizations that face a turning point: “You grow or you go.” Just such an imperative of progress impelled this individual's growth in grace that has since blessed others. Desiring to know how she and other patients could contribute to the planning for the 50th anniversary celebration of Fern Lodge that was held in May, our Administrator, George Strong, suggested that she lead a prayer committee to support the event. Clearly of value to patients, the weekly meetings have continued now for over three months after the anniversary celebration, with the general motive of supporting one another's prayerful work. Begun with brief readings followed by discussion, the meeting topics have included what all are grateful for, how each one prays, how and why each one loves God,

This was perhaps most clearly demonstrated to me while helping an uncommunicative patient with breakfast. I caught the rhythm and level of her participation where there appeared to be none, and she opened and closed her mouth for every bite. Although this was a singular occasion, such a revelation of harmony, rightly valued, indicates the entire glory of perfect, spiritual being whereof we may now but “see through a glass darkly”¹ as “the blossom shines through the bud.”²

In his healing practice, Christ Jesus often referred to the faith of those he helped, suggesting that his loving and just recognition of their wholeness drew out that wholeness. He said to the woman with an issue of blood, a man whom he healed of blindness and another of leprosy, “thy faith hath made thee whole.”³ He saw the perfect man by recognizing their spirituality, and we can, and we do, too.

A REPORT FROM THE FERN LODGE PATIENT PRAYER COMMITTEE



Taking part in the Patient Prayer Committee and enjoying each other's company!

There have been many such evidences of the perfect man in these meetings where there have been claims of the opposite—blooms where there have been beliefs of blight, and with our practice of divine Science we can appreciate what Mary Baker Eddy wrote in *Science and Health*, that “a little understanding of Christian Science proves the truth of all [she says] of it.”⁴ On the way to the meeting one morning, a patient whom I had never before heard speak with the recognition of her present surroundings announced that she was helping everyone get to the group as we walked in the halls to the living room together. She has since proceeded to speak in the meeting of the pure, spiritual truths of God, articulately elaborating upon the spiritual purpose of the group and again demonstrating awareness of her surroundings.

The founder of the group asked that we set up participants in a circle, which we have done, to encourage a sense of belonging. This embrace of a sense of home has nurtured a faithful affection between members evident in hand-holding and hellos, most notably between patients who have

struggled to accept their whereabouts and invest in getting to know their neighbors, struggling with a strong desire to return to their families.

Patients who rarely speak have been heard from in these meetings, and on thoughtful topics. One patient who has been known to repeat just one or two phrases has begun to develop her thought in meetings, reasoning spiritually beyond what have appeared to be former limitations. Outside of the meeting I saw her effectively comfort another patient who was distressed, demonstrating the same presence and initiative of thought I first observed from her in the meeting. This patient first branched out from her usual refrains to share during meetings focused on the topic of gratitude: “gratitude is riches, complaint is poverty.”⁵ Recently, at a meeting focused on prayer for Fern Lodge, she elaborated to say that she prays to know there is nothing to complain about at Fern Lodge, citing also that happiness is spiritual.

Our well-being is not dependent upon material circumstance or personal relationships but is anchored in our relationship with our ever-present and eternally good God. Her comments struck a happy and hopeful chord with everyone, realizing by their embrace of present inspiration the prophetic title of the group as it originally appeared on the daily schedule: “Bloom Where You are Planted.”

Meghan Dunn
Christian Science Nurse

1. 1 Corinthians 13:12
2. *Science and Health* 518:21
3. Matthew 9:22, Mark 10:52, Luke 17:19
4. *Science and Health* 329:6
5. *Christian Science Hymnal* 249:2

SUMMER CLASSES IN CHRISTIAN SCIENCE NURSING



The smiling faces of the most recent class in Christian Science nursing! From left to right: Sharon Strong, Fern Lodge Instructor; Brenda Bunes, from Minnesota; Sandy Hilbun, from Texas; Allyson Shone, from British Columbia; and Uche Thomas, from Santa Rosa, CA.

The Christian Science Nurses Training Program at Fern Lodge has had a busy year! Students have come from across the country and beyond to take courses in all levels of Christian Science nursing. Some have remained with us to avail themselves of the opportunity for mentored work with patients at Fern Lodge, while others have returned to their homes to put what they have learned into practice with those who are relying on Christian Science in their communities. We are humbly grateful for our opportunity to work with each one.

Fern Lodge played an active role in planning and presenting Mexico's first Christian Science Nursing Workshop. It was held in Mexico City on July 23-27. Sharon Strong, Director of Christian Science Nurses Training, served on the committee that organized this workshop and brought it to fruition, actively promoting the worldwide activity of Christian Science nursing. The workshop was attended by 38 individuals from various States throughout Mexico, and we have learned that several of those who attended are already putting into practice what they took from the workshop, caring for family and friends.

The next issue of the **FERN LODGE FOCUS**, which will come out in November, will include more thorough, in-depth reports of our classroom and mentoring work and of the workshop in Mexico.

CHILDCARE PROGRAM TALENT SHOW!

It was a delightful afternoon! Near the end of the FLOCK summer program for children of the Fern Lodge staff, Jintong Yu put on a talent show. Patients and staff gathered in our largest living room, and we were entertained by precious expressions of the creative joy of Soul.

Jingtong is an accomplished dancer, and she shared her talent and inspiration. She then brought out the talents of the children and staff members, who sang and danced, to the delight of the patients and all who attended.



Never too young! Jintong Yu assists her new friend with a dance.



Meghan Dunn holds the microphone for one of our singers.

SUMMER INTERN AT FERN LODGE — JULIET BECK

This summer, while thinking of possible internship locations as part of my National Leadership Council program, I was given a wonderful opportunity - to intern at Fern Lodge for a month. I knew this would be a time of learning more about Christian Science nursing, as well as a time for new experiences, doing things I had never done before.



Juliet photographing the 4th of July party.

The first thing I felt when I walked into Fern Lodge was a homelike sense of peace and love, and excitement for all I was about to experience! Immediately I was welcomed into the loving, lively atmosphere that is Fern Lodge. Wherever I went I was met with bright smiles and helpful words of wisdom.

Even the briefest of conversations were sweet and uplifting, including discussions while arranging and stapling papers, walking up the hill with patients, and laughing with staff and patients during lunch.

I was especially grateful for the amount of activities and events I was able to participate in during my time at Fern Lodge. In my first few days I was asked to lead Bible Lesson for the patients. We all gathered in the Living Room right after breakfast. I was grateful to be able to share some of the inspiration I had gained during my trip to Israel last March. I had several more opportunities to lead or co-lead the Bible Lesson study. It was such a special time because it was full of genuine moments of connecting with patients. Seeing a patient's face light up with a smile, or nod with understanding really made my day. It was always so amazing to hear inspiration and testimonies from patients during the Wednesday services, and I always learned something new.

The Fern Lodge Fourth of July celebration was an opportunity for me to help plan an event with the Activities Department. I worked on hand-crafted decorations - something I hadn't done much of before! I also was able to help with some of the food preparations. There was a lot to do, but everything was accomplished with a lot of joy and teamwork.

Though every day was slightly different, there was always one aspect that remained: the friendliness and kindness of all the Christian Science nurses and staff. I was grateful to see Christian Science nursing in action and learn how all the different departments support Fern Lodge's healing mission. I am very blessed to have been given this amazing opportunity!

Pictured at the right are two interns who joined the Fern Lodge staff this summer. Jintong Yu, on the left, conducted the Fern Lodge Summer Daycare Program. Juliet Beck helped with a variety of tasks to enrich our Patient Activities Program. Both women brought so much joy to patients and staff alike.

Every year we are grateful to welcome students who would like to work during summer and winter breaks and make meaningful contributions to the healing mission of Fern Lodge.



***Fern Lodge Focus* — September 2017**

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CHANGE SERVICE REQUESTED

SHARING THE GOOD WE HAVE GATHERED

FERN LODGE ANNUAL MEETING

the afternoon will feature a talk by
ANNA LISA KRONMAN, C.S.

and a performance by the
Lighthouse Singers Gospel Choir

We hope you will join us on
Saturday, October 21, at 2:00 in the afternoon
Kenneth C. Aitken Senior & Community Center
17800 Redwood Road, Castro Valley

Anna Lisa Kronman is a dear and devoted supporter of Fern Lodge and Christian Science nursing, and she is a member of the Fern Lodge Board of Directors. In the 1970s and '80s Anna Lisa served at Fern Lodge as a Christian Science nurse. She moved to St. Louis while her four children attended Principia schools and worked at Peace Haven as a Christian Science nurse. She then returned to California and is now a Christian Science practitioner listed in *The Christian Science Journal*. In her Annual Meeting talk, Anna Lisa will share from her demonstrated understanding of the coincidence of healing prayer and practical care in Christian Science nursing.

