

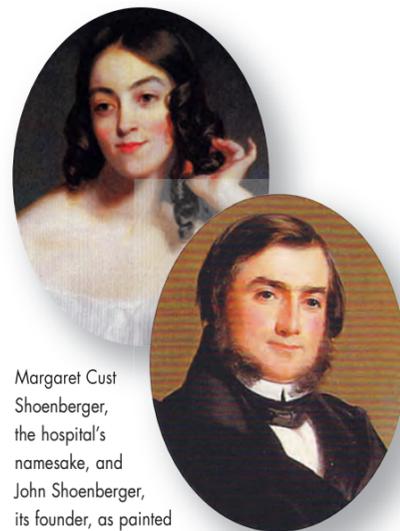
The original St. Margaret Memorial Hospital, designed in grand Baroque style and located in Lawrenceville, opened its doors to patients 100 years ago.

A Century of Service

Looming over Aspinwall, UPMC St. Margaret marks 100 years of caring for patients.



In 1980 the hospital relocated to its current site on Freepoint Road.



Margaret Cust Shoenberger, the hospital's namesake, and John Shoenberger, its founder, as painted by Thomas Sully in 1841.

BY MARY S. GILBERT

Margaret Shoenberger may be a woman lost in history to most Pittsburgh-area residents, but for 100 years, UPMC St. Margaret has built upon her legacy to create a community hospital at the vanguard of quality care.

When she died in 1878, Shoenberger was eulogized for her generosity and kindness as “a lady of singular beauty of life and character.” In a more permanent tribute to his beloved wife, and as testimony to his belief in the evolving science of hospital care, wealthy industrialist and philanthropist John Shoenberger bequeathed \$800,000 (worth about \$10 million today) to establish a hospital in her name.

The hospital he envisioned—now bordering Aspinwall along Freepoint Road—was originally built on three acres of land on the family's summer estate in Lawrenceville. Dedicated in 1898, St. Margaret opened to patients in 1910 under the leadership of a board appointed by the Protestant Episcopal Church. Its mission was to provide compassionate, modern care to both rich and poor alike.

From its location on 46th Street, the hospital served residents of the city's East End and the small towns that dot the northern shore of the Allegheny River. St. Margaret Memorial



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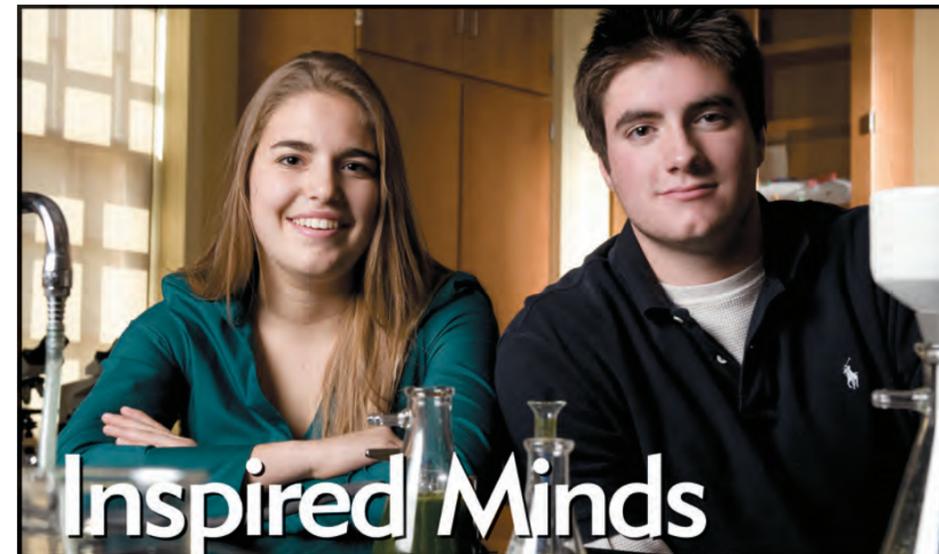
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A Century of Service

Hospital, as it was known, became the first hospital in Pittsburgh named for a woman. And that was just the first of many subsequent firsts and innovative undertakings that have occurred there during the past century.

For example, in the early 1900s, St. Margaret opened an ear, nose, and throat dispensary to provide free outpatient care. As women began turning to hospitals for safer, more comfortable places to give birth, it offered prenatal and obstetrical care. A nursing school gave women a meaningful career in a growing profession. And the role of the hospital's Women's Auxiliary Board ranged from decorating for holidays to supervising house-keeping long before the days of government standards.

To raise money for free clinics, the hospital's Dispensary Board in 1924 launched one of the oldest charity debutante balls in the country. The Cinderella Ball was the holiday social gathering, and this distinguished event continues today as an independent entity. Later, a new charitable tradition, the Free Bed Fund, became the first organized effort in Pittsburgh calling upon donors to mark special occasions with contributions to a designated fund for needy patients.

St. Margaret developed nationally recognized programs in rheumatology, orthopedics, and family practice. One of the first of its kind in the nation, St. Margaret's arthritis center became a regional referral center in 1961—a big achievement, indeed, for a community hospital. Doctors there were also among the first in the city to perform total hip replacements. In addition, the St. Margaret Family Health Center was the first of its kind in western Pennsylvania to care for people at every stage of life.

As programs expanded, the hospital building itself grew more inadequate despite remodeling and additions. The practice of modern medicine required equipment and facilities undreamed of by St. Margaret's founders at the turn of the last century. A financial crisis led the administration to apply for state funding. Because the state could not aid a church-affiliated hospital, St. Margaret became a nonsectarian institution.

To better serve its communities, the hospital relocated in 1980 to a new state-of-the-art building at its present-day home on a 21-acre



Early scenes from the hospital. **Top:** A St. Margaret ambulance.

Above: Young interns and student nurses observing and learning from watching St. Margaret surgeons at work.

campus, the site of the former City of Pittsburgh water filtration plant.

After moving to Freeport Road, St. Margaret introduced the Classic Care Gerontology Center for seniors, and soon afterward became the region's first hospital to develop and build long-term care and retirement residences. In 1989, it became a pioneer in bringing family healthcare to Pittsburgh Public Schools.

Three years later, the hospital made the momentous decision to become the first Pittsburgh hospital to affiliate with UPMC Health System, combining resources with the region's largest healthcare provider. Douglass Harrison, the hospital's executive director of operations, attributes much St. Margaret's continuing success to that partnership.

"To the hospital, the key benefit of our merger with UPMC is our long-term sustain-



Today's hospital campus sits right along Aspinwall's Delafield Road eastern border.

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Starting Over

The president of the St. Margaret Foundation has gone from destitute to destiny and is sharing her story.

BY MARY S. GILBERT

Mary Lee Gannon's path to her position as President of St. Margaret Foundation was far from traditional—or easy. At age 35, she went from being a wife and stay-at-home mother of four in Fox Chapel to a divorcee. And through a storm of litigation and anger, she found herself homeless, without a car, and on public assistance.



Needing to rejoin the workforce after a seven-year hiatus, Gannon defined her transferable skills and developed new ones. She leveraged her two-year degree in an allied health profession and experience writing for organizations as a volunteer to land freelance assignments. She then became a self-employed public relations consultant, a business writer, and a trade association executive.

Ultimately, Gannon went on to hold senior executive positions at several hospital foundations, including her current role as head of the St. Margaret Foundation, which helps support UPMC St. Margaret hospital near Aspinwall and promotes health and wellness in the surrounding communities.

Gannon draws on this remarkable journey from welfare to CEO for her first book, *Starting Over—25 Rules When You've Bottomed Out* (available at bookstores and online, \$14.95), published recently by New Horizon Press. In her inspiring book, she combines practical insights and hands-on strategies gleaned from her travails with testimonials from others who have made successful turnarounds.



Starting Over is a resource for mastering change and overcoming challenges while still maintaining a healthy life balance. "This isn't just theory," she says. "But practical steps to a more productive and enriched life."

Among her suggestions for starting over are:

- Find a mentor in an offbeat place
- It's not who you know, it's who knows you
- Dress for the job above the one you want
- Help yourself by helping others first
- Don't pray for what you want, pray for what you have
- Expect everything—nothing is gravy

Gannon says her tactics enable people to develop leadership skills, maximize time, solve problems, and be more persuasive, whether they are job seeking, networking, starting a business, or coping with divorce and other life interruptions. "If I can come back from overwhelming adversity, anyone can," she asserts.

A Century of Service



Each May the hospital is the starting and ending point for the St. Margaret Foundation Fitness Classic, a 5K run/walk. This year's event takes place May 16.

ability in an otherwise tumultuous healthcare environment," Harrison stresses. "For our patients, it's the seamless transfer of care to our tertiary centers."

Today, as statistics illustrate, UPMC St. Margaret is a busy place. In 2009, the 250-bed acute care and teaching hospital logged 14,996 admissions, 188,734 outpatient encounters, 38,497 emergency visits, and 15,985 surgical operations.

It is renowned for its Centers of Excellence in orthopedics, lung and thoracic diseases, and bariatrics, in addition to providing clinical services such as cancer care, endocrinology, emergency medicine, physical and occupational therapy and rehabilitation, radiology,

and surgery. Last year, the hospital achieved Magnet designation, the highest international recognition for nursing excellence and leadership.

Every patient room at UPMC St. Margaret is private and equipped with a computer, putting the hospital at the forefront of implementing eRecord—UPMC's electronic medical record system. The technology enables physicians to update patients' medical records on computers at their bedsides.

"UPMC St. Margaret has served the needs of its community by providing access to high-quality care and by creating jobs," Harrison says. "We're still considered a community hospital, but by comparison to other community hospitals, we're much more in that we're an academic medical center offering advanced healthcare in the community setting. Our mission is to provide the right care, every time."

What's on tap at UPMC St. Margaret for the next 100 years—or at least for the foreseeable future?

"We'll continue to grow the main campus to accommodate patient demand," Harrison says. "We'll also continue to develop services at our UPMC Natrona Heights facility, such as the recently added non-invasive cardiology services."

Still, as the hospital begins its second century of service, a few things won't change. "The same values guide us now as I believe they would have guided the hospital in its origin—care, compassion, academics, respect, empathy, and safety," Harrison says.

Margaret and John Shoenberger undoubtedly would approve. SA

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