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AANA'S 75TH ANNIVERSARY: ANNUAL MEETINGS IN CLEVELAND

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Gertrude Fife, chair of the 1949 Local Arrangements Committee, wrote in the year-end report, "We have tried to foresee the things that would make your stay pleasant because we do want to welcome you back to Cleveland again some day. It is always a pleasure to welcome the American Association of Nurse Anesthetists to Cleveland."¹ Little did she know it that "some day" would be the 2006 Annual Meeting.

Fourth Annual Meeting – 1936

After previously meeting in Milwaukee, Philadelphia, and St Louis, the fourth Annual Meeting took Place in Cleveland in 1936. The meeting was held September 29 to October 1; the hotel headquarters was the Carter Hotel that was located just a few blocks from the convention auditorium in Cleveland Public Hall. The August 1936 *Bulletin of the National Association of Nurse Anesthetists* noted that a special cab fare of 20 cents between the hotel and the auditorium had been negotiated. From 1933 to 1975, the Annual Meeting was held in conjunction with the annual meeting of the American Hospital Association.

The meeting opened with an address from Honorary President

Agatha Hodgins and greetings from George Crile, MD. Crile had asked Hodgins to become his anesthetist at Lakeside Hospital in 1908, and he later helped found the Cleveland Clinic. In his remarks, Crile recalled how nurse anesthetist Lou Adams worked with a 3-year-old child with an exophthalmic goiter.

Miss Adams took two or three weeks' time to become acquainted with that little child, to play with the child, give it toys, and have it understand the gas machine until she had the child's complete confidence and was able to give it the anesthetic without any struggle on the part of the child. That is symbolic of what I meant when I referred to the finesse of the nurse anesthetist as compared with that of the [physician] intern. It represents a contribution that I do not believe could ever be equaled among doctors."²

Other session topics included oxygen, cyclopropane, evipal, the ideal nurse anesthetist, and anesthesia explosion hazards.

The banquet (Figure 1), held Tuesday, September 29, and attended by 236 people, featured music by members of the Cleveland Orchestra and a slide presentation given by Daniel P. Quiring, PhD, on the Cleveland Clinic Expedition to Southeast Africa. The expedition was organized by Crile, and included Crile, his wife, Quiring, and a Mr Fuller of the Cleveland Museum of Natural History. Quiring explained that

the expedition was undertaken as a "systematic attempt to study the energy system in a large group of wild animals living under natural conditions."³

One draw to the city that year was the Great Lakes Exposition, which opened on June 2, 1936, for a 100-day run. The 135-acre site near the lakefront included "a Streets of the World district that featured 200 cafes and bazaars reminiscent of the countries they represented, a midway with rides and sideshows, a Court of the Presidents, a Hall of Progress, an Automotive Building, an art gallery, a Marine Theater, and horticultural gardens."⁴ More than 4 million visitors attended the exposition.

12th Annual Meeting – 1944

While World War II was raging, the 12th Annual Meeting returned to Cleveland on October 2 to 5, 1944 (Figure 2). This time the headquarters hotel was the Hotel Hollenden, and daytime meetings were held in the Music Hall of the Cleveland Auditorium. Nurse anesthetists from Cleveland staffed an information booth outside the Music Hall to answer questions about the meeting and the city.

The May 1944 *Bulletin of the American Association of Nurse Anesthetists* spelled out the reasons why AANA members should attend the Annual Meeting.⁵

There is a shortage of anesthetists in civilian hospitals and there is also a great need for anesthetists in the armed forces, but in spite of this the anesthetists are urged to attend the annual meeting in October if at all possible. If this meeting were not considered essential for present and post-war planning, the Government would not allow it to be held, and neither would the hospital associa-

Figure 1. Banquet at the 1936 Annual Meeting



(Courtesy of AANA Archives.)

tion plan such activities....We cannot hope to solve our problems individually—we must discuss with one another the best way to meet the new situations that are arising, and we must make plans as an Association for our post-war activities....Keep the nurse anesthetists going forward and let us on the home front protect the interest of our members who are with the armed forces abroad.

In addition to AANA members, a number of faculty members from Western Reserve University Medical School spoke at the meeting. Session topics included the use of curare, caudal anesthesia in obstetrics, the nurse anesthetist in the postwar period, resuscitation of the infant, and national trends in health legislation. On Monday, October 2, the Alumnae Association of University Hospitals of Cleveland School of Anesthesia held a tea at the hotel open to all members. The banquet, again held on Tuesday, featured an address by Louis B. Seltzer, editor of the *Cleveland Press*, titled “Life Under Pressure.”

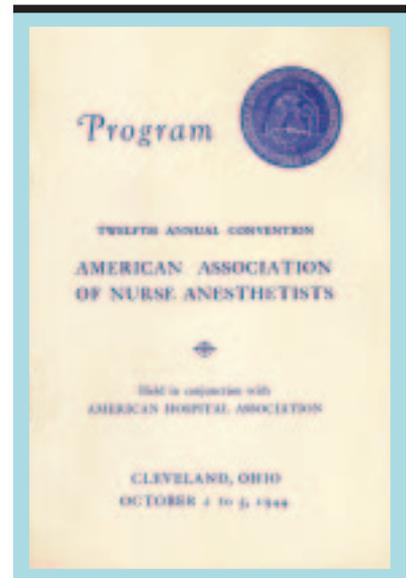
16th Annual Meeting – 1949 AANA returned to its roots by

holding the 16th Annual Meeting in Cleveland on September 26-29, 1949. Once again the meeting would be headquartered at the Hotel Hollenden and the Public Auditorium. A total of 314 members and students registered for the meeting, making it the highest attended meeting to that date.⁶

On the day prior to the meeting the Assembly of Directors School of Anesthesia, formed in 1946 and later to be called the Assembly of School Faculty, met at the Statler Hotel. Session topics included trends in postgraduate nursing education, the role of universities in the education of nurse anesthetists, and a progress report on the AANA’s accreditation program. The Assembly also met on the morning of September 26 before the Annual Meeting began for an open discussion on problems relating to the AANA’s education program and administering a school of anesthesia.

The Annual Meeting opened on Monday, September 26, with welcome addresses by AANA

Figure 2. 1944 AANA Convention program cover



(Courtesy of AANA Archives.)

President Myra Van Arsdale and American Hospital Association President-elect John Hatfield. On Tuesday the business session began at 9 AM with a talk from Emanuel Hayt, AANA’s legal counsel, and reports of the officers; that was followed by the election of officers, committee

Figure 3. Nurse anesthetists Verna Rice, Leola Richter, and Margaret Giffen at the 1949 AANA membership tea



(Courtesy of AANA Archives.)

Figure 4. Carl Lenhart, MD, on behalf of University Hospitals of Cleveland, receives the 1949 Award of Appreciation from AANA President Myra Van Arsdale.



(Courtesy of AANA Archives.)

reports, and new business. Voting took place at the business meeting until 1980 when a mail ballot was introduced; at the 1949 meeting the new officers were introduced at the membership tea (Figure 3) held after the close of

the business meeting and hosted by the Ohio Association of Nurse Anesthetists.

Wednesday, September 28, began with clinics at three local hospitals—University Hospitals of Cleveland, Cleveland Clinic

Hospital, and Cleveland City Hospital—with emphasis placed on anesthesia for thoracic and abdominal surgery. At University Hospitals, the theme of the clinic was controlled breathing with the use of curare in thoracic surgery. The general session resumed at 2 PM with a forum on complex medical problems related to anesthesia moderated by Cleveland Clinic anesthesiologist Donald Hale, MD, and a panel composed of Cleveland Clinic staff. That evening the banquet was held at the Hotel Hollenden. The highlight of the evening was the presentation of the third Award of Appreciation to University Hospitals of Cleveland; Carl H. Lenhart, MD, received the award on behalf of University Hospitals (Figure 4). In her remarks upon presenting the award, AANA President Myra Van Arsdale said,

...the name Lakeside tends to have a symbolic significance in the lives of nurse anesthetists. Sooner or later to anesthetists all thoughts about Lakeside come to a focus on its school of anesthesia. And, contrariwise, any consideration on the education of nurse anesthetists and schools of anesthesia seems incomplete unless Lakeside is mentioned....At this sixteenth Annual Meeting it seems proper and just that we as an association should acknowledge our debt to Lakeside and the University Hospitals of Cleveland.⁷

The banquet speaker was to be US Congresswoman Frances Payne Bolton, but she was unable to attend due to Congress being in session. Bolton, who represented Cleveland in Congress for 29 years, was a strong supporter of nursing and education projects; she funded the school of nursing at Western Reserve University, which was later named after her, and sponsored the Bolton Bill which created the US Cadet Nurse Corps during World War II. Replacing Bolton as a speaker was Cleveland columnist

F. H. Sterbenz who spoke on world affairs.

General sessions were held again in the morning and afternoon of Thursday, September 29, and the topics included resuscitation, emotional problems in anesthesia, and psychology in the relationship of the patient and the anesthetist. The afternoon session featured "Twenty Questions on Association Affairs," an open discussion to clarify AANA policies, and to obtain ideas from the membership. Written questions were submitted from the floor, and

AANA officers and committee chairs were encouraged to attend the session to provide answers to the members' questions.

While the reasons for holding an Annual Meeting in Cleveland were more apparent to AANA members in the 1930s and 1940s, it is important that today's nurse anesthetists remember Cleveland's importance to AANA history. In light of the debt to Cleveland of which Myra Van Arsdale spoke, it is fitting that the Annual Meeting during AANA's 75th Anniversary celebration will return to Cleveland.

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